

**Design Your Own Degree (DYOD)’:**

## **Need to empower students by giving them freedom of choice: V-C JKHEC**

*‘Need to strengthen each other through collaborations, knowledge sharing’*



**Srinagar, Feb 20:** To assess the progress and implementation of the ‘Design Your Own Degree (DYOD)’ programme across various educational institutions in the region, the Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Council (JKHEC) is holding a three-day review meeting here at Kashmir University (KU).

The meeting that began Monday is poised to hold orientation and awareness programmes by providing a platform for stakeholders including coordinators and mentors to exchange ideas and address challenges to further enhance the effectiveness of the programme, an official KU statement issued here read.

V-C, JKHEC, Prof Dinesh Singh, said that students need to be empowered by giving them freedom to choose their subject of choice and henceforth a degree of their own.

“We need to first identify the drumbeat of their souls (as we all possess a special one), tap that and march ahead on the same beat for a better future,” Prof Dinesh said, reiterating that we need to change our mindset by encouraging and accepting new ideas to change our future.

VC, IUST, Prof Shakeel A Romshoo, said that we need to strengthen each other through collaborations and knowledge sharing as NEP (National Education Policy)-2020 also promotes an ecosystem of innovation, incubation and entrepreneurship.

“5 of the 11 universities in J&K are already offering the DYOD programme. The persistence, perseverance and the doubts in between enabled us to accept DYOD as the root which is soon to become mainstream,” Prof Shakil maintained.

Dean Academic Affairs, KU, Prof Farooq A Masoodi said that we cannot uproot all at once but the transition has to be gradual and smooth.

“If we do away with the conventional modes and methodology, we have to simultaneously anticipate the employability of our students as we still follow traditions in pedagogy,” he said.

Discussing the status of the DYOD at KU, Dean, College Development Council, Prof Khursheed Ahmad Butt, said that the aim is to not restrict but to free students by being proactive rather than reactive in our approach.

In his presentation, Principal, Islamia College of Science and Commerce (ICSC), Prof Khurshid Ahmad Khan outlined the status and preparedness of DYOD at his college.

Dean, Research, KU, Prof M Sultan Bhat; Director, Directorate of Admissions and Competitive Examinations, KU, Prof M Farooq Mir; Controller of Examinations, KU, Dr Majid Zaman Baba; Director, Institute of technology, KU, Prof Gowhar Bashir Vakil; Special Secretary to Vice Chancellor, KU, Dr Ashfaq Ahmed Zarri; Coordinator, DYOD, Er Qazi Junaid Ashraf besides various mentors and KU officials also attended the meeting.

The meeting was followed by an interaction with coordinators and mentors from KU and ICSC wherein they shared their feedback and reservations, it read.

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