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MERC TIMES



MEDIA EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE,
UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

FOUNDER OF MERC NO MORE



HOW TO READ A
BOOK!
P2



Chief Minister launches scooty
scheme in Ganderbal
P8



J&K among best in terms of women
empowerment
P11

Reconstruction of Dastgeer sahib shrine in its final stage



❖ Imran Ali Buth

SRINAGAR: The reconstruction work of the most revered shrine Peer Dastgeer sahab, at Down Town, is at its final stage of completion. The intricate work of papier-mâché on the interiors of shrine is going on as per the documentation of previous designs carried out by INTACH, J&K.

After gutted in a blaze on 25th June 2012, the reconstruction work of the shrine remained in focus, as the then government claimed to rebuild it in its original form. The project was handed over to Jammu and Kashmir Project Construction Corporation (JKPCC) for execution under the close supervision of national heritage organization, INTACH. “The J&K chapter of INTACH had undertaken detailed documentation along with measured drawings of various prominent wooden structures within Kashmir valley, including that of Dastgeer sahib at Khanyar as part of their programme to document cultural assets of the state” said, Hakim Sameer Hamdani, senior architect INTACH, J&K Chapter.

Speaking to MERC Times, Hamdani, who supervised the project, said, “Most of the motifs, designs, materials in the shrine have been replicated as they were in the original structure. It involves basically recreation of the spaces that were there, their texture, their entire decoration, in materials and in crafts.”

Every year on the on the day Urs (annual commemoration) of Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani, thousands of people from all over Kashmir thronged there to pay homage to their beloved saint.

Book Review

HOW TO READ A BOOK!

❖ Mohammad Nadeem

This book is all about “the art of reading”. This is a rule book for readers. It was first published in 1940. And remained a best seller for one full year. After, 30 years, in 1970 Mortimer J. Adler along with his student, Charles Van Doren revised and updated it.

There were many reasons, which the author expresses, about the need for writing this book. The effects of TV and Radio on reading habits was one of the important reason. Emergence trends of joining Speed Reading Courses was another. Another reason was James Mursell’s research article “The Failure of Schools”.

The author was a student of a course in which they had to read “100 Great Books”. After completing the course and topping the exams Adler was chosen to teach a group, the same course. When he started teaching he realized that he was not able to teach his students effectively. Later, he realised that he has not read “the 100 books” the way they should be read. This, among the many, was the main reason for writing this book.

This book is divided into four parts. Part first

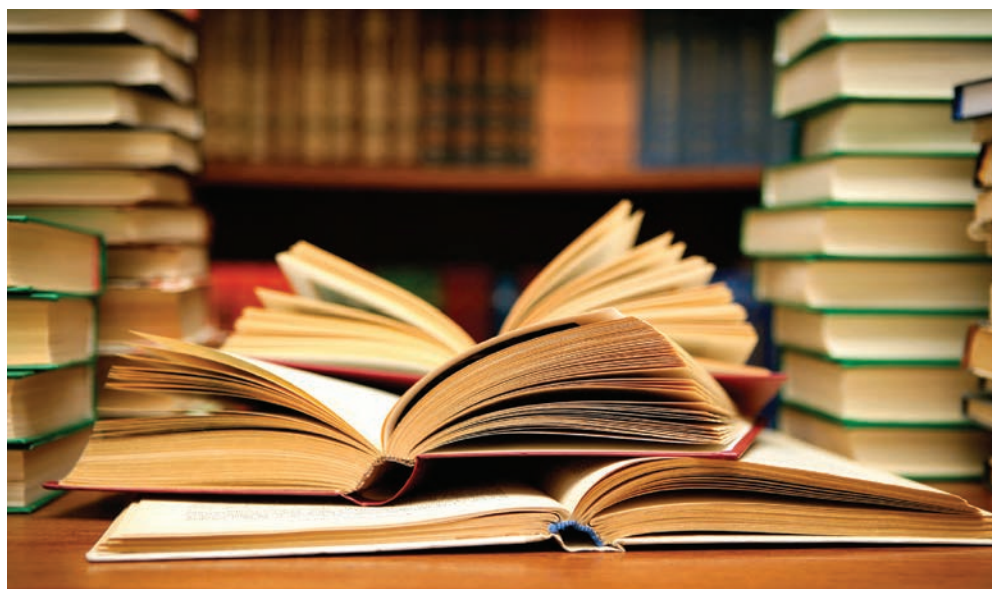
yourself answer.

This book is lucid, but at times it discuss some aspects in a philosophical tone which makes the discourse a bit harder to carry on with. This book argues that reading well, which means reading actively, is a means of advancement in our work and career.

By going through this book one realises that reading is a divine art which should be excelled in order to get most of what we read. This book also suggests that one should also read the books he thinks are difficult to understand. By reading those books and facing the challenges and difficult ideas ones brain also evolves dramatically. If you’ll read what others are reading you’ll think what others are thinking. So, to think differently, what is most important is not to read what others are not read but to the same stuff but differently. As Shiv Khera says, “Winners do not do different things, they do things differently.”

There are some 11 basic rules one has to apply while reading to understand the book more accurate. Among those rules are:

01:- You Must Know What Knid Of Book You’re Reading, And You Should Know This As Early In The Process As Possible, Preferably You Begin To Read.



deals with “the dimensions of reading” part second is “Analytical reading” part three is “approaches to different kinds of reading matter” part fourth is “the ultimate goals of reading”

This books claims that “Activity is the essence of good reading” and by activity he suggests doing the things while reading that keeps you awake and attentive. These activities include; asking questions, making notes, underling and highlighting the text et cetera.

The author also discusses what the goals of reading should be. He calls a book an absent teacher. To whom you can ask questions and then

02:-State The Unity Of The Whole Book In A Single Sentence, At Most, A Few Sentences (A Short Paragraph)

05:- Find The Important Words And Through Them Come To Common Terms With The Author.

09:- You Must Be Able To Say With Reasonable Certainty, “I Understand” Before You Can Say One Of The Following Things, “I Agree,” Or, “I Disagree” Or “I Suspend Judgement”

This Book, All In All Is A Very Insightful Read On ‘The Art Of Reading A Book’. I’ll Recommended This To Everyone Interesting In Getting More Understating From The Books.

Youth festival concludes at Kashmir University

❖ Mu'azzam Bhat

SRINAGAR: Youth Festival Sounth -2017, organized by Kashmir University's Department of Students Welfare, concluded with the prize distribution ceremony. During the four-day festival, students from colleges, KU departments and other universities participated and competed in events including debate, elocution, poster-making, collage, painting, cartoon-making and spot photography.

Felicitating the awardees, S.P (Traffic) Srinagar, Ms Sargun Shukla (IPS) said: "Such festivals provide an opportunity to youth to showcase their talent and helps exchange of innovative art, ideas and thoughts."

Former DDG Doordarshan, Dr Rafeeq Masoodi, said: "Our students don't lack talent. They are a repository of innovative and creative ideas and it is our duty to nurture their talent and provide them a proper platform to showcase their skills."

Dean, Students Welfare, Prof Fayaz Ahmad said: "It was the dedication and seriousness of students that encouraged us to conduct the event."

The debate competition 'Women make better politicians than men' was held, and evaluated by a three-member jury including Dr Masoodi, Dr Nasir Mirza from MERC and Mr Ozair Nissar, Liaison Officer. The proceedings of the session were conducted by

Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer.

The following awards were given away in each category:

Debate: 1st position: Mahoor Mifta Shaw, The Business School; 2nd -3rd Positions: Kaneez Mariyam, Department of Law/ Mah Nashit Uzma, CUK.

Elocution: 1st position: Beenish Mehraj, Department Law; 2nd-3rd positions: Mohammad Shahkar Mearaj, DDE/ Mah Nashit Uzma, CUK.

Cartoon: 1st position: Zaid Bhat, Institute of Music & Fine Arts; 2nd-3rd positions: Anis Rasheed Wani/ Arbila Fayaz Mir, both from Institute of Music & Fine Arts.

Poster-making: 1st position: Afifa Faiz from Institute of Music & Fine Arts; 2nd-3rd positions: Mohammad Manan Khan from IUST/ Nowbahar Khan from CUK.

Collage-making: 1st position: Naurina Shabnam from GDC Nawakadal; 2nd-3rd positions: Muheeb Firdous from GDC Bemina/ Rukaya Rashid from GDC, Pampore.

Painting: 1st position: Naurina Shabnam from GDC Nawakadal; 2nd-3rd positions: Farah Naaz from GDC Nawakadal/ Saba Altaf from Institute of Music & Fine Arts.

Photography: 1st position: Faizan Irshad from GDC Bemina; 2nd-3rd positions: Zaid Bashir from GDC Bemina/Touseef Khan from Institute of Music & Fine Arts KU.

More investment needed in water research: Expert

❖ Saba Gul

SRINAGAR: The Department of Environmental Sciences and Centre for Research and Development (CORD) at University of Kashmir organised a workshop 'Water Resources: Threats and Challenges-A way forward' to mark the World Water Day-2017.

Renowned experts said universities, research organisations, NGOs and civil society organizations must work continuously and in tandem to educate masses on water conservation and also urge upon the government to invest more in water research and development.

In her welcome address, Dean, Biological Sciences, Prof. Azra Kamili, highlighted the aims and objectives of the workshop while Dr Sami Ullah Bhat, Senior Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Sciences gave introductory remarks and background of the observance of World Water Day.

Five experts delivered special lectures on pressing issues like : Aquifer Mapping Techniques using Hydro-Geological and Geophysical Methods; climate change impact on glaciers; climate change impact on water resources; rainwater harvesting systems, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs); Arsenic and Fluoride in the Aqueous Environment etc.

