



# The Echo



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## ROHAN POSH: A FESTIVAL TO 'SOOTHE' DEPARTED SOULS

Villagers sprinkle flowers, rice on graves, hold special prayers for deceased



PHOTO: SAMREENA NAZIR/IUST

A villager distributing *chapattis* among children on the eve of *Rohan Posh* at Muniwara village in Anantnag.

### SAMREENA NAZIR

Marquees are for celebrations and graveyards for mourning. This has been a routine everywhere since ages. However, this village in South Kashmir holds an annual festival on its graveyard.

Almost three kilometers from the main town Anantnag lies Muniwara village, where the villagers celebrate '*Rohan Posh*' festival in the graveyard. The festival is observed on any selected day during the spring season.

Surrounded by a crowd of children, a villager Abdul Raheem, 65, holding a wicker basket full of *chapattis* (whole-meal bread) with his shivering hands, walks slowly towards the grave of his late son, Hamid. While reciting prayers, Raheem distributes the *chapattis*—that are considered sacred by villagers—among the cheerful children around him, who are aware of the rituals of *Rohan Posh*.

'*Rohan Posh*' literally means flowering the souls. It is being practiced in South Kashmir since ancient

times and has been passing on from one generation to another. Every year during the spring season, flowers of diverse kinds and colours along with rice are placed over the graves. It is believed that as birds eat rice grains from the graves, it soothes the departed souls. The villagers also hold special prayers for their deceased family members on this day.

Nilofar, 35, a mother of two, is engaged in sweeping the courtyard of her modest house after cleaning every corner of her kitchen. She prepares the *chapattis* at home and accompanies her eight-year-old son to the graveyard. Carrying her two and a half-year-old daughter in her lap, she holds her son's hand, who is carrying *chapattis* in a container to distribute on the grave of his father. Nilofar's husband, Asif, had died five months back during a snow avalanche at Banihal.

"My children keep inquiring about their late father. They ask me when he will return. Today I told them that these preparations are for him only," opines Nilofar. "Both are excited and are perhaps expecting to see their father. I have no idea as to how to console them at evening," she says, while wiping her tears.

Tahira, 30, has come to her parental home at Muniwara to carry out the *Rohan Posh* ceremony of her mother, who had died four years back.

"I reside at Tral and have come here especially to attend the *Rohan Posh* ceremony of my mother. It gives one a sense of contentment when they dedicate a whole day to their loved ones who are no more," shares Tahira, while holding a tray full of rose petals.

Ghulam Rasool, 70, a retired school teacher, while pointing towards the graveyard, rues that the tradition of *Rohan Posh* is gradually fading away. "Nowadays, not many people have time to remember their dead family members. Many children don't know where their ancestors are laid to rest. Earlier, these graveyards would remain crowded on this day, but now not many people respect such traditions," he laments.

Meanwhile, a group of villagers lead by the *Imam-e-Masjid* (one who leads prayers in Mosque) enter the graveyard holding baskets full of *chapattis* to distribute them among the children. After distribution, people move towards the white lilies, beneath which their loved ones are laid to rest.



Girls holding trays with rose petals to shower over the graves.  
PHOTO: SAMREENA NAZIR/IUST

# Poplar pollens: Yearly menace in Kashmir

FARHAT JAHAN

With rise in mercury in Kashmir region, white tufts like snowballs can be seen everywhere across the Valley. These white tufts are produced by female Poplar trees—Russian Poplars—during the pollination. They get dispersed by the wind, giving rise to health issues among people besides creating air pollution.

The white tufts of cotton carrying pollen enter the body through nose and mouth, and cause various ailments. “Pollens can cause hay fever, nasal congestion, soar throat and respiratory diseases,” says Dr Abdul Rashid at Sub District Hospital (SDH) Sopore. “There is often a rise in the number of patients during this season. Those who already suffer from respiratory diseases like asthma, pneumonia and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) are more prone to the infection,” he warns.

