

# MERC TIMES



Vol 8 | No 07 | JUNE 15, 2015

MEDIA EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR



## PRINCIPLES CONFERENCE AT KU

P3

INSIDE

2

TRAFFIC CHAOS CONTINUES IN CITY

5

KU ORGANIZES WORKSHOP FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

6

'KASHMIR: A STATE OF IMPUNITY' RELEASED AT KU

C  
M  
Y  
K

## TRAFFIC CHAOS CONTINUES IN CITY

❖ **Ishan Fazili**

Srinagar: Wrong priorities of Traffic Department, narrow roads and ever increasing number of vehicles has created chaotic traffic situation in Srinagar, allege daily commuters in city.

People complain that they face a lot of inconvenience due to routine traffic jams. They said that at the entry points and other major towns in Srinagar city witness huge traffic jams and have become the order of day and to overcome the problem, government is "not showing much interest."

"The Traffic Department is behaving like a revenue generating department, they are just filling challans



and collecting fines", said Sakib, a commuter.

The roads that were built many decades ago were not widened to accommodate increasing vehicular traffic. According to official figures 50,000 new vehicles are added to the road traffic every year in Kashmir.

"Traffic jams have become a routine nowadays, not only at a single place but across the valley. Common man is suffering and the present dispensation seems unmoved," says Shahid Hussain, a Govt. employee.

He said that the traffic police deployed at various points are unable to streamline the traffic adding the department should take corrective measures to tackle the rush. "The traffic department ignores some of the vital junctions and concentrates on regulating the traffic on some selected roads, mostly frequented by the VIPs. But the roads frequented by the common masses are being ignored," Hussain said.

In Srinagar city areas like Barzulla, Rambagh, Jawahar Nagar, Raj Bagh, Lal chowk, Batamaloo and Khayyam witness routine traffic jams.

Blaming the common man for shouldering off the responsibilities of a responsible citizen, SSP Traffic, Srinagar, Haseeb-ur-Rehman said that the common man is violating rules and park their own cars on the road. This is why one lane of the road remains occupied by cars throughout the day".



## 700 YEARS OLD TEMPLE DECAYING IN CITY SWAMP

❖ **Khalid Bashir**

Srinagar: In what could be termed as a serious dereliction of duty by concerned authorities, the 700 year old Mangleshwar temple at Brari Nambal Khanyar is in a dilapidated condition since the floods wrecked havoc last year.

The temple is located in the middle of the lagoon, locked, with no accessibility to reach it.

The government and concerned authorities continue to be oblivious to the rotting state of this religious structure.

The 700-year-old Mangleshwar temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Over the past decade, a number of Hindu shrines have been reopened across the valley with Muslims playing a key role.

"Due to collective efforts of Hindus and Muslims of the area, the gates of the temple were opened after 18 long years in April 2007. A Hawan (a religious exercise) was performed at the shrine after about two decades," said Sudhershnan Dhar a local Kashmir Pandit and in-charge of ISKCON Kaphleshwar Mandir Haba Kadal.

"It is due to irresponsible concerned authorities that this historic temple has reached such a state. It had long been the main centre of social, religious and literary discourses," Dhar recalls.

Noted Historian and poet Zareef

Ahmed Zareef spoke at length about the historic significance of the temple.

"The temple is 700 year old known as 'Mongur Azam'. The temple was closed in the early 90s following the migration of Pandits from the valley. This is due to the lackadaisical approach of its authorities that it is in a bad shape. The lagoon where it is located used to be a crystal clear water body. But it is choked due to people and government. This is a manifestation of our callous attitude. This temple is an asset which we are losing," Zareef said.

The local Muslims living in the vicinity are agonized by the callousness of government towards the historical temple.

"This temple continues to remain locked and there seems to be no one to take care of it. The temple is almost disappeared in weeds of stinking lagoon," said a residents of Khanyar, a nearby area.

Talking to MERC Times the local MLA Ali Mohammad Sagar feigned ignorance about the temple's dilapidated condition.

I am not sure which temple you are referring to but since matter has been brought under to me I will raise the issue with concerned authorities and look into it," the MLA said.

