

“Emotional attachment with different aspects of conflict at home makes reporting much more challenging”
Parvaiz Bukahri P3



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Women Journos in Kashmir

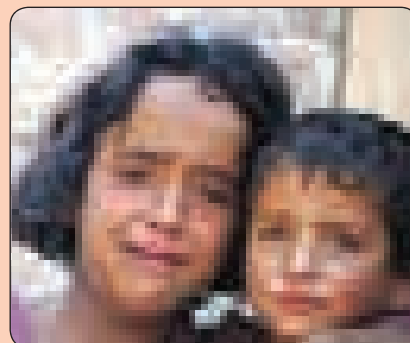


Women journalists from Kashmir are breaking the traditional trend, and are turning to be the new trend-setters in their understanding and practice of journalism. A few of them have already carved a niche on the media landscape of Kashmir, reports
Umar Hayat

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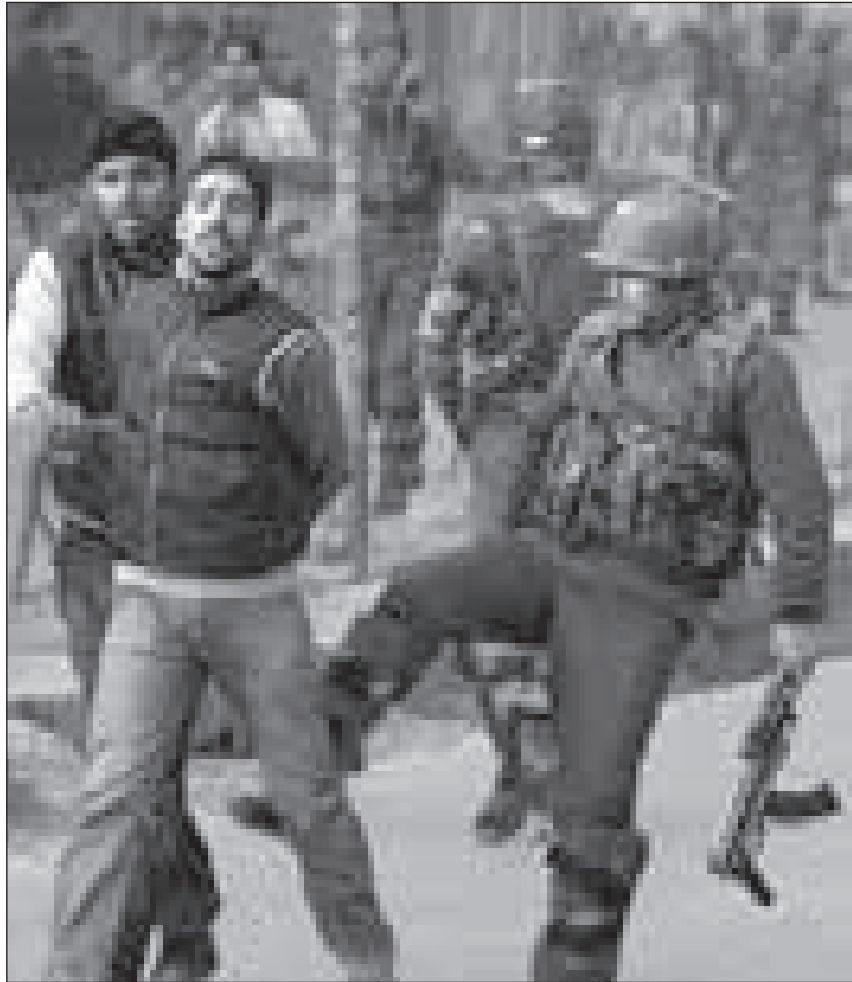




Shahid Tantray-
"Yes, I want freedom in work and profession"



Showkat Shafi-
"I REALIZED
WHAT IT IS TO BE
A JOURNALIST IN
WORLD'S MOST
MILITARIZED
ZONE, KASHMIR"



CAUGHT IN CROSSFIRE

JOURNALISTS IN KASHMIR ARE TREADING A DIFFICULT PATH

Mudasir Peer

Journalism in Kashmir has always been a challenging job. The journalists from local, national and international news organizations have been the constant targets in the conflict. Constant assaults on press have been increasing. In such a situation, the question arises: who will tell the stories?

