

KU gets Rs 10 crore DBT-BUILDER grant to promote interdisciplinary research, education

Srinagar, June 9: The Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Innovations (CIRI) at the University of Kashmir has received a mega Rs 10 Crore DBT-BUILDER grant for promotion of interdisciplinary research and education at the varsity.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad said the Department of Biotechnology-Boost to University Interdisciplinary Life Science Departments for Education and Research (BUILDER) programme would go a long way in promoting quality interdisciplinary education and research at the university as envisioned under the flagship National Education Policy-2020.

Congratulating Dr Altaf Bhat, Coordinator CIRI and BUILDER team including Dr Ajaz Wani, Dr Ashraf Dar, Dr Abdul Wajid, Dr Rafiq Mir and Dr Javaid Bhat for the achievement, Prof Talat said the project is aimed at addressing local scientific problems through interdisciplinary approaches and establishing high-end research facilities. He appreciated the efforts of the CIRI in promoting interdisciplinary education and research in a big way.

The University of Kashmir is the first university in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir to become a part of this prestigious programme.

Prof Talat thanked the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India for its support to the University of Kashmir, which has recently also received major grants including Rs 10-crore DST-PURSE grant and Center for Excellence in Glaciology, budgeted at approximately Rs 8 crore. The University is emerging as a major research hub in interdisciplinary research and education.

Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir congratulated the BUILDER team for securing the prestigious mega grant which, he said, will be utilised to promote interdisciplinary teaching and research at the varsity and establish high-end facilities and infrastructure thereof.

Coordinator CIRI Dr Altaf Bhat said the University has established CIRI, a brainchild of Prof Talat Ahmad, in 2019 with an objective to attract brilliant, talented and well-trained young scientists from abroad through prestigious fellowships like Ramanujan, Ramalingamswami and Wellcome trust-DBT India Alliance across various disciplines.

“It is an initiative to convert brain-drain into brain-gain. We have scientists at the CIRI who have returned from top universities in USA and Europe, like Harvard University, Max Planck Institute Germany, University of Cambridge, University of Edinburgh,” he said.

Dr Bhat said the establishment of CIRI is a first such initiative where scientists across disciplines would be working under one roof.

The establishment of the centre has received a lot of appreciation in scientific circles and many national and international faculties have shown willingness to be associated with it as adjunct faculties, he said.

He said the Centre is developing a competitive research ecosystem by promoting cutting-edge interdisciplinary research and plans to integrate various disciplines in the university for collaborative research to serve as a model to inspire youth to take up research as a career.

Dr Bhat said apart from an advanced instrumentation facility, an interdisciplinary teaching and research programmes will be introduced in the Centre under the DBT-BUILDER program to build trained and skilled human resource.