



THE Echo



LAND CONVERSION in full swing at Ganderbal

Agri land used for constructions, willow plantation; experts aghast

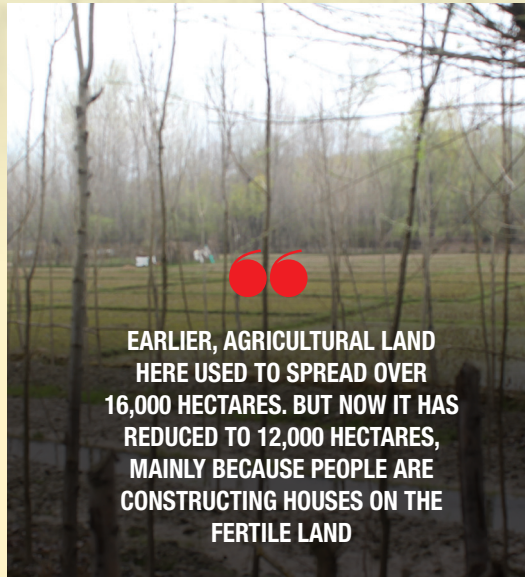
M SAJAD

Even as agricultural land degradation has been taking place at an alarming rate in Ganderbal district of Kashmir, local administration has apparently failed to put curbs on the vandalism of the land.

With rampant residential and commercial constructions going on in full swing on agricultural land, experts here have raised deep concern.

"Earlier, agricultural land here used to spread over 16,000 hectares. But now it has reduced to 12,000 hectares, mainly because people are constructing houses on the fertile land," says Mushtaq Ahmad Dar, Associate Professor at Sher-i-Kashmir Agricultural University of Science and Technology, Kashmir (SKAUST-K). "They do not seem to be in a mood to leave some legacy for their children," he adds.

The Jammu and Kashmir Land Revenue Act (1966) states that no agricultural land shall be used for any other purposes. However, locals seem to pay no heed to even law. While residential and commercial establishments are being erected on fertile land, a large portion of paddy land is being used to plant willow trees.



EARLIER, AGRICULTURAL LAND HERE USED TO SPREAD OVER 16,000 HECTARES. BUT NOW IT HAS REDUCED TO 12,000 HECTARES, MAINLY BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE CONSTRUCTING HOUSES ON THE FERTILE LAND

Locals reveal that they plant willow trees on paddy fields as it fetches them hefty sums. "We do not earn as much through agriculture as by planting willow trees on the same land. So I preferred to plant willow trees on my paddy field. This also involves lesser expenditure than agriculture," says Muhammad Maqbool, a local.

Another local, Gulam Muhammad Dar, owns eight kanals of land, four of which he utilises for agriculture purpose and other four for planting willow trees. "Interestingly, I earn three times more by planting willow trees than by cultivating paddy," he divulges.

While land conversion has turned into the biggest concern in Ganderbal, the district administration is being accused of playing a mute spectator.

"Had authorities from lower to higher level taken the required steps at the initial stage only, things would have been different," experts opine.

Denying the allegations, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Sarmad Hafeez, says the higher authorities had been taking stern actions against those involved in agricultural land conversion. "We levy a fine of Rs 5,000 on the accused. They even have to serve a three-month imprisonment," he adds.

Flood-hit family faces harrowing winter

Spends chilly nights in shack, awaits compensation

AAMIR ALI/ SHAH UZRAT

It has been over a year since floods inundated the entire Kashmir Valley for about a month in September 2014. The wounds left by the devastating deluge, however, are yet to heal for many even as time is regarded as the biggest healer.

Despite state and central government's tall claims of rehabilitating flood victims, this poor

family of Padgampora village in district Pulwama is forced to spend harsh winter days and nights in a makeshift shelter adjacent to the debris of what once used to be their two-storey house.

Amidst piercing winter chill, the family of five is living in a shack made of broken windows, beams and tin sheets, which they had pulled out from the rubble of their shattered house after floods.

CONT. ON PAGE 2



I RUSHED BACK TO MY VILLAGE EARLY IN THE MORNING ONLY TO FIND THE DEBRIS OF MY TWO-STOREY HOUSE

FROM PAGE 1...

Muhammad Yousuf Dar, 45, who extracts sands from River Jhelum, is the lone breadwinner for this family. His house was completely washed away by floods on September 5, 2014.

