



The Echo



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ABANDONING

Life

More than dozen babies dumped by parents in 2018



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

ZUBAIR LONE/ KAMRAN ALI

In a shocking state of affairs, Kashmir has been witnessing rise in abandonment of new born babies over the past some years. In 2018 alone, so far more than a dozen of infants have been abandoned since January, with two of the babies losing their battle with life.

Eight of such cases have been reported from the apex hospital of Srinagar, viz., Government Lalla Ded Hospital that included six females and two males. Besides, one case was reported from the Valley's lone children's hospital, G B Panth Hospital. Apart from this, one baby was found in a local shrine at Srinagar's Sonawar area, one at Nowhatta, one at Eidgah, one at Tahab, Pulwama, while another case was reported from the Baramulla district.

"It is a very disturbing trend, for the number of such cases has been the highest this year over the past decade," notes Gulshan Akhtar, In charge nurse, Neo-natal Care Unit, Lalla Ded Hospital, adding that such incidents are "inhuman" in nature.

"IT IS A VERY DISTURBING TREND, FOR THE NUMBER OF SUCH CASES HAS BEEN THE HIGHEST THIS YEAR OVER THE PAST DECADE"

Pertinently, in 2016, one case of abandonment of a baby was reported from Lalla Ded Hospital, while two cases were reported in 2017 from the same hospital.

Experts cite illegitimate relationships, female child and poverty as the main reasons behind abandonment of children. "Some parents apprehend that there shall be no social acceptance for their kids, so they prefer to abandon them, while some disown their babies due to financial problems," observes Dr Fayaz Ahmad Bhat, a sociologist, who teaches at Department of Sociology, University of Kashmir.

"Moreover, the number of abandoned female children is usually higher than abandoned male children," he adds.

Clerics blame social evils, which, they say, lead to rise in immoral activities in the society. "Late marriages and adoption of western culture could be cited as some of the reasons for this issue," says Molvi Zameer Ahmad, who preaches at a local Mosque at Pulwama, adding that strict surveillance must be adopted in hospitals, so that the culprits could be caught and punished accordingly.

Some experts also accuse the society for not undertaking their social obligations towards other people. "We ought to look after the economically weak people around us and provide them possible assistance," suggests G N Khaki, Director, Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir. Stressing upon the moral duties of parents, he says, they need to enlighten their children about the teachings of the Holy Quran. "Apart from providing school education to their children, parents should also impart moral education to them, so that there is less possibility of wrong doings in the society," he suggests.

Although the parents of the abandoned babies were never identified, but sooner or later all of these kids were adopted after following proper procedure of the court. "If a person wants to adopt any abandoned baby, he has to approach the concerned police station followed by the court," says Dr Rouf Ahmad, In charge, Medical Records Department. "After getting clarification about economic and criminal background of the family, the baby is handed over to them by the hospital authority," he adds.

Experts say, people need to do thorough self-introspection to address this evil in the society. "If even married couples are abandoning their babies, then this issue needs to be addressed with a serious approach," says Dr Bhat, adding that children are the blessings of Almighty Allah, and it is their loss who abandon babies.

"IF EVEN MARRIED COUPLES ARE ABANDONING THEIR BABIES, THEN THIS ISSUE NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED WITH A SERIOUS APPROACH"

'Nepotism' mars Kashmir cricket



J&K RANJI PLAYERS
IN ACTION
AT
SHEIKHPORA,
BUDGAM.

PHOTO: OWAIS BASHIR/IUST

OWAIS BASHIR/ RIZWAN RASHID

Even as Kashmiri youth are believed to have talent for cricket, they hardly make it to national or international level. Lack of infrastructure and alleged nepotism do not let them explore their talent to its fullest.

Instead of turf cricket, Kashmiri youth have to play mat cricket, which is said to have altered the technique of the players. As a result, Kashmiri youth are not usually seen in bigger leagues and tournaments organised outside the state.

"Cricket in Kashmir is in shambles because of mismanagement and nepotism in Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA). Over the past 48 years, JKCA has failed to organise a single tournament or a training camp," reveals Syed Bilal

Shah, Private Secretary, JKCA.

He says, the funds provided by the government are not utilised properly, due to which they lack even the basic infrastructure required to organise high-level tournaments and training camps.

