

From Passion To Depression

'Social networking takes toll on youths' mental health'

NAYEEM SHOWKAT KHAN

“Till only sometime back, I used to chat with my friends daily on Facebook. I would spend some five to six hours a day on internet. With interesting debates going around, I became addicted to social networking. And gradually I found myself developing mental strain and losing concentration on everything else.”

This is an honest confession of 22-year old Kousar, a Journalism student, who besides affecting his health lost his concentration on studies as well to social networking. After he realized he could not take it anymore, Kousar finally bid adieu to his networking habit.

Social networking that has nowadays become a passion among Kashmiri youth is believed to take toll not only on their studies but mental health too. As per experts, the youth, who participate in social networking for prolonged periods of time, are more likely to experience depression and anxiety.

“Engaging in social networking to the extent of skipping routine activities definitely has a negative impact on youth. It can lead to excess stress in one’s life, which is the known risk factor for Depressive Disorders,” says Dr Majid Shafi Shah, noted psychiatrist. He warns that easy fatigability, mood swings and irritability can also occur.

Dr Shah adds that since social networking is relatively recent phenomenon, there is paucity of research regarding its long term effect on psyche of youth. “However, changes in behavior can be expected as an effect of it.”

Experts alert parents to social media’s adverse effects on mental health of youth and teens. “Till two things are clear—that is one is able to understand difference between real and virtual worlds and that social networking is only part of one’s overall socializing and not the whole story—there are no hazardous effects on people who use social networking sites. But once these two boundaries are transgressed, they may form erroneous and unreal relations and live with it,” explains Dr Arshad Hussain, consultant, department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College, Srinagar.

“They may even isolate themselves from the pleasures and challenges of the real world. This can also diminish their capability to live as a social being,” he adds.

It would be, no doubt, unfair to overlook numerous benefits of social media. However, there is a



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dark side as well to social networking that too cannot be ignored.

Many parents say their kids usually complain of headache, poor eye sight and anxiety after spending long time in social networking.

“My son spends most of the time on his laptop chatting with friends. Once he is done, he usually asks for an analgesic (pain reliever) to relieve his headache,” complains Ghulam Muhammad Hurrah of Awantipora, who then took his son to an eye specialist only to see him wearing spectacles.

“I am really concerned about increasing social networking usage by my 18-year old son. He has developed extreme irritability,” says Mushtaq Ahmad, a businessman.

These concerns echo remarks of some students of Islamic University of Science and Technology, for whom social networking is “the best pastime.”

“I spend nearly eight hours daily on Facebook and do not miss a chance to reply any post,” reveals

Taha Abin Nazir, an MBA student.

“For past two years now, I spend most of my time on sites like Orkut and Facebook. It’s really fun,” echoes Ishfaq Khan, a B.Tech student, however, quickly admitting, “It has badly affected my eye sight, so doctor has recommended me eye lenses.”

Deterioration of health is not the only concern. Addiction to social networking has affected their social life too. “It has literally minimized the amount of time youth get to spend with their families, which is really a matter of concern,” says Iftikar Rashid Wani, columnist.

Ameena Begum of Pampore says her son hardly interacts with his family and “rather mostly remains busy with his internet enabled mobile phone.”

Kashmiri youth got attracted to social networking mostly since Amarnath land transfer row in 2008, when government imposed ban on SMS services in the state. Experts believe the ban shifted youth from SMS to social networking.

Shabir Ahmad (name changed), who teaches Sociology at University of Kashmir, blames prolonged curfews for social networking addiction. “When youth were not allowed to even peep through windows for several months, they searched for alternatives to overcome the frustration,” he says.

Like every problem has a solution, this one too has a way out. It is high time to educate youth about the risks and complications of social networking. They need the parental supervision to navigate the risks of social networking. As they say, ‘it’s never too late.’ *Echo*

IUST to acquire 500 Kanal identified land soon: VC

UMAR KHALID

Vice Chancellor Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Prof A R Trag, has said the university shall soon acquire already identified 500 Kanals of land around the campus in a phased-manner. Speaking at a welcome ceremony cum interaction session organized by Islamic University Faculty Association (IUFA) on April 21, Prof Trag said the land shall be utilized for raising more buildings and other infrastructure for the varsity.

He assured the staff to raise the overall standard of the university at par with other reputed universities. He also assured them to work with utmost dedication and ability to take the varsity to "newer heights in the field of academic excellence."

IUST, he said, shall soon be considered one of the most preferred destinations for education in India. "In coming years, both quality-wise and locality-wise, this university is going to be one of the best universities not only in the state but



DISCOURSE: Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag, addressing faculty members at university auditorium on April 21, 2011. **AABID SULTAN/IUST**

in India," he said.

Pertinently, Prof Trag took charge as vice chancellor on March 14. He succeeded his predecessor and noted intellectual Prof Siddiq Wahid, who held the position for more than

six years since the establishment of the varsity in 2005. Former director research, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, Prof Trag took over the charge amid

warm welcome by administrative and academic staff representatives of the university.