"We were asleep when torrents of flood began gushing through our village and we were informed through a nearby Mosque's loudspeaker," recalls Dar, who risked his own life to rescue over 50 villagers during the floods.

Sitting beside her few salvaged utensils, Dar's grief-struck wife, Shameema Akhtar, 40, narrates that the couple along with their three minor daughters managed to escape just in time, seeking refuge in a neighbouring village.

Next day, however, when Dar returned to his village, he was shattered to see his house razed to the ground. "I rushed back to my village early in the morning only to find the debris of my house," bewails Dar with tears rolling down his face.

As many as 22 houses were reduced to pile of debris in Padgampora village due to floods, while rest of the houses were partially damaged. The village is among the worst affected areas in the district.

Reminiscences of 2014 floods are still reverberating in the lives of Dar's family. "Apart from our house, our apple and rice crops, and cow shed also got washed away in the floods," says Shameema, who is suffering from depression.

The story of woes does not end here for the family. Two of the daughters, Arbeena and Zeenat, who were studying in class 10 and nine, respectively, were compelled to drop out from school. "It is very difficult to arrange two times' meals for my family, how could I have afforded to continue their studies?" asks Dar, while wiping off his tears.

Like many other flood-affected family, Dar and his family too is awaiting the major chunk of government compensation to rebuild their house. "Until now we have received a compensation of Rs 1.75 lakh against the damage of around Rs 20 lakh, which is not enough to even lay plinth of a new house," Dar says.

He adds that the Peoples Democratic Party had vowed during election campaigns to prioritize the rehabilitation of flood affected families and reconstruction of their houses. "I appeal to the government to recall their promises and provide us with the much-required compensation, so that we could live our life the way as we used to before floods," says Dar, who has been toiling hard to make the two ends meet for his family.

The family also ridicules Prime Minister Narendra Modi's economic package of Rs 80,000 crore for the state, saying that it proved nothing other than "mockery of flood victims".

DJMC faculty bags PII-ICRC award

SAJID ALI

Independent journalist and faculty at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Shazia Yousuf, was conferred the prestigious Press Institute of India-International Committee of the Red Cross (PII-ICRC) award, 2015, on December 2.

Shazia, who currently serves as Assistant Professor at department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), IUST, won the award for her story, 'Can You Imagine Life Without A Toilet?' that has highlighted the problems faced by Kashmiri women during September 2014 floods.

"This award has come with a lot of responsibilities. And now I feel more dedicated towards reporting," shares Shazia after receiving the award.

Shazia, who hails from Srinagar, did her schooling from Shaheen Public School at Ganderpora in old city. After she performed well in secondary exams, her parents encouraged her to pursue graduation in Science. "It has been a trend in Kashmir that when you perform well in studies, your parents want you to pursue either Biology or Mathematics," opines Shazia, who did her graduation from Government College for Women, Nawa Kadal.

Her passion for story-telling, however, compelled Shazia to opt for Mass Communication and Journalism instead of Science at Master's level. She joined University of Kashmir's Media Education Research Centre (MERC) in 2007.

After completing her Master's degree, Shazia joined *Kashmiri Life* as an intern reporter in 2009 at a time when the weekly newsmagazine was making grounds in Kashmir. "Due to my interest in doing stories related to human rights violations, Kashmir Life started a feature page for me, and later hired me as a staffer," she says.

In 2011, Shazia received Ford Foundations scholarship and thereby moved to Boston, United States of America, to pursue Masters in Print and Multimedia Journalism from Emerson College.

After returning to her native land Kashmir, she began to do long-form and analytical journalism. "It is because, I felt, long-form journalism is missing in Kashmiri media. Here we mostly have obituary journalism," she says.

Her stories have been published by international news organisations like *Guernica*, *Inter Press Service* and *The Women's International Perspective*, which highlighted conflict and post-conflict effects on Kashmiri women. "I feel I can do justice with gender journalism because it touches me the most and I will continue doing it," she says.

Shazia opines that nothing inspired her more than those untold stories of Kashmiri women, which remained hidden to the world due to dominance of male journalists in Kashmir. "How can a woman confide her sufferings before a male journalist?" she asks.



