

MERC TIMES



Vol 8 | No 02 | MARCH 30, 2015

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AUTHORITIES IGNORE HMT-CROSSING MESS, COMMUTERS SUFFER

❖ ANAYAT SULTAN

Srinagar: The Srinagar- Baramulla highway continues to give tough time to commuters with long queues of vehicles getting stuck everyday near the hectic HMT-Parimpora stretch thereby causing delay to the travelers.

Being one of the strategically and economically important routes in the valley this road witnesses mess of thousands of vehicles that jostle for space every day.

Amaan Nabi, a Kashmir University student hailing from north Kashmir said, "Every day we face huge inconvenience at HMT crossing due to mess on the road; it causes wastage of our precious time".

Authorities had started road widening project about 14 years ago but to utter dismay of the general public, the completion of the project is still a pipe dream.

The officials of the executing agency hold lack of funds and the climatic conditions, responsible for the inordinate delay in the completion of the project.

The locals are aghast over the snail's pace work on the long ongoing project which has taken the toll of everyone asso-

ciated with this road.

"The work on this vital project is going on for more than a decade now but is still no way near the completion" said by Javed Iqbal, a local resident.

"The previous Governments have miserably failed to address this pressing issue and we hope that the new government will look into the issue and direct the executing agencies to speed up the pace of work" he said.

Although the government has deployed some traffic police personnel to streamline the traffic but the rush is such that it becomes impossible for them to keep on the free flow of traffic on the road, locals said.

A senior official, at the traffic department said that "there is immediate need to complete the widening project as it is becoming difficult to manage the traffic due to the ever increasing pressure of vehicles on this route".

On being asked, how to end up this daily mess, he said, "People should necessarily follow the principles and the drivers should always obey the rules so that undue inconvenience is minimized" he added.

QAMARWARI-HAZRATBAL ROUTE MESS:

STUDENTS DEMAND SUMO SERVICE AS ALTERNATIVE

❖ UMAR SHAFI

Srinagar: The Kashmir University students are demanding alternative transport facilities from Hazratbal to Qamarwari route as according to them the inadequate transport is causing inconvenience to thousands of students coming from the this direction.

Qamarwari route, which remains busy with the rush of students, is considered one of the major routes for the University students.

The students allege that with limited vehicles, the buses are always overloaded with passengers thereby causing a lot of hassle to female students.

"It seems traffic rules are not applicable to this route" says Gazanfar Afroze, a Kashmir University student.

"Since there is inadequate transport plying on this route, we are left with no other alternative but to go away with overloaded buses" he added.

Anayat Sultan, another student from Kashmir University said "I come from Sopore and it takes me not more than 50 minutes to cover a long distance of 45km from Sopore to Qamarwari. But from Qamarwari to Hazratbal, which is about 12km, it takes me more than one hour to reach."

The students have now appealed to the transport department to look into the matter and have asked for an alternative transport service that would save the time of students.

The buses which ply on this route often move at snail's pace due to which it becomes difficult for students to reach on time, the students complained.

"It seems they are least bothered about the safety and comfort of passengers and are interested in earning more and more bucks by putting life of passengers at stake", said a local passenger.

PDD FAILS TO RESTORE POWER SUPPLY, LOCALS AGHAST

❖ ZAFAR AAFAQ

Srinagar: The unprecedented weather change has disturbed the electricity schedule in many areas of the valley as number of electric wires and uprooted poles are left unnoticed by Power Development Department (PDD).

People stage protests at many places, demanding fast track restoration of power supply in the valley.

"The officials earlier assured us to restore the supply within hours but five days have gone, we are still reeling under darkness," said Mushtaq Parray, a tehsil Chadoora resident.

Locals here allege that the PDD officials hardly visit to the affected areas and show a 'lethargic ap-

proach' towards renewing the damage done by the snowfall.

Similar queries were also raised by people living in Charari Sharief, Wathora, Zuhama as locals stage demonstrations against the PDD for not fixing the issue.

"We have been living continuously without any power supply to us despite the repeated complaints from local men, the officials were unreturned" said by Abdul Razzaq, a resident of Budgam.

Many areas of the city also face frequent power cuts irking the residents.

"The administration earlier assured us to restore the electricity in five hours but it has been five days now and we are still facing issues," said Rafiq Ahmad, a resident of Baghat Srinagar.