The concerned maintainers of the temple were unavailable for comments.

# PRINCIPLES CONFERENCE HELD AT KU

❖ **Omer Malik**

KU: A principals' conference attended by principals of all affiliated degree colleges of the valley, was organized by UGC - Human Resource Development on June 3, at Gandhi Bhawan Auditorium, Kashmir University.

Prof. Mehraj-ud-din Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir while speaking on the occasion said, "Our state has unique challenges which do not match with national level." He suggested that one day conference could not do the justice to the theme and needs at least a week long programme. He said that there was need to link higher education with society and industry.

Honourable minister for higher education J&K, Nayeem Akhter gave a brief about some challenges in education scenario of the state. He said that the system was derailed to a great extent due to uncontrollable reasons but encouraged teachers by appreciating their efforts to bring it back on rails.



He believed that the role of teachers and students was pivotal. He agreed that admissions to colleges should be based on merit, catchment and intake capacity. He replied various observations to the satisfaction of the participants including Principal Women's College, Baramulla, S.P College, Vice Chancellor University of Kashmir, Principal Boys College Anantnag and Principal College of Education, Srinagar.

Prof. Mustafa Baqal, Principal degree college Pattan ex-

pressed concerns on unsuccessful implementation of Choice Based Credit System (CBCS). He also gave suggestions to formulate concrete policies for adoption of the system.

Baqal was of the opinion that the higher education system needs complete overhauling. "Contractual atmosphere in colleges has become an impediment in the achievement of social and economic aims of education", he said.

Prof. M.Y. Peerzada focused

on exceeding of PG. courses in some historic colleges for quality improvement of the students. He critically analyzed the viability of some courses in the institutions. His concern was also on admission policy, intake capacity, pooling of lecturers and polarisation of staff.

Dr. S.M. Shafi, Deptt of Business and Financial Studies and Prof. H.G. Mustafa, Principal GDC Vailoo, Larnoo reflected on the importance of freedom of student's choice to choose his/her subject.

Prof. Gull Mohd Wani, Director Institute of Kashmir Studies said, "The present higher educational system provides a dismal picture and is marred by economic and global challenges."

Prof. Irshad A. Wani, Director North Campus, University of Kashmir favored the idea of launching Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) with access, equity, educational excellence and semester system

The conference concluded with the vote of thanks by Prof. Zahoor Ahmad Chatt.

# KU HOSTS ONE DAY RTI WORKSHOP

❖ **Nazir Gillo**

KU: A one day Right-to-Information (RTI) Capacity Building workshop was organized by UGC-Human Resource Development at regional Centre, Kashmir University.

The workshop started with the welcome address by Prof. Mohidin Sangami (Director, ASC, and University of Kashmir). Prof. Sangami said that the genesis of the Right to Information goes to the notion of transparency and accountability. According to Prof. Sangami, the citizens in the contemporary world want to be the part of the democratic setup and decision making and it is not possible without the enactment of Right to Information.

He pointed out that those days are gone when all the information was regarded as classified. But now as the notion of governance itself has changed. For perfect deliv-

ery system, according to prof sangami, people need to know and that can be ensured with accountability.

Prof. M.A Wani, Dean Academic Affairs, said that these kinds of workshops play the role of capacity building in the institution like University of Kashmir. He pointed out the changes that are happening all over the world for last three decades. He also said that there is an emergence of new governance ethics under the auspicious of International Aid giving Organizations.

Prof Wani said, the good governance includes accountability, openness and transparency and the aid receiving countries are now bound to follow these parameters. He said that the culture of secrecy is against the basic principles of democracy.

Prof. H.G Mustafa, Principal Degree College' Vailoo, delivered a talk on "Transparency in Governance", where he dis-

cussed the importance of the J and K RTI act of 2009. Prof. Mustafa started his deliberation with an important proposition that there is a strong connection between transparency and good governance.