On November 25, 2011, Shahid Tantray, a young photojournalist, with Dainik Bhaskar had gone to cover protests in downtown, Srinagar where he got a trashing from Security forces.

"That day police and paramilitary were chasing protestors, while I was taking photos," recalls Shahid.

Suddenly, Shahid recounts, some CRPF personnel came and started beating him with bamboo sticks. "They kicked me with their long boots and hit me with gun butts. As I was being dragged, one of the men struck my head with a brick and I started bleeding profusely."

After forces thrashed him, he was taken to Nowhatta police station and kept in the lockup. "A month ago I had clicked a group of minors whom police presented handcuffed

IN A
CONFLICT
ZONE,
RISKS ARE
INESCAPABLE

in the court. They had been arrested on charges of stone throwing. Police was annoyed with me seeing these pictures out in media," Shahid recalls.

In Nowhatta police station, then SHO had asked Shahid what his profession was, to which he had replied that he was a photojournalist. "He asked me to confirm my identity. I said that I am Shahid Tantray. He became furious as he heard my name. He picked up the baton and started beating me. My camera and lenses got smashed," alleges Shahid.

He further adds, "After thrashing

me, SHO mockingly remarked, 'now you will click the photographs of minors'. The police also snatched my mobile phone, wallet, belt and other articles."

An officer of CRPF had come to Shahid and asked, "You people want Azadi (Freedom)?" To which he had replied, "Yes, I want freedom in work and profession". The officer had left after hearing the answer.

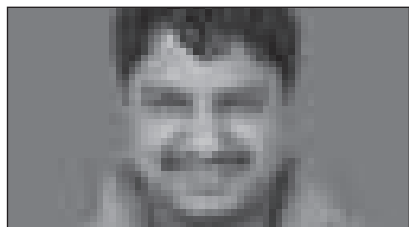
"I was released the same day after my organization and many journalist friends approached police for my release. I was bed-ridden for two months, unable to move my neck. I had bruises all over my body," says Shahid.

Shahid is presently working as a freelancer with BBC's online edition.

In a conflict zone, Shahid believes that risks are inescapable. "My passion for photography has been a linchpin in holding my foot to this profession. Whenever there is a protest demonstration or any stone-pelting incident going on in any part of Kashmir, I never refrain from discharging my duty," says Shahid.

To this young photojournalist there wasn't complete understanding about what it was to be a journalist in Kashmir. But, he says.

Contd. on P5



Mufti Islah-
"MERC has certainly helped me build my career. I must say MERC gives you a ticket, a key to take a shot at this profession"



Ubaid Shafi Bhat

Journalism is synonymous to courage especially when reporting from conflict areas. Many journalists across the globe were killed while performing their duties, scores maimed, forcing hundreds to leave this profession.

The tale of journalism in Kashmir is no different as it has been the hotbed of conflict for 23 years. During all these years, journalists of Kashmir have displayed tremendous courage while covering the turbulent Kashmir.

Among these brave hearts, the alumni of Media Education Research Centre (MERC) from Bureau Chiefs, Chief Editors to Reporters have been the pivots of journalism in Kashmir. The faculty at MERC has worked tirelessly to train the students to become sound professionals.

Parvaiz Bukhari, Kashmir Bureau Chief, Agence France-Presse (AFP), who started working as a journalist in 1990 as a freelancer believes MERC has helped produce very good media professionals and as an institution for producing quality journalistic training, it has a long way to go.

Parvaiz who has covered Iraq and Afghanistan war, said, "Reporting a conflict at home will always be the toughest compared to any other situation. It is more tiring and emotionally exhausting."

"The emotional attachment with different aspects of conflict at home makes it much more challenging," added Parvaiz.

On asking about the challenges faced by Kashmiri journalists while reporting conflict, he said there were no constraints but challenges at every step.