Residents of Wagoora Tehsil of district Baramulla also staged protest against officials of Power Development Department (PDD) for neglecting their area and demanded immediate restoration of power.

Similar reports were received from Tehsil Karnah of North Kashmir's Kupwara District which is also without the electricity supply for past 20 days.

As the board exams have just begun, the parents are expressing concerns over the continuous darkness, which according to them cause serious implications on the exam results of students.

A top official of the department in Srinagar said that 70 to 80 percent of the supply has been restored. Work is in progress and 100 percent reparation will be achieved in couple of days.

SUDHIR DAR VISITS MERC



Photo Credits/Suhaib

❖ SIBTAIN HYDER

Srinagar: Sudhir Dar, a renowned political cartoonist, visited Media Education Research Centre (MERC) at the University of Kashmir on Mar 27. Dar interacted with the media students while sharing his professional experience, which runs down to the last four decades.

Starting with *The Statesman* in 1960, Dar went on to work as the political staff cartoonist

with *Hindustan Times*, one of the largest-selling newspapers in north India, for over two decades. After which he worked independently for many newspapers and magazines.

Addressing a huge gathering of faculty and students, Dar stressed on the importance of communication in the field of journalism.

“Express yourself, that’s journalism. Communicate as much as you can, with this you would learn how to express more accurately,”

Dar said.

Being the most illustrious cartoonist of the nation, he shared his unique experience of he made up his mind to become a cartoonist and not go in to any other field, how students can create a new journalism by staying close to their roots and what is the greatest difficulty he faced as a cartoonist.

“My philosophy as a cartoonist was to bring a smile on the face of people. I always wanted to stay with the creativity. I had some difficult times, every one of us has, but one thing that keeps you going in the field is the will to do it at any cost. Stay focussed in whatever you do. Sometimes life hits you so hard that it becomes very difficult,” opined Dar.

Dar suggested that the journalists should look beyond the veil of stereotypes and be fair in their approach.

“There will be people who will hate and like you, there will be critics of your work but you should be focussed.”

Impressed by the liberal interaction, Umar Shafi, a student at MERC said, “It’s good to interact with such an eminent personality. He was very humble and down to earth. Experiences are shared. He has seen the world, we are about to. So it’s always fruitful to interact with experienced people”

In the end, Dar wished the students luck in the field of media and urged them to visit Delhi and look for more professional opportunities.

CCAS HOSTS 3 DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

❖ NAZIR GILLO

Srinagar: Centre of Central Asian Studies (CCAS) Kashmir University, organised a three day international conference on ‘Literary Legacy of Indo-Central Asia, Afghanistan and Iran’ was organized from 31st March to April 2nd, in collaboration with Bedil International Foundation (BIF), New Delhi.

The inaugural function of the conference was held at Gandhi Bhavan, Kashmir University. Prof. G.N Khaki, Director, Centre of Central Asian Studies after introducing the theme of the conference formally welcomed the participants who had come from different parts of India and abroad.

In his introductory remarks, Director highlighted the age old relations between India and Central Asia in its prospect and retrospect; stressing the need to explore the ways and means to revive the rich historical relations in the context of the emerging importance of the inter-regional cooperation.

Dr. Haseeb Drabu, Minister for Finance, Culture, Labour and Employment was the Chief Guest on the occasion. In his inaugural address, Dr. Drabu extensively spoke about the current state of culture and stressed the immediate need of revival of Silk Route for fostering the bonds of culture, commerce and scholarship.

The ambassador of Turkmenistan in India, Mr. Parakhat Durdyev, who was the Guest of honor on occasion, highlighted the Sufi traditions of the region under reference.

Prof. Hakemeh Dadiran, former Vice-Chancellor of Az-Zehra University, Tehran, Iran, delivered the key

note address while highlighting the role of Persian language and its impact on the neighboring region including Sub continent.

Prof. Mirzo Mulloahmad, Director, Academy of Science, Dushambeh, Tajikistan, also as Guest of honor, spoke about the regional relations since ancient times in the context of language and literature.

Mr. Mohammad Shafi Pandit (IAS), Chairman Bedil International Foundation, New Delhi, introduced the said foundation and highlighted its efforts with



regard to the promotion of Persian Literature and highlighted the contributions made by the medieval scholars and poets of Persian Language.

