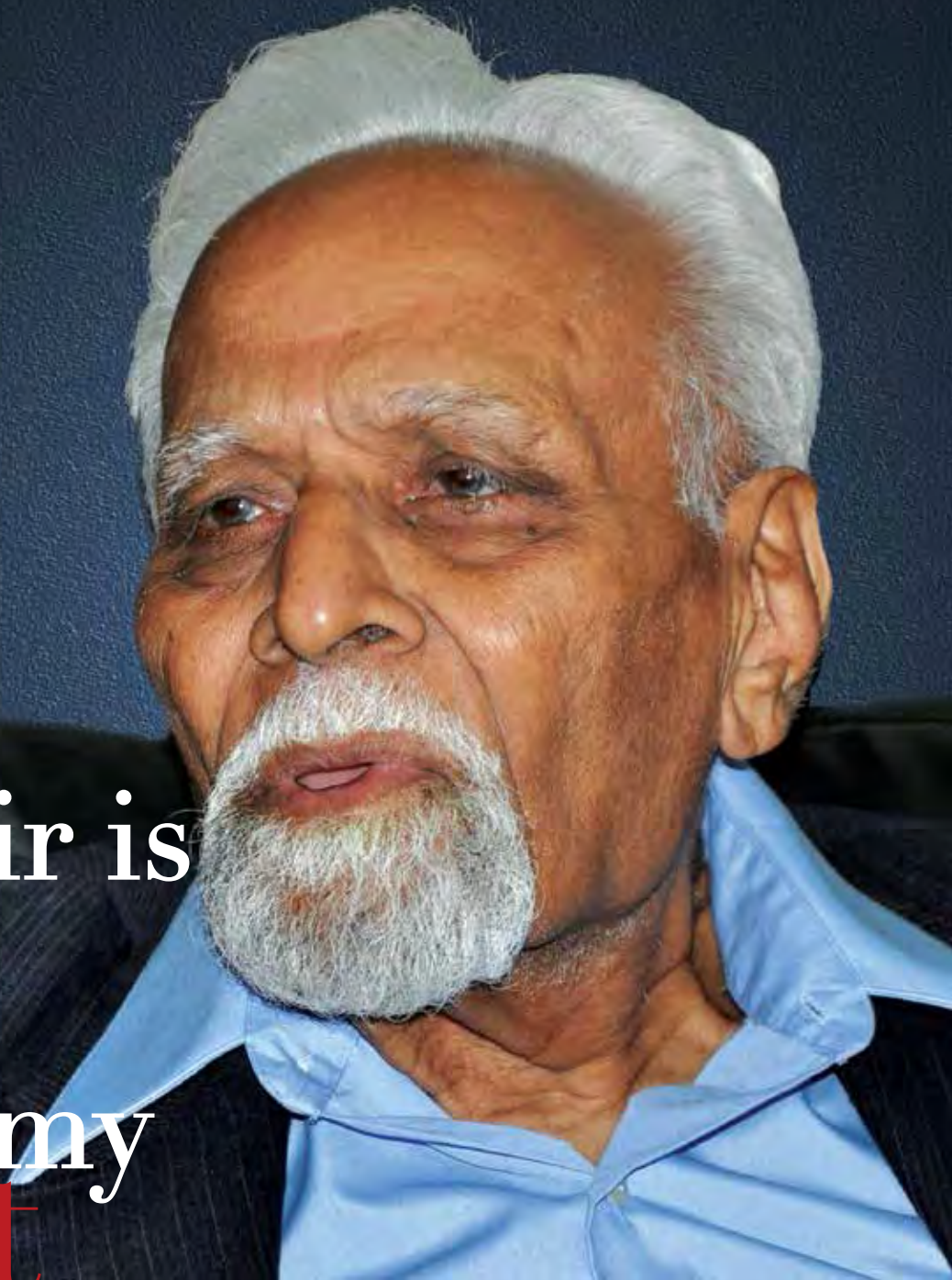




Vol. 22 No1
2012

MediaTimes



Kashmir is
in my
Eyes
and in my
Heart

Media Education Research Centre
University of Kashmir



Vice-Chancellor releasing special issue of MERC Times on Panos valedictory function



VC Prof Talat Ahmad and HoD Prof S Mufeed with founder HoD MERC Prof Manzurl Amin



Veteran journalism trainer Alope Thakur during Panos workshop at MERC



Green Oscar award winner Mike Panday (filmmaker) with faculty and students at MERC

MERC ROUND-UP

The Media Times is a bi-annual lab journal of Media Education Research Centre, University of Kashmir. It is devoted for enhancing the Print Journalism skills of the Students

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Vice-Chancellor

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Prof. S. Mufeed Ahmad
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Feedback and suggestions from the readers are welcome.

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Prof Manzurul Amin with faculty members, alumni and the students at MERC



HoD Prof S Mufeed and Sr faculty member Nasir Mirza with a team of filmmakers from Mumbai



VC Prof Talat Ahmad, Registrar Prof S Fayaaz, HoD Prof S Mufeed and Director DD Srinagar Shami Shair in a video workshop at MERC



Team of Panos trainers and students at valedictory function of Panos programme titled 'People and Places' at MERC



Dr. Er. Mehraj-ud-Din Dar,

FOUNDER DIRECTOR IT & SS,
UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

Kashmir University deeply mourns the tragic death of one of its brilliant and shinning stars Dr. Er. Mehraj-ud-Din Dar, Founder Director IT & SS, University Of Kashmir. He did his BE in Electronics & Communication from Regional Engineering College (REC) Srinagar, (now NIT) and then completed his MS (M.Tech) Software Systems from the prestigious Birla Institute of Technology & Science (BITS) Pilani. Dr Mehraj did his Ph.D on "Data Extraction and Recognition with Dynamic Variants" from Kashmir University. In his short

life he scaled the heights of excellence and proved his mettle. His achievements are numerous and qualities as a human being beyond count. He will always be remembered as a man of great will power and a golden heart.

"Science & Engineering Research Fellowship" (SERC)-2009, awarded by Science and Technology, Govt. of India. "Science Scientist Fellowship-1998" offered by Department of Science & Technology, J&K Govt.

6th August, 1992 joined the University of Kashmir as System Analyst in the Computer Centre (now

Department of Computer Sciences).

KU specially assigned the job of automating the results of the Examination Wing which was subsequently successfully executed by him in his capacity as the Additional Controller of Examination.

2007 Ist December, 2007 Dr. Mehraj was appointed as the Founder Director of the Directorate of IT & SS. Immediately he took up the challenge of promoting IT and executing e-Governance in the University.

A strong team of multidisciplinary members with Dr. Mehraj

as its Chief Coordinator was constituted for launching multiple IT activities worked out various strategies to make the Directorate and its entire domain of IT and e-Governance self financing.

In its very first attempt it succeeded to secure a prestigious project from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology for e-governance of the Admission, Registration and Examination systemic activities with the goal of providing many on-line solutions. The project was successfully completed in June 2011.

It is because of his tireless efforts that at present a variety of on line solutions are in operation which have benefitted all stake holders including the students, staff and faculty. The benefit has extended to a maximum portion of the society since all the Govt. Degree Colleges were brought under the purview of e-governance. Currently 38 IT centres are functioning across the valley in all affiliated Govt. Degree Colleges.

In view of the successful completion of the earlier e-governance project, Dr. Mehraj as Chief Coordination of the team proposed for total e-governance of the entire administrative system of the University and the Ministry of

Communication and Information Technology, Govt. of India sanctioned another e-governance project in September 2011 under which efforts are on to make all operations of the University e-governed.

In 2012 Dr. Mehraj proposed for introduction of M.Sc Programme in Information Technology (M.Sc in IT) which was approved by the competent authority and the program was launched in March 2012 giving the Directorate the status of an academic department. The course will be run by the Directorate of IT and SS in collaboration with IIT Mumbai. It has been designed as a specialized practical oriented professional courses offering specialization in VLSI and hardware designed technologies.

Under his dynamic leadership many on-line services related to admission, Examination, Syllabi, Statutes, Feedback Forum, Registration, Students academic details, Re-evaluation, Re-checking, Migration, E-learning etc are operational on e-based mechanism at present;

e-Governance (Examinations & Admissions) Project;

e-Registration, e-Admissions, e-Entrance, e-Examination Au-

tomation System, e-feedback, e-NOC.

e-Governance (Administration) Project

e-HR, e-Workflow, e-learning.

Auxiliary Services.

Maintenance of University Website, Hosting of Departmental Websites, Establishment of Information Centres in Affiliated Colleges, Connectivity with Colleges, University WAN Connectivity. Student Placements in IT, IT Trainings pertaining to the in home e-governed solutions, University Event Management, University Salary System, University Guest House Booking.

Advanced Centre for Excellence in information and Communication Technology.

The contributions and achievements of Dr Mehraj ud Din in the IT sector in general and e-governance practices in KU have been duly acknowledged by the state and central governments. He was an asset to the University and society as a whole and his death is an irreparable loss to the IT department in particular and to the University in general His loss will be mourned for years to come. May Allah provide peace to his soul and grant him place in heaven (Ameen) .

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Message from
Vice-chancellor

The common notion is that journalism is all about idealism. However, in field, things are very different. Number of things attain more significance than just reporting the objective fact. Many a time, social considerations also take precedence. That's why the concept of self censorship assumes much more significance, because what journalists often report has wide ranging consequences.

There are other sensibilities which ought to be taken care of. Journalism as a profession is becoming a tricky job. It is all about finding ways and means to say what you want to say by not offending anyone. Sometimes journalism is about compromises also. More than idealism, it is about realism and understanding of the situation. So there is only one advice: be wise.

And this wisdom can be garnered by knowing the nuances of journalism in a great deal. The threshold to withstand pressures from different quarters while reporting facts can be assimilated by understanding the fine distinctions of this profession. The theoretical footing and sound knowledge of this field, as such, is a pre-requisite to excel and survive in the ever-exploring domain of media.

In this regard, I am pleased to know that the Media Education Research Centre (MERC) of University is filling up this need by teaching the sciences of media to the budding journalists. Imparting the relevant information and understanding of media studies has been the facet of this Centre, which has a distinguish of making good journalists, most of whom are affiliated with the media in the State and some among them are working with reputed national and international media organizations outside.

In a way, this Centre has been instrumental in supplying the media manpower to the State which is gradually evolving with the entry of the same every year. This is a considerable contribution MERC has made towards its society.

However, given the increasing economic globalization and re-structuring in the world political, economic and technological systems, and the requirements for knowledge and information within that system, educational needs in terms of curriculum and approach at all levels have changed. MERC too has to keep in sight these educational requirements for the workforce of the future.

In this backdrop, it is enormously imperative that the area of publications by students (a fortnightly newspaper MERC Times and a bi-annual lab journal Media Times) is widened. These are the platforms that will generate creative thought and reflection amongst the budding journalists. This will also open the doors for rewarding careers in many fields of professional activity including academia and media affairs.

I am pleased to know that in the year 2012 under the able leadership of HoD MERC conducted various seminars workshops on the significant topics like Media and Social Responsibility and Press Freedom and the like and also organized interaction sessions with the veterans of Media industry.

It gives me pleasure to note that the content of departmental publications is gradually improving and the frequency is getting regular. The efforts put in by the Editor and her team are commendable.

I wish them all the best.

Prof. Talat Ahmad



From HoD's Desk

A Call For Responsible Journalism

Free press is one of the most important indicators of a successful democracy. People's participation in the affairs of State, which is the soul of any democratic republic, will be impossible without the functioning of free and fair press, also referred to as fourth estate. The main aim and goal of the fourth estate is to keep our leaders honest and to arm the powerless with high amount of required information to become problem solvers

However, this goal will be impossible to achieve in absence of freedom that media requires to empower the powerless. Press freedom is essential for the media to promote dialogue, challenge violations of the rule of law, and expose corruption. Journalists everywhere must be able to practice their profession without fear and censorship. The mass media are able to contribute to the life and the liberty of people only if they are allowed to operate with freedom. A free press that gives voice to minorities and marginalized groups promotes dialogue and mutual understanding among the different groups in society. It is in recognition to the significance and essence of this freedom for the operations of media that the fourth estate enjoys constitutional guarantees in this regard in the shape of Art 19. However, the same Article immediately after pledging the freedom puts necessary restrictions on it. The freedom of speech has become a contentious issue in resent times and the limits of what is and what is not acceptable speech has become widely debated issue throughout the world. Allah in his Holly Book Quran has defined the limits on what is acceptable and unacceptable speech. In chapter 49 (Surah Hujraat) Verse No. 6, "O, you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with content of information, investigate first, lest to you harm people out of ignorance and become a regretful over what you have done? Even one could find the execution and implementation of right of speech as demonstrated by benefactor of humanity Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Khaleefas (R.A) and followers.

Media deals with and touches people's lives very closely and what rolls out has a direct bearing on the functioning of the society. Therefore, media practitioners have to be extra careful while exercising their liberty and power of access. Independence gives rise to responsibility, rights are followed by duties and if there exists a disconnect the consequences can be disastrous. Liberty calls for accountability and that should begin from the media practitioners themselves.

Media can gain and hold credibility with the public only by observing highest professional and ethical standards of accuracy, verification, attribution, and inclusivity. A public served well by a highly competent, professional, and ethical press will see value in press freedom. Diverse, vibrant but inclusive and fair media free from political and commercial special interests and inclinations can only prove beneficial to the society.

Skewed practices like Yellow Journalism and sensationalizing issues have turned people more skeptical towards media. Events like NoW scandal and involvement of some media practitioners in 2G scam have raised serious questions on media's reliability. Trust deficit is a big challenge before media practitioners and it is difficult to restore and maintain it until and unless freedom matches its responsibility.

At Media Education Research Centre (MERC) we give our students exposure to not only seek and exercise their professional freedom but also and more importantly to exercise this right with care and responsibility. Meaningful and socially conscious journalism is our commitment.

I place on record my deep appreciation for the Editor and her team for their hard work they put in bringing out the publication and providing opportunity to the students to display and hone their skills as young writers.

Prof. (Dr) S. Mufeed Ahmad



From Editor's Desk

Old School Is Holding The Fort

New Media technologies have spread through every form of media and changed its make-up and thrust. Their impact is so enormous that a new course has been added to the academic curriculum in various Universities around the globe that focuses on media convergence. Social networking sites and blogs are important facets of new media technologies. Face-book and Twitter have changed the dimensions of communication drastically and are coming up as important source of sharing information and opinion cutting across physical and non-physical boundaries. Most of the political mobilizations in this age around the world owe their enormity to the magic of the social networking sites. This has given rise to a debate that is centered on “conventional” journalism being replaced by these informal networking sites. A claim that has been strongly refuted by votaries of the old school journalism, which stresses on inviolability of facts and accuracy.

Recently, a report revealed that there are millions of fake accounts on face-book. In company filings published in August, Facebook has said it believes there are now more than 83 million illegitimate accounts on the social network.

This raises fingers on the credibility of the content generated on these sites. No doubt, social media networks have proved resourceful in terms of providing information but it is the necessary process of verification that makes the particular information credible and reliable. Attribution and verification are the two key principles of journalism and the content of the social networking sites generally lack both these qualities. Many times, it becomes impossible to verify the information provided by an account holder on say Facebook or Twitter, and the case becomes more complex when the identity of the source of such information is not reliable. And, in case the information is accorded the value of journalistic fact, media-persons run a great risk of ending up in promoting jingoism and trivialization of media as an institution.

Ideally, social networking services should serve as a tool for journalist to uncover news tips, gather content for stories, pursue news sources, reach out and connect with people, discuss social and political trends, learn how people feel about happenings, create and circulate stories, explore significant comments, and respond to know more and interact with readers, listeners and viewers. These functions are complimentary to the traditional media and cannot be treated as a substitute.

With this challenge, all forms of media have to be very critical about the usage of content available through the social media. And more so for the print journalism, this augurs the loss of already diminishing readership, and as such entails more in-depth, honest and reliable way of reportage and analyses.

Against this backdrop, the media educators are face up to many issues that lie at the heart of any genuine journalism education. We at Media Education Research Centre (MERC) have a greater challenge to convince and train our future media professionals accordingly. Of course, technology is indispensable for their careers but the sense of responsibility and authentic professionalism is also the demand of the hour. Hope MERC fills up this dire need.

This issue of Media Times is a humble endeavor to provide platform of expression for our students to create sensitization about various critical issues and themes existing in our society, and rarely reported by social media.

Here, I want to place on record my gratitude to the patron of the publications Vice Chancellor Prof. Talat Ahmad for the academic freedom he is providing to the department and I also acknowledge the support and the efforts of the Chief Editor for making this endeavour a success.

Muslim Jan



Rouf Bhat

GOOGLE`S GOOGLY

Watch your stumps

Do you use Google? I am sure the reply to this question by even some of the best intellectuals and stalwarts would hardly be in negation.

Google a search optimised engine which searches data on the internet on 'key word' techniques has crammed into everybody`s life. It has become a faithful servant and won`t ever disobey its master. You will rarely find any complaints against the faithfulness of google. It serves all and sundry. Google has a role in a person`s life even before one is born. Are you surprised how? Well, you should know that today`s conceiving ladies surf google for every query they have about pregnancy and related issues, even for matters like baby care and choosing a name they depend on this (giant)



search engine.

However, this virtual companion has paralysed humans and what is more pathetic that

we are not able to recognise the damage it does to us. It has drilled cosiness deep into our minds which is now hard to be knocked out. I

personally fear that our future generation will face intellectual bankruptcy, spirit of hard work would be lacking in them. They no more would be in mood to hunt for knowledge; rather they would go into their rooms and would start 'roaming' in google (virtual) to seek knowledge. By relying more and more on it we are closing the options for capability of generating ideas by personal effort.

Plagiarism is one of the biggest concerns, which is rather growing at a fast rate because of this "information mine". Not only the writers but researchers too are lifting content from the already published works. The concept of originality of the ideas is vanishing silently. Fresh ideas face a silent death. When even the big guns do not shy away from copying the readymade content and labelling it as their 'copyright', how can we expect our youth to be immune to this 'copy-paste disease'?

Students should be given a limited access to google content rather they should be encouraged to consult books for

Vexed Plagiarism is one of the biggest concerns, which is rather growing at a fast rate because of this "information mine". Not only the writers but researchers too are lifting content from the already published works. The concept of originality of the ideas is vanishing silently. Fresh ideas face a silent death. When even the big guns do not shy away from copying the readymade content and labelling it as their 'copyright', how can we expect our youth to be immune to this 'copy-paste disease'?

their studies and assignments. It will really boost their spirit of hard work. The concept of

spoon feeding being encouraged is not providing anybody space to think about the possible threats posed by the wrong usage of this technological boom. Everyone seems to be contented with leisure and luxury google provides them. We need to be vigilant about the dire consequences of the harm. People especially youth need to go under proper counselling about the usage of google. There should be a proper check on the content used by the students, it should be properly monitored.

So be aware and have limited access to this 'gaint' which is brewing in everybody's pocket. Stop it before it stops you from generating good, innovative and fresh ideas.

Take a bit bite and cut down at least a small corner from your bunch of habits. If not completely, at least have a little control over google, rather being controlled by it. All I can say is just to be a little brave. We have done excellent things without google in past. So why cannot in future. Take a pledge and save yourself.



Vice-Chancellor
Prof. Talat Ahmad
interacts with
HoD Prof. Mufeed
Ahmad and faculty
members during his
visit to MERC





Hashim Hakeem

Youngsters Losing Appetite To Read



Despite the initiatives taken by the government towards inculcating reading culture among the youth by making books available through public libraries, youth seem to have lost appetite for reading.

