

**‘Disaster Risk Reduction’:**

## **Academic institutions can develop disaster-conscious, disaster-resilient society: KU VC**

*Inaugurates 5-day regional capacity building training prog*



**Srinagar, June 3:** To equip educators with the knowledge, skills and resources necessary to enhance disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies within their respective institutions and communities, the University of Kashmir, Monday inaugurated a 5-day capacity building workshop here.

Titled, ‘Regional Capacity Building Training Programme for Academicians of J&K and Ladakh (UTs), India on Disaster Risk Reduction’ covers a range of topics and is tailored for academicians from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The faculty development programme is being jointly organised by the Department of Geography and Disaster Management (DGDM), University of Kashmir and the Indian Universities and Institutions Network for Disaster Risk Reduction (IUINDRR), National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), MHA, GoI.

On the occasion, KU Vice Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan, said that the academic institutions have a larger responsibility to help develop a disaster-conscious and disaster-resilient society by undertaking collaborative endeavours especially, engaging women as “they play key roles during and after disasters”.

“We need to create awareness on disasters at the grassroots level and link more varsity departments for such collaborative programmes for training, preparedness and awareness to mitigate risks associated with disasters,” she said.

Executive Director, NIDM, Rajendra Ratnoo, in his online address, focused on the policy framework, government initiatives and the collaborative efforts required to effectively manage disaster risks in the region.

“Institutionalising DRR management and mainstreaming the subject into the curricula is the need of the hour,” he said, adding there is need to empower the next generation with specific knowledge and skills.

Underlining the broader academic and societal implications of DRR, Dean, College Development Council and the officiating Dean, Academic Affairs, KU, Prof Khurshid A Butt, said: “We need to face the emerging regional challenges that can arise courtesy disasters like the earthquake of 2005 and the floods of 2014,” adding that social sector disasters are another concern looming large in Kashmir.

Senior Consultant, NIDM, Dr Preeti Soni, emphasised the critical need for capacity building among academicians for building resilient communities.

“There are different fellowship opportunities available at NIDM and other institutions in Disaster Management,” she said, while informing the participants that UGC NET-JRF in the subject “will be inducted in the list very soon”.

Information and Public Relations Officer and Incharge e-learning, NIDM, Nazia Khan, conducted a session on the ethics of reporting during disaster scenarios.

“As responsible reporters, media professionals or representatives of the public relations, we have to ensure clear and objective reportage simultaneously upholding professional and ethical standards,” she said.

Head, DGDM, KU and Programme Convenor, Prof Pervez Ahmed, highlighted the importance of DRR in the regions of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

“Our faculty has been actively engaged in studying natural hazards, vulnerabilities of communities, analysing exposures, assessing multi-hazard risks and contributing in development of policy framework for DRR in the region,” he said.