The white tufts also spread certain bacterial and fungal infections that lead to skin rashes. “And if they come in contact with eyes, they can cause conjunctivitis, watering of eyes, irritation and pain. A



FILE PIC

prolonged exposure to pollens can lead to serious eye diseases,” says Dr Ayaz, an ophthalmologist at SDH Sopore.

The Poplar plants, locally known as ‘Rusi Phras’ and botanically ‘Populus’ belong to the plant family, *Salicaceae*. According to an estimate, there are two crore Poplar female trees across the Valley. “Only female Poplar trees produce these white cotton tufts, which causes air pollution. This can be controlled by lopping the branches before the female Poplars enter the reproductive years,” says Dr Arshid Maqbool, Head, Department of Forestry, Sheri-Kashmir University of Agricultural Science and Technology.

Since Poplar trees are one of the major sources

“ POLLENS CAN CAUSE HAY FEVER, NASAL CONGESTION, SOAR THROAT AND RESPIRATORY DISEASES ”

of livelihood in villages, at least 1,40,90070 Poplar trees are planted in rural areas and 8,04850 in the urban areas. “Around 30 million cubic feet of Timber is produced from Poplars annually and its turnover is more than Rs 600 crore, therefore people are against the ban on Poplars,” divulge officials at Social Forestry Department.

## When driver’s family takes backseat in life

IRAM NAAZ

When he leaves for his work in morning, he kisses the forehead of his sleeping daughter. After spending a tiresome day at work, he returns home only to find his daughter sleeping again.

Bashir Ahmad Rather, 35, who is a bus driver at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), lives in a rented accommodation at Harwan area in the outskirts of Srinagar city. He calls his wife numerous times a day inquiring about the safety of his family as they do not belong to this place.

For Rather, wee hours are the only time when he leaves and returns home. As a result, he hardly gets to spend time with his three-year-old daughter, Qurat-ul-Ain—his lone child—whom he has recently got admitted in nursery class at Gousia Public School, Shalimar. “Most of my time is spent outside the home, which is taking toll on my family life,” rues Rather.

Rather is not the only one to face such situation. Other bus drivers of IUST too have a similar story to share. They leave their homes much before the students and staff of the university in the morn-

ing, and return home quite late in the evening. Consequently, their personal life takes a backseat.

“It is only during holidays I get to spend some time with my family. My personal life has suffered a great



Bashir Ahmad Rather along with his family at their rented accommodation at Harwan. PHOTO: SHAH UMAR/IUST

deal because of my job timings,” says Saleem Malik, a bus driver, who is a Commerce graduate.

Another driver, Rayees Ahmad, says he finds it hard to take care of his family, especially his old parents. “I leave home very early in the morning even without paying regards to my parents. Then

this feeling that I am not a good son haunts me for entire day, especially when I know they need me more in this stage of life,” he laments.

There are other hardships as well these drivers have to come across every day. They demand a hike in their wages besides a proper space to rest during the day.

Rather earns Rs 9,000 per month, of which he pays Rs 1,500 for the parking space and Rs 2,000 as the house rent. “It is very difficult for me to meet the basic requirements of my family with no savings left by the end of the month,” he says.

Looking at his daughter with tearful eyes, Rather says he wishes to build a small house for his family, where they can live happily. “Like any other father, I want to give my daughter all happiness that I have not been able to.” Rather works on weekends also so as to support his family.

Even though the drivers are faced with everyday challenges, they feel proud to belong to this profession. “Problems are there in everyone’s life and we have to face them. It is our duty to ensure safe journey of our passengers each day and we are proud to do so,” says Abid Ahmad Bhat, an IUST driver.

## STUDENTS' TRIUMPHS

# MBA students hold exhibition of ladies' garments

**SAMREENA NAZIR**

**A** two-day exhibition-cum-sale of ladies' garments was held at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on May 29-30. The exhibition was organised by three students from IUST's Business School.