Workshop on research techniques begins at KU



❖ Sabeeha Shaheen

Srinagar : A two-day workshop on 'Scholarly Writing, Reference Management and Deterring Plagiarism' was organised at the University of Kashmir by Allama Iqbal Library.

Dean, Academic Affairs, Prof Mohammad Ashraf Wani, inaugurated the National-level workshop. "To undertake innovative and path-breaking

research, it is important that a researcher, apart from having an interdisciplinary approach, must also have different theories, assumptions and laws propounded about his subject," he said.

Prof Wani added: "Research is not merely a narration of facts, but their interpretation and one has to make an addition to the existing knowledge to make the research more meaningful."

In his welcome address, KU's Chief Librarian Dr AM Baba, said the main purpose of the workshop is to make scholars' community aware of recent tools and techniques in research methodology, information on anti-plagiarism software and reference management. Referring to some "mistakes" made by scholars during the course of their research.

Dr Baba said: "It has been observed that scholars commit many mistakes because of lack of proper orientation on research methodology."

Assistant Librarian Ishaq Lone conducted proceedings of the inaugural session while Assistant Librarian, Shiekh M. Imran presented vote of thanks.

FOUNDER OF MERC NO MORE

❖ Sadia Mir

SRINAGAR: Professor Manzoor-ul-Amin, founder Head, Media Education Research Center (MERC), Kashmir University (KU) passed away on 3rd March at the age of 92.

He was an eminent Urdu writer and an ex-Additional Director General of Door Darshan, New Delhi.

He was suffering from paralysis for the past few days and was admitted in Care Hospital, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad where he was undergoing treatment. Later he was shifted to his residence, located at Shareefa Apartment, Banjara Hills Road No 4, where he breathed last.

His Funeral prayers were offered during Friday prayers, at Masjid Barkat Vila, Banjara Hills, Road No 7. Burial took place at a graveyard adjacent to Dabeerpura Bridge, Hyderabad.

Being the founder of MERC, KU, the faculty, students, scholars and other staff of the department held a condolence meeting remembering the contributions of Professor Amin towards the growth and development of this prestigious department. Later, special prayers were also held for peace of the departed soul.

While talking to MERC times, Nasir Mirza, Senior Assistant professor MERC, said, "Professor Amin was my friend, philosopher, guide and mentor." "I happened to be the first one chosen by him to be his student and later as a faculty member," he added.

On asking how Professor Amin had been as a HoD back in the days, Professor Mirza said, "he was admirable and affable as a founder and the first HoD." "He made a permanent place in our hearts," he further said.

Apart from being the founder of MERC, his services for Urdu language and literature were really remarkable. He has authored a number of books and his famous TV serials were Buniyad, Gul Gulshan Gulfam.

KU'S CBCS FAILS TO IMPRESS STUDENTS

❖ Syed Jesarat

SRINAGAR: Inspired by many European and American universities, the Kashmir University's Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) program has failed to impress the students and the faculty.

In a bid to revamp higher education and bring all the Universities and Colleges under a single umbrella of grading, learning and standards in the country, the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 2014 came up with a program called Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).

In the program the students have to study two or three subjects based on their credits, outside their departments which they have to choose based on their own choice. The classes are conducted on every Friday and Saturday.

Students in the campus said that Kashmir University's new program for studies was only wastage of money and time.

"We are not satisfied with this program. It is only a burden on the students loaded by the varsity," said Mehak Shah, a 3rd semester student of Sociology department.

"CBCS studies have taken a heavy toll on our own courses and most of the times the syllabus of our courses remain incomplete pushing us to face chaos

during exams days," she said.

Faisal Sadiq, a student of MERC department said: "To attend these classes, we have to move from one department to another in the time frame of five minutes. And , most of the times, we miss our classes"

Students enrolled in south and north campus of the university have termed this initiative as a hectic

A professor at Kashmir University told MERC Times, on the conditions of anonymity that the varsity must focus on to improve the deteriorating infrastructure and other facilities.

"We lack the basic facilities for the students like bus service, proper seating and infrastructure arrangements, though they pay a hefty amount as their fees," the professor said.

The University of Kashmir has already introduced this scheme in its PG courses from the academic session 2014. The Colleges in J&K have started this program from session 2016.

Coordinator for Choice Based Credit System, University of Kashmir, Javid Ullah Aziz said, "Starting this program is only beneficial for the students."

"Those students who are not able to get seats in their favorite subjects, are given a chance to study their favorite subjects through this program," Aziz said.

Conference on literary progress of Kashmiri women held

❖ Auqib Salam

SRINAGAR : A conference to recognize the literary progress of the women folk in Kashmir under the title "Women and Literature" was organized on International Women Day jointly by eminent organizations - JK Youth Council and Inspire Me Global at Green Valley Educational Institute Srinagar.

Dr.Mubeena Ramzan, Eminent philanthropist and Scholar was the chief guest on the occasion whereas Chairman GVEI Muhammad Yousuf Wani and Principal Prof. G.N. Alie were guests of honour.

Brain storming discussions, debate and questioning were also included in the programme.Green Valley Management also participated by sharing their viewson the topic.

While talking to MERC TIMES Tauseef

Mir, President of JK youth council said, "we wanted to focus on the educational part of Kashmir women because education is the real empowerment.

While discussing about the theme of the conference one of the organizers, Shawl said, "since the other topics like, the women emancipation, the empowerment, the eve teasing, the gender equality have been debated over and over again, we are living in times where we are seeing women coming up with newer things, we are seeing women in the field of sports, technology, so there needs to be an equal debate about the emergence of women in the field of literature as well".

She further added, "We do not lack the talent but resources. In fact, if we see the onset of our own literary culture and heritage, it has been full of women. It starts with women poets. We have seen Lalla Ded, Arnimaal, HabbaKhatoon who have contributed immensely to the field of literature".



16 YEAR OLD DEVELOPS RADIO APP

❖ Adnan hilal

SRINAGAR: Umar Nisar, a 10th class student from Tral has developed Android internet Radio application 'Panun FM', first of its kind in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking about developing the App, Umar said, "i come from a very poor family. I had never seen a computer before joining a computer course in an institution in Tral town".

"I found the course interesting as it motivated me to make this application" he added

The application features streaming of online radio stations and Kashmiri songs

"I am thankful to the app developer, as he has composed a playlist of the prominent Kashmiri songs in the application" said Waqar, a student of Art & Music from Kashmir University

The application has received more than 74,000 views & 800 download, since it was first updated in September.

Umar also bagged an award in the innovation category of nominations organised by CRDP which was held at SKICC

Umar has not only made me proud, but the whole village is proud of his hard work" said Umars father



Sub District Hospital Surankotee function without doctors

❖ Syed Bilal

SRINAGAR: Local residents of Surankotee and attendant staged a protest demonstration against absence of proper health facilities and availability of medical staff in the Sub-District Hospital Surankotee in Poonch district.

People alleged that none of the doctors remain present in hospital which forced all the attendants and outdoor patients to stage protest. They raised slogans against the hospital administration.

They complained that no doctor was available in the hospital for check-up and treatment of patients who had been admitted to the hospital during last few days.

The protesters said, "On one hand the government claims to be spending huge amounts on

provision of basic and modern healthcare facilities and free medicines to the people, but on the other hand no medicines, not even a single syringe was available in the hospital, forcing the patients to seek treatment in hospitals in Srinagar or Jammu."

Talking with Merc Times correspondent Syed Bilal, Chief Medical officer Poonch Dr Niyaz Ahmad said, they are short of doctors and other staff and he requested higher authorities for the matter but nothing has happened so far. He further mentioned that he is trying his best to provide adequate medical facility.

"I requested higher authorities many times on our problems and staff shortage but nothing happened," DR Niyaz CMO Poonch said.

CRDP HOLDS AWARD CEREMONY AT SKICC

❖ Saher Iqbal

SRINAGAR: In an endeavor to appreciate and inspire the talent of young generation and professionals from different backgrounds, an Award of the Year-2016 event was held by Centre for Research & Development Policy (CRDP), here at Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre, (SKICC).

The event was organized to felicitate the personalities with outstanding contributions in different spheres of life.

The awards were given in 11 categories to the people, who have done ordinarily in the fields of media, social reform, entrepreneurship, health care, research, literature, innovation, music, art craft and sports.

Organizers of the event said, that this event has been organized to encourage those who are making their names in the field and are contributing towards the betterment of the society.

96 nominees were awarded in the ceremony. It is the second award ceremony organized by CRDP. The earlier one was held in year 2016.

Xuhaib Maqbool, a young photo journalist who lost his one eye during 2016 turmoil was awarded with excellent photo journalist award. Xuhaib after

receiving the award said that "this initiative has been a bold step. It will surely help me in moving ahead. In other words this award will serve as an energy booster for me."

Javaid Ahmad Tak, a renowned social activist, was awarded in the category of social reform. Dr.Mohammed Muzaffar khan and Dr. Rashid Maqbool Wani were awarded in healthcare. Zufa Iqbal was rewarded in Craft.

Adil Mir of Pure weave in Entrepreneurship/ Business; Rayees Mohiudin, standup comedian in Art, Sajad Yusuf Dar and Mohammad Arif khan in Sports, Abdul Rashid Hafiz and Shazia Bashir in Music.

Zehru Nissa of Greater Kashmir received award for covering health stories during unrest 2016 and Xuhaib Maqbool in Photo Journalism.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir was given the life time achievement award.