Prof Trag called on teachers to help improve the education standard in the varsity and encourage a healthy teacher-student relationship. "I seek your full cooperation to take the university to new heights of success," he told the faculty members. He also praised the staff for their efforts in bringing up the institution to "where it stands today."

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Muhammad Amin Masoodi, registrar IUST, said the university was the first and one of the best universities of Kashmir in rural settings. He also threw light on Prof Trag's contribution towards academia as well as society in general.

Earlier the faculty members raised various issues regarding infrastructure and facilities in the university with Prof Trag, to which he assured full consideration.

The faculty members too assured the VC of their support to raise the standard of the university in all means. *Arjo*

Gol to promote scientific research in J&K 30-50 scientists from state to be trained annually: Kumar

UMAR KHALID

Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, Ashwani Kumar, has announced to arrange training in key science and technology institutions for 30 to 50 scientists from J&K annually. He said the support will be in the form of fellowships, institutional charges and expenses for stay.

"Every year 30 to 50 scientists from J&K shall be trained for science and skills development through various fellowships," the minister said on his visit to Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on May 27.

Besides, he said, scientists from the state will also be facilitated for 10 international fellowships in specialized areas every year.

Kumar said his ministry will provide special orientation and training programmes to interested postgraduate students of the state, "so that they can pursue quality research."

"We assure support to university groups

in the state in specific research programmes to pursue research activity in space technology, including natural resource studies as well as space sciences," he said.

The minister, who was accompanied by Dr Krishnaswami Kasturirangan, member Planning Commission, government of India and other dignitaries, termed IUST a good initiative. He said the university needed to go hand-in-hand with technology and that research and development in science and technology should be the university's main focus.

Speaking on the occasion, vice chancellor, IUST, Prof A R Trag, said in spite of having various constraints in terms of time, space and funds, the university had started Resident Instruction Grants programmes in 2006 in five disciplines, admitting 186 students initially.

"Then over the next years, the varsity expanded its academic domain by instituting new academic programmes. The number of courses offered has increased to 14, whereas

around 1500 students are on rolls at present," he said.

He said out of 588 students passed out from the university so far, 104 have already been placed in various national and multinational companies.

The VC apprised the guests about the developments of the university, future endeavors and the issues confronting the university.

In his address, Prof Kasturirangan said that the university needed to be encouraged and assured to extend his support in this regard.

The team took stock of the university infrastructure and appreciated progress of the varsity. They also interacted with students, faculty, in charges of various departments and administrators of the university.

Among others present on the occasion were registrar IUST, Prof Muhammad Amin Masoodi, university officials and dignitaries from various government departments. *Arjo*

Vérité: First students' film festival held at IUST

SAMEER SHOWKIN/ ISHFAQ G

It was for the first time a film festival was held at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST). The festival portrayed various aspects of Kashmir through 22 documentary films screened on the occasion. Most of the films were directed by young film makers of Kashmir.

Vérité, the first students' film festival, was organised by *The Parallel Post*, an e-magazine, in collaboration with the IUST on April 20 in the university auditorium.

Where some films highlighted grave issues pertaining to the society, most of them reflected sufferings of the Kashmiri people during the conflict. Some of the films also portrayed declining culture and heritage of Kashmir.

The award for the best film went to *'Life on Wheels'* directed by Adil Shah, a student of Media Education Research Center, Kashmir University. The film portrayed struggle of a Kashmiri bus driver and a conductor in their routine life.

For Shah it was not just a moment of joy but an encouragement. "Now I am confident that I can pursue my career in film making so as to show the real picture of my motherland," Shah told *The Echo*.

He dedicated the success of the film to his team. "I have worked very hard for this film. But the credit goes to my team, who actually helped me in its completion,"



Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag, giving away prize to Ather Mohi-ud-din for his film 'Lost' at Vérité Film Festival at university auditorium on April 20, 2011. SHAHNAWAZ DAR/IUST

he said.

The second prize went to *'Pankh'* directed by Nishant, whereas the third prize was shared by three films, viz *'Lost'* by Ather Mohi-ud-din, *'Hopscotch'* by Malik Sajad and *'Eidiyaan'* by Muhammad Irfan Dar and Aman Kaleem.

The opening film of the festival was *'The Ninth Act'* by Ali Imran Qureshi, which effectively captured mood of the audiences. The mood got upbeat when a short animated film was screened. The film *'Hopscotch'* by young Kashmiri cartoonist, Malik Sajad, metaphorically portrayed erstwhile division of Kashmir.

The film *'In Limbo, Kashmiri Half Widows'* depicted agony of Kashmiri women, whose husbands have disappeared in jails. "There are umpteen women in Kashmir, who just

don't know whether their husbands are alive or not. There is no specific word to identify them," said Lebul Nissa, director of the film.

"When I first heard the term half widow, I asked my friends in India and abroad what it was about. They were taken aback on hearing it and asked me if it was a new term. That is why I chose 'half widow' as title of the film," Nissa shared with the audiences.

Another film, *'The Heritage Lost'*, highlighted deteriorating condition of silk industry in the valley, which was once considered one of the major economic contributors of the state.

