

# Chillai-Kalan

CHILLAI KALAN is the most severe part of the winter in Kashmir consisting of three months.



- ✔ It is divided into three parts called the Chilas: The Chillai Kalan, the Chillai Khurd, and the Challai Bache.
- ✔ Chillai-Kalan begins from December 21 and ends on January 31, next year. Chillai-Kalan is the 40-day period of harsh winter.
- ✔ Chillai-Kalan is followed by a 20-day long Chillai-Khurd (small cold) that occurs between January 31 and February 19 and
- ✔ A 10-day long Chillai-Bachha (baby cold) which is from February 20 to March 2.

## Living Conditions during Chillai-Kalan:

- ✔ Chillai Kalan is a Persian word that in literal sense means "major cold".
- ✔ In this 40-day period, nights are chilly and day temperatures thrive in single digits.
- ✔ Historically, during this period, Kashmiris stay indoors surviving on dried preserved food and enjoying folklore and traditional music.
- ✔ During Chillai-Kalan, the weather in Kashmir valley continues to remain dry and cold with minimum temperatures hovering below the freezing point.
- ✔ The snow during this 40-day period freezes and lasts longer.

It is this snow that adds to the glaciers of the Valley and replenishes the perennial reservoirs that feed the rivers, streams and lakes in Kashmir during the months of summer.

- ✔ Any snowfall after the chillai kalan does not last long.

Kashmiris put on traditional pharan (Long woolen gown both for males and females) to protect from cold.

- ✔ Kanger – a traditional earthen firepot – is used to keep warm and ward off freezing intense cold.