He, however, adds that the conditions have started to improve to some extent. JKCA, he says, has vowed to construct stadiums of international standards in every district and shall also introduce turf cricket to the Valley. This is believed to eventually improve the technique of the cricketers.

Club cricket is also not productive in Kashmir. Even if there are 25 cricket clubs in the Valley, 13 of them are defunct due to ownership dispute. Moreover, these clubs belong to urban areas, whereas there no clubs for rural areas.

Talking to *The Echo*, local players say, they face

nepotism during the selection process for the national cricket. "We struggle a lot to make a career in cricket. Whosoever has played the high-class cricket, like Manzoor Dar, has excelled on his own," says Aaqib, a cricketer.

Mehjoor Ali Sofi, Ranji player, Jammu and Kashmir team, says the criteria for selecting players should be based on their annual individual performance like in other states of the country "instead of conducting single trial based selection."

He demands that JKCA should provide at least the basic facilities as well as employment opportunities to the cricketers, especially Ranji players. "In other states, players are provided jobs in various departments, like railways, secretariat and so on. This should be done here as well," he adds.

ART that Speaks

Srinagar girl becomes first Kashmiri to perform abstract art on yarn, craft paper

IQRA QADRI

Kashmir has always been known for its rich heritage and traditions. However, nowadays, youngsters are trying their hands on new emerging trends. Among these trends is that of abstract art, whereby one can express his or her ideas through visuals.

Gone are the days when such visuals could be drawn only in the form of paintings. An artist can now perform this art work on yarn and craft paper as well. One such young artist is of Qazi Tabish Faiz, who has taken up abstract art as a career instead of traditional art forms.

"I tried to come up with an art form, which is different from painting and other art forms," says Tabish.

Hailing from Habak area of Srinagar, Tabish is so far the only artist in Kashmir, who performs abstract



art on yarn and craft paper to give a physical form to her ideas. "Though many people are not able to understand this art form, but generally people have the capacity to absorb newness. And once you have communicated your perception well, they easily understand it and relate with it too," she says.

Tabish has pursued Masters in

Business Administration (MBA) from University of Kashmir. She has just begun her journey in abstract art.

"I was never inclined towards this art, but after I completed my MBA, I got the time to explore myself and then switched to art, as art is in my genes," says Tabish. "And then, unemployment became another driving force for me to take up art as career," she adds.

Tabish does not work on any particular theme, "but whatever idea comes to my mind I try to give it a form."

Talking about the abstract art, she says, it is all about how one perceives something. "Abstract art makes me happy, and when I see people appreciating my work, I somehow feel accomplished," shares Tabish.

Tabish, as yet, does not have any outlet to showcase her creative pic-

es. Artists like her get invitations from exhibitions like *Spring Fest* and *Poash*, where she sells her products. She also runs her *Instagram* page under the name 'handybytabish' and takes orders there as well.

In a message to youngsters, Tabish says, "Everyone has some talent in them, you just need to find it within yourself like I did."

“ THOUGH MANY PEOPLE ARE NOT ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THIS ART FORM, BUT GENERALLY PEOPLE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO ABSORB NEWNESS. AND ONCE YOU HAVE COMMUNICATED YOUR PERCEPTION WELL, THEY EASILY UNDERSTAND IT AND RELATE WITH IT TOO ”

Phobia keeps students away from Maths; experts concerned

SHAHEEN AMIN

At a time when demand for Mathematicians is increasing worldwide, in Kashmir, the number of students opting for the subject is constantly decreasing. Reason: Fear of Mathematics.

As per the experts, most of the students have developed maths phobia, due to which they usually don't opt for this subject "even though it has a huge scope."

"Mathematics is one of the most important subjects. Those who have opted for it are well settled today. However, most of the students have developed phobia towards this subject, that is why the number of the students opting for it is declining," says Dr Riyaz Ahmad Shah, Head, department of Mathematics, Government Degree College, Kulgam.

Vice Principal, Government Higher Secondary School, Kulgam, Bashir Ahmad, says, Mathematics forms the base of all subjects, be in Physics, Chemistry, Commerce, Social Sciences or other subjects. "Students must fight their fear. Nowadays, each and every competitive exam requires them to prepare Maths. However, not many students opting for it is a matter of concern," he says.

