

‘Assessing Skill Needs in Industrial Sector’:

Academia must be responsive to fast-changing industrial landscape: KU VC

‘Need to formalise education in specified trades, remove stigma associated with certain jobs’



Srinagar, Oct 17: To explore how educational institutions can bridge the gap between industrial needs and youth capabilities and discuss the evolving requirements in the region’s industrial landscape, the Centre for Capacity Building and Skill Development (CCBSD), University of Kashmir (KU), Thursday organised a daylong industrial meet here.

The event brought together industry experts, academicians and policymakers to discuss the evolving skill demands in the job market and explore efforts towards crafting a sustainable skill development roadmap for the region.

On the occasion, KU Vice Chancellor, Prof Nilofer Khan, underscored the need for academic institutions to remain responsive to the fast-changing industrial landscape.

“We are on the right path and direction as we are focusing more on upskilling and strengthening our industry connections. The NEP-2020 also prioritises skills and experiential learning and KU is simultaneously investing in incubation centres and entrepreneurship initiatives,” she reiterated.

She highlighted KU’s efforts in patenting innovations and the aim to link local talent with global market needs while urging the participants to provide grassroots-level

feedback to ensure that skill development initiatives are aligned with both local and international demands.

Joint Secretary, Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), Omer Nazir Tebat Bakal, highlighted a significant mismatch between industry needs and available skills.

“There is a lack of proper skills across sectors like tourism, hospitality, handicrafts and horticulture. We need to formalise education in specified trades and remove the stigma associated with certain job roles,” he said.

He underscored the challenges such as brain drain, inadequate infrastructure and low wages that deter skilled professionals from taking up local jobs.

KU Registrar, Prof Naseer Iqbal, reiterated the varsity’s commitment to skill development as a pathway to economic progress.

“The key to solving the unemployment crisis lies in building stronger, more dynamic connections between universities and industries. We must ensure that our curricula are not just theoretical but also practical and aligned with the demands of the job market,” he said.

Dean, School Open learning, Prof Mushtaq Ahmad Dar, spoke about the importance of flexible learning pathways for skill development.

Director, Directorate of Employment and Counselling, Dr Nisar Ahmad Wani, emphasised the importance of understanding the specific skill sets required by different industries.

Manager, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Adil Ahsan, highlighted the role of financial institutions in supporting skill development initiatives.

Director, CCBSD, Dr Aadil Bashir, shared insights on the need for skill upgradation in various sectors to boost regional development.

Project Officer, Mohammad Yousuf, conducted the proceedings of the inaugural session while, Programme Associate, CCBSD, Shumila Shamim, proposed the formal vote of thanks.

Project Officer, CCBSD, Manzoor Ahmad Mir, summed up the programme deliberations and presented the feedback.

Various industry partners, including representatives from public and private entities, successful entrepreneurs besides faculty from KU’s Institute of Technology, NIT and SKAUST-K attended the meet.