Registrar Kashmir University, Prof. Zaffar Ahmad Reshi talked about the difficulties of the RTI procedures in the University. "It becomes cumbersome process to deal with the cases like shortlisting for the jobs and the re-evaluating answer scripts", he said Prof. Reshi ended with a positive note that in future there will be no need of RTI, as the system itself will be transparent enough.

At the concluding session of the workshop Dr. Tabassum (Deputy Director ASC) presented the vote of thanks to the resource persons, all participants, the staff of academic staff collage and media persons present.



## 2000 FOREST DEPT HELPERS IN LURCH

❖ **Moosa Hayat**

Srinagar: In a blatant and repeated violation of SRO rules, the Forest Department is not re-designating thousands of its 'Helpers' engaged as Daily Wagers since 1990s. In a period of more than 20 years, around 2000 helpers are still fighting their way to be re-designated since the position of a 'helper' is a temporary one and does not fall into the department hierarchy.

While talking to MERC times, a helper engaged with the department in 1989 said, "We were initially engaged as daily wagers in late 1980s and later brought on regular establishment as Helpers in terms of SRO 64 of 1994. However since 1994, we have not yet been re-designated within the department thus halting our promotions from the last two decades."

Clause I of Government order no. 484 dated 24-11-2000 clearly states that "these posts of helpers shall be reduced as and when the existing incumbents vacate the posts by way of moving up, either being adjusted on regular posts or when someone retires."

In 2008, a government order bearing no. 257F of 2008 dated 03.09.2008 with reference to Cabinet decision no. 57/7 dated 20.05.2008 specified that the induction of the posts of Helpers in the existing hierarchies of the department should be done with authorization by the finance department after case by case recommendations of the forest administrative department.

However, the Principal Chief Conservator Forest (PCCF) took more than five years to act on the cabinet decision and recommend the

case of Helpers to the 'Forest Administrative Department. In the meantime the forest department hired and promoted more than 600 Class-IV employees thus clearly violating SRO 64 of 1994 ruling which says, "No class-IV vacancy occurring in any department where daily rates workers or work charged employees are adjustable under these rules shall be available for direct recruitment till whole lot of such workers/employees is adjusted."

Meanwhile, Social Forestry, another wing of the Forest Department, were easily able to comply with the order of 2008 and adjusted almost 2000 helpers in their existing hierarchical system without referring the case to the cabinet again.

"Our Juniors have become our officers, we have missed two or three promotions", said another Helper.

AK Singh, Principal Chief Conservator Forests (PCCF) expressed unawareness of the issue and had to be reminded with the help of order numbers and other information before he finally arrived at the following conclusion, "We have referred the matter to the cabinet and they are the ones to decide."

When pointed out that the Cabinet had already given a go ahead in 2008, PCCF said, "I have no information about it."

These 2000 odd Helper, all graduates and post graduates, are the ones carrying out the field work and other major tasks in the department from the last many years. Some of them hinted internal corruption as they had been asked to bribe the officials within the department to get rid of this unending frustration.

## IMFA STARTS FUNCTIONING FROM KU

❖ **Shahnaz Marouf**

Srinagar: Nearly 50 years after its establishment, Valley's only government run Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA) has finally found some space in Kashmir University's Naseem Bagh Campus.

The Institute was formerly running from a rented building in Rajbagh from the last decade but following the devastating floods last year, the owner refused to allow it further.

The institute was paralyzed by the September floods of last year and it suffered a huge loss in terms of art, history and Santoor departments. The library, consisting of about 8000 books by foreign authors, was also washed away by the floods.

"We have been struggling for a permanent landmark and it's good that we now have a building of our own", said Shaiqa Mohi, principal IMFA.

While the students of the institute seemed to be pleased on getting the institution shifted to the Kashmir University, but the lack of basic facilities is causing a lot of inconvenience to them.

"We use Model Public School's wash-room. It is really inconvenient for us, especially for girls", said Sakib, a student.

Sabreen, another student said, "Art can be practiced everywhere, however technology has developed, we need graphic labs and software and that is what we lack right now."

"Though we still don't have too many facilities, the authorities are working on it and hopefully will keep their promise", said Mohi.

