

## Khanqah-i-Mualla returning to its glory



Photo: Khanqah -i-Shah Hamdan Srinagar

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The Spire of Khanqah-e-Moula, damaged in recent fire, is taking its original form. The work which was started soon after the unfortunate fire incident is at final stage of completion.

The Spire of the revered Shrine was damaged in a devastating fire broke-out on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2018. The J&K Wakf Board and The State Government commissioned INTACH J&K for restoring the Spire and carry necessary repairs to the damaged Spire.

Speaking to INTACH, the locals expressed happiness and satisfaction over the instant work execution and the methods applied by agencies to handle the job which is fragile in nature.

Appreciating the documentation work carried by INTACH, they said that it proves helpful to reconstruct the Spire back to its glory. "The work of reconstructing the Spire is going very well; it is taking the original shape", said Ghulam Ahmad, a local resident.

### Historical Background

The Khanqah was originally built in 1395 A.D but was damaged due to fire in 1479 A.D thereafter it was rebuilt in, keeping with the original building character. The building was renovated in 2001 A.D.

The Khanqah is one of the best examples of traditional monumental wooden architecture entirely constructed of solid wooden blocks used as headers and stretchers with brick infill.

The Khanqah is surrounded by River Jhelum on west, Hammam on north, Shrine of Baba Wali on south and dressed stone platform and main entrance gate on east.

"The work was challenging for us because of its intricacies. Khanqah is the place considered as an architectural marvel of Kashmir because of its detailed and exemplary style. Our task is very crucial to maintain the standard of work without any sort of deviation", said the carpenter working here.

Khanqah is a highly revered place and people are deeply attached with this place. They are keenly observing the developments of work here.

The place was functional which added challenges for craftsmen to work on the line and accomplish it within the given time-frame.

While sharing the experiences of work the craftsmen said, " under the supervision of INTACH, we are able to execute the work smoothly. The detailed drawings we were provided timely and professional monitoring of the work helped and guided us to built back the Spire into its original form".

"The work is at its final stage of completion. It is a delicate task to retain the splendid architectural style of Khanqah-i-Moualla, keeping all us on toes" says Umar Farooq, Project Architect.



Photo: Khanqah -i-Shah Hamdan Srinagar

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Photo: Khanqah -i-Shah Hamdan Srinagar

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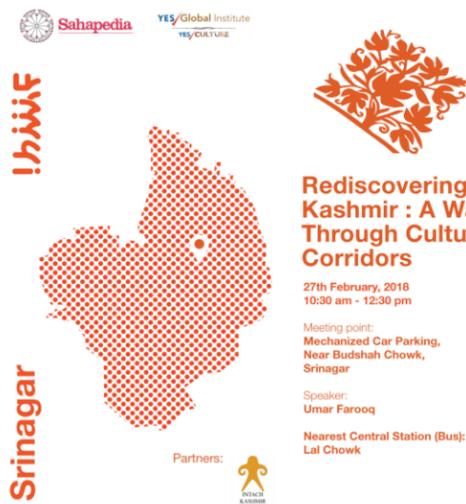
# INTACH join hands with Sahapedia and Yes Bank, organizes heritage walks in Srinagar city

As a part of nation-wide heritage drive, INTACH Kashmir collaborates with Sahapedia and Yes Bank conducts heritage walks within the Old city here. The program aims to introduce to the participants the tangible and intangible heritage of *Shehar-i-Khas*.

The walks planned by experts on art and architecture, from INTACH, aimed in exploring the old city from two different heritage corners.

On 26th Feb, the walk "Trysts with Kashmir: A Walk around River Jhelum" was conducted by Ar. Taha Mughal. The participants were assembled on the bank of the river, the ghat connected to the famous historic monument Pather Masjid. After deliberations upon the need of such events to create more awareness to care our heritage, the walk was headed towards exploring the rich vernacular style of architecture visualizing the Old residential houses, commercial structures, mosques, shrines, and temples around. There are a number of heritage structures with diverse historical, religious and socio-cultural significance emerged around the River Jehlum.

