

KU inks pact with Tata Consultancy Services on key employability, student engagement programmes



Srinagar, Feb 19: The University of Kashmir has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Mumbai to undertake some key employability, entrepreneurship, literacy and student engagement programmes in Kashmir in next three years.

KU Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad was the chief guest at the MoU-signing ceremony, organised by the varsity's prestigious Centre for Career Planning and Counselling (CCPC), the nodal center to execute the MoU from the varsity side.

Five key projects including 'Youth Employment Programme (YEP)', 'goITis a TCS CSR Programme', 'TCS Ignite My Future (IMF) Programme', 'TCS Adult Literacy Programme (ALP)' and 'Entrepreneurship Programme (EP)' are part of the MoU between the two institutions.

The YEP aims at improving employability skills of undergraduates by imparting English communication skills, corporate etiquette practices, analytical thinking and problem-solving techniques, basic computer skills, technical skills and confidence levels among youth while the goITis programme increases interest in STEM and Computer Science through design-thinking, mobile app development, and mentorship from TCS employees. The IMF programme is a trans-disciplinary educator training programme which aims to ignite the spark of curiosity and problem-solving through Computational Thinking, while the ALP aims to augment the Government of India's efforts to address the momentous challenge of educating adults. The EP, on the other hand, aims to support committed and passionate youth towards their entrepreneurship journey through skill development, market mobilisation and mentorship.

In his presidential address, Prof Talat said the current MoU with TCS is an important milestone to help address the employability concerns of Kashmir youth, especially those from underprivileged sections of the society, by way of their skilling and upskilling.

He said Kashmiri youth are immensely talented and it's merely a matter of getting a right opportunity for them to showcase their talent.

He urged the CCPC team to work hard towards achieving the objectives enlisted in the MoU, even as he exuded confidence that youth from Kashmir will become actively involved in these professionally-designed programmes.

The MoU was signed from the university side by Dean Academic Affairs Prof Farooq Masoodi and Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir while it was signed by Mr Sunil Joseph, CSR Head (India) and Mr Balaji Ganpati, Global Head CSR, from the TCS side.

Mr Joseph outlined the broad contours of the MoU programmes while Mr Balaji, who joined the ceremony virtually from the US, underlined how such programmes would enhance the 'Access to Opportunity' for youth of Kashmir with the right kind of skilling and mentoring.

In his introductory remarks, Director CCPC Dr Geer Mohammad Ishaq, who conducted proceedings of the mega event, said the MoU aims to help students to develop 21st century skills that they need to possess to be successful in the digital economy through CSR-related initiatives of the TCS.

The function, held in blended online-offline mode, was attended by Prof Gowhar Bashir, Dean School of Engineering KU, Dr Ghulam Hassan Mir, Director DLL KU, Dr Reyaz Qureshi, Head, Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Studies KU and Prof Mohammad Shafi, Head, Department of Commerce KU, apart from senior officials and functionaries of the TCS, Mumbai.

Pertinently, Prof Masoodi also spoke on the occasion and offered his insights on how this significant MoU can be translated into action at grassroots, while Dr Nisar delivered a formal vote of thanks.