

## Top doctors, academics call for mass awareness on organ transplantation at KU event

*Prof Nilofer Khan, Mr Saurabh Bhagat, Dr Parvaiz Koul, Dr M Saleem Wani share dais, views at inaugural session*



**Srinagar, June 14:** Eminent doctors and academics Wednesday joined deliberations on organ donation and tissue transplant at an awareness programme held at the University of Kashmir.

The day-long programme was organised by the varsity's Department of Bioresources and Institute of Home Sciences in collaboration with J&K State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (SOTTO) and J&K Science Technology and Innovation Council (JKST&IC).

Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof Nilofer Khan chaired the inaugural session of the event as chief guest, while Shri Saurabh Bhagat, IAS, Commissioner-Secretary, J&K Science and Technology Department was the guest of honour. Director SKIMS Prof Parvaiz A Koul, HOD Urology SKIMS, Prof M Saleem Wani, Registrar KU, Dr Nisar A Mir and Nodal Officer SOTTO, J&K, Dr Elias Sharma, shared the dais.

In her presidential address, Prof Nilofer said such awareness programmes are a need of the hour to address a host of emerging health concerns in a collaborative manner. She exuded confidence that the technical deliberations involving eminent doctors from SKIMS and GMCs in different districts of Kashmir will be a great learning experience for young students.

"The University is conscious of its responsibility to connect with the society through such programmes," the VC said, congratulating all the partnering organisers for holding the important programme.

In his special address, Shri Saurabh Bhagat said such awareness programmes are very important because six to seven lakh people in the country are waiting for kidney transplant, while a similar number is looking for liver transplant or eye transplant. "And while we have a huge donor population but because of certain issues we have not been able to move forward," he said, adding that the hardship

that a family undergoes due to organ failure is “extremely terrible. It is not only financial hardship, but emotional and psychological hardship as well.”

In his keynote speech, Prof Parvaiz A Koul said “you can save a life while you are alive yourself and that is the general convention for transplantation in the country, and most other countries in the world.”

“Transplantation is regarded as one of the marvels of modern science,” he said, highlighting the SKIMS’ initiation of organ transplantation some years ago and its new strides in the process.

In his special address, Prof M Saleem Wani, talked about challenges in the way of transplantation and the way forward. He called for doing away with “myths” surrounding transplantation for the greater good of the society.

“Human resource is not a problem but infrastructure is a problem which we need to augment to move forward vis-à-vis transplantation,” he said.

KU Registrar, Dr Nisar A Mir, referred to the role of academic institutions in raising awareness on health issues concerning the society at large.

Dr Elias Sharma explained the role and functioning of SOTTO in Jammu and Kashmir, while Dr Manzoor A Mir, Coordinator, Department of Bioresources, KU, spelt out the broad objectives of holding the day-long programme.

Dr Manzoor, also an Organising Secretary of the programme along with Dr Humaira Azim of Institute of Home Science, said the University had roped in experts from SKIMS, GMCs and other health institutions in the Valley to share their perspectives and knowledge on the theme.

The inaugural session was attended by senior KU academics and officials, besides top doctors from SKIMS and several GMCs.