According to the experts, since internet has set its foot in Valley, youngsters have changed their reading style from traditional books to the new high tech equipments enabled with reading devices.

“Youngsters in Kashmir are losing reading habit by every passing day. They spend much time with the internet rather than reading. It is the craze for internet among youngsters and the easy access to it which makes them glued to social networking, computer games and mobile games that they are unable to develop reading habits.” said Manzoor Bhat, a sociologist.

“They get exposed to these technologies in early age of their lives affecting their minds deeply,” added Manzoor Bhat.

Technology has changed the life style of the young generation

“Teenagers and children are not patient readers; they find it difficult to adjust themselves to books in their early age. They need to develop it gradually by sticking to newspapers initially and later turn to comic stories and then to the short stories in a different phases”

who are very much attracted to it.

“From the last three years, the readership of the literature, declined as our young generation has chosen games over books,” said a bookseller, Tariq Ahmad.

Some believe that it depends largely on parents to inculcate among children the sense of reading.

“I think It depends more on the atmosphere at their homes. Children usually tend to follow

their parents. If parents have a habit of reading newspaper, magazines and books, then children also follow the same,” said Shabir Ahmad, a teacher.

“Reading is essential for personal development as well as for the socio-economic development of State. We need to take steps to develop the reading habits among the children so they may prove better citizens,” he added.

Vexed by the diminishing interest in reading among youngsters from the very beginning, government has opened libraries at several places which showcase all types of books but this move has not brought much change.

“We have library as well as browsing center for the students but they prefer to remain hooked on internet rather to spent time with books,” said a librarian Suhail Ahmad, posted in a public library in downtown Srinagar.

“Books are available to us in good quantity but readership here is very less. There is an immediate need to generate interest among the youngsters by telling them the advantages of reading so that readership may increase in future,” he suggested.

Experts also stress the need to inculcate reading habits among children right from their formative years.

“Teenagers and children are not patient readers; they find it difficult to adjust themselves to books in their early age. They need to develop it gradually by sticking to newspapers initially and later turn to comic stories and then to the short stories in a different phases,” said Basher Ahmad, an academician.



Ashiq Sofi



Social Networking: BOON or BANE?

Human beings are social animals and tend to live in groups. Due to this trait social groups are formed.

In modern age internet has become the biggest mean to this end. Wherever we are, we form clusters or groups through networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, Google+, My Space and so on.

Social networking provide platform for humans to interact, gather and share information and experiences cutting across all the limitations whatsoever. The main reason for creating social networking was to bring people together, so that they interact with each other through chat rooms and encourage them to share personal information and ideas. It started with SixDegrees.

com in 1997 and became popular with the advent of Facebook and Twitter in 2006. Nowadays social networking sites vary on the basis of their different contexts like professional, research/academic and general social networking. It has great impact on our day today activities ranging from political to socio-economic aspects.

Professional social networking sites are focussed solely on interactions and relationships of business activities. These help us in e-commerce, finding jobs and in bringing socio-economic equality. LinkedIn, Viadeo and Xing can be categorised among these sites.

While as Research gate, Academia.edu etc are Research/ Academic social networking sites and also a collaboration of tools aimed at scientific research for

sciences disciplines. These have helped in promotion of e-learning and research of diverse issues.

General social networking sites serve as a social platform where people reunite with old friends, stay connected with current ones and even make new acquaintances. These help to accommodate focus on all aspects. Facebook, Orkut, Twitter, Google+, etc. fall under this category.

Social networking sites have become important tools in shaping the political spectrum of today's world. The vast network of users, combined with time and cost efficiency methods have not only helped in making them a practical and convenient method but also have helped to bring grave issues in political arena under public scrutiny. These sites

Social networking provide platform for humans to interact, gather and share information and experiences cutting across all the limitations whatsoever. The main reason for creating social networking was to bring people together, so that they interact with each other through chat rooms and encourage them to share personal information and ideas

were used as a tool to topple the governments in Middle East.

It gave a voice and power to citizens and minorities whose voices were either suppressed or simply overlooked by mainstream government controlled media. It has also revolutionised politics as politicians now find themselves under a greater level of scrutiny.

The grave issue in Indian politics like corruption was brought to the forefront of political discussion only when "The India against corruption" page and "@janlokpal" page was created on Facebook and Twitter to create awareness and gather support for the Lokpal bill.

Social networking sites are also helping in generating revenue, jobs, etc. The department of post is using twitter as a marketing tool for nearly two years and will like to use it as a customer relationship management tool.

The revenue of social networking sites is mostly generated through advertising which is estimated at \$200 billion in USA. It's also creating employment opportunities for application developers like, Agarwalla brothers from India developed Facebook version game called Scrabulous, earning 25,000\$/month from advertising. At the same time, Facebook application economy has contributed \$12.2 billion to the U.S economy.

Social networking has also affected social life and activity of people in various ways. Especially with its availability on many mobile devices, it has allowed people to stay in touch with their loved ones. It also unites people with common interests or beliefs through groups, and has been predominant in reuniting lost family members and friends. John Watson and his daughter

were united after 20 years by Facebook.

These sites nowadays provide an easy and cheap way of communication, connecting different parts of world by using features like voice and video calling. For the upliftment of society, it has also allowed scientific groups to expand their knowledge base and share ideas.

Nowadays these sites are used by government functionaries to generate opinion. Planning Commission created its Facebook page to connect with the people and get their suggestion for the 12th FYP. Similar is the case with Delhi Traffic Police and J&K Traffic Police who created their Facebook pages to create awareness among the people, disseminate information on road blocks, processions, etc. and gave a tool of public participation in controlling traffic crimes.

Social networking has also led to the integration of cultural ideas, classless society, religious harmony, creation of its own individual language like "b4" for "Before", "da" for "The", thus strengthening the concept of globalisation.

However this depicts only one side of the coin. Social networking has increased the ease and prominence of cyber bullying also, affecting a person both emotionally and psychology and has also devastating effects on victim, often leading to suicide and depression. People are getting addicted to it and are spending most of their time on these sites, which creates distraction, decreases productivity and can jeopardise a company's reputation and legal liability.

Diminishing interpersonal communication has been a growing issue as more and more people have turned to

social networking as a means of communication. Also most of the information put by users on these sites is false and concocted, resulting in misleading information about other people.

The rise in anti-religious comments has increased hatred, intolerance to others views and communalism in the society. The pornographic images and videos have found another ground to reach people, thus increasing immoral activities in the society. Due to these things people are becoming individualistic and social and moral values are on decline.

Privacy concerns with these sites have also raised concerns amongst users. In 2011, more than 2 lac Facebook accounts in Bangalore (India) were hacked. There are also accusations levelled at these sites that despite promises of freedom of speech, the content is controlled by the powerful. A Facebook page "Intifada" (Palestinian protest against Israel) was removed for propagating views of Palestinian's.

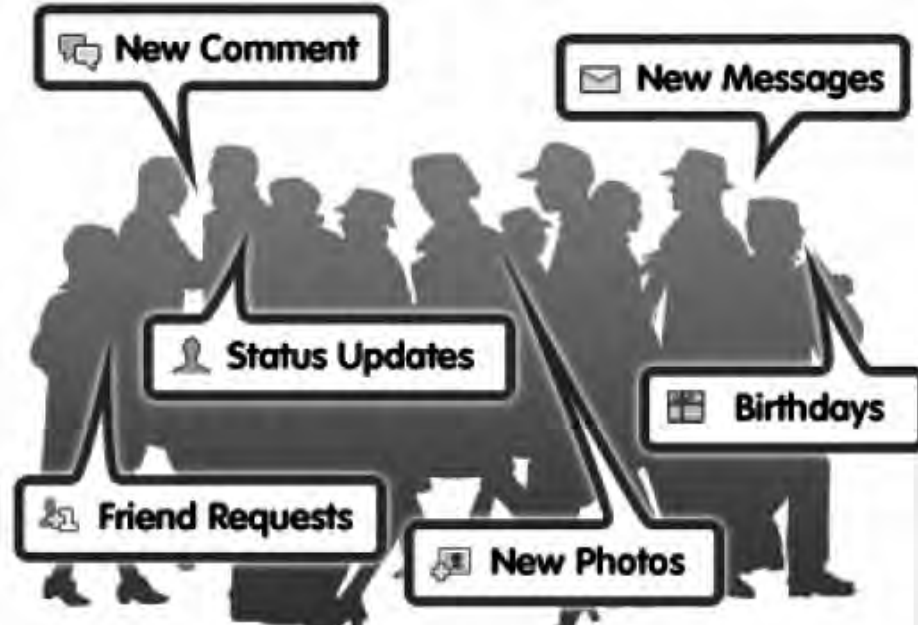
Though we cannot say that we need to move away from social networking which has revolutionised human communication, created new phenomena and fields of research in this internet world of possibilities but to this innovation, we need to limit the negatives of social networking by following some measures. Like parent's need to educate children, users should provide less personal information, delete cookies after logging out, prune friend list on a regular basis, the person should read privacy policy before joining it, proper implementation of consumer protection acts, and investment on censoring internet is required.



Javed Bhat

Best Buddies Beyond Borders

A Tale of Facebook Friendship



Social networking has thrown up opportunities of making friends beyond borders. However, how often do really build a friendship bond worth meeting and spending some time together. Answer is just a few. Here is a story of Facebook friends who met after two years of messaging and chatting.

Faisal Ahmad of Srinagar Kashmir and Nepho Chou of Singapore met here in Kashmir in April 2012.

We all know that world has become a global village where one can communicate with other between 1000 miles of distance. And Facebook as a tool of social networking has tied such strings among masses. One such interesting example of socializing was set this April when two people belonging to different ethnicity, environment, culture, language and country, after becoming friends on facebook came together to spend some

Nepho Chou, 20 year old computer hardware engineering student came on vacation to meet his Facebook buddy Faisal Ahmad, 19 a student. They have been friends on Facebook from last 2 years

time with each other.

Nepho Chou, 20 year old computer hardware engineering student came on vacation to meet his Facebook buddy Faisal Ahmad, 19 a student. They have been friends on Facebook from last 2 years.

“From last two years we have been consistently in contact of

each other through Facebook, we had a lot to share when it came to culture and traditions,” said Chou

Chou was planning for an exotic getaway and hence was asked by Faisal to visit India and to Kashmir. He first visited some places like Delhi, Mumbai and Goa. All this time he was in contact with Faisal.

“Chou was in Mumbai when he called me up. He insisted me to come to spend some time with him. However, I was busy with some personal work, so I could not go with him. But we were in contact through internet and telephone” said Faisal Ahmad.

After 25 days Chou told Faisal that he was coming to Kashmir as promised by him. Faisal received him with joy and excitement on the Srinagar Airport. He took him to his home Nishat, where Faisal introduced Chou to his family. Chou was also excited after meeting his friend.

Chou spent next eight days with the family. During this stay, he went to many places like Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Achabal, Mughal Gardens etc along with Faisal. He also realized and praised the hospitality and care shown by his Facebook friend and his family. He admired and respected the Kashmiri culture, and expressed his admiration by terming it as unique.

“I am touched by the generosity and behavior of Faisal’s family and those whom I have met here. I have made many friends in Kashmir now. Kashmir and its people are incredible,” said Chou.

Chou learned a lot of new things about Kashmiri culture. He interacted with Faisal’s friend circle and shared his cultural values and exchanged ideas, and dissimilarities.



Jahandad Bashir

COURTESY FACEBOOK

Nuclear Families Turning Further Nuclear



Mark Zuckerberg's invention further shrunk the global village world had become by advancements in communication technology, connecting millions across the planet. Geography, time and frontiers make no hindrances to its users. But at the same time, people forget near ones in their vicinity while using facebook.

Millions of users across globe have their facebook account. The concept of meeting face to face and knowing each other physically is getting very rare. Judging someone's aptitude, care and intellectual level by social network site is settings up a false belief.

"No doubt facebook is a great

innovation, but kids are getting addicted to it and constructive time is getting lapsed," said Riyaz Ahmad, a father of two sons.

"Every parent feels relaxed at the end of the day when their children mingle with them but excessive use of facebook acts as a hurdle," he added.

Youth are unable to distinguish between meaningful relationships and casual acquaintances. Life has always been full of stresses, and its age-old remedy lies in the fairy tales of grandparents. However, now the natural remedies are replaced with modern innovations and gadgets. New generation prefers to stay alone with their laptops

and spend considerable time on facebook.

As per Riyaz Ahmed , "No one is against technology but excess of everything has its repercussions".

"Indeed I spend most of my spare time on facebook rather than with my family but I can't resist," said Sameer Ahmad Bhat, a student.

Facebook takes away our expression and emotion which are the ideal human characters for effective communication. Whatever could be the reason over real world social interaction starts diminishing. For us, families don't come first but online distant friends whose credibility relies on uncertainty.



Zulqarnain Mir

THE TABLOIDISATION OF NEWS

Journalism has always entertained as well as informed us, had it not done so, it would have not been possible to reach a mass audience. But, today the *tabloidism* to amuse is driving out the will, and depleting the resources for serious reporting and analysis. Obsessed with a world of celebrity and trivia, the news media are rotting brains and undermining civic life, which is directly involved in the paradigm of every society.

HISTORY

The tension between the serious news instinct and the entertainment instinct certainly isn't new to journalism. It was William Randolph Hearst who launched New-York Mirror in 1924. He declared that Mirror would provide 90 percent entertainment and 10 percent information, and the information without boring people. So we can say that he started tabloidism. It was the tabloid newspapers which gave rise to the so-called tabloid television, which has huge reporting coverage especially of youth and urban working class.

MURDOCHISATION

The Sun appeared first in 1964, but it was in trouble when it was brought up by young Australian Rupert Murdoch in 1969. At that time its circulation has slashed down to low. Murdoch had an idea; he told the staff that he wanted THE SUN to focus on sex, sport, and contests, plus one of the trademarks would be the page 3 girl – a daily photograph of a naked woman. Its circulation reached heights and fueled the

era of tabloid journalism. He never looked back and now is among the most powerful media personalities in the world. Murdoch somehow controls and affects the media

content of the world. The admirer of the Murdoch's News of The World Tenorso Pope jr. bought national enquirer and turned it into tabloid and told his journalistic staff to concentrate upon lurid crime stories. Eventually it changed the course of tabloid history. It's believed that it was not Sun but the national enquirer that changed the course tabloid journalism.

FAKING

It is not always truth that tabloid stories are real for the sake of circulation or the TRP they make go fake and deceive the audience. In 1981 a young Washington Post reporter Janet Cook was strict off her Pulitzer Prize when it was known that her story was only imagination and not real. Another best example was of Joyson Blair, a reporter of Newyork Times who was exposed in 2003 as a serial faker of news stories leading to his own resignation and that of two of most senior editors. Tabloid Journalists go to any extent in sensationalizing and blowing out of proportion a news story.

CELEBRITIES



Journalism has now learnt to make light boundary between fact and fiction. It has now become increasingly absorbed by the entertainment and sale potential of celebrities. Celebrity is the big money for everyone involved in the field of journalism. With the involvement of celebrity the coefficient of entertainment have drawn to newer heights.

THE TABLOID DECADE

The case tabloid journalism is that it widens access to politics and other serious subjects. Moreover, the tabloid media multiplies and amplifies the heterogeneous voices and viewpoints in contemporary culture. They are excluded from the dominant regime of truth through dynamics of class, gender, sale, and sensuality. Tabloid journalism dominates today decade of journalism and has influenced the minds of people. Journalism has entered the 21st century in a paradox of its own making. We have more news and more influence journalism across an un-preceded range of media.



Rabiya Bashir

Science: An Emerging Beat For Reporters

The first task of a science journalist is to render the very detailed, specific and often jargon-laden information produced by scientists into a form that common people could understand and appreciate, without any deviation from the real meaning

Science and Technology has gradually developed in India on qualitatively and qualitatively as well. There has been a considerable progress in this field over the years resulting in the emergence of several science magazines, feature services like Popular Science, Natural History, Current Science, Science Illustrated: Bees Feel the Sting, Seed, Science, and Logic. The newspapers such as The Hindu, The Indian Express, The Times of India, and many others have also devoted one full page on daily basis to this theme. In addition to it, there are programmes on radio and television regarding it on routine basis.

Science journalism means reporting science related issues and developments to the public. The field typically involves interactions between scientists and journalists. But, it is still evolving. Science values details, precision, the impersonal, the technical, the



lasting, facts, numbers and being right. Journalism values brevity, approximation, the personal, the colloquial, stories, words, and being immediate.

The first task of a science journalist is to render the very detailed, specific and often jargon-laden information produced by scientists into a form that common people could understand and appreciate, without any deviation from the real meaning. The second job is to avoid using the information deficit model. The model is one-way communication about information transition from the top to down. This has emerged in recent times due the global recession, forcing the newspapers and other media outlets to go for major budget cuts. It limits an open dialogue between knowledge holders and the knowledge seekers (masses).

Public awareness and understanding of science is a term related to the attitudes, behaviours, opinions, activities that comprise the relation between public or oblivious society as a whole to scientific knowledge and organisation. It is comparatively new approach

to the task of promoting science, technology innovation among the public and provides an integrated and results oriented view. It incorporates under a single

framework a series of other fields, such as science communication in mass media, internet, radio, television programs. In addition, the reportage regarding the Science museums, aquaria, zoological parks, botanical gardens, science festivals, grass root innovators (otherwise often exploited by the people at the helm of affairs) and their innovations need to be taken on hand. It involves public interest, therefore demands raising awareness about these subjects in particular, and science in general. This field also involves risk communication, blogs, feature writing, books.

Science is based on experimental evidence and testing. One area in which science journalism supports varying sides of an issue is in risk communication. Science journalists may choose to highlight the amount of risk that studies have uncovered while others focus mostly on the benefits. This however depends on intended audience. How to raise public awareness, how the public feels, and knows about science in general, specific subjects such as genetic engineering, bioethics are important lines of research in this area.

Science stories are still not regarded as worthy enough to claim a prominent place in local newspapers, instead the places are filled with larger advertisements and political contents.

Science reporting requires more ability of understanding subject and a will to deal with scientists, ability to use language in an explanatory yet captivating way and to find metaphors of all kinds and social contexts. When reporting about cutting-edge science, journalists often are among the first to interpret scientific finding into common language.

If the reporting of scientific issues is considered at local

Science is based on experimental evidence and testing. One area in which science journalism supports varying sides of an issue is in risk communication. Science journalists may choose to highlight the amount of risk that studies have uncovered while others focus mostly on the benefits



level, it is miserable. There is hardly any type of these stories present in the newspapers. In fact, the latest discovery of Higgs Boson popularly known as God's Particle, seen by the scientists as

the biggest discovery in the twenty first century, by the Geneva based CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research-Conseil Européen pour la Recherché Nucléaire) found little mention in the vernacular press of the state.

Recently, a discussion was initiated on Facebook (Social networking site) regarding the absence of Science as a reporting beat in the vernacular press of Jammu and Kashmir by a netizen named M Waseem (a media practitioner). Many journalists expressed their views about it. At last, it was concluded that journalism flourished in the state due to the political disturbances. It is this instability, which made people to read newspapers and turn to other sources of news since life security comes first.

In short, it is conflict which sells in the state. The lack of research institutes in the state is also seen as a contributing factor in this regard. And, if anyone of these institutes is present, their performance is not up to mark where the findings and innovations can influence on a large level.

