

2-day national seminar on ‘Creating Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Spaces’ begins at KU

VC calls for involvement of youth in urban development programmes, policies



Srinagar, Mar 13: Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir Prof Nilofer Khan on Monday inaugurated a two-day national seminar on ‘Creating Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Spaces’.

The seminar that focused on ‘Urbanisation and Urban Planning in India with Special Reference to Kashmir’ was organised by the Department of Political Science with the sponsorship of Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR).

In her presidential address, Prof Nilofer called for participation of youth in programmes pertaining to the creation of sustainable urban spaces and emphasised on encouraging them to have a “positive thinking and imagination” about urban development programmes and policies.

She said the vast urbanisation has a direct bearing on the quality of life of the people and it is therefore important to formulate policies which are both sustainable and futuristic.

“Universities can contribute beyond research and academics and generate conversations on the need for creating robust urban spaces that take care of people’s wellbeing,” she said, congratulating the Department of Political Science for organising the event.

Mr Athar Amir Khan, IAS, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, who was a guest of honour, said creation of urban spaces doesn’t happen as an afterthought but by “sound planning and designing which needs a lot of public support.”

He said the Srinagar Smart City project is being designed in a manner that fosters social conversations in urban spaces. Mr Athar also highlighted the essence of works being undertaken in various parts of Srinagar City under the project.

Keynote speaker Prof Debolina Kundu from National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi, said India is moving on an upward urban trajectory where urban population is on a continuous rise. “It is projected that India’s urban population will reach 876 million and will cross 50 percent in 2047,” she said, adding that the “new wave of urbanisation” is expected to bring both opportunities and challenges.

“Urban India acknowledges these emerging challenges and recognises the need to take advantage of opportunities of urbanization with cities being seen as major drivers of economic growth,” she said.

Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, who was a guest of honour, highlighted the role of institutions in contributing to the creation of secure, inclusive and resilient cities and towns in view of emerging environmental and social concerns.

Head, