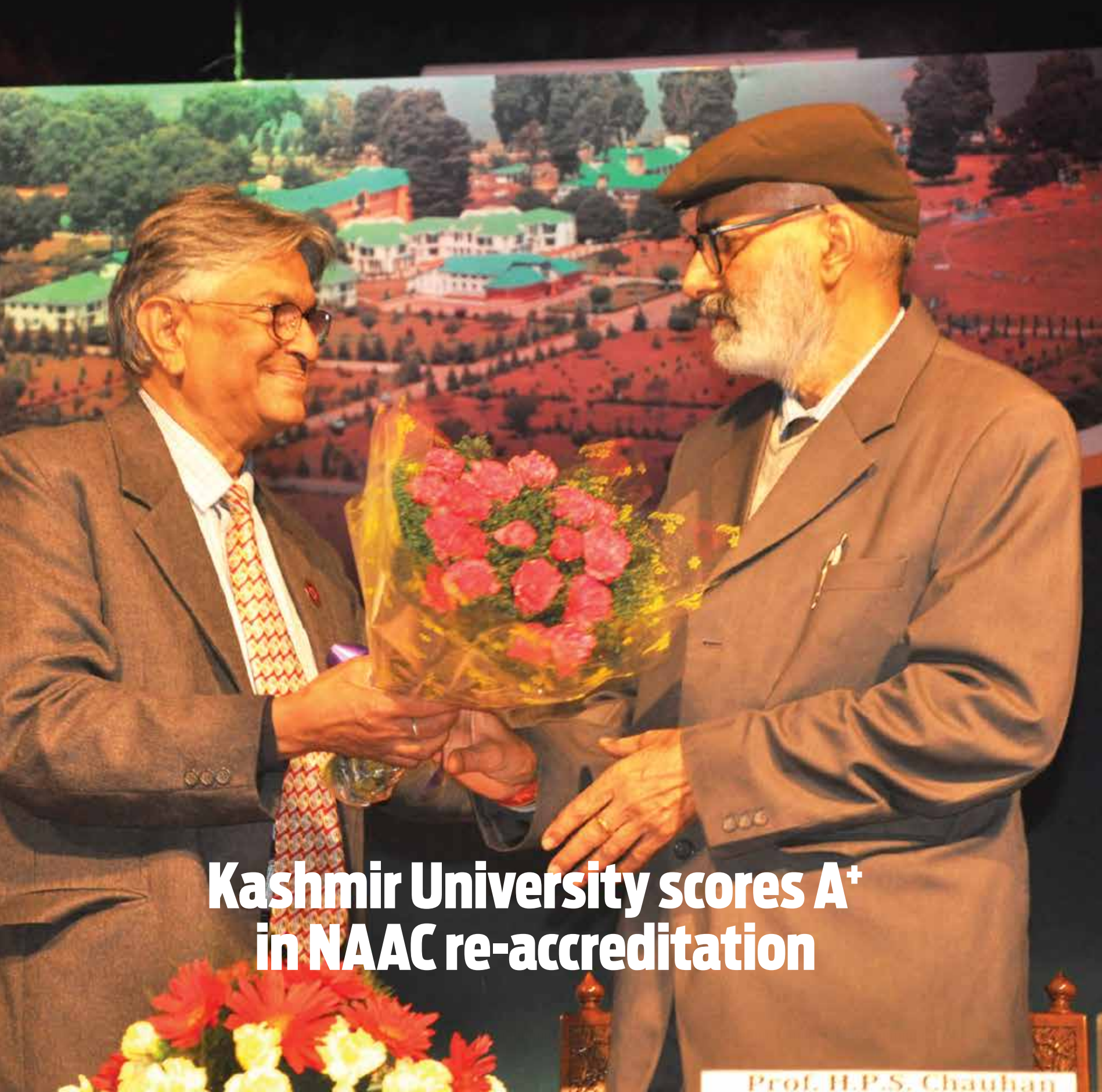


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# MERC TIMES

**MEDIA EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE,**  
**UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR**



**Kashmir University scores A<sup>+</sup>  
in NAAC re-accreditation**

Prof. H.P.S. Chauhan

# NIT observes World Telecommunication and Information Society Day

**Obaid Bashir**  
Srinagar

**A** seminar was held at Srinagar by the Institution of Engineers India, Jammu and Kashmir State Center in collaboration with National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar to observe the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2019.