The exhibition that themed 'Shoobwun ti Sajhwun' featured a variety of garments like designer dresses, casuals, bridal and party wear suits and so on. It attracted a good number of customers amongst IUST staffers as well as students.

The girls who owned the stalls included Jasira Nabi, Farishta Akbar and Daniyah Naqshbandi, who are in the final semester of their course. Aware of job struggles, the trio aspires to start their own business rather than applying for jobs. "Business is in our blood," shares Jasira, who owns an online venture, 'iamyourlittle-shop'—a page on Instagram and Facebook—for past one year. Farshita and Daniyah are the owners of 'Outlook Fashion,' which is also an online venture.

Being in the same batch, the girls became friends after understanding each other's interests. They were conscious that online dealings lacked the much-needed interaction with customers. This is how they planned to start a venture together.

The girls were guided by their mentor and Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Dr Parvaiz Mir, who gave them the idea to hold an exhibition within the campus. IUST's Entrepreneurship Development Cell also supported these budding entrepreneurs in organising the exhibition.



PHOTO: ISHFAQ MAJEED/IUST  
MBA students selling garments during an exhibition organised by them at IUST on May 29.

“FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS WITH CUSTOMERS ARE USEFUL IN MOTIVATING AND SATISFYING THEM IN A BETTER WAY”

“The main aim of setting up the stall in the campus was to learn marketing skills. Unlike in online media, here we deal with the real customers,” says Daniyah.

“Face-to-face interactions with customers are useful in motivating and satisfying them in a better way,” stresses Farishta, while attending student customers with a smile.

The girls opine that they have received a positive response from students as well faculty. “It has been a great learning experience and has strengthened our plans of entrepreneurship.”

## IUST launches yet another student start-up

**T**he Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC) of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) launched yet another student entrepreneurial venture under the brand name 'Sunshine Washing Centre' in IUST's girls hostel on April 9.

The venture—an initiative by an MBA student, Rafiya Farooq—was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Siddiqi said such start-ups create a sense of future security among the youth. “There is a need to create a proper mentoring team by the EDC, which would encourage young entrepreneurs and develop confidence in them,” he said, adding that the students should focus on the areas of human consumption.

Chairperson EDC, Dr Parvaiz Ahmad Mir, said their next step with regard to 'Sunshine Washing Centre' is to register it as a private company and then apply for seed capital start-up grant from the state government, “and thus turn this start-up into a full-fledged unit.”

“EDC aims to attract students towards entrepreneurship and boost their willpower to take risks so as to convert them into opportunities,” he said.

“EDC AIMS TO ATTRACT STUDENTS TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BOOST THEIR WILLPOWER TO TAKE RISKS SO AS TO CONVERT THEM INTO OPPORTUNITIES”

The start-up entrepreneur, Rafiya, has been staying in girls' hostel for a long time. “I have seen students facing a lot of problems in washing their clothes. This is how the idea of starting Sunshine Washing Centre struck my mind,” she said, adding that the EDC helped her in accomplishing her dream.

Among others present at the inauguration were Dean School of Technology, Prof A H Moon, Dean School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prof Abdul Salam Bhat, Head department of Management Studies, Dr Asif Fazili, members of EDC—Monisa Qadri, Dr Abid Ahmad Shalla and Dr Basharat Nabi—and other faculty members and students of IUST.

## 60 IUST students qualify GATE 2019

**O**ver 60 students of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) from different branches of engineering have qualified GATE-2019 examination. This is in contrast to 20 students, who had qualified GATE-2018.

Among the qualifiers, Amir Yaseen and Wahid Gulzar Bhat have secured All India Rank 126 and 152 in computer science engineering branch.

Meanwhile, Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, lauded the qualifiers “for bringing laurels to IUST.” Dean School of Engineering and Technology and Project coordinator TEQIP-III, Prof A H Moon, also congratulated the students.



