

2-week refresher course in social sciences begins at KU

Prof Talat urges teachers to encourage critical thinking among students

Srinagar, Feb 6: A two-week refresher course in social sciences started at the University of Kashmir on Saturday. Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad inaugurated the online course, organised by the varsity's UGC-HRDC, for college and university teachers from within and outside the J&K UT.

In his presidential address, Prof Talat said that social scientists were better communicators to disseminate the criticality of education and research in the society.

He said the flagship National Education Policy-2020 lays emphasis on interdisciplinary education and research and this calls upon teachers to "know something about everything" to be able to answer questions posed by today's knowledge-driven students in the classrooms about their own subjects and about other subjects too.

Prof Talat said it was time for amalgamation of sciences and social sciences for better approaches and outcome on societal and environmental problems.

"In view of Covid-19 pandemic, social scientists have a far greater role to play to encourage people to know each other better and socialise more given the isolation, quarantining, trauma and stress they had to undergo," he said, congratulating the UGC-HRDC for organising the refresher course and selecting top-notch experts from different parts of the country as lead speakers.

Prof Talat also urged teachers to be kind to students and encourage critical thinking in classrooms.

"Being rude to students will scare them away from education and inquisitiveness," he said.

KU Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir, who was a guest of honour, said that teachers haven't been interacting much or accessing libraries ever since the Covid-19 started and this has necessitated holding such online refresher courses.

He said the university is committed to augmenting facilities at the UGC-HRDC further in accordance with the NEP-2020 objectives and challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prof Bashir A Khan, Dean of Social Sciences at KU, who was a guest of honour, said it has been the university's constant endeavour to see that our teachers don't lag behind in their pursuit for knowledge and research.

Director UGC-HRDC Prof Shabir Ahmad Bhat said all areas related to social sciences were important because these help create better institutions and systems that concern people's everyday lives.

He said the NEP-2020 aims to provide quality education and the responsibility of social sciences faculty is very huge in achieving the objectives of this national flagship programme.

"The NEP 2020 is an opportunity for modern universities to see how they can act as co-producers of knowledge and create partnerships with other institutions of learning," he said, asserting that UGC-HRDC will continue to work with greater zeal to help teachers remain updated with newer trends and challenges in their fields of study and research.

Prof Pamela Singla from Delhi University's Department of Social Work, who was a guest of honour and lead resource person for Saturday's session, said the refresher course was an opportunity for the participants to learn new things which will benefit the students eventually.

She congratulated the UGC-HRDC for planning the refresher course meticulously.

"This refresher course has been designed to meet the requirements of NEP-2020 which calls for an interdisciplinary approach to education and research," she said.

Coordinator UGC-HRD Dr Geer Mohammad Ishaq said the refresher course has been designed in view of the emerging importance of social sciences and the fact that Covid-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on the social life of people.

Dr Sumeer Gul, Course Coordinator, elaborated on the panel of experts for the upcoming sessions of the refresher course.

Dr Geer Mohammad Ishaq later presented a formal vote of thanks.