In Degree College Kulgam, the ratio of students opting for Mathematics to other subjects has con-

stantly remained imbalanced over the past some years. In 2015, only 225 students opted for Maths out of 1600 students. In 2016, out of 1500 students,



only 243 students have taken Maths as subject, whereas in 2017, 180 were Mathematics students out of overall 900 students in the college. In 2018, barely 85 students have opted for Maths out of 1562 students. This speaks of a negative trend in terms of Maths.

Similarly, in Girls Higher Secondary School, Kulgam, 37 students in 11th standard have opted for Maths out of 800 students, whereas in 12th standard only 22 students have chosen Maths out of 920 students.

In Boys Higher Secondary School, Kulgam, 22 students out of 680 in 11th standard and barely 19 students in 12th standard out of 552 have opted for Maths.

Talking to *The Echo*, students share that even

though they are interested in Mathematics, they are afraid of taking it as subject, for "it needs additional hard work than other subjects." Contrarily, Mathematics students believe that it is simpler than other subjects. "Once a problem is solved, it remains forever in mind. All one needs is to have proper knowledge about the subject and its importance in the present scenario," says Humaira, a Commerce student.

Experts believe that there is a need to counsel students, wherein parents and teacher have an important role to play.

“**MATHEMATICS FORMS THE BASE OF ALL SUBJECTS, BE IN PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, COMMERCE OR OTHERS**”

"Teachers as well as parents should encourage their children right at primary level for learning Mathematics, so that they get to know importance of the subject," says Dr Shah.

Muhammad Iqbal Dar, a Commerce teacher, says that there is a need to conduct awareness programmes regarding role and scope of Mathematics.

Students paying price for being paying guests

ZUBAIR LONE

Student life is believed to be the best stage of one's life. However, for those who have to travel for one place to another for education, life isn't that easy.

The students of down-trodden areas of Kashmir, viz., Tangdar, Macchil, Kargil, Gurez and so on, face a tough time in attaining higher education. Due to the non-availability of universities and lack of required infrastructure in colleges at their respective places, they are compelled to shift to other places to pursue their higher studies.

Since only a limited number of students can avail hostel facility, many of them are supposed to stay in rented accommodation as paying guests. Doing so, they say, they face a lot of difficulties.

"It is quite difficult to stay as a paying guest as we have to manage everything by ourselves, be it



Rented accommodation for students at Chhanapora, Srinagar. PHOTO: ZUBAIR LONE/IUST

cooking, cleaning, washing clothes and utensils, and so on," says Khalid Latif, a post-graduate student of Central University of Kashmir,

who hails from Kupwara and stays as a paying guest at Nowgam, and adds, "Amid so many chores, we are left with little time for our studies."

The students also complain about the high rates of rented rooms. "These rates are only increasing with every day, which is a matter of concern for us," says Asif Nazir Wani, B.Sc Radiology student from Anantnag, who is presently studying in Punjab.

Latif adds that many students come from humble background and thus their parents cannot afford heavy expenses of their accommodation. "With the result, they quit their studies."

Arif Shaf, a B. Sc student at Sri Pratap College, who hails from Kul-

gam, is staying as a paying guest at Barbar Shah area of Srinagar. He says, staying as a paying guest affects one's personal as well as social life. "You get simply cut off from your family and friends."

Parents consider it as a failure of the government for not being able to provide enough facilities to students. "The colleges and universities in Srinagar do not have enough rooms available in hostels. Hence the students from other districts of Kashmir have to stay as paying guests either in Srinagar or outside," says Khursheed Ahmad Bhat, father of a student, staying as paying guest at Dehradun.

"There should be more colleges and universities in various parts of Kashmir and more of hostels as well, so that our children are not required to move to other places to complete their studies," he adds.



IUST to have Centre for Artificial Intelligence: Prof Siddiqi

'US scientist to mentor varsity students'

SURIA HAMID/ IQRA QADRI/ TABASUM GUL

Vice Chancellor, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Prof Mush-taq A Siddiqi, announced setting up a Centre for Artificial Intelligence in the varsity in near future.

