

# Kashmir University observes World Autism Awareness Day



**Srinagar, Apr 2:** The University of Kashmir on Friday organised a programme to observe the World Autism Awareness Day.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad presided over the day-long event, organised by the varsity's Department of Social Work (DoSW) in collaboration with Learning Edge, Centre for Autism and Early Intervention.

In his presidential address, Prof Talat called for doing away with any kind of stigmatization and discrimination associated with autism.

He said the Autism Awareness Day is observed across the globe with the objective of raising awareness about the need to improve the quality of life of those with autism so that they don't feel dissociated from society.

“This ongoing pandemic has taught the world the importance of living together, understanding each others' needs and aspirations. It's therefore important to make people with autism an integral part of our society so that they don't feel isolated or excluded in any manner,” he said.

KU Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, who was a guest of honour on the occasion, said it is important to have policies that ensure equal opportunities for—and equal participation of—people with autism to make them realise their aspirations.

In his special address, Director, Composite Regional Centre Srinagar Dr Mir Zafar Iqbal welcomed the initiative of observing the World Autism Awareness Day. He highlighted various services available for PWDs at the CRC Bemina.

Shafaqat Gillani, Vice-Chairperson, Autism Welfare Trust and Learning Edge, highlighted the role of the organization and the need for care and protection of children with autism.

In his welcome address, Coordinator DoSW Dr Adil Bashir highlighted aims and objectives of the programme.

Referring to a study by INCLIN Trust International in 2018, he said 1 in 100 children in India under age 10 have autism, and nearly 1 in 8 has at least one neurodevelopmental condition.

“There's a need for a collaborative action to ensure the rights of people with autism are protected and ensured,” Dr Bashir said.

Dr Sarafraz Ahmad and Uzma Nisar conducted proceedings of the programme.