The film *'Drug De-addiction'* by Nayeem Khan advocated rehabilitation of the drug addicts. "Through this film, I wanted to inform those who want to give up the addiction

that there are some drug de-addiction centers here to help them out," said Khan.

Earlier, vice chancellor IUST, Prof A R Trag, hailed the film makers and said he was glad to see Kashmiri students participating in such events. "I have often seen students in universities of Mumbai and Kolkata organising big festivals. Today I am proud to see the Kashmiri boys and girls also taking such initiatives," he said.

Talking about the social aspect of the festival, Prof Trag said the films could also prove helpful in fighting against corruption in the society.

To catch them young and teach them right was what the renowned Kashmiri poet Zareef Ahmad Zareef deemed. He said there was a dire need of noble teachers in Kashmir, "who will catch the budding talents young and teach them the right way."

"The way students have presented various aspects of Kashmir is highly commendable. The Almighty has gifted Kashmir with immense talent. The only thing that needs to be done is to guide these kids properly," he said.

Among others, Dr Shahid Rasool, director EMMRC, Kashmir University, Ajaz-ul-Haque, noted columnist, Shafqat Habib, cinematographer Film and Television Institute of India and Farooq Lone, producer EMMRC were present on the occasion. *The Echo*

IUST holds 3rd annual Open Day

SHOWKAT SHAFI

To provide right career options to aspiring students, the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organized the third annual 'Open Day' for admissions 2011 on May 26. The purpose of the programme was to aware and counsel students, desirous of exploring career options, about various courses being pursued in the university.

On the occasion, information desks were installed by various departments within the campus

for guiding students in their respective areas of interest. The vice chancellor, IUST Prof. A R Trag, along with registrar, Prof Muhammad Amin Masoodi, took stock of the stalls in the morning.

The counseling programme commenced at 10:30 AM and lasted till 3:30 PM. Hundreds of students along with their parents visited the campus. The university had kept transport facility available for the visitors on different routes.

The students interacted with concerned faculty and some of them took round of the class rooms and laboratories of the varsity. Talking

to *The Echo*, Mantaha, a 10+2 pass-out, appreciated the idea of Open Day. "I had come here just to witness the event, but now I am definitely going to apply for the admission to B.Tech Civil Engineering over here."

Earlier, she said, she was not aware of various courses offered in the IUST. "The counseling programme has thus been of a great help to me."

Kamran Shamshad, a student aspiring to get admission in M.A. Journalism, said, "I have obtained a lot of information regarding the course. I also got a chance to visit

the radio club over here, which I am very happy about."

Pertinently, on last two instances as well, the university received hundreds of visitors on the Open Day.

As the new session begins in the varsity, various students are currently seeking admission in different courses. "So far hundreds of forms have been sold from various centers at different colleges in Kashmir besides IUST. The number is likely to increase manifold in coming days," said Fayaz Ahmad, an official in the administration block. *The Echo*

CAMPUS TALENT

IUST student scales heights

UMER IQBAL WANI

He is a budding photojournalist of Kashmir. He nurtures a dream to become world's best war photographer. He is still a student, but has already tasted success in the field.

Showkat Shafi, a Journalism student at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), has become the first Kashmiri freelance photojournalist to inscribe his name on the website of Aljazeera, an international broadcasting news channel.

Aljazeera.net has so far published five pictures clicked by Showkat, which mostly depict human rights violations in Kashmir.

This is not the first achievement for Showkat. His pictures had been published earlier too by various reputed news organizations, including Reuters, an international news agency, Sakaal Times, a national daily and Drik News, an international news photo agency. He has also been working with some international developmental organizations, like Handicap International and

Aljazeera publishes pics by Showkat Shafi



Mercy Corps.

For Showkat, this is just a beginning of a long journey he is going to undertake. "My ultimate aim is to become the world's best war photographer and win Pulitzer Prize. And this is why I have chosen news photography as my career," opines Showkat.

Right from his childhood, Showkat has had an inclination towards art and poetry. "I had thought I would

become a poet or painter. And fortunately, I am a photojournalist today," he shares.

Following his heart, though, was never easy for him. His brother being a doctor, his family wanted him follow the suit. "I, therefore, had no option but to go against the family will to accomplish my dream," he reveals.

In this endeavor, Showkat joined Baramulla Boys Degree College in

2005 and did his Bachelors in Mass Communication and Multimedia Production. This is what actually led the foundation of his career in photojournalism.

In 2006, Showkat got his first photography assignment from Baramulla District Information Office. In the same year, he got his second assignment from Deputy Inspector General of Police, Baramulla.

It was in 2008 when Showkat saw his credit line in various news organizations. Reuters, being one of them, published six pictures clicked by him. Same year he worked with Kashmir Speaks, a news magazine, Kashmir Newz, a news portal and Press Bureau of India besides some publishing houses.

Despite being a student himself, Showkat has been delivering lectures on photography at some educational institutions.

Showkat dedicates his success to his teachers, family, friends and everyone he has met in life. "I would request all parents not to force their children to go for any particular field, but to support them in what their children's interest lies," he suggests. *Arjo*

Anecdote

What an Unpleasant Surprise!

M OWAIS GURKOO

It was seven O'clock in the morning. The sky was dreary and it was raining heavily. As a routine practice, I took breakfast and left for the university. Amid incessant rains, I managed to reach the bus stop at Bota Kadal, Srinagar.

While I was waiting for my university bus, I saw a man passing by my side. He was walking at snail's pace. Suddenly he stopped a few yards away from me. With pitiful eyes, he asked for money from a man walking from opposite direction. That time I noticed he was walking with the help of crutches; he was physically disabled.

The rain drops were rolling down his cheeks. He looked utterly miser-

able. The scene really moved my heart. I thought to forward a helping hand to him. Meanwhile he turned to his right, proceeded with the same difficulty and soon disappeared from the scene.

In my heart of hearts, I was asking the Almighty why He did not treat all the individuals equally. Why some of us have to live a miserable life? Why they have to suffer for no fault of theirs? Lost in a deep thought, I turned my head up to the sky. With rain drops splattering on my face, I became conscious.

I instantly realized that I should not miss the chance of helping him. So I walked briskly to locate him. I looked for him here and there. I began to curse myself for not being able to help a hapless person. But

finally I managed to get his glimpse again.

Before I could thank heavens, I received a huge shock. I saw him walking like any normal person. He could easily walk without the help of crutches. I got dumbstruck seeing this. I understood that he was a professional beggar, a cheat. He appeared physically disabled only to be fool people to earn a few bucks. It was one of the worst experiences of my life. It was a real unpleasant surprise.

The episode reminded me of my school times. Once I had a story in Hindi subject about one Vinoba Bhave. He was once riding horse in a forest, where a physically challenged man asked him for help. Vinoba Bhave put him on horse

and resumed his ride. After some time, the appeared physically challenged person pushed Vinoba Bhave down. He was actually a dacoit. Vinoba Bhave shouted at him, "Don't tell this story to anyone, for otherwise people will not believe physically challenged people and won't help them anyway."

I wonder how come ordinary people will be able to differentiate between a professional beggar and those who actually deserve their help. In this perspective, I have come to the conclusion that in every locality, residents should form social welfare committees. Those committees shall identify the deserving people in their respective localities to support them financially. By this, they would not need to indulge in the practice of begging. This way we shall be able to eradicate the menace called 'begging' from our society. *Arjo*

MUSSALLAH: Imparting moral education to students

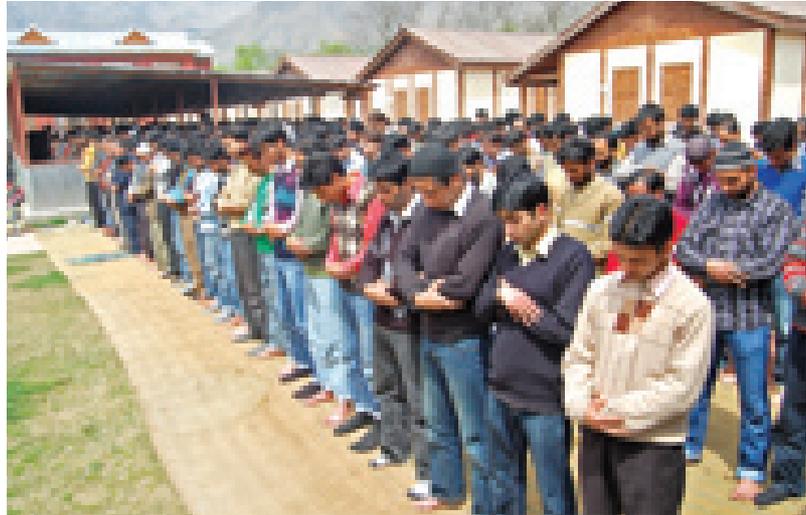
KOUSAR MOHI-UD-DIN

As *Muezzin* calls out the *Azaan*, devotees assemble here and bow down their heads before Allah. For past two years now this place serves as a common ground for staff and students of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) to submit themselves to the Almighty.

Mussallah, located inside the IUST campus, was established in April 2009 after university staffers expressed need for the same. "Earlier we had to travel down the slope to offer prayers in a local Mosque, which was quite difficult. So we requested the university authorities to come up with a *Mussallah* inside the campus, which they agreed to," recalls Fayaz Ahmad Bhat, a university employee.

Generally, *Mussallah* is a temporary arrangement for worshipers to offer *Namaz* and recite Holy Quran.

Setting up of *Mussallah* in IUST has been appreciated by one and all. "*Namaz* is obligatory upon every Muslim man and woman after reaching adolescence and has to be recited at a stipulated time. But without *Mussallah*, it just wasn't easy for us to offer *Namaz* on time," shares Bilal Ahmad Kuchay, a Journalism student.



Friday congregational prayers being offered at *Mussallah* in IUST on April 15, 2011.

SHAHNAWAZ DAR / IUST

Mussallah is being looked after by an association namely 'Come to Islam Come to Peace' comprising of over 10 students and a few staffers of IUST. The association aims at imparting moral education to students besides making them aware of Islamic teachings.

