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HAZRATBAL, SRINAGAR 190006, KASHMIR

REPORT ON CULTURAL COMPETITIONS/ EVENTS ALONGWITH THE PHOTOGRAPHS



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Cultural Fusion Workshop at the University of Kashmir (2018)



The University of Kashmir's department organized an engaging and dynamic three-day Cultural Fusion Workshop from August 25th to 26th, 2018. This multidisciplinary event brought together various forms of artistic expression, including Theatre, Music, Literary Arts, Folk Dance, and Folk Orchestra, offering participants a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in diverse cultural traditions.

The workshop aimed to foster creative collaboration and interaction among students and faculty members, encouraging them to explore and express their artistic talents. By intertwining these diverse art forms, the event created a vibrant space for artistic experimentation and cross-disciplinary learning. The fusion of theatre performances, music sessions, literary discussions, and folk traditions allowed participants to appreciate the rich cultural heritage and contemporary practices in a holistic manner.

Participants were encouraged to engage in hands-on activities, from acting and musical performances to literary readings and folk dance showcases. The Folk Orchestra and traditional dance performances provided a captivating glimpse into the region's cultural heritage, while theatre and literary arts sessions opened avenues for modern storytelling and self-expression. This eclectic mix of activities fostered a deeper understanding of both the cultural roots and contemporary artistic practices, enriching the overall experience for all involved.

Overall, the Cultural Fusion Workshop succeeded in building a creative synergy among participants, nurturing a sense of cultural pride, and enriching the cultural tapestry of the university. The event underscored the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and the role of the arts in enhancing academic and cultural life on campus.



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Igniting Discourse: IIPA Intra-University Debate 2018



The IIPA Intra-University Debate 2018, held at the University of Kashmir on September 20, was an intellectually stimulating event organized by the department. The debate revolved around the theme "Our Youth's Untapped Potential in the Realm of Online Information Systems," focusing on the transformative power of online platforms and information systems. This theme was particularly relevant in today's digital era, where online information systems play a critical role in shaping global discourse, business practices, and even social movements.

The debate aimed to spark a deep, thought-provoking discussion about how the youth—often the most tech-savvy demographic—can leverage the tools available in the digital world to drive innovation and progress. Participants explored various dimensions of the theme, discussing the potential for young people to use online information systems for purposes ranging from educational advancement to social change and entrepreneurship. The discourse highlighted the importance of fostering critical thinking and strategic use of these digital platforms, encouraging students to think about how they can contribute to solving real-world issues.

Beyond the technical aspect of information systems, the debate also delved into the socio-economic implications of youth engagement with digital technologies. It raised questions about access to information, digital literacy, and the responsibilities that come with harnessing online systems in an ethical and impactful way. Participants argued the need to empower youth with the right knowledge, tools, and opportunities to unlock their full potential in a digital world that is constantly evolving.

The IIPA Intra-University Debate not only provided a forum for these crucial discussions but also encouraged the development of critical thinking, public speaking, and argumentation skills.



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It allowed students to reflect on the changing landscape of information systems, the growing importance of online platforms, and the key role that the younger generation can play in shaping the future of these technologies. Ultimately, the debate helped foster a culture of intellectual engagement, pushing participants to envision how they can be agents of positive change in an increasingly connected world.

University of Kashmir Organizes ‘Swachhta Pledge’ Event and Cleanliness Drive to Mark 151st Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (2020)



On Friday, the University of Kashmir organized a special ‘**Swachhta Pledge**’ event and a **cleanliness drive** to celebrate the 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The event was held as part of the university’s efforts to promote cleanliness and uphold Gandhi’s ideals of maintaining personal and community hygiene.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Talat Ahmad led the ceremony by reading out the 12-point ‘**Swachhta Pledge**,’ which calls upon citizens to stay committed to cleanliness and work to end littering. The pledge encourages individuals to devote 100 hours per year—approximately two hours per week—to voluntary efforts for cleanliness in their surroundings. It also aims to spread the message of the ‘**Swachh Bharat Mission**’ to villages and towns across the country.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. Talat emphasized Mahatma Gandhi's deep commitment to cleanliness, noting that Gandhi regarded clean homes and surroundings as essential for the health of citizens and the overall well-being of the environment. He urged everyone to follow Gandhi’s teachings by actively contributing to a cleaner and healthier society.

