



Govt school Dadasara in shambles

Runs in dilapidated building, lacks infrastructure

KOUSAR MOHI-UD-DIN

Every morning his sunken eyes follow the creeping young souls entering the premises of this primary school. Mere a glimpse of the kids relieves him of the anxieties of old age. All he aspires now is a bright future for them.

However, as he takes a look at the school building, an image of their gloomy future flashes across his eyes. It also reflects to him the administrative negligence in providing education to the children.

Muhammad Abdullah Rather, 70, is a retired teacher of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* Primary School, located at Batipora Dadasara, a remote village at Tral area in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. He takes with a pinch of salt the government claim of providing "quality" education to the children of poor families.

"The school is literally in shambles. However, the concerned authorities do not pay heed to even its basic requirements. This makes me concerned about the future of its students," laments Rather while pointing towards the school building.

Located on the edge of a river and surrounded by thick canopies of walnut trees, this two-storied sun-dried brick building lies in a pathetic condition. Broken window panes and cracked mud walls coupled with inadequate infrastructure are a stark reminder of what students of government schools in villages are receiving in the name of education.

Due to its inadequate infrastructure, most of the locals do not prefer to admit their wards in this school. With the result, the roll of the school has reduced from 92 in 2007 to 43 at present.

The school building is believed to be over 80 years old. The school started operating in this building on rent basis in 2003 under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* scheme.

"I was a kid at the time of its construction. This building has borne the brunt of thousands of tenants, government offices, business establishments, households and what not," reveals 90-year-old Khurshi Begum, proprietor of the building.

This is not all. Location of the building is a huge concern. It is believed to fall in an earthquake zone. In fact, during October 8, 2005 earthquake, a portion of the building was dismantled and its walls developed cracks.



Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Primary School at Dadasara Tral in Pulwama district.

BILAL AHMAD KUCHAY/IUST

"The staircase inside the school is in such a pathetic state that it can collapse anytime and cause a serious mishap," says Nazir Ahmad Rather, a parent. "It seems the authorities are not concerned about the safety of our children."

I wonder how my kids would compete with students of rest of the valley, who are provided with every basic facility for learning

Inside the mud rooms, the students and their teachers have to bear with the dust pouring out from walls and roofs. "The dust not only affects our health and hygiene, but also spoils our clothes," says Zahoor Ahmad, school Head Master.

The school has only three rooms available for eight classes, from nursery to fifth standard, whereas one room is meant for administrative

purposes. The school faculty comprises of just two permanent teachers, while one works on temporary basis.

Sports and recreational activities have virtually taken a backseat in the school due to the absence of playground. "My kids do not enjoy studying here and often complain of boredom. I have decided to cancel their admissions," says Muhammad Amin Sheikh, a parent.

"I wonder how my kids would compete with students of rest of the valley, who are provided with every basic facility for learning," exclaims Farooq Ahmad, another parent.

The parents seek intervention of higher authorities in the matter, "so that future of our children is secured."

The school staffers say they have time and again urged the concerned authorities to allot a new building to the school, "but to no avail."

Denying the allegations, officials blame the locals for "non-cooperation" with them. "Our hands are tied, since we lack the possessive rights of the building," Muhammad Hussain Malik, Zonal Education Officer, Awantipora, told *The Echo*.

"Plus we cannot use the land for construction of new building or repair the existing structure unless owner of the building gives us the permission," he says, adding that locals have not shown any sign of cooperation in this regard. *Echo*

IUST hosts 2-day pottery workshop



SMUKARAM/IUST

NAYEEM SHOWKAT KHAN

In an endeavor to aware Kashmiri traditional potters about innovative designs of pottery, the Mantaqi Centre for Science and Society, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organized a two-day workshop 'Re-shaping Kashmir Pottery' on October 11-12.

The workshop, held in the varsity, focused on reviving the skill and use of

“The pottery products could be made marketable by giving them new decor and shape.”

pottery. Various innovative designs of pottery were unveiled on the occasion, which are believed to make pottery products more marketable.

Studio Potter at Darashukon Center for Art and an art hobbyist, Dr Jyoti Singh, demonstrated some innovative and interesting techniques on the occasion. She emphasized the need for modernizing traditional pottery, “so as to make pottery items more saleable in the market.” She, however, maintained that the art of traditional Kashmiri potters was unmatched.

Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof A R Trag

said pottery could become a good source of employment in Kashmir, if innovations were brought into it. He, however, lamented that art was declining fast and could become extinct in future, “if serious steps are not taken to preserve it.”

The students of School of Business Studies presented a marketing plan to potters through PowerPoint presentations on second day of the workshop. They advised traditional potters to avail the facility of new machinery.

“The pottery products could be made marketable by giving them new decor and shape,” said Adnan Ali Khan, an MBA student, who bagged first rank for his presentation.

A local potter, Mohammad Rajab, who possesses over 50 years' experience of shaping pottery, gave pottery making demonstrations to the students.

Earlier, welcoming the guests, Coordinator Community Relations, Mantaqi Centre, Shazia Shafi, said the workshop was a part of the community development programmes that were initiated by IUST. “It is an attempt to get enlightened about the art of pottery by Kashmiri potters,” she said.

The workshop was also attended by former Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof Siddiq Wahid, Registrar IUST, Prof Muhammad Amin Masoodi, Director Physical Education, Prof K A Tarzan, in charge Mantaqi Centre, Prof Fozia Qazi, besides IUST students and faculty members and many local potters.

Don't rely on govt for jobs: Experts to youth

BILAL AHMAD KUCHAY

Experts at a seminar on career guidance advised Kashmiri youth not to rely solely on government jobs, but explore better career avenues. They emphasized the need for imbibing skills in younger generation for setting up small-scale industries.

They were speaking at one-day seminar on 'Employment Generation Prospects: A Perspective for the Youth of Kashmir' organized by Victor Force in collaboration with Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on October 17. The purpose of the seminar was to apprise the students of the finest career opportunities at global level.

Retired Major General Pramod Saigal said in India, only less than 10 per cent people were employed by the government, whereas more than 90 per cent people were involved in the private sector. “I want Kashmiri youth as well to concentrate on over 90 per cent job opportunities,” he said. He said it was vital for the youth to imbibe skills for setting up industrial units. “So I want you to focus on acquiring the skills that are needed in setting up the industry,” he said.

Earlier, General Officer Commanding of 15 Corps Lieutenant General Syed Ata Hasnain said such interactions helped students pursue right career options. “The standard of education in Kashmir is no doubt very high, but students don't find appropriate opportunities for jobs within and outside Kashmir,” Hasnain said.

“So we thought to channelize all the organizations involved with youth, so as to bring people of repute from other parts of India to do career counseling in the valley,” he said, adding that their aim was to promote careers of different interests.

Speaking on the occasion, columnist Aparna Srivastava Reddy talked at length on women empowerment. “Earlier in India, women were considered inferior to men, but today they are working in every field at par with them,” she said, adding that education is the main factor responsible for empowerment of women.

She asked the students to first choose their career, and then work avidly in that direction. “You should get assignments voluntarily, be responsible and don't give explanation of not doing any assignment,” she said.

Another speaker, Zubin Malothra, a career guide, talked about how to be successful in life. “Everyone possesses a special talent. You should explore it and make it your career,” Malothra suggested to students. “Then you should broaden your horizon, move outside for the knowledge and education, which you cannot get in Kashmir and then come back and apply it in your state,” he said.

Among others present on the occasion were Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag, Registrar IUST, Prof Muhammad Amin Masoodi, Mohamad Ayub Shah of Business School, Kashmir University, and administration staffers and faculty members of IUST.

‘Discipline is a must in varsity’

Aabid Hussain Shalla recently took charge as Proctor IUST. In an interview with *The Echo* reporter **Aabid Sultan**, he talks at length about his previous professional experiences and his new role in IUST.

Your academic background?

The journey of my academic life started from a boarding school, namely Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), at Shahkote, Baramulla. I did matriculation in 1997 and then went to Aligarh Muslim University for further studies. There I did my bachelors-cum-honors and M.Sc in Analytical Chemistry in 2003 and 2005, respectively. In 2008, I was awarded PhD and then I did Post Graduate Diploma in Chemo Informatics (PGDCI) from Jamia Hamdard University in the same year. I am the first person in my family and among my close relatives to have done PhD.

Who else is in your family?