THIS AWARD HAS
COME WITH A LOT OF
RESPONSIBILITIES.
AND NOW I FEEL MORE
DEDICATED TOWARDS
REPORTING

— SHAZIA YOUSUF

‘We ensure students’ participation in sports activities’

He has been associated with sports for decades. Being son of a footballer, he was introduced to sports early in his life. Having attained M.Phil and PhD degrees in Physical Education, he has represented the state at national level in various sports. Before joining Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) in 2009, he has served as Director of Physical Education at University of Kashmir. In an interview with **The Echo** reporters **ZUBAIR AMIN** and **SAJID ALI**, **PROF KA TARZAN** talks at length about his role as Director of Physical Education and Dean Students Welfare at IUST, and about the state of sports and cultural activities in the university.



You are holding two important positions at IUST as Director of Physical Education and Dean Students Welfare. How do you manage the both simultaneously?

Nothing is difficult for a sportsperson. And I take every job with sportsmanship spirit. In Physical Education, you are taught courses like Orientation and Management, which make you able to deal with every situation. I know how to handle all these things because of my experience. This does not mean I am better than anyone. I still learn from students. But experience matters.

What are the policies and procedures of the university with regard to sports?

IUST is an evolving university. We are faced with land constraints. Then this university does not have financial resources like other universities of the state have. Presently, we are trying to deal with such issues. Rest of the things shall follow accordingly.

IUST students have been showing tremendous performance in sports activities for many years. However, they are not being provided with the required facilities and infrastructure. What is the reason behind?

The reason is plain and simple. We do not have enough funds, otherwise we try our level best to get the best out of students.

Tell us about the events and tournaments organised by university and the ones it participates in?

The university volleyball team has recently participated in All India Volleyball Tournaments. Besides, our students regularly participate in basketball, badminton, cricket, table tennis and chess tournaments.

Do you provide opportunity for girls also to participate in such events and tournaments?

Participation of girls is meagre in various sports activities. We don't have separate facilities for girls. If you will have a look at our table tennis hall or basketball court, those are usually occupied by boys, resulting in less participation of girls. But we are looking into this matter.

The gymnasium of IUST lies defunct for past many years. Why don't you make it available for students and faculty whose lifestyle has turned sedentary because of university timings?

You see, students do not have much time to join gym. Then we do not have a residential campus. But yes, if students can manage to reach here before 9 am, I will provide them a trainee, who will guide them in this regard.

Universities need to have NSS and NCC, which help develop personality of students through community service. But IUST lack these

councils. How do you cope with such lacunae?

NCC has been eliminated from all colleges and universities. Regarding NSS, we have sent a proposal to the concerned authorities and we may start it soon over here.

Besides sports, you look after cultural and youth activities of the students. How often you conduct cultural and other activities for students?

We have been without a spacious auditorium till this year where students could have performed. But over the past six months, various events have been organised here. Even during NAAC team's visit to the university, our students performed in one of the newly constructed auditoriums, which mesmerized the team.

Does IUST have a talent club or any other independent platform, where students showcase their talent?

We have a talent club here. Our worthy Vice chancellor, Registrar and I look after that. We are going to start a new talent club as well.

What are your future plans for the development of sports and curricular activities in the varsity?

We are seeking more funds from the government to strengthen the Sports Council of the varsity. Besides, we want to ensure that our students are trained well and participate in more and more tournaments within as well as outside the state. This is our main motive.

Lack of infrastructure mars football in Kashmir

SYED FAKHAR IMAM GEELANI

Football runs through the veins of younger generation of Kashmir. The game is loved, admired, played and watched across the Valley in huge numbers. The lack of infrastructure, grounds and academies, however, has led to the decline of this sport in the region.

The major football grounds in Kashmir remain in dilapidated condition for past many years. Sri Pratap College ground, Amar Singh College ground, Polo Ground and Bakshi Stadium have reduced to cesspools filled with filth and muddy

waters.

"We have to practice in parks since bigger football grounds are quite dilapidated," says Ubaid Kirmani, a budding footballer, adding that the players are demoralized by the callous attitude of the concerned authorities.

Grassroot academies are a must for building a player's skills, which, however, are lacking in the Valley. As per footballers, there is a need to improve academy setup to encourage young talent the state.

