

Mental health awareness programme held at KU's South Campus

Srinagar, Feb 7: A day-long mental health awareness programme was held at Kashmir University's South Campus, Anantnag.

The programme titled "Mental Health of Emerging Generations" was organised jointly by the varsity's Dean Students Welfare (DSW) and South Campus in continuation with a series of such programmes initiated by the university in the backdrop of mental health challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In his special address, Dean Students Welfare Prof Raies A Qadri said that Covid-19 outbreak has exacerbated mental health challenges and concerns following bereavement and isolation that it brought to thousands of people in its wake.

Quoting a World Health Organisation survey, Prof Qadri said the pandemic badly disturbed mental health services in 93% of countries worldwide, even as this study showed devastating impact of Covid-19 on access to mental health services.

"Raising awareness on important aspects of mental health is crucial to addressing a host of mental health problems," he said.

He said the DSW has held similar awareness programmes in several Kashmir colleges as well as the varsity's Main Campus.

In his welcome address, Director South Campus Prof Aijaz A Wani said such outreach activities are significant to educate people on essentials of mental wellbeing in the face of stressful situations like the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prof Wani said it is important to take such initiatives to satellite campuses and colleges, and even schools, to help students and teachers to cope with the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic to the academic arena.

Keynote speaker Dr Abdul Majid, Head, Department of Psychiatry, SKIMS Medical College Srinagar, gave a detailed power-point presentation on emerging mental health challenges and concerns. He said academic institutions must take a lead in organising such programmes to help address the deleterious fallouts of Covid-19 pandemic, especially with regard to mental health.

Mr Ishfaq Nazir from the Department of Nursing, South Campus, shared his experiences and views on the subject, while Dr Mohammad Iqbal Bhat, faculty member, South Campus, presented a vote of thanks. Mr Zahid Jeelani, Junior Coordinator DSW, conducted proceedings of the programme, which, apart from staff and faculty of South Campus, was attended by DSW staff, including Mr Shahid Ali Khan, Cultural Officer.