The event saw the enthusiastic participation of university officials and faculty members, including Dean Academic Affairs Prof. Akbar Masood, Registrar Dr. Nisar Ahmad Mir, Dean Students Welfare Prof. Raies A. Qadri, and Dean of the School of Education Prof. Showkat



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Ahmad. Prof. Akbar Masood also spoke on the occasion, stressing the importance of cleanliness in light of Mahatma Gandhi's vision for a clean and healthy nation.

The pledge-taking ceremony was followed by a **special cleanliness drive** across the university campus, reinforcing the message of Swachhta and demonstrating the institution's dedication to a clean environment. This initiative is part of the university's ongoing efforts to contribute to the national **Swachh Bharat Mission** and inspire students and faculty alike to embrace a culture of cleanliness and civic responsibility.

Schwatta Pakhwada Programme One Day Talk Show/ Panel discussion on Cleanliness (2020)



The University of Kashmir organized a **One-Day Talk Show and Panel Discussion** on cleanliness as part of the '**Swachhta Pakhwada**' programme. The event aimed to raise awareness about hygiene, waste management, and the importance of personal and community cleanliness. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Talat Ahmad inaugurated the program, emphasizing the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings on cleanliness. The panel featured academics and environmental experts who discussed sustainable practices and the role of individuals in promoting cleanliness. The event encouraged active participation from students and faculty, fostering a sense of responsibility toward contributing to a cleaner, healthier environment.



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University of Kashmir Celebrates Eid Milad-un-Nabi (S.A.W) with Enthusiasm and Devotion (2020)



The University of Kashmir marked the auspicious occasion of **Eid Milad-un-Nabi (S.A.W)**, commemorating the birth of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), with great enthusiasm and reverence. The event, organized by the university's faculty and student bodies, brought together students, staff, and members of the local community to celebrate the life and teachings of the Prophet (S.A.W), highlighting his message of peace, compassion, and kindness.

The celebration began with a **special gathering** that included recitations of the Holy Quran and **Naats** (poems in praise of the Prophet). Esteemed scholars and religious figures were invited to deliver speeches on the significance of Prophet Muhammad's (S.A.W) teachings in today's world. They highlighted how the Prophet's (S.A.W) life serves as a timeless example of moral integrity, justice, and humility, and how his message continues to guide Muslims in leading righteous and compassionate lives.

In his address, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Talat Ahmad emphasized the importance of following the Prophet's (S.A.W) example, especially in promoting peace, tolerance, and brotherhood in society. He encouraged students to study the life of the Prophet (S.A.W) and apply his teachings to foster kindness, respect, and service to humanity.

The event also featured a **panel discussion** on the relevance of the Prophet's (S.A.W) message in addressing contemporary challenges. Scholars discussed how values like empathy, honesty, and



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community service, as embodied by the Prophet (S.A.W), could contribute to resolving issues such as social inequality, environmental degradation, and global conflict.

A key highlight of the celebration was the **distribution of food and charitable donations** to the underprivileged, embodying the spirit of generosity and compassion that the Prophet (S.A.W) exemplified throughout his life. The university community came together to support those in need, reinforcing the message of social responsibility and kindness.

The **Eid Milad-un-Nabi (S.A.W)** celebration at the University of Kashmir was a reflection of the university's commitment to fostering religious and cultural values while promoting the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). The event concluded with prayers for peace, prosperity, and unity, both for the university and the broader community.

This celebration not only honored the Prophet's (S.A.W) legacy but also inspired participants to incorporate his values into their everyday lives, striving for a society based on compassion, justice, and harmony.

DISTRIBUTION OF AIDS AND APPLIANCES AMONG DIASABILITY STUDENTS (2020)



The University of Kashmir organized a **Distribution of Aids and Appliances** program to support students with disabilities. The event aimed to provide essential aids such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and other assistive devices to help enhance the mobility, learning, and overall independence of disabled students. The initiative reflects the university's commitment to inclusivity and equal opportunities in education. Faculty members, staff, and students attended



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the event, expressing solidarity with the cause and pledging ongoing support to empower differently-abled students in their academic and personal endeavors.