On the visit of renowned US-based scientist, Dr Faisal Farooq, to IUST on July 19, the VC expressed his desire to see a "serious inclination" among IUST students towards Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Prof Siddiqi, who was chief guest on the occasion, said AI offers solutions in the field of health, environment, computing, social sciences and so on. "This session has been an at-tempt to pave way for AI in IUST. The university shall work on competitive science projects and Dr Farooq has consented to be our mentor," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Farooq delivered a special lecture on 'Data Science 3.0: Democratisation of Artificial Intelligence' that was organised by International Centre for Spiritual Studies (ICSS), IUST



Noted scientist, Dr Faisal Farooq, delivering a special lecture on Artificial Intelligence at IUST on July 19.

Principal Scientist with the Watson Health Group of International Business Machines Corporation, Dr Farooq deliberated at length on the evolution and impact of AI. "There were times when only researchers could conceptualise AI, but now it has penetrated our daily lives. AI is now not only in the hands of the scientists but users as well," he said while citing various examples from the field.

Dr Farooq, who has authored over 20 patents and around 50 scientific publications, dealt with the usage of AI in IT, health and other sectors. He also expressed his desire to guide university students on various research projects.

Speaking on the occasion, Registrar IUST, Prof Farooq A Mir, said, AI is a platform for students from diverse steams where they converge together.

Dean School of Technology, IUST, Prof A H Moon, who was the guest of honour said, "Today was the spring of AI at IUST and soon our group of faculty and students will undertake projects on AI, for our university has ample resources for science and technology projects."

Earlier, welcoming the guest, Head ICSS and organiser of the event, Dr Iqbal Quraishi said Dr Farooq is a Kashmir born world renowned researcher, who wishes to give back to the society "and IUST will collaborate with him on various fronts."

The lecture was followed by question-answer sessions attended by various deans, heads, faculty members and students from various departments.

US prof delivers lecture at IUST

Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organised a distinguished lecture on 'Engineering Innovations in Clinical Medicine,' which was delivered by Dr Riyaz Bashir, a prominent US-based cardiologist, on September 6.

Dr Bashir, who serves as Professor of Medicine and Director of Vascular and Endovascular Medicine at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine, Temple University in Philadelphia USA, delivered an extensive motivational lecture on the necessity and impact of engineering innovations in Clinical Medicine.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Bashir said, the main objective of higher education is to hone creative minds and produce critical thinkers, "who would evolve into innovators and problem solvers."

While elaborating on 'new device innovation and development,' he said invention is what brings royalty to the nations and that makes them global leaders in contemporary times. "Interdisciplinary approach

and collaborative efforts can lead to path-breaking achievements, as already illustrated by coalescence of engineering and medicine."

Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, who presided over the occasion, talked about his desire to incline students towards innovations by setting up Design Innovation Centre at the university. "It was an attempt from our side to create a learning ecosystem and inspiration for our students to think and create, as innovation and education go hand-in-hand," said Prof Siddiqi.

Registrar IUST, Prof Farooq A Mir, and Dean, School of Engineering and Technology, IUST, Prof A H Moon, also spoke on the occasion and emphasised upon the need of organising such motivational lectures in future as well. The lecture that was followed by question-answer session was attended by various deans, heads, faculty members and students from various departments, especially from the School of Engineering and Technology.

IUST holds orientation program for DIQA officers

SURIA HAMID

The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organised an orientation programme for the nodal officers on July 31 first time after the constitution of Directorate of Internal Quality Assurance (DIQA).

The workshop was aimed to orient the nodal officers of DIQA, IUST, regarding the role and responsibilities of a Quality Assurance cell in varsity. During the workshop, University of Kashmir's DIQA Chief Coordinator, Dr Manzoor A Shah, and his associate interacted with their counterparts at IUST.

Dr Shah highlighted DIQA's role in development and application of quality benchmarks through its academic and administrative activities. "DIQA should facilitate the creation of a learner-centric environment and encourage feedback from students, parents and other stakeholders," he said.

In his presidential remarks, Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq Siddiqi, said, Quality Assurance is a mindset rather than a procedure. "Our university is aiming to excel in quality education, research and extension and I am proud to be the leader of this team," he said.



PHOTO: SURIA HAMID/IUST



IUST likely to be among premier institutions soon: Khurhid Ganai

Lauding the development of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) within a short span of time, Advisor to Governor, Khurshid Ahmed Ganai, stated that the varsity could be among the premium institutes of the country in near future.

Inaugurating a three-day workshop on 5G communication technology that was held at IUST on September 24-26, Advisor Ganai said, if the development work of IUST is carried out at a faster pace, “nothing could stop it from excelling in academics as well as infrastructure.”