"Reporting a conflict at home will always be the toughest compared to any other situation. It is more tiring and emotionally exhausting",
Parvaiz Bukhari

While differentiating contemporary media with that of 1990s, Parvaiz said, "The contemporary media scene is certainly more challenging compared to when I started as a reporter during 1990s. Readers are more critical and demanding. New technologies keep pushing the frontiers of journalism and accountability of journalists."

He also said that the media manipulation has acquired more sophisticated aspects as various nationalistic elements mediate journalism in ever sophisticated and open way.

Zahoor Malik, Bureau Chief, Daily Kashmir Times said, "Many MERC alumni are presently holding top positions in media organizations in and outside Kashmir, that way it is a big contribution."

"I joined MERC to get professional training and skills to move ahead in

the career."

"Difficulties are always there while working in the field. With the passage of time, one learns to tackle these situations professionally. There were instances when I faced severe difficulties as a journalist but they have now become a part of my profession," said Malik.

Mufti Islah, Srinagar Bureau Chief, CNN-IBN said that MERC has done well for students and it has also produced a good number of trained professionals.

"In a conflict place like Kashmir, you need to be credible and honest," he added.

He further said that aspiring journalists imbibe basic skills and exposure at MERC and that gives you a good start in career.

"MERC has certainly helped me build my career. I must say MERC gives you a ticket, a key to take a shot

at this profession," Mufti said.

Toufiq Rashid, Bureau Chief, *Hindustan Times*, said, "We have highest regard for MERC as it has given us many credible and bright journalists."

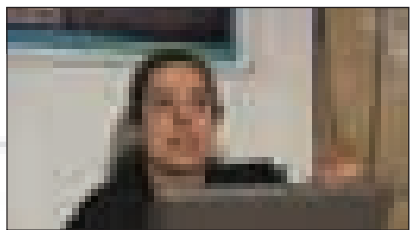
"Kashmiri journalists have done fairly well when it comes to reporting conflict irrespective of pressures from all quarters including people, who at times, feel the media does not represent their true feeling," she added.

While claiming that media was better at her time of joining the field, particularly in terms of quality of news, she said, "With so many news organisations and news channels, one gets confused as what to watch. Quality of news has gone down. With TV boom and the quest for breaking news, real news seems to have taken a back seat."

She said that aspiring journalists should make journalism a clear choice. "They should do thorough and substantial stories and avoid unnecessary spin and remain true to the story", stressed Toufiq



"MANY MERC ALUMNI ARE PRESENTLY HOLDING TOP POSITIONS IN MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS IN AND OUTSIDE KASHMIR, THAT WAY IT IS A BIG CONTRIBUTION"
Zahoor Malik



Toufiq Rashid-
"Psyche of people has to change since women journalists are sometimes not allowed to work in the newsrooms here. But women journalists have to break this barrier to do stories on the serious stuff to prove themselves and move ahead"

WOMEN JOURNALISTS OF KASHMIR

Umar Hayat

During 20 years of turbulence in Kashmir, the press fraternity here in Kashmir had to face a lot of challenges while highlighting and showcasing the unheard voices before the world.

Not only males, but female fraternity has also taken up this path as a challenge. That is why, nowadays, more women are joining the field of journalism.

Traditionally, the press was confined to the male fraternity and their contributions. However, the role of women journalists from Kashmir cornering various issues cannot be neglected.

'Sky is the Limit'

Afsana Rashid, a pass-out of Media Education Research Centre (MERC) is a journalist with 10 years experience. She has worked for several English-language papers including the *Kashmir Images*, *Kashmir Times*, the *Tribune* and *Milli Gazette*.

"There was a time when women issues were under-reported or not reported at all. But things are changing now and issues concerning women are getting reported, though not as seriously as it ought to be."

She added that if one has the capability and passion, one can get the prominence despite so-called "gender bias".

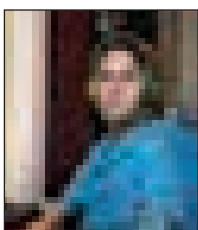
"Journalism, in my opinion, has nothing to do with gender. If you've will and skill to work, sky is the limit. And then, gender bias exists everywhere, and if you are a good reporter, you can be an agent of change," Afsana said.