PAYAM-E-RAMADHAN FESTIVAL (2020)



The University of Kashmir organized the **Payam-e-Ramadhan Festival** to celebrate the spiritual and cultural significance of the holy month of Ramadan. The event included lectures, Quranic recitations, and discussions on the teachings of Islam, focusing on themes such as charity, compassion, and self-discipline. Scholars and religious leaders shared insights on how to embrace the essence of Ramadan in daily life. The festival also featured community activities, promoting unity and togetherness among participants. The event fostered a deeper understanding of the values associated with Ramadan and encouraged attendees to reflect on their spiritual growth.



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SOCIAL SERVICE CAMP (2020)



The University of Kashmir organized a **Social Service Camp** aimed at fostering community engagement and volunteerism among students and staff. The camp involved various activities, including cleanliness drives, tree plantation, health awareness programs, and distribution of essential supplies to underprivileged communities. Participants worked together to serve the local community, promoting the values of empathy, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship. The camp provided an opportunity for students to give back to society, helping to build a sense of civic duty and social awareness while addressing the needs of the less fortunate.



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SONZAL-2021



The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Prof. Talat Ahmad, inaugurated the varsity's annual literary and cultural festival, Sonzal-2021, on Tuesday. The inaugural ceremony, held at the scenic Zabarwan Guest House, marked the beginning of the eight-day festival organized by the Department of Students Welfare (DSW). Prof. Talat emphasized the university's commitment to continuing the rich legacy of Sonzal, which serves as a platform for students to showcase their talents and fosters interaction and conversation among them.

The festival includes a variety of literary and cultural activities, with competitions in 25 events such as Painting, Islamic Calligraphy, Collage, Debate, Poster-Making, Spot Photography, Poetry Recitation, Bollywood Singing, Western Vocals, Cartoon Making, and Mehendi Design. Prof. Talat encouraged students to engage in activities beyond the classroom, offering them opportunities to express their creative abilities and talents. He also expressed support for students from colleges and universities to participate in local, national, and international competitions.

Prof. Talat inaugurated an Art Gallery featuring students' paintings, clay models, photographs, and other artworks highlighting social issues. Registrar Dr. Nisar A. Mir, who attended the event as a guest of honor, reaffirmed the university's dedication to supporting festivals that foster a spirit of competition and participation in literary and cultural activities. He emphasized that student welfare is a priority for the university, aiming to support students' success in both academics and extracurricular pursuits.

In his welcome address, Dean of Students Welfare Prof. Raies A. Qadri spoke about the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic but highlighted that the department managed to organize over 20 events in offline mode. He thanked the university authorities for their unwavering support and assured adherence to SOPs to ensure smooth conduct of the events.



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Cultural Officer KU, Shahid Ali Khan, provided an overview of the festival's events, noting that more than 1,500 students had registered for various competitions, with the first round having concluded on March 21. The grand finale began on March 23, and participants' performances were to be evaluated by a panel of experts, with prizes awarded to the meritorious students.

The inaugural ceremony also featured a performance by Chinar Band and was attended by key university officials, including Chief Proctor Prof. Showket A. Shah, Head of the Department of Environmental Science Prof. Fayaz Ahmad, Head and Dean of the Department of Law Prof. M. Ayub, Chairman of Sheikh-ul-Alam Chair Prof. GN Khaki, Media Advisor and Director of EMMRC Dr. Salima Jan, Special Secretary to the VC Dr. Tanveer A. Shah, Principal IMFA Prof. M. Hussain, former DSW Prof. SM Afzal Qadri, and Medical Officer Dr. Suraiya. SDPO Hazratbal and SHO Nigeen also attended the event.



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National Road Safety Awareness Programme – 30th September 2021



On 30th September 2021, the University of Kashmir organized a significant event aimed at raising awareness about road safety under the National Road Safety Awareness Programme. This initiative sought to engage students, faculty, and the wider community in conversations about the importance of responsible road behavior and the need for safe driving practices. The event was organized in collaboration with various local authorities, including the Traffic Police Department, to promote awareness on road safety regulations and measures to reduce traffic-related accidents and fatalities.