The workshop titled ‘5G: An Evolution to Revolution’ that witnessed the participation of hundreds of students was organised by Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering, IUST. The workshop was sponsored by Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP)-III and witnessed the lectures from resource persons from various parts of the country.

Addressing the students as chief guest, Advisor Ganai, stressed upon students to work hard so as to bring laurels to the state and society. “Education does not only transform an individual, but it leads



Courseware for Engineering and Technology students being released during the workshop on 5G communication technology on September 24.

to the betterment of society,” he added.

He also urged the teachers to understand the nuance of teaching. “Unless we improve the quality of teaching, our students cannot improve the standards of learning,” he said.

Speaking on the theme of the workshop, the Advisor highlighted the potential and role of Information Technology and Internet in the effective governance and thereby changing millions of lives.

On the occasion, Advisor Ganai also launched free GATE coaching classes and released a courseware for the students of school of Engineering

and Technology under project TEQIP - III.

TEQIP is Technical Education Quality Improvement programme and its third phase focuses on improving quality and equity in engineering institutions in focus states of North East and Himalayan states. Moreover, a short documentary was screened that portrayed the impact of TEQIP among engineering students at IUST.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi stressed upon the role of 5G technology in health, hygiene, medicine and so on.

Later, Advisor Ganai also interacted with the school children participating in the school outreach programme ‘Science for entertainment’ organised by Design Innovation Centre, IUST, in which the students of Lyceum International School participated.

The workshop was attended by Dean Academic Affairs, IUST, Prof A M Shah, Dean School of Engineering and Technology, IUST, Prof A H Moon, Registrar, IUST, Dr Farooq Ahmed Mir, resource persons from various parts of India, deans of IUST, heads of various departments, research scholars and students.

DoCS, DCSE hold week-long workshop on research trends in IT

Departments of Computer Science (DoCS) in collaboration with Department of Computer Science Engineering (DCSE), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organised a week-long national Faculty Development Programme (FDP) on ‘Research Trends in Information Technology’ from September 25 to 29.

The workshop was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor, IUST, and Chief Patron FDP, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi. Speaking on the inaugural session, Prof Siddiqi urged faculty and researchers to build a strong foundation for pursuing quality research. “Best minds grasp a comprehensive theoretical knowledge of domain because that sprouts the best of ideas. This way, one is able to think out-of-box that eventually leads to innovations and discoveries,” he said.

Deliberations on key themes like machine learning, soft computing, data science, artificial intelligence, image processing and recognition,

cognitive science, computational complexity, data mining, deep learning, Natural Language Processing (NLP) and communication were held during various technical sessions conducted by renowned experts.

During the valedictory session, Professor IIT Roorkee, Dr Partha Pratim Roy, who was the guest of honour, described the workshop as a successful framework, “as it helped participants understand the conceptual base during the theoretical sessions and reinforce their learning through programming exercises.”

Applauding the efforts of IUST, key expert for the workshop, Professor IIT Allahabad, Dr Uma Shanker Tiwary, said, IUST was going in the right direction toward educational excellence. “I am particularly impressed by the enthusiasm of faculty here and I am looking forward to collaborative research ventures in my areas of expertise, particularly regarding Kashmiri language.”

SMMCNT conducts awareness program on World Hepatitis Day

To mark the World Hepatitis Day, the Syed Mantaqi Memorial College of Nursing and Medical Technology (SMMCNT)—a constituent college of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST)—organised a training programme for health care providers and community awareness programme at Sub-district Hospital Bijbihara and District Hospital Anantnag, and SKIMS Medical College Bemina, respectively, on July 28.

“The main aim of the programme was to create awareness about hepatitis among Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), dental technicians, health workers and general public,” said Asmat Parveen In charge Principal, SMMCNT. She added that globally 325 million people are suffering from hepatitis and 300 million among them are unaware of it. This year, the day was celebrated under the theme ‘Eliminate Hepatitis’.

Around 40 ASHAs participated in the programme. The eminent speak-

ers of the programme were gastroenterologists, Dr Muhammad Shafi and Dr Mashkoor Beigh. The speech was followed by a role play prepared by B.Sc Nursing students, in which people were given a message about the prevention of hepatitis. Later, health care providers and common people interacted with experts and got their queries answered regarding hepatitis.