The inaugural session was followed by 14 technical paper reading sessions, in which 103 research papers were presented, including two from Media Education Research Centre (MERC), on diverse magnitudes related to the Geography, History, Language, Trade Routes, Literature, Culture, Trade and Relations between Central Asian and Sub-Continent.

The delegates who presented their papers during the conference were from various south and central

Asian nations including; Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iran and the prominent institutions of India like Jamia Millia Islamia, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi University, Calcutta University, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) Aligarh, IUST Awantipora, SKUAST-Kashmir, IGNOU, besides reputed institutions of Patna, Haryana, Mysore, Pondicherry Aurangabad, Hyderabad and New Delhi.

The Vice-Chancellor, Kashmir University, Prof Khurshid Iqbal Andrabi presided over the valedictory session of the conference. In his presidential address, the Vice-Chancellor shed light upon the cultural interactions for which languages play a significant role.

In the end, Convener Conference prof. Qamar Gaffar, secretary General of Bedil International Foundation (BIF) deliberated upon the need of such academic activities and formally presented the vote of thanks.

The Conference was attended by various scholars and luminaries, including Padma Shri Prof. (Capt.) Dr. M. Sharfe Alam, Prof. Zamira Gaforova, Shaikh Musak Rajjak, Dr.

Hakimeh Dabiran, Dr. Hassan, Sharofat Arabova, Dr. Mirza Mullahmad, Prof. Amit Dey, Prof. Jiger Mohammad, Prof. Muhammad Aleem Ashraf, S. K. F. Husaini, Gulfishan Khan, Prof. Ajay Kumar Patnaik, Prof. Sanauallah Mir, Prof. G. M. Mir and Mohsin Raza Khan. Besides Prof. M. Ashraf Wani, Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Naseem A. Shah, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof. Aijaz A. Bandey, Prof. G. R. Jan, Prof. Bashir A. Dabla, Prof. Noor Ahmad Baba, Prof. Hameed Naseem, Prof. Abdul Rashid and Prof. Hamida Nayeem also participated in various academic sessions.

MERC ORGANIZES 3-DAY EDITING WORKSHOP



Photo Credits: Suhail

❖ MAROUF GAZI

Srinagar: Media Education Research Centre (MERC), Kashmir University, organized a 3 day in-house workshop on 'Editing in Print' for its students. Hilal Mir, renowned Hindustan Times journalist and Zahid Rafiq, special correspondent 'The Hindu' were the chief facilitators.

The workshop started on March 25 with a welcome note by Mr. Faruk Masudi, Coordinator MERC and Prof. Sabeeha Mufti.

Attendants at the workshop were introduced to the art of storytelling and aspects of news reporting by Zahid, while discussing the changing scenario of news reporting in the age when news reports are flowing 24/7.

"Nothing is wrong in a story but there is always room for improvement" said Hilal while introducing the students to five-paragraph structure in editing a story. Through his discussion, he moved students from the idea of sub editor's role as spell

checker and grammar corrector to him being responsible for all that takes place, from story pitch to giving reporter's compilation a final shape and deciding upon adding value to story.

"Sub-editor should always remain a step ahead of reporter in terms of prior information and background of the story" Hilal held.

The duo also discussed freelancing and shared valuable insight about how to pursue as a freelancer. Zahid stressed that a freelancer must be able to sell the story by knowing the banner, he or she wants to write for.

As an example of meticulous journalistic research, Zahid suggested participants to read 1965 piece 'Frank Sinatra Has a Cold' by Gay Telese, an American author and then a journalist with Esquire magazine.

"Telese was given an assignment by Esquire to profile Frank Sinatra, the legendary American Singer who was reluctant to talk about himself. The next thing, Telese did, wrote a 15000 word piece

about Frank involving everyone but Frank. The piece is still exemplified as one of the best journalistic research pieces, more so because the subject was not directly involved" Zahid said.

Hilal took over Zahid to discuss the SOAP-ST, an acronym for Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Speaker and Tone. He stressed that SOAP-ST should be used as a prewriting gauge for all stories.