The seminar focused on the theme bridging the standardization in which more than 100 people including the representatives of the mobile service providers participated.

Rakesh Sehgal Director NIT Srinagar stressed on conducting such seminars to boost the concept of the modern technologies which are important in the day to day life of the people.

Chairman of Institution of Engineers, Aamir Ali said that the telecommunication has made world a global village and percolated in every aspect of the modern day life.

He said, "It is due to the advancement of telecommunication, which has waved out the traditional and conventional concepts and empowered a wide range of the new digital technologies which involve Artificial Intelligence (AI), 5G network, 3D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, machine learning advanced robotics to mention."



**"It is due to the advancement of telecommunication, which has waved out the traditional and conventional concepts and empowered a wide range of the new digital technologies. Which involve artificial intelligence (AI), 5G network, 3D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, machine learning advanced robotics to mention."**



# JCR flyover phase II completed

**Sheikh Arsh**  
Srinagar

**S**tate Governor Satya Pal Malik formally opened JCR flyover phase-II for general public here on May 23 after missing several deadlines.

The construction of Asian Development Bank (ADB) project was announced in June 2009 but started only in 2013. The first phase was inaugurated in May 2018 by the then Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti.

The 2.4 kilometer Jehangir Chowk-Rambagh flyover is to be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 369 crore. The project is being executed by the Jammu and Kashmir Economic Reconstruction Agency (JKERA).

The stretch would provide relief to commuters traveling from areas across this stretch. The flyover has been divided into three phases - Jehangir Chowk-Magarmal Bagh (A), Haft Chinar-Tulsi Bagh (B) and Alochi Bagh to Rambagh (C). The work on four major structures of phase A (Jehangir Chowk-Magarmal Bagh) is yet to be completed.

Governor congratulated the executing agencies and added that this stretch would provide much awaited relief to commuters from Rambagh to Alochi Bagh and regulate traffic at Rambagh, Solina, Alochi Bagh and on Rambagh Bridge.

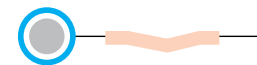
Chief Executive Officer, JKERA Raghav Langer said third and last phase of the flyover is expected to be completed by June end.

"We are hopeful that the final limb of the mega project will be completed in June. People

will have a sigh of relief from traffic congestion in the area," he said.

According to locals, the Jehangir Chowk -Rambagh flyover with six access ramps - including at Jehangir Chowk, Gogji Bagh, Alochi Bagh, Rambagh, Natipora, and Barzulla - is expected to decongest city traffic and reduce travel time between Jehangir Chowk and Rambagh from about 45 minutes to 2.5 minutes.

Earlier, in February this year, ERA imposed a penalty of Rs 2 crore on contractor, M/S Simplex Infrastructure Limited (SIL) for delay in completion of the project.



**"We are hopeful that the final limb of the mega project will be completed in June. People will have a sigh of relief from traffic congestion in the area."**

# Srinagar Residents Await Street Lights



**Sheikh Ahsaan**  
Srinagar

The residents of Hyderia Colony, Khomeini chowk, Bemina decry the delay in installation of street lights by Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC).

The locals of the area demand redressal of grievances filed earlier through Governor's grievances cell.

"We were assured that streets lights will be installed, but never really they did so. They have enlisted the demand and are not executing and redressing the complaints practically. They are doing this for more than six months now" said Manzoor Hussain, an elderly committee member, who is also a complainant.