Stayed a while at Wakil House in Khawaja Bazar, the participants were explained briefly about the architectural techniques used in its construction. The historic building represents a fine example of vernacular architecture of Kashmir.



The walk was carried through the famous copperware market – Maharaj Gunj. The participants were excited to see the copperware work done there, the intricacies it involves to reach the level of a final product ready to sell.

The walk was finally culminated at the historic mosque named after the famous Sufi Saint Mir Syed Ali Hamdani. The place also known as Khanqah-i-Moulla is considered as an architectural marvel of Kashmir. The participants were updated about the ongoing restoration work on Spire which was damaged in recent fire.

The walk "Rediscovering Kashmir: A Walk through Cultural Corridors" was conducted by Ar. Umar Farooq on 27th Feb.

The walk was conducted on and around the hill that is considered as the centre of religious diversity of Srinagar.

The southern side of Hari Parbat features Makhdoom Sahib, the shrine of Hamza Makhdoom, a 16th-century Kashmiri Sufi saint locally known as Hazrat Sultan-ul-Arifeen. Another shrine on the hill's southern slope is dedicated to Shah Badakhshi, a 17th-century Sufi saint. Gurdwara Chatti Patshahi, again on the foothills of Hari Parbat, is believed to have been the preaching spot of the sixth guru of Sikhism, Guru Har Gobind, making the place highly venerable in Srinagar. Mullah Akhoon mosque, Hamam Dara Shikwoh, Badaamwari, Kathi Darwaza was some of the other important places visited by the participants during the walk.

The walk was finally culminated at one of the old gates to the then city 'Nagar Nagar' which was founded by Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1500 A.D. The gate is named as "Bachi Darwaza"

## 100 year old Mohra power project set for revival

*J&K State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) has been looking at reviving the site as a heritage project since the plant became defunct.*

Mukeet Akmal (Greater Kashmir)

Srinagar | Feb 12 2018



Jammu and Kashmir government has set in motion process for revival of over 100-year old Mohra hydroelectric project in Baramulla district which has been defunct since 1992.

An official said the revival of state's first hydroelectric project, constructed way back in 1905, has received impetus after national hydroelectric power corporation (NHPC) agreed to allow discharge of water from Uri first barrage.

J&K State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) has been looking at reviving the site as a heritage project since the plant became defunct.

"We are hopeful to make the plant functional with an increased power generation capacity of 9MW. The process for inviting tenders for restoration of the project is likely to take place later this year. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 120 crore," official said.

Minister for power, DrNirmal Singh said, "The consultant has been engaged for updating the detailed project report to maintain heritage of the project."

"For reviving the Mohra project, 11.33 cumecs of discharge, is required which needed to be released by NHPC from Uri Ist barrage. Only after receiving the assurance from the NHPC in 2017 for release of required discharge the updating of the DPR was revived by JKSPDC," he said adding that 9 MWs power will be generated by this plant.

The 9 MW Mohra power house was developed by JKSPDC in early 1905 and until 1992 it was operational.

"Due to generational loss and subsequent soaring repair cost, the running of this plant became expensive to operate," said another official adding that floods of 1992 proved to be the final nail in its coffin as after that the government didn't pay any attention towards its restoration.

The heritage project was constructed by European engineers in 1902-03 on the left bank of the river Jhelum on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road at Boniyar in Uri.

The water conductor for the old project is a wooden flume approximately 11 km in length and a heritage conservationist is being consulted on possible revival options.

Running along the left bank of the Jhelum in North Kashmir, close to the Line of Control, the flume served multiple purposes. While it catered to the needs of the villagers for irrigation purposes, it also fed into the power house and helped generate electricity.