My parents and six siblings—five sisters and one brother. My father runs a shop, whereas my brother is a businessman.

Tell us how did your professional life begin?

I have started my career as lecturer in Prakash Institute, Delhi, in 2008, where I worked for only two months. Then I worked as research officer for 11 months in Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Mumbai, where I also studied about the instruments. After that, I joined the IUST in August 2009 as Assistant Professor.

Now that you have been appointed as Proctor of the varsity, what difference do you feel from your earlier tasks?



You know, as faculty, you have no authority; you are just concerned about your class. However, being Proctor, you have a huge responsibility to shoulder. One of the important tasks of the Proctor is to maintain discipline in an institution.

And how tough job it is?

See, discipline is not just confined to students, but is meant for administration staff, faculty and non-teaching staff as well. So keeping a vigil on the entirely university is really hectic. But, I believe, discipline matters a lot. It is a must, especially for a new and flourishing varsity. Its importance is second to none.

Obviously, nobody wants to be in news for bad reasons.

Enlighten us about your role as IUST Proctor?

Frankly speaking, former proctors had already done most of the job. They were appointed at the beginning of the varsity. And to handle any office at its inception is really commendable, because you have to work really hard. *(Pause)* There are a just couple of new rules, which I have recommended. For instance, in university buildings, hostels and periphery of campus, uniformed security personals have been deployed. Stair sitting has been prohibited that creates hindrance in the free movement of female students and faculty. Smokers will be dealt with strictly, if caught. They will be fined and suspended and personal letters will be sent to their parents in this regard. I have also proposed for the CCTVs, which will be very helpful in maintaining law and order and discipline in the varsity.

Any message for students?

I would like to tell them that this is their own university and it is going to be a part of their life forever. For instance, on degree certificates, it is the name of university that is written first, which is followed by the name of a student. Then I would advise them to maintain discipline, respect faculty and senior students, love juniors and don't confront each other. *Echo*

IUST opens Counseling & Placement Cell

AABID SULTAN/NAYEEM
SHOWKAT KHAN

To provide placement and training support to students, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) has come up with a Counseling and Placement Cell. The cell that aims to aid students' transition into employment and further studies came into existence on August 29.

The cell provides training programmes to students through individual sessions for their overall personality development.

“We are here mainly for career counseling of the students. We also aim at their skill-enhancement

building and placements,” said Sehar Iqbal, Coordinator, Counseling and Placement Cell.

“Many students, who had been in dilemma whether to go for job or further studies, have visited us and expressed satisfaction over the counseling sessions,” she added.

Besides career counseling, the cell provides personal counseling as well to the students, which in turn helps them concentrate on their studies.

Pertinently, the varsity earlier used to have a placement committee, which comprised of faculty members of various departments. “They would send students to various organizations

for internship. So the present one is the first placement cell of the IUST,” said Sehar.

For its smooth functioning, whole-time staff members and faculty as well as student coordinators from each department have been identified.

Some other functions of the cell include organizing career and training events and short-term workshops. Just within a short span of time, the cell has received proposal from the local spice giants, Kanwal Foods and Spices Private Limited, for recruiting Food Technology students. The company has offered to hire the students on full-time basis.

“Besides, we have been forward-

ing proposals to various multinational companies, like Wipro, Larsen and Toubro (L&T), Confederation of Indian Industry and Aegis besides the department of Roads and Buildings (R&B), J&K government, for recruiting B-Tech and MCA students,” said Sehar.

“Infact, some B-Tech students have already been recruited by L&T—India's leading engineering multi-national company—and many others have been interviewed for jobs in the Army Engineering Corps,” she added.

The cell is also looking forward to coordinate joint-campus placement opportunities with other universities to explore more job offers for the students. *Echo*

CAMPUS TALENT

MBA student to set up 3000 MT CA store

NAYEEM SHOWKAT KHAN

To help increase shelf-life of fruit in Kashmir, a student of Islamic University of Science and Technology has taken an initiative to set-up Controlled Atmosphere Store (CAS) under public-private tie up with Jammu and Kashmir Bank. The 3000 metric ton integrated CAS is likely to be set-up in a phased-manner. The project 'United Apples Private Limited' is coming up at Lassipora in Pulwama district of south Kashmir.