## IUST can create knowledge economy: DC Pulwama

### Inaugurates Young Achievers event at varsity

Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah, said Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) was a strong platform to create knowledge economy. After inaugurating the 'Young Achievers' event organised by IUST on March 19, Dr Shah said the university should strive to emerge as "an industry of knowledge for future generations."

"IUST should not only concentrate on preparing the students for job market, but also focus on promoting meaningful learning within the campus," he suggested.

The event was inaugurated in presence of Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, and other officers of the university administration. It witnessed a huge participation of students from various streams.

The DC advised the students to adjust to the changing trends in higher education. "This is your prime time to work towards academic excel-



Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah, inaugurating the 'Young Achievers' event at Islamic University of Science and Technology on March 19.

IUST PHOTO

IUST SHOULD NOT ONLY CONCENTRATE ON PREPARING THE STUDENTS FOR JOB MARKET, BUT ALSO FOCUS ON PROMOTING MEANINGFUL LEARNING

ents for succeeding in life.

He stressed upon the faculty and students to make IUST a brand and exhibit an "unrelenting devotion" to make it an institute of eminence.

Later, the DC presented laptops to faculty members under Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP), which aims at improving quality and equity in engineering institutions in North East and Himalayan states.

lence and become more competitive to make global contributions," he told students, adding that hard work and will power are the only essential ingredi-

## IUST celebrates World Book Day

The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) celebrated the World Book and Copyright Day on April 25. The day-long event was organised by the University Library.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi underlined various benefits of book reading for health. He suggested that people should devote more time to reading in order to stay safe from the health issues like Dementia. "The real pleasure comes from the books," he stressed.

Earlier, welcoming the guests, IUST Registrar and University Librarian, Syed Reyaz Rufai, gave an insight of the importance of books. Deliberating upon the role and significance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in libraries, he presented a brief report about the new technological implementations in the upcoming University Library building.

The event witnessed several lectures from many dignitaries. Guest of honour on the occasion, Justice (Retd) B A Kirmani, delivered a speech on the lack of reading habits among people and the "worrysome" rise of smart phone usage.

Noted columnist, Z G Muhammad, dealt

at length with the copyright and royalty issues in J&K with emphasis on the lack of good publishing houses in J&K. Dean Academics IUST, Prof A M Shah, delivered a lecture on the copyright issues along with the usage of e-resources.



IUST PHOTO

In the second session, Prof A S Bhat, Dean, Humanities and Social Sciences, IUST, delivered a lecture on book reading. He expressed his concern over the lack of reading habits amongst people, especially youth of the Valley. Dr Sumeer Gul, Senior Assistant Professor, Department of Library and Information Sciences, University of Kashmir, gave a detailed presentation on the latest publishing and copyright issues.

The session concluded with a quiz programme conducted by Monisa Qadri, Senior Assistant Professor, about bestselling books and authors, followed by award to the most frequent users of the library.

## IUST holds faculty development program

A week-long Faculty Development Programme (FDP) was held at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) from February 14 to 21. The programme titled 'Emerging Trends in Physical, Chemical and Mathematical Sciences' was organised by School of Sciences, IUST.

The objective of the programme was to emphasise the significance of teaching and research in basic sciences with an interdisciplinary approach. It also focused on understanding the difficulties students face in understanding the fundamentals of Science subjects.

The FDP was attended by over 40 faculty members from Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and other allied subjects of Science belonging to various colleges and universities of the Valley.

In his inaugural address, Head, Department of Physics, IUST, Farooq Hussain Bhat delved into the historical perspective and significance of FDP in the contemporary times.

"The college and university faculty members are required to be successful investigators, productive researchers as well as effective teachers. It requires them to attain new knowledge and diverse skills. This programme is focused on that very demand," he said.

