

KU, Azim Premji University, SMC sign MoU to improve quality of education in Srinagar schools



Srinagar, Feb 6: In a major initiative that aims to further the cause of universalisation of education, the University of Kashmir, Azim Premji University Bangalore and Srinagar Municipal Corporation on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to give a fillip to quality of education in 83 identified primary schools in Srinagar.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan chaired the MoU-signing ceremony as chief guest while Mayor Srinagar, Mr Junaid Azim Mattoo and Commissioner SMC Mr Athar Amir Khan, IAS, were the guests of honour who represented the SMC. Azim Premji University was represented by Mr Bijoy Shankar Das, Leader (NE States and J&K).

The tripartite MoU envisions joint collaboration in three critical areas, including visioning workshops with SMC core group, continuous professional development programmes for Zonal Education Officers, School Leaders and School Teachers, besides development of academic material like textbooks for these schools functioning under the ambit of SMC.

While the KU will provide all academic and technical support to finalise and contextualise the modules, Azim Premji University will bring in necessary technical resources for the initiatives. The SMC, on its part, shall extend necessary support in realisation of the desired objectives.

In her presidential address, Prof Nilofer said the MoU is yet another opportunity for the University to connect with the community at grassroots and engage with the baseline feeders (primary schools) for higher education.

Urging seriousness at all levels to realise the MoU objectives with sustained attention and focus, Prof Nilofer said the University will share resources, infrastructure and expertise so that the identified schools are truly benefitted.

Mayor Srinagar, Mr Junaid Azim Matoo, underscored the genesis of the MoU. He said the Kashmir University's partnership in the MoU will offer a great impetus to "set our priorities right" vis-à-vis upgradation of quality of education in the identified primary schools functioning under the aegis of SMC.

"Giving a decent schooling to children from disadvantaged sections of the society is the focus of the MoU, which we shall be able to attain with the vast academic strength of the University of Kashmir and support from Azim Premji University," he said, underlining the need to evolve synergies and synchronisation to face the "challenges in the way."

Commissioner SMC, Mr Athar Aamir Khan called for bringing in best practices and cross-learning in schools to improve the learning outcomes.

"This MoU offers an opportunity to identify and address the gaps in teaching-learning at primary level," he said, adding that the SMC will offer its full support so that the goals envisioned in the MoU are achieved holistically.

Mr Bijoy Shankar Das from Azim Premji University said the MoU aims to develop internal capacities of various stakeholders in primary education, right from the foundational stage. This, he said, will be in sync with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) with emphasis on the need to offer quality education to children from socio-economically weaker sections of society.

Dean Academic Affairs KU Prof Farooq A Masoodi also shared his views, while Dean Research Prof Irshad A Nawchoo delivered a vote of thanks.

Earlier, KU Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir gave introductory remarks about the MoU and highlighted the role of the University in the agreement.

Joint Registrar Dr Ashfaq A Zarri coordinated the event and conducted proceedings of the MoU-signing ceremony, which was attended by Deans of various Faculties, Controller of Examinations, Heads of Departments, Media Advisor, Directors of satellite campuses, Officers of the KU Registry and several senior officers of SMC.