Adnan Ali Khan, a third semester MBA student, has been working on the project for last one year. Khan, who has also done B.Tech in Industrial Engineering earlier from Bharti Vidyapeeth University, Pune, had been waiting for a business idea that could help people of the valley at large.

"The idea came to my mind a



Adnan Ali Khan

AABID SULTAN/IUST

couple of years back, when I learnt that in Kashmir many fruit growers were not able to store their fruits due to dearth for CA stores. Then I began to work on the idea," said Khan.

Although, Khan said, there were some CA stores in Kashmir, "however, due to large production (40 lakh metric ton) of fruits here,

they are not able to suffice the needs." The CAS that costs Rs four crore is expected to kick-start by October 2012.

Controlled atmosphere is an agricultural storage method, used to increase the shelf life of fruits by six to eight months. "The CAS enhances shelf life of the fruit three times more as compared to the conven-

tional cold storages," said Khan.

"With altered atmospheric conditions and reduced temperature, fresh fruits, especially apples and pears, are provided prolonged stor-

The CAS enhances shelf life of the fruit three times more as compared to the conventional cold storages.

age with only a slow loss of quality," he added.

Khan also eyes at providing job opportunities to over 300 unemployed Kashmiri youth. "It was my dream to generate employment to a large number of people. Perhaps this is another reason why I came up with this project," he said. *echo*

Boston varsity selects CIPACS student for spl course

SABAA MALIK

Waheed-ur-Rehman Para, a student of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), was recently selected by Boston University for a special course on Investigative Journalism. He has become the first person in Kashmir to be selected for the course by one of the leading varsities of United States.

The selection was done on the basis of some of his analytical pieces and news stories carried by local as well as national media. The course usually draws applications from hundreds of aspirants from different places every year.

A student of Centre for International Peace and Conflict Studies (CIPACS), IUST, Waheed has been actively participating for long in several conferences and workshops on Kashmir issue. He has also participated in 'SAARC Emerging Leaders Programme' organized by US State department in Nepal.

His analytical pieces have been published in widely circulated dailies of Kashmir, including



Greater Kashmir, Kashmir Times and Kashmir Images, and an analytical magazine, *Epilogue*.

He has also been contributing for 'South Asia Idea,' an international think tank on SAARC. He has video-interviewed Hizb-ul-Mujahideen supremo, Syed Salah-ud-Din, in 2007 for *Times Now* and *Aaj Tak*. Besides, he has worked as special correspondent with *Aankhon Dekhi, TV Live*.

"After working with TV Live for some time, I decided to revert to studies to learn the emerging trends of geopolitics and global conflicts. So I joined CIPACS, IUST, which has been an eye opener for me. I am really glad to get a world class education of conflict studies in IUST," shares Waheed.

Hailing from Pulwama town in south Kashmir, Waheed runs a regional TV network, *HBN Channel*, at his native place.

Waheed is the only Kashmiri member in Kashmir Committee formed recently in New Delhi for peaceful settlement of K-issue and better Indo-Pak relations. "I consider myself lucky to get a chance to contribute towards Kashmir issue. I will *Insha Allah* try my level best to serve the cause and also my region," he says. *echo*



Prepaid users demand SMS restoration

'Ban has deprived us of various benefits'

NAYEEM SHOWKAT KHAN

It has been one and a half year since government imposed ban on Short Messaging Service across Jammu and Kashmir. The non-resumption of the service has put thousands of pre-paid subscribers to avoidable hardship.

As situation in the state has remained normal over the past one year, mobile subscribers are demanding restoration of the service. "We fail to understand that when the situation here returned to normal a year ago, why pre-paid subscribers continue to be deprived of SMS service?" asks Muhammad Amin of Awantipora.

With cost of an SMS being lower than that of a phone call, this service stoppage has left many without the "most affordable" means of contact. "I usually have to spend three times more on passing a message through a phone call as compared to an SMS," says Henna Siraj, an Airtel subscriber.

"The message that could be conveyed through an SMS at a cost of a few paisa has to be conveyed through a phone call worth several rupees," she adds.

Ishfaq Khan, a B.Tech student at Islamic University of Science and Technology, believes that SMS is the most convenient and quickest form of communication. "The facility of group SMSes would help us

send the same information simultaneously to many that would save our time," says Khan.