Hilal also highlighted how being multi-skilled can help the beginners climb up the professional ladder faster. He explained the convergence of newsroom and suggested the participants to learn new software used in layout designing and multimedia editing.

The workshop concluded on March 27.

MERC SCHOLARS AWARDED

❖ MERC DESK

KU, March 26: Media Education Research Centre (MERC), Research Scholars namely, Saima Riyaz and Toyeba Pandit got the 2nd best paper award in a National Seminar on 'Issues related to the Library and Information Science Profession in the North-Western Region of India', organized by the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kashmir. The Seminar was organized from 24-25 March 2015, in collaboration with Allama Iqbal Library, University of Kashmir, sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR).

MULTI-CULTURAL EVENT 'BAAMAN' HELD AT KU

❖ TASIR KHAN

Srinagar: Prism creations, in association with department of student's welfare Kashmir University held a musical-cum-cultural festival 'Baaman' from March 14 to 16 at convocation complex Kashmir University.

The event began with multi-cultural programs followed by the thrilling performance by a Pune based rock band, including a budding rock band (vocalist) artist from Kashmir Muhammad Muneem. The rock band 'Highway 61' fashioned the fusion of rock music with traditional folk music of Kashmir.

While talking to MERC TIMES, Mrs. Tabish Habib, one of the organizers said, "Baaman is an international photography exhibition which

aims at exhibiting Kashmir in its different forms of beauty amongst its people, culture heritage and landscapes of course."

Baaman is first of its kind exhibition which is held in Kashmir that features works of photographers from many countries, along with a multicultural program which has many great performances.

Dr. G N Qasba, chairman, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, and Dean Student's welfare, prof. Nilofar Khan were the chief guest on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Qasba said that "the valley youth can create new ventures and they have the potential to showcase the latent talent in them".

He said, "The event has exposed that the valley youth are second to none and the only need is

to nurture the inner skills of our young generation."

Prof. Nilofar Khan while applauding the event organizers said "the department of student's welfare has been on the forefront in organizing the cultural events inside the campus".

Earlier, the three day international photo exhibition-cum-festival was inaugurated by dean student's welfare prof. Nilofar Khan, who along with CEO Prism Creation's, Tabish Habib and cultural officer Shahid Khan Kick started the event on Friday.

The event concluded with the certificate distribution ceremony, in which Dr. G N Qasba along with Prof. Nilofar Khan gave away the certificates to the organizers and the associates of this event.



BREAKING BARRIERS; ENTREPRENEUR INVESTS IN HANDICRAFT

❖ NELOFAR JAHAN

Srinagar : Dreamt of venturing in the handicraft business, Arifa Jan, a handicraft entrepreneur is setting standard for young entrepreneurs in valley.

Coming from an illiterate family, Arifa did her graduation in commerce and then received her master’s degree in craft development, to make a career in the craft management and marketing of Kashmir handicrafts in valley.

According to her, during her master’s degree research, she developed an interest in revival of carpets in valley. In her research, she used the wool of ‘merinos’, a type of sheep known for its better quality of wool and qualitative dyes which are less harmful, to make a fine quality of carpets.

“I have always been committed to provide better quality products to my customers. Be it carpets or embroidery, we go for a special thread to ensure good quality” Arifa said.

As part of her project work in academics, Arifa prepared 300 carpets and exhibited some of her work in Delhi as well.

“It was a memorable day for me as I had sold all my carpets with a good response from the customers,” she recalls.

Recently, Arifa started a venture ‘Incredible Kashmir Crafts’, that makes carpets and other items like embroidered covers ,bags and many other products, who’s main focus is on the design and innovations as well as the preservation of Kashmiri handicrafts.

“I am happy that more women are getting associated with Incredible Kashmir Crafts. Further, it would enhance their working skills so that they can have their own ventures and a better future.”

Arifa is aspiring to create an organisation which will provide financial assistance to those women who wish to start their own ventures but lack monetary support.

SEAT RESERVATION, NO LAW JUST CONSCIENCE

❖ JUNAID RAFIQ

Srinagar: The much hyped initiative to reserve seats for women in the local passenger buses by the department of traffic is proving to be a failure, allege female commuters of Kashmir.