Source: [www.greaterkashmir.com](http://www.greaterkashmir.com)

## Gol released 273.85 cr for conservation of Dal, Nageen lakes



Jammu | Feb 06 2018

The Jammu and Kashmir government Monday admitted in the legislative Assembly that Anchar lake Gilsar, Khushallsar lakes are deteriorating due to uncontrolled growth of trees that paved the way for illegal encroachments.

According to local newsgathering agency, KNS, in a written reply to a question raised by PDP MLA

Abid Hussain Ansari, the government has said that Anchar lake Gilsar, Khushallsar lakes have deteriorated due to illegal encroachments. "The condition of Dal Lake has not deteriorated as the project for its conservation/ preservation is under implementation with lakes and waterways development authority (LAWDA). However, in respect of Anchar Lake, Gilsar, Khushallsar lakes have somewhat deteriorated," the government has said.

The government has further said that 1, 038.52 have been spent on cleaning/ dredging of the aforesaid lakes and water bodies during the last three years. " Now in pursuance

to the directions of High court Pre-feasibility Report for Anchar Lake, Gilsar, Khushallsar lakes for Rs.100.00 crores each have been sent to the JK ERA for their prioritization under next ADB loan funding but decision is yet to be taken,".

The government has further said that government of India has released funds for conservation of Dal/ Nageen lake under NLCP Rs. 273.85 crores and under PMRP now PMDP Rs. 83.18 crore ( out of total package of 356.30 crore.

Source: [www.risingkashmir.com](http://www.risingkashmir.com)

# Prof. Rehman Rahi bags highest literary award

*JKAACL chooses doyen of Kashmiri literature for first Sharf-e-Saqafat award of Rs 10 lakh*



**By : Waseem Ramzan (KNS)**  
Srinagar | Jan 30, 2018

Jammu, Jan 30 (KNS): Renowned Kashmiri poet and Jnanpith awardee litterateur, Prof. Rehman Rahi has been chosen for first Sharf-e-Saqafat Award, the JKAACL announced today.

Born in 1925 Prof. Rahi is known for his erudite Kashmiri poetry. A person of pan India standing, this former professor emeritus of University of Kashmir is widely known for depth of his poetry. "The jury / panel arrived at the unanimous decision that the first Sharf-e-Saqafat award be given to Prof. Rehman Rahi for his

outstanding contribution in the field of literature, academics and culture and his having earned a pan India reputation," the statement by the expert jury/panel, chaired by noted writer Padma Sachdeva said.

Addressing representatives of media fraternity at Jammu, Secretary JKAACL, Dr. Aziz Hajini said that Prof. Rehman Rahi is a path-breaking poet, who deserved such an honour

"He has immensely enriched Kashmiri literature," Hajini said adding it was on account of his multifaceted personality that the jury/panel decided to choose him for the honour.

Prof. Rahi has been the recipient of many coveted awards in the past, including Padma Shree, Kabir Samman, State Award, Sahitya Akademi Award, and Jnanpith.

It may be recalled that in its meeting held in December, 2016, the General Council of the JKAACL decided to institute the Sharf-

e-Saqafat award of Rs 10 lakh to be given once in two years to any eminent personality from the fields of arts, culture and literature. Consequently on the request of the Secretary JKAACL, expert panel was constituted under the headship of prominent Dogri writer, Padma Sachdeva with Secretary JKAACL as the Member Secretary. Others on the decision-making body included Jitinder Singh, Masood Hussain, R. L. Shant, and MK Raina.

Apart from announcing the first Sharf-e-Saqafat award, the Secretary JKAACL also announced that the Academy was in the process of finalizing awards in various categories of performing arts for which the apex committee was meeting shortly.

Pertinently, the General Council of the Academy has instituted awards in various categories of performing arts. The awards of Rs 1 lakh each will be given on annual rotational basis. (KNS)

Source: [www.knskashmir.com](http://www.knskashmir.com)

## Hangul population declines to 182

*As per 2015 census, the population was 186. In the beginning of 20th century Hangul population in Kashmir was recorded at highest 5000.*



**Mukeet Akmal (Greater Kashmir)**  
Srinagar | Jan 31 2018

The population of Kashmir Stag (Hangul) has declined to 182 as per the census report 2017 of J&K government.

