

Prof Ved Prakash former UGC Chairman delivers lecture at KU

Srinagar, Oct 25: Former Chairman of University Grants Commission Prof Ved Prakash delivered a lecture on Draft 'National Education Policy -2019' at University of Kashmir here on Thursday.

The function was presided over by Governor's Advisor Khurshid Ahmad Ganai. Vice-Chancellor of University Prof Talat Ahmad was also present on the occasion.

In his presidential address Ganai stressed upon the teaching faculty in higher education to make optimal utilization of available technological tools in teaching pedagogy so as to connect the students of the Valley with the best available online educational resource platforms enabling them to face the challenges of the modern day world.

"The whole world is changing faster than ever before and so is the technology. Technology is the future. We are in the age of big data analytics, artificial intelligence and robotics which hold the key to the development and progress of any nation in future," he said.

He said there is a need to ask the question to ourselves, as policy planners, teachers whether the right kind of scientific and technological education is given to our students in higher education sector which will make them competent enough to face the challenges of the modern day world.

Referring to the observations made by Prof Prakash on the draft 'National Education Policy -2019' Ganai said these inputs shall go a long way in giving directions to us in the government and other policy planners to fix priorities and to make sure that the benefits as have been envisioned in the new policy document should percolate down to the grass root level.

Earlier in his lecture on draft 'National Education Policy -2019' former Chairman, UGC Prof Ved Prakash presented a detailed analysis of the draft.

"This document is very important and will affect the life of not only the students and teaching fraternity but every single individual of the nation," Prof Ved Prakash said.

Deliberating upon the pros and cons of the draft policy Prof Prakash said this exercise is being conducted after 33 long years as the last National Education Policy was introduced in 1986 and the first ever education policy of the nation was drafted and introduced in 1968.

While enumerating some of the recommendations of the new policy upto secondary level of education Prof Prakash said the policy proposes universal access to early childhood education by 2025, flexibility in the selection of subjects by the students, stress on examination reforms, formation of school complexes and sharing of resources, extension of right to education upto higher secondary stage covering children upto 18 years of age, emphasis on vocational subjects of education, setting of Indian Institute of Translation, reconsidering the over domination and practice of exams at every class and stage.

In Higher Education sector some of the recommendations which Prof Prakash presented include to achieve 50 percent Gross Enrolment Ratio by 2035, need to increase intake capacity both at college and university level, introduction of four-year liberal education at UG level with multiple exit options, creation of National

Scholarship Fund, dismantling the affiliation system of colleges with the universities and full autonomy on pedagogy and resource material.

However, Prof Ved Prakash also expressed some concerns including the need to simplify the complexities in the policy document. He identified various gaps in the draft and stressed for reconsidering some of the recommendations which are not in tune with the ground realities. The lecture was followed by an interactive session with the audience.

Besides Vice-Chancellor Central University of Kashmir Prof Mehraj-ud-Mir, Vice-Chancellor University of Jammu Prof Manoj K Dhar and Vice-Chancellor Cluster University of Jammu Prof Anju Bhasin also attended the lecture.

Dean Academic Affairs KU Prof Akbar Masood presented the welcome address and introduced the guests while as Dean Research KU Prof Zaffar A Reshi conducted the proceedings of the lecture.

The lecture was attended by members of the KU Council, Deans of various schools, Heads of the departments, Directors of various centres and faculty members of University of Kashmir.

Some faculty members from Central University of Kashmir and principals of degree colleges were also present on the occasion.