SMMCNT celebrates maiden annual day

Syed Mantaqi Memorial College of Nursing and Medical Technology (SMMCNT) celebrated its maiden Annual Day on World Heart Day on September 28 at IUST campus. The Annual Day was celebrated along with the inauguration of two-day national workshop on ‘Innovative Teaching Strategies in Nursing.’

Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, who was the chief guest, released first Annual Day 2018 ‘Souvenir’. Noted cardiologist, Dr Khurshid Aslam, was guest of honour during on the occasion.



National workshop on Food Safety held at IUST

Department of Food Technology, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), under TEQIP-III, organised two-day National Workshop on 'Food Safety: Current Scenario and Future challenges' on September 18-19.

The workshop aimed to sensitize the participants about the food safety issues prevalent in the state. It also drew attention to safety management systems to be adopted for prevention from food-borne diseases.

The two-day deliberations comprised of three technical sessions, in which various aspects of food safety were discussed, like contaminants and hazards arising from various sources at critical points in the food chain. During student poster session, food safety issues like food adulteration, junk foods, personal hygiene, etc., were highlighted,



Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, felicitating Commissioner Food Safety, J&K, Dr Abdul Kabir Dar on September 19.

which grabbed the attention of the visitors.

Vice-Chancellor IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, was chief guest on the occasion, while Commissioner Food Safety, J&K, Dr Abdul Kabir Dar, was the guest of honour. The workshop was attended by the members from food industry, food safety

officers, students and faculty members. Among the prominent guest speakers were Prof Rekha Singhal from Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai, Prof H R Naik, Head Food Science and Technology SKUAST-K, Rashid Hussain, Scientist BARC Zakura, Sona Sharma from Quality Council of India, Pravin Jagtap, Plant Manager, US-based company, Schreiber Dynamix, Dr Tawheed Amin, Food Safety Officer and Prof M A Pal, Head, Live-stock Product Technology, SKUAST-K.

During the valedictory session, Prof A M Shah, Dean Academic Affairs, IUST, Prof A H Moon, Dean School of Engineering and Technology, IUST, Prof Farooq Ahmad Mir, Registrar IUST, and Syed Reyaz Rufai, Chief Librarian, IUST, shared their experiences vis-à-vis food safety aspects and distributed awards and certificates among the participants.

DJMC students interact with senior journalist

IQRA QADRI/ SURIA HAMID

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organised an interactive session for its students with Nazim Nazir, Associate Editor of *Tameel-e-Irshad* on July 17.

Stating that journalism in Kashmir is one of the "most difficult professions" owing to the prevailing political situation, Nazir said, one has to be extremely professional about the newsroom practices. "A journalist ought to adhere to the ethics of journalism, and as an editor, the responsibility increases many folds. We just cannot afford to be biased," he said.

Nazir dealt with technical requirements of news writing, layout designing, editorial writing and newspaper advertising in an elaborate manner while giving tips to the students.

While tracing the journey of Urdu press in Kashmir, Nazir said, Urdu journalism has kept the Urdu language alive in Kashmir.

Coordinator of the session, Monisa Qadri, Sr Assistant Professor, DJMC, said Urdu Journalism remains an unexplored field for journalism students even though it is not saturated as yet. "Considering this, IUST offers a course in Urdu journalism."

IUST organises 3-day faculty dev workshop

With an aim to provide a scholarly framework for the development of teaching and research expertise among faculty members, Department of Management Studies, Islamic University of Science and Technology, organised a three-day Faculty Development Workshop on 'A Roadmap to Growth of Teaching, Learning and Research'. The workshop was organised in association with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee, under the aegis of Capacity Development Cell, Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP) III on July 15-17.

During the inaugural session, Workshop Director and Head, School of Business Studies, Dr Asif Fazili, said, the workshop focussed on faculty members, who wanted to gain a 360-degree view of their

career within the academia including learner and teacher-related competencies. "The workshop has been designed accordingly and includes core competency-building thematic areas covered by the best in the industry."

On the occasion, Project Coordinator TEQIP-III and Dean School of Technology, IUST, Prof A H Moon expressed his satisfaction over the format and design of the workshop.