But our family is not in a financial position to undertake a journey across the Wagah border. That's why we had applied for the bus permit to visit our native village almost a year ago but we are yet to receive clearance from the Indian government," she adds.

With hopes that keep waxing and waning with each round of Indo-Pak talks, the family is still hopeful of returning to their village one day.



Souzeina Mushtaq

Earlier when one typed 'Satyamev Jayate' in Google, only India's emblem used to come up but Aamir Khan's show Schanged its definition.

Satyamev Jayate Hits the Bulls Eye



many television personalities, politicians, and social activists for its research, format, presentation, and content.

The opening episode showed agonized mothers from different walks of life braving all odds and sharing their experiences on national TV. Narrating what they underwent when they were carrying a female child and how they were duped to abort their babies, the show managed to gain more eye balls and sensitize people about the growing menace of female feticide.

The second episode of the show dealt with a taboo in the society- child sex abuse. If female feticide was an issue that was being shoved under the carpet, then child sexual abuse was another one that is not in the open, and the show used the platform to highlight it. The following episodes focused on similar issues critical to society like the problem of dowry, the malpractices in health sector, the draconian tradition of honor killings, government indifference towards differently abled etc. Satyamev Jayate touched the chords by highlighting the problem of domestic violence, the bad effects of chemical farming and pesticides on health and alcoholism in India. Aamir Khan

“Have you ever really felt what it feels like when a strong current of emotions gushes down your veins and creates a lump in your throat and leaves your eyes moist? Have you ever been able to look beyond what your eyes show? If not, then follow Satyamev Jayate,” wrote Gayatri Sankar for Zee News.

Satyamev Jayate or ‘Truth alone prevails’ was the one of its kind which was loved by most, criticized by many but ignored by none. An appealing title track, issues concerning common people and eyes searching for a better tomorrow, Satyamev

Jayate was a complete package hitting the bull’s eye.

The first season of show premiered on May 6, 2012 marked the television debut of Bollywood actor and filmmaker Aamir Khan.

EPISODE REVIEW:

Starting with female feticide, the show carried out surveys for proof, brought courageous people to tell their stories to the world, investigated the loopholes in the legal system, and a song summarizing the whole episode at the end was icing on the top. The show was widely appreciated by critics and public, along with

refrained from being high-handed and self-indulgent and opened many drenched minds to intervention.

The show touched topics that are generally least talked about in public forums but are of vital importance to society like abuse against senior citizens and water conservation. The thirteenth and the final episode illustrated the common vision of shining India. It touched a plethora of issues like discrimination between religious groups, castes, sexes; corruption in our government bodies; and lack of education. The show ended with the aim to bring about a change in the society and to dream big to bring that desirable change.

MEDIA RECEPTION:

Satyamev Jayate did not just throw light on various issues, but also brought to our notice various people, whether individually or in organisations, who are working towards a change. Several media organizations praised Aamir Khan for his effort and described the show as “a movement.”

VIEWERS RESPONSE:

Apart from the critics, film, social and political personalities, the show was well received by the television viewers describing it as “a gutsy, hard-hitting and sensible program that strikes an emotional chord with the audiences.” As per Indiantelevision.com, the show garnered an overall rating of 4.27 television ratings (TVR) (including terrestrial of DD) across the 6 metropolitan cities upon its premiere telecast on 6 May 2012. According to the Television Audience Measurement (TAM), the show reached out to 8.96 million people in the age group of 4+.

CRITICISM:

A review from Outlook India noted that, “...the show might well heighten awareness, enable the efforts of those doing

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real work at the ground level, and get the issue out of the denial closet... But it is a little unrealistic to expect a film star and a TV show to change the world.”

Subhash Jha from The Times of India commented on the show, “...though brave and thought provoking, was disappointing in its lack of genuine connectivity between the host and the victims of social atrocity. At the moment Satyamev Jayate looks like a product of elitist conscientiousness.”

Sheela Bhatt from Rediff.com commented that, the format of Satyamev Jayate has to be more profound, and the big problem of the show is that it is on predictable lines. She went on to conclude by requesting Khan to bring in some raw energy in the show.

IMPACT:

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot met Aamir Khan and discussed the issue of female foeticide. The government has already given the green

signal to set up a fast track court, to quicken the trial in the female foeticide cases. After the telecast of the episode about growing corruption in medical profession, Aamir Khan received an invitation to visit the Parliament. In Allahabad, a case was lodged against a local doctor Harish Chaudhary, for carrying out female foeticide. More than 64 nursing homes were suspended in Bhopal. Weeks after Satyamev Jayate talked about problems faced by physically challenged children in getting admission in schools, Delhi government decided to carry out a survey of such kids in the city to extend them educational facilities.

CONCLUSION:

Following a great deal of hype and promotions, Aamir Khan's reality show, Satyamev Jayate has managed not only hit the television screens but also the viewers' hearts.

Earlier when one typed ‘Satyamev Jayate’ in Google, only India's emblem used to come up but Aamir Khan's show Satyamev Jayate changed its definition. He bid an adieu to the nation with the words of Rabindranath Tagore:

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action---

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.”



Hilal ul Fayaz

Hundred Years of Indian Celluloid

You name it, you have it. Drama, Action, Comedy, Suspense, Thriller; there is no genre which the Indian Film industry hasn't experimented with, and also has come with stupendous results.

As the Indian cinema turned 100 on April 21, 2012, I sat to think what new heights the industry has scaled. In a country where over 1,000 films are made every year, in several languages, when we celebrate a century of filmmaking excellence, how do we define Indian cinema?

From mind-boggling blockbusters for people ever ready to whistle to multiplex movies tailor-made for English speaking Indians, to typical NRI films with enough emotional content to tug at the heartstrings of homesick Indian diaspora, the platter is huge and diverse.

Over the years, bollywood movies have comprised the majority of Indian film industry, while regional films make up the rest (Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Bengali, Gujarati, and Bhojpuri). From Teflon coated candyfloss romances, peppered with lavish song-dance sequences, shot in



Not many of us were even aware that a language called Byari existed! The best feature film award for 2011 was also given to Byari (along with the Marathi film Deool), a film based on the dialect spoken by the people in it.

As we gear up to raise a toast to a cinema that is 100 years old now, it is a moment of great national pride and glory for all Indians. Unlike other western film industries, the Indian film industries have not been too heavily influenced by the Hollywood film industry and continue to retain its local flavour, essence, emotions and dialect. Indian films get to do their share of globetrotting at prestigious world film festivals; find their reviews by top international film journals and newspapers; Indian stars walk the red carpet in Cannes and other

festivals along with their global counterparts ,many Indian filmmakers continue to hope for Uncle Oscar's mini replica to adorn their trophy collection, but the endorsement isn't all important anymore. India has its own distinct multi-lingual, multi-hued crop of films, some of them entertaining, some

exotic locales, gritty underworld flicks, kick butt action capers to social melodramas, Indian movies have touched every genre of entertainment. The 2011 National Awards, in fact, makes it amply clear how the industry has started looking into every peck of mainstream cinema and regional cinema.

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made for aesthetic pleasure, but all of them for your eyes only, for people like us.

Pather Panchali (1955) directed by Satyajit Ray was among the earliest Indian films to have received global recognition (it got 11 international awards). Indian cinema has an identity that is very unique and unmatched. We have moved from the black and white silent films to 3D, but our cinema continues to retain its basic essence - to thrill. Even as internet downloads and television continue to cannibalize the theatrical revenues of Indian films, the lure of the 35 mm is something else altogether. Be it *Mughl-e-Azam* re-released in colour or gen-ex movies remade as a tribute to the movies from yester years, Indian Film Industry hasn't forgot the roots.

Of course it would be nice if regional films were given the much needed leg-up and importance they deserve. Not many of us are aware of the immense talent that lies in regional film industries. It takes the occasional *Kahaani* to show India the versatility of character actors like Parambrata Chattopadhyaya and Saswata Chatterjee (the man who made Bob Biswas, the most iconic baddie in just a 10 minute role!), or a 160 crore (rough estimate) film (*Endhiran*) made by Shankar to prove how technologically advanced Indian cinema really is. Even as we crave for movies from the Khan kitty, meantime we don't forget to still have those occasional peeks on movies from yesteryears. Lately, movie like *Shangai* has proved yet again that Indian Film Industry has that aura in it which makes it class apart. If one Friday sees a brainless comedy

Indian cinema has an identity that is very unique and unmatched. We have moved from the black and white silent films to 3D, but our cinema continues to retain its basic essence - to thrill. Even as internet downloads and television continue to cannibalize the theatrical revenues of Indian films, the lure of the 35 mm is something else altogether.

being released, the next Friday we get to see movies which touch the daily realities of life.

Indian Film Industry, perhaps would be better defined if we get to see good films in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Bhojpuri, Marathi, Bengali, Assamese (and maybe even Byari), with subtitled versions in multiplexes, or on national television.

Talking of Indian fans and their love for those cut pieces on screen, if a survey is done all over the world to select biggest fans of cinema, arguably Indian fans would win the competition hands down. We live cinema, eat it, savour it and use it as a reference point in our day to

day discourses as well. Where else can one find fans viewing cinema on a screen made out of jute inside snooty godowns, or on a white screen being viewed from both the sides in an open expanse in the country side. From the times when there were only moving images, to the times when one can really be part of the cinematic oeuvre panning on the screen, cinema is elixir of life.

For a country which cannot provide various forms of entertainment, it is cinema that has been able to provide the much needed relief and it arguably is the only secular institution in our country that continues to vibrate and pulsate with raw energy.

For the present generation as also a generation from the past, to revive the magic of cinema, to relive it, as also to underscore the vital flag posts in the Indian cinematic history, there would not be a much better reference point than to travel this journey through the books that have been written on Indian cinema. Here a caution needs to be introduced, that the volume of work related to cinema is not that bountiful as it is in Hollywood, reasons better unknown to those who write them or to the fact that we believe more in oral history than in written one. Even then, what is at disposal provides an interesting insight into the legends of Indian cinema, which have been responsible in their own way to take the Hindi cinema to its exalted glory.

A century later, surely, the least we can ask for is for good meaningful cinema if Indian cinema needs to leapfrog into the next century with bigger and better strides, ahead of its western and Oriental counterparts.



Rohail Sheikh

Bollywood films are not only enjoyed by the Indian diasporic communities outside India. The industry has also managed to attract an international fanbase



Bollywood's Influence Beyond Its Borders

The Hindi Cinema not only has an impact on its own country, but it has been influencing the countries that surround it, mostly in the Asian continent. Due to globalization, Bollywood films have managed to reach masses from other part of the globe (Tyrrell, 1999). Other countries began to recognize the benefits on having the Bollywood movies filming their movies on their locations. Malaysia has become a popular destination for filming while Thailand is beginning to promote itself as a shooting destination for Hindi films. Not only is revenue to be earned from the shooting itself, but the revenue spinning potential from tourism is endless.

Singapore has also become one of the few destinations that were chosen for on-location

Malaysia has become a popular destination for filming while Thailand is beginning to promote itself as a shooting destination for Hindi films

filming. Krrish, one of the popular Bollywood movies filmed in 2006, featuring an Indian caped crusader played by Hrithik Roshan, was filmed in Singapore. In July 2005, it was announced that the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) had signed a deal with Indian film-maker, Rakesh Roshan, to shoot 60% of the film in Singapore, and provided logistical support to the shooting of the film. The board believes that the tie up will lead to accelerated tourism as Hindi cinema has a strong following across India and it is an extremely powerful force in shaping the views and opinions of the population. Reportedly, the film has been so popular with Asian audiences in its opening weeks that it outdid Superman at the box-office. Young viewers

in Singapore have reported the delight of being at the location where the film was shot, and retracing the steps of the hero along the bridge and down the boulevard. Asian audiences, it would seem, like having their own caped crusader, and having him in familiar territory (Kripalani, 2006).

At the same time, interest in popular Indian cinema and its global culture has literally exploded. What once was purely the domain of the Diaspora of non-resident Indians is now distributed globally and available for Melbournians to see. The distribution of popular Bombay cinema in Melbourne and Sydney is part of a global trend and growing interest in South Asian cinema in its most popular form. The simultaneous release of selected films in Australia, Bombay, the United Kingdom, North America and other sites of the global Indian diasporas serve to incorporate Australian viewers within the global Bollywood film audience (Boltin, 2003).

In South Korea, a group who call themselves The Bollywood Lovers' Club gathers to watch Hindi movies, which they have subtitled in Korean. They watch in "Indian Style" that is to "make noise, laugh, and abuse the villain." Also, in a paper called Indian Films and Nigerian Lovers: Media and the Creation of Parallel Modernities, anthropologist Brian Larkin writes about the influence of Bollywood in Northern Nigeria, where Lebanese exhibitors

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What once was purely the domain of the Diaspora of non-resident Indians is now distributed globally and available for Melbournians to see. The distribution of popular Bombay cinema in Melbourne and Sydney is part of a global trend and growing interest in South Asian cinema in its most popular form

started importing Hindi films in the 1950s. The Germans are following suit. The first Bollywood film to have a major theatrical release was *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham* in 2003. Also, DVDs of dubbed Hindi films are sold with the tag line 'Bollywood macht glücklich!' which means 'Bollywood makes you happy!'. As discussed, Bollywood films are not only enjoyed by the Indian diasporic

communities outside India. The industry has also managed to attract an international fanbase.

Not only this but the Bollywood superstars are considered by many to be their idols and are thus worshipped.

According to Chopra (2007), a fifty-plus housewife named Sandi Mann of Australia said that Shah Rukh put "passion, magic and delight" in her life, devoted her days to running six Shah Rukh Khan online fan clubs (she belong to over a hundred), collecting memorabilia, magazines, DVDs and communing with other fans on the internet. In 2002, to celebrate Shah Rukh's birthday, Sandi had a star in the scorpius constellation named Shah Rukh Khan. The following year, she bought him a block of land on the moon. Sandi believed that Shah Rukh had "some kind of grace within him, like he's been touched by god."

Chopra (2007) also wrote that, "These stories of worship were repeated with varying intensity around the globe. Women showed up at Shah Rukh's door, requesting that they'd be allowed to wash his feet and drink the water. Others wrote him letters in blood (presumably their own). One fan, a young man named Vishal, living in Lucknow, rechristened himself Vishahruk and believed that he had beat cancer gnawing at his kidneys because Shah Rukh was on his side". Here, we see how the Bollywood stars are idolized by their fans to the extent of juxtaposing them with mythical beings.



Mudasir Majeed

Basera-e-Tabassum Healing The Spirits

Healing young children's wounds allows them to survive a war or a conflict but healing their spirits may prevent the next war or a conflict. And that is what they do! Basera-e-Tabassum (Abode of Smiles), a rights and needs based comprehensive rehabilitation centre came up at a time when the children of valley were sleeping to the rumble of guns instead of cradlesongs, seeing more corpses than toys and mourning more than smiling. The center was set up on May 12, 2002, in Sulikoot, a village two kilometers away from Kupwara town.

To save both the lives and minds of children from the psychosomatic disorders and the brutality caused by the armed struggle, which erupted in 90s here in Kashmir, Borderless World Foundation (BWF), a Pune base NGO took up the initiative in 1998 and visited the strife torn and the then militancy hotbed Kupwara for project survey.

After an extensive study in several villages of Kupwara district, the BWF found ample count of orphans, most of them being the children of slain militants. Later, in 2002, the organization notified the land and set the center at Sulikoot in 2002 and named it Basera-e-Tabassum. This rehabilitation



center is exclusively for girls; aiming at fighting for their basic rights to, survival, development and participation.

Bharti Mamani and Adhik Kadam, the co-founders of Basera-e-Tabassum, then in teens, were just two people, when they proposed this project. The duo hail from well-off business families of Pune.

Turning away from the metropolitan comforts and the luxurious life at home, Bharti and Adhik embraced a tough mission when they chose a terrain, which at beginning put even their lives in at risk. But their determination and commitment gradually paid off.

"We had to tread a treacherous path to catch up

on the mission. Initially, in the face of perilous circumstances, we had to face very tough time because we were strangers in a strange land. But there was no option except to take the bull by the horns. Gradually we explored the route and things turned easy" says Adhik, who presently is the chairperson of the NGO.

Adhik feels that people living in cities are indifferent to the population living on the extremes of rim lands. "They are least bothered about the life of people living in border areas. But their impervious approach can't do any good to country. You see, if we overlook these orphans today can we anticipate a better tomorrow?"

Children, he says, are the

main victims whenever a tragedy breaks in, "and we must not play blind to prevent them from entering the victimhood".

"The concept of the BWF originated in 1998, when we started work in this strife-torn land. During the work here, we would often realize that people of nation have failed to serve to the people living here", says Adhik.

Adhik says that the life of people in the border areas of Kashmir is choke-full with grief, chaos, uncertainty, fear, and violence. "The inert socio-economic setup, corruption and the administrative breakdown has pushed every life in border areas into the mess," he adds.

Talking about the orphans, Adhik says nearly 24000 children were orphaned during militancy and most of them were found in pathetic state. He says, "We were deeply struck when we visited the villages of Kupwara and found girls of a very tender age stuck with trauma. Their fathers took up the arms and they were left to endure the most. I don't say militancy is responsible for everything but it certainly victimized the children to a great extent."

At the beginning of Basera-e-Tabassum, there were only four girls. Initially the center had to face difficulties because the local support was less and most of people created fuss after being provoked by the local clerics that the project might be some proselytization center and might cause harm to religion.

"We used to convince locals that this project would benefit the needy but the clerics would hinder our work because they feared us to be proselytizers and even a fatwa was issued against us. But gradually locals shouldered the work and we succeeded in winning the hearts of people", recounts Adhik Kadam.

Bharti and Adhik had a close shave one day when they were travelling through Gussi, a village 4kms away from Kupwara.

"During the field study, we were travelling through Gussi, when all of a sudden a group of militants cropped up and stopped us. We had almost given up the chances of further living, because every day we would hear about killings. But they understood everything when we explained to them about our project. They didn't harm us instead they acclaimed our project and were apologetic", says Adhik.

"I remember a militant telling

Turning away from the metropolitan comforts and the luxurious life at home, Bharti and Adhik embraced a tough mission when they chose a terrain, which at beginning put even their lives in at risk. But their determination and commitment gradually paid off

us then that, a true Muslim can't think of killing you because you are on a noble mission", he recalls.

Baser-e-Tabassum Sulikoot at present houses 55 girls, aged 3 to 20 years. Fifty girls are studying in private schools and rest five in government schools. The eldest among these girls is studying in 2nd year. She has been in this center for last ten years.

The lives of these children were hit by trauma and chaos the time they were brought here. But the proper counseling, care and education stand as the watersheds in their lives.

Jameela, a girl who hails from Kukroosa, is presently studying science (12th class) at Fergusson College Pune, has grown up in Basera-e-Tabassum. Her militant father was killed few months after she was born. Being an orphan and observing how other girls of her age were loved by their fathers, Jameela would turn sad. She too wanted to be happy but had no one to care for her.

In May 2002, her mother brought her to Basera-e-Tabassum. Initially she had to face problems, because she could not communicate in Hindi with Bharti and Adhik. She was admitted into a private school. Two years ago Jameela passed 10th with distinction and the following year she got admission in the prestigious Fergusson College Pune. The BWF is funding all her education.

The surprising but praiseworthy tale related to this project is about a young lady, Saleema Bhat, who has been managing the entire functioning of this center for last nine years and most of the times in absence of its founders. She is working as the project coordinator at this time in the centre.