"Besides, if we urgently needed to get in touch with someone who could not receive our call, we could send him an SMS and convey our message," he says.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) in its latest report has advised people to make use of text messaging (SMS), which, it says, is not at all harmful to the

We fail to understand that when the situation here returned to normal a year ago, why pre-paid subscribers continue to be deprived of SMS service?

human body, rather than phone calls. The report has warned people about excessive usage of mobile phones, which can cause brain cancer. In Kashmir, however, majority of people have been left with no option but to get in touch with their acquaintances through phone calls.

"The authorities should consider the WHO's warning and thus revoke the ban," says Nazir Ahmad Shah, a BSNL subscriber.

This is not all. The SMS ban has also affected the Mobility Number Portability service—consumer-friendly initiative of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India—in

J&K. As per official sources, in absence of the SMS service on pre-paid connections, merely less than 0.5 percent of 56.69 lakh cell phones users in the state could successfully change their original operator.

Pertinently, SMS services in J&K have been banned several times in the state ostensibly to prevent "spread of rumors during protests." Earlier on August 3, 2008, the SMS services were suspended in Jammu

and two days later in Kashmir in the wake of protests in the state following the Amarnath land transfer row. The ban remained under implementation for several months.

Later, on April 16, 2010, the Union Telecom Ministry had directed mobile operators in J&K to stop SMS service on all postpaid mobile phones, while pre-paid users were permitted to use 10 text messages a day. But then the order was revoked only a few hours before it was to be implemented. Then on June 29, 2010, the SMS services were again banned in the state after the onset of the agitation

against the alleged killings of teenage protesters by police and paramilitary forces. The ban was later revoked on post-paid connections on December 22, 2010, whereas the ban on pre-paid connections continues till date. In this regard, Union Minister of State for Communication and Information Technology, Sachin Pilot on August 20, 2011 said that revocation of ban on prepaid SMS services in J&K was not possible in near future.

Besides SMS service, pre-paid mobile connections in J&K were banned on November 1, 2009, by the Union Home Ministry. The ban was revoked in January 2010 on the conditions that the telecom companies would re-verify the identity of the existing subscribers and strictly verify the new subscribers. Ironically, even as the identity of pre-paid subscribers has been re-verified thrice, the ban continues to be in place.

Many mobile phone users in Kashmir call such moves as uncalled for. Mudasir Bhat, a Computer Sciences student at IUST, blames the central government for depriving Kashmiris of "our fundamental right to communicate." "There is no fun of continuing the ban, when the situation is quite normal in the state," Bhat deems.

The officials of the mobile service providing companies refused to make a comment in this regard. *Arjo*



ESSAY-CUM-CHART COMPETITION

To mark International Youth Day, the department of Journalism organized an essay-cum-chart competition on August 25 for university students. The theme of the competition was 'Expression of Youth: Challenges and Aspirations.' The students expressed their content over the competition. "It felt great to participate in such a competition after so long," said Mariya Bashir, an MCA student. "The university should organize more of such competitions as they provide a platform to the students to prove their skills," she added.

EXCELLENCE IN INTERVIEWS- TRAINING SESSION

A training session on 'Excellence in Interviews' was organized by Counseling and Placement Cell, IUST for university students on September 9. Coordinator of the cell, Sehar Iqbal, said the purpose of the session was to provide training to the students to help them face job interviews. The session was facilitated by Ms Pragya, trainer at Global Talent Track (GTT), Pune in the university auditorium. GTT is a human resource training and skill-development company that provides customized trainings to individuals, companies and institutions.

WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES- GUEST LECTURE

Behavioral Scientist and Director Manford, Delhi, Anand David, delivered a guest lecture on 'World of Possibilities' to university students on September 15. The session was organized by Vice Chancellor's office in the auditorium of varsity.

Interacting with students, David laid stress on importance of 'change' in life and said people usually think with conditions and thus get trapped by one way of thinking. In this regard, he gave a mental exercise to students to make them understand the concept better.

He advised the students to step out of their comfort zone and try out different things in life. "If you do what you have always done, you will get what you always got. Breakthroughs never take place inside the comfort-zone," said David to students. He also emphasized the importance of self-reliance of a person. "World is not going to give solutions of your problems. You have to solve them yourself," he said.

