

# 3-day national conference on 'global environmental challenges' begins at KU

*VCs, academics, scientists, J&K UT officer share dais at inaugural session*



**Srinagar, June 5:** A three-day national conference on 'Changing Course in Global Environment: Challenges and Solutions' started at the University of Kashmir on Monday, with Vice-Chancellors of several universities in J&K and academics from reputed institutions in the country in attendance for the inaugural and technical deliberations.

KU Vice-Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan chaired the opening session of the conference, organised by the varsity's Department of Environmental Sciences in collaboration with Zoological Society of India (ZSI), to mark the World Environment Day and 34th All India Congress of Zoology. Vice-Chancellor, Jammu University, Prof Umesh Rai; Vice-Chancellor Cluster University of Jammu, Prof Bechan Lal; President ZSI, Prof B N Panday; Immediate Past President, ISCA, Prof Vijay Lakshmi Saxena; Commissioner/Secretary, Science and Technology Department, J&K, Mr Saurabh Bhagat, IAS; Registrar KU, Dr Nisar A Mir; General Secretary ZSI Prof Kamal Jaiswal, and Head, Department of Environmental Science KU and Convener of the Conference Prof Fayaz Ahmad, shared the dais at the inaugural session.

In her presidential address, Prof Nilofer urged young students to be in the driver's seat in the global fight for environment protection and help promote "environment consciousness" in the society.

Prof Nilofer said Universities across J&K can further collaborate to find innovative solutions to new environmental challenges in the region. She congratulated the organisers for holding the important collaborative event.

In his special address, Prof B N Panday urged young students to understand the origin of the environment and help stop what he called the "ecocide which is threatening plant and animal life on planet Earth."

Prof Umesh Rai called for dismantling the boundaries of academic disciplines in J&K universities to address the "new environmental challenges in a trans-disciplinary manner", while Prof Bechan Lal said that young students need to shoulder the responsibility of environment protection, saying there are fears that 40% of food supply will get curtailed due to global warming and climate change in next 40 years.

Mr Saurabh Bhagat, IAS, said the J&K's Science and Technology Department has earmarked Rs five crore for research and development (R&D) on waste-to-energy research and solutions and urged the students and faculty from universities to come up with project proposals in this regard and "share their knowledge and research with the government for policy-making."

Prof Vijay Lakashmi said sustainable development is possible only with "harmonisation of societies with the environment".

Dr Nisar A Mir delivered the introductory remarks and highlighted the pro-environment initiatives taken by the University, while Prof Fayaz Ahmad in his welcome address said delegates from 20 institutions in the country are participating in the conference. Prof Kamal Jaiswal spelt out the programme schedule for technical deliberations.

The ZSI also honoured scientists from different parts of the country with felicitation medals for their outstanding contributions in research and academics.

Dr Mohammad Muslim conducted proceedings of the inaugural session, while Dr Arshid Jehangir delivered the vote of thanks.