## BABA NAGRI URS CELEBRATED WITH RELIGIOUS FERVER

❖ **Afshan Rashid**

Srinagar: Thousands of devotees thronged Baba Nagri to celebrate the 123th annual Urs of Hazrat Baba Jee Sahib Larwi (RA) on June 6 in Ganderbal. The two day Urs, from June 6 to June 8, witnessed a huge number of devotees came from different areas.

On June 8, special prayers were held by devotees who come every year from different

parts of the state. The prayers continued all night. In view of this famed festival, Shrine Management had organized a free lungar for the devotees.

The Urs celebration dates back to 19th century.

The Shrine is situated at a distance of 48kms from Srinagar, in the mountains of Naranagh. The place besides having a religious importance is rich in landscapes and natural water bodies.

Before 1990's people from Pakistan administered Kashmir and Pakistan were also visiting this place in good numbers, but now the situation permits only a few.

The visitors were thankful to locals for being cooperative and helpful. "Thousands of devotees visit this place every year and we welcome them," said Fazal Khan, a local resident. "We at times even offer them place in our homes to stay."

## KU ORGANIZES WORKSHOP FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED



❖ **Sumaiya Yousuf**

Srinagar: A three-day workshop was organized by Special Cell, Department of Students Welfare in association with National Association for Blind, CIS Bengaluru, Allama Iqbal Library, and J&K Abled organization at Kashmir University.

The workshop aimed to train visually impaired people to use new equipment's which includes talking watch, talking calculator, talking keyboard.

University Librarian KU Abdul Majeed Baba in his welcome note said, "the main objective of the workshop is to train differently abled to know about the new technologies for differently abled people."

He stressed that 50 percent of the visually impaired people are illiterate in J&K and "This issue needs to be addressed".

The chief guest, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Asgar Samoon, while speaking on the occasion said that the Jammu and Kashmir lacks infrastructure and has acute shortage of doctors.

"It has been a trend that politicians make so many promises at the time of elections and after winning the polls, their promises only remain confined to the papers and they speak only for public consumption," he said.

Samoon in his speech also urged education institutes and universities to help differently abled students in getting admissions to what he called as "inclusive education".

In his speech, Station Director Radio Kashmir Humayun Qaiser said that the government in Jammu and Kashmir "does not exist" for differently abled people.

"Government in our State could have saved eyes of 80 percent of people from the total number of visually impaired but they ignored their issues and didn't take any step to save them. This is the level of health care that the differently abled people get in J&K, which simply means government does not exist for them," he said.

CEO NAB New Delhi Homiyar Mobedji (himself visually impaired) in his address said that the education is the fundamental right of every one; be it differently abled or abled people, so society should behave normally and help visually impaired people to seek education.

"We are from the category of visually impaired people but we want society to accept us as normal human beings. We don't want another world for differently," he added.

A number of visually impaired students and elderly people took part in the three day work shop.

## ASPIRING FEMALE SPORTS ENTREPRENEUR

❖ **Rafia Rahim**

Srinagar: Despite less enthusiasm for sports among women in Kashmir, Rehaan a 25 year old runs a big sports shop 'A-one sports' in Dalgate Srinagar.

Rehaan holds a bachelor's degree in Arts along with diploma in computer applications. She has been with this profession since 2012, when she left the teaching job to earn more for the survival of her family.

A one sports shop earns a huge profit of 1 lakh rupees on daily basis. While talking to MERC Times Rehaan admitted that she faced some awkward moments but she ignored all these incidents and remained committed with her job.

"Initially I was not feeling comfortable when I had to interact with any male customer" says Rehaan.

"But I didn't give up, I made myself confident and remained committed and now here I am the only girl running this big shop" she added.

Shops popularity has made every sports-lover known to Rehaan. Not only males, even female customers are finding this per-



fect destination for sports items.

Local, National and Inter-national sports players and athletes come here to get their desired stuff" Rehaan said.

When asked about future plans of advancing A-one sports business, Rehaan said, "Currently our business units are operating from few districts in Kashmir Valley, but I would like to expand the circle."