LE MELANGE- CULTURAL MEET

A cultural meet, titled 'Le Melange' (mixture of all kinds of things) was organized by the fifth semester BBA students on September 19 in the university auditorium. The programme was sponsored by J&K Academy for Art, Languages and Culture. Students performed various traditional Kashmiri plays and music, like *Ladishah*, *Band Paether*, *Rouff* and Kashmiri songs to entertain the audiences. Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof A R Trag, who was chief guest on the occasion, hailed

IUST inks pact with KU, DU on academics, research

In a first move of its kind, three top-notch academic institutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on academics and research on October 21 in presence of the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is also Chancellor IUST and Pro-Chancellor KU.

The Vice Chancellors of Islamic University of Science and Technology, University of Kashmir and University of Delhi signed the pact, which, among other things, would facilitate faculty and student exchange programmes besides carrying out joint research work.

Speaking on the occasion, Omar said, the MoU assumes significance not because it is just the MOU on sharing of resources, "but it also aims to get academics, students and scholars at the three universities together." "It also looks at the faculty and student exchanges and also the research component."

Omar said the backbone of any academic institution is its research work and the research papers it produces. "So this cooperation between the University of Kashmir, IUST and Technology and Delhi University will be beneficial to the students and scholars of these institutions," he said, hoping that the "Wealth of talent in the students and academics of JK will be beneficial to the University of Delhi as well."

The CM said it is the IUST that has to take more advantage of the MoU. "As a pro-chancellor of University of Kashmir and Chancellor of the IUST, I would ensure that this MOU grows from strength to strength and it is allowed to benefit students and scholars," he said, addressing deans of KU faculties and officials from IUST and DU at the SKICC.

the students' efforts for conducting cultural awareness event in the varsity.

Speaking on the occasion, Zaffar Iqbal, Secretary Cultural Academy, expressed his concern over the decline of Kashmiri language. "Kashmiri language is dying; today's youth don't pay any heed towards it. And pathos is that we can't tolerate if a child speaks Kashmiri at home," he said, adding that need of the hour was "to promote our mother tongue."

Asif Fazli, Assistant Professor, School of Business Studies (SBS) coordinated the event. Mohammad Yaqoob, Information Officer Pulwama, and Aijaz Akbar Mir, HOD SBS, were the others present on the occasion. Interaction Session for Journalism Students

An interaction session was held by the department of Journalism for first semester students with Nathalene Raynold, Research Associate, Centre for Asian Studies, Geneva, on September 19. She also serves as visiting fellow at Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad,

Pakistan. Raynold talked at length on contemporary as well as historical dimensions of Kashmir and related issues. Later a question-answer session was held.

INTERACTION SESSION WITH BASHARAT PEER

Noted author and journalist, Basharat Peer, interacted with students of departments of Journalism and International Peace and Conflict Studies on September 20 at university auditorium. Peer advised the students not to confine their studies to syllabi but also to attend the lectures on Political Science, Literature, History, Peace and Conflict Studies, so on and so forth. He also said there was nothing wrong in imitating the masters while being the learner to master the art. He was accompanied by Paul Stament, political scientist from US, who shared his views on the political structure of Asian counties and also answered the queries from students.

FIELD TRIP TO SHIKARGAH

The department of Journalism organized a field visit for students to Shikargah Breeding Centre at Tral on September 28. The purpose of the visit was to give students first-hand experience of covering diverse aspects of the place for print and broadcast media and train them handle video and still cameras. Besides, the visit aimed at making students aware about standard of living of people residing in rural places.

CAREERS IN IT AND ITES: A TRAINING SESSION

A short training session on 'Careers in IT and ITES services' was held on October 20 at university auditorium. The course was organized by the Counseling and Placement Cell for B.Tech, Journalism and MBA students.

Experts from Dream Whistlerz, an organization offering multifaceted exposure of entertainment world, enlightened the students about various job opportunities. They also made them aware of various short-term courses in animation, visual effects, graphic design, sound and video editing, public relations, event management and copy writing.

MISSION10X WORKSHOP

To increase employability of the engineering graduates, IUST organized a five-day 'Mission10X Faculty Empowerment Workshop' on October 24-28 at university auditorium. The programme was sponsored by Wipro Technologies Private Limited in collaboration with the School of Technology. The workshop was coordinated by Er Pal JT Singh, faculty at School of Technology, while Prof K K S Jamwal, Dean Students Welfare and a certified Wipro professional, supervised the project.