Introducing the programme, Prof G M Rather, Dean School of Sciences, IUST, said the purpose of FDP was to highlight the recent developments in three basic fields of Science, viz., Physical, Chemical and Mathematical Sciences.

The resource persons consisted of both young and experienced researchers and professors from within the Valley as well as outside. Prof Manzoor A Malik from Department of Physics, University of Kashmir, was the guest of Honour for the inaugural session.



## IUST holds plantation drive; 1,000 saplings planted

**W**ith the aim to increase the green cover in the campus, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organised a plantation drive in collaboration with Department of Social Forestry, Pulwama, on April 2.

Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi inaugurated the drive, during which more than 1,000 saplings of Conifer, Chinar and male Poplar trees were planted. University officers, faculty members and students also participated in the drive.

Prof Siddiqi encouraged the students, faculty and staff members to actively participate in such events. Interacting with students, the VC said plantation drives should not be limited to plantation of saplings only. "Instead, all efforts should be made to ensure the proper survival and growth of the plants," he said.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Awantipora, Tehsildar, Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Awantipora and other officials of the district administration were also present on the occasion.



Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi planting a sapling during plantation drive in campus on April 2. IUST PHOTO

## IUST organises research methodology course



IUST PHOTO

**A** week-long research methodology course in Social Sciences was held at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) from June 11 to 15. The course was jointly organised by Rinchen Shah Centre for West Himalayan Cultures and Centre for International Relations, IUST, in collaboration with the Anthropological Survey of India.

The main objective of the workshop was to equip research scholars and faculty with the requisite skills to conduct quality research that is relevant to the society. The workshop was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi. He stressed on the need to conduct socially relevant research in the field of Social Sciences.

Dean School of Humanities and Social Sciences, IUST, Prof Abdul Salam Bhat, who was guest of honour on the occasion, stressed that research should be socially relevant as well as of high quality.

## Crispino Nunes delivers lecture to Journalism students

SHAH UMAR

**N**oted anchor and Senior Associate Producer, *News X*, Crispino Nunes, delivered a guest lecture to Journalism students on June 14. The lecture was organised by the department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST).

The lecture revolved around how digital media is changing the face of Indian mainstream media. Nunes deliberated on how social media has been injected into the lives of the audiences, and the

role social media plays in contemporary times.

"Television channels cannot ignore social media because its impact is greater than any other medium, be it Television itself or newspapers," he said.

He encouraged media students to contribute their content to digital media by way of writing blogs besides contributing to national and international mainstream news organisations. "In fact, your own social media accounts like *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *YouTube* or *Instagram* can help you create your own content, for social media is accessible to almost all."

## IUST hosts basketball tourney

**T**he Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) organised first Syed Mantaqi (RA) Invitation Basketball Tournament on May 2 at the varsity's basketball court. Teams from various colleges and universities of the Valley participated in the tournament. The objective of the tournament was to surface the talented players of basketball game and to groom them for national and

international competitions.

The first match was played between SSM College and NIT Srinagar, in which NIT defeated the SSM by 28-15 points. Vice Chancellor IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi, who was chief guest of the tournament, accompanied by Syed Reyaz Rufai, Registrar IUST—the guest of honour—gave flick to the match between specially-abled wheelchair basketball team of Kashmir to boost their confidence level.

## ASSETS OF IUST

## Arabic deptt strives to boost job prospects of students

SANA HAMID

With an increase in the demand for Arabic knowing people, their employability prospects globally have also improved. Keeping this in view, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) established the Department of Arabic Language and Literature in 2006.

The department, which is one of the pioneer departments of the varsity, offers post-graduate and PhD courses in Arabic language. The first PG batch of the department comprised of 15 students. "It has been a beautiful journey since the inception of the department. The intake capacity has now increased to 45," says Dr Abdul Majid Andrabi, Head, Arabic department.

"We aim to produce scholars, who are competent enough to cater to the emerging needs in this field, which has tremendous employment opportunities within as well as outside the country," he adds.