As per official data, the Hangul population in Kashmir is witnessing decline over the years.

It has dwindled from 5000 in 1940s to 182 in 2017.

The minister for Forest and Ecology in a written reply to a question in Legislative Assembly stated: "As per latest census conducted in March 2017, the population of Hangul stands at 182."

As per 2015 census, the population was 186. In the beginning of 20th century Hangul population in Kashmir was recorded at highest 5000. The animal is battling for its survival in its last bastion. They are now scattered within 141 square kilometer of the Dachigam National Park located in Zabarwan mountain range here.

Known for its magnificent antlers with 11 to 16 points, Hangul was once distributed widely in the mountains of Kashmir. The government in its reply stated that it has formulated a Hangul conservation action plan as the deer has been accorded highest priority in terms of its conservation and protection as it is the state animal of J&K.

The Dachigam National Park, which was earlier divided administratively between two wildlife divisions, has now been made a single administrative unit under the Wildlife division (central) to ensure better conservation of Hangul in its last known habitat.

Source: [www.greaterkashmir.com](http://www.greaterkashmir.com)

# Where is Kashmir's 50,000 year old mammoth?

*Former KAS officer raises question as Jammu University denies its possession*

**Arif Shafi Wani (Greater Kashmir)**

Srinagar | Jan 30 2018

Signifying failure of the state government to preserve prized fossil findings, there is no trace of the mammoth, believed to be 50,000 year old, which was discovered from Galandhar, Pampore, in 2000.

The mammoth (extinct elephants widely distributed in the Pleistocene) was discovered by a student of University of Kashmir in 2000 and later excavated by a team of experts. Geologists had declared it as one of the rare fossil finds having the potential to put Jammu and Kashmir on the map of great mammoth era.

In 2007, the mammoth was "secretly" removed from its makeshift tin shed at the excavation site and shifted to University of Jammu. The fossil had become a bone of contention between Universities of Kashmir and Jammu, with former accusing latter of "clandestinely" shifting it without their knowledge in 2007.

For several years, the mammoth skull with complete lower and upper jaws and a broken tusk was gathering dust in corridor of the Jammu University's Geology department. The fossil was later shifted to newly set up Wadia Museum of natural history in the varsity.

"I was shocked to learn from the Jammu University authorities that the mammoth is not there," said Khalid Bashir Ahmad, a former KAS officer who retired as secretary Cultural Academy.

Bashir said during his research for a write up, he had sought information on the mammoth from Jammu University through an RTI application on November 22, 2017.

Bashir said he had asked for details about how the fossil reached Jammu University.

"I had also sought information on the action taken against the person who removed it from Galandhar since his act was unauthorized and illegal," he said. "I wanted to know details of the money Jammu University had spent on activities



Mammoth which was recently put on display at Wadia Museum of Natural History, Jammu University.

related to the stolen fossil and if it intended to return it to Kashmir," he said.

The RTI application had also sought information on whether the fossil had been installed in the newly set up Wadia Museum of Natural History (WMNH), Jammu University, foreclosing possibility of its return to Kashmir.

He said "shockingly" the public information officer Jammu University in his response dated December 4, 2017 refused information on the ground "that the information sought by you is not related to any public activity or interest and also does not involve the larger public interest. He asked me to justify the public interest in the disclosure of the information sought".

On December 16, 2017, Bashir shot a letter to the PIO Jammu University. "I am shocked to read your response, coming as it is from a University faculty.

You ask me to justify public interest in the theft of a fossil estimated to be at least 50,000 years old which experts are optimistic would redefine natural and climatic history and human presence in Kashmir - a land of 7 million people?" Bashir stated in the letter.

