

Top scientists meet at Kashmir University for climate change dialogue

Varsity hosts first meeting of DST's Reconstituted Expert Committee to assess new proposals



Srinagar, July 21: Top scientists from Government of India's Department of Science and Technology (DST) and country's reputed academic institutions on Thursday met at the University of Kashmir for a dialogue on climate change.

The eminent scientists are in the varsity for a first meeting of the Reconstituted Committee of Climate Change Programme of the DST which aims to generate strategic knowledge on issues of climate change and build capacities of various stakeholders.

KU Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan delivered the keynote address at the inaugural session.

"Climate change is real. It is happening and we all are bearing its brunt. This two-day meet therefore is critically important in shaping our policies to combat climate change and evolve better understanding on the mitigation and adaption plans," Prof Nilofer said, calling for a coordinated approach at governmental and institutional levels to address climate change concerns and challenges.

She said the KU has recorded a significant impact in climate change research and will be always ready to cooperate and collaborate with DST and other institutions in areas of research and capacity building.

In his opening remarks, former KU Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad, Chairman of DST's Reconstituted Committee of Climate Change, called for a multidisciplinary approach to address climate change impacts. He said the current dialogue must lead us towards better understanding of climate change, especially in the vulnerable Himalayan region, and evolve better strategies and policies.

In his special address, Senior Advisor DST Dr Akhilesh Gupta, who joined the meeting in virtual mode, underlined the need for a "nationally-coordinated plan" to see that climate change research in the country gets further impetus. He said the DST's climate change programmes have penetrated into several states and motivated universities to take up major projects.

"After the 6th IPCC report, the impact of climate change on India is much clearer. We are now at a crucial juncture where climate research will become important for our country to formulate robust climate action plans," Dr Gupta said, appreciating that Kashmir University is part of an important climate change programme of the DST.

Head, CCP DST Dr Nisha Mandiratta delivered the welcome address and highlighted the aims and objectives of the DST's National Mission for Sustaining the National Ecosystem and National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change.

Dr Susheela Negi, Scientist E, DST, presented the Action Taken Report.

The inaugural session was attended by renowned scientists and administrators including Prof P P Majumdar from IISc Bangalore; Dr Kalachand Sain, Director, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun; Prof N.H. Ravindranath, Former Professor, IISc Bangalore; Prof S.C Garkoti, JNU; Prof. Anamika Barua, IIT Guwahati; Dr. S. Sreekesh, JNU; Dean Research KU Prof Irshad A Nawchoo, who coordinated the meet and Registrar KU Dr Nisar A Mir, besides a galaxy of scientists and academics from reputed institutions across the country in online and offline modes.

During the two-day meeting, the DST Committee will screen scientific proposals related to climate change and consider the same for award after proper assessment and evaluation.