Maintaining a mild tune in talking and a light smile covering her face, Saleema Bhat says her happiness is firmly attached to Basera-e-Tabassum. Whosoever visits this center, she has an earnest request in advance, that no one should utter the word 'orphan' as she feels hurt. She says they are her children, although she is yet to get married.

"At the beginning it seemed to be a very tough job to manage the lives of children especially the nascent ones but now I don't need to put a Herculean effort. I don't want to move away from my children and I really can't afford separation. My life is clutched in their souls", says Saleema.

The children here call her Didi meaning elder sister. Adhik has high esteem for Saleema. He

has no word to praise her but he only says, "She is a goddess. I am elder to her but she is my mother. A mother can't care her child the way she cares these children in the centre".

Adhik spends eight months in Kashmir every year and rest four months in Pune but does seldom visit to Sulikoot, because he has to look after other two projects; one in Ananthnag and other in Beerwah, Budgam. Therefore, Saleema has been permanently holding the fort of this center and managing every single work: maintaining discipline, looking over the school work of girls, their meals, their neatness etc.

Basera-e-Tabassum has computers along with internet facility also. Three computers sets have been kept for the children here to use in spare time. To stay updated with knowledge of different things, they make most of the internet. Saleema says girls here also talk to Jameela, who is presently in Pune via video chatting.

In addition to computer and internet facility, there is also a television set, which has a satellite dish connection; letting children to access nearly 200 channels, which cater a wide variety of programs mainly related to news, sports, music, daily soap operas, movies, cartoons and many other educational programs.

Nearly one and a half lac rupees are spent every month on this Rehabilitation Center (BeT). This amount goes into the meals, paying school fee, purchasing uniforms, books and note-books, bags and other daily commodities needed by the children here. The aim of the project is to ensure a complete family environment, by guaranteeing the love as well as equal care, which refrains children here from the home reminiscences.

Every year in summers, each girl is given two dresses

Baser-e-Tabassum Sulikoot at present houses 55 girls, aged 3 to 20 years.

Fifty girls are studying in private schools and rest five in government schools. The eldest among these girls is studying in 2nd year. She has been in this center for last ten years

"There has not been any aide from the locals but I must not downplay the role of JK-armed police battalion, which is staying in Wayan Gundisana. It helped us at the time when there was none to come forward. During 2010 summer unrest, they would get us gas cylinders. Whenever we would go on winter tour, most of the arrangements would be made by them", says Saleema Bhat, adding that army too has been actively aiding from the last one year.

The locals have been highly acclaiming this effort of Borderless World Foundation.

"I live in vicinage to this center. I have been constantly witnessing their rigorous efforts, aiming at alleviating the poor and needy, the abandoned and deprived. I must appreciate BWF team for giving a voice to these innocent souls and teaching



and two shoes and in winters, one firaag-shelvar, Pheran (a traditional gown) and shoes. This is compulsory procedure but usually there is extra supply from Pune, so they get more clothes.

them how to stand on their own feet. They were orphaned at an age when they needed to nap in their parent's laps. But now their abode is this center, where we see them smiling always" says a local.



Asmat Muneer

It was 20 years ago when on one fateful day, at the peak of insurgency in Kashmir, I had to leave home hurriedly and cross the river Kishanganga to the other side of LOC along with hundreds of other families from my village

Craving For the Roots



Nasreen lives in a refugee colony, one of the many created in Pakistan Administered Kashmir for people who migrated from the Jammu and Kashmir in the initial years of armed insurgency. A simple looking woman with a care worn face she is a mother of three children with a chronically ill husband. With hardly any steady source of income, she finds it difficult to make the two ends meet. Two of her children, Saleem and Haneef study in the local school setup by funds from Kuwaiti government. Due to the strained economic condition of the family, her eldest son Ismail had to leave his education midway after passing tenth, two years ago, to work as a mechanic in a

car repair garage. He is now the sole breadwinner for the family.

Nasreen originally belongs to Keran village of district Kupwara in Jammu & Kashmir; a far flung area situated right on the LOC. Lacking an all weather road and with hardly any mobile connectivity even today, the village remains cut off from the rest of Kashmir valley during the winter months.

Recalling the years spent in her native village, she says that although they lived in poverty there was contentment and happiness.

“The LOC had not yet been turned into the sort of iron curtain that it was to become later and people were allowed to meet each other at various points. The village

bore the brunt of all the Indo-Pak wars as well as recurrent floods in the 1990s which devastated the entire village,” she says.

Recalling the early days of her youth, Nasreen says that she was hardly 16 when according the local custom she was married in a simple ceremony to Mohammad Sharif, a hardworking farmer with a large family.

“It was 20 years ago when one fateful day, at the peak of armed insurgency in Kashmir, I had to leave home hurriedly and cross the river Kishanganga to the other side of LOC along with hundreds of other families from my village,” she says.

Facing immense hardships and poverty, the initial days on the other side of LOC were spent



huddled in a small tent where they had to share space with two other families. Her husband who was deprived of his means of livelihood spent most of the time looking for jobs which as always were hard to come by.

“To support the family, my husband did even menial jobs and hard labor that left him with serious lung ailment at this stage of his life. A large part of the family income goes towards the treatment of Mohammad Sharif with hardly any savings at all,” she says.

Although the family has moved on to a concrete house now she can never forget the initial years of her struggle as a migrant.

The eldest son of Nasreen, Ismail, was born before the family migrated. Even though he was four years old that time he has hardly any memories of his home. For him, home has always been the little concrete and brick structure where Nasreen and her family live. The children have seen their home only in old faded photographs.

The greatest regret that Nasreen says she has is that “her children were not able to enjoy a

happy and care free childhood spent in the midst of a loving family.”

Over the years the migrants have formed various organizations, NGOs and self-help groups for their own welfare. Besides taking care of the various needs of these migrants, the primary demand of these organizations is the facilitation of their return to their homeland and native villages for which they have been working relentlessly. Schools and even colleges have been established with funds being provided by various Middle Eastern countries like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia for providing quality education to the children of these families. Quite a few of these children also study in various professional colleges and universities across Pakistan.

Although the general condition of these migrants has improved over the years and some of the families are quite well settled but the longing for home remains deep seated in their hearts. With the thawing of relations between India and Pakistan, Nasreen says hopes had been raised among the migrants

that they would be allowed to visit their native villages and even resettle in their homes.

“I clearly remember the day when the bus route was opened across the LOC connecting Uri in J&K to Chakhothi in PaK. There was excitement and jubilation all around but the usual hassles related to official formalities with months spent in verifications have proved to be a dampener,” she says.

The trans-LOC bus that started with much fanfare has not lived up to the expectations of the families.

“People find it much easier to travel on visa across the Wagah border to their native villages. But our family is not in a financial position to undertake a journey across the Wagah border. That’s why we had applied for the bus permit to visit our native village almost a year ago but we are yet to receive clearance from the Indian government,” she adds.

With hopes that keep waxing and waning with each round of Indo-Pak talks, the family is still hopeful of returning to their village one day.



Hilal Ahmad Darzi



Extravagance in Marriage Ceremonies: A Cause of Worry

Kashmiri weddings have, generally speaking, become so lavish and pompous that the “auspicious occasion” seems to be reduced to mere show off and is losing its soul.

It is unfortunate that despite everyone is aware of extravagance being strongly condemned in Islam, still this practice prevails in our society. Although debates and religious seminars are, being held every now and then to keep a tab on extravagances, but that hardly has any impact on this unleashed nuisance.

“We are sharing duck traits; when one plunges into pond, others also follow without pondering what made first one to jump,” said Fayaz Ahmad, student of Islamic Studies, Kashmir University.

“We never ponder logically on issues, but follow the trends set by the affluent class which gradually gets introduced as customs in our society. Then it

is poor class who has to bear the brunt,” he adds.

Onus lies on the upper class, as they are the pioneers of the extravagance.

Allah clearly mentions in Quran, Chapter number 17, and verse number 16

“When we decide to destroy a population, we first send a definite order to those among them who are given things of this life and yet transgress. So that the word is proven against them then we destroy them utterly.”

So it is apparent from this Quranic verse, possessing surplus money does not mean to lavish on absurd activities, but strictly stresses not to flaunt what has been bestowed upon them.

Marriage norms set by wealthy class have spread deep tentacles in our society and average class is sinking deep into debt. Gossip echoes around when one does not meet modern marriage requisition and norms.

It is unfortunate that despite everyone is aware of extravagance being strongly condemned in Islam, still this practice prevails in our society. Although debates and religious seminars are, being held every now and then to keep a tab on extravagances, but that hardly has any impact on this unleashed nuisance

“Nikah is a sacred ceremony which one can perform even at nominal expenses. But it is always guest entertainment, decoration, illumination, sophisticated Shamyanas and feast prepared from 7-8 quintal of meat which keeps poorer sect in deep consideration prior executing marriage,” said Mudasar Nagar, a scholar.

Whatever may be the situation, it is the average class who is being tramped with the new culture, and such prevailing customs compels them to wear borrowed robe to maintain the high standard in the society.

Unless and until rich do not curb extravagance, things will deteriorate further and burden the poor shoulders of lower strata.

Also it is the responsibility of people who belong to lower income group not to follow the “extravagance trends” pursued by people belonging to elite classes.



Zuhaib Ashraf

Dry House: Dream of a Bakerwal Kid



On the stones of someone's incomplete house, sits Eesa, watching his father making a new house for him. It has been a hot day; never had he thought that making a house takes so much time. His father's sweat was falling like a person who had just come out after having a bath without drying himself.

It will take at least five hours to make a normal sized house, or maybe more, if there is no one to help for this tedious job.

With the advent of summer, Bakerwals' come back to their lands they had left in winter; the land which is not currently utilized by its owners becomes their land de facto for a period of time until someone comes and owns it de jure. The houses they build on these lands are not the ones that we call houses, they are tents sometimes and others range from structures made from joining wood pieces and

rubber, and polythene covering it from the outside.

Meanwhile, the house is completed. Eesa enters the newly made house with awe, watching it from every angle, and stretching it at the every corner to get the folds right. His father has made it with all the energy.

He watches concrete houses apathetically, well knowing it is people in the cars who live there and kids who have clean and ironed dresses. His friends have a sense of thankfulness for the men in cars because of the money they gather from them.

Eesa had a different experience when he once went for begging. He met the affluent kids that went jeering at him, almost turning him into tears. The mother immediately drew the kids inside, not because she was angry at their behavior to a harmless kid but because of the fear of the germs, the little vector

was carrying. That was the first and the last day he begged.

Rain came pouring down; the last thing Eesa's parents wanted. Eesa could see the tense atmosphere growing up in the home. Personally he loved this moment when everything was drenched with rain; it liberated his soul.

But reality was harsh. His father picked up the tools to make a way for the water that was pouring inside the tent. Eesa saw his friends doing the same act.

Meanwhile Eesa was successful in getting out of the problem. He was happy with himself as he slept. The wet floor smelled of mud, making him nauseated, when he would wake up during the night.

The rain had made everything muddy and slippery. Eesa's friends could hardly hold on to their ground while moving the horses in the potent rays of sun.

"There can be better houses and there are better houses", Eesa thought.

He loved his home and still believed it to be the best one in the world. But he couldn't forget the last night at all. The lines of stress on his father's forehead, tears of his mother, the sleepless rainy night, and the nausea- all proclaimed one truth that he longer could deny: he had a wet house.

He started to day dream about a 'dry house' that would have been somewhat like the people in cars live in. He thought of them as blessed people. And that thought comforted him.

One day, he will own a dry house and live in it.



Uzma Manzoor

WHEN DEATH ESCAPES BY A PROMISE

Sufiyan (name changed) was shocked, his eyes wide open and his legs trembling when his numb hands discovered drops of blood on his shirt and handkerchief.

He had already exhausted 24 cigarettes but his being a tobacco junkie was enough to be a reason to procure some relief from anxiety, he crammed charas into cigarette up to its brim. As soon as he lit it up and took some quick puffs, the fears started fading as if there wasn't any blood on his shirt to panic about. In 2008, the 17 year boy apart from having an identity of junkie was also a student of BCA, his days used to be lost in the smoke and foot remained busy in crushing the butts. By this time he had also got familiar with the Alcohol, Kashmiri Rum, Vodka, Beer, Desi Pawa ,Daru and also two of his favorite brands i.e. Kingfisher and Godfather. Now all the ingredients of failure were with him hence his grades too slipped from 80 to 63%.

It was in his 12th class when he first got familiar with Charas, He started his journey of smoking with one cigarette, and with every passing day he added more ending up taking as many as 25 cigarettes. He had three reasons for his addiction; his love for family, his love for his girlfriend and the stress of his studies as well at times.

It was a fine morning of January 2009 when he went to appear for his paper of Data Base of BCA 2nd year but things didn't end the way they had started. His paper wasn't to his expectations. He was upset .He preferred not to eat anything but it was a reason for him to take a puff of few more. So having an empty stomach, he preferred to take two cigarettes



of CHARAS to relieve himself from the sadness. Satisfaction was not the thing he got this time but severe pain in his chest was an invitation for hospital. Hiding the pain from his hostel attendants was just impossible so they caught his poor condition and in a hurry he was shifted to the near by hospital where in no time he was moved to ICU. He remained unconscious for

48 hours and when he opened his eyes after such a long time every thing looked to be still. Suddenly a man wearing white apron entered the ICU. "How are you man " he enquired. "Better Doctor " Sufiyan lied as he wasn't feeling better, It had been 48 hours for him without his dose which was pathetic on his end. As soon doctor heard the reply

Sufiyan used to be a bright student but his parent's decision of admitting him in the boarding at the age of nine proved fatal for him

, he raised his tone and said "Look man all your tests have conveyed me what you really want to hide and sorry to say some part of your brain is damaged with your addiction and your lungs too are no more alright".

Sufiyan didn't believe what he was being told about his health as if everything had changed in fractions of seconds. His body was lying on the bed and his stoned eye focussing on

the world outside the panes. The beam coming from outside carried tons of messages for him and the breezes too appeared slapping him for the way he has been harming himself. The things lying in the room acted like kiths and kins to him as he took all of them consoling him. Slowly his eye balls got fixed on the wall of the room and he was

lost in his memories:

Sufiyan used to be a bright student but his parent's decision of admitting him in the boarding at the age of nine proved to be fatal for him. He loved his family and his father loved the discipline. He remembers the weekends of his boarding life when he felt like orphans on seeing the parents of his mates coming to meet their sweet hearts but his parents remained missing in the scene. He recalls mid summer of his 9th class when he was preparing for his term exams and his friend offered him cigarette for the first time and then both of them enjoyed life's first puff in the gigantic water tank of the hostel while keeping its lid closed. The more he missed his parents the more cigarettes he had.

It was now near to dusk now and Sufiyan didn't know why he is travelling to the past ...was it the death bed which is compelling him to go through the nasty past he asked himself, though his question remained unanswered. But now he realised that life is worth living so he started avoiding the cigarette and drinks as well.

It was April 13 2012 when he was in his room and there was a knock on door. His father stepped in and hugged apple of his eye. He asked him may I ask you my son for one thing and promise me that whatever I ask you won't disagree. Sufiyan loved the disciplined man the most so he promised him he won't. The man with the white beard lifted his wrinkled hand and placed

them on the chin of Sufiyan and uttered I BEG YOU MY SON NOT TO SMOKE.....silence filled the room for few moments and "I PROMISE YOU DAD" were the words that broke the lull.

Currently Sufiyan is enrolled as a student of Kashmir University and doing MCA and neither his friends nor his parents know that apart from being a chain smoker he was a heavy drinker too. But he does not want people to know about the notorious fellow he was as he loves to live a happy and respectful life.

After 13 April 2012 he has not smoked nor drank as the promise he gave to his father has done the wonders which a rehabilitation centre won't have done for years.

HoD Prof Mufeed,
faculty members
and students with
Satyakki
Bhattacharjee,
Vice-president HR
Anand Bazar Patrika
Group





Bilal Bhat



The 'Grave' Question

Slapping his forehead with a huge thud, tears came out of his eyes. "What is my mistake?" asks Ali Muhammad (name changed). Many professions that were considered noble in the past are unfortunately now looked down upon. Grave digging is one such profession, a great service in the path of religion. The social stigma that has been attached to this noble profession has created lot of difficulties for the grave diggers. Many people who are in this profession have got into

depression and are thinking of leaving it.

Ali Muhammad from Srinagar city has been a grave digger. A man in his 80's with dark eyes and wrinkles on his face has become a victim of the stigma. His eyes reflect the pain he is going through. He was in this profession for last 40 years. Due to the problems he faced he left this profession but leaving was not the solution. Ali's family is still facing the stigma and no one turns up for a marriage proposal for his three girls.

"My daughters are more than 40 and are still unmarried, now who will marry them. One of my daughters was engaged some time back but it broke up because of the label I have on my face. She was so much depressed that she even tried to commit suicide," the broken father said.

The deprived man is making every effort to sell his poorly constructed house and buy a new one in some far-flung area where nobody will recognize him as a grave digger. This is his desperate attempt to get rid of the "cursed

image” his profession earned him that is now destroying his family.

While narrating his woeful tale Ali recalls an incident , “I was coming back home from a nearby area after digging a grave. As I boarded the bus I heard some women gossiping about me smelling like a dead man. They finally told the driver to force me to get down as I was ‘smelling like a rotten rat’, those words pierced my heart like a stab soaked in venom. That day I cried like a child.”

He pauses and begins again , “ Whenever I am invited to a marriage, which is very occasional people try to keep distance from me ,while having

wazwaan they change their positions so that they won’t be the part of the plate I am sharing . Everybody around me behaves as if I don’t exist. I was like I don’t exist.”

Disgusted by the social response many gravediggers are now leaving the job and that is giving rise to many problems. Ali himself is witness to many incidents were the burial was delayed because in that particular area nobody was available to dig the grave. “Once a person died in Habbak early morning. His family couldn’t get a grave digger up till 4.Pm.”says Ali. He recalls another incident that happened in Kawdara area of

Srinagar city where a person named Abdul azia Gilkar died at 7pm and was buried at 9 the next morning. Late Aziz’s daughter Jamsheeda said, “We couldn’t find a grave digger in the vicinity. One who would do it denied as he had left the job. Finally a noble man took pity on us in the morning and prepared the grave for my father’s body.” Ali says that the standards of the society are strange, “They respect a wealthy smuggler, corrupt person and a gambler but have no space and respect for a poor person who is doing them a big service for a few bucks sometimes that too in extreme weather and political conditions.”



Senior Journalists
of J&K during a
function organized
by MERC



Shafat Hussain



Master plan 2005-2025 that will fast turn this health resort into a mess of concrete structures. This allows rich & influential people to build concrete structures and that too in eco-sensitive areas but villagers, who are living there since centuries, are not even allowed to repair their damaged houses

PAHALGAM A Haven for Haves

Pahalgam, the valley of shepherds, attracts tourists from around the globe every year because of its lush green pine forests and crystal clear waters from its glaciers.

It is situated about 95kms from the state capital, Srinagar and located on the banks of river Lidder, at an altitude of 7200ft above sea level. It was a favourite destination for bollywood at one time.

Being a hill station, its temperature stays cool most of the times. This place holds importance for Hindus also because of presence of Shiv Lingam (an ice stalagmite) in Amarnath Cave, which is situated near Panchtarni, enroute Chandanwari. Every year, around

five lakh pilgrims visit this cave.

Besides being a tourist spot, this place is trekkers' heaven. There are number of treks which begin from Pahalgam, some leading to the spectacular Kolahoi Glacier. These treks lead to many more mountain lakes like Tuliyan Lake, Kater Nag and Tar-sar Lake.

