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First time in 20 yrs, university discusses Kashmir issue

[Bashaarat Masood](#) : Srinagar, Mon Jun 18 2012, 00:59 hrs

For the first time in 20 years, the Kashmir University has opened its gates for politicians to discuss the Kashmir problem. In a two-day seminar — Jammu and Kashmir and the Federal Models of Shared Sovereignty — at the varsity, participants debated on National Conference’s ‘autonomy’ concept along with Sajjad Lone’s ‘achievable nationhood’ proposal. However, as only mainstream politicians were invited at the seminar, some participants called for the “need to take the separatist on board”.

“We have discussed issues on a larger scale and which have certain political implications,” said Prof Noor Ahmad Baba, head of varsity’s political Science department that organised the seminar in collaboration with the Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation.

On the second day of the seminar on Sunday, politicians discussed formulae for the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Finance Minister and NC leader Abdul Rahim Rather said, “Our party has always advocated autonomy and continuation of dialogue.” Lone, on the other hand, said, “This (achievable nationhood) is an amalgam of various models practised in the modern world. It covers everything (about the issue) and is best suited in the present conditions.”

The organisers had also invited PDP leader Muzaffar Ahmad Beig, who was to discuss the ‘self rule’ formula proposed by his party. But he couldn’t attend the meet. Communist leader M Y Tarigami was also present.

Some participants advocated the need for inviting separatist leaders. “Until we listen to them and debate with them, we can’t reach anywhere,” said Justice (retd) Bilal Nazki.