COMPILED BY
AABID SULTAN

Pandav Lari: A Much Revered Tourist Destination

ISHFAQ G

Situated in the heart of Awantipora, this tourist destination is one of the most recognizable landmarks of the town. For past many decades, it has been attracting a large number of tourists every year.

Awantiswami temple, located on Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, dates back to the 9th century. The gigantic ruins of the temple are popularly known as *Pandav Lari*, which means 'the houses of the *Pandavas*.'

The temple remnants attract both domestic and foreign tourists passing by. According to the officials posted there, nearly 1000 tourists from India and outside visit the place every year. "The temple witnesses a huge influx of tourists during summers. In winters, however, the number usually declines," says an official, adding that the entry charges are Rs five for domestic tourists and Rs 100 for foreigners.

Awantiswami temple had been built by King Awantivarman of Utpala dynasty in 853-883 AD before ascending the throne. It is said that Awantivarman founded the Awantipora town, located 29 kilometers southeast on the Srinagar-Anantnag Road and on the wedge of Wastarwan mountains, and named it after him.

King Awantivarman was the devotee of Lord Vishnu, to whom he dedicated the Awantiswami temple. The central shrine of the temple bears an image of four-armed Vishnu. The architecture of the temple is noteworthy. The images of the god and six-armed goddess carved on the stones form the walls of the temple.

Awantiswami temple holds a great historical significance for the visitors. It takes them hun-



Awantiswami Temple ruins at Awantipora in Pulwama district.

ISHFAQ G/IUST

dreds of years back as they step inside the temple. "I learnt about this historical monument on reaching the valley. So I came here especially to see this temple," says Ashutosh Raina, a visitor from Maharashtra.

A group of German tourists said they were impressed especially by the art and architecture of the temple. "This is an amazing historical edifice. We have seen only a few historical monuments like this before," they share.

The temple also provides a spectacular view of River Jhelum flowing on the other side of the national highway.

According to Archaeological department officials, numerous sculptures have been unearthed during the excavation of the temple. Some inscription bearing name of King Awantivarman has also been discovered. Many valuable sculptures have been placed in the SPS museum, Srinagar. *Echo*

SUGGESTION BOX

♦ IUST should focus on practical work more, so that students can carve a niche in their respective fields once they move out of the university. It is not only scores on report cards that count in the professional field, but expertise and skills imbibed by students.

Newsheen Nabi, Assistant Professor, department of English

♦ Since majority of the faculty is contractual in IUST, the period of contract should be increased to at least two years. It is very important for the growth of a department. It takes quite some time for new faculty to adjust in

the university; and by that time their contract is over.

A group of contractual faculty members

♦ The university should introduce M.Phil and PhD programmes, so that we don't need to move to other universities for further studies.

Syed Rufaidah Jan, Student, department of Journalism

♦ There must be a separate room for advisory meetings in every department, for we feel uneasy to share our personal matters in faculty rooms in the presence of other faculty members.

Shahid Dar, MBA Student

♦ Girls are mostly interested in games like badminton and throw ball, which, however, are not available in the varsity. Such games should also be introduced.

B.Tech Students

♦ More number of cameras should be made available in the department. Besides, there should be a Mosque for females in the campus.

Aamir Ashraf Gujri, Student, department of Journalism

♦ The number of dust-bins should be increased in the campus.

Mariya Bashir, Student, department of Computer Sciences

♦ One more canteen should come up in the university so as to avoid overcrowding of students in the canteen.

Iqra Fayaz, Student, department of Islamic Studies

♦ There must be lockers for the students in the varsity to keep essentials.

Nahida Akhter, Student, Peace and Conflict Studies

As told to SABAA MALIK
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IUST TWIN TOURNAMENTS CONCLUDE

B.Tech CSE win IUST football final

FAYAZ PEER

B.Tech Computer Science Engineering (B.Tech CSE) has emerged as winners of IUST Seven-A-Side Football Tournament title. The team defeated B. Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering (B.Tech E&C) in the final match by 5-4 in penalty shootout on September 27. The

developing the sports culture in the university and advised the students to take maximum part in all kinds of sports. Prof Trag also assured that the university will develop sports infrastructure. Later, he distributed prizes among the players.