"If seeking information about such an immensely significant object, especially when it has been illegally and unlawfully removed from Kashmir and not returned despite assurances by the then vice-chancellor of the University now holding it, and directions from the then Chief Minister to bring it back, is not of public interest what else would be? The information sought by me is of infinite public interest and I would request you to provide the same in the right

earnest," the letter further states. In response to the letter, PIO Jammu University replied that "there is no mammoth fossil housed in Wadia Museum of Natural History, University of Jammu." "In response to my justification, I have now received a letter dated January 9, 2018 from the PIO Jammu University forwarding a document dated 4 January 2018, signed jointly by head of the Postgraduate Department of Geology, and director Wadia Museum of Natural History Jammu University stating therein that "there is no mammoth fossil housed in Wadia Museum of Natural History, University of Jammu," Bashir said.

"Intriguingly, the PIO maintains a loud silence on whether the Galandhar fossil missing from Kashmir, was surreptitiously brought to Jammu University in 2007. He is also silent on whether the University knew that the fossil had been illegally and unauthorizedly brought from Kashmir, and whether it supported this illegal act."

"Silence is equally maintained on whether the University will return the fossil, and on its response to requests made earlier for its return in view of the then vice chancellor's assurance. Of all the points raised in the RTI application, the PIO has chosen only to respond to the query whether the fossil has been installed at the newly established WMNH. And, the reply is an absolute and mammoth lie," he said.

When contacted, a senior officer of Jammu University wishing not to be named said, "There is no mammoth in our museum, but we have Galandhar fossils."

Bashir said some officers at Jammu University are trying to create confusion. "At the time of discovery, the experts declared it as mammoth, but it was unlawfully removed from Galandhar in 2007. It is housed and displayed in the Wadia Museum of Natural History, Jammu University. I have documentary evidence in the form of photographs taken as recently as on January 17 and 29, 2018, clearly showing the stolen fossil installed and displayed in the museum," he said.

Source: [www.greaterkashmir.com](http://www.greaterkashmir.com)

# J&K's draft Trade Policy envisions e-trade, branding of handicrafts

*Focuses on quality control to keep check on counterfeit goods*

**Saqib Malik (Greater Kashmir)**

Srinagar | Feb 4 2018

In an endeavor to provide a new lease of life to dying Kashmiri arts, proposed Trade Policy 2018-28 for J&K, a draft of which was recently put in the public domain, has suggested measures for brand promotion and quality control of the handicrafts. The policy also encourages government corporations such as Handloom and Handicrafts to adopt e-commerce platforms for the purpose of marketing and sale.

The trade policy which has been prepared by the state Industries and Commerce Department has sought to provide grant-in-aid to registered Small Scale Industry (SSI) units for brand promotion. "Government agrees that the brand promotion scheme requires a review and push through a well thought out programme by all the stakeholders," states the policy.

The draft policy admits that complaints are regularly received about fake handicraft items being sold to the tourists as genuine Kashmir craft. "The traders has been wary of such practices as it brings bad name to the entire trade," the policy states. It says "unscrupulous elements" in the trade find their own ways and keep indulging in such unfair practices to make a fast buck by living from season to season under different names.

According to the policy, in order to promote the handmade and authentic produce of the state, government has successfully registered seven regional crafts namely Kashmir Carpet, Kashmir Pashmina, Kashmir Papier-Machie, Kashmir Sozni, Kashmir Walnut Wood Carving, Kani Shawl and Khatambund under the Geographical Indications Act of India. "Further, the state government is also in the process of registering agro products like saffron under the same Act," the policy states.



A Pashmina Testing and Certification Centre for Hallmarking (labeling) and certification of Kashmir Pashmina has also been set up in Craft Development Institute, Srinagar, the trade policy draft reads, adding, government intends to create more testing and certification centers.