The programme commenced with an inaugural address by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Talat Ahmad, who stressed the importance of road safety in saving lives and ensuring the well-being of citizens. Prof. Talat emphasized that road safety is not just a matter of law enforcement, but also of creating a culture of awareness among the public. He highlighted the role of students, as future leaders, in promoting road safety messages and driving behavioral changes that could reduce accidents and prevent loss of life on the roads.

A series of activities were organized throughout the day, including informative talks, presentations, and video screenings that covered key issues such as the significance of wearing seat belts, adhering to speed limits, avoiding drunk driving, and the importance of pedestrian safety. These sessions aimed to educate the participants on the vital role that road safety plays in reducing road accidents, protecting pedestrians, and ensuring the safety of all road users.

In addition to the presentations, a street play and a poster-making competition were held, where students participated actively, creating impactful visuals and performing skits to convey road safety messages. The participants demonstrated creativity and enthusiasm in communicating the importance of traffic rules and the consequences of negligent behavior behind the wheel.



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The event also saw the distribution of road safety pamphlets, leaflets, and informational booklets, providing participants with valuable resources to share with their peers and communities. A significant part of the programme was the distribution of reflective arm bands and helmets, aimed at reinforcing the importance of wearing safety gear while traveling on roads, particularly for motorcyclists.

The Traffic Police Department also conducted interactive sessions, where they demonstrated practical road safety measures, such as proper lane discipline, the importance of obeying traffic signals, and the role of traffic officers in maintaining road order. Special emphasis was placed on the use of mobile phones while driving, highlighting the risks involved in distracted driving.

The National Road Safety Awareness Programme concluded with a pledge, where all participants, including students, faculty, and staff, took an oath to follow traffic rules, advocate for road safety, and contribute towards building a safer road environment. This initiative was seen as a significant step in promoting responsible road behavior, not just within the university but also extending its impact to the broader community.

This event served as a timely reminder of the need for collective responsibility in maintaining road safety and the important role that educational institutions can play in spreading awareness and instilling positive habits in the younger generation. With such initiatives, the University of Kashmir continues to contribute to the national movement for safer roads, hoping to reduce accidents and save lives through proactive education and awareness efforts.



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Social Service Camp on Muharram (2021)



The University of Kashmir organized a Social Service Camp on Muharram to commemorate the solemn occasion of this important Islamic month. The camp, held on 19th August 2021, was part of the university's ongoing efforts to engage students in community service while honoring the spirit of Muharram, which is a time of reflection, sacrifice, and remembrance, especially for the Muslim community.

The event focused on fostering a sense of social responsibility among students, encouraging them to participate in activities that benefit society. The Social Service Camp, organized by the Department of Students Welfare (DSW), aimed to contribute positively to the local community during this significant period of mourning, reflection, and solidarity.

The camp's activities included providing aid to families in need, organizing free medical check-up camps for underprivileged communities, and distributing food and essential supplies to local areas. Students actively participated in preparing and distributing food packets to the poor and homeless, ensuring that those in need were taken care of during this spiritually significant time. The camp also organized seminars and discussions on the teachings of Muharram, focusing on its historical and spiritual significance, which helped raise awareness about the importance of peace, unity, and sacrifice.

Volunteers from the university, including students and faculty, worked alongside local organizations to ensure the smooth execution of the camp's various initiatives. The event also included the distribution of hygiene kits and masks, in adherence to the Covid-19 safety protocols, ensuring the health and safety of both the volunteers and the beneficiaries.



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The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Prof. Talat Ahmad, praised the students and staff for their commitment to community service and their efforts in bringing the true spirit of Muharram to life through acts of kindness and service to humanity. He highlighted the importance of such initiatives in creating a compassionate and empathetic society and urged students to continue engaging in social service throughout the year.

In addition to providing material aid, the Social Service Camp also encouraged participants to reflect on the values of sacrifice, patience, and compassion that Muharram represents. By engaging in such activities, the university not only contributed to the community but also provided its students with an opportunity to practice empathy and social responsibility.

The camp concluded with a ceremony where the participants reflected on the experiences of the day, discussed the impact of their actions, and pledged to continue supporting such social causes. The university expressed its commitment to organizing similar events in the future, fostering a spirit of service, and promoting the values of compassion, solidarity, and social welfare.



