

## Innovators' Meet held at KU's Zakura Campus

*VC vows establishment of new centre to facilitate innovation, incubation, entrepreneurship*



**Srinagar, Mar 26:** Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir Prof Talat Ahmad Friday inaugurated an innovators' meet at the varsity's Institute of Technology (IoT), Zakura Campus. The day-long meet was organised by the National Innovation Foundation Cell-JK, established at the University of Kashmir under the aegis of National Innovation Foundation-India, an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

Addressing academics and grassroots innovators on the occasion, Prof Talat announced establishment of the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship at the Zakura Campus, with an outlay of Rs four crore under RUSA, to facilitate grassroots innovators to float their innovative ideas and go for their patenting.

"We are committed to foster the culture of innovation in the university and provide a professional platform to students and youth from J&K UT to learn about innovation and incubation in a proper innovation ecosystem," he said.

Director NIF-India Dr Vipin Kumar delivered the inaugural address in online mode, highlighting the country-wide scenario of 'Innovators of Tomorrow' scheme under the NIF's Million Minds Augmenting National Aspiration and Knowledge (MANAK) programme.

Appreciating Kashmir University's active collaboration with the NIF-India, Dr Kumar assured that a large number of youth from J&K will get nurtured under the MANAK scheme in the years to come.

In his special remarks, Dean School of Engineering Prof Muzaffar Andrabi said innovators are assets for the society and need to be encouraged and provided with all kinds of support until they actually convert their ideas into useful industrial products.

In his welcome address, Prof GM Bhat, Director NIF Cell-JK, said they have scouted and supported over 100 indigenous technological innovations so far while developing working prototypes for many innovations.

"69 patents have been filed in favour of Kashmiri innovators through the NIF Cell, including 22 for herbal practices. Seven patents have been awarded in favour of Kashmiri innovators, even as several innovators have been awarded at the national level. Some innovations scouted and incubated at the NIF Cell have also been commercialised," he said.

An Innovation Exhibition, managed by NIF-Cell, has been established at Zakura Campus, where students can visit for a practical exposure to working innovations, he said.

"NIF is also looking after implementation of INSPIRE award scheme in J&K. 6942 innovations of school children from J&K have been shortlisted for 2019-2020 INSPIRE-Manak Award

scheme. As such, J&K stands at 14<sup>th</sup> position in the country-wide INSPIRE nominations. Nine student innovators have so far visited Japan under the INSPIRE scheme,” Prof Bhat said.

The inaugural function, among others, was attended by Prof Iqbal Hakeem, Prof Showket A Shah, Dr Altaf Hussain Pandith, Akhtar Hussain Malik, District Nodal Officers of NIF JK-Cell/INSPIRE programme and scores of grassroots’ innovators.