Besides award ceremony, an expert panel discussion was also the part of the event. The panel comprised of Dr. Mushtaq Margoob and Dr. Peer Suhail. The panel discussed the importance of such award ceremonies, and how such ceremonies will be helpful in infusing a new life already existing young talent in the valley.

SPORTS FACILITY IN STATE STILL LAGGING BEHIND

❖ Shabir Parray

SRINAGAR The sports scenario in our state of jammu and Kashmir is lagging far behind to even that of nations standard. Today when enormous talent from all the states is competing at international platforms and bringing laurels to the state, there is barely a name from our state in spite of having enormous talent. This is perhaps contributed to the lack of proper infrastructure and the coaching facilities that the athletes require to develop and compete at important platforms.

The ailing service and facilities that are available from j & k sports council are not enough for the proper development of different sports in the state. There is no doubt about the capabilities and the potential of players of jammu and kashmir but somewhere down the line they are not able to take full toll of their talent due to our in competitive and deficient sports infrastructure. Cricket is like the religion of the people of our country likewise it is very common in our state as well but unfortunately there is no international

cricket out here in our state which in ways is disheartening for cricket lovers. Not only cricket but the fate of other games due to poor infrastructure is even worse which is main cause of less participation of players from j & k on the highest level of the game.

"Countries like Australia, USA, ENGLAND, CHINA rule the sports world only because these countries possess infrastructure of great repute. Players from these countries are hard to beat that is why we see individual players from these countries winning 7 golds in the single edition of the Olympics while as countries like India in collaboration with few others countries are unable to win 7 golds in the single edition of Olympics. Seeing all this no one gets surprised because everyone knows very well that their infrastructure can't be compared with ours by any stretch of imagination". Pervez rasool said over phone about the sports infrastructure of our state, he gave a very straightforward answer about the depleting condition of sports facility in the state.

12 years on, Sri Pratap Singh Library still incomplete

❖ **Shah Tawqeer**

SRINAGAR: The construction of Sri Pratap Singh (SPS) library in Srinagar is incomplete even after 12-years have passed.

In 2004, the then Chief Minister late Mufti Muhammad Sayeed laid the foundation for the construction of the library building at Maulana Azad Road in Srinagar, and the deadline for the completion of the building was fixed six months by the concerned authorities.

Earlier the library was named as 'State of the Art' and was constructed

to relocate the existing library at Lal Mandi Srinagar.

The estimated cost of the project was 17.34 crores. The five-story building once completed would have an art gallery, auditorium, and fireproof blocks for manuscripts, exhibition hall, children section, researcher's cabin and a cafeteria.

"Earlier one lady had claimed in court that this land belonged to her, while a portion of this allotted land was taken by the College of Education. There was a stay on the construction for many years," the official said.

An official wishing anonymity

stated that callous approach from the government authorities and poor funding too delayed the project. He said, "Poor funding from the government delayed the work. The government for many years has ceased to release funds for the construction of the library due to which it has consumed these 12 years."

"Previous some Rs. 17-crore was estimated as construction cost but project needs more funds which the government has approved some extra funds for its construction," he added.

Presently the five story buildings have two stories completed with

brickwork, while the brickwork for other three-stories is incomplete.

Meanwhile sources said that the sluggish approach of the work agency Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) proved nuisance.

When contacted the Managing Director, Daleep Thusoo JKPCC he snubbed their poor performance and said that the non-disbursement of funds has led to the delay in completion of the project. But we are sure that the construction will be completed by the end of the August this year," Daleep Thusoo said.

Negligence of SMC troubles patients

❖ **Wajahat Shabir**

SRINAGAR: Adding salts to its wounds negligence by Srinagar Municipal Cooperation (SMC) in shifting the dustbin from outside the premises of Kashmir Tibbia College Hospital & Research Centre, Saida Kadal, Srinagar to alternative is proving hazardous to the patients and staff member of the hospital.

The waste from surrounding are collected and are thrown in the dustbin found outside the hospital which is not just hazardous, but, also is safe heavens for stray dogs.

Mohammad Ibrahim Beigh, Chairman, Kashmir Tibbia College Hospital & Research, complains "that from the last years we have been submitting our problems in written to the concerned head of Srinagar Municipal Cooperation, but, they are making fool of us".

All they say is that we will shift the dustbins to alternative sights, but, believe me no heed is being paid to the concern matter. We have no other option left than to take matte to the police and we will sort this matter of our own, added Ibrahim Beigh.

Imtityaz Ahmed, a patient said, that is hard to see the dustbins just outside the premises of hospital. We were here for treatment, but, our bad luck, my child got ill because of the negligence of SMC.

Speaking on the phone, Dar Ahmed, higher authority from SMC said, that we will look into the matte as soon as possible and will order the local warden of that area to shift the dustbins to the other alternative sight.

Teachers exempted from all non-academic assignments

❖ **Bintul Huda**

SRINAGAR: In a bid to infuse a fresh lease of life into J&K's otherwise derailed education system, Minister for Education Syed Altaf Bukhari on Friday ordered that teachers in state's educational institutions shall be exempted from all non-academic assignments including election duties to help them focus on their prime task of teaching, even as he virtually rolled back the decision to have a screening test for all Rehbar-e-Taleem teachers.

Addressing a press conference here, Altaf said the government has decided to relieve teachers from all non-teaching assignments including election duties, census duties and "other off-beat responsibilities within the department to minimize the interruption of academic activities."

'RESTORING DIGNITY'

"We want to provide teachers a congenial atmosphere and minimize disruption of academic activities. After brainstorming and thorough deliberations, it has been felt that teachers should be allowed to concentrate on their primary goal of imparting education and for that they should be relieved of all other duties," said the Education Minister, who was flanked by his deputy, Priya Sethi.

Altaf said this would also provide teachers enough time to compensate the loss of studies due to certain situations like the one Kashmir was embroiled in last year. "I am of the opinion that teachers are the custodians of our future. Need of the hour is to restore their dignity and honor by relieving them of all duties other than academic," he said. He said the objective of these reforms is to "reinforce a sense of accountability and ownership of schools among the teaching fraternity."

"For this, teachers would be exempted of election, census and other similar duties. To begin with, about 80 percent teachers deployed for BLO duties have been exempted for the bypolls being held in Kashmir," the Minister said, adding: "The decision would be conveyed to the Divisional Commissioner of Jammu as well to end the practice here also."

'SEPARATE WORKS DIVISION'

"The involvement of teachers with construction works under different educational schemes is a continuous drain on their time and energies. The department is examining the proposal for creation of a separate works division," he said and added: "We are also exploring the possibility to execute the Mid-Day Meal Scheme through NGOs."

He said schools would also be provided some alternative to deal with accountancy and relieve the teachers engaged with this task. "We can explore the possibility of empanelling Chartered Accountants for the purpose," he said.

He said focused attention would be laid on orientation training for teachers and remedial teaching for elementary-level students who may get detained with the introduction of combined examination for class 5 and class 8 as the government has done away with the 'No detention policy'.

Altaf said the government, particularly Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, is very particular on ensuring better amenities including sanitation, toilets, safe drinking water and power in government schools. "Strict instructions have been issued to complete all required works in this regard at the earliest," he said.

'RESTRICTED SCREENING TEST'

Asserting that the government has "full faith" in the ability of teachers, the Minister said the screening test would be restricted to only one percent of ReTs who have secured degrees from study centers.

"Out of 41,000 ReTs only around 500 ReTs have to undergo screening test as directed by the High Court. The test will be based on eighth standard syllabus and they will be given two chances," he said.

'SRO-66 PUT IN ABEYANCE'

The Minister further said that implementation of SRO-66 regarding assessment of the quality of degrees got through distance mode for promotions in Education department has been kept in abeyance. He said this order was passed pursuant to cabinet decision of 2012 which required every department to notify the mechanism.

THE AROMA OF MUSHKBUDUJ

❖ **Munawar Hussain**

Kulgam: Around 16 km from the Islamabad area of south Kashmir lives Abdul Gani Wani. His wife is busy adjusting the cauldron on the fire-pot. The air in the ambience smells aromatic. They are preparing dishes for the public extravaganza to be held at noon. One of the dish is traditional galvanic variety of rice: The Mushkbuduj. This quality is essentially known for its scent which wildly diffuses in the air.

Every year Mr. Gani hands over 60 Quintal of paddy at the price of 8.5k per Quintal to the officers of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Kashmir (SKUAST-K) and State Department of Agriculture. This in turn sold to the Jammu based company who identify themselves as Sarveshwar Marketing company.

Out of 3 hectare (60 kanals) around one and a half hectare (30 Kanal) land is exclusively kept for the cultivation of Mushkbuduj. Mr. Gani, a 60 year old resident of aroma town, Tangpawa sagam spends his most of time in the agricultural fields. And recently he and his community has been awarded with the huge sum of 10 lakh by the Central Ministry of Agricultural and Farmers welfare.

50 out of 60 families in the Tangpawa sagam village have reserved their lands for the Mushkbuduj production. There is around 100 Hectare (2000 kanals) of land available for the production of scented rice.

Kashmir is a home to different varieties of rice. Before and till 1960's the farming community of Kashmir were busy cultivating many scented land races of rice. The produce of Kamad, Mushkbuduj, Laer beol and begum were circulated abundantly in the market.

In the latter half of the decade, people stopped producing these varieties. The reasons were simple: low production and scourge of microbes. Because of less technological know-how and lack of technical expertise the farmers started abandoning it.

After almost four and a half decade later it came to the resourceful minds of Agricultural scientists and they embarked upon the journey of its revival.