Hyderia colony is fast growing colony inhabited by muslim minority sect. A group of people said that the place is currently inhabited by some 100 households. " We are living in a locality having disputed jurisdiction, Urban local bodies pass the buck to Municipal Corporation and they in turn ignore" said a person who wished to remain anonymous.

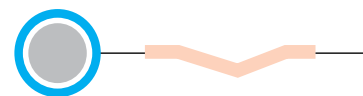
Executive Engineer Electrical SMC said that it is not their duty to get these things done, rather it is duty of deliberative wing."

Hyderia colony hosts Muharram processions where hundreds of mourners gather to commemorate martyrdom of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) grandson in holy month of Muharram and most of the processions require lighting facility to allow smooth conduct of ceremony.

# GHSS Kothibagh celebrates Biodiversity Day



**"Only through knowledge and enlightenment we can bring consciousness at individual level to preserve and conserve the gift of biodiversity. So, such seminars are really important to create awareness among people"**



**Insha Rani**  
Srinagar

A day-long seminar was organized by the Cultural Education Wing of Directorate of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Kothibagh, Srinagar. The seminar was held to raise awareness on the benefits of biodiversity and the large-scale threats being faced by wildlife.

"We need to protect the nature, if we want nature to protect us," said Nadia Mushtaq, a student who participated in the event. The seminar was attended by students from different districts who spoke on various issues related to biodiversity and its conservation.

"Only through knowledge and enlightenment we can bring

consciousness at individual level to preserve and conserve the gift of biodiversity. So, such seminars are really important to create awareness among people,"she added.

Roman Qazi, Principal Girls Higher Secondary School Kothibagh appreciated teachers and students who participated in the seminar. She highlighted that conserving biodiversity is for securing our own future.

"Our actions can be small, yet significant, towards conservation of biodiversity," she said. She also highlighted that in order to survive and prosper, we must respect nature and all the development activities should be in harmony with nature.

The seminar also included brief presentations for generating awareness and sensitization for conservation of wildlife.

# Kashmir University scores A<sup>+</sup> in NAAC re-accreditation

**Tahil Ali**  
Srinagar

**K**ashmir University brought home more laurels by scoring A+ grade in the recent reaccreditation cycle by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

The NAAC peer team comprising of six members during its visit to the University from May 2-4, appreciated the research standards and infrastructure of University.

Vice Chancellor Kashmir University Prof Talat congratulated the staff, students, scholars and alumni on the occasion, "I congratulate both teaching and non-teaching faculty, students, scholars and alumni for this feat," he said.

He added that it was a team effort and that the varsity succeeded in their collective efforts.

The University of Kashmir has scored 3.31 Institutional Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) on a scale of 04 ahead of several other leading Universities in the country as per the result issued by NAAC.

The University has scored 3.89 in Infrastructure and Learning Resources, 3.67 in Curricular Aspects, 3.18 in Teaching Learning and Evaluation, 3.05 in Research, Innovations and Extension, 3.61 in Institutional Values and Best Practices, 3.1 in Governance, Leadership



and Management and 2.94 in Student Support and Progression.

Earlier in April the University bagged 53rd rank in

National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2019 and 51st in QS India University Rankings 2019.

KU was earlier accredited during its previous two cycles in 2002 and 2012. University was awarded grade 'A' by NAAC on both the occasions.

Registrar KU Dr Nisar A Mir also congratulated staff, scholars and students and all other stakeholders of the University. He said that the reaccreditation will ensure better job placements for the students and will fetch more fellowships to the scholars.

Kashmir University's NAAC accreditation will make the university eligible for different funds from Government of India.

NAAC evaluates higher educational institutions in terms of their performance related to the educational process and outcomes, curriculum coverage, teaching-learning process, faculty, research, infrastructure, learning resources,

organization, governance, financial wellbeing and student services.