"We aim to impart moral education to students and help them generate a sense of responsibility," says Mashid Siddiqui, president of the association and a Management student, adding that the association is open to one and all in the campus, "hence the number of the members is not static."

The association usually meets

twice a day with regard to *Mussallah*. "Every morning, *Dars-e-Quran* (Quranic teachings) is delivered. And after *Asr* (afternoon prayers), we usually discuss issues pertaining to *Mussallah* and decide on the future course of action," says Khalid Ahmad, a B.Tech student.

Close to *Mussallah* lies *Wazoo Khaana*, where worshipers perform ablution before prayers.

Presently there is no special arrangement for females inside the campus for performing prayers under one roof, even though they demand for the same. "We wish we could pray *Namaz* together, but there is no such place for us in the var-

sity," laments Nuzhat Tasleem, a student of Food Technology.

"We have no option but to pray inside our classrooms," share a group of female students of Arabic department, adding that there must be a separate *Mussallah* for females too.

Where need for *Mussallah* has been acknowledged by one and all, space still remains a concern. The space inside the *Mussallah* is believed not to be sufficient enough to accommodate all the worshipers simultaneously, especially on Fridays.

"Due to heavy rush of worshipers on Fridays, most of us have to offer *Namaz* in the open," says Farhan Ahmad, a B.Tech student. "And when it rains, we have to rush to corridors to offer prayers," he adds.

Mussallah also lacks loud speaker system and a permanent *Imam* (worship leader) for leading Friday congregational prayers, "which is a must for any place of worship." "We, therefore, request the university authorities to soon arrange the same for the *Mussallah*," says Arshad Yaqoob, a student of Civil Engineering.

Many students demand that *Mussallah* should be upgraded and turned into a Mosque soon. To this Dean Students Welfare, K K S Jamwal, says, "We will raise the matter with the Honorable Vice Chancellor and will do everything that is possible on our part." *Echo*

J&K Bank collection counter opens at IUST

ECHO MONITORING DESK

Deposition of fee is no more a tedious task for students of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST). Unlike in the past, they no longer need to visit banks outside the campus for depositing their admission and examination fees.

IUST in collaboration with J&K Bank has opened a collection counter at the campus, where students can now deposit their fee without facing any difficulty.

"Now students do not need to move outside the campus to make demand drafts in favour of the university. The J&K Bank collection counter allows them to deposit fee in cash or other form like demand draft and pay order within the campus itself," says Manzoor Ahmad, an accounts assistant at IUST.

The collection counter at the ground floor of Skill Enhancement and Training Centre building became operational on March 14—the day spring session began in the varsity.

As per the new procedure, students are required to fill up three pay-in slip copies, of which one has to be submitted along with the university form and one each is retained by student and bank, respectively, as the evidence. "The form needs to be filled up by the depositor in his or her own hand writing," says Ahmad.

With easier fee deposition facility available, students too feel at ease. "Earlier I had to wait in long queues for hours together for depositing fee. The new facility has really saved my time, which is quite precious for any student," opines a jubilant Asif, a B.Tech student, after depositing fee on the collection counter. "And this time, I could deposit my fee within the stipulated time frame unlike on previous occasions," he adds.

"Besides, earlier we had to pay additional charges of Rs 50 or so for making a demand draft, which is not the case anymore," says Qazi Umar, an MBA student.

The month of March usually marks end of a fiscal and beginning of academic session in

various colleges and universities, due to which the workload on different branches of various banks increases manifold. Therefore, the facility is believed to be beneficial for J&K Bank officials as well. "Earlier due to heavy rush of students, we were not able to serve them properly. So this initiative will help reduce the workload on us and we can better serve our customers," says a bank official.

The facility is likely to be available for university officials as well in near future. "We have already sought an approval from the Reserve Bank of India in this regard," says Ichpal Singh, assistant banking associate, IUST.

The procedure is likely to undergo further modification to get even more simple in near future. According to university officials, students shall soon be able to avail e-banking facility. "The facility would make banking easier for the students and will enable them to deposit their fee or conduct any financial transaction online at their respective places," an official informs. *Echo*



INDUSTRIAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

A four-month industrial training programme for sixth semester students of the department of Computer Science commenced at University of Kashmir on March 10. The state-sponsored programme, which shall last till July 10, is being organized by a self-established company, Global Talent Track in collaboration with Coordinator Talent Valley. The students are currently given training at Kashmir University and shall soon leave for Pune.

EXCEL FOR BUSINESS- AN ONLINE CERTIFICATE COURSE

The department of Mathematics has been facilitating a 12-week online certificate course, 'Excel for Business' for students of the department offered by a noted Delhi-based institute of education and research, Mathematical Sciences Foundation (MSF). The course commenced on March 24.

The students are being taught online in the university through weekly Skype sessions by highly qualified faculty from the MSF. Students interact with the faculty in Delhi via web cam in computer laboratory. "Students' response to the course has so far been quite positive," said a faculty member.

HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SCENARIO IN INDIA - GUEST LECTURE

Executive Director, Educomp Raffles Higher Education Ltd, Harpreet Singh, delivered a guest lecture on 'Higher and Technical Education Scenario in India' to the students of School of Business Studies in the university auditorium on March 29. Singh, who is a gold medalist in Management from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, dealt at length on the current educational scenario of India and future prospects for youth, particularly business students. Singh emphasized the need for honing students' communication skills, "for nowadays hard work is usually overdone by smart work."

ARABIC LANGUAGE: LEARNING, PROBLEM AND

SOLUTION- A SEMINAR

Eminent scholars and academicians at a seminar on 'Arabic Language: Learning, Problem and Solution' underlined the need for promoting Arabic language and discussed various challenges faced by the language in contemporary times. The seminar was organized by the department of Arabic on March 31 in the university auditorium. The speakers stressed that the language ought to be largely promoted especially at senior secondary and college levels, "for it can provide a good opportunity to our youth to avail overseas as well as native jobs." Chief guest on the occasion, Prof (Dr) Syed Majeed Andrabi, former incharge Arabic department, deliberated upon various aspects with regard to the language.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN THE POST 9/11 WORLD- GUEST LECTURE

It is high time to initiate dialogue with other faiths so as to remove misconceptions about Islam developed after 9/11. This was stated by Dr Idreesa Pandit, professor at University of Waterloo, Canada, while delivering a guest lecture on April 27 at university auditorium.

Deliberating upon 'Interfaith Dialogue in the Post 9/11 World: A North American Perspective,' she addressed various issues pertaining to the Muslim world at present.

The lecture was organized by the department of Islamic Studies. On the occasion, Pandit also responded to queries from students and faculty members.

BASIC PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC BANKING AND INVESTMENT - GUEST LECTURE

"Islamic banking could provide a huge business opportunity to Indian market, but for that we need to generate awareness among masses," said Dr Showkat Hussain, assistant professor, department of Islamic Studies. He was delivering a lecture on 'Basic Perspective of Islamic Banking and Investment,' organized by the department of Business Studies on May 3 at university auditorium. Hussain said in spite of having some legal constraints as per Indian Banking Act, Islamic banking still had a huge potential

for growth, "as India is one of the biggest markets in the world."

150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The university celebrated 150th birth anniversary of poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore. In this regard, a seminar was organized on May 6 in university auditorium.

In his presidential address, Prof K K S Jamwal, Dean Student's Welfare, IUST threw light on Tagore's contribution towards literature as poet, novelist, story writer, dramatist and philosopher. On the occasion, it was decided to celebrate the current year as Tagore's year.

FIELD VISIT TO DOORDARSHAN

As part of its series of field visits to media organizations, the department of Journalism organized a day-long tour for students to Doordarshan Kendra, Srinagar on May 12.

The students were given demonstrations of live news production, handling of equipments in Production Control Room and planning and execution of programmes.

VISIT TO RADIO KASHMIR

The department of Journalism organized a field visit for students to Radio Kashmir, Srinagar, on May 16. The students were given a tour of various divisions of the organization, including News Studio, Duty Room, Talk Studio, Control Room, Transmission Studio and Music Studio.

Broadcasters Himayun Kaiser, Abdal Mehjoor and Tulha Jehangir explained execution of various programmes to the students. They advised students to work on things like pronunciation, accent, timing and economy of words.

ISLAMIC STUDIES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD- GUEST LECTURE

The department of Islamic Studies organized a couple of guest lectures on 'Recent trends in Islamic Studies' and 'Islamic Studies in the Contemporary World' on May 19 and 20, respectively, in the university auditorium.

Guest on the occasions, Dr Obadullah Fahad, associate professor, department of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, narrated the approach of orientlists and western scholars to a range of aspects and dimensions of the subject.

FRAUNHOFER SOCIETY AND ITS ROLE IN EUROPE- GUEST LECTURE

Senior scientist from Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging, IVV, Freising, Germany, Er. Sven Sangurlab, delivered a guest lecture on 'Fraunhofer Society and its Role in Europe' to the students of Food and Technology on May 23 in the university auditorium.

Apart from deliberating upon the role of Fraunhofer Society in Europe, he gave a detailed presentation on packaging of oxygen sensitive foods and preservation of fresh produce.

SESSION ON RÉSUMÉ WRITING

The School of Business Studies (SBS) organized a session on résumé writing on May 31. The session was conducted for second and fourth semester MBA and sixth semester BBA students in the university auditorium. Muhammad Ehsan-ul-Haq, assistant professor, SBS, said it was important for the students to learn résumé writing skills in order to avail better job opportunities. Among others, dean SBS, Prof A R Matoo, and incharge SBS, Dr Aijaz Mir, were also present on the occasion.

VISITS TO GREATER KASHMIR

Students of Journalism department visited the office of local English daily, Greater Kashmir, Press Enclave Srinagar, on May 31 and June 1. The purpose of the visits was to help students get acquainted with organizational structure and functioning of the publication.

The students were given a tour of various departments of the organization. The GK staff shared their experiences in media with the students and also gave them on-spot assignments.