In the year 2003, The Mountain Research for Field Crop, Khadwun launched a project. The aim was to bring back the era of aroma. To counter low production, admixture and blast diseases of Mushkbuduj. They researched over it and came up with the scientifically refined seed of Mushkbuduj. The seed was consequently treated. These treated grains were sown in the field which grew into panicle and they were later on handed over to farmers who are cultivating it till this time.

Like our traditional Kashmiri varieties of

rice, the practices from sowing to harvesting of Mushkbuduj are same. Apart from initial seed treatment and spray of chemicals like Tricyclozol there is no stark difference in its pre-production and post-production methods.

While talking to Dr Sheikh Muzzafer, Associate Director of Extension center SKUAST-K, he said, "Compared to the recommended land race varieties issued by SKUAST-K like China 1039, K-39, Jhelum, Chenab, SR-1, SR-2, SR-3, the selling price of Mushkbuduj is quite higher."

He further explained that one Quintal of Mushkbuduj rice cost 16-18 thousand rupees where as the cost price per kilo of other varieties of rice ranges form 20-25 rupees.

"But the production of Mushkbuduj is less than these varieties. Around 2-2.5 Quintals of Mushkbuduj rice can be gathered from a land of one Kanal."

This traditional variety of rice is trying hard to bounce back in the market but the competition of varieties like Basmati rice is hindering it to flourish fully. The farmers of Sagam area excitedly appreciated the efforts of State Agriculture department and welcomed the unconditional help from the scientists of SKUAST-K. Who brought this variety back again. They however, complained about its marketing strategy.

"The price of Mushkbuduj variety is very huge and common people cannot afford this. It should be effectively exported to the rest of country, one of the farmer opined."

Recently, in the month of february. The state department of Agriculture assured farmers that this variety would be kept available at the airports and hotels. This step would really encourage farmers to

Continue its production in the future. Moreover, like other crops. Which are being covered under different programmes of subsidies the Government should launch a same scheme to help the Mushkbuduj farmers in financial and technical areas.

Apart from this Scientists and experts should try their best to revive this variety in different parts of the valley. In contemporary times, this variety is chiefly produced in the South Kashmir. Efforts should be made to cultivate it in the different regions.

While talking to Dr. Mohd Ashraf Bhat, Head Division Of Plant Breeding and genetics SKUAST-K, He opined, "There are no specific climatic pre-conditions for its cultivation. This crop can be grown in all the fields which are 5-6 thousand meters above sea level. However, the produce will vary in different conditions."

Given the expertise opinions the Government should implement this crop in the different parts of State.

Sericulture exposure tour for farmers

❖ **Ali Pathan**

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Showkat Aijaz Bhat, flagged off two day awareness cum exposure tour for Sericulture farmers of the district Kulgam.

The tour is organized under the centrally sponsored Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) scheme during which the farmers will visit the Central Sericulture Research Training Institution Pampore.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC, Kulgam, Showkat Aijaz Bhat, said that the aim of the programme is to acquaint farmers about the latest technology being used by the Sericulture Department regarding silk worm rearing and maintenance of mulberry trees.

He impressed upon the farmers to make optimum use of this opportunity so as to make Kulgam district self reliant in silkworm production.

JKEDI conducts awareness program in GDC Anantnag

❖ **Danish Pathan**

ANANTNAG: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) Thursday conducted a special Entrepreneurship Awareness Program (EAP) for the final year students of Government Degree College, Anantnag.

The program was intended to provide an insight into the world of entrepreneurship to the participating students. More than 125 students of the college participated in the awareness program.

"Such programs are very helpful and we are thankful to them, today I have learned a lot from them" Said Abrar Hussain a final year student.

In these EAPs the students are being acquainted with the realities of labour market in the State along with the scope of entrepreneurship development/self-employment in various sectors of the State economy. An interaction with the local successful entrepreneurs is also part of these awareness programs to act as motivators. The EAPs are also structured to create awareness among the youth about different Government schemes for entrepreneurship development and network the eligible candidates with the concerned departments for coverage after proper registration and screening. The awareness programs are being conducted by a specialized team constituted by the Institute for the purpose. Experts from the J&K Bank and Department of Industries and Commerce, J&K Government are also part of the awareness team.

The EAPs are scheduled to be held in all the degree colleges of the State over a period of next two months.



Chief Minister launches scooty scheme in Ganderbal

❖ Rafia Manzoor

GANDERBAL:: Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti distributed scooties among 50 meritorious girl students of Ganderbal district under CM's scooty scheme,

On this occasion, Mehbooba Mufti said that women's are the key to development and that her government is committed to empower the women in the state.

The Chief Minister enumerated several steps her Government has taken for the welfare of women in the State.

Addressing the students on the occasion, the Chief Minister said the aim of launching the scheme is to provide better mobility to girl students so that they can chase their dreams in a better way and without any difficulty. She hoped the scheme would instil confidence among the girl students so they could bring laurels to their parents and society.

She said that keeping the same objective in mind, her Government had ordered the start

of a ladies bus service in the capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu for the convenience of women commuters and possibilities would be explored to extend the said service to other districts as well.

The Chief Minister also announced a Scooty competition for the girl students.

Minister for Education, Syed Altaf Bukhari thanked the Chief Minister for taking a keen interest in the education sector, particularly education of girls in the State. He said the Department would strive to improve the standards of education in the State to make it comparable with the best in the country.

PWD Minister Naeem Akhter, MLA Ganderbal Sheikh Ishfaq Jabbar, PDP General Secretary Qazi Afzal, district president PDP Ganderbal Bashir Ahmed Mir and various civil and police officials were present on the occasion.

"I am very happy after getting a scooty through this scheme as it helps me to reach college on time without the usual traffic mess," said Iqra, a 2nd year B.A student.

Garbage outside Govt Girls Higher Secondary School Khanyar Irk Students

❖ Rahil Hussain

SRINAGAR: Failure of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) in shifting the garbage dump outside Government Girls Higher Secondary School Khanyar continues to pose the health risks to students and residents.

The garbage dump near the main gate of the school is causing immense inconvenience to students. "Due to pungent smell emanating from the garbage dump, we are not able to concentrate on our studies. It is difficult to pass through the stinking garbage while coming to and fro to the school," said a group of students.

The presence of huge chunk of garbage near our school has made its environment unhealthy and unhygienic. Children are reluctant in eating in school premise," said one of the teachers.

Locals said that piles of garbage attract stray

dog, which is another matter of concern for them. They said that authorities did not pay any heed to their issue despite a number of representations.

"We have several times apprised the SMC officials about the issue, but no action was taken. We urge the SMC Commissioner to order shifting of the garbage bins from the spot," they said.

Chief Sanitation Officer Srinagar, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed Parray told MERC Times that they were trying their best to stop this dog menace and removal of garbage.

"We have installed the dustbins so that people can dump waste there. But they dump it anywhere making the environment dirty, and the waste that is scattered on roads is difficult to be carry. We need cooperation from the society as well to make our city a better place to live in," Parray said.

Dal Dwellers refute Government claim to beautify Dal Lake

❖ Mehvish Mumtaz

SRINAGAR: World famous Dal Lake again submerged in floods after devastating floods of September 2015 and with that the hamlets, houses and vegetable gardens were again flooded.

The cause of the flood was heavy and incessant rains that lashed the valley. Besides rain water huge inflow of Telbal nallah and its tributaries which run in full spate during rainy season greatly contribute to the flooding in Dal.

However, some officials of Lakes & Waterways Development (LAWDA) have attributed submerging of Dal to higher level of water maintained by them prior to the rains. This explanation is not plausible and is based on fabrications to mislead the people and cover up their own wrong-doing and mismanagement.

Being a resident of Dal Lake, Tariq Ahmad said, "I can honestly say that the water of Dal was at normal level before it got submerged under the flood".

However other factors contributed to the submerging of lake. This is not the first time that Dal got deluged. Submerging of Dal has become a chronic phenomenon, largely due to human intervention and less to natural forces. Heavily clogged backwater channels also make the level of Dal swell during rains, he

said.

Even though dredging of lake is well in place but lacks scientific approach. Interestingly there is no proper mechanism in place for the proper disposal of dredged material. On the contrary, it is dumped in the wetland area which used to border the lake and acted as a bio-filter. This is having adverse impact on health of the lake. There is danger of loss of life especially. There is an also grave chance of spread of diseases since the water is polluted too much.

It should be avoided and efforts should be made to restore these wetlands. Besides, large chunks of the dredged material have been converted into agricultural land inside lake by LAWDA and this information was provided by Executive Engineer, he said.

Similarly, construction of western foreshore road and the road along its eastern, north-eastern foreshore seriously impacted Lake's surface area. The surface area further shrank due to construction of network of macadamized pathways and pedestrian mall in the interior of Lake.

Further, great amount of silt and sediment is generated by catchment areas around the Dal Lake, especially around the Hazratbal basin have also hugely contributed to the squeeze of the surface area of the lake, he said.

Srinagar Boy Cracks IFS, Secures 24th Rank

❖ Sajad Bashir

SRINAGAR: Without taking any coaching, a boy from Srinagar Shanawaz Ahmad Bhat of New Theed Harwan Srinagar has qualified the Indian Forest Service (IFS), the results of which were declared by the Union Public Service Examination on 22 March. Shanawaz has secured 24th rank in the examination.

After passing his 12th class examination from Government Boys Higher Secondary School Shalimar, Shanawaz appeared in the Common Entrance Test and was selected for BVSC. He did not stop here and got admission at prestigious Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar Bareilly for post-graduation.

Presently, working as Assistant Professor at Khalsa College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Amritsar, Shanawaz said he had to carry on with his job due to financial constraints. "My ambition was to crack the examination but I could not devote my entire time for preparation due to financial constraints. I took up the job to support my family," said Shanawaz.