## Locals suffer due to deplorable condition of Hygam CAPD godown

**Shahid Bashir**  
Srinagar



**I**n absence of any check, decade years old Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution (CAPD) godown lies in deplorable condition with its lawn filled with filth of rotten rice bags and garbage of Hygam, alleges the local population of the area.

Sajad Ahmad, a local resident said that the area is under threat as stink is emanating from the store and it could lead to spread of diseases in neighboring area. "While passing through a nearby road, commuters have to cover their faces due to foul smell in the area."

"The store was setup 10 years ago for the distribution of the ration, but after few years the store was

shifted at another place and the godown was used as a store for rotten rice bags. Last winter, the roof of the godown got heavily damaged due to heavy snowfall and that resulted in its destruction."

Javaid Ahmad, a teacher at local school nearby said, "Hygam is a model village, students from various villages come here to study. The distance that can be covered in 10 minutes takes them half an hour through other alternative route to cover the same distance to avoid the stink.

Locals appeal the authorities to transfer the rotten rice bags to another place so that they get rid of the stinking smell emanating from the store.

Assuring the locals, Fayaz Ahmad Shah, Assistant Director CAPD said,

"We have formed a committee who will prepare a report regarding it, once the report will be completed then we will act accordingly."



The store was setup 10 years ago for the distribution of the ration, but after few years the store was shifted at another place and the godown was used as a store for rotten rice bags

**Aarif Shah**  
Srinagar

The Law School Kashmir University (KU) organises a three-day Bahaar e Ramadan festival-2019 at KU. The festival is organised in association with Saaya, a local NGO and supported by J&K Bank.

The inaugural ceremony of the festival was attended by Registrar of the university, Dr Nisar and Dean Social Sciences, Prof. Asifa Jan, Dean Social Sciences KU, students and scholars.

While welcoming the guests and participants Prof. Mohammad Hussein, Head and Dean School of Law, KU, said “ law society is the society of students which works for social causes and issues. This month is very auspicious to work for our afterlife and we assure that more such programs will be organised in future.”

Dr. Nisar Mir, Registrar KU, who was chief guest on the occasion said “I am very happy to be part of this event. I have an old attachment with this department and I assure to resolve any issue faced by the department.”

## Bahaar-e-Ramadan Festival begins at KU



While talking about the importance of spiritual life, Prof. GN Khaki said “ There are two parts of life-spiritual life and professional life. One needs to balance both of them to live a fulfilling and blissful life.”

He further requested students to contribute in society building and spreading humanity which are important than scientific discoveries.

The various events which are organized in the festival included Azaan competition, Qirat competition, Naat competition, Collage competition, painting & Calligraphy competition.

The festival is attended by participants from various law colleges including Vitasta Law College, Sopore Law College, Kashmir Law College Nowshera and School of Legal Studies Central University of Kashmir.

While talking to MERC Times, many students expressed their satisfaction on participating in the festival. “ I am excited to participate in Naat competition, wining is not my concern. But participation is important. I hope I can become winner in my category,” said Hafsa, a participant.

## Shan-e-Ramadan festival started in Kashmir University



**Rooh Yaseen**  
Srinagar

A three-day Shan-e-Ramadan festival started here at the university of the Kashmir (KU), on May 29.

Division of Youth Affairs Department of Students Welfare (DSW), KU is organising the event and is supported by LAYOUTS and Radio Mirchi.

The festival includes competitions in Husn-e-Naat, Husn-e-Qirat, Husn-e-Azaan and Islamic Calligraphy.

Acting Vice Chancellor KU Prof Neelofar Khan who presided over the event said that DSW has been organizing this event every year in the same month and it has benefited students in showcasing their skills in Quran recitation, Islamic calligraphy and many other areas of religion.

“DSW has always given a face-lift to the

university and has played an important role in engaging students in many cultural, social and intellectual activities”, Prof Khan said.