With the growing demand, various hotels and huts in private sector have come up in large numbers, some legally and some illegally, threatening the eco-sensitive region. Because of a flawed and controversial Pahalgam Master plan 2005-2025 that will fast turn this health resort into a mess of concrete structures. This Master Plan allows rich & influential people

to build concrete structures and that too in eco-sensitive areas but villagers, who are living there since centuries, are not even allowed to repair their damaged houses. "The influential, big businessmen, bureaucrats and relatives of politicians have built big hotels and huts on the banks of the river Lidder and also inside the green forests by chopping off standing pine trees, with the help of land mafia operating there" said a local villager on the conditions of anonymity. "The tree barks are removed, thus cutting off the supply line to the tree, which in-turn dies a gradual death and then the tree is cut off" he further added.

The villages situated besides the main road have been chosen

as green zones, where all kind of construction is prohibited, while as areas covered with green pine trees have been shown permissible land, which have been allegedly occupied by rich and influential people by unfair means.

Locals, whose houses were destroyed in recent windstorm have not been allowed even to fix a single brick. Two years ago, the house of Rashid Chaupan family of Rangwara, Laripora got gutted but they were not allowed to rebuild it. Chaupan said that they were forced to live in a makeshift shelter.

“A Hotel had permission for only a residential hut, but its owner raised a huge hotel, violating the building permission law”, lamented a resident Mohd Yousuf who was not allowed to

repair his cowshed citing blanket ban on commercial construction by High court orders. “Another hotel”, he added “had permission for minor repairing but its owner demolished the old building which had only 40 rooms and constructed a new structure with 125 rooms”.

The rampant corruption is responsible for defacing this world famed tourist destination just to fill the coffers of the people from capitalist and bureaucratic class, while the common villagers residing there are suffering overall.

Inner village roads are in dilapidated condition. People living there level many serious allegations against some top officials.

After being fed up by all this, a local resident Riyaz Ahmed

Lone formed an NGO namely “Pahalgam People’s Welfare Organisation” in 2008 and this organisation filed a PIL (OWP no. 484/2010) in Jammu and Kashmir High Court, which gave a stay order for commercial construction in Pahalgam, and also nominated a five member Panel to study the Master Plan. The stay order did stop further construction but by then many new constructions had already come up and many trees had been cut off to pave the way for the construction of illegal structures.

Furthermore, the sewage system of many of the hotels is also drained into the famous Lidder river, the water of which is supplied to large part of the South Kashmir for drinking and other day to day uses.



Green Oscar Winner
Mike Pandey with
MERC students



Nishah Zargar

Guryul Ravines

Hiding Secrets from the Permian Period

Guryul Ravine in Khonmuh – one of the world's richest fossil sites has been rated by geologists as the world's premier site for the study of species from the pre-dinosaur Permian Period (251-299 million years ago).

The site has been known to Geologists across the world since 1868 and has attracted leading Geoscientists to know the causes of the “Mother of mass extinctions” – the Permian-Triassic extinction – about 252 million years ago, which wiped out 90 per cent of marine species and 70% of terrestrial species.

Hundreds of millions of years ago, the prehistoric Tethys Ocean flowed where Kashmir's Guryul Ravine now stands. Guryul's fossils, which were first discovered by a British scientist in 1886, represent a variety of ancient marine life.

The recent study done by Geology and Geophysics department, Kashmir University shows that the section comprises rock of Permo-Triassic Period. The Geological succession as seen at Guryul ravine includes Panjal volcanic rocks, the Gangamopteris beds, the Zewan formation and the Khonmuh formation.

“The fossils are of two ages (periods) and there is no particular demarcation. There are unfortunately only a few areas on the earth where continuity of late Permian with earliest Triassic could be recognized, but Guryul ravine (Kashmir) is the one such area where continuity of sedimentation is believed to be found without any interruption,” said Dr. Rakesh Chandra, Assistant professor, Department of Geology and Geophysics, Kashmir University.

In Kashmir, there are several sections where continuous



Photo by : Nishah Zargar

development of Permian and Triassic strata can be studied. Worth mentioning are Guryul Ravine, Mandakpal, Barus, Narastan, Pastun, Pahalgam, Pir panjal, Bhallesh etc. Barring Guryul ravine, other sections have some demerits for considering them as stratotype.

This section, besides easy approach, has additional attraction of the presence of major part of Permian and Triassic, even up to Jurassic.

“The fossils lie inside rich tracts of limestone. According to a recent study, the common fossils found in Guryul include brachiopods, primordial corals, small invertebrates, plants, and a group of mammal-like reptiles known as Therapsids. Some sections which have not been studied are thought to be rich in molluscan fossils,” Dr. Chandra said.

In the past, the section was studied by the geologists from Japan and Geological Survey of India for about one and a half decade (1970-1987) to know the causes of the Permian Mass Extinction and rejuvenation of life forms on earth at that time.

Since 2007, the geoscientists from different countries (Canada, Taiwan, Italy, London,

Switzerland, India, etc.) started visiting the site to study the rocks at Guryul ravine and more visits are expected.

In 2005-2006, Jammu hosted an international conference of geologists who impressed upon the government to turn the ravine into Geo-park monument. Subsequently, in 2008-09, Director Geology and Mining formed a team to prepare a map of the area to declare the site as a protected heritage site. Afterwards, the department of Geology and Mining also terminated all the lease contracts and stopped stone quarrying in the area but the quarrying is still going on.

“Besides having a ban on stone quarrying in Guryul section, new quarries are still dug and stones rich with fossils are excavated and used for construction purposes, which is a big loss,” Dr. Chandra added.

Stressing on the need to preserve Guryul ravine, Dr. Chandra said, “The stone quarrying on this site should be stopped completely and the whole hillock of Guryul should be marked as the heritage site as there is a need to preserve it for future generation”.



Tyba Bashir

I am satisfied with what I do, I love my work and would want it to be continued but our children find it non-profitable. For me this craft is preserved till we three are alive after us it isn't,"



The Last Three 'German Khaars'

A plain looking single room workshop at one of the corners of lawn comes in sight as one enters the premises of legendary 'German khaars'. Opposite to the workshop, stands an archaic 200- year- old house.

A frail looking old man occupies a corner of this workplace, he mumbles his name and age. "Habibullah Ahangar and I am 85-years-old", he says with grin in his eyes. He is elder among the last three 'German khaars'.

His cousin, Abdul Rahman Ahangar aged 65 years, other German khaar sits by his side. Both of them have learned this profession at a

very young age, while they are busy in fixing a fishing tackle. They claim that they can repair and make a replica of almost anything. In our career so far, they say we have repaired almost everything which includes- electrical gadgets, surgical items, fishing equipments, silver ware, foreign made cameras and tape recorders.

'German khaars' – an exceptional title given to these blacksmiths residing at Rainawari in the old city. They claim their ancestors came from Hazzare, Afghanistan in 1700's. Maharaja Hari Singh, Dogra ruler had given them this title.

"Our elders made forceps for

Dr Wasper, who used to work at the Tuberculosis hospital at Dal gate. Their work was appreciated by him and he shared their talent with one of the Ministers of Maharaja. Thus Maharaja came to know about us and titled us 'German khaar'," they say.

Another workshop that is just a yard away looks same as the first one, but the only difference is that it is well furnished and has a modern look, opposite to it is a three storeyed house constructed in front of it.

The last of the three 'German khaars' is even busier. He has no time to interact and indulge in chit chat with anyone. Coincidentally, three university

students are present on the scene. Among them, a young gentleman, Muneeb Ahmad, says, "We are B. Pharmacy students from University of Kashmir, and we came here to get a light weight lever made. It is used in measuring the responses of the tissues."

"I am sure that the replica of the lever made by these blacksmiths will be perfect than the conventional equipments we are provided in our laboratory." His colleagues come out with two levers and ask him to check both. He weighs them with his hands and with a satisfactory smile says "It's perfect".

"Money isn't the question; we came here because they can do things to perfection like the lever they made now is better than the laboratorial one," students say.

The three students leave satisfied but 'German khaar' is still busy with his work. His head is down and hands busy; he is preoccupied in making some unusual piece of equipment. "My name is Ghulam Mohiudeen Ahangar and I am 40 years old."

Mohiudeenis the cousin of the

other two 'German khaars'. He is among three blacksmiths who can repair and make replica of any type of surgical equipments. He proves to be outvert than the first two.

He displays his cache of products which he has manufactured, he showcases arm needles used to generate response from a fetus. He pulls out dental equipments, vacuum cups, sphygmomanometer, and liver biopsy needles. Some other objects are laid in a corner, he says he has to fix.

He mentions: "I get orders from both private as well as government hospitals directly. The payment we receive depends on the work I have to do, for instance, I charge 300-500 rupees for a biopsy needle, and for an arm needle it would be 400 or more. The rates are fixed".

"It is the cheaper rate that attracts the customers, if we increase the rate, we won't be given any work," Mohiudeen says.

He again focuses on his work, a buffalo horn from which he has to make a door handle, "An

American woman came here last year, her camera had to be repaired, she was impressed by my work and since then she assigned me this new job of making handles from buffalo horns" Mohiudden says, he likes his profession but his other two cousin brothers don't. He says that the less profit in this craft has made them despondent about this skill. Their children have never learned this craft and opted for other jobs, his own son is a school teacher.

"I am satisfied with what I do, I love my work and would want it to be continued but our children find it non-profitable. For me this craft is preserved till we three are alive after us it isn't," he says.

"Government never helped us, why would they help us to boom this cottage-craft now?" It shall be of no use since we are old and hardly can work for longer hours. We will be the last three 'German khaar'," he says

The three of the extraordinary blacksmiths, honored with a title by the Maharajah, will be the last.



Sr Journalist of India
Shankershan Thakur
with the students of
MERC



Aaqib Ashraf



TONGA IS LOOSING THE RACE

Ghulam Muhammad of Islamabad is bound to drive a Tonga to feed his family. Few years back, when his horse died he could not earn and his family suffered. Due to poverty, he could not afford to buy a new horse.

To feed his family, he started working as a labourer, without knowing tricks of the trade. While working, he suffered an accident and got his leg fractured and lost all fingers of his left foot. Since he couldn't cope up with his new job, he tried to get back to his ancestral job of tonga driving. But hurdles along the way didn't permit him to do so.

He tried to get a loan from bank to buy a new horse but no one helped him. Then other tonga drivers came forward and helped Muhammad to buy a horse. He is now driving a Tonga but not with the pride and enthusiasm his father used to.

About hundred tongas are running in the busy streets of Islamabad but the number

seems to be decreasing day by day. As we think of the benefits of industrial revolution, its dark side can be seen in the house of Ghulam Muhammad and other tonga drivers. Increasing number of vehicles has added to their plight. Kashmir has lost many native crafts and traditions, and such will be the case with our ancient transport system.

Another tonga driver, Mohammad Shaban Dar, 70, who has been with this occupation from last 30 years, has finally decided to quit driving tonga that once used to be his source of income.

"From the very beginning, I had decided that I will not let my sons to take it as the occupation as there is no future in this and the income is getting lesser day by day. Now I and my sons are working as masons," Shaban says.

People and transporters also believe that Tonga have become obsolete and don't find any relevance with present transportation system.

"We want to reach to places

as quickly as possible, and travelling in a Tonga is the last resort," says Sameer, a college student, who regularly travels to college in a local bus.

Since tonga is slow in speed, many people complain of traffic jams. "Tonga is a hurdle and causes traffic jams," says Irshad, a sumo car driver.

"After getting furious with the slow speed of my Tonga, a sumo driver once rammed his vehicle into my Tonga. That broke the leg of my horse and I couldn't utter a word against the sumo driver," says Shaban.

Tonga drivers criticize government for not doing anything for them. "We met authorities many times and they promised a lot but nothing has been done so far," says Mohammad Akbar, President District Tonga Drivers Association.

The situation tonga drivers are struggling with it seems that days of this traditional vocation are numbered and soon it will diminish and fade away in the memories of past.



Umar Hayat

Khayyam Barbeques: A Mouth Watering Experience



Like junk and other fast foods, which are gaining popularity, barbeques are also not lagging behind in this race and have earned favorite place in the palatable menu for its own special taste and aroma.

Quite popular among the youth nowadays, the barbeques are in great demand all over valley. But the shops situated at Khayyam (uptown area of Srinagar) have their own unique taste, good nutritive value and hospitality towards their customers.

The barbeques here possess unique distinction when compared to the rest of the barbeque shops elsewhere in the Kashmir valley. They are deeply roasted, available in different tastes (spicy or non spicy), with pleasant aroma and served with chatni's of at least eight different types. There are also special arrangements for families to maintain privacy.

Prepared from fresh sheep meat, preferably from buttocks and rib portion, the barbeque maker first cuts the meat into small pieces and mashes it with spicy ingredients like curry

powder or meat masala. They he penetrates a small iron shaft through several pieces of meat, which ranges from 7-10 in a series and keeps at a nominal distance for thorough roasting.

When customers ask for it, he places the barbeque stick on a coal hearth. The barbeque maker keeps the coal hearth on an optimum temperature by using an electric fan to avoid over roasting.

While getting prepared, the barbeques emits an aroma which fills mouth with water. The smell is irresistible to bear to a large extent and perhaps plays a vital role in attracting the customers to have at least one.

Among different shops all around, 'Imran Cafeteria' at the corner of road has the expertise of 40 years in making barbeques. Now along with barbeques, he also serves wazwan (unique traditional series of Kashmiri dish) especially for tourists.

"We are getting good number of customers, especially in afternoon and Alhamdulillah, flow remains till late evening. Not only the locals find it tasty but we receive tourists as well in

a welcome gesture," said Imran, the barbeque maker at Khayyam. He also claims that one out of every four people in Srinagar city has tasted a barbecue at Khayyam Chowk.

"We have maintained quality so far, which is the main cause of our customer credibility and keeps us at par with others, and Inshallah, we will never compromise with it," he added.

Due to apparent difference in taste and quality, customers also find it as the best place for their quest for barbeques. Keeping its taste in view, people also order for home deliveries.

"It is always the quality that nobody wants to compromise with. Here they serve fresh sheep meat without adulteration and that is the guarantee of trust," said Hilal Ahmad, customer at Khayyam.

"Barbeques served with eight different chatni's is the unique feature of this particular area and one gets addict to it," he added.

"If one goes through the pages of history, this cuisine is the traditional dish of Baluchistan, and Kashmiri's learnt this art of cuisine from them way back," said Ghulam Nabi Shera, another barbeque maker.

He also claims that he is the one who introduced Barbeque stall at Khayyam.

Ghulam Qadir, 70, a local resident of Khayyam area, who is also a frequent eater of barbeque, said barbeques gave Khayyam an identity.

"Prior to 90's, the area was known for the cinema where latest films would be screened. But unfortunately, it got closed. Now the barbeque shops have given this area some sort of identity," said Ghulam qadir.

Rendezvous with Prof. Manzoor ul Amin

'Kashmir is in my eyes and in my heart'



Founder and the first HoD of Media Education Research Centre (MERC), Kashmir University, **Prof Manzoor-ul- Amin** revisited the department after a gap of 22 years and interacted with students and faculty. In an exclusive interview with **Editor** and **Souzeina Mushtaq**, **Prof. Amin** revisits the past and talks about his experiences in Kashmir- a place he loves the most.

SM : You have visited the Centre, that you established, after a gap of 22 years. What are your impressions?

MA: I am indeed delighted. The Centre has progressed in leaps and bounds. It has improved way beyond imagination in every respect may it be the infrastructure or the human resource. The course material is extremely rich and the kind of exposure, opportunities and training the students are being provided is exemplary. The direction

that the department has taken and the pace of development under the leadership of the Head of the Department Prof. Mufeed is highly impressive. The kind of interaction programs and workshops the Centre is organizing are commendable. I hope that the trend will carry on with full vigor in future also. I wish the faculty of the Centre all the success.

SM : We all know you as the founder of this Centre. Tell us something about your childhood?

MA: As a child, I was much pampered and loved. You will be surprised to know that in 1928, my mother started a government job. Those were not the days when muslim women would work.

My mother was the head mistress of her school. She was a unique teacher. I grew up under her influence. She along with my father, who was also well educated took great care of our education. Whatever I became, I owe it to them.

SM: You were born and brought up in Hyderabad, what prompted you to come to Kashmir and start a journalism institute here?

MA: I didn't come here on my own but I was asked to come. Moreover, I had no idea to start an institute here; I came here with a mission. I had this idea that the generation here is very depressed, it needs to be taken out of it. I felt a need to awaken the masses, make them conscious of their rights, and make them realize that the world is changing and they should keep a pace with it.

While I was working as Additional General in Radio, I got this offer to start a journalism department in Jamia Millia Islamia. I had no idea



about the field, but my director took me there and we inaugurated the department.

While I was there, the then Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University, Prof Manzoor ul Alam came there and sought my help to start a journalism department in Kashmir. So I came here and became a part of the syllabus forming committee. After the syllabus was framed, we formed the

department. Then I decided to go back to Delhi but the VC didn't let me go. He wanted me to stay here and become the Head of the Department.

SM: How difficult was it to manage and survive with the new course?

MA: It was very difficult to convince people that there is a world beyond medicine and engineering. But we managed to convince students to join the new course. We had no facility at our disposal; it all started with a scratch. I used to teach every subject those days.

But students were very cooperative. They had a desire to learn things. So as a part of training students, I invited top notch people, like P C Chatterji, Dileep Padgaonkar from the communication field to come here and interact with the students.

SM: After such a rapport was built, what made you to pack your bags and leave?

MA: I remember having tea with my wife, when a bomb rocked Nigeen. Then a man came and told me about the killing of Prof. Manzoor ul Alam, the then VC of the University. It was a shocker for me. The situation outside was tense. My family was very scared. It was for them that I had to take the painful decision of leaving the valley.

SM: How was your experience in Kashmir?

MA: Kashmir is in my eyes and in my heart. It always pains me to leave this place. Today, as I am leaving, you won't see tears in my eyes. They have dried now.

I have to leave, unwillingly though, because there is no alternative. But I carry my memories of this beautiful place; the smell of its soil, the beauty of chinars. I have no words to express my love for Kashmir.

SM: Your wife, Sufiya was with you through thick and thin. She has also contributed a lot to this department. And today, when she is not around, how does it feel?

MA: There is a vacuum. We spent fifty beautiful years together. But death is inevitable, it has to come. Today it is someone and tomorrow it may be anyone among us.

SM: Now that you are retired, what keeps you busy these days?

MA: I talk with my solitude (laughs). I talk with pictures. I have many pictures of Kashmir with me. I talk to them, relive the memories.

SM: What is your message to the students of this department?

MA: I want them to work hard and stand on their own. Life is dynamic, it demands creativity. Students should understand the unique process of creation and revolutionize their lives. My message for all is the message of love.



Malla Waseem

I WANT TO BE HIS DISCIPLE FOREVER



Countless people have come to this world and left. Some came, lived their life and left; lived life for their own selves. But some came and devoted their life for the welfare of people at large. In other words, some lived to die while others died to live.

At school, my best teacher Mr Jalal ud din Malik left an indelible mark on my whole life. Once he asked me if I knew how people lived even after they died. I had no answer. I just looked towards him without uttering a word and then asked humbly, what that meant. He, in his gentle, caring and lovable voice, said "People live through what they have done for the humanity, when they live for others."

Malik Sir went on saying, "If you want to live after you are long gone from this world, then write, and write for the welfare of the society. If you can't do this, then do something remarkable for the welfare of the humanity so that others are compelled to write about you."