He said he did not take any coaching to clear the examination. "It is not necessary to take coaching to crack the examination. If you are persistent and hardworking, you can qualify the examination," he said. Shanawaz's father Muhammad Ramzan Bhat is working in private sector while his mother Aamina is housewife.

Tral-Awantipora road in shambles; irks residents

❖ Asif Bilal

TRAL: The Tral-Awantipora road is in shambles, due to the careless approach of the government which has added to the plight of the people. The road is bumpy and gives tough time to vehicles plying on this road. The government has failed to pay any heed towards the renovation of this road.

The road is 11 km long stretch and is the main road to connect Tral with other parts of the State. Unfortunately, it is dotted with potholes wherein water gets accumulated which cause inconvenience to the pedestrians as it stinks to high heaven.

Decrying the apathy of the government, locals allege that we presented our grievances before concerned authorities, but no action was taken after giving much assurance.

Macadamization of this road was done some decade before, until then it was not even repaired. It takes half-an-hour to complete fifteen minutes journey from Tral to Awantipora. Sometimes we are forced to walk on foot as some drivers refuse to ply on this road. We are unable to understand why government after giving much assurance is, turning blind eye towards us, said an elderly man in Shareabad village of Tral

Students are the worst sufferers as they don't reach their educational institutions on time. Sometimes we miss our exams due to the dilapidated condition of the



road which leads to massive traffic jams, said Asfaq Ahmad, a student of Nowdal village.

Speaking on the issue, MLA Tral, Mustaq Ahmad Shah, passes the buck to previous government and said that they have totally failed to initiate work on this road. It is a big project worth crores of rupees so we need some time to complete its requisite documents. He assures people of Tral to have faith on him as the work on this road would start within two months.

I know how much people face inconvenience, due to this damaged road. I took this issue with the officials and directed them to expedite the documentation process, he further added.

'Winterfell café full of creativity'

❖ Nazima Rashid

SRINAGAR: Young minds have come up with a dramatic cafe, 'Winterfell' in the valley; the cafe is situated on Boulevard road. It is inspired by popular T.V show, Game of Thrones. The cafe is started by two cousins, Omar and Kamran. 'All men must dine' is a tagline of the cafe which has a resemblance to the actual line of Game of Thrones, 'All men must die.'

While talking to MERC Times, the owners of the cafe revealed, "The idea of the cafe came from the poster of John Snow, a famous character of the series, the character is loved by everyone."

Gaining huge popularity among youth, the social media has played an important role in helping the cafe to expand its business. The Facebook page of Winterfell is most followed page, which gained over 5000 hits in just two months.

"Social media was the only option for us to boost our business and we have also started our Instagram page," said Kamran. "Besides, that people helped and supported us throughout our journey of making this cafe," he added.

Talking about their journey, Omar confessed, "It was my dream from childhood, but it's very difficult to find space, and start a cafe, that too in this

conflict region," said Omar.

Difficulties also came in the making of this place. It was not a bed of roses and finance was one such. "Winterfell was to open on 9th July 2016, but conditions were not conducive, it was a complete shutdown," he added.

The interiors of a cafe are praiseworthy everything is symmetric and beautifully designed. The cafe is ornamented with wood and leather. Everything is made beautifully and accurately, and details are carved intricately, every woody thing in cafe is of pine wood, which makes it attractive for visitors.

"It is our own creativity and this is expensive and economical," said Kamran.

"It is about right thing, right time, and right space, that has helped us to come up with this," they said.

"Here we already had conducted various sessions with artists from different genres, including painters, tabla players, musicians, guitarist, magicians and few Persian plays, and we are planning to take it forward," said Omar to MERC Times.

People are cynical and they have to be, we are open to criticism and take it positively, and we are open for suggestions, food is the main thing, and we are working very hard on it.

Government to monitor marriage functions in Kashmir

❖ Nisar Malik

SRINAGAR: The state government has decided to keep a check on lavish and exuberant celebrations during the functions in J&K. Then government has announced several measures to ensure there in minimum expenditure during the marriages which could also put curb on wastage of food. The order will come in effect from April 1, 2017.

A government order of 2017 dated 21/2/2017 by FCS&CA department has restricted the number of guests invited for marriage of daughters including Barat to 500 while guests to be invited for son's marriage have been restricted at 400. The guests for small functions have been restricted to 100. "The number of vegetarian/ non-vegetarian dishes to be cooked in such functions should be restricted to a maximum of 7 each and two sweets and fruits or ice creams." The Government has also put a complete ban on use of big generator sets, high pitch sound amplifiers, loud speakers, decks, profuse lighting, bursting of crackers in social as well as government functions. The order reads that the move will save the

general public from inconvenience of noise pollution and air pollution caused by various gadgets. Curbing the ritual of sending gifts along with invitation cards, the order bans any sweets, dry fruit packets to be sent along with invitation cards to relatives, friends, guests and invitee's etc.

The govt. has also directed people that leftover food in wedding and other functions instead of being thrown in dustbins must be provided to poor and needy ones after being properly preserved and packed.

The guest control order has however come under challenges with political and bureaucrats circles saying "The department of food, civil supplies and consume affairs is not competent to issue such an order and cabinet alone can decide on policy matters.

According to sources the concerned minister Zulifkar Ali Said that he has an approval of CM on the matter. He further added that it is an administrative order and I am confident that high court will not set it aside. He further revealed that it is prerogative of the minister that which matter is to be taken to the cabinet.

‘Kashmir’s Kolahoi melting at alarming speed’

❖ Useeba Bashir

SRINAGAR: Kashmir’s biggest glacier, the Kolahoi, is melting faster than other Himalayan glaciers, threatening water supply of tens of thousands of people.

Despite continuous efforts of researchers to draw their attention, the government has been least bothered for the preservation of glaciers with no preventive measures being taken to restrict them from further shrinking. The latest data from the New Delhi-based The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) shows that in the past four decades, Kolahoi has lost between 15 to 18 percent of its total volume. The research also shows that the glacier is retreating by almost ten feet (three meters) a year. The preservation of glaciers comes under the domain of Ecology and Environment Department. The Kolahoi glacier is the main source of water for Kashmir’s biggest river, the Jhelum, and its many streams and lakes.

“They do not need scientists to tell them that the glacier is shrinking,” said Tariq Ganai, a resident of Aru. “My father tells me the tip of the glacier used to be there, now the glacier ends up here,” he added, pointing to a dried-up river bed visible several kilometers down the mountain. “We are dependent on the beauty of Kashmir,” he said, looking at the mountain skyline. “If

Kolahoi goes, I don’t know what we will do.”

The nomadic herders, who bring hundreds of thousands of sheep to graze in the Liddar Valley have dealt with unpredictable water fluxes in recent years. “We used to know when the waters would be in the



river,” said a middle-aged shepherd woman. “But now the waters are too high or too low. I want my children to get an education. This way of life is no good anymore,”

the mother of three added. “

“Kolahoi glacier is shrinking 18 metres a year,” said Dr Shakeel Romshoo, HOD, Department of earth sciences, University of Kashmir. “Other small Kashmir glaciers are also shrinking and the main reason is that the winter temperature in Kashmir is rising,” he further says. Romshoo believes that the global drivers of climatic change are responsible for the rapidly shrinking of Himalayan glaciers. The climate change has caused temperatures in the mountainous region to rise by about 1.1°C in the past 100 years. In the latest action plan on climatic changes of earth science department, it says the climate change cell mentions the annual temperature is projected to increase from 0.9 +/- 0.6 degree Celsius to 2.6 +/- 0.7 degree Celsius by 2030. “That would only mean more melting. I believe we still have sufficient amount of water resources available” says Romshoo.

“The melting of glaciers has become a serious issue for the last 15 years but government has failed to do any monitoring or conduct any research so that melting of glaciers could be stopped,” an official of Environment Department said. “We are yet to know the number of glaciers present in the state since there are many untapped glaciers.”

Revival of Mehjoor Nagar bridge gives breather to locals

❖ Musaib Mehraj

SRINAGAR: The local residents of Mehjoor Nagar and the adjacent areas that come under the vicinity have breathed a sigh of relief as the Bailey bridge connecting Jawahar Nagar - Mehjoor Nagar was thrown wide open earlier this month. The bridge that had collapsed last month created havoc as the residents complained about the difficulties that they had to face since then. After the collapse of the bridge, the residents of Padshahi Bagh in particular came to the streets for the revival of the bridge as they literally had to travel around several areas and suffer a lot.

Now the revival of the bridge has seen a tremendous improvement as far as traffic is concerned. The government last week constructed Bailey bridge and threw it open, since then people have sensed a breather as they feel the smoothness in traffic is upto the larger extent.

The Bailey bridge was installed in a shortest possible time. The work on its installation began on February 13 and today it was thrown open for public. “The cost estimated cost of the bridge was around 45 to 50 lakhs,” said R&B Chief Engineer, Abdul Hamid.

He confirmed that the government had



directed authorities to throw the bridge open for public immediately on its completion.

While talking to MERC times, the local resident, Bashir Ahmad Dar of Mehjoor Nagar said “Since the bridge collapsed they had to suffer a lot as they had to take the route from Rambagh and they literally had to wait for hours to reach Lalchowk. Rambagh has turned into the hub of traffic jams recently as the construction of flyover is still under process. On return we used to stuck in Jawahar Nagar as the buses move at the snails pace because of the traffic mess. Now the revival of the bridge has made a quick impact on the traffic and it has started to move swiftly to a greater extent”.