"Six main handicrafts of Kashmir including Pashmina, Kani, Sozni, Khatamband, Paper Mache and Walnut Wood-Carving for Geographical Indication (GI) certification to discourage imitation and counterfeiting of the regional handicrafts,"

According to the trade policy, grant-in-aid is available to registered SSI units for "brand promotion?", financial incentives are available for research and development, acquiring of quality control equipment, registration with the Bureau of Indian Standards and registration with International Standards Organization (ISO) etc under the State Industrial Policy.

The trade policy highlights that various government corporations like Handicrafts and Handloom, Agro Industries, Horticulture (Produce and Marketing) etc

must develop e-commerce platforms for trading products from respective sectors to increase the outreach of local products worldwide at lower costs. "The e-marketing shall also eliminate mediators and improves linkages between farmers, food processors, small time artisans/manufacturers and retailers," the policy document states.

The trade policy has also has underlined the need of a major initiative in quality control, maintenance of standards in manufacturing/ processing and quality marking which can be created around the aura of Kashmir. "For this, the Government shall promote Quality Control Council for products especially agro and handicrafts comprising of all stakeholders to formulate and manage the quality marking programme under which very high and exacting standards of quality control mechanism would be created and enforced and liberal use of information technology, bar coding, holograms etc. shall be made," the policy states.

Source: [www.greaterkashmir.com](http://www.greaterkashmir.com)

# Massive Mayan ruins found in Guatemala

Guatemala City | Feb 03, 2018

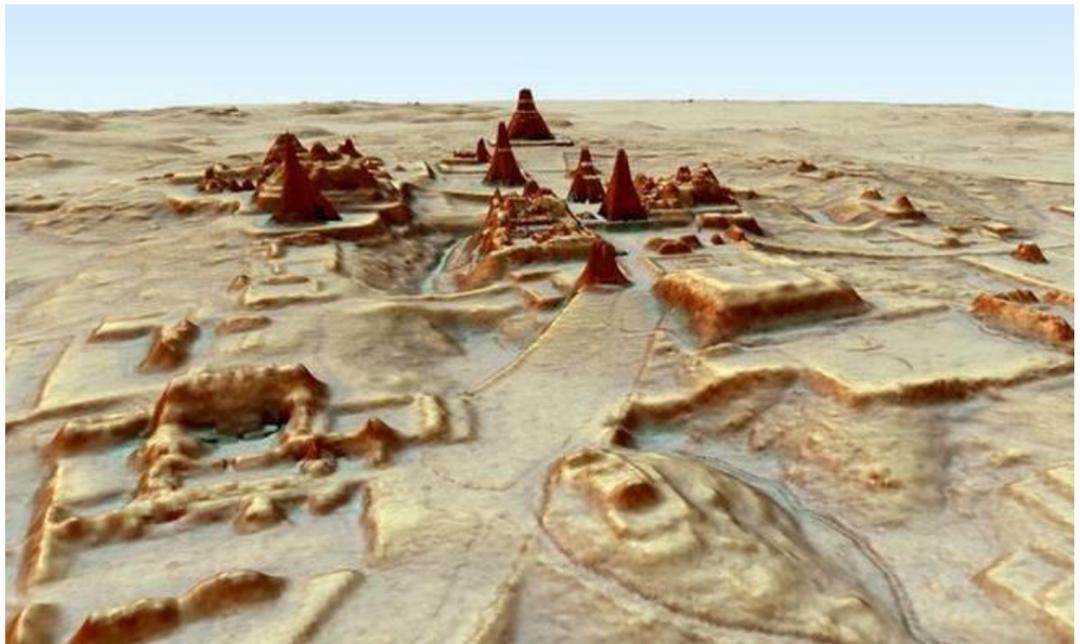
**10 million people could have lived there, say researchers**

Researchers using a high-tech aerial mapping technique have found tens of thousands of previously undetected Mayan houses, buildings, defense works and pyramids in the dense jungle of Guatemala's Peten region, suggesting that millions more people lived there than previously thought.

The discoveries, which included industrial-sized agricultural fields and irrigation canals, were announced by an alliance of U.S., European and Guatemalan archaeologists working with Guatemala's Mayan Heritage and Nature Foundation.