"We require at least 100 academies in the Valley so as to tap the budding talent and help talented youngsters reach to the highest levels of game,"

says Shahnawaz Bashir, captain of JK Football team.

The Valley also lacks coaching facilities for the budding footballers. Surprisingly, there are merely two 'A' license coaches available in the Valley, who are often busy outside the state.

"There are very less professional coaches available. We require at least 50 professional coaches to train budding footballers. More importantly, they should be available in state round the clock," says Bashir Malik, chairman and coach, Iqbal Sports.

While the players in the state continue to suffer, the authorities seem to be in slumber. Talking to this reporter, Jammu Kashmir Football Association (JKFA) president, Zameer Thakur, says, they are

taking stock of the situation and estimating cost of repairing the grounds.

"Due to September 2014 floods, the damage has increased. We are trying our best in collaboration with Sports Council to repair and maintain the football grounds," he adds.

About the academy setup, Thakur says, they are introducing grass-root programmes in every district and providing free kits to budding footballers.

He further says the JKFA has collaborated with All India Football Federation, "and we are also conducting a programme of training coaches in the new Astro Turf Ground near Tourist Reception Centre, Srinagar."

DJMC holds 5-day layout designing workshop

SAJID ALI

To help them learn technicalities of advanced layout software, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organised a five-day workshop on 'Newspaper Layout Design' for its print specialization students on November 16-20.

Workshop instructor and ace layout designer, Sajid Hussain, dealt at length with technicalities of In-design and other advanced layout software.

Stressing on the need of using composite styles in storytelling with the help of infographics, images and text, Hussain said since journalism is evolving with digitization, "reporters and editors should have the basic knowledge of layout designing."

Hussain, who serves as chief layout designer at Valley's leading newspaper, *Greater Kashmir*, said a designer should have a complete knowledge of designing software, but more importantly he should have an idea about the proper placement of news stories.

Apart from teaching them basics of layout designing, Hussain guided the students to design broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. "Layout designing is not just about decoration of newspapers, it should communicate the essence of con-



NOTED LAYOUT DESIGNER, SAJID HUSSAIN, GUIDING JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION STUDENTS ON NOVEMBER 17, 2015. PIC: SAQIB-UR-REHMAN/IUST

tent as well," he told students.

While talking about the usage of various elements in newspaper design, he told students that they should use one or two font families and avoid more than that.

"The more you bring font families in, the more cluttered the page will look and affect adversely the overall layout of the publication. Besides, we have to follow a particular stylebook in an organisation that lends its product the individuality," he said.



LAYOUT DESIGNING IS NOT JUST ABOUT DECORATION OF NEWSPAPERS, IT SHOULD COMMUNICATE THE ESSENCE OF CONTENT AS WELL

Hussain has earlier worked with various reputed news organisations of the Valley, including *Rising Kashmir*, *Kashmir Reader*, *Daily Etalat* and *Counsellor Magazine*.

Workshop concluded with certificate distribution among the participants. Speaking at the concluding session, Dr Ruheela Hassan, Head DJMC said, the department always attempts to impart best practical training to the students. "Basically the aim is to help students get adequate skills to set up their own ventures after the completion of degrees," she said.

Workshop coordinator and Assistant Professor DJMC, Dr Rabia Noor, said it is important to be versatile and have diverse knowledge in journalism, "since it gives a journalist an upper hand in the field."

"Technical courses like layout designing help print journalism students get better job opportunities. Since this is an age of versatility, print journalism students should learn layout designing as well apart from reporting and editing that they usually learn in classes," she said.

Meanwhile, the students of print specialisation of DJMC expressed satisfaction over the workshop. "In workshop, I got to learn more than I had expected. Now at least I can try my hands on designing campus newspaper, *The Echo*," said Amir Ali, journalism student.

Academicians call for promotion of Indian literature

IUST hosts 2-day national seminar

SAJID ALI/ SHAH MOHSIN

Emphasising the need of promoting Indian literature, noted academician Prof Harish Narang said the literature from third-world countries is still getting neglected by the West and is being sidelined "even in our own institutions".

Prof Narang, who has earlier served as chairperson at Centre for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, was speaking at two-day national seminar 'From the Margins to the Centre: Texts and Contexts' at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on November 4-5.

He underlined that there has been imperialism of literature and culture in third-world countries by the West. "In the name of producing civilized literary work, West has been exploiting peripheral nations," he said.