Bailey bridge at Mehjoor Nagar sigh of relief for commuters

❖ Saba Gul

SRINAGAR: To unclog the congested roads in the uptown city of Srinagar, Roads and Building department have constructed a Bailey bridge in Mehjoor Nagar for smooth vehicular movement. This bridge being an alternate to old Mehjoor Bridge is the first action implemented by the Civil Government in Srinagar as the construction of Bailey Bridges until now was the uniqueness of the Armed forces only.

The old Mehjoor Bridge was closed on 7th February, when one of its pillars collapsed. The closure of the bridge since then had caused elephantine traffic jam from Jawahar Nagar to Rambagh and had severely affected its adjoining areas.

However, the bridge is now complete and is functioning smoothly.”The bridge was made within the fifteen days and on February 28; it was opened for public convenience.

The bridge is about 190 feet long and has a carriage way of 14 feet and this bridge is constructed at a cost of 45 to 50 lakhs. The bridge also involved using 75 to 80 tons of steel.” Sources associated with the bridge said.

According to Assistant Engineer, R&B Srinagar, Parveiz Hussain. “Bailey bridges are in regular use throughout the world, as they do not require special tools or heavy equipments for assembling process and this pre fabricated truss bridge can handle up to 20 tons of load and our department believed that there was no better option than Bailey in this hour of need.”

Meanwhile residents of the adjoining areas who were badly affected with the closure of old Mehjoor bridge said, that they are now satisfied and have heaved a sigh of relief over the installation of Bailey Bridge.

Illegal stone mining poses risk to Ashmukam shrine

❖ Waseem Ahmad

SRINAGAR: In the outskirts of Kashmir's famed tourist destination Pahalgam, illegal stone mining is putting the most revered cave shrine of Ashmukam vulnerable to landslides and falling of rocks.

The locals said that unabated stone mining on the rare side of the hillock that houses the cave shrine of the revered Sufi Saint, Baba Zaina- Ud-Din Wali were posing a serious threat to the Shrine. "Since the shrine is in the same hillock wherefrom the miners extract stones it could pose a threat to the shrine", Ab Ahad, a local said.

He said they have repeatedly requested the authorities to shift the stone queries as a number of stone queries are operating from an area but their pleas have fallen on deaf ears, "Look, it's a matter of faith. We don't want them to completely ban the querying but to shift them to nearby mountains wherein a number of query units are already operational".

He added that there are five- six query units, that operate near the shrine that could damage the cave which is visited by thousands of devotees every day, "If the authorities fail to put a check to

the mining the cave could collapse", he said.

The locals of the area also said that the stone query units are very close to the Ashmukam- Hapnar road and the falling of rocks puts the lives of commuters at risk.

Showket Ahmad, an official at the Department of Geology and Mining said they have not given permission to mine stones around the shrine and whosoever was found indulging in the practice would be penalized, "We will not allow anyone to do it. It is our collective asset and we will protect it. I will immediately take a note of this thing and visit the spot myself", he said.

He said that they have received the same type of complaint from the residents as well and the matter was also discussed in the recently held board meeting. "We recently discussed the matter in the board meeting and I assure the residents that action will be taken", he said.

The shrine was built in honor of a renowned Sufi Saint, Baba Zaina-uddin Wali. The main Sanctorum of the shrine is nestled inside a deep narrow cave. Several relics associated with the Baba are kept preserved in a room inside the cave.

In internet age Handwara village sans mobile network

❖ Tahir Bhat

SRINAGAR: Darishpora is a village of around 200 households barely three kilometres from Handwara town of District Kupwara in the north of Kashmir valley. The village, falling in the municipal limits of Handwara town, sans mobile telephone network even in this age when India claims to be on the path of digital revolution.

The lack of mobile telephone network has become a cause of major suffering for the villagers.

In most parts of the village the mobile telephones show no signal and at certain isolated places the electronic communication devices receive weak signal.

The people complain that they have to

travel to Handwara to make a phone call. A student of Kashmir University, Zubair Ahmad said that to make a contact with his family he calls his relatives in Handwara who then communicate with his family.

Another villager namely, Adil Hussain said that They faced a lot of problems due to lack of mobile network system in the area.

A girl student preparing for competitive exams said that due to lack of mobile telephone network in the village she remains disconnected from Internet – a chief source of information she believes. The lack of network has paralysed the development of the villagers. They appealed to the authorities concerned to arrange mobile network system in the village at earliest.

J&K among best in terms of women empowerment



❖ B.M. Hussain

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is among the best in terms of women empowerment, claims a Government of India survey.

As per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2015-16 conducted by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), 84 percent of the state's women in the age group 15-49 years—more than the percentage in states like Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Bihar—have a say in family decisions.

The data for the survey, held in 2005-06, was collected by Population Research Center (PRC), Srinagar, from 17,894 households consisting of 23,800 women and 5,584 men from rural and urban areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

Even New Delhi, as per the survey, has only 73 percent women participating in the household decisions.

While Tamil Nadu shares a common figure with J&K on what the survey has treated as an empowerment indicator, the former has witnessed a decline by three per cent over the last NFHS survey.

J&K, on the other hand, has recorded an improvement of almost 20 percent in its status since the last survey conducted in 2014-16.

The survey claims that only 9.4 per cent women in J&K suffer spousal violence, figuring third after Kerala (1.2%) and Himachal Pradesh (5.9), which are at the top in terms of the indicator.

Manipur, according to the survey, is worst in terms of the 'spousal violence', with 53.1 per cent of its women populace listed as victims.

The strong position of Jammu and Kashmir on women empowerment and 'spousal violence' indicators in the survey comes in contrast with the stereotype of the state being labeled as a 'conservative' society on the back of it being a Muslim majority state.

An opinion piece in a Jammu-based daily by a leading academician last year, blamed the "Muslim dominated" character of the Jammu and Kashmir which, as per the author, rendered the state a "conservative" and a "religious" one.

Claiming the government was "committed" to empower the state's women folk on the education front, the author blamed "gender gap" for hindering "universalisation" of education in the state.

In the backdrop of the 'conservative' tag, Chairperson State Women's Commission (SWC), Nayeema Ahmad Mehjoor termed the higher rank of J&K in the survey a "constructive change".

Debunking stereotypes, she said being conservative doesn't mean being lawless or not looking after the women folk.

The Muslim majority of J&K, Mehjoor said, "means most of the people here are God-fearing".

Women empowerment scenario, on that count, she said was "understood to be improving".

Saying the state's "traditional" society was "well-knit", Mehjoor called it a "blessing".

"The increasing literacy rate in the state over the years has only improved the situation", she said.

KU CELEBRATES WOMENS' DAY



❖ **Faila Khan**

SRINAGA: Kashmir University's Women Studies Centre and Dean College Development Council in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Women's Commission celebrated International Women's Day in KU's EMMRC auditorium.

The theme for International Women's Day was "Be bold for change". Catering to this theme, KU took the initiative a little forward and made the main objective of the event "Women in changing world of work: Planet 50:50 by 2030."

The Chief Guest of the event was Nayeema Mehjoor, Chairperson J&K Women's Commission along with Khurshid Iqbal Andrabi, Vice Chancellor KU, Professor Nilofer Khan, Coordinator Women's Study Centre and few J&K Bank dignitaries.

Students from various schools, like Kashmir University Model School, Chanapora Higher Secondary School, KothiBagh Higher Secondary School attended the event.

The event was divided into three segments. The first segment was led by the Chief Guests of the event and mainly focused on different subjects involving a woman's life like, balancing of domestic and work life, salary disparity, sexual harassment at work place, parallels drawn between western women and eastern women and social empowerment of women.

The second segment was led by

dignitaries from various fields and focused mainly on challenges faced by women in different work places. Many esteemed guests spoke on the matter. Dr. Aasima Rifaai, Senior Professor from Law Department, Shafak Shah, a working journalist, Dr. Muzamil Jan, Professor from Home Science department. Dr. Sabeeha Mufti, Senior Associate Professor from Media Education Research Center Dr. Geer Mohammad Ishaq, Senior Professor from Pharmaceutical Studies.

The third session was an interactive session with the audience, and queries were addressed by Professor Lilly Want, Head of English Department.

Students from various disciplines spoke to MERC Times and shared their experience on being there.

"It feels good to be here. We are glad we came despite the heavy pouring," said Tabish Sarfaraz, a 12th class commerce student from Chanapora Higher Secondary School.

"The event is so much better than the School events we have celebrated," she added.

"The event was properly conducted, it was very nice and informative," said Shaista, a Psychology student.

"It is great we are finally speaking about the issues, that really matter," she further added.

"The event was very positive and it is always great to hear from such eminent people," said Rafia Manzoor, student from MERC.

With highway closing prices skyrocket

❖ **Sheikh Saman**

SRINAGAR: The closure of the road link to the rest of country has skyrocketed the prices of essential commodities like vegetables and food grains. The stocks of cooking gas have depleted significantly as the trucks carrying the supplies have been either held up in Jammu or stranded en route the 294-km road.

Due to fresh rains and snowfall, The Jammu- Srinagar national highway closed. Many passengers and the vehicles carrying essential commodities to Kashmir valley were stranded for many days on national highway.

Rates of vegetables and fruits in Kashmir had increased by Rs30-Rs 40 per kg. During January as hundreds of truckloads with essentials were stranded on the Jammu-Srinagar

highway which remained closed for several days due to snow. Mutton was being sold almost Rs 50 costlier than the government prices of Rs 400/kg at most mutton shops while Chicken prices hovered around Rs 150 per kg. The government approved rate for chicken is Rs 105/kg. Interestingly, prices of vegetables and livestock had remained towards the lower side during the unrest last year mostly due to a bumper production season of vegetables. Officials in the divisional administration maintain that there are enough stocks of essentials. When contacted Directorate of Food and Supplies, he said that he had constituted a "price checking squad" which will go in each and every market to check the prices of commodities and in case if anyone is found to violate the laws then he would be dealt under strict laws of land.