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Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav



The Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations at the University of Kashmir were marked by a series of impactful and transformative events that spanned several days, engaging students, faculty, and the local community in a variety of social causes. The event series, which aimed to raise awareness, foster community engagement, and promote key societal issues, began on August 10 and concluded on August 14, culminating in a grand finale.

The journey began with a **Painting Competition on Climate and Environment Change** held at Gandhi Bhawan on **August 10**. This event invited participants to use their artistic talents to highlight the pressing challenges of climate change and environmental degradation. Through vibrant and thought-provoking artwork, students expressed their concerns and solutions regarding the state of the planet, aiming to inspire others to take action toward environmental sustainability.

On **August 11**, the university organized a **Poster Competition** and an **Awareness Campaign on Tuberculosis**. Students showcased their creativity through posters aimed at raising awareness about tuberculosis, focusing on prevention, early detection, and treatment. The awareness campaign sought to break the stigma surrounding TB and encouraged the community to take proactive steps in safeguarding their health. This initiative was instrumental in educating students and the local population about the importance of early intervention and awareness in managing and eradicating the disease.

The following day, on **August 12**, the campus hosted a **Drawing Competition on Drug De-Addiction**, which aimed to raise awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse. The competition encouraged participants to use their creativity to portray the dangers of drug



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addiction and the importance of leading a healthy, drug-free life. This was followed by an **Awareness Camp**, where students and community members were provided with valuable resources about the consequences of drug abuse and the available support systems for those struggling with addiction.

The programme continued with an **Awareness Campaign on Blood Donation** on **August 13**, accompanied by a **Blood Donation Camp** and an **Awareness Campaign on HIV-AIDS**. The blood donation campaign emphasized the life-saving importance of donating blood, urging participants to take part in this noble cause. Alongside, the HIV-AIDS awareness campaign provided vital information on prevention, treatment, and the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS, educating the community about the significance of safe practices and support for affected individuals. These activities were conducted in the open air of the university campus, creating a vibrant and interactive environment for participants to learn, engage, and contribute.

The grand finale of the Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav celebrations took place on **August 14** with the **Cyclothon for Peace, Progress, and Prosperity**. This event was a powerful symbol of unity, community spirit, and social consciousness. Participants cycled through the university campus, promoting various social causes, including health, education, and environmental sustainability. The cyclothon was not only an expression of physical endurance but also a demonstration of the university's commitment to fostering positive change and progress within the community.

These Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav programmes were a resounding success, engaging a wide range of participants and fostering awareness on critical social issues. They provided a platform for students to showcase their creativity and contribute to causes that matter to society, while also encouraging community involvement and responsibility. The university's efforts to combine education, art, and social activism exemplified its dedication to shaping responsible, aware, and compassionate citizens.



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Literary festival 'VIRSA-2021' concludes at Kashmir University



The three-day literary festival 'VIRSA-2021' concluded with great success at the University of Kashmir on Thursday, bringing together students, faculty, and guests in a vibrant celebration of literature, culture, and intellectual exchange. The valedictory session was graced by Prof. Irshad Ahmad Nawchoo, the Controller of Examinations, as the chief guest. During the ceremony, Prof. Nawchoo distributed certificates and cash prizes to the winners of various competitions held throughout the event, recognizing their outstanding contributions and talents.

In his presidential address, Prof. Nawchoo emphasized the importance of literary and cultural festivals in academic institutions, stating that they should become a core component of university life. Such festivals, he explained, provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions, exchange ideas, and gain insights into various social and academic issues. He encouraged the participants to continue fostering a culture of learning and intellectual curiosity beyond the classroom setting.

Prof. S M Afzal Qadri, former Dean of Students Welfare (DSW) at KU, was the guest of honor at the session. He lauded the efforts of the DSW in consistently organizing literary and cultural programs, which he described as essential in nurturing students' creativity and critical thinking. He also highlighted how such events contribute to the holistic development of students, preparing them for leadership roles in society.

Dean of Students Welfare, Prof. Raies A Qadri, welcomed the guests and participants, reflecting on the various programs hosted by the DSW in recent years. He expressed pride in the department's commitment to addressing social issues through its diverse initiatives, with the active involvement of students from both the university and local colleges. Prof. Qadri



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reaffirmed the DSW's dedication to promoting student welfare and their overall growth through educational and extracurricular activities.