Prof Narang further said during colonisation, British had brought English literary studies to India through some "insignificant writers, who are still being revered throughout the country."

"We have produced much better poets



HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, IUST, DR MUNIJAH KHAN, FELICITATING ACADEMICIAN PROF HARISH NARANG ON NOVEMBER 4, 2015. PIC: MUZAMIL SHAFI/IUST

than Alexander Pope, John Dryden and other poets from the West," said Prof Narang, who was the key-note speaker for the seminar organised by Department of English Language and Literature, IUST.

Expressing concern over the indifference of the concerned authorities towards Indian literature, he said more than 95 percent questions in National Eligibility Test papers for English subject in 2014 were from British literature rather than from Indian literature, "which is very

unfortunate".

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice Chancellor Prof A R Trag said India possesses rich literature, "so we should shun the practice of relying on the West in this regard."

"We have a good number of literate people and scholars in our country, so we must maintain our own individuality and identity," said Prof Trag, who was the chief guest on the occasion.

Earlier, welcoming the delegates, Dr



WE HAVE PRODUCED MUCH BETTER POETS THAN ALEXANDER POPE, JOHN DRYDEN AND OTHER POETS FROM THE WEST

—PROF HARISH NARANG

Munijah Khan, Head, Department of English Language and Literature, IUST, said the purpose of the seminar was to shift focus to non-Western scholarships and offer an analysis of the production of their texts and contexts.

"The seminar shall analyse how the colonial hegemony has been challenged by the non-Western world," she added.

The seminar was attended by scholars, students and faculty members from IUST as well as from other universities and colleges. More than 30 delegates presented their papers on non-Western literature and languages, while Prof Narang and other academicians, viz., Dr Anupama Vohra, Prof Anil Raina, Prof Sudhi Rajiv, and Dr Monijah Khan were chief resource persons for various technical sessions.

ASSETS OF IUST: CENTRAL LIBRARY



Treasure trove of knowledge

ZUBAIR AMIN

At a time when technology is making advances to meet the ever-increasing needs of people, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) does not lag behind. The university houses a digitized central library that apart from offering thousands of books provides access to online resources as well.

The library that is enriched with over 30,000 printed books offers online access to a growing collection of e-books covering a wide range of subjects. Students can access millions of e-books available at various websites, such as Gutenberg, Google Books and so on.

“With development, format of information resources changes, but the role of the libraries remains as such. Even though world is shifting from print format to digitization, the essence of traditional library remains unscathed,” deems Prof Waji Alvi, Chief Librarian.

The library also subscribes to around hundred journals, magazines and newspapers to ensure access to latest information in various disciplines. Besides, it facilitates online access to a huge number of journals subscribed by the library and available online. It also provides links to full text of over 9,000 journals available under Open Access Initiative on different disciplines via Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and other sites.

“Apart from arranging books in shelves, we have to take care of e-resources as well. We have to be aware of changing needs of the users,” says Prof Alvi.

“The role of libraries is to connect a user with the source of information. Earlier we had to connect these two by physical access. But now we have to connect them by e-access as well. If you are providing that link, your purpose is served,” he adds.

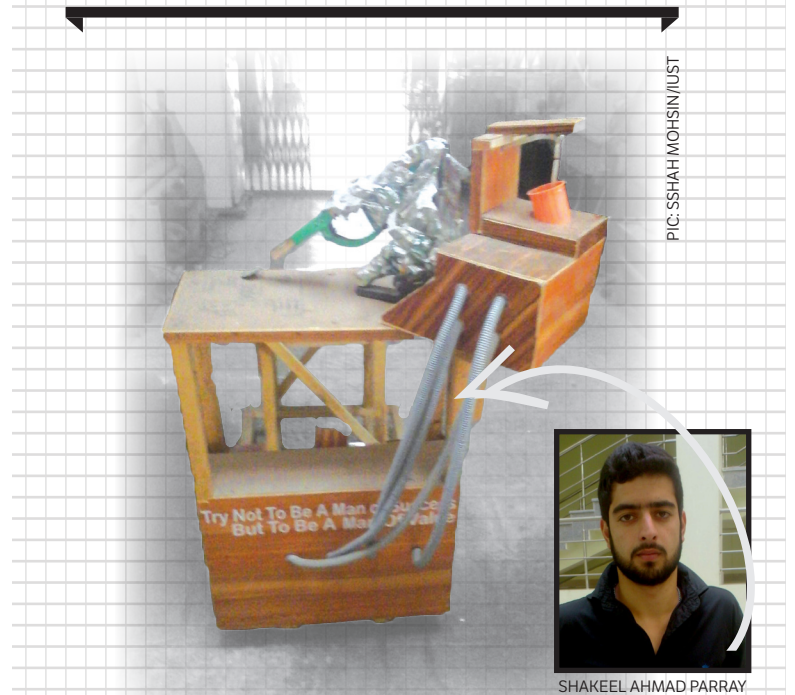
The library receives funds on annual basis from the university budget for the purchase of new books. “Then accordingly we write to the heads of various departments to recommend new books to us. Our annual budget is Rs 20 lakh, which we spend on books, online systems and various other services for students,” says Prof Alvi.