The department has been playing a vital role in preserving and promotion of the Arabic language, which is spoken by one seventh of the world's pop-

ulation. "It is very important to understand the Arabic language nowadays, since it can enhance one's ability to work and interact effectively in Arabic speaking countries," says Dr Irshad Ahmad



PHOTO: BABA NADEEM/IUST

Mir, Assistant Professor, Arabic department, who teaches short stories, novels and drama in Arabic language.

The alumni of the department are currently working in various companies of national and

“ WE AIM TO PRODUCE SCHOLARS, WHO ARE COMPETENT ENOUGH TO CATER TO EMERGING NEEDS IN THIS FIELD, WHICH HAS TREMENDOUS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ”

international repute, whereas many are pursuing research in foreign universities.

"This department has laid the foundation of my career. After earning my Master's degree from here, I went to Tehran for further studies," says Adil, an alumnus of the department.

Durdana Muhammad, a student, says, it was her dream to learn Arabic language and pursue the same as career. "Now my dream is to help preserve Arabic language in Kashmir and I will work hard in this direction."

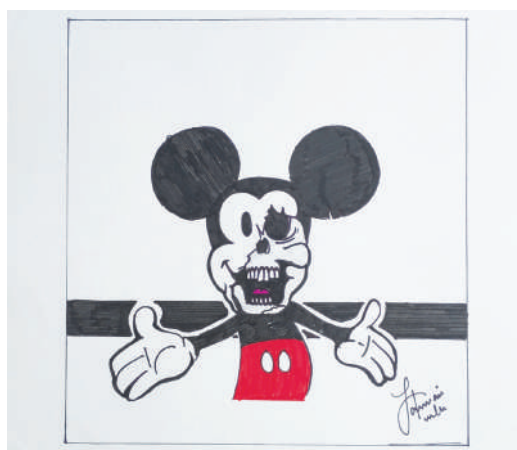
The department, which has six faculty members, has been organising national and international conferences regularly. It has also been contributing in spreading the religious awareness.

### CAMPUS TALENT

## Engineering student keeps the artist in him alive



HANAN JAVAID QURESHI



HANAN'S ART WORK

BABA NADEEM

When all his school mates would enjoy outdoor games, he would silently sit in a corner of the playground. He would draw his thoughts on his canvas book under the shadow of a Chinar tree. As he grew up to take up engineering as career, the mechanical nature of technology could never suppress his love for the art.

Hanan Javaid Qureshi, who is pursuing his fourth year in B.Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering from Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), had kept his talent hidden as a student in Burn Hall School, Srinagar. He has always been passionate about sketching, graffiti, artistic drawings, paintings, illustrations and photography.

Even though Hanan was a born artist, he opted for Science stream after passing his school under family pressure. "However, I somehow managed to keep the artist inside me always alive," shares Hanan, adding that it is never easy to excel in a society where one faces more criticism than appreciation for their work, "but I never gave up."

This young artist has been inspired by

Bankasy (graffiti artist), Saima Hussain Mir (graphic designer) and Moisa Shafeeq (painter). He had also been inclined towards photography, however landed into engineering instead.

Hanan displays and promotes his art mostly through social media. He participated in 'Kasheer 2019'—a cultural event that was held recently at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, in April.

Hanan is concerned about the lack of facilities for budding artists in Kashmir. "Being an artist, I wish the youth here could have the proper exposure as well as facilities where they can brush up their talent," he suggests. "Kashmir is the only place where we lack a proper art school," he laments. "Even the universities here do not have departments for the art and culture."

“ THE YOUTH SHOULD HAVE THE PROPER EXPOSURE AS WELL AS FACILITIES WHERE THEY CAN BRUSH UP THEIR TALENT ”

## Valley gets first plastic crates production unit

SHAH UMAR

When he was offered a job of his dreams, he rejected it to serve his people. A mechanical engineer from the United States, Zia Ashai instead decided to manage his father's business in Kashmir and take it to the level where it is today.