KU Cultural Officer Shahid Ali Khan, who conducted the proceedings of the event, also proposed a vote of thanks. He expressed his gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of VIRSA-2021. Khan further announced that the university's literary club would soon be organizing a series of training workshops aimed at young debaters and poets, where experts would help refine their skills. He also shared that the literary club would be hosting the Asian Parliamentary Debate competition next month for university and college students, providing another valuable platform for intellectual engagement.

The VIRSA-2021 festival, with its blend of competitions, workshops, and intellectual discussions, showcased the vibrant literary and cultural spirit of the University of Kashmir, offering students a unique opportunity to hone their skills and exchange ideas with peers from various disciplines. The success of the festival further solidified the university's commitment to fostering academic growth, creativity, and social awareness through such initiatives.



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KU kick-starts Gandhi Jayanti celebrations (September 30, 2022.)



The University of Kashmir began its celebrations for Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti on Friday with a series of events aimed at highlighting the principles of "Truth" and "Non-Violence," as advocated by the Father of the Nation. Under the patronage of Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan, the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW) organized three competitions centered around these themes, reflecting Mahatma Gandhi's teachings and philosophy.

The events witnessed enthusiastic participation, with around 150 students from the university's teaching departments and affiliated colleges taking part. The competitions included a speech competition on the topic "Truth and Non-Violence," an essay competition focused on "Gandhism: Ideology and Relevance in the 21st Century," and a painting competition on the theme of "Non-Violence." These activities provided students with a platform to reflect on the relevance of Gandhi's ideals in today's world.

The celebrations were inaugurated by Registrar Dr. Nisar Ahmad Mir, who highlighted the enduring message of peace and non-violence in Mahatma Gandhi's life and teachings. In his address, Dr. Mir emphasized that Gandhi Jayanti serves as a time for introspection, urging individuals to follow the Mahatma's path in addressing pressing social issues and challenges.

Dean of Students' Welfare, Prof. Aneesa Shafi, delivered the welcome address, emphasizing the importance of the chosen themes for the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations. She noted that such competitions provide students with an opportunity to express their ideas and embody the spirit of non-violence in society.

The competitions were judged by a panel of experts, including Dr. Iffat Maqbool, Showket Shafi, Aijaz ul Haq, Masood Hussain, Ishfar Ali, and Yousuf Naqashbandi, who evaluated the participants' contributions across the various categories.



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Media Advisor Dr. Salima Jan and Director CCAS Prof. Tabassum Firdous were present during the valedictory sessions, where they praised the students for their participation and dedication to Gandhi's ideals. KU Cultural Officer Shahid Ali Khan conducted the proceedings of the event, ensuring a smooth and engaging celebration.

The university's celebrations for Gandhi Jayanti not only paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi but also encouraged students to internalize and propagate his principles of truth, peace, and non-violence in their daily lives.

Annual IIPA Debate at the Department of Students Welfare Kashmir University held on August 18, 2022.





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The Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) J&K Regional Branch Kashmir organized its Annual IIPA Debate at the Department of Students Welfare, University of Kashmir, on August 18, 2022. This inter-university debate competition, organized in association with the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW) at the University of Kashmir, saw enthusiastic participation, with more than 60 students from various university departments and degree colleges of Kashmir speaking for and against the motion, "Keyboard learning is not an alternative to formal education."

The debate commenced at 10:30 a.m. and was inaugurated by the Registrar of the University, Dr. Nisar Ahmad Mir, in the presence of Dr. G N Qasba, Vice-Chairman IIPA J&K Chapter, and G M Andrabi, Joint Secretary IIPA. The performances of the participants were evaluated by a panel of experts, including Dr. Mufti Mudasir from the Department of English at the University of Kashmir, Mr. Aijazulhaq from EMMRC, and Mr. Bashir Ahmed, a member of the IIPA J&K Chapter.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Nisar A Mir emphasized the university's commitment to student welfare, pledging to provide necessary facilities and infrastructure both inside and outside the classroom. Dr. G N Qasba, Vice-Chairman of the IIPA J&K Regional Branch, and Mr. A M Watali, former Vice-Chairman IIPA J&K Regional Branch, also spoke on the occasion, expressing gratitude to the university for its continued support of the IIPA debates.