He, in his gentle, caring and lovable voice, said "People live through what they have done for the humanity, when they live for others"

After I joined the University, I came across another gem of a teacher, Mr. Nasir Mirza. From the day one at the University, there would be hardly any day when Nasir Sir hadn't talked about Professor Manzoor ul Amin.

On 12th May, 2012, I came to know about the interaction

to be held with Prof. Amin. Till the time of interaction, Prof. Amin was known to me as the founder of the Media Education Research Centre (MERC). To be honest, I had made my mind not to participate in the interactive session and remain at home. But then one thing struck my mind- this was the same person I have heard about a lot from Nasir Sir always.

Then started the chain of thoughts in my mind- this man has given people of Kashmir a voice, to be heard at all levels. The institution founded by him has produced number of journalists who represent the sufferings of people in this trouble torn state.

These thoughts made me to change my plan and I decided to participate in the interaction.

On 14th May, 2012, in the Media House Auditorium, many people had already occupied the maximum seats, most of whom I had seen for the first time. In the mean time, I could see an old man, a look-alike of Vice-President of India, Mohammad Hamid Ansari entering the auditorium. With a soft and gentle smile on his face, he was escorted by every faculty member, alumni of MERC on his both sides. He was Prof. Manzoorul Amin.

When I saw him, the thoughts of my teacher Malik sir ran across my mind. My teacher had suggested me to either write myself or do something remarkable so that people would write about me. But this man had done both the things.

Though I know nothing about Prof. Manzoorul Amin substantial and to write about this personality is a very difficult job for me. But then after seeing the admiration of his students

for him, and having heard him and his students, I couldn't resist from expressing my feelings and observations as this reminded me of my teacher.

Prof. Amin is from a well to do family in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. His parents, both well educated, were also involved in imparting education. His hobbies included playing hockey and cricket.

He has held various top posts at the central level. He was Additional Director General (ADG), Door Darshan (DD). His contribution to Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) launched by Indian Space Research Centre (ISRO) has been a remarkable one. Initially, he served in the army and after that, he joined All India Radio (AIR) as talk's producer.

Prof. Amin is regarded as the father of Media Education and a visionary who laid the road map for it in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He single handedly started the Media Department in the highest learning seat of education in the Kashmir Valley.

What prompted Prof. Amin to come all the way from Hyderabad to Kashmir, I am unaware of. But one can say with surety that his love for this land is one of the factors. He recited a full Persian poem regarding Kashmir and said that Kashmir was not only in his eyes but in his

It would be unfair on my part not to mention his wife Rafia Amin, who also played an important role in the establishment of MERC and in the other every sphere of his life. She has to her credit a novel with the title of *Aalam Pannah*, which was later conceived into serial in the name of *Farmaan* which was aired on Door Darshan

heart as well.

Prof. Amin has been a teacher par excellence, when he himself taught the students in the serene ambience of famous Naseem Bagh campus of the Kashmir University.

"Whatever little I am today, is only because of his patronage and guidance," says Dr. Shahid Rasool, Director EMMRC.

The Media Guru of Kashmir, Nasir Mirza describes him as the "living legend."

Prof. Amin being held at high

esteem by one and all reflects his stature. This was evident when His Excellency Shri N N Vohra, the Governor of J&K commended the department.

It would be unfair on my part not to mention his wife Rafia Amin, who also played an important role in the establishment of MERC and in the other every sphere of his life. She has to her credit a novel with the title of "AALAM PANNAH", which was later conceived into serial in the name of "FARMAAN" which was aired on Door Darshan.

Prof. Amin's simple living and high thinking gets reflected when he talks in a humorous and very simple way. This got to me amply clear when he quoted a verse of poem which, if my poor memory supports me, goes as:

Kabhi jo Dhoop Main Saya
Tumhen Lamba Nazar Aaayey

To Apney Kad Ke Barey mae
Galat Fehmee mae Mat Rehna

His quoting of different literary works while speaking gives a hint of what treasure of knowledge he has.

I wish if I could be his student all through my life. Every morning he would share his pearls of knowledge and I would collect those pearls. He would teach all the day and I would listen, with all my senses wide awake... I just want to be his disciple forever.

Editor with Ms
Ambika Soni,
Union minister for
information and
broadcasting at
media conference in
New Delhi





Ubaid shafi Bhat

Strawberry Village- A single man initiative



The fragrance of strawberries can be smelled across mile or two before reaching the alluring village of strawberry on the outskirts of Srinagar. Just inside, a pitched red form of carpet awaits the visitor as it occurs. The vast spreads of strawberry fields which started from 1 kanal of land has become a Strawberry village.

The strawberry cultivation, which was started by Abdul Ahad Mir of Gasso Hazratbal in 2001, is a single man initiative. As per Mir, he took a risk without any financial or technical support. Today his income is about Rs 60000- 70000/kanal/annum by selling strawberry fruits.

Due to the technical backup of Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Directorate of Extension Education, SKUAST, the area has now reached 12.0 hectares

of strawberry cultivation and is known as Strawberry Village. The income of the village is 8.0 lacks/ hectare and the total income of the village is 91.0 lacks. The area produces 237 quintals/ hectare of strawberries that engage 79 families with the business.

The strawberry cultivation that starts in Aug- Sep is a seasonal crop. After 8-9 months of development, the strawberry is the first fruit to reach the market. After his business emerged, the horticulture department came up with financial and technical assistance under horticulture mission.

Mir was ranked NO.1 progressive farmer at National level during the year 2009-2010, where 101 farmers from 29 countries had participated. Besides that, he has won several

awards both at State as well at National level. His whole family is now engaged in this business with full dedication and has achieved a great satisfaction. The socio-economic status of Mir has changed which has created enthusiasm among farmers in his neighboring areas and as such they have also started the strawberry cultivation.

According to Mir, "Every business is possible if done with ardor and hard slog."

Another strawberry cultivator, Manzoor Ahmad Mir said, "We left shawl business of our forefathers and started the strawberry cultivation because we were stirred by Mir's dedication and economic status."

"Our whole family is engaged with this business and we are benefitted to a larger extend," he added.



Mukeet Akmal

KING OF WOOLS YEARNING FOR REVIVAL



Once a famed handicraft, that used to provide livelihood to hundreds of families in Kashmir, is yearning for its revival.

Shahtoosh, the name signifies royalty and kingship. It is a Persian word meaning 'King of Wools'. Each shawl made out of this delicate and ethereal fiber, would cost hundreds of thousands of rupees.

However, after the ban on the trade of Shahtoosh, question now arises can this sector be revived again by rearing the delicate Chiru antelopes in farms and obtaining their prized fur without killing the animals?

While the artisans from Jammu and Kashmir, who are in danger of forgetting the age-old weaving craft for the Shahtoosh, say that the ban should be lifted, the state government does not seem to have done much to revive an art form that could fetch it good money.

Earlier, the wool for Shahtoosh was obtained 'non-violently'. The Chiru antelope would shed its hair, which after being procured by locals would then be sold to weavers. Shahtoosh products were an important cottage industry in the

Kashmir Valley.

However, pushed by the compulsions of market and lure of profit maximization, traders, instead of waiting for the natural and voluntary shedding of hair, started getting the prized possession by killing the antelope. The Chiru became the target of poachers.

"It takes five dead Chirus to make one shahtoosh shawl," said Mushtaq Ahmad, a wildlife expert.

The numbers of the timid and delicate antelope, found in the desolate vastness of the Tibet, Xinjiang and Ladakh regions,

began to dwindle alarmingly.

The killing of the Chiru, a Schedule I animal according to the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, is banned in India.

"Processing or wearing Shahtoosh is a punishable offence. Chiru is on the Appendix I of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), meaning that international trade is prohibited. It also means hefty fines or even jail for those who carry the shawls," says Ahmad.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the imprisonment for killing a Chiru is one to three years, with



a proposed fine of Rs 5,000 to 25,000, says an official of Jammu and Kashmir Animal Husbandry department.

"The Chiru or Tibetan Antelope (*Panthalops Hodgsoni*) is an inhabitant of Tibet. It migrates to Ladakh in the summer and remains there from May to July," he adds.

However, despite the controls, the illegal trade continues.

"Shahtoosh continues to be a high value product in the wildlife market. Seizures of shahtoosh shawls are made regularly by agencies like Customs, CBI and the WCCB, pointing to the fact that the trade is alive," said Muhammad Shafi, customs officer at Srinagar International Airport here.

And how much does a shahtoosh shawl cost? "All I would say is that they can be worth several lakhs each," says Shafi.

While he could not say how many shahtoosh shawls were being made illegally, he said, "It is likely that stockpiled shawls may be finding their way gradually into the markets". Asked to point out the likely markets, he said they were the "fashion markets in the US, Europe and Southeast Asia".

While the ban on the

shahtoosh continues, the weaving industry in Kashmir has suffered collateral damage.

"The ban has directly affected our earnings. We have pleaded before the government of India to rethink about the ban. But it has mostly fallen on deaf ears," Ajaz Lolpuri, a wool exporter from Srinagar,

Can the government not find a middle ground?

Tariq Rashid, proprietor of Pashmina Ghar says that if procured humanely, Shahtoosh would be acceptable. Rashid told Media Times: "Sufficient research has not been done in India on finding ways of domestically rearing the Chiru and shearing and spinning its wool without killing it."

It is not that the Kashmir government has not thought of the idea. "In 2004-2005, the state government had a conceptual plan to make some enclosures in Ladakh for retaining some of the migratory Chiru that would cross over during summer from Tibet and China. The idea was to rear these Chiru for gathering shahtoosh fleece, but the plan has not been implemented till date," Muhammad Afzal Parray, President Chamber of Commerce and Industries said.

Parray feels the weaving tradition for shahtoosh would be

lost forever if the ban continues.

"Shahtoosh shawl-making involves special looms and weavers who were skilled in the family tradition over centuries. After the ban, this tradition has been lost and there is no possibility of its revival as the law stands on it now," says Parray.

According to Parray, many shahtoosh weavers have fully switched to pashmina. "In 2005, we had estimates of about 45,000 families of shahtoosh weavers, who were directly or indirectly connected with the trade. After the ban, the families gradually shifted their livelihoods to Pashmina shawl weaving and have now fully migrated to their new trade," said Parray.

But, in the meantime, the craft form stands in danger of vanishing altogether. Warns Parray: "Something must be done. Or else, India would lose an extraordinary and unique textile tradition." Many weavers have switched to pashmina to keep their hearths running. "We are supporting a campaign to advocate pashmina (another fine wool) as an alternative to shahtoosh. Craftspeople who thus earlier used to make shahtoosh products can now switch over to Pashmina and retain their livelihoods," says Bashir Ahmad, a Pashmina dealer.



Baseera Rafique

CLOUD COMPUTING MAKING DATA STORAGE AND ACCESS EASIER



Science and technology has revolutionized the world. The advent of new gadgets and techniques has influenced almost every part of our life; be it computer, mobile, internet browsing, or social networking. It is the outcome of sustained human effort lead by scientists, technologists, hardware and software engineers etc. that computing, storage and communication has become so easier. Internet has not only made communication easy but the use of common place devices like, hard disk, flash drive, memory cards, compact disks etc. has made software storage of data more fast and safe.

Various new concepts are coming up in computer technology to connect the world through an invisible connection known as the World Wide Web. It has a global reach with no boundaries, which makes it universally acceptable. It has the

A simple example of cloud computing is Yahoo email, Gmail, or Hotmail etc. Users don't need a separate software or a server to use them. What is needed is just an internet connection and one can start sending emails

potential to generate lot of data across the globe that is often very difficult to handle, store or manage.

Presently most of the data is stored in different devices which are vulnerable to various kinds

of virus: Trojan bombs, spy works etc. and are at a constant threat of being lost forever with immeasurable loss. Keeping this problem in mind, technology has evolved to secure data according to our needs. These inventions are a wonder in itself, and adding to these is the concept of Cloud Computing.

Generally speaking, cloud computing means providing hosted services by means of the internet. The term cloud computing came in vogue due to the representation of the internet as a "cloud" in most information technology diagrams. So, in its simplest sense, the cloud pertains to the World Wide Web.

Cloud computing is a technology that uses the internet and central remote servers to maintain data and applications. It allows consumers and businesses to use applications without installation and access their personal files at any computer with internet access. This technology allows for much more efficient computing by centralizing storage, memory, processing and bandwidth.

A simple example of cloud computing is Yahoo email, Gmail, or Hotmail etc. Users don't need a separate software or a server to use them. What is needed is just an internet connection and one can start sending emails. The server and email management software is all on the cloud (internet) and is totally managed by the cloud service provider Yahoo, Google etc. The analogy is, 'If you need milk, would you buy a cow?' All the users or consumers need is

to get the benefits of using the software or hardware of the computer like sending emails etc. Just to get this benefit (milk) why should a consumer buy a (cow) software /hardware?

Cloud computing is a model for enabling convenient, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources (e.g., networks, servers, storage, applications, and services) that can be rapidly provisioned and released with minimal management effort or service provider interaction.

Cloud computing is being progressively adopted in different business scenarios in order to obtain flexible and reliable computing environments, with several supporting solutions available in the market. Being based on diverse technologies (e.g. virtualization, utility computing, grid computing and service oriented architectures) and constituting a completely new computational paradigm, cloud computing requires high-level management routines.

Trust and security have become crucial to guarantee the healthy development of cloud platforms, providing solutions for concerns such as the lack of privacy and protection, the guarantee of security and author rights.

According to a recent Carbon Disclosure Project report, companies that streamline operations to improve IT performance will not only reduce capital expenditures

Trust and security have become crucial to guarantee the healthy development of cloud platforms, providing solutions for concerns such as the lack of privacy and protection, the guarantee of security and author rights

but they will shrink energy consumption and carbon emissions. The group estimated that by 2020, US organizations that move to the Cloud could save \$12.3 billion in energy costs and the equivalent of 200 million barrels of oil.

As computer technology continues to progress, so does the capability of cloud computing. As faster computers and larger virtual storage areas become available, cloud computing will also continuously improve with it. The noticeable effect will probably show on the improvement of the time it takes to perform computing

processes. It can be possible in the future, that data processed in an hour today can be done in just a minute.

Faster processors and connections will be the main proponents of this improvement. The user is not limited into purchasing a service that has lots of restrictions. The user has the power to choose which elements of the service to include and which to omit, and can quickly scale the level of service up or down based on real-time service needs. The user does not need to immediately invest in buying data storage and processing resources as it can be dynamically modified at anytime. Additionally, the user also does not need to pay for the maintenance of tools needed to run the service as the service provider handles operations of the systems. Moreover, with the use of the internet, users can easily be connected to the services obtained in any location at any convenient time. This allows for a great deal of practicality in acquiring cloud computing.

As the technology has both advantages and disadvantages, same is true with cloud computing. Although it provides storage to a huge data but its safety and privacy is in doubt. Some believe that it is going to monopolize the information which will be controlled by the big powers to monopolize its use according to their wishes. And it also is a threat to the valuable data stored at some distant place.



Hajira Bano



Setting up University Campus in Leh will prove very beneficial for the students of both Leh and Kargil. Students who cannot afford going outside Leh for further studies can pursue their Master's degree there only

Education in Ladakh Touching New Heights

Ladakh, being a remote area, has always remained deprived of the basic education since very long. In 2001, according to the census, the overall literacy rate in Leh district was 62 percent (72 percent male and 50 percent female).

However, the Census 2011 has shown a drastic improvement in the literacy rate, running third in the list out of 22 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The literacy rate is 80.48%, out of which male literacy is 89.48% and female literacy rate is 64.52 percent.

Earlier the parents did not know their right to demand proper education for themselves and for their children but now things have changed.

"In early 1980s, tourists started visiting Leh and the people realised how fast the world had moved on and how much ground we had to cover," said Kaneez Fatima, student of Kashmir University.

Ladakh has always been an open society, be it for the Buddhists or the Muslims. The male and female are treated as equal, and women in Leh have held a dominant position in society since ages.

"We have for ages been a knowledge seeking society. Buddhist would go to monasteries and Muslims to Maktab to seek education," said Tamchos Namgial, from Leh.

"Parents apply for loans and even sell their land to get their girl child educated," he added.

The first local school to provide modern education in Leh was "Lamdon Social Welfare Society" in 1973.

A large contribution in the field of education in done by Student's Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL) who started Operation New Hope in 1994 and in collaboration with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, teachers were trained and their aim was to make government school as

good as private school.

They also started Village Education Committees where villagers were trained through group discussions. Education campaign was started all over Ladakh.

By 2001, Operation New Hope principles were being implemented in all government schools of Leh and matriculation exams pass rate rose to 50 percent.

72.02 percent of children aged 5 to 16 are enrolled in government school and 12.65 percent in private schools.

Setting up University Campus in Leh will prove very beneficial for the students of both Leh and Kargil. Students who cannot afford going outside Leh for further studies can pursue their Master's degree there only.

Now the people of Ladakh are witnessing change that they want to see and very soon the literacy rate in Leh will touch 100 percent.



Mehrun Nissa

Fascinating Folk Songs of Ladakh



With the inception of civilization tradition and culture also came into existence. One of the main phases of culture and tradition is folk songs. Every place in this world has its own unique folk songs which represents the essence of that place.

India is also rich in traditional songs, from Himalaya to South India, which throws light on the customs of Indian societies.

Ladakh, a detached region in the Himalayan range has abundance of mesmerizing cultural songs that people cherish throughout the year.

Tourists are mainly enchanted by its galvanizing folk songs and dances.

Traditional songs of Ladakh emphasize on the political, social, cultural, historical and

In ancient period, kings and ministers had people to chant folk songs in courts to make the environment of court charming. The traditional folk songs and dances reveal the history of Ladakh

economical aspect of the isolated valley, and the folk dance depicts the content of the songs.

In ancient period, kings and ministers had people to chant folk songs in courts to make the environment of court charming. The traditional folk songs and dances reveal the history of Ladakh.

In ancient times, Ladakh was a trade route, so people from various cultural backgrounds settled there including that of the Aryans. Thus Ladakh has a huge variety of cultural songs and dances.

An intellectual person of Ladakh, Tashi Rbigs has enumerated different form of Ladakhi songs.

- Taal Lu or Party songs, which are used to sing on social occasions.

- Chos Lu or Religious songs, which are used to sing in presence of great Lama's.

- Chok Lu or Royal songs, which were used to sing in ancient era to praise kings and queens.

- Chank Lu or Drunkards hymn which glorifies the different forms of alcohol.

- Pokh Lu or Marriage ceremony songs, which are vocalized on special occasions of marriage to praise bride and bridegroom. These songs are abundant in number, comprising of painful songs which bride's friends chant while the bride is about to depart.

- Tsek Lu or Debatable or haggling songs, which are chanted in interrogative manner in social gatherings when there is a competition between man and a woman or between two groups.

- Rang Lu or Incredible songs, which are attractive and popular.

- Jong Lu or Provincial songs, which are sung on different social occasions.

- Jabru songs relate to a particular nomadic tribe, that admires kings, Lama's, Gonpa's and are presented with great zest.

- Shoan Lu or Imperial songs are related to the era of kingdom, which is exhibited on New Year with great enthusiasm.

Beside all these, there are various songs, which are sung on special events like festivals, hunting, archery, cultivation and so on.

On the celebration of festivals, villagers get dressed up in traditional array and dance and sing folk songs, backed by an orchestra. The festival also facets musical concerts, dances performed by veiled Lama from selected monasteries.

Throughout farms, men, women who are working in fields recite songs to keep themselves busy in work.