'Discover self'

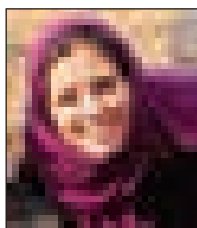
Sharing her experience, Aliya Bashir from daily *Kashmir Monitor* and also the alumna of MERC said, "I was passionate about writing especially in a place like Kashmir where we have very less mediums to express. That is why, I chose journalism as a full-time profession. In this profession, you tend to learn a lot when you are in the field. So, for me it's not just reporting the facts but to develop myself as a responsible individual as well. It is a field full of exploration."

She added that people who are sincere in reporting facts with utmost sincerity without any sensationalism and whose writing is responsible and impact-full have inspired her. Izhar Wani, AFP Bureau Chief, who passed away a year back, still continues to be her inspiration as a professional who used power of media to accelerate the most fragile conflict of 90's before a global audience.

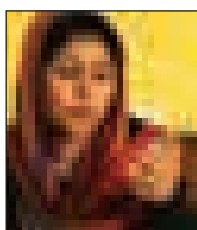
Talking about reporting in Kashmir, she said "Talent always creates a space. There is no end to anything as long as we are dedicated and well-aware about our responsibilities as a journalist. Journalism is not a glamour show. In a place like Kashmir, where everything is under surveillance, those who want to



"JOURNALISM, IN MY OPINION, HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH GENDER. IF YOU'VE WILL AND SKILL TO WORK, SKY IS THE LIMIT. AND THEN, GENDER BIAS EXISTS EVERYWHERE, AND IF YOU ARE A GOOD REPORTER, YOU CAN BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE"
Afsana Rashid



"THERE IS LOT OF SCOPE FOR THE WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN KASHMIR. BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THE PRESS IN KASHMIR IS A LITTLE BIT BIASED TOWARDS US"
Shahana Butt



"TALKING ABOUT REPORTING IN KASHMIR, SHE SAID "TALENT ALWAYS CREATES A SPACE. THERE IS NO END TO ANYTHING AS LONG AS WE ARE DEDICATED AND WELL-AWARE ABOUT OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A JOURNALIST"
Aliya Bashir

join this field should be aware of all the challenges that they have to face and prepare themselves accordingly,"

Stressing upon the need of quality journalism by women she said, "It is necessary to raise women's profile in the news, both as professionals and as news subjects. We have to pave way where girls feel empowered by this profession. They should be clear about their goal instead of treating journalism just as any other course. Journalism is purely practical filed with full of challenges especially when you are women. We have to work consistently with confidence and professionalism to be equally heard and supported in the media."

'Need to break this barrier'

Another pass-out of MERC, Toufiq Rashid, Bureau Chief, *Hindustan Times*, has a varied opinion about the women journalists in Kashmir.

"I have worked and started my career from Delhi. I find a huge difference between women work and the newsroom culture in terms of preference and gender there and here."

"In Kashmir most of the women journalists don't do the serious journalism like political beat or those stories for which they have to get quotes from the officials while waiting outside. They are reluctant move and get to the source," she said

She admits that "while now working here in Kashmir, I get quotes and respect wherever I go. I don't find any problem and disparity."

She emphasised that "psyche of people has to change since women journalists are sometimes not allowed to work in the newsrooms here. But women journalists have to break this barrier to do stories on the serious stuff to prove themselves and move ahead."

"In Delhi most of the women are given the serious stories to work upon without looking at the gender, and they do it. Even some of the editors are women," she added.

'Women are reluctant to talk to males'

Shahana Butt from Press TV, alumna of MERC while sharing her views said,

"There is lot of scope for the women journalists in Kashmir. But unfortunately, the press in Kashmir is a little bit biased towards us."

She also added "in war-torn Muslim countries, the majority of the women and children only feel comfortable opening up to women reporters as they are not allowed to be seen talking to men outside of their families."

'We are in need of good female reporters'

The fact is that more women are joining journalism in Kashmir and realizing the need and scope which this field is meant for.