On second storey of the university library is situated a browsing centre, where university students and faculty surf the Internet. “We provide access to the lectures from various reputed institutions, like Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL),” Prof Alvi divulges.

The library uses SOUL 2.0 software for its operations and services. It has maintained an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) using SOUL software module. The library is a constituent of the National Knowledge Network, which is intended to connect all the educational institutions in India.

THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IS TO CONNECT A USER WITH THE SOURCE OF INFORMATION. EARLIER WE HAD TO CONNECT THESE TWO BY PHYSICAL ACCESS. BUT NOW WE HAVE TO CONNECT THEM BY E-ACCESS AS WELL

CAMPUS TALENT



PIC: SSHAH MOHSIN/IUST

SHAKEEL AHMAD PARRAY

IUST student creates semi-robotic chair for disabled

SHAH MOHSIN

With an aim to help differently-abled people to be independent, an Engineering student of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) has invented a pedal-driven wheelchair with artificial limbs.

Shakeel Ahmad Parray, who is currently pursuing third semester of Mechanical Engineering at IUST, has created a semi-robotic contraption based on Pascal’s law of Physics.

“The idea struck me when I saw a physically challenged person on wheelchair being fed by his daughter on a street. I thought why not to create something that can help disable people eat and do other stuff on their own,” shares Parray, who is popularly known as ‘Shakeel Tata’ in his village Haripora at Tral area of south Kashmir.

The self-financed project cost Parray Rs 10,000 and took him some eight months to design the machine. “Now I have submitted this project in University of Kashmir’s Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (GIAN) cell for evaluation by experts from across the country,” he opines.

Nadeem Ahmad, a research fellow at Department of Electronics and Information Technology, University of Kashmir, says, the idea of creating the semi-robotic machine is brilliant, but needs to be evaluated for its uniqueness and utility, and then effectuated “for placing it in the list of innovations.” “Our head of the department, Prof G M Bhat, has highly praised Parray’s invention,” he adds.

In his primary school days, the young scientist had designed hydraulic arms using syringes, for which he has received admiration from scientists across the Valley. Parray has also created a magnetic trouser for armless people, which opens and closes by embedded magnets.

THE IDEA STRUCK ME WHEN I SAW A PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSON ON WHEELCHAIR BEING FED BY HIS DAUGHTER ON A STREET. I THOUGHT WHY NOT TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT CAN HELP DISABLE PEOPLE EAT AND DO OTHER STUFF ON THEIR OWN


 CAMPUS
ROUNDUP

Bilal Jan interacts with DJMC students

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Islamic University of Science and Technology, organised an interaction session for its students with noted documentary filmmaker, Bilal A Jan, on November 12.

Students from both the semesters attended the session. Besides providing them with basic knowledge about documentary film making, Jan also touched history, purpose and other aspects of documentaries and films.

"Documentary is a creative interpretation of actuality, the best way to showcase your talent and a good medium of storytelling," he told students.

The session ended with screening of the documentary film 'Ocean of Tears' that depicted agony and hardships faced by women in Kashmir.

Journalism students attend personality dev workshop

Journalism and Mass Communication students attended a three-day workshop on self-esteem and forgiveness at Indrahama in Srinagar on November 22-24. The workshop titled 'Manford Breakthrough Games' had been organised to boost productivity in youth and help them tackle their problems.