Among others, Director Physical Education, Prof K A Tarzan, Dean School of Business Studies, Prof A R Matoo, Chief Librarian Prof W



Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag, presenting winning trophy to Adil Mushtaq, captain B.Tech CSE team, on September 27, 2011. **FAYAZ PEER/IUST**

tournament was organized by Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, IUST.

The game became interesting when both the teams managed to restrict each other from scoring any goal till the end. Then penalty shootout helped B.Tech CSE win the match after scoring all five goals.

Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag, who was chief guest on the occasion, emphasized the need of

A Alvi and faculty members of various departments were present on the occasion. They appreciated the sports capabilities of the university students.

Pertinently, 14 teams of various departments had participated in the tournament, which was played on knock-out basis. Both the finalist teams played well throughout the tournament. The best individual performance was made by Adil

B.TECH CE BEAT MBA TEAM, CLINCH VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

B.Tech Civil Engineering team won the inter-departmental volleyball tournament after beating MBA team in the final match on October 28. The team won the game with a huge margin of three quarters.

B.Tech CE won three quarters out of five played in the final. In first two quarters, B.Tech CE gave no chance to MBA to take the lead. The team scored 21 points in the first quarter, while MBA scored 13 points. In second quarter, MBA lost by four points. MBA, however, took a lead of six points in the third quarter. Later, B.Tech CE took a lead of eight points in the fourth round and the match referee declared the team as winners.

Minister for Higher Education, Labour and Employment, Abdul Gani Malik, who was the chief guest on the occasion, applauded the sports curriculum of the IUST. He said the university had shown the best results in sports as well education. "This moment has recalled me of my college days, when I was considered as the best volleyball player," said the minister, who distributed trophies among winner and runner up teams.

The minister impressed upon the students to take active part in extracurricular activities, especially sports, besides studying hard. He also said that government was conscious of the infrastructure needs of the university.

Vice Chancellor, IUST Prof A R Trag, lauded the players for their sports talent and display of team spirit during the match. Welcoming the chief guest, Prof Trag said he had been extending full support to the university at different levels in the government. Director Physical Education and Sports, IUST, Prof K A Tarzan, assured the participants and other students that the department shall be more active in coming days, "as our students possess tremendous caliber for sports." "Our students are doing well in the academics as well that is why they are getting jobs in the reputed companies of India," he said.

It was an encouraging moment for the B.Tech CE team, when Prof Aslam Malik of the School of Technology gifted them a cash prize of Rs 1000.

The tournament that was played on the knock-out basis was organized by the Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, IUST. 14 teams from different departments had participated in the tournament.

Mushtaq of B.Tech CSE, who scored five goals in the tournament.

To mention, the Directorate of Physical Education and Sports has throughout been developing the sports enthusiasm among the students of the university for the physical and all-round development of their personality.

Besides this, IUST will participate in the inter-university cricket tournament to be held in Guwahati on November 26, 2011. In this endeavor, a four-day trial session was held in the university on October 11-14. The purpose of the trial session was to select the best team from the university for the tournament. **Echo**

IUST holds 3-day trekking programme

The Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, Islamic University of Science and Technology, organized four-day 'Trekking-cum-Awareness Programme of Environment Protection' for female students at Sonamarg on October 22-25. 30 female students from various university depart-

ments participated in the event. The participants, besides undertaking short treks in Sindh Valley, were taught some adventure activities, like river crossing, mountain walking and so on.

The team was lead by Director Physical Education and Sports, Prof KA Tarzan, who was assisted by Nowsheen Nabi,

Assistant Professor, department of English, IUST and other supporting staff. Minister of State for Tourism and Home, Nasir Aslam Wani was chief guest, while Vice-Chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag presided over the function.

The team undertook day treks to Bear Valley, Thajewas and Baltal under the guid-

ance of noted adventurer and Director (Operations), Adventure Call Tours and Travels, Muhammad Yusuf. The students trekked in cold climatic conditions and braved the heavy fresh snow fall. They also visited the villages at Sonamarg to create awareness about the hygiene and healthy living among villagers. **Echo**