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Journalism in Kashmir has always been a challenging job

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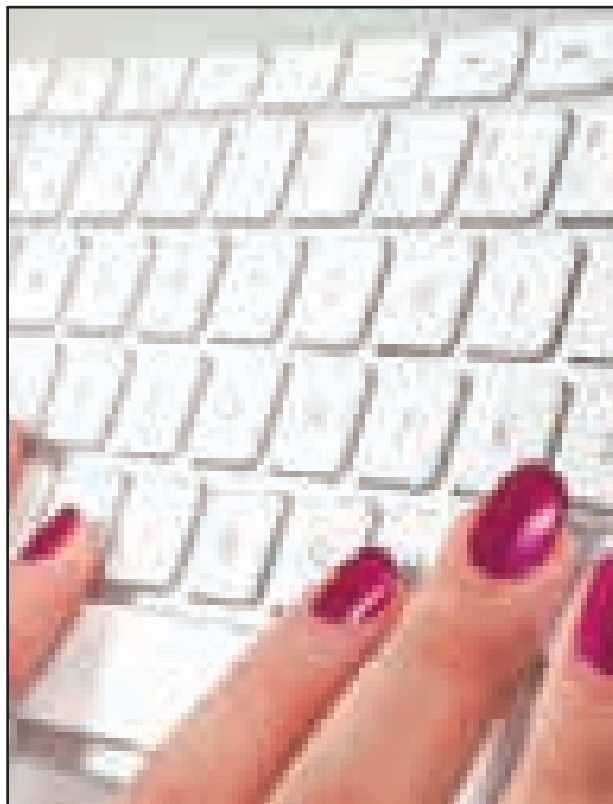
WOMEN JOURNOS

Syed Asma, who is now working with weekly *Kashmir Life* from last 5 years said, "Journalism wasn't my only choice, but yes it was one of them. I wanted to get away with Botany and Zoology. They no longer were of my interest, partly because of the prescribed syllabus and relevant pedagogy. So, I chose journalism and pursued it from Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST)".

Optimistic about the future of women journalists, she said, "There may be less number of women journalists, in the field but I suppose the scenario is improving with each passing day. More and more girls are joining the field. There is a lot of space for many more to come. We are in need of good reporters, both girls and boys".

Bottomline

The women journalists are making their presence and the only thing is that they have to develop an attitude towards doing journalism with a strong sense of professionalism.



THERE MAY BE LESS NUMBER OF WOMEN JOURNALISTS, IN THE FIELD BUT I SUPPOSE THE SCENARIO IS IMPROVING WITH EACH PASSING DAY. MORE AND MORE GIRLS ARE JOINING THE FIELD. THERE IS A LOT OF SPACE FOR MANY MORE TO COME



Contd. from Page 2

Caught in Crossfire

after being thrashed by police and paramilitary forces without any reason, he says, "I realized what it is to be a journalist in world's most militarized zone, Kashmir. I realized that I have an indispensable job to do-- to tell the people of world the stories of Kashmir".

Press Trust of India (PTI) also reported about Tantray's beating and detention in 2011. The then Station House Officer (SHO) Nowhatta had confirmed to *PTI* about Shahid's detention, though he had denied any assault on him.

In 2011 on World Photography Day, Showkat Shafi, a freelance photojournalist with *Al Jazeera* English, had thought to capture some pictures. Showkat says Jamia Masjid had always been lucky for him. "It was Friday. At around 2 PM, I along with my photojournalist friends Shahid, Narciso (from Mexico) and Rajesh (from Delhi) went to the historic mosque. I clicked many pictures. One picture stood out from the rest of the photographs. I was really happy to have captured a great shot. I thought the place has again proved lucky for me. But this time, I was wrong."

After the Friday prayers, some boys started protesting. "We started capturing the scene. All of a sudden some protestors started throwing stones on security forces. No sooner had I captured few pictures that I was stopped by troops in a nearby lane. Instantly I informed them that I am from Press. They didn't listen. I kept crying, 'Press, Press'. At least ten cops were beating me simultaneously with bamboo sticks and gun-butts till I fell on ground, bleeding", says Showkat.