Ladakhi songs are full of emotions and are melodious, but most of the song composers are unknown. Now with fading of conventional thoughts, the talented people there get opportunity to publicize their extraordinary skills. Efforts are making to upsurge the declining songs, especially marriage songs which are generally sung during marriage ceremonies

and dances are performed to entertain participants.

People of Ladakh have noteworthy flare for singing and dancing, but due conventional thoughts of society, people were not that much supported to excel which is ongoing from generation to generation. If there would be freedom of dancing and singing, people of Ladakh would have touched the skies.

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At the time of ploughing, prolonged songs are sung to credit the bull (Zo).

Ladakh is also renowned for its wild animals from ancient periods. Songs are sung to encourage the hunter for hunting.

Archery is a famous recreational game play in winter, during which revitalizing songs are sung to boost the players

The Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy, Leh has organized a weekly special training course in customs of marriage songs, where around 40 youth from different villages come for training under the supervision of legendary artists of Ladakh. Mipham Otsal, who is also an award winner of Sangeet Natak Academy is one of the artists.



Fida Hussain

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC OPINION IN MEDIA



"The public opinion is the only critic whose opinion is worth anything at all"

- Mark twain.

Public opinion is the complex collection of opinions of different people and the sum of all their views. Public opinion forms an important component in all fields and media is no exception to it. The Importance of public opinion has increased in the recent years. Public opinion governs the working of our society and gives a way to change when public opinion is voiced.

Media is all about connecting people and mirroring the society we live in. It is all about reflecting on daily happenings around the world. People are not just audiences but also an essential element of news itself. Be it journalism or entertainment, the increasing importance of the public opinion is evident

everywhere. Public opinion is the backbone of media.

First, let us talk about the print media. The newspaper content, which is wholly and solely product of reporters and journalists in the office, is now undergoing a radical change into an amalgamation of news and public opinions. The letters to editor written by the readers to the newspapers and magazines is an example of acknowledgement of the importance of the public opinion. In addition to the readership polls and questionnaires, there are also columns, which are contributed by readers themselves.

Talking about internet now, the websites have already been using the public polls. In addition to that, the rise of blogs and public forums have paved way to increased exposure to individual opinions, and hence strengthened the importance of public opinion. Public polls are commonly used by many news channels and are considered an important tool for measuring the public opinion.

In India, the trend of public polls used by different news channels has become common. In

case of entertainment channels, public voting is accorded utmost importance. Reality shows like Indian Idol reflect the importance given to the public opinion. In case of movies, what would be the success of the movie if there was no audience? It wholly depends on the audience that is responsible for success or failure of a particular movie.

Importance of public opinion is due to the effect of the increased public participation in the media. This is an era where media has awakened to the fact that no matter what they are dishing out- news, views or entertainment, they need to keep it interactive. Public opinion is not just a way to validate and supplement the news but also a great way to increase the awareness of the public on a particular topic. And today, public wants to be aware of the issues happening around them and to give their comments on the important issues. It is the public opinion that determines the popularity of the media, so a compromise on public opinion is almost impossible today.



Sheikh Qayoom

WHY I WRITE?

I had never thought I would fall in the business of writing. Wandering gave me little time to read even the prescribed books, not to even think of fiction, comic and story books. Time passed and I progressed to class after class. There was no clear direction. No goal, no destination was set. I never had thought of writing.

Days passed and I landed in the field of communication. I was supposed to write. The fear psychosis was high-write what to write and how to write. On the other hand it was obligatory to put ideas into words. One day I wrote a poem unexpectedly. When I jotted the words, they began to appear as the silky threads that I really liked. I was convinced that I could write. The potential of writing was in me, only I needed was to give it some shape. I began to write. I wrote few pieces with the intention that they will be published in the newspapers. It would think the newspaper would get their space filled and I fame. The pieces were controversial laden with harsh criticism against the establishment. They were never published. I was very much dismayed. Only thing could do was to call the in-charge editor of the paper and ask why not the piece was published, the counter argument would be more disturbing "We received no such piece." I knew they were lying. Still I was thankful they were at least picking the mobile call. The dream of getting fame was shaken. I had put a self-imposed barricade that until the first piece



is not published I will not write another. However, I wrote a lot but it was all purposeless and directionless.

Then a day came when people offered me an opportunity to write. It was like a dream came true. The intention was to get fame. My writing in college days impressed my batch mates, but to others I was an unknown entity. I was given space to write as much as I can. I, to some extent, shouldered the responsibility. Now my name began to appear in the newspapers. My desire was full filled. I was no longer an unknown person. My byline appeared more than forty times in different papers of the valley. I got both name and fame. What next. Is the aim of writing only to get fame? How long will I go with the ghost of fame? Will my writing serve any other purpose?

Now there was a purpose behind writing. It was simply to let people know what I know. I began to write some exclusive pieces, different from the age-

old tradition of political-oriented things. I wrote a piece that got its space in the valleys largely circulated and widely read newspaper. I received admiration from within and outside Valley as well: from America, New Delhi and my email inbox was filled with appreciation for writing such a piece. Even some unknown persons began to call me as great intellectual. My teachers, colleagues were happy. Even my college teacher and now editor of one newspaper said I read your piece twice and it was amazing.

Now my aim was to not get fame. Rather I played gentle. I began to think of doing more and more work like this. I resolved that my writing should add something new to the knowledge of people. I want to write some interesting stories that people will carry with them for a long time. That is what the aim of writing is at present times. I don't know tomorrow what will be the purpose of my writing. I can only say I am hoping for the best.



Iqbal Kirmani

PhD: The Formula of Success!!

There is enough evidence to show that winning and being successful in life has little to do with academic qualifications. So you might be wondering why you need a PhD to achieve your goals in life and be the best you can be. Yes, you read it right. We all need a PhD.

PhD is the new mantra for success. It stands for Passion, Hunger and Discipline! Get them all. And see the difference. Becoming a Passionate, Hungry and Disciplined person can put you on the road to realizing your true greatness.

Passion: Do you enjoy what you are doing? Do you love your work? It's extremely important that each of us can answer those questions with a resounding 'Yes!' Passion helps ensure that you jump out of your bed every morning and get to work on your goals. Not because you have to, but because you love to. Passion makes those long hours spent at work seem worthwhile because you are having fun, enjoying every moment. Outstanding results are achieved not through better resources or bigger budgets.

They are achieved by people madly, wildly, excited by their mission to be the best. Martin Luther King once said: "If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets just as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well." Would they be saying that about you? Are you aiming



to be the best "YOU" in the whole world? It's nice to be able to do what you love. But it's important to love what you are doing!

Hunger: How badly do you want to win? Are you really, really hungry for success? It's when you really want something that you start to go after it, and do all it takes to get it. If you want to win, you must first want to win. Get hungry. And yes, no one else can feel hungry for you. You've probably heard the story of the young man who went up to Socrates and said he wanted to get wisdom. "Come with me," said Socrates and took him along to a river. Without any warning, Socrates pushed the man's head under water and held it there. The man did not know what was happening. He struggled for air. He moved his head, flailed his hands desperately seeking to get his head above water for some air. Socrates finally let go and asked him "What did you want when your head was under water?" "I wanted air," said the man. "Right," said Socrates,

"when you want wisdom as badly as you wanted the air – you will get it!" So how badly do you want to win?

Discipline: And once you have the passion and the hunger, you'll probably see a road emerge in front of you, leading you to your goals. There will be obstacles on the way, there will be roadblocks, but you will need discipline to keep doing the right things, time after time after time. You need the discipline to stick on the path. Nothing of substance was ever achieved without discipline. An Olympic Gold medal-winning gymnast was asked the secret of her success. Her response: "I practised when I felt like it. And also when I didn't!" Success demands discipline. Slogging and staying the course – particularly when you 'don't feel like it' – is often the key to success.

That's it then. Never mind what you are doing now, commit yourself to becoming a PhD. A Passionate, Hungry and Disciplined person. Success is calling. Are you ready?



Heeba Din

The book is like a breath of fresh air and is a must read for all those who are bored from all the mainstream political drama televised and who are ready to look the harsh truth in the eye

Name : The Moslems are Coming
 By : Azad Essa
 Publisher: Harper Collins
 Cover Price: Rs. 299.00
 Category: Non-fiction
 On Sale : April 2012



Azad's Whirlwind Journey

Azad Essa takes you on a whirlwind journey in his first book 'The Moslems are coming'. The journey from deep interiors of African politics to birds eye view on global politics, from Islamophobia to bollywood and his own identity crisis, Essa has managed to put all the ingredients of a bestselling book. And with his own pinch of dark humor, it just becomes too delicious to resist.

His fresh style of writing, laced with satire makes the book hard to put down, once you get used to his witty wicked sense of humor. With his provocative pen, Azad's writing is sure going to catch the eye balls.

With his own style of writing, Azad takes you to a level of discomfort, but that is his main point; to take you to a place where you are bound to think about issues which we have so easily accepted, and the ones we hesitate

to talk about.

The book is not your general stereotype novel; it is based on the author's popular blog on Thought Leader. It is a collection of essays on a variety of topics, ranging from international politics, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racial discrimination and offers a unique point of view on the Kashmir issue and vastly discusses politics in Africa and his search for his own identity while dealing with the dilemma of being an Indian South African.

While the major half of the book predominantly talks about South African politics, its Essa's sarcastic, witty tone of writing which keeps you hanging onto his every word, even if you are one amongst the people who don't know much about south African politics. His sarcastic light tone relatively appears more serious when he talks about

issues like burqa ban in France to Islamophobia. Azad stands out in his way of describing the issue.

With his shrewd sarcasm, this book sure won't be settling in with all the fundamentalists's out there. Surprisingly and contradictory to its name, the book is not all about 'MOSLEMS'. Contentiously, book speaks about issues about Islamophobia and burqa ban but that is not what the whole book is all about.

From bollywood to cricket, world cup 2011 affecting sales across the borders to being an Indian South African searching for his true identity, Azad Essa manages to laugh at him and make people do the same.

The book is like a breath of fresh air and is a must read for all those who are bored from all the mainstream political drama televised and who are ready to look the harsh truth in the eye.



Mohammed Saquib

Two States: Story of My Marriage

Publisher: Rupa & Co.
No. of Pages: 269
Publishing Year: 2009

Reading Chetan Bhagat's novels are like watching Bollywood flicks; you find every emotion there- friendship, betrayal, exploitation, break-up, reunion, elaborate weddings, tearful mothers, nosy relatives, office politics, just-for-laugh lines and a predictable ending.

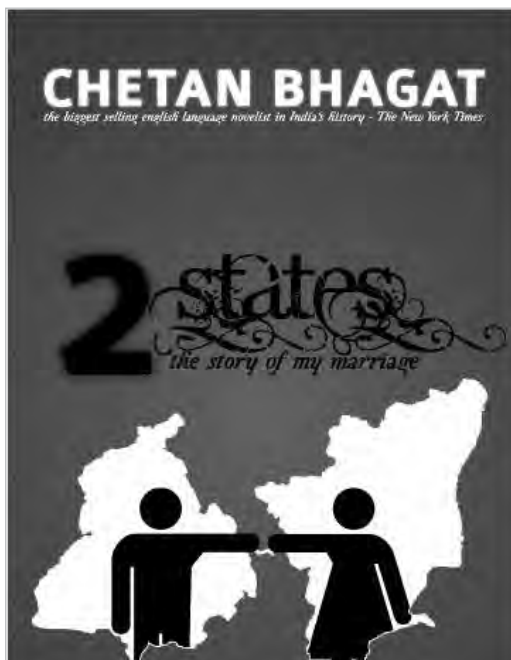
His new book, *Two States* (2009) also falls in the same category as his previous books *Five Point someone*, *One Night @ the call center* and *The three mistakes of my life*.

The book, *Two States* is also semi-autobiography of the author. Easy on language, no need of dictionary, and a perfect past-time are the characteristics one can associate with the writing of Chetan Bhagat.

Though, in critical sense, Chetan Bhagat does lack quality in terms of literature; his plot is always predictable, a stereotypical conclusions drawn at the end, but his work touch the contemporary times, where we live. At times you wonder whether it really is a novel or some new genre of writing as most critics state his works as 'comic'. He fails to touch problems faced by real India, as most of his works are related to dreamy urban youth. But his work generates lot of bucks; even a book worm would be comfortable with content. So ignoring his work as something banal would be wrong.

The plot of the book is like any other Bollywood flick, where you have boy and a girl, who fell in love.

Anaya and Krish, both belong to different racial identities. Anaya



comes from a culture of Dosala, while Krish is from Parathas. An expected twist to their marriage comes from their families.

Then you have the story in making- from rendezvous IIMS canteen's first meet, campus relationship spanning four years, Bollywood funda of couple treaded to each other, brawl at convocation farewell between parents, xenophobia mentality of parents, and an enemy to their love. Krish's New Delhi portrays one side of divide, where Aryan race resides with their own cult; while Ananya's Chennai is populated by Dravidians having own beliefs. Goa acts an intermediary as always is case with any romantic Bollywood movie. But Punjabi mum ruins possibilities of matrimonial. Novel is nitty gritty of these things.

Krish finds himself on *Temptation Island*, but love shows him the way. There is one problem though- his mother thinks

'Madrasis' (every South Indian is called that up here) are just out to 'trap her boy'. While on contrary, Anaya's family thinks him to be no match for her, as they belong to a Brahmin family.

As a part of struggle for love, Krish gets himself posted in Citibank, Chennai, where Ananya is working with HLL, and sets the ball rolling. He sets himself into South Indian attire and wears a dhoti and even starts taking their food- Chhole Bhaturey and Rawa Dosa. He also becomes teacher to Anaya's brother, helps her father in accounts & also cajoles her mother to sing in his company party.

Well in Chetan's work, you get this sort of desperation, where the protagonist crosses every sort of limit in love. Anaya unfortunately, isn't able to put up such talent, for Krish's mother remains a stubborn villain.

Then the usual Bollywood mantra – In the end everything goes well! A bad man becoming a Messiah. In this story, the alienated father of Krish helps union of the two lovers, who are made to live apart because of their different origins, and also over coming qualms father-son duo had over years.

The premise of the book is more realistic; it draws your attention to cultural differences in diverse India and is perfect opportunity to dwell into age-old 'North India versus South India divide', which still is prevalent. Chetan Bhagat enthralls you for just Rs 95.

At the end of the novel, Ananya gives birth to twin boys. They say that the babies belong to a state called 'India'.



Ashraf ul Hassan

Manto's Magic Left Me Spell Bound

There behind barbed wire on one side, lay India and behind more barbed wires, on the other side, lay Pakistan.

In between a bit of earth which had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh!

Few weeks back, I came through a piece of writing in Urdu. It had no proper heading, though, I started to read. Somewhere in the middle of the story, I wanted to stop because of its eroticism but somehow I reached to the end of the two-page story. The flow in the writing interested me to go on reading.

Toward the end it turned to be devastating, powerful and a painful story with a Sikh just killing a Muslim family.

Thanda Ghost by Saadat Hassan Manto is one of the first short stories through which I was introduced to his literary work. I began to read him after I had gone through his magnum opus – Toba Tek Singh. It is said that Manto once read Toba Tek Singh in Lahore's YMCA Hall at the annual meeting of Halqa-e Arbab-e Zauq. After he finished reading it, tears had welled up in everyone's eyes.

Saadat Hassan Manto was born on May 11, 1912 in Paproudi village of Samrala in Ludhiana district of Punjab in a Kashmiri Muslim family of barristers. He had his early education in Amritsar. In 1931 he passed his school and joined a college in Amritsar. Amritsar was very tense in those days of India's freedom movement. This phase of his life is recorded in his short story Tamasha—a reflection of Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

Many of his critiques believed that Manto was ahead of his time. His works were

highly criticized because of erotic details which they contain. Manto was accused of obscenity six times – thrice before 1947 and thrice after 1947 in Pakistan. But he was never convicted.

Manto, unlike others, wrote about the taboos of society and explained them. He portrayed the dark side of human psyche. In his writings no part of human existence remained a taboo for him for he sincerely brought out stories of prostitutes and pimps alike. He highlighted the subversive sexual slavery of the women of his times.

His writings about the socio-political system portrayed the real face of India and Pakistan – the two parts of a single entity, separated by a bloody partition.

The Toba Tek Singh is considered as his magnum opus. Translated in English and many different languages, it revolves round the partition of India. The short story is based on exchange of lunatics between the countries when the line of separation is drawn between the two newly entities. The lunatic named Bishen Singh who is unable to understand the partition and establishment of Pakistan dies in no man's land.

This is how Manto ends the classical tale: "There behind barbed wire on one side, lay India and behind more barbed wires, on the other side, lay Pakistan. In between a bit of earth which had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh!"

If Bishen Singh insists on

finding out where is Toba Tek Singh, then how can one agree on loss of memory and death of imagination? Manto wrote scores of short stories on communal disturbance. His collection Siah Hashiy is portrays the aftermath of partition. Manto, virtually, penetrates human psychology. The characters have no names; they are neither Hindu nor Muslim. They are just human beings with all their shortcomings and selfishness.

Khol do, a story based on barbarism of people who forget humanism in the fire of revenge, is among his masterpieces. Titwal ka kutta and Akhri salam are his masterpieces about Kashmir conflict. In the stories, Manto wonders how the soldiers, who fought together in World War II, suddenly turned into enemies. Yet, soldiers learning their identities recall old memories. Manto brings out the idea of humanism in their hearts.

Saadat Hasan Manto is often compared with D. H. Lawrence. Like Lawrence he too wrote about the topics considered as social taboos in Indo-Pak society. His concerns on the socio-political issues, from local to global level, are revealed in his series – Letters to Uncle Sam and those to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

On his writing he often commented: "If you find my stories dirty, the society you are living in is dirty. With my stories, I only expose the truth".



Basit Lone



INNOCENT KILLER

"You have no right to pass judgements about other! How dare you?", retorted Sheena. "I have no boyfriend, how can you allege that I have one? Up till yesterday I used to respect you but now it is all over", Sheena in an angry gesture told Aleeza who meekly tried to be defensive but in vain.

Aleeza, a student of Sociology at Kashmir University came from an affluent family of Srinagar, whom nature and Almighty has bestowed with everything under the Sun except the affection of Sister. He in his naivety began to explore and seek this love and affection from other strange girls, but every time he was sure that he has really discovered his sister, he was ditched in an unruly manner, leaving him high and dry while in sundry.

Aleeza qualified the tuff entrance examination to get into his favourite Political Science Stream, and was luxuriously enjoying his days till he got

Then he remembered he is living in materialistic age where emotions, empathy and ethos are of no value, where every relationship is based on monetary benefits and considered as a stepping stone towards success

e-mail ID of his classmate Farheen. Farheen was an innocent faced girl but a class bully Hafeak went after her,

proposing her and each time being turned down. Meanwhile Aleeza's intimacy with Farheen grew thanks to the techno-savvy habits of both. Aleeza being an innocent hearted, trusted every Tom, Dick and Harry and poured his heart out. He opted the same with Farheen also whom he considered his dear sister and she too pretended that Aleeza was her loving and caring brother.

Hafeak was a pitiful guy who never fell in love during his school days, and for a person like Hafeak getting admission in University was to land in dreamland as he had never visited the city and was naive to its atmosphere and norms as he belonged to a remote part of the Valley. Also because he grew in a conservative, orthodox environment of strict puritanical code of conduct, the winds of liberalism, open society began to make inroads in his personality. Women in his part were sacred. Nothing of a boy-girl living

relationship or boyfriend-girlfriend sought of thing could he ever dream about, but in the city it was all together different, having gals as classmates was a normal affair. So, he tried to make rapport with the girls of the class. First thing to grab their attention was to capture power by standing in the election of Class-Representative and coming out successful, though through his actions resentment against him was growing among the students but he left no stone unturned to maintain the Status Quo.