The drive, launched by Superintendent of traffic, Haseeb-u-Rehman in collaboration with the Civil Society Forum led by its Secretary General Omer Shafi Trumboo in 2012, to ensure safe and comfortable travel for women commuters seems to have found no takers , as there is little or no impact on the ground and women continue to suffer due to overloading in the buses.

Most of the women travel by buses since it is economical. But they continue to suffer in the overloaded buses as they have to jostle for space every time they travel.

“There are stickers pasted in the buses: ‘First eight seats reserved for ladies’. But, it is only limited to these stickers and not implemented practically,” said Saima, a college going student from Srinagar.

“Moreover, we cannot ask the male passengers to get up and leave the seat as we fear they might misbehave or abuse us,” she added.

Admitting the failure of initiative, Superintendent of Traffic police, Haseeb-Ur-Rehman while talking to MERC TIMES, said, “We marked the reserved seats however people are not following the ethics. We are planning to law down some strict policies regarding the same.”

Unlike in other parts of India, the reservation of seats in Kashmir is not backed by any law and is usually left to the conscience of people to make way for the female commuters.

“As there is no provision in the law to charge the offenders with fine, we cannot take any action against them,” Rehman said.

“We have already sent a proposal to authorities, seeking legal aid to tackle this grave issue but we are yet to get response. An enactment of new law is necessary for redressal of this vexed issue”, SP said.

In reply to our question, regarding a separate bus facility for females he said, “Keeping separate buses for females come under the jurisdiction of transport department. As far as our department is concerned our job is to regulate the traffic and implement laws regarding traffic”.

Photo Credits | Suhail



RAINS TRIGGER LANDSLIDES IN GANDERBAL

❖ IDREES AHMED

Ganderbal: Incessant rains since past few days have triggered landslides in Beehama village in Ganderbal town damaging roads and buildings in the locality.

With huge rocks rolling down the hill, landslides have weakened the surface, thus being a danger to life and property. The villagers believe that a concrete bund should be built near hill side to work as a barrier for the rolling rocks as well as huge landslides.

“With scarce trees, the town is vulnerable to landslides if the rains continue. It feels scary,” says Rafiq Pandit, a Beehama resident.

Another resident Ghulam Mohi-ud-din, a farmer, said his sheep paddock was fully damaged due to the last landslide and his cattle were shivering in cold under open sky.

“There is mound of debris and mud in front of my house and till now I have not seen any government official taking note of the issue,” he added.

Commenting on the issues, Tehsildar Ganderbal said, “We will soon make assessment of the damage and due compensation will be ensured. Many bunds had already been made at some places and rest will be brought under notice to higher authorities.”

Similar cases of landslides were also reported last year. Locals believe that such landslides occur due to deforestation by local population.



ROAD BLOCKADE PARALYZES NORMAL LIFE IN GUREZ



❖ WASIM NASIR

Gurez: The residents of Gurez valley are facing huge shortage of essential goods, owing the continuous blockade of Gurez-Bandipora road, the only link between Gurez and rest of the state.

According to locals, the stock of essential

commodities is running out and “it seems government is least bothered about the situation.”

Ghulam Mohammad Dar, a local, blames Government for its “lethargic” approach, which led to a famine like situation in the area.

“It’s very difficult for us to put up with meagre resources and sustain ourselves in situation like this,” Ghulam Mohammad said.

The student community of this area is aghast over the continuous blockade at the road. The students enrolled in various educational institutions of the state are stuck for two months without any alternatives and official assistance.

Aqib Mir, a student, while talking to MERC Times over phone said, “The students have to appear for the examination but we are stuck here, the government should do something for student community.”

While talking to some officials of Border Roads Organization (BRO), responsible for the maintenance of this road, said “the organization has pressed into service some of the sophisticated machines and manpower to put through the road again.”

Traffic movement on Gurez-Bandipora road was suspended in February, due to heavy snowfall witnessed in the area. The heavy snowfall, according to local officials increased the chances of avalanche and landslides at many areas forcing authorities to close the road for vehicular moment.

“We are not allowing any vehicle to pass because of heavy snowfall and prevailing bad weather. The roads are blocked completely and there is a possibility of avalanche in some parts of the area” said by one of the senior police official.

50 km long Bandipora-Gurez road connects dozens of areas near the line of control.