As a sports entrepreneur, Rehaan said that we should encourage those girls who wanted to join this profession. "It has tremendous scope, especially for girls who are enthusiastic and willing to join this field." Rehaan said.

Rehaan says that no work is flawed "one should go to every field and taste every bit of work because when we come across any new field or experience, then we can prove ourselves how much capability we have."

## PPCPL ROUGHS UP VISITING FANS ON DAY 1

❖ **Zafar Aafaq**

Srinagar: The fans who attended inaugural ceremony of the much advertised 'Police Public Cricket Premier League (PPCPL)' criticized the tournament organizers for roughing up the inaugural ceremony.

As per the advertisements in the newspapers the ceremony had to start at 6:30 PM but got delayed by one hour, because Chief Minister who was chief guest arrived late at the venue.

"I could not understand why they waited for chief guest to arrive, we wanted to see the performance of artists and also take glimpse of former Indian Cricketer Mohammad Kaif and current J&K Ranji team Captain and local star cricketer Pervez Rasool. They should have started in time," said Haroon Rashid, a cricket fan, who had come from Qamarwari to witness

the occasion.

The enthusiastic fans who wanted to meet the cricket stars gracing the occasion also complained of misbehaviour by security personnel.

"The gaurds did not allow us to enter the main ground. We told them we want to meet Pervez Rasool but they pushed us away," says Aabid Khan, another visitor accompanied by his friend Bilal Ahmad.

"We are real fans who instil life into such ceremonies, we make it successful and we were poorly treated by management. We could not take closer look of stars, we did not get a chance to meet them. We were made to sit on dirty chairs," complains Muzzamil Maqbool.

Despite poor facilities and conduct, fans cheered and enjoyed every moment on the occasion. Every time camera zoomed on Pervez and appeared on screen, the crowd went in uproar.

## KRALPORA ROAD IN PATHETIC CONDITION, AUTHORITIES NOWHERE

❖ **Wasim Nasir**

Gurez: The road in Kralpora is giving tough time to its inhabitants as the road continuous to be in pathetic condition.

The locals say that they have been going to concerned department for several years for the redressal of issue, but to no avail, the problem is yet to be resolved. "We are waiting for better road connectivity since 15 years but the government is giving a deaf ear to our pleas" Bashir Ahmad, a local said.

Shabir lone, a resident of Kounter mohalla Kralpora while talking to MERC times said, "we had been pleading to the authorities to provide better roads, but the authorities are in deep slumber from last 15 years."

The people are now rejuvenating the road with monetary assistance of their own as they are continuously suffering in their daily commute owing the dilapidated condition of Kralpora road.

"We have been temporary maintaining this roads from the money collected from the residents for last many years as no government agency is taking responsibility for the betterment of roads" said Mohammad Qadir, a resident Kralpora.

## 'KASHMIR: A STATE OF IMPUNITY' RELEASED AT KU



❖ **Suhaib Mansur**

Srinagar: 'Kashmir: a state of impunity', a book by Javid Iqbal, a doctor and a leading civil society member, was released at an event held at Kashmir University amid a galaxy of civil society members, intelligentsia and students.

The book release function was organized by the civil society members in collaboration with Gulshan Publications. The book is a collection of essays and columns written by Dr. Javid Iqbal over the years on myriad topics such as philosophy, spirituality, economics, health-care, education and culture.

The event started off with the inaugural address by Prof. Hamida Nayeem, Head of the English department Kashmir University. She termed the book as "invaluable addition to Kashmir's literature based on authentic narrative".

"The book is about culture of impunity that has seeped into every section and sector of the society," Prof Nayeem said.

Renowned pediatrician Dr. Altaf Hussain while reviewing the book said that "there is serious need to enrich our literature. There is a serious deficit of books written by Kashmiri authors about Kashmir and we have to rely on outsiders work who most of the time indulge in character assassination.

Abdul Majid Zargar, leading CA, and known figure among the civil society, while reviewing the book commented about its price.

"The price of the book should be lowered down and there should be a special discount for the student community," he said.