Acute water shortage hits Rainawari

❖ **Qazi Tanzeela**

SRINAGAR: Several areas of Rainawari have been facing acute shortage of water, especially Mian Shah Sahib.

In some areas of Rainawari, residents rarely get water supply during the day. "Due to the scarcity of water, we have to fetch buckets of water from other areas for drinking purposes" said Shiraz Ahmad Mar, resident of Mian Shah Sahib, Rainawari. A similar scenario prevails in Jogilankar area where water supply is erratic.

Residents of Mian Shah Sahib,

Rainawari said that they are reeling under acute shortage of water from last few years. They have lodged complaints to the concerned officials to improve the situation but all in vain, nobody is paying heed to their pleas.

When contacted Chief Engineer, he said "The water supply will be solved at the earliest and we don't want people to suffer anymore".

As per officials data the total water requirement of Kashmir is 12 crore gallons per day, which includes seven crore gallons in the urban areas and five crore in rural areas.



A S College holds road safety awareness camp

❖ **Kaiser Majeed**

ANANTNAG: A day long road safety awareness camp organised by Regional Transport Office, Kashmir was held on thursday at Amar Singh College.

The programme was held in

collaboration with NSS wing of Amar Singh College and Kashmir Road Safety Foundation, during which RTO Kashmir said that the motor vehicle department would endeavour to reach out to the youth especially in colleges for imparting traffic awareness among

them.

He said that non adherence to the traffic rules is causing loss of precious lives on roads and appealed youth to join hands with the department in generating traffic awareness and reducing accident relating deaths.

Administration takes steps to revamp horticulture sector in state

❖ Muneem Farooq

SRINAGAR: Minister for Horticulture, Syed Basharat Ahmed Bukhari convened a high level meeting to review the status and implementation of directions and guidelines issued in various meetings.

The Minister said that horticulture contributes substantially to the state's economy and hence government is committed to ensure accessibility of end to end services to the cultivators involving production, protection, post harvest, management, processing and marketing.

"Substantial efforts are underway to revitalize the horticulture sector in the state", he added.

For extending irrigation facilities to greater areas under horticulture, the Minister directed digging of borewells with requisite electricity supply in plateaus, karewas and areas with low water availability. He further instructed to take up construction of

command channels in collaboration with Rural Development Department under MGNREGA with adequate framework for their maintenance by local self government bodies.



With regard to enhanced accessibility to the interior areas of orchards, Bukhari asked the Horticulture Department to identify various roads to be constructed in convergence with Rural Development Department under MGNREGA in a phased manner.

In a bid to enhance per hectare yield for horticulture crops, Basharat

Bukhari directed up gradation of 80 nurseries to high density nurseries under Prime Minister Development Package. 10 such nurseries in Jammu and Kashmir each are earmarked to be up graded this financial year.

To introduce accountability, transparency and efficiency in regulation of marketing and transportation of horticulture produce in market areas, the Minister directed holding of mandi elections as per provisions of APMC Act. As such Deputy Commissioners of the districts were asked to kick start the election preparations by compiling voters' lists in this regard to be subsequently followed by rolls verification, filing of objections and election notification by mid July.

The Minister further directed Secretary Horticulture to frame an expert committee for suggesting measures for drafting Horticulture Policy envisioning planned development for next 20 years.

With every passing year, Kashmir Consuming more beer



❖ Hayat Manan

GANDERBAL: According to data provided by the state excise department, beer has emerged as the favourite drink in Kashmir. Despite the surge, the Jammu and Kashmir government has ruled-out a ban on sale and consumption of liquor in the state.

A total of 21.73 crore liquor bottles, including Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL), JK special whisky (country liquor), beer and ready to drink (RTD) have been consumed in Jammu and Kashmir from April 2014 to November 2016

J&K recorded sale of a total of 7.12 crore bottles of liquor in the financial year 2014-15, which went up to 8.05 crore bottles in 2015-16. "As many as 5.54 crore bottles of liquor were sold in the state from April 2016 to November ending last year.

The income generated in the liquor business has also grown over the years. More importantly, the liquor sales generated over Rs 531.88 crore revenue from liquor sales in 2015-16 compared to Rs 464.88 crore in 2014-15. In 2013-14, the department collected a revenue of Rs 439.04 crore from liquor sales in the state

As per the data available on the website of excise department, in the 2011-12 fiscal, the government had generated an income of Rs 385.58 crore while this amount went up to Rs 420.15 crore during the financial year 2012-13.

In the 2013-14 fiscal, the government earned Rs 439.04 crore while an amount of Rs 402.78 had been generated in the last financial year till February.

A total of 38 liquor bars have been granted licenses in hotels, restaurants, banquet halls and clubs since 2011-12.

Manasbal lake in complete mess

❖ Showkat Wani

SRINAGAR: The number of tourists both domestic and foreign used to throng the famous tourist destination but from last few years their number has drastically decreased thus badly affecting the local business.

President of local shikara owners association, Gulam Mohammad Dar told that Manasbal Development Authority (MDA) is doing nothing to improve the condition of lake and its surroundings.

"We found dogs and cattle inside the Manasbal Park and the place is too filthy. The lake was beautiful when we visited three years ago but now we are very disappointed to see its condition today." said visitor.



Lake inhabitants said that many fish species found in the lake are

different areas around the lake has worsened the ecosystem of the lake, nothing has been done to stop the inflow of sewage into the lake, "said a local resident adding a large area of lake is covered with weeds.

When a MERC'S correspondent asked Zulufkar Khan, CEO Walur and Manasbal development authority and asked the reason for the condition of lake, he said "we are trying to best to save our people and their profits too and it's my duty to take care of all inshallah! The time will come the manasbal lake will be considered in the purest lake in the world and all will happen when people contribute the helping hand to us." Authority plan to continue to keep their environment clean

endangered because of the water pollution. "The sewages from the

Government hospitals provide cost effective healthcare



❖ Bisma Farooq

PULWAMA: As the fees charges of private doctors has started to increase day by day, a rapid growth of patients visiting government hospitals could be easily figured out. Despite patients being made to wait in queue for hours, people are not conferring to visit government hospitals.

“Private Doctors and private hospitals are much costlier; I can’t afford the huge bills which I have to pay after visiting one,” a patient in SMHS hospital said. “One of the other reasons is that government hospitals are abundant in the technological aspects,” he added.

A cost- effective health care system being setup to support the health care needs of population is a benefit to most of the populace. Schemes funded directly by the government are proving most helpful in almost all the urban and rural areas.

Although provided with poor sanitation by government hospitals, people have made it a part of their usual life. As the problems faced in private hospitals and clinics are pretty little before that.

“Government hospitals are poorer on the grounds of sanitation, government should take care of this issue in the hospitals,” another visitor in the hospital said.

The high-tech labs boosted with latest equipments are being functioned for the patients in the government hospitals. “I visit government hospitals because the technology used here is modern,” a patient, Firdous Ahmad, while visiting SKIMS for routine checkup said.

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS’ DAY MARKED ACROSS KASHMIR

❖ Farhad Khan

SRINAGAR: To celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women and to pledge support to help forge gender parity, many functions were held today to mark International Women’s Day.

The theme of this year’s Women’s Day is “Be Bold For Change”. In Srinagar, Women’s Study Centre of Government College of Education organized a two-day seminar titled ‘Creating Space, Not sympathy for

Women’ to celebrate International Women’s Day.

Chairperson State Women’s Commission, Ms Nayeema Ahmed Mehjoor was the chief guest on the occasion, while as Vice chancellor Kashmir University, Prof Khurshid Andrabi, presided over the function.

Speaking on the occasion, Nayeema Mehjoor highlighted the importance of celebrating women’s day and called for socio-economic development of women. She said that the Commission will carry out a mass campaign of public

education and awareness about the rights available to women under the State and Centre laws. She added that the aim of Commission is to make women aware of their rights and empower them. The Vice Chancellor, in his presidential address called for reviving and preserving ethical principles and moral values.

Later, the chairperson visited Government College of Education and addressed the audience about challenges being faced by the working women.

IISM COMPLETES 5TH SKI COURSE AT GULMARG

❖ Junaid Manzoor

GULMAR: Indian Institute of skiing & mountaineering completed its 5th ski course at Gulmarg on Tuesday. More than 80 students passed out in 3 different levels of skiing in basic, intermediate, and advance courses. The institute has become so popular that its difficult for most of the students to get admission due to limited number of seats.

The batch of students was from different parts of the country including considerable number of students from Kashmir. There were

students from other parts of the country. Aziz Ahmed Rather Sub District Magistrate Tangmarg was the chief guest and Suhail Ahmed Wani of Gulmarg gondola was the guest of honor.

Aziz Ahmed Rather gave away prizes to the winners of different events. JS dhillon principal IISM welcomed the chief guest and briefed him about the various activities being undertaken by the institute amidst negative media reports of turmoil in Kashmir. He told that hard work put in by his team combined with excellent training

and administration has removed all fears from minds of students who make a bee line to get admission in this institute .

In addition to develop the skill of skiing , he said this institute develops the overall personality of the students under adverse weather conditions. These are best courses for national integrations as students from all parts of india interact students from Kashmir and and discover the truth of rich kashmiri culture of excellent hospitality which is never conveyed through media.

WATER SHORTAGE IRKS GANDERBAL FARMERS

❖ Fehmeeda Rashid

SRINAGAR: Shortage of water in Wussan area of Ganderbal district has assumed chronic nature with the farmers flaying the authorities for failing to redress the problem.