Registrar KU, Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir who was the special guest on the occasion spoke about the importance of holding such festivals. He assured university’s full support to such endeavors. He appreciated the students participating in the event. “There are small tokens that we give on behalf of the university to the winners of various competitions in the programs held in the fest but the nature of this event is such that mere participation is spiritually rewarding.”

Students of various colleges of Kashmir and Universities are taking part in the fest and displaying their skills in areas of Azaan, Qirat, Calligraphy and Naat.

Dean Students Welfare, KU, Prof Raies Ahmad Qadri gave the welcome address on the occasion and said that such events are

necessary to elevate one spiritually.

Prof Qadri spoke about the medical benefits of fasting as proved by medical science.

On the inaugural day of the festival competitions in HusnAzaan were held and the performance of the participants was evaluated by a three member jury

Cultural Officer DSW KU Shahid Ali Khan conducted the proceedings of the inaugural session.



“There are small tokens that we give on behalf of the university to the winners of various competitions in the programs held in the fest but the nature of this event is such that mere participation is spiritually rewarding.”

## New Parimpora bus terminal in shambles



**There is only one washroom for hundreds of people inside the bus stand which has exposed the Swach Bharat Mission (SBM) of the government**

**Afshan Mir**  
Srinagar

**P**arimpora Bus Stand in the city outskirts turning into a dumping site, as Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) fails to clear the piles of garbage here.

Expressing the resentments over the presence of garbage and lack of basic facilities inside the newly constructed bus terminal, commuters at Parimpora accuse the government of turning a blind eye.

Hamza Hameed, bus driver, said it is the failure of SMC that they don't conduct sanitation drives on daily basis here. "From the last six months, SMC has not conducted any sanitation drive here," Hameed said.

"There is only one washroom for hundreds of people inside the bus stand which has exposed the Swach Bharat Mission (SBM) of the government," he added.

Heaps of garbage are lying unattended in the bus stand and foul smell emanating from it has become the breeding ground for many diseases, causing health problems for pedestrians as well as the local people.

Zubair Ahmad, a local resident said, "Solid waste including plastic bags, polythene and rotten vegetable and fruits can be spotted at every corner of the site and has posed a threat to our health."

Despite repeated attempts about the matter the concerned authorities has only made false promises and nothing has been changed on the ground.

Chairman Western Bus Service Parimpora, Mushtaq Ahmad Lissa said, "SMC is turning a blind eye every time we approach them, this mess is getting worse with each passing day."

Chief Sanitation Officer, SMC, Mohammad Akber Sofi said that they will clear all the garbage from the bus stand within two days. "We will begin a fresh sanitation drive," Akber said.

## Safapora residents protest against dumping of garbage

**Schnian Meer**  
Ganderbal

**T**he Residents of Safapora protested against the dumping of garbage near tourist spot Manasbal by Municipal Committee Ganderbal.

The people living in the vicinity said that the dumping site has been chosen without any consideration. An Engineering college is located near to the proposed dumping site and also many localities are located nearby which include Kohistan Colony, Gratbal and Tresa.

The famous Manasbal Lake is few hundred meters away from the dumping site as a result it has affected tourism activities as well.

The locals further added that the Municipal Committee Ganderbal should have consulted them before taking any such decision. They appealed the District Commissioner Ganderbal to identify some other location for garbage dumping.

When contacted Executive Officer Municipal Committee Ganderbal said, "We didnt have any solid waste dumping site here and therefore we requested DC Ganderbal to provide us land for the same. DC Ganderbal has provided us 25 kanals of state land near Manasbal for the purpose."

"This site is a proper place for solid waste dumping. We have been also directed to dispose of the waste scientifically. We will also setup solid waste treatment plant there. We will ensure that no one is affected by it," he added.

## Newspapers as wrappers cause health problems

**Mirza Sharafat**  
Srinagar

**K**ashmiri traditional junk food and other eatable food items being widely sold in newspaper as wrapper or cover is highly injurious to health says Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

**I**n Kashmir, at every nook and corner, items from traditional junk food sellers to baker's shop, wet and moist eatables are more commonly wrapped in an old newspaper as packing, which is hazardous to human health.