Prof. G.R. Malik, former HOD English department Kashmir University was the chief guest on the occasion and congratulated the author for the book in his presidential address. He said that we if we yearn for change we have to start from changing ourselves.

The author, while talking to MERCTIMES said that "Kashmir's history is replete with instances of impunity and because of that every sector of the state is in disarray."

When asked about the higher price he said that "I would request the publishers to bring the price down so that everyone would be able to buy this book."



## RESPIRATORY DISORDER ON RISE IN KHREW

❖ **Umar Shafi**

Srinagar : While local population of Khrew town is demanding an end to unabated pollution caused by the presence of cement factories, doctors in the lone Primary Hospital of Khrew town have warned of increase in respiratory disorders.

Doctors stationed at the district hospital say that out of the patients seen in Out Patient Department (OPD) daily, 25 per cent complain of respiratory disorders.

“The respiratory disorders in the local population can be attributed to smoking, chewing of tobacco etc, but almost 25 per cent cases are such which have been directly affected by the pollution caused by cement industries,” says Khurshid Ahmed, a senior doctor in the government Hospital Khrew.

“The number may increase incase government fails to check the pollution caused by these factories”, he added.

According to Dr Ahmad, people of this town are more prone to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases (COPD). The people who are suffering from minor lung ailments can be badly affected from the constant inhaling of the air which is full of toxic particles coming out from cement factories.



The ongoing construction of more cement factories in the town has generated fear among locals as they think that government is giving priority to corporate interest over public welfare.

Locals also alleged that these factories are involved in illegal mining and have occupied more land than they have been actually allotted under rules.

“Since these factories have been running here for more than two decades, the most people of this locality and of adjacent areas have developed Allergic Bronchitis,”

opines Dr Ahmad.

He further added that small children are more prone to diseases here as their metabolic system is very weak, so the owners should either use eco friendly ways for running their plants or government should wind them up in case they fail to do so.

It is important to mention that according to the report from the World Health Organisation (WHO), Khrew has a more death rate than any other town in the district due to these poisonous gases. These factories emit 100,000 kilograms of toxic fumes, poisonous gases and life-threatening elements in the air on daily basis.

The WHO report rated lung disease as the main killer, followed by Kidney and heart ailments. The report also suggested that pollution control must intervene and check these factories on monthly basis whether the pollution control devices are functioning properly.

It is pertinent to mention that the lone government Hospital in the area lies in the close vicinity of the cement factories and doctors there believe that the pollution caused by the cement factories affects the patient care and government should solve this matter as soon as possible.

## BUDGAM TEHSIL OFFICE ‘VIOLATES’ PSGA

‘DOCUMENT UNDER PROCESS, COME AFTER FEW DAYS’

❖ **Altaf Hussain**

Budgam: In Tehsil office Budgam, a simple process of getting a Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) or an Income Certificate for financially weaker section takes an eternity to complete. The officials work at snail’s pace and whenever one tries to enquire about the status of his or her document, he gets a same answer every time, “Document under process.”

Pertinently, the Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA) 2011 which provides for right to public service to every eligible person within the specified time limit in a transparent manner is blatantly violated as most of the ‘public work’ takes more than the stipulated time here.

The lackadaisical attitude of which all the Tehsils in general and Budgam tehsil in particular has become prey of,

is taking heavy toll on people, particularly students and unemployed who have to wait for months to get an income certificate or a PRC and who mostly do not meet the form submission deadlines simply because an official at the Tehsil office takes his own sweet time to complete the documentation process.

“I applied for an income certificate to apply for the university scholarship for financially weaker students. The income certificate was mandatory but the Budgam Tehsil office took a lot of time and as such I missed the submission timeframe,” says Abid Wani, an MCA student.

He further added that he had waste his time visiting the Tehsil office everyday and a familiar excuse, “document under process” always awaited me. Eventually, after 20 days I got my income certificate post

crossing the university submission deadline.

While talking to a group of people who were waiting for some officials at the Tehsil office, they said, “Our matter was about newly constructed road and its linkage to nearby village. In a bid to remove bottlenecks from blocking the road, we had registered a case about the issue in Budgam Tehsil. Higher officials in the department convinced us of a fast and productive solution of the case, since then one month has passed but there is no progress at all in the case. The only reply that we used to get from them was “Case under process”.