The three-day workshop included sessions on 'Academic Leadership- Networking and Mentoring,' 'Research and Publications,' 'Project Development' 'Effective teaching,' and so on. The workshop was attended by faculty members from various schools, who were provided with reference materials, articles, papers, chapters and cases relevant to the sessions.

DJMC pays visit to photo-exhibition

The students and faculty of Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), visited the photo-exhibition by Valley's prominent photographer, Mukhtar Ahmad, at Srinagar Club on September 22.

While discussing his photographs, Ahmad asked the students to learn the techniques of photography properly. "A photographer must be able to communicate his idea effectively to the viewers, which has always been the driving force for me," he said.

The students also interacted with noted landscape photographer, Ashok Dilwali, also known as "The Himalayan Man." He instructed them to learn the 'art' and 'craft' of photography, so that they could prosper in the field. "You must keep on learning as much as



possible for you and be your honest critic," he said.

The visit and interaction was organised by Sr. Assistant Professor, DJMC, Monisa Qadri. The students were also accompanied by Head, DJMC, Dr Ruheela Hassan.

ASSETS OF IUST

Food Tech Deptt

Ensuring food safety, quality HR

IQRA QADRI/ TABASUM GULL

To produce quality human resource so as to meet the needs of the food industry as well as academia in Kashmir, the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) established the department of Food Technology in 2006.

The department offers four-year bachelor's course (B.Tech) and two-year master's course (M.Tech) in Food Technology. Earlier the department would offer M.Sc in Food Technology that was replaced by M.Tech in Food Technology in 2015. The department is also offering PhD programme beginning this year.

As per the faculty members, the department has always aimed to motivate and enable students "to opt for higher levels of learning in this field."

"This aim could only be achieved with the help of faculty supported by the university administration. Within a short span, IUST has developed first-class infrastructure in terms of Food Processing and Training Centers, laboratories and high quality classrooms," says Er. Tariq Ahmad, Senior As-

sistant Professor, Food Tech department.

He adds that besides providing quality man-power, the department has also been at the forefront of disseminating information about food safety and standards "for the benefit of the community."



A student performing experiment in the Food Technology lab. PHOTO: MUSLIM RASHID/IUST

The department comprises 17 faculty members, 24 staff members and three labour workers. The intake capacity of B.Tech course is 60, whereas that of M.Tech is 10.

The B.Tech course is designed in a way that first two semesters focus on areas of food processing,

food preservation, food chemistry and human nutrition. In the later stage, the emphasis shifts to food technology, design, promotion and marketing. The M.Tech course deals with research part.

The department sends students to the top multinational companies, like Pepsico, Coca-Cola, Danon Nutritia, Schreiber Dynamix, Nestle, Hatson Agro, etc.

"We have developed a strong linkage with these companies so that our students will get the best practical exposure about manufacturing," says Dr Aamir Hussain Dar, In charge, Training and Placement, Food Tech department.

The students also work in companies like Danone Nutritia, Al-Marai (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), Nestle and Coca-Cola. Some students are placed in Kashmir-based companies like Kanwal, Rehmat, Snowcap and Khyber.

In their last semester, the B.Tech students are taken for industrial exposure in and outside Kashmir. "This is an essential part of the course, wherein we are supposed to attend at least three months industrial training, mostly from March to June," students say.

CAMPUS TALENT

IUST girl's tribute to late father

FARHAT JAHAN

The immense love for nature, environment and her late father made a young girl turn into a poetess. In praise of nature, she penned down a book, 'A Walk With Nature', which is a collection of 135 poems.

Lubna Binti Nayeem, who is pursuing Masters in English at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora, developed interest in writing when she was child and wrote her first poem in 2013. The poem titled 'A tribute to my eternalized love' is Lubna's tribute to her father, who too was a poet.

Lubna believes that she has inherited her writing skills from her father, (late) Ghulam Muhammad Parray, who had written two books—one in Urdu, 'Lahu Rang Wadiyan' and the other in Kashmiri, 'Yaad Pamei Be'. His sobriquet was Nayeem Siddique.

"My father was a religious poet. After his death, I thought now it is my responsibility to take his mission of writing forward," she shares.

Lubna was barely six when her father passed away. "My role model is my Dad, even though I have never talked to him. But when I read his poetry, I feel as if I am



LUBNA BINTI NAYEEM

talking to him," she says.