Speaking on the occasion, workshop instructor, Anand David, said Kashmiri youth were stuck with past and bad experiences, which hamper them in the long run.

"Youth in Kashmir are capable to excel in every field, but they are stuck in conflict within themselves," he said.

DJMC visits Khonmoh Industrial Estate



Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology, organised a field visit

for its first semester students to Khonmoh Industrial Estate on November 26.

The visit that was coordinated by Shazia Yousof, Assistant Professor DJMC, aimed at helping students learn how to gather information in field and produce stories for broadcast.

Students, who were divided into four groups, interacted with people working in both traditional stone carving market and modern day factory.

Maths dept organises workshop for teachers

Emphasizing the need for changing the approach of teaching, Prof Amber Habib from Shiv Nadar University called upon teachers to implement innovative techniques in classrooms.

"We need to change the way we teach irrespective of the resources available. We must use innovative teaching techniques to impart quality education to students," said Prof Habib at a two-day workshop organised by the department of Mathematics, Islamic University of Science and Technology, for Mathematics teachers, on November 13-14.

Among other workshop instructors were professors from various universities, including Prof Farida Khan and Prof Jayshree Subramaniam, who shared some practices required for an interactive classroom session.

IUST holds cleanliness drive

Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organised a cleanliness drive within the campus in collaboration with Urban Local Bodies Kashmir on November 27.

As a part of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan', university students displayed placards highlighting the importance of hygiene.

Appreciating the efforts of students, Dean Students Welfare, Prof KA Tarzan, said, "It is a proud moment for all of us to be a part of Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan." He called upon students to work together for social and environmental causes.

Khursheed Ganai delivers lecture on administration reforms

There is a dire need to teach public administration in colleges and universities, "as we lack social reforms in this sector." This was

stated by Khursheed Ahmed Ganai, Chairman, Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Jammu and Kashmir. Ganai delivered a lecture on 'Reforms in Administration' to the students and faculty at Islamic University of Science and Technology on December 1.

While highlighting the need for reforms in public administration, Ganai said, it was important to examine the subject in terms of why, what and how the reforms should be taken.

Ganai further said the reform process should be made citizen-centric and citizen-friendly. "All reforms should focus on the betterment of citizens," said Ganai.

Print specialisation students visit Samboora's conflict-hit families

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organised a field visit for its Print Specialisation students to Samboora village of Pulwama district in south Kashmir on December 3.

The students visited conflict affected families in the village under the supervision of Dr Rabia Noor, Editor and Assistant Professor, DJMC. To mention, on December 5, 1995, three civilians and some militants were allegedly killed by Army personnel in the village. DJMC students visited the families of the deceased and did a handful of stories for some reputed newspaper organisations.

"Exactly two decades ago, the Army shot a torrent of bullets at our peaceful procession, killing three villagers and injuring eight others on spot. Among the slain civilians was one teenage girl," villagers told Journalism students and faculty.

Television students attend 5-day workshop at EMMRC

Third semester Television specialisation students attended a five-day workshop on 'Video Editing' at Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMMRC) from November 30 to December 4.

The workshop was organised by Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Islamic University of Science and Technology.

The students were provided with training of linear video editing, online editing and offline editing. They were given an idea of how to work in an organisation and meet the deadlines.

Senior journo delivers lecture on Conflict Reporting



Senior correspondent and political editor, *Rising Kashmir*, Faisal Yaseen, delivered a lecture on 'Conflict Reporting' to students of Journalism and Mass Communication on December 10.

He dealt at length with state of conflict reporting in Kashmir. He also provided the students with some practical tips for covering conflict situations, and stressed that "no story is more important than a reporter's life."

He further advised students to abide by journalistic ethics and not to compromise with facts. "You should try your best to minimize bias in stories and be cautious of the effect of your actions on your organisation," he told students.

Biz School hosts 2-day int'l conference

To provide a platform to researchers and practitioners to share various developments in technology, a two-day international conference on 'Sustainable Development and Technological Innovation' was organised by School of Business Studies, Islamic University of Science and Technology, on November 23-24.

The conference, sponsored by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), comprised 15 technical sessions, wherein 105 research papers were presented by scholars and academicians from various institutions.