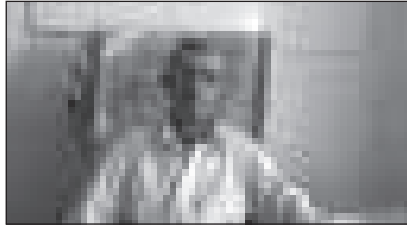
Daily Tribune reporter Azhar Qadri being taken into custody

International News Channel *Al Jazeera* English had also reported about Showkat Shafi's thrashing at the hands of security forces while he was covering a protest in Downtown, Srinagar (20th August-2011).

In 2011, after the constant attacks on press, Justice Markandey Katju, Chairman Press Council of India (PCI) had written to Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah that "the paramilitary forces and police must be instructed not to commit any violence on media persons, otherwise they will face criminal proceedings."

Despite Katju's letter to J&K Chief Minister, no safeguard measures were ensured by the state, as one more journalist Azhar Qadri of *Daily Tribune* was detained by police and later on released.



Prof. Dabla-
"They face accommodation, educational loss, psychological depression, social disorganization, insecurity, health deterioration, dependence on others, deviance and delinquency problems"

ORPHANS IN OBLIVION



Sajena Wami

“

I WONDERED WHEN HIS MOTHER DID NOT ACCEPT HIM AND PLEADED ME TO TAKE HIM BACK. I WAS SURPRISED AND ASKED FOR A REASON. THE WOMAN WAS NOT READY FOR STARVING HIS SON BECAUSE OF POOR FINANCIAL CONDITION

Zahoor Tak

'Apoor lal chowk, apoor lal chowk (ahead of Lal Chowk route)' cries Altamash (name changed), a teenager who works as a bus conductor with the local passenger vehicle ferrying passengers around Lal Chowk. Wearing blue colored T-shirt and black trousers, he is busy calling passengers.

Altamash, 18, is the lone breadwinner of the family which comprises of his ailing mother, two sisters and a brother. Some 17 years ago, his father was allegedly killed by security forces in the hills of frontier district Kupwara while attempting to cross over to other part of Kashmir for arms training.

After witnessing the death of father in a tender age, Altamash along with his sisters and brother were sent to orphanage to meet the daily needs.

"We faced huge financial problems after he (husband) got killed. My children were starving as there was nothing to feed them. I unwillingly send them to orphanage," Syeda, (name changed) mother of Altamash said.

Seeing the poor economic conditions at the home, Altamash left the orphanage to support his family financially.

"After being in orphanage for almost nine years, I along with my siblings left the place for supporting my family," he said.

With job of a conductor, Altamash earns a paltry sum of Rs 100 after exhausting himself for about 12 hours every day. He now lives in a rented accommodation in city outskirts, with his family.

Like Altamash, there are also other children who are facing the brunt of pathetic plight in Kashmir. A recent report by UK-based Child Rights Organization, *Save the Children*, revealed that estimated population of orphans in Jammu and Kashmir is 2,14,000 and out of them 37 percent were orphaned due to armed conflict.

In 1986, before turmoil erupted in Kashmir valley, Srinagar had a single orphanage. However, the number drastically increased since 1990's after insurgency broke out.

Jammu and Kashmir Yateem Trust, a valley based orphanage, registers scores of children every year. Zahoor Ahmad Tak, Chairman, remembers a child whom he dropped back to his home for celebrating Eid. "I wondered when his mother did not accept him and pleaded me to take him back. I was surprised and asked for a reason. The woman was not ready to starve his son because of poor financial conditions," he said.

Dr. Mushtaq Margoob, a renowned psychiatrist of the valley, says orphans in Kashmir are psychologically vulnerable and face many psychological disorders.

"At a age when they need support from their parents and siblings to cope up with physical and emotional development, the loss of their parents makes them more prone to psychological disorders," the psychiatrist said.

Prof. Bashir Ahmad Dabla, Head Sociology Department, University of Kashmir, opines that orphans have many issues at hand. "Accommodation, educational loss, psychological depression, social disorganization, insecurity, health deterioration, dependence on others, deviance and delinquency problems are the pressing issue faced by them," he said.

While calling passengers to board, some school kids also step in the vehicle. While kids remain absorbed in narrating stories to each other, Altamash is absorbed in his daily routine. With no friend around, his story remains untold!