Despite restrictions by FSSAI over wrapping of food items in newspapers, Kashmiri junk food sellers feign ignorance.

"We don't know, there is any restriction on newspaper. I heard this first time from you" said Mushataq Wani, a hawker in Dargah Market Hazratbal.



While speaking to locals, many expressed concern over open selling and circulation of such food items in the market. A lady Parveena Akhtar while buying some street food wrapped in a newspaper in Khanyar said, "I know, newspapers ink blend with food, especially so fast when food is served hot, but people are so hard to be convinced and sensitized for such concerns."

Director Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, said that the matter does not pertain in purview of consumer affairs.

Pertinently as per FSSAI some pathogenic micro-organisms and chemicals are present in newspaper ink that may cause cancer and are hazardous to human health.

# Bandipora residents appeal reviewing link road plan

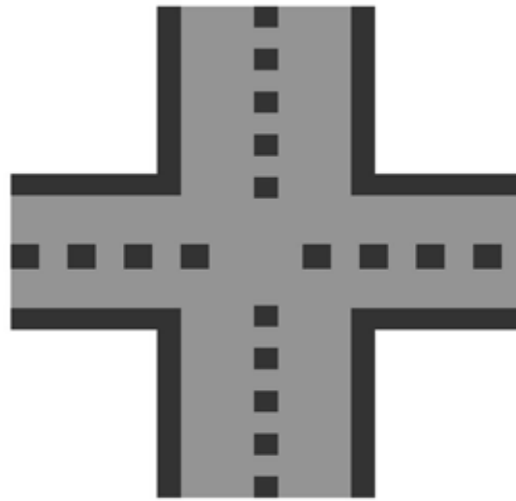
**Tahir Hussain**  
Bandipora

The residents of Bandipora have appealed the Governor, Satya Pal Malik, and Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Shahbaz Mirza, to review the plan of link road construction in order to save their crop lands.

The Government has decided to construct a bypass for Bandipora, which passes through the crop fields, keeping in view the heavy traffic jam in the main market which would affect living of hundreds of local farmers.

“Government needs to examine its plan again as the construction will lead to the eradication of our crop lands which will ultimately lead to shortage of food grains and ecological imbalance”, said a group of local people.

The letter reads that the road be construed on the already existing earthen bund that runs parallel to Nallah Madhumati in Kaloosa,



Nathpora, Dachigam and Zalwan areas as it would be beneficial for the government. Further, the government should not deprive people from their source of income.

“If the road is built on the existing road then the government will not have to purchase land from the farmers”, the locals added.

While blaming the administration local residents told MERC Times, that the government had demarcated the land twice but some land owners of the area are forcing the district administration to change the road alignment for their own interests. “We don’t have enough crop land to sustain in future, if the link road gets constructed on the crop lands,” they added.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Shahbaz Mirza told MERC Times that he will look into the matter personally and will take necessary steps which would cause minimal disturbance in the area.



## Locals protest against defunct water pumping station

**Ubaid Gul**  
Srinagar

Locals in uptown Srinagar area of Gulshan Nagar, Nowgam agitated over the defunct of water pumping station, which extends over 24 km drainage covering 28 areas.

According to the locals, Water pumping station was established in 2008 under ERA and then handed over to the SMC department of Srinagar in 2012, it was functioning properly until it was under Jammu and Kashmir ERA department but after 2012 this water pumping station is nothing less than a place full of trash.

While taking to MERC TIMES, President of Gulshan Nagar area, Showket Ahmad Baqal said, “After 2012 water station was lying defunct and the equipment in the water station are all uncovered and now full of dust. SMC did not at all look after this station nor did they care about its function.”

Meanwhile, Ahmad alleged that SMC paid no heed to their repeated requests about the defunct of the water station.