COMPILED BY
AABID SULTAN
AND SHAHNWAZ DAR

SUGGESTION BOX

■ A protective fencing must be installed around the university so as to prevent strangers and animals enter the campus.

*Misbah Gul, Student,
Department of English*

■ There should be an organized seating arrangement in the canteen. Hygiene should be especially taken care

of and more varieties of foodstuff should be made available.

Tanzeela Ali, Student, MBA

■ The number of the taps in the Wazoo Khana (ablution place) should be increased, so that worshipers can perform ablution on time. Besides water is not readily available there that is something to be taken care of on priority.

*Mudasir Gul, Student,
Department of English*

■ Since hostel is far from the campus, we often get late for first class on travelling of our own. Therefore, the students, who reside in hostels, should be allotted a free bus service between hostel and campus.

*Nayeem Showkat,
Student, Journalism*

■ A television studio should be set up in the university on the lines of the radio studio that is already available over here, so that journalism students can compete at all levels.

Students of Journalism

As told to SABAA MALIK
and UMER IQBAL WANI

STUDENT COUNSELING

‘Believe in yourself’

He is one among those who have made it to Kashmir Administrative Services this year. Hailing from a remote village in district Pulwama of south Kashmir, he has set an example for many who aspire to excel in civil services. The young man of 25 years, Suhail-ul-Islam, shares his success mantra with The Echo reporter **Bilal Ahmad Kuchay**.

A GLANCE AT YOUR ACADEMIC BACKGROUND?

Well, I am currently pursuing M.Phil in Sociology at Jawaharlal National University (JNU), New Delhi. I have done my schooling from a public school at my native village Dadsora at Tral in Pulwama district. Then I went to Iqbal Memorial Institute, Srinagar, where I studied higher secondary part I and II. My subjects were Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics. Then I thought to change my stream from Science to Arts. So I did Bachelors in Arts from Amar Singh College, Srinagar, with Sociology, Political Science and Economics as subjects. Later I joined JNU for Masters in Sociology that I finished in 2010.

WHEN ACTUALLY YOU THOUGHT OF KAS?

During my school times only, I had decided to appear in KAS exams. After I passed higher secondary, I got even more serious about KAS. I would say, the time my college studies began I actually started devoting my time to it.

WAS IT YOUR FIRST ATTEMPT IN KAS?

Yes, it was. And my batch was 2009.

WHAT WERE YOUR OPTIONS AND WHY DID YOU OPT FOR THEM?

I had opted for Sociology and Urdu Literature. Sociology was an obvious choice for it has been my subject throughout. I have been studying Sociology religiously for a long time now. My other optional was Urdu because I have immense love for the language and find it an efficient monotony-breaker.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS IN KAS? HOW DID YOU GO AHEAD WITH PREPARATIONS?

Honestly speaking, I did not follow a typical civil service exam strategy. I just read, discussed, debated, wrote and went on going for a variety of stuff. The preparations thereby took care of themselves.

WHAT BOOKS DID YOU REFER TO?

For General Studies, I read some social science textbooks of NCERT and my newspaper-reading habit paid off too. Sociology being the subject of my post-graduation did



not require some special preparation. For Urdu literature, I did read some prescribed books (as in syllabus) and took help from my brother and friends in the form of notes, some books and discussions. The habit of writing and debating proved helpful in several ways.

DID YOU PREPARE NOTES OR YOU JUST MANAGED WITH BOOKS?

Actually, I did not have time to prepare notes. My post-graduation course was sufficient to rob me of the required time. So I just managed with books.

DID YOU JOIN SOME CLASSES FOR MAINS OR PRELIMS?

No, I did not.

WHAT IS YOUR SUGGESTION TO THE ASPIRANTS IN THIS REGARD? SHOULD THEY JOIN COACHING OR MANAGE THEMSELVES?

Coaching is not necessary, I think. However, one should get acquainted with the syllabi, pattern and nature of examination and then prepare accordingly. Those who fail in deciding about ‘what’ and ‘how’ of preparations should take some help in the form of coaching classes or guidance from some seniors or successful candidates.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WRITING STYLE MATTERS IN EXAMINATION?

Of course, it does. It is very impor-

“My sincere suggestion to every aspirant is: think, read, write, discuss, criticize, appreciate and, last but not the least, debate. Believe in yourself and ignore those who try to discourage you.”

tant to have sound writing skills. So aspirants should try their best to hone their writing skills.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR INTERVIEW SESSION?

My interview was one of the longest interviews, which lasted for about half-an-hour. Wearing formal, I entered the room confidently and after greeting the board I took my seat. The board was cordial. But at times, some arguments and counter arguments did emanate from both ends. The interview began with my introduction and from there followed some questions, like about my research, interests and university. Then questions on Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Agrarian Reforms in J&K, Millennium Development Goals, Environmental Sustainability, Judicial Activism, 2G Scam, Mirza Ghalib’s poetry and Urdu poetry in general were asked.

They also asked me questions about Magic, Science and Religion, Kashmir conflict, ethnicity and deepest point in ocean. I had a good discussion with the board and happened to differ with them at times. I simply said “I do not know” to some factual questions (Smiles). Towards the end of the interview, they asked me some questions about my family. Overall, my interview was satisfactory.