Almost eight kilometers from Lal Chowk area in Srinagar city, one reaches the industrial estate of Shalteng, where various industrial units are located. Amid the noise of machinery, Zia is instructing his workers at his factory, Supertherm—popularly known for manufacturing kerosene oil *bukharis*. This year, Supertherm has become the first factory in Kashmir to produce plastic



Plastic injection moulding machine in Supertherm factory at Shalteng industrial estate.

PHOTO: SHAH UMAR/IUST

“ THIS AREA HAD REMAINED UNEXPLORED IN KASHMIR TILL NOW, OTHERWISE IT HAS AN ESTABLISHED BUSINESS WORTH CRORES OF RUPEES OUTSIDE ”

fruit crates.

“We have added a plastic injection moulding machine to our factory and thus diversified into the manufacture of plastic fruit crates, which is the first of its kind production in the Valley,” opines Zia Ashai, Managing Director, Supertherm.

The unit procures the raw material for plastic crates from outside the state and sells the products to cold store owners, fruit growers and orchardists.

“This area had remained unex-

plored in Kashmir till now, otherwise it has an established business worth crores of rupees outside,” divulges Ashai.

Supertherm was established in 1988 by Ashai's father, Dr Farooq, to manufacture the kerosene *bukharis* by the name of Heat King. Afterwards, Supertherm began manufacturing heating equipments of all kinds. After his father's death, Ashai gave his blood and sweat to his father's business.

Later, he tried his luck in other

manufacturing units as well as software export business. He diversified into manufacturing pre-fabricated insulated huts, modular kitchens and wardrobes, central heating system (hot water boilers) for hotels and so on.

Supertherm has generated employment to scores of youth in Kashmir. “Apart from earning livelihood, we also learn new things and skills here,” shares Wasim, 26, an MBA pass-out, who is working as sales manager at Supertherm.



● There is a need to build stationary shops inside the campus, for we often have to move outside the campus even for buying a pen.

Faiza,  
B.Sc student

● Five departments of School of Humanities currently function in one building, which, as a result, always remains over-crowded. The departments should be shifted to separate buildings with good infrastructure.

Samreena Nazir,  
Journalism and Mass Communication student

● There should be a proper playground in the university for students to play cricket, football, volleyball, tennis and other sports.

Muhammad Dimal Shah,  
B.Tech Mechanical Engineering student

● Smart class-rooms should be introduced in the university, so that we are able to understand the subjects in a more effective manner.

Arsheya,  
B.Sc student

● We spend more than three hours daily travelling in university bus. So, the university should reduce the number of working hours by an hour or two.

Syed Henna Nazir,  
MBA student

● Air conditioners should be installed in classrooms for the comfortable learning of the students.

Kamran Matoo,  
B.Tech Electrical Engineering student

AS TOLD TO BABA NADEEM

## Paddy cultivation in Kashmir

**W**ith onset of summer season in the Valley, Kashmiri farmers spend most of their time in farm-lands. They begin the paddy cultivation with sowing rice saplings in the paddy fields spreading from low lying areas to upper reaches of Himalayas. The villagers participate with enthusiasm and help each other in the fields in every task from sowing saplings and plucking out weeds to harvesting the crops.



Farmers ploughing paddy fields with tractors ahead of planting rice saplings in central Kashmir's Budgam district.



Paddy fields are being filled with the required amount of water. The incessant rains usually delay the process of sapling sowing, which even hits the productivity.



Farmers plucking out weeds and levelling paddy field before sowing the saplings in one of the villages in Budgam.



Women pulling out rice saplings from a small piece of land to plant them in larger paddy fields.



Farmers carrying rice saplings to be sown in the paddy field.



Farmers sowing paddy saplings during the sowing season in June in Budgam district.

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY ISHFAQ MAJEED

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