The major source of income of Wussan area of Ganderbal is agriculture but due to lack of the irrigation facilities farmers suffer. Moreover, the Baba irrigation canal adjacent to the area but there is no channel system to the area.

A local resident Mohd subhan dar said that the water shortage has ruined our crops and also effected our land.

When contacted District collector Ganderbal Mr Hussain Ganai told MERC TIMES that we have received the complaints regarding the issue earlier also but due to turmoil unfortunately no attention was paid to the grievances of villagers .However, he assured to sort out the matter with higher authorities.

Delayed Construction of Poshpora Bridge Affects Connectivity of the Area

❖ Iqra Akhoun

KUPWARA: In 2005, the foundation stone was laid for construction of the bridge and work on the construction of bridge went on for a year.

Villagers were hopeful that within two years Poshpora will be connected to several other villages which include Dedikote and Pazipora. “However, after one year, the construction process saw a halt,” recalls Abdul Ahad standing on the bank of the river. “After a wait of several years, we asked the government to complete the work,” says another local, Ghulam Mohammad Bhat.

In 2012- 2013 two more columns (Pillars of the bridge) were constructed and work again came to a halt. “The construction material like iron roads and other stuff got rusted and became debris. A lot of material got washed away with floods,” says Javed Bhat who grew seeing the laying of foundation stone up to now.

When contacted, JKPC’s Kupwara DGM, rues lack of required funds to complete the construction of bridge. “The bridge with estimated cost of approximately Rs five crore thirty lakh for construction has received only RS 2.5 crore So far, Informs DGM.

STRAY DOGS ROAM KASHMIR UNIVERSITY, STUDENTS SCARED

❖ Naveed Ahmed

SRINAGAR: The stray dogs roaming in main campus Kashmir university are scaring students, hence questioning the administration's indifference towards campus sanitation.

As per students dogs are seen wandering in campus all the time and even some times enter the department premises. A student from one of the departments told MERC TIMES that ' she saw the dogs entering the departmental premises Shaheen Shafique said that while coming to university in morning she was chased by a dog and somehow managed to run." Kashmir university being one of the reputed institutions of valley should be devoid of all such things said another student.

Dr Naseer Iqbal, Chief Proctor Kashmir university when contacted told MERC times , that they have already done lot regarding this matter, as the university work has resumed after long unrest and chilling winter the university is looking forward to increase its efforts and overcome all the prevailing challenges regarding the sanitation and other related issues ,he added.

Depression on rise in Kashmir

❖ Shahzad Ashiq

KUPWARA: Depression is a common mental disorder that presents with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, and poor concentration. It usually occurs as a result of adverse life events, such as: losses of a significant person, object, relationship or health, but can also occur due to no apparent cause. These problems can become chronic or recurrent and lead to substantial impairments in an individual's ability to take care of his or her every day responsibilities.

Depression, as a disorder, usually starts in early adulthood, with likely recurrences. An episode may be characterized by sadness, indifference or apathy, or irritability. It is usually associated with change in a number of neurovegetative functions, including sleep patterns and appetite and weight, motor agitation or retardation, fatigue, impaired concentration and decision-making, feelings of shame or guilt, and thoughts of

death or dying. A small proportion of patients will experience psychotic symptoms. The duration of an untreated crisis ranges from 9 months to several years. Fifty to sixty per cent of patients will have at least one more episode in their lifetime.

The nature of depression is such that affected persons are unlikely to realize that they are depressed and therefore unlikely to seek help for themselves. They are also incapable of appropriately taking their treatment as directed by health care professionals. In all chronic conditions, the concurrence of depression, highly affects the quality of care provided by themselves and received by others. When present with other chronic conditions, outcomes are usually poorer and health care considerably more expensive than expected.

Major depression is diagnosed when depressed mood or anhedonia (lack of ability to enjoy or experience pleasure) has been present for more than 2 weeks and is associated with at least five of the following symptoms: loss of interest, fatigue or loss of energy,

insomnia or hypersomnia, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, decreased concentration, significant weight loss or gain, and recurrent suicidal ideation.

A diagnosis of dysthymic disorder is founded on a patient having suffered from mild but constant depressive symptoms for at least 2 years, which are not clearly related to any specific cause. It might concur with a more intensive depressive crisis; this is what is known as "double depression".

Doctors recently released a report which suggests that half of all residents in the valley has depression or some other mental problem . the report found that nearly 2 million adults of Kashmir valley suffer from some form of mental distress . a majority 93% have experienced conflict related trauma, an average adult found to have witnessed around 8 traumatic during his/ her lifetime. More than 70% adults have witnessed the sudden or violent death of someone they knew. According to the report , 50% of women and 37% of men are likely to suffer from depression .

Open Data Day Celebrated At KU

❖ Tajamul Islam

PULWAMA: an "OPEN DATA DAY" was celebrated in the auditorium of EMMRC, Kashmir University. The event was attended by faculty members of different depts. and various students.

Dr Aijaz Ahmad, Sr. Asst professor Biotechnology was the chief Guest of the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, he explained the meaning, role and significance of open data in research work of all subjects in general and biological science in particular. He also spoke about the various challenges being faced in making any researchwork open data.

Chief librarian Kashmir university

and HOD Dept. of Library and Information Science Dr Abdul Majeed Baba was also present on the occasion, while sharing his views he stressed upon the utility of Open Data of research work especially for financiallyweaker section scholars who don't have direct free access to works done by other researchers in other parts of the world.

He also emphasized on making efforts to make more and more research an open data research so that every person irrespective of his location or status can avail the benefit of work done by others and research doesn't remain confine to some restricted constraints.



Honouring local heroes for their extraordinary talent

❖ Raja Asim

SRINAGAR: An award ceremony for achievers belonging to the different walks of life was held at SKICC by the Centre for Research and Development Policy (CRDP). The work and contribution of 19 such achievers was acknowledged under different categories.

The 19 awardees included Javed Ahmad Tak under the Social Reform category; Dr Mohammad Muzaffer Khan, a clinical psychologist; Dr Rashid Maqbool, an ophthalmologist working during the 2016 crisis; Ghulam Mohammad Sofi, an ambulance driver who despite being hit by pellets drove the patients to the hospital, under the Health category; Adil Mir, owner of 'Pureweave' under Entrepreneurship category; Prof. Shakeel A. Ramshoo, HOD of Earth Sciences department, University of Kashmir, under Research category; Dr Sohan Lal Koul, a writer, under Literature category; Zufa Iqbal, an 18-year-girl who is reviving Namdagari, under the Craft category; Omar Nissa, a boy from remote Tral who owns an online radio

FM was awarded under the Innovation category; Zehru Nissan, Greater Kashmir correspondent; Zuhaib Maqbool, a photojournalist, under the Media category; legendary Kashmiri singer Abdul Rashid



Hafiz and Ms. Shazia Bashir, under the Music category; Mohd. Arif Khan and Sajad Yousuf Dar under the Sports category

Two more awards were announced by the CRDP which included 'CRDP Young talent of the year' and the 'Lifetime Achievement award'. "Young talent of the year" was awarded to Ms. Zaira Waseem,

a Kashmiri child actress featured in a recent hit bollywood movie, Dangal and "Lifetime Achievement award" was given to Bashir Ahmad Bashir, the legendary cartoonist of Srinagar Times.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir expressed his gratitude for the people who have liked and appreciated his work. He said, "Awards often carry dust at shelves but the claps of my own people today is the real award that will reverberate in my heart till I am alive,".

Zaira Waseem said "she feels humbled for being selected for this award, I am speechless, I can't thank people enough for choosing me for this award"

"The CRDP extends congratulations to all the award winners whose genius endowment had made our Kashmir proud on local as well as global platform and we feel this is a proud moment for all us," said Dr. Peer G.N. Suhail, head of the CRDP.

Musical performances by budding artists, and special performance by Kashmir's renowned singers Waheed Jeelani and Shazia Bashir also added to the entertaining aura of the event.

Lack of proper facilities in KU hostels

UNINTENTIONAL CARE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SUFFER



❖ Syed Irshad

SRINAGAR: The students of Kashmir University claims they lack the adequate hostel facilities in main campus in which hundreds of students suffer outside rented rooms. An unintentional care of authority student suffers outside rented rooms. There are some students of Kashmir university who claims that they were unable to get hostel in which they suffer a lot in

rented buildings.

Those students who belongs to different districts and far flung areas like Uri, Kupwara and Baramulla alleged that authorities are failed to grant them hostel facilities .while expressing their difficulties students feel helpless and paying huge amount of money in outside rented rooms. While student of Mass Communication and other departments live in rented room outside campus.

I applied for hostel some eight months ago in June 2016, unfortunately did not get room, university are totally failed to fulfill our demands said Tahir a student of Mass communication.

Another student Firdous said he pays 4000 per month outside campus if he got any facility from university would be able to save some money for my future as my family is financially very low he also added.

However authorities said that every year approximately 5000 students got admitted in the campuses might be 1000 of them belongs to Srinagar rest 4000 belongs to other far flung areas thus it's not possible to grant all of them hostel facility .in addition to it presently 400 students are living in Naseem bagh hostel in boys apartment, however 6000 girls and 55 scholars pursuing students are living in hostel.

In Kashmir university there is a lack of hostel buildings in campus so we have very few vacancies, we give priority first to those students who belongs to Leh, Kishtwar, Poonch, Uri then after we select some students from North and South Kashmir districts said G.A khaki chairman provost, also added that the admission for Zakura hostel will start 15 march, 300 students would select for there I am hopeful this problem would end with its start.