WHAT ARE YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO THE ASPIRANTS? HOW SHOULD THEY PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW?

My sincere suggestion to every aspirant is: think, read, write, discuss, criticize, appreciate and, last but not the least, debate. Believe in yourself; ignore those who try to discourage you; avoid negative sources like people, places, things and habits; work smartly, not necessarily hard; don’t give up and don’t give in; and yes, remember always- ‘winners never quit and quitters never win,’ and I am sure you will find all the reasons to chortle with mirth. After all, Allah sees and knows us all!

TO WHOM DO YOU CREDIT YOUR SUCCESS?

I am very thankful to Almighty Allah for everything He has bestowed upon me. May He shower His blessings on us all! Having said that, let me take this opportunity to tell you that my parents, who have taught me through their own lives’ trajectories to move on undeterred, have been my greatest inspiration. After Almighty’s grace, it is their blessings that have made me achieve whatever little I have been able to, so far. I am highly grateful to them. I am also indebted to my other kins, especially my siblings, and to all my teachers, who have taught me so far. *Echo*

Sports mania in IUST

FAYAZ PEER

The Directorate of Physical Education, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), has organized four interdepartmental tournaments in volleyball, football, basketball and cricket.

Among these, volleyball and football tournaments are in their final stage and await their final matches. B-Tech Civil and MBA teams have made it to finals of the volleyball tournament. Finalists of the football tournament are B-Tech Electronics and Communication and B-Tech Computer Science teams. Both the tournaments were played on knockout basis. Except for basketball tournament, 14 departments are participating in all tournaments.

Basketball and cricket tournaments are in initial stage. Basketball tournament is league based, whereas cricket tournament is

JOURNALISM STUDENTS PLAY FRIENDLY CRICKET MATCH

A friendly cricket match was played between two semesters of Journalism department on April 21 in the sports ground of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST). The second semester team won the match against fourth semester team by 47 runs.

Second semester's captain S Mukaram won the toss and elected to bat first. The team scored 169 runs in 15 overs and lost five wickets. Opener Altaf Sofi played a brilliant knock of 72 runs off 29 balls with 14 fours and a huge six. The knock helped the team to score a defendable total of 169. Sofi built a partnership of 43 runs with Fayaz Ahmad in 2.3 overs.

Fayaz was the first batsman to go, who was run out by Yasif Malla. Next batsman Ajaz Ahmad scored 16 runs and was bold by Adil Wani. Mukaram played captain's knock of 40 runs off 19 balls.

The fourth semester team scored 122 in 14 overs. Mir Obaid and Adil Wani scored 30 runs each. No other player could enter double figures. Second semester's Shahnawaz Dar bowled took four wickets in four overs. Umar Khalid bowled three overs and took three wickets. Sofi was declared man of the match.

knockout based. Six teams are participating in the basketball tournament, which have been divided into two pools. Pool A

includes B-Tech Computer Science Engineering, B-Tech Civil and BBA teams. Pool B comprises of B-Tech Electronics and Commu-

nication, Actuarial and Finance Mathematics and MBA teams.

In cricket tournament, the inaugural match was held on May 24 between Islamic Studies and English department teams. Islamic Studies won by 16 runs. Batting first, Islamic Studies scored 135 runs for eight wickets in 16 overs. Mysar was the top scorer with 32 runs.

Chasing the target of 136 runs, English department had a poor start, as they lost first wicket in the very first over. The team was all out for just 120 runs, with Asif top scoring with 23 runs. Fayaz Ahmad of Islamic Studies took two wickets.

Directorate of Physical Education is also providing coaching to the IUST football team, who will participate in state level B-division football tournament. The tournament is being played under the supervision of J&K football association. *Echo*

Journalism deptt visits Nara Nag

S MUKARAM

The month of May witnessed a broad spectrum of activities for the department of Journalism, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), which students were engaged in all through. Apart from the regular academic work, a multitude of co-curricular activities, ranging from sports activities and debates to field visits to media organizations, was carried out throughout the month.

In this endeavor, a field trip was organized by the department to Nara Nag, the historic temple complex in Kashmir's district Ganderbal, on May 17. The purpose of the visit was to give students first-hand experience of covering diverse aspects of one place, train them handle equipment used in media and aware them about standard of living of people residing in far-off places.

Nara Nag lies some 86 kilometers away from the IUST. It also lies eight kilometers to the east of Wangat, a small hamlet on Srinagar-Leh national highway. It is one of the most preferred adventure tourism destinations in the valley. Foreign tourists particularly prefer this place for trekking



Ruins of the historic temple complex at Nara Nag.

SHAHNAWAZ DAR

on high attitude grasslands.

Nara Nag is blessed with natural scenery, dense forests, Haramukha peaks and glaciers, through which River Sindh passes. The place is particularly known for ruins of the massive

Buddhist temple complex, which are currently under the charge of Archeology department, J&K government. The temple complex was constructed by Lalitaditya Muktapida, eighth century king of Kashmir. *Echo*