Hailing from Dawlatpora, Kreeri Bara-mulla, Lubna has done her Bachelors in Science from Government Degree College, Sopore, in 2017. She got her book published in 2015.

"I am sure my writings about nature would help the future generations understand the significance of Mother Nature," she deems.

Lubna has come across several challenges in making her dream a reality, "but when there is passion and dedication, no obstacle can stop you."

Talking to *The Echo*, Lubna shares a message for the budding writers. "You should never conceal your talent and should always pursue your career in the field of your interest."



- The infrastructure of the health centre needs to be restructured. We see patients in huts, so the centre should be shifted to a concrete building. Plus, the rush of students and staff is increasing day by day, therefore, we need to have two more doctors including a male doctor. Besides, there should be a laboratory, where urine and haemoglobin tests could be done.

Dr Zahid Rasool,
Medical Consultant, IUST Health Centre

- Residential quarters should be constructed in the varsity for faculty members, who want to stay back after 5 pm so to make it a 24x7 university. This will also help them focus on their research, which is ultimately beneficial for the university. Besides, an indoor sports complex should be made inside the campus.

Asim Ashai, Assistant Professor,
Electronics and Communication

- The road connectivity between university and girls' hostel needs to be improved and the road should be macadamized, so as to do away with dust that we have to pass through every day.

Farhat Jahan, Student,
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

- There must be a student union in the university that can help resolve the issues of students.

Taiba, Student,
B.Tech, Electronics and Communication

- There is a need to have a grievance cell, a staff guest house, a recreational centre, gymnasium, sports grounds and theatre for dramas and cultural activities in the university.

Nayeem-ul-Haq,
Assistant Professor, Department of English

- The huts where classes take place are lacking on the security front, so these classes should be held in buildings.

Shahid Nabi,
Student, B.Tech Computer Science

● As told to Shaheen Amin

A Glimpse of Leh, Ladakh

Known for the vista of its barren mountains, the city of Leh is attracting tourists from every nook and corner. The erstwhile capital of Himalayan Kingdom of Ladakh, Leh is now known for its trekking areas and Buddhist monasteries. Since 1974, when Ladakh region began welcoming its tourists, Leh has become a bustling tourist city, with large numbers of Kashmiri traders selling goods to domestic and foreign travellers. The natural splendour of the city, however, has been preserved.



The Shey Palace is situated some 16 kilometres from the Leh city. The palace, which houses a huge copper-gold gilded statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, used to be the summer retreat of the royal families of Ladakh. The statue is reckoned to be the second largest Buddha statue in Ladakh. Shey Monastery is believed to have been built in 1655 by Deldon Namgyal, in the memory of his father, Singay Namgyal.



The historical Shah-e-Hamadan (RA) Mosque was established in 1382 and is revered by the Muslim community in Ladakh. The mosque is situated 15 kilometres from Leh city. Even during the 2010 devastating floods, the mosque remained unaffected, which locals deem as something divine.



Shanti Stupa is a white-dome structure dedicated to Buddhism. Located on the hilltop of Chamspa in Leh, it is one of the major tourist attractions of Ladakh. The stupa is perched at an elevation of 4,267 meters and offers a breathtaking view of the Himalayan ranges that surround this structure. The Shanti Stupa is constructed on two levels. The first level houses the gold embellished statue of the Buddha and the Dharmachakra. The second level of the stupa depicts the life and death of Buddha.



Famous after the Aamir Khan's blockbuster movie, *Three Idiots*, Druk Padma Karpo School, also known as Druk White Lotus School, was conferred as one of the most beautiful schools in the world by *BBC London* in 2016. The clean and eco-friendly structures of the school are designed to withstand seismic disturbances. Tourists are allowed to visit the school for 15-20 minutes along with a guide.



The Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre in Leh was founded by Venerable Bhikku Sanghasena in 1986. Located 12 kilometres from Leh city, the centre includes Mahabodhi School, hostels for girls and boys, Mahabodhi Jetavana Monastery, Mahabodhi nunnery, Mahabodhi old age home and some other institutions.



The Main Market of Leh, which is the busiest part of this region, offers all the specialities of Ladakh region. Numerous shops specializing in traditional handicrafts and colourful artifacts could be seen in the market. The shops and business establishments are mostly run by women.

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY UFAQ FATIMA