SNOW RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP STARTS IN GULMARG

❖ MUNEER DAR

Baramulla: Two day snow rugby championship was kick started in Gulmarg, a famous resort in Kashmir, on March, 18.

The championship that is being organized by Jammu and Kashmir rugby association and tourism department Kashmir was inaugurated by President of rugby association.

“Championship is being played according to rules and regulation of international rugby board (IRB) as well as Indian rugby football union,” the spokesperson of rugby association said.

Teams from Srinagar, Budgam, Baramulla, Gan-

derbal, Pulwama, Jammu, and Kargil are participating in the championship.

The Spokesperson further said that the Championship is open for both men and women and they have got good response from women teams.

“Many women teams have registered for the championship, it is a big achievement that women are coming forward,” he added.

Inaugural match was played between Baramulla and Srinagar in which Baramulla beat Srinagar by 7 points, making 5 tries and scored 25 points with Srinagar making 3 tries and just scored 18 points.

Suhail a participant said, “Such events will pro-

mote winter sports in Kashmir and I am very grateful to rugby association and tourism department for organizing snow rugby championship”.

Spectators were present there in huge numbers, they found this championship very entertaining and exciting. John melo a German tourist said, “I am very happy to see rugby being played in Kashmir, it is very popular back there in Germany, I am enjoying it a lot”.

President of Gulmarg development authority said, “winter sports can add to the influx of foreign and domestic tourists in Kashmir. In future we are going to see lot of winter sports activities in Gulmarg.”

READY TO COMBAT SWINE FLU THREAT: DDC

24x7 control room established in CMO office Budgam

❖ ALTAF HUSSAIN

Budgam: Proactive measures are being taken to face any eventually which may arise due to threat of N1H1 Influenza or Swine Flu break out in district Budgam.

This was stated in meeting convened by District Development Commissioner, Budgam, Mir Altaf Ahmad which was attended by Chief Medical Officer Budgam, Medical Superintendents, Block Medical Officers and other concerned officers.

Giving details about the arrangements and preparedness to combat the disease, the District Development Commissioner said directions have been placed to all the concerned doctors, para medical staff to remain vigilant and fully prepared at their

respective Health Units, Primary Health Centres, Sub District Hospitals and main District Hospital and examine the routine OPD’s and

keep a close watch on patients visiting their units so that any such suspected patients could be singled out and accordingly treated as per requirement.

The District Development Commissioner appealed to general public not to panic as there is no such threat looming, however, as safety measures people have been advised to keep close watch in their vicinity and adjacent areas and if any suspected person or any such complaint is received



from any where they shall immediately contact Cell No. and Telephone Nos. 01951-255237 and 9419771214 available in Chief Medical Officer’s office 24x7.

The Chief Medical Officer on this occasion assured the District Development Commissioner that Health Department is fully prepared to negotiate any such kind of threat in a professional manner and for this purpose special equipment and machines have been installed for diagnosing N1H1. He said that till date no such case or complaint was anywhere in the district.

BUMPY ROADS WEARING AWAY VEHICLES



❖ MOOSA HAYAT

Srinagar: The bumpy roads of Srinagar are compelling the vehicle owners to pay an extra price for frequent punctures, wearing down and premature realignment of tyres along with decaying of suspensions and shocks of the vehicles.

“I spent Rs 24000 on replacement of tires and suspension, but in just three months my car needs fresh parts as the roads have become pathetic” Mushtaq Ahmad, a car owner complained.

The Managing Director KC Hyundai while confirming the rise in complaints of early wearing down of spare-parts, said “In other cities, the suspension replacement is done after 30,000 kilometers but here it’s being done just after 10,000 kilometers or less of driving.”

Officials blame the September floods of last year, for creating large potholes and fissures in roads.

A senior Government official while admitting the problem said, “Floods have left the roads wrecked and as such the wear and tear of government vehicles has also increased. Also, the main cause of traffic jams is the aggravated condition of roads.”

Deep pits and bumps are precarious for vehicles especially for two wheelers, increasing the chances of road accidents, said by some of the drivers in Lal chowk, Srinagar.

“I got injured last week when my scooter lost control and hit a pedestrian,” said Abdul Hai, a Nowgam, resident.

When contacted the Chief Engineer R&B, Satish Kumar Razdan, said, “The road repair is getting delayed due to the bad weather. Once the weather improves the roads will be blacktopped and most probably the work will start within a few weeks.”