During the inaugural session, Prof Azizuddin Khan from Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, asserted that technological development was an essential ingredient for sustainable development. "Technological innovations should not be seen as contradicting with the objectives of sustainable development, for they complement them," said Prof Khan in his keynote address.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Dipankar Sen Gupta, Head Economics department, University of Jammu, underlined the role of innovators, professionals, researchers and academics for paving way for sustainable development. "All stakeholders should collectively shoulder the responsibility of building a better tomorrow through the efficient use of resources and knowledge," said Prof Gupta.

Smugglers 'loot' Kangan forests in broad daylight

SHO assures probe; locals smell a rat

M SAJAD

While forest smuggling goes unabated in Kangan area of central Kashmir, the concerned authorities appear to be in deep slumber. As per the locals, even as smugglers continue to loot the precious forest wood in broad daylight, no action is being taken against them.

They alleged that authorities and smugglers were working in nexus with each other, while vandalizing the forest woods. Altaf Khan of Prang area said timber smuggling was at its peak in this area. "We have been witnessing timber smuggling for long now. But ironically, the Forest department does not seem to be concerned about this crime. They just do not take any action," he said.

Shakir Ahmad, who owns a timber shop in the area, alleged that the Forest department was giving a free hand to smugglers, which ultimately ruined the established business of timber.

"Forests are assets of a nation and they need to be preserved. The importance of the forests has not only been highlighted by government and non-governmental



TIMBER SMUGGLERS CARRYING LOGS THROUGH A DRIED UP STREAM IN KANGAN AREA.

PIC: M SAJAD/IUST

organisations through advertisements and programmes, but some great saints have also mentioned their importance as legendary poet Sheikh ul Alam has put it, 'Ann Poshi Teli Yeli Vann Poshi', he said.

When contacted, Forest Officer, Nazir Ahmad Bhat denied the allegations made by the locals. He said the department was rather providing wood to the needy people for domestic purposes, who resided in the vicinity of forests.

He added that the department was keeping a vigilant eye on every movement in the forests, while strict steps were being taken to protect them. "Anybody who violates the course shall be dealt with strict laws," he said.

Talking to this reporter, SHO Kangan said they were investigating into the matter. "We have in fact taken some smugglers in our custody," he said.

Forest Minister Abdul Majeed Padder said, anybody involved in the crime would face the music. The punishment for the crime is six months imprisonment and a fine of up to Rs 50,000, he said.

He further said they kept the timber available at every depot in abundance. "People who need timber for construction and other purposes can submit their forms in the department, and they would get the benefit as per their needs," he said.

Suggestion Box

As told to Sajid Ali
Photo-credit: Saqib-ur-Rehman



Buran Bashir

Journalism and Mass Communication Student

Traditional coal stoves are injurious to health, so the university should make blowers or gas heaters available for the students.



Mir Suhail

Junior Assistant, IUST Browsing Center

Students should be provided with individual WiFi accounts, for the university browsing center cannot accommodate more than 50 students at a time.



Bhat Asif

Sixth Semester MCA Student

Each department should have its own departmental library rather than relying completely on university library for books and other material.

Proper sanitation should be maintained in washrooms of the university.

Asif Amin,

Seventh Semester Food Technology Student



Insha Aijaz Kanue

Computer Science Engineering Student

The university should organise industry-oriented workshops for students in collaboration with some technical giants.



Rizqaan,

First Semester MBA Student

Signboards suggesting way to various departments should be installed throughout the campus.



Sahiba Meraj

Third Semester Integrated MBA Student

Inter-university debates and discussions highlighting a wide range of issues should be held in the university.



University takes care of accommodations charges for MCA and B.Tech students for their internships. Journalism Students should also get this facility.

Showkat Rashid,

Third Semester Journalism Student

Fading Aroma

Abdul Aziz Kozgar inherited the craft of making rose water manually from his forefathers, who had travelled all the way from Turkey some 400 years ago. After they got settled in Kashmir, they set up their own shop at Fateh Kadal in old city. However, nowadays, this shop barely attracts any customers. The aroma of roses is mixed with the melancholy of Kozgar, who is witnessing a gradual death of this craft. This 55-year-old graduate, also a government employee, now remains the only person in the Valley to have this skill. He desires to maintain his legacy, but is unlikely to pass the craft on to the next generation.

PHOTOS BY MUZAMIL SHAFI