The debate brought out diverse perspectives on the topic, with participants discussing issues like personality development, effects on handwriting, discipline, the digital divide, physical disabilities, and health concerns associated with distance learning. Fahad Fayaz, a student of Amar Singh College, highlighted how traditional learning has produced many Nobel laureates and raised concerns over the safety of online learning, citing a recent data breach at the



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university. Mehak Ayaz, a student of English Literature at the University of Kashmir, argued that online education offers significant benefits, especially for women confined to their homes due to societal pressures. Mehvish Manzoor, from the Department of Law, emphasized the importance of social interaction in a child's development, noting that education should go beyond academics to include moral and spiritual growth.

Numaira, a student of SKUAST Kashmir, underscored the role of personality development in overall growth and development, while participants addressed the challenges posed by keyboard learning compared to formal education, including the impact on decision-making and physical well-being.

The valedictory-cum-prize distribution ceremony was presided over by Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan, who served as the chief guest. In her presidential address, Prof. Nilofer highlighted the importance of debates in fostering critical thinking and communication skills, which are essential for students' overall development. She lauded the DSW and IIPA for organizing the annual debate and emphasized the importance of extracurricular activities in preparing students for the competitive world of academia.

At the end of the event, the Vice-Chancellor distributed prizes among the winners. Mehak Fayaz from the KU English Department secured the first prize, while Saira Jabeen and Numaira from SKUAST-K won the second and third prizes, respectively. Fahad Fayaz from Amar Singh College and Mehvish Manzoor from the KU School of Law received the first and second consolation prizes, respectively. SKUAST-K was declared the overall winner of the IIPA Cup.

The program proceedings were conducted by (Dr.) Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer of the University of Kashmir.



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Lieutenant Governor Inaugurates 'Sonzal-2022' at Kashmir



The Lieutenant Governor (Lt Governor) of Jammu and Kashmir inaugurated the annual cultural and literary festival '**Sonzal-2022**' at the University of Kashmir. The term *Sonzal*, meaning rainbow, symbolizes hope, inspiration, and good fortune, embodying the spirit of the event, which aims to celebrate student creativity, talent, and diversity across multiple fields.

In his inaugural address, the Lt Governor urged educational institutions to fulfill their critical role in fostering **freedom, creativity, and engagement** among students. He emphasized the importance of allowing students to explore their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in an ever-changing world. He also stressed that students must become **multi-achievers** capable of shaping their own future by drawing on diverse areas of expertise and interests.

The Lt Governor **commended** the University of Kashmir for its efforts in implementing the key recommendations of the **National Education Policy (NEP)**. He highlighted that the university had made significant strides in aligning its curriculum and teaching methods with the goals outlined in the NEP, which emphasizes holistic education, creativity, critical thinking, and innovation.



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Furthermore, the Lt Governor applauded the university's transformation into a **center of excellence**, not only in terms of promoting **scientific research** but also in fostering **new ideas** and knowledge-sharing. He recognized the university's adaptive approach in addressing the rapid global changes in the educational landscape. This includes embracing technological advancements, interdisciplinary learning, and promoting cutting-edge research that keeps pace with global educational trends.

In his closing remarks, the Lt Governor expressed confidence that the University of Kashmir will continue to serve as a beacon of excellence, contributing to the intellectual and personal growth of its students. He reiterated the need for educational institutions to provide students with opportunities for **holistic development** by encouraging participation in events like Sonzal, which nurture creative expression alongside academic pursuits.

Sonzal-2022 not only celebrates student achievements but also serves as a platform for them to express their ideas, engage with peers, and enhance their leadership, communication, and critical thinking skills.



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Meri Maati Mera Desh' Campaign at University of Kashmir: Honoring the Bravehearts and Strengthening National Unity (2023)



As part of the nationwide 'Meri Maati Mera Desh' (My Soil, My Country) campaign, which began on 9th August to commemorate 76 years of India's independence, the University of Kashmir (KU) organized several impactful events, including the 'Panch Pran' (Five Pledges) Ceremony and a speech competition dedicated to recognizing India's unsung heroes and their contributions to the country's freedom struggle.