He further added, “After media covered this issue, the SMC department woke up and started cleaning the drainage. We want them to continue this process and after every two months they must put men on work and remove slits from drains so that the drainage works properly.”

SMC Commissioner, Peerzada Hafeezullah, said, “Our team went there to inspect and noticed, surely there is a major problem of not functioning of this station. Our department has failed to maintain the motors and other machinery of the water pumps, But we will work on this and assure the locals that soon the motors will be replaced with new and upgraded motors and the water pumping station will function properly and in coming days I’ll personally pay a visit there and make sure this water pumping station works adequately.”

# Farmers use prohibited growth regulators for better crop

**Haris Arshid**  
Shopian

The orchardists of the valley have witnessed increase in the apple crop. Experts share that this increase in the crop production is possible only because of Plant Growth Regulators (PGR).

According to experts many of the growth nutrients sprayed by orchardists are not recommended by SKAUST Kashmir while orchardists rue over disapproval of PGRs having seen better results with their use.

Safir Mir an orchardist from Trenz area of Shopian told MERC Times that he has been spraying growth regulators for six years now and has witnessed the best results through his bumper crops.

"None of the government officials from Horticulture Department are recommending these growth regulators, but we have seen good results by using them," he said.

Orchardists said that generally those who don't use the growth regulators have found a low crop this year as compared to 2018.

Naseer Ahmad, a pesticide seller said. "Last year there was good crop all over, both those who sprayed the nutrients and who didn't harvested a bumper crop. But this year the orchardists have seen a decline in crop density."

Scientist at Horticulture Department Waseem Ehmadi said that people should remain vigilant to save their crop from diseases.

"During inclement weather, the chance

of diseases rise, and orchardists should take advice from experts of SKAUST and local KVKs," he said adding that people must act on the advice and go for sprays after regular intervals.

Last year, despite a bumper crop and low disease-rates, the apple market saw a huge crash. The reasons, according to experts, were many, like an imbalance in demand and supply, closure of highway and import of apple from Iran which, according to them, is not allowed in India but is being done through dumping.

Most of the South Kashmir population is directly dependent on the horticulture sector, particularly apples, and large numbers of people in the region have taken loans under the Kisan Credit Card from banks and financial institutions.

Over the years, many of the orchardists have failed to return their debts, resulting in more losses to them.



None of the government officials from Horticulture Department are recommending these growth regulators, but we have seen good results by using them

# Man loses month's salary to online fraud

**Syed Mudawar Shamus**  
Srinagar

A Bengali waiter working at a restaurant in Nigeen was robbed by online conmen through fraud. The man named Narendra Sharma received an unknown Whatsapp call claiming to be from the team of Kaun Banega Crorepati on May 25.

He was told that he had won 25 lakh rupees through an online contest run by Kaun Banega Crorepati and in-order to get the money transferred to his account he had to pay 13,000 rupees as processing charges.

After the deposit was made to the account, another demand for a deposit of 17,000 rupees was made which the waiter could not manage. "I was told that the money could not be transferred unless I paid rest of the charges," Sharma shared. He further told that the money he paid was non-refundable.

"Sharma said that he had taken an advance salary from his boss for the purpose. "I got greedy and did not listen to my boss who stopped me from paying money. I am poor and have to survive the next month without salary," he added.

When asked about reporting the case to police, he said that police can not help him as it was his



own fault. "They called me and told me that I was on TV last night and sent me photos of the show and some producers with their details. They asked me for my picture and I sent that through Whatsapp." Sharma was given photo of a cheque with his photo on it. "In order to lure me further they sent a video of money being packed into a bag, saying that the

money belonged to me. But then my boss refused to lend me more money." Burhan Sofi, the owner of the restaurant while speaking to MERC Times said, "We tried to convince him that it was a fraud, but, he would not listen to anybody".

There has been a serious rise in cybercrime across the valley and this case is an addition to a long list.