“



Orphans in Kashmir are psychologically vulnerable

”



Faruq Masudi-
"It was the first time that students were exposed to such an event. A good number of students watched it"

MERC students stage Anti-ragging street play at KU

The students of Media Education Research Centre (MERC), University of Kashmir staged maiden street theatre at the varsity to aware the students about the menace of ragging. The campus reverberated with slogans "Ragging is crime, punishment is jail" and "Senior-Junior Ek Hain".

Titled "Speak up", the play was enacted at six different places— Sir Syed Gate, Rumi Gate, Iqbal Library, Humanities block, Business School, and Science and the Admin-

istrative blocks—at the campus, evoking overwhelming response from everyone.

This was the maiden street theatre show conducted by the students of this department. While talking about the show, Faruq Masudi, Co-ordinator MERC said, "It was the first time that students were exposed to such an event. A good number of students watched it."

Speaking on the significance of the show, Assistant Professor and Incharge Folk Media, Malik Zahra said, "The play



has come at an appropriate time as new session has started in the University."

"This (play) will overcome the apprehensions of and anxiety freshers and will inculcate a sense of freedom and equality among the students," she added.

Heeba Din, who directed the play said, "Today, we made history on the campus by maiden street theater performance at KU."

Nisha Zargar, who acted in the

show, described the play as "a unique experience for everyone."

Kashmir University spokesperson while lauding the efforts of MERC students said, "Street play sensitized our students about the issue of ragging and the consequences of it."

The play was conceptualized, written, directed and produced by the 3rd semester students of MERC.

Theatre Blooms in Valley

Javaid Bhat

Theatre culture is finding back its roots in Valley and since February 2013, more

Radio Kashmir Auditorium, DDG Radio Kashmir, Srinagar Bashir Arif said, "These young boys and girls remind me of my youth, I had the same zeal for theatre as they

audience, and it will survive if we continue to support it," he added.

On the occasion a play *Naav Nosh* (New Bride) written by Padma Shri Somnath Sadhu was showcased.

"This play is being performed in order to tribute the works of Kashmiri writers, this is just a beginning to a long chain of tributes," said Rashid Barki, Director of the play. The play was performed by Tagore Cultural Society in collaboration with Kashmir Yuva Balak Theatre Association, organized by Radio Kashmir, Srinagar.

On the eve of World Theatre Day celebrated on 27th March, various stage plays took place in Radio Kashmir Srinagar, Delhi Public School and Government Degree College, Anantnag.

A folk form of theatre known as "Band-i-Pather" was carried out in Delhi Public School by EKTA group of Performing Arts under the Direction of Bashir Bhawani.

"I did not know that our folk

theatre is so rich in its content," said Zainab Nisheen, a 10th class DPS student.

Radio Kashmir Srinagar celebrated World Theatre Day by presenting a play *Chapaath* (Slap) written by Padma Shri S.N. Sadhu, performed by Bharatiya Kala Munch Srinagar.

"This play deals with the different social aspects of society, which includes dowry, casteism, and corruption" said Assistant Director Ashraf Nagoo to MERC times.

In another event, a series of one act plays were performed by different departments of Govt. Degree College, Anantnag. where in different social issues were highlighted.

After celebration of World Theatre Day, there has been an increase in plays around the Kashmir. Recently, renowned theatre directors Mushtaq Ali, Arshad Mushtaq, Manzoor Ganai and others showcased their plays at different places in Valley.



than 10 stage plays have been performed across the valley. This has brought into limelight the new crop of talented youth of Kashmir theatre.

Addressing the audience and people associated with theatre at

have and they will go a long way if they continue to perceive with same passion".

"No doubt, theatre in Kashmir was popular than Radio and TV. However, in today's world of mass media, theatre has to compete for



EVERY TIME

Journey of Newspapers in Kashmir

Hilal Ahmad

Munshi Mohammad Fauq earned the "First name" in the journalism book of Kashmir. A man from Soibug Kashmir, who worked for several newspapers in British Lahore and Punjab, visited back to Kashmir in year 1905, approaching Maharaja Pratap Singh. He sought his permission to launch a newspaper from Kashmir. Maharaja, however instructed his courtiers to make tough laws against publication of any newspaper, especially for newspapers in Kashmiri.