The Department of Student's Welfare (DSW) at KU organized a speech competition themed "Unsung Heroes", highlighting the often-overlooked freedom fighters whose sacrifices played a pivotal role in India's liberation. The competition aimed to shed light on the unsung warriors of India's freedom struggle and emphasize their invaluable contributions to the nation's journey toward independence.

Students and scholars from various schools and departments within the university participated in the competition, sharing inspiring stories of the unsung bravehearts who gave their all for the country's freedom. These speeches not only celebrated their legacy but also educated the audience on the significance of remembering all those who contributed to India's independence, regardless of the recognition they received.



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The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kashmir, Prof. Nilofer Khan, congratulated the winners and all participants for their insightful and passionate speeches. She highlighted the importance of the ongoing 'Meri Maati Mera Desh' campaign, emphasizing how such activities help in building confidence among the youth and fostering a sense of nation-building.

Prof. Nilofer Khan also reiterated the crucial role of youth in shaping the future of the country. "I am impressed by the knowledge, talent, and enthusiasm with which our students have participated in these competitions," she remarked, expressing her pride in their active engagement. She further assured that the university would celebrate Independence Day with great enthusiasm and extended her wishes for a Happy Independence Day to everyone.

Registrar Dr. Nisar Ahmad Mir provided an overview of the week-long celebrations that were being held across both the university's main and satellite campuses. The events were designed to instill a sense of patriotism and remind everyone of the sacrifices made by India's freedom fighters.

Dean of Student Welfare, Prof. Aneesa Shafi, highlighted the significant contributions of female freedom fighters, often forgotten in mainstream narratives of India's independence. Her remarks brought attention to the important role women played in the country's freedom struggle, which is often overshadowed by the achievements of male leaders.

The competition culminated with the announcement of the winners, who were awarded cash prizes and merit certificates by the Vice-Chancellor. The winners included:

- Kifayat Ullah from the Department of Social Work, who secured first place.
- Sobia Manzoor and Abrar Ahmad from the School of Law, who secured second and third places, respectively.

Additionally, the 'Panch Pran' Ceremony (Five Pledges) was held on Thursday at the Gandhi Bhawan. In this ceremony, all participants, including Deans, Directors, Heads of Schools/Centers/Departments, the Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Officers, students, and volunteers, took the pledge to honor the values of unity, discipline, and patriotism. The ceremony was further marked by the symbolic lighting of 'diyas', representing the commitment to the nation's progress and prosperity.

The 'Meri Maati Mera Desh' campaign at KU served as an inspiring tribute to India's unsung heroes and underscored the importance of unity, national pride, and patriotism in shaping the future of the country. Through these events, the university reinforced its commitment to nurturing responsible, confident, and patriotic citizens.



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Shahrul Ramadhan' talent-hunt festival held at KU (April 19, 2023,)



A day-long '*Shahrul Ramadhan Festival*', an annual activity of the Department of Students' Welfare, was held at the University of Kashmir on Wednesday.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan chaired the valedictory session of the talent-hunt festival, which was attended by a large number of students from the University's teaching departments and affiliated colleges.

Three competitions including Traditional Calligraphy Competition, Contemporary Calligraphy Competition and 'Naat' Competition were held in which students participated with great enthusiasm and passion to showcase their talent.

In her valedictory remarks, the Vice-Chancellor said such competitions encourage the students to develop confidence and give vent to their hidden creative talent. She congratulated the Department of Students' Welfare for continuing with the legacy of holding the *Shahrul Ramadhan Festival*, which started in 2009.

Saying that participation of students is more important than winning the competitions, Prof Nilofer said the festivals like '*Shahrul Ramadhan*' ignite the feeling of compassion for others among young students and also encourages them to become good human beings.

The VC later gave away prizes among the winners of the competitions.



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Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, who was a guest of honour, said such important festivals bring students from diverse backgrounds together to learn from each other and rekindle in them the desire to participate in different competitions.

Dean Students Welfare Prof Aneesa Shafi highlighted the objectives of various programmes, including the current programme, being organised by the DSW under the aegis of Y20. She said more extracurricular activities are in the pipeline during the current academic year.

Cultural Officer, Shahid Ali Khan, conducted proceedings of the valedictory session.