

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

With reference to your article 'The Indian Contribution to Rhinoplasty' in *Journal of Laryngology and Otology* of August 1988 (pp. 689–693) I will like to congratulate you on your interest in the Indian Method of Rhinoplasty. Medical history has fascinated me also. I would like to clarify certain points which arise after reading your article. Nakta (your Nacta) is a male, so that the 16-year-old young woman in Birmingham who was admitted to the Accident Hospital in 1983 was a 'Nakti' and not Nakta.

Your blame on Tipu Sultan for ordering more noses to be cut off is not true and lacks historical proof. Facts mentioned in a scientific journal should be supported by a proper reference. Kangra (Punjab) family of nose surgeons should not be called "Hakim nose Surgeons" as Hakim is a physician and not a surgeon and he regards surgery below his dignity. Hakim literally means philosopher or brainy. If you had been in this part of the world we could have nicknamed you as Mr Hakim or Hakimji but then your profession would not be in accordance with your name.

Cowasjee, the first Rhinoplasty operation patient watched by English doctors, was a Parsi as Cowasjee is a typical Parsi name and most of 'jees' are Parsis and not Marhattas (Beg, 1985)

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Reference

Beg, M. H. A. (1985) Rhinoplasty: oriental contribution to modern surgery. *Pakistan Journal of Otolaryngology*; 1: 151–153.

Dear Sir,

I was very interested to read the letter by Dr. Beg on the Indian contribution to Rhinoplasty, which certainly adds to my knowledge of a subject which has fascinated me for many years.

I would like to deal with the points he has raised in relation to my paper:

1. I would certainly accept that the gender of the victim would determine the spelling of the last letter in the word.
2. The statistics for nacta are obviously not available but it is universally accepted that rulers, such as Tipu, who practised this form of mutilation on prisoners of war, as well as using it as a form of judicial punishment were, therefore, responsible for a much greater number of cases of rhinectomy. The reign of Tipu was one of almost continuous warfare and it appears to have been the historical period when nacta was performed most extensively. Certainly during the next bloodbath on the continent in 1857, death rather than mutilation appears to have been the more common fate for prisoners of war on both sides during the Indian Mutiny.
3. The mention of 'hakin nose surgeons' was taken as a direct quotation by Dr. S. C. Almast.
4. The reference that Cowasjee was a Marhatta and not a Parsi, was again taken as a direct quotation from the famous letter to the Gentleman magazine by B. L.

Yours sincerely,
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