NATURE DISRUPTS ACADEMIC CALENDAR

❖ MOHMAD YONUS

Srinagar : Srinagar: A series of calamities which Kashmir witnessed has badly disrupted the entire academic calendar, leaving student community to suffer.

The September floods, swine flu and recent unprecedented rainfall have left many of the educational institutions dysfunctional in the valley.

Following the floods, the secondary and the university level exams which are usually held in Nov-Dec, were held in March 2015.

The government was compelled to announce the mass promotion of students and later, the swine flu scare caused the extension of vacations, all adding to the delay in commencement of academic activities in the schools.

The admission procedure in Kashmir University generally starts from the month of February but this year even the undergraduate exams are yet to be completed.

“We are still busy with our final year exams. It’s worrying to think of when we will be done with our exams” Gowhar Ahmad, a final year student said.

Aqib Shafi, another final year student, who

desires to be on rolls in Jamia Millia Islamia, said “Though the university sessions in other parts of India starts from August-September but still our preparation time for the entrance exams has been reduced by a number of weeks.”

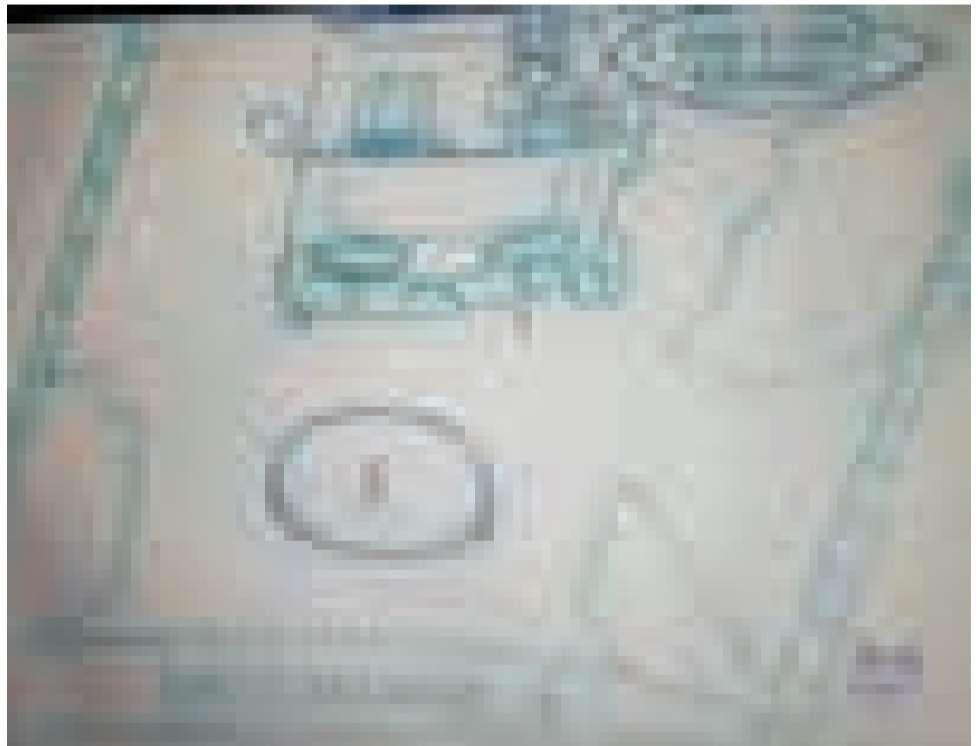
“To crack entrance for universities like Jamia Millia Islamia or Delhi University we need ample time to prepare and we have got little.” He said.

The same worries haven’t spared students at secondary levels as well, with 12th class exams also been postponed a couple of times, extending the time period of their session.

“Our examination was switched over to march because of the floods and lately the snowfalls stretched the period even further” Javid Ahmad, a 12th class student said.

Talking to G.N. Var, President Private Schools united front (PSUF) about the initiatives they had taken to cope with the situation, he said, “we are carrying out remedial classes, assigning students with more homework. Projectors are used to save the time.”

“Nevertheless, it will take 10 years minimum to restore the academic routine because the government approach was lethargic”, he said.



REFLECTIONS...

MERC TIMES CARTOON