While discussing the issue with Ali Mohammed, a Naib Tehsildar in tehsil Budgam, he said: “I only take two or three days maximum to settle issues, demands and grievances that general public bring to me. I have been here in Budgam

Tehsil for eleven years. Yes, finalising some documents do take time but people should understand that it is indeed a lengthy process.”

The people in general prefer to stay away from such departments and pray that they don’t come under their ‘clutches’.

While talking a senior official in the tehsil office, he said: “There is actually a prescribed schedule in which some services under Public Services Guarantee Act have been given priority to be completed within a prescribed period.”

He said sometimes a task gets delayed due to work overload. “I assure the work of public would be done in limited time frame and that also in transparent manner. I have already directed concerned officials in Tehsil to accelerate in completing public work,” he added.

# KU ORGANIZES 'WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY'

❖ **Anayat Sultan**

Srinagar: The Department of Students Welfare Kashmir University organized a seminar on World No Tobacco day on June 1 2015 amid large gathering of academic, political social dignitaries and students. The event was organized in collaboration with J&K Voluntary Health Association (JKVHA) and Times of India Group at media house auditorium.

Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhary Lal Singh, state's health minister and chief guest on the occasion said that "addiction to smoking brings nothing but misery and devastation and it is better to use that time and money for the betterment of the society".

The minister added that to eradicate this menace everyone has to work at grassroots to bring about a change.

Minister of State for Health



and Social Welfare Asiya Naqash, guest of honour on the occasion said that "smoking not only affects the health of the smoker but also has negative socio-economic and environmental impact".

Prof. Khurshid Iqbal Andrabi, V-C, Kashmir university on his part said that there is a need

of comprehensive drive against this social evil.

"Why should there be restriction only upto 18 years and within the radius of 100 metres from the outer boundary of educational institutions? There should be a blanket ban on the use of tobacco products irrespective of age and institution," Prof

Andrabi said.

Chairman JKVHA on the occasion spoke about the role JKVHA has played in the de-addiction and rehabilitation of the addicts and stressed on the Government to "levy higher rate of taxes on tobacco products".

Earlier while welcoming the guests Dean Students welfare, Prof. Nilofer khan said that "the varsity has already been declared as no smoke zone and the violators are taken to task under section 4 of COTPA 2003". "The varsity has always played its part in the eradication of the social evils alongside the civil society and we will continue to do so", she further added.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Prof. Neerja Matto, member JKVHA. She thanked the guests, media persons and the students from various institutions for being part of this event and making it a success.

# KU CELEBRATES WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

❖ **Muneer Dar**

Srinagar: The Department of Environmental Sciences in collaboration with the Department of Students Welfare under the slogan "SEVEN BILLION DREAMS, ONE PLANET CONSUME WITH CARE" celebrated World Environment Day on June 5, at Gandhi Bhavan Auditorium, Kashmir University.

In his welcome address, Bashir Ahmad Ganie, Head of the Department of Environmental Sciences said, "The continued degradation and depletion of resources is a great concern for the sustainability of the environment and for sustainable growth, conservation of resources is necessary".

Sheikh Javed, Dean Research, said "clean ability of the environment is extremely important for the sake of our future generation".



Professor Zafar Rishi, Registrar Kashmir University, who was also the chief guest on the occasion stressed on the need for conservation of resources. "At the pace

environmental programme to be successful, participation of students is necessary", remarked professor Nilofar Khan, Dean Students Welfare (DSW).

we are using resources, by 2050, we will require resources equivalent to three earths; which is not possible, so there is need to learn more about environment and try to conserve it".

On the sidelines of the event, Dr. Aftab Ahmad, Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Sciences, while talking to MERC times said, "human lust and greed have drained the carrying capacity of our environment that is why there is serious change in climatic pattern, which ultimately leads to degradation of our resources".

On this occasion, a number of school children and research scholars were present. "For any