Maharaja tightened noose, suppressing the freedom of expression in Kashmir, but Munshi Mohammad Fauq continued to express his views in the newspapers like: Kashmir Muzloom, Kashmir Magazine, Maktoobe-Kashmir and Inqalab, thus highlighting the plight of Kashmiri people.

It was the historical day for Jammu and Kashmir, when in 1924 the first newspaper (Ranbir) published from the Jammu, hit the stands. Although, considered as the media face of the Maharaja, its editor was soon asked to stop its publication because the newspaper published a procession which showed the people protesting against British (when Gandhi was arrested).

To show the plight of people in Kashmir many writers started publishing their articles from British Lahore and Punjab and over a period of time. Prominent among writers was Molvi Mohammad Abdullah Vakil who highlighted the downtrodden condition of Kashmiris through La-

hore and Punjab journals.

However, Maharaja soon imposed ban on these journals and a strict vigilance was placed on the circulation of these Newspapers. The people though, used to smuggle these journals into the Kashmir from British Lahore. These journals would eventually reach to the "Reading Room Party," where group of Kashmiri youth used to read and provide back the feedback to these publications.

In year 1931, immediately after the July 13th massacre British administration constituted the Glancy Commission to look into the cause of public uprising in Kashmir. The Commission also put forward several recommendations in 1934, which were in favour of press and the freedom of expression. The recommendations laid down by the Glancy Commission cleared obstacles, providing a way for the publication of many newspapers. This resulted in mushrooming of Newspapers like: Hamdard, Khidmat, Milat, Rehbar, Zamindar, though under intense censorship. The circulation of newspapers proved to be the catalysts in Abrogation of 1846 Amritsar treaty and Quit Kashmir movement.

'New Kashmir' by Som Nath Tiku and 'Hamdard' by P.N. Bazaz gained much publicity in 1940s. Other newspapers that achieved prominence were the Kidmat and Roshini. Post-1947 scenario for press was altogether different. The newspapers were divided into two categories i.e. white list and black list (Govt press notes and Ads were reserved only for white list due to pro government policy and this retarded the growth of press).

It was only during the regime of G.M. Sadiq (1964-65- 1971) press in Kashmir witnessed a different era. He eased the press restrictions, as a result of which large number of newspapers entered into market. However, later due to the prevailing violent situation in Kashmir and Sheikh Abdullah's detention, eleven Newspapers was

banned which included Hamdard, Mahaz, Hurriyat and Hidayat and Rehbar. Kashmir Times and Srinagar Times, however were able to hold the ground and became very popular by 1970s.

The restriction in freedom of press was also tightened when "Incitement of offences" act was imposed. This meant anybody defying the government orders will suffer the deprivation of government ads. Later, after four years there was another setback for the freedom of Press when the emergency, declared by President Fakhruddin during the regime Indira Gandhi (1975-1977). Many newspaper publications in Kashmir suffered as newsprint was totally under the control of Centre and intense censorship was imposed.

With the advent of armed uprising in 1989, J&K legislature passed censorship law in lower house. Strong censorship was imposed on the local press. Editors had to submit the stories to the authorities for approval. Turmoil left many journalists in dilemma. On one hand were charged as pro-Movement by authorities and on other hand they were labelled as anti movement by some militants. The daily "Aftab" was banned by authorities in 1990 and its proprietor Sanaulah was thrashed by pro-movement activists. The daily "Chattan" was threatened to close down its publication.

Nevertheless with all these, the reports depict that there are more than 483 newspapers being published in Jammu and Kashmir out of which, 321 news papers are approved for government advertisement. Among these Greater Kashmir, Rising Kashmir, Kashmir Times, Kashmir Reader, Aftab, Roshini are prominent.

Online news organisations from Kashmir like KNS, CNS, Free Press Kashmir are now-a-days stealing the show, providing extensive coverage in Kashmir. There are also some monthly magazines like Honour, Kashmir Scan, which have recently hit the stands and are flourishing.

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