

Peaceful perspectives needed in Kashmir region

By Shazana Andrabi and Ruheela Hassan

In Kashmir, a conflict zone often referred to as a 'nuclear flashpoint' between India and Pakistan, the last twenty-five plus years have been those of violence (of several degrees of intensity), turmoil and loss. Like any conflict situation, education has been one of the major casualties and has sometimes been relegated to the background as more 'pressing' issues of law and order were prioritized.

Journalism, however, was needed more than ever; and responsible journalism at that.

Academics from the Centre for International Relations and Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Kashmir, and Park University, USA, came together to hold a series of workshops on Peace Journalism from the 28th to the 30th of July, 2015. The objective of

Shazana Andrabi (left) heads the Centre for International Relations at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST). Having Masters degrees in History and International Peace Studies (from the University for Peace, Costa Rica), she is one of the founding members of the Centre.

Dr. Ruheela Hassan heads the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at IUST. In addition to her teaching experience, she has worked in the fields of television, radio and print media, especially in the social sector. Her experience in the field has translated into a fusion of theory and practice in class.



these workshops was to understand how media affects the prospects for conflict and peace building. The series was meant to sensitize academics, journalists and students to perceive situations through the perspectives of a peace journalist.

It was recognised that Peace Journalism was much-needed, especially in a conflict zone, and practical, peace-

oriented perspectives needed to be brought forth. It could involve different academic activities like offering joint courses, organising workshops and conferences, conducting research activities and joint publications. The first step towards this end would be to make people aware of the concept of Peace Journalism. This was done

Continued on next page