The study estimates that roughly 10 million people may have lived within the Maya Lowlands, meaning that kind of massive food production might have been needed. "That is two to three times more [inhabitants] than people were saying there were," said Marcello A. Canuto, a professor of Anthropology at Tulane University.

Researchers used a mapping technique called LiDAR, which stands for Light Detection And



What lies beneath: Digital image shows a depiction of the Mayan archaeological site at Tikal in Guatemala. | Photo Credit: AP/PACUNAM

Ranging. It bounces pulsed laser light off the ground, revealing contours hidden by dense foliage.

The images revealed that the Mayans altered the landscape in a much broader way than previously thought; in some areas, 95% of available land was cultivated.

## Intensive agriculture

"Their agriculture is much more intensive and therefore sustainable than we thought, and they were cultivating every inch of the land," said Francisco Estrada-Belli, a research assistant professor at Tulane

University, noting that the ancient Mayas partly drained swampy areas that haven't been considered worth farming since. And the extensive defensive fences, ditch-and-rampart systems and irrigation canals suggest a highly organized workforce.

"There's state involvement here, because we see large canals being dug that are re-directing natural water flows," said Thomas Garrison, assistant professor of Anthropology at Ithaca College in New York. The mapping detected about 60,000 individual structures, including four major Mayan ceremonial centers with plazas and pyramids.

Source: [www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com)

# Egypt unveils ornate tomb of ancient priestess in Giza

FEBRUARY 03, 2018

Rare and well-preserved paintings adorn walls of Hetpet's chamber

Egyptian archaeologists on Saturday unveiled the tomb of an Old Kingdom priestess adorned with well-preserved and rare wall paintings.

Antiquities Minister Khaled al-Enany told reporters that the tomb on the Giza plateau near Cairo was built for Hetpet, a priestess to Hathor, the goddess of fertility.

The tomb was found during excavation work in Giza's western cemetery by a team of Egyptian archaeologists led by Mostafa Waziri, secretary general



Glorious past: A woman photographs the interior of the newly discovered tomb in Giza. (Right) Close-up of wall painting. | Photo Credit: AFP

of the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

The Antiquities Ministry said the cemetery houses tombs of top officials from the Old Kingdom's Fifth Dynasty (2465-2323 B.C.), and that several have already been dug up since 1842.

The newly discovered tomb "has the architectural style and the decorative elements of the Fifth Dynasty, with an entrance leading to an 'L' shaped shrine", the Ministry said.

"The tomb has very distinguished wall paintings in a very good conservation condition depicting Hetpet standing in different hunting and fishing scenes or... receiving offerings from her children," it said.

The paintings also show scenes of musical and dancing performances as well as two scenes featuring monkeys — domestic animals at the time — one picking and eating fruit and the other dancing in front of an orchestra. Mr. Waziri said the paintings were unusual. Mr. Waziri said archaeologists will continue to excavate the site and hope to make new discoveries.

Source: [www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com)

## INTACH Craft Shop

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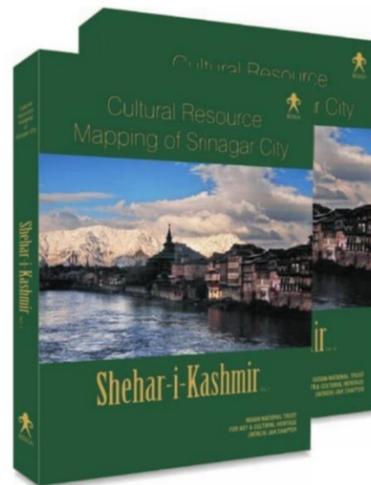
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### Publications available:



#### Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City **Shehar-i-Kashmir** 2 Vols.

INTACH, J&K publication: 888 pages  
(Hardbound)  
First edition: December, 2010  
ISBN: 978-81-903136-5-0

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