Farheen too began to like him though she through her golden words kept Aleeza satisfied that there was nothing between them and she considered all boys of the class as her brothers but the intimacy began to grow between Hafeak and Farheen, with Aleeza as ever in dark. Aleeza had a clever friend Meraj who forewarned him about the gimmicks of Farheen, but he was too blind in his achievement at last that he rebuked him and forsook his prediction, but time proved Meraj right when Farheen stabbed him in back by blurting Aleeza's personal views about Hafeak, Sheena and scores others who then sought out an explanation from him. What did he say?

At first he was shocked and surprised but when he regained his senses he could just make out who the real culprit was? He didn't budge towards their remarks and declared that he had never said anything like that, but Hafeak and Yasir were far from satisfied as they knew that Aleeza was the real culprit! Aleeza for days together couldn't reconcile that his dear sister has blurted out all his secrets as well as washed his dirty linen in public . Aleeza could do

nothing so as to rescue himself, he had been publicly abused, his character assassinated, mocked at, made fun of and even became a laughing stock for the whole class. Aleeza thought to sought explanation from Farheen but in vain, she declined that she never spoke his views to other guys, but Aleeza was realistic enough to question her as to who then blurted out these secrets when she didn't as he only told her about those or if they came to know who were the spies get them by their balls?, as Farheen alleged that Aleeza spoke about those guys in front of scores of other guys, but Farheen declined any help.

Aleeza interrogated Yasir who the other day had intimidated and threatened him to cut his long powerful tongue if he didn't keep mum. He very well told Aleeza that farheen had told them everything, he had shared with her and even advised Aleeza not to make strange girls as his sisters, and follow his example as he made all girls his friends not sisters, and even confirmed his suspicion that Hafeak and Farheen were in a relationship. This talk of Yasir came as a bolt from blue on Aleeza whose whole body withered in agony. Farheen was watching this conversation between them from a distance.

"Aleeza, I was weeping for the whole morning because you don't believe me, and hold me the culprit" meekly said Farheen. "You don't know Aleeza, she is so innocent, she can hurt none" added Sheena, as they came in rescue of their false stance that Farheen spoke to none, and Aleeza's views were out by his own shortcomings. Aleeza said nothing to them, as he didn't wish to escalate the issue, but "innocent" words

tossed in his head and didn't even left him in sleep. What did the words innocent signify? A turncoat, who can betray one and Love another, Aleeza's mother used "innocent" to depict his character as he was too naive with the complexities of life and trusted everyone. His mom cautioned him that for this habit he was going to pay one day, and it came so soon and left him shattered completely.

Should one never believe an innocent face? Is there nothing sacred in brother-sister relationship? Or was Yasir realistic when he advised him that one should never make girls as sisters but friends. What does the word friendship between a gal and guy signify? an illicit type or sacred one, a tissue paper or life lasting relationship? If sister-brother sacred, divine and trustworthy relationship is not backed by impunity how mere friendship can survive? Maybe Yasir had advised him in between the lines to be a Womanizer! But can he be? If relationship of this kind can be betrayed then whom in the world he is supposed to trust.

Then he remembered he is living in materialistic age where emotions, empathy and ethos are of no value, where every relationship is based on monetary benefits and considered as a stepping stone towards success. When the relationships can no longer serve they are severed like an unwanted weed. This intuitive thought made him ponder over the fact that, can he again in life attempt to find or discover another sister, this very thought was enough to send shivers down his spine and he restlessly tossed his head in the bed, for whole night.



Aamir Salati

KP: A TEST SPECIALIST



England star batsman decided to quit limited overs cricket

Alti palti de ghumake, these four Hindi words unerringly reflect the character of Kevin Pietersen (KP) on field. His willingness to take on bowlers in any situation makes him the most feared batsman in modern cricket. His batting is a delight for cricket aficionado. In the winter of 2005, a young batsman with his peroxide blond dyed streak of hair along the middle of his head, broke into the vista of world cricket with a bang against South Africa scoring three centuries in a 5 match one day international (ODI) series.

KP retired from international limited overs cricket after the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) refused to accept his conditions, which were to drop 50-over cricket for England and continue playing Tests and T20s, it is clearly mentioned in ECB's contract that a player has to play in both forms of limited overs cricket.

KP known for his aggressive batting style had a pretty decent career an average of 41.84 in ODI's proves it. He became the fastest batsman to reach both 1,000 and 2,000 runs in One Day International cricket. His stay at the crease made bowlers run for their money and ability to play shots on both sides of wicket made it worse for them, thus making him one of the dodgy batsmen round the globe to play limited overs cricket. England will miss the services of KP in ODI's and T20's; over the years he has been a vital cog in their batting line up with his wholehearted batting performances, up and down the order. Recently he played a role of make shift opener in ODI's and did an "ok" job, by scoring back to back centuries in his last two outings and was also player of the tournament in last world T20.

KP's success in ODI's made his bosses at ECB believe he is an ideal nominee for ODI

captaincy and was dished it from November 2008, but he failed to lead the team and his rift with the then coach Peter Moores meant curtains on his captaincy in late 2009. He departed with a record of one win, one draw and one defeat in his three Test matches in charge, while his one-day record as captain reads won four, lost five.

In Ashes 2005, KP's test career was launched, facing the likes of mc Garth, Lee, Warne was not an easiest job on planet for a debutant, but he, with ease played them and I remember how he hit Shane Warne at Kennington Oval with nimble footwork and was instrumental for England's success in retaining Ashes for the first time after 25 years. Ever since, donning England's test cap he has been a regular feature in their Test squad.

KP will continue to represent three lions (England) in tests and players like him need to be

there playing 5-day matches. It's just like an item number in a bollywood movie to catch eye balls. The character's like KP on and off field always pull crowd and his presence in test cricket will aid in filling empty stands and fetch some TRP's too. He has a good quality test career ahead and in the past has saved England from follow-on's, won games for them, batted all day to drew matches and rolled his arm as a part time spinner.

KP is among those modern batters who have innovated and brought variations to the game. Switch hit (altipalti hit) is one such example, where he switches his hands at the time of delivery, changes his stance

(effectively batting as a left-hander) and heaves the ball over a left-hander's fine leg. Many have been waiting for him to display this shot but he does so on rare occasions. Some purists raised a cry about this shot being banned but the cricket's parent body; ICC (International Cricket Council) declared it legal.

KP is a sturdy cricketer; he has faced challenges before and has another in front of him, to excel in test cricket. Test cricket is a pinnacle of gentleman's game and there is all time in the world for KP to make a name of his by being a test specialist batsman. Even thou, he will continue to play lucrative T20 in different leagues around the

world; it is test cricket where he has to prove his mettle. A long and tough season of home and away matches will prove to be an acid test for him. With England's impressive bench strength, it won't be an easy walk in the park for KP to keep his place intact in test line up. The stylish right-hander represents a new and insistent brand of cricket. Flamboyant, explosive, enthusiastic and fearless are the best terms suited for the tall England batsman. The aggression he brings to play is unmatched and the eminence of a match winner makes him part of any batting side in the world. Wish him best of luck for job in whites.

Section Officer
of MERC Mr G M
Mir monitoring
the arrangements
on World Press
Freedom Day



MERC ACTIVITIES

Jan-Aug 2012: A Kaleidoscopic View

Editor's Desk

In last eight months, under the able guidance and leadership of worthy Head of the department Prof. S. A Mufeed, MERC has conducted a series of special guest lectures, video workshops and other skill development programs that include interactions with veterans from Studio Talk Mumbai, INDO Global Social Service Society, Telegraph , Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, STAR News, FLAME School of Communications, Lavale , Pune and India Chapter of UNICEF to mention a few. And many more such programs are in the pipeline. Following are the glimpses of some of the activities.

MEDIA TOUR

The students of Media Education Research Centre (MERC) completed their 10 day media tour, organized by this centre to enable the students to interact with prominent media personalities and visit media houses in New Delhi. A group of 20 students of M.A fourth semester of MERC were part of the tour program. During the trip students besides interacting with prominent media persons also had an interaction with senior politician, former Union Minister and Kashmir Committee chairman Ram Jethmalini during such sessions exhibited their capability and keenness to learn from such personalities. The Students were accompanied by two faculty members Dr. Aaliya Ahmed and Malik Zehra. On the basis of their interaction, institutions like STAR News, IANS, DD NEWS offered internship to seven students who were part of the group. Two students qualified the exam conducted specially for MERC students at PTI. During this Media Tour HoD Prof. S. Mufeed Ahamd was assured by the CEO's of these Media Houses for extending their cooperation for similar kind of activities and placements of students

PLANTATION DRIVE

A day-long Plantation drive was conducted in collaboration with Flood control and Irrigation department alongside the banks of river Jehlum during which more than 40 Chinar trees were planted by the students. HoD Prof S Mufeed Ahmad while highlighting the need and importance of such activities said, "Activities like these will inculcate social consciousness among the students and will make them better human beings."

COMMEMORATION SESSION

A special commemoration session was conducted in memory of Aasiya Jeelani on her 8th death anniversary, in which glowing tributes were paid to the deceased.

Aasiya was a pass out of 1998-99 Batch of MERC Department, KU. She died in a mine blast at Chandigam, Lolab in 2004 while reporting and monitoring elections.

PIB CAMPAIGN

Students took part in Bharat Nirman public information campaign conducted by Press Information Bureau (PIB), Srinagar at district Barahmmulla and achieved awards and certificates for their information.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

A function was organized by Media Education Research Centre (MERC) in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Press Association (JKPA) on World Press Freedom Day. Prominent Media personalities including editors and reporters from across the state attended the seminar.

FOUNDER'S VISIT

Founder HoD of Media Education Research Centre (MERC), Kashmir University, Prof Manzur ul Amin revisited the department after a gap of 22 years and interacted with students and faculty of the department.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM AWARD

For the first time in its history, MERC in association with a group of alumni organized a special function to present Prof Manzur-ul-Amin's Professional Journalism Awards to the students of the centre. The function coincided with the presence Prof Amin in the town. Speaking on the occasion, Head MERC, Prof S Mufeed Ahmad said, "The purpose of this function was to let the students seek inspiration from the success story of Prof Amin and to provide them an opportunity to exhibit their creativity." Prof Mufeed also announced that the award will be an annual feature of the academic calendar of MERC.

PANOS -SOUTH ASIA WORKSHOP

A series of workshops were conducted in collaboration with Panos South Asia under their program 'People & Places.' A five-day training workshop on Urban Affairs Reporting was also conducted at the Centre that was aimed at promoting urban affairs reporting in Jammu and Kashmir.

WORKSHOP ON NEWSPAPER READABILITY

A workshop on Newspaper readability was conducted in which Prof. Kiran Thakur highlighted the need for simplicity and clarity of language in news writing and exposed the participant students to various techniques of developing these qualities in their writing. Noted journalist and media educator Prof. Thakur is associated with Department of Communication and Journalism in University of Mumbai.

SEMINAR ON MEDIA & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Media Education Research Centre (MERC) in collaboration with J & K Yateem Foundation (JKYF) organized a day-long seminar on "Media and Social Responsibilities" in which speakers highlighted the role of media towards orphans, widows and destitute.

TV NEWS ANCHORING WORKSHOP

MERC organized a workshop on television news anchoring. Noted TV news anchor Mahrukh Inayet was the resource person for the workshop.

VIDEO WORKSHOP FOR IUST STUDENTS

For the first time MERC organized 10 days a special video workshop for the media students of Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST), Awantipora at the Centre. The workshop was highly appreciated by the authorities of IUST.

Dignataries who visited the centre

GREEN OSCAR AWARDEE

Noted film maker and thrice Green Oscar winner, Mike Pandey visited the Centre and addressed a special session attended by students, research scholars and the faculty of the Centre. Sensitizing the students about the fragile ecology, he referred to the erratic climate, the recent freak storm in the valley and the stinking Dal Lake.

ROVING EDITOR TELEGRAPH

MERC organized an interaction session with noted journalist, Sankarshan Thakur Thakur, who is the Roving Editor at The Telegraph, shared his experiences of working as a reporter and also as an editor at some of the reputed media organizations.

EXECUTIVE Vice President STAR NEWS

Executive VP (Engineering Wing) of Star News, Subrata Dutta interacted with students of Media Education Research Center (MERC) and highlighted the evolution of news production and process from analogue to digital mode.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR SONG & DRAMA DIVISION

Dhruva Awasthy of Song and Drama Division of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting gave a special lecture to students in which he highlighted the activities of the division and apprised students about the job opportunities in the Song and Drama Division.

COMMUNICATION OFFICER

UNICEF, Communication Officer, Idhries Ahmed who is also an alumni of the Centre, visited MERC and interacted with the students and the faculty. Highlighting the role and importance of social media in the contemporary world, he advised the students to use it intelligently.

Vice President HR ANAND BAZAR PATRIKA

Human Resources, Anand Bazar Patrika Group (formerly Star News) Satyakki Bhattacharjee visited Media Education Research Centre (MERC), and interacted with the students and the faculty. Speaking on contemporary media scene he highlighted the essential skills required to be a good journalist "Your focus should be to make a career and not just to get a job", he advised the students. "Try to avoid Goal Myopia", he added.

Valedictory event of Panos workshop held at MERC

Journalists and school teachers should not only report news but also highlight developmental work.

MERC gives Student Journalism Awards

The contestants had submitted writings, posters, paintings, sketches, photo montages, slide shows and sketches about Prof. Amin.

Education & Career Student Journalism Awards given at MERC

The function concluded with the presence of the department's founder, Prof. Amin in the town.

Workshop on readability of Newspapers at MERC

Write to express, not to impress: Prof Thakur

VC, Others Highlighted Problems of Media

VC, Others Highlighted Problems of Media

'Med' has important social

Srinagar, May 29, 2012, Sunday
29 جمادی الاول 1433 AH

Telegraph editor visits MERC

Telegraph editor visits MERC

UNICEF Communication Officer visits MERC

UNICEF Communication Officer visits MERC

World Press Freedom Day Observed at KU

VC, Others Highlighted Problems of Media

NC for protection of Press

NC for protection of Press

STATE Founder MERC visits Centre after 22 years

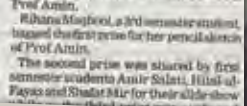
STATE Founder MERC visits Centre after 22 years

MERC holds workshop on readability of newspapers

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VC, Others Highlighted Problems of Media

یوم آزادی صحافت، یونیورسٹی میں تقریب
انجمنوں، اسکالروں اور ماہرین تعلیم کا آزادانہ اظہار خیال

MERC holds workshop on readability of newspapers

مقامی یوم آزادی صحافت پر تقریب یونیورسٹی میں خصوصی تقریب
مقررین کی طرف سے سٹیج پر ایک رول کی اہمیت کو اجاگر کیا گیا

انجمنوں کے مطالبے



VC, Others Highlighted Problems of Media

STATE Founder MERC visits Centre after 22 years

MERC holds workshop on readability of newspapers

مقامی یوم آزادی صحافت پر تقریب یونیورسٹی میں خصوصی تقریب





Media Times & MERC Times

(A REVIEW by Prof Manzurul Amin, founder Head)

In these days one finds more space in the country's newspapers and magazines is given to the stories of Hollywood and Bollywood, Sex and Sports, Stories of rape, bribery, corruption, killings and conflicts etc., but less to education, agriculture, commerce and industries, major social initiatives in health, tribal welfare, national skill development and country's progress in different fields such as science and technology. However, it is refreshing to see MEDIA TIMES (Lab Journal of Media Education Research Centre of the University of Kashmir (2011-2012) which has broken new grounds and has cast wider net to cover latest problems that confront our society.

There is a German word ZEITGEIST which means the spirit of the times, the trend of thought and feeling in a period. While glancing through the current issues of MEDIA TIMES I find, and it is a good augury, that this journal is keeping pace with contemporary times. It reflects what may be called in urdu (*Rooh-e-Asar*).

As a proof of my submission, I would like to quote **Shri. N.V. Vohra's (Governor of J& K State)** sound and pragmatic advice, in the context of tension and turmoil in the Universities of the country, on teaching and research which is very timely. Shri. Vohra favours University Student's association with the management in the context of LYNGDOH committee's recommendation as also that students should become good source and input for the successful working of the management.

I do not propose to analyse all the articles in this issue some of which highlight only the local problems. The article on Kashmiri Shawls (by Souzenia Mushtaq) which are known all over the world for their exquisite craftsmanship, design and technique is highly informative and educative.

In this issue, there is yet another article on "Is censorship bringing down society" by Rohail Sheikh. The writer makes a forceful plea for media ethics in the context of scenes of violent video games, consuming alcohol, smoking, mutilated bodies during violent clashes.

Along with media times, the department of Media Education Research Centre also issues MERC Times (fourthnightly) newspaper which is an equally laudable effort. A report on "commercialization is distorting journalism" is based on how the Dept of MERC is organizing special lecture series to allow the alumni to get acquainted with the diverse nuances of journalism. I feel this is a very correct, positive and pragmatic approach.

According to **Prof. Mufeed Ahmad, Head of MERC** "our focus of MERC is to develop students with world class media marketing skills and strategies". This is a positive focus and perspective.

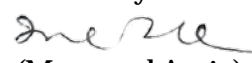
I should like to congratulate **Prof. Mufeed Ahmed HoD, MERC** and **Ms. Muslim Jan, Editor** for their great effort in bringing out these publications (MERC Times and MEDIA Times) for their ability to meet the challenges of times.

I fee that the time has come when the students should be motivated to meet the challenges of future and to equip them with necessary media skills.

Further, I should like to complement **Prof. Talaat Ahmad, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir** and the Patron of these media publications for his foresight for allowing the lab journals of the department to work in an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity and in an atmosphere which is free from tensions and high-strung pervading situations.

Last but not the least I should make a mention of the external quality of the two journals. The paper used in Media Times is superb, the smooth-coated high-quality-art paper. The font is pleasing to the eye. The quality of the photographs is excellent.

The size of the journal (Media Times) is the standard size used by India Today and internationally known magazines like Time etc.


(Manzurul Amin)



VC releasing Media Times (December, 2011) on press freedom day



Executive Vice- President of STAR NEWS Subrata Dutta and HoD Prof . S A Mufeed during an interaction session at MERC



Prof Kiran Thakur ,HoD Prof S A Mufeed and Sr faculty member Nasir Mirza during an interaction session with the students of MERC



Faculty Members and students during a guest lecture at MERC



Media dignitaries among the audience on Press Freedom Day at MERC



Sr. Journalist Shankarshan Thakur with the students during his visit to MERC



Vice Chancellor distributing certificates among the students, Director Doordarshan, Registrar and others also seen in the picture



Sr Newscaster and freelancer Mahrookh Inayat with faculty and students during a workshop at MERC



Editor and a group of students presenting a copy of Media Times to Shashi Tharoor during an interaction



Editor Muslim Jan and Sr. faculty Nasir Mirza along with students with team of Press Council of India



Vice-Chancellor Speaking on Press freedom Day at MERC Auditorim



Hod Prof. S. Mufeed Ahmad visited various Universities of Australia to examine and study e-Governance systems practices. He also gave presentations about e-Governance practices in UoK.



Prof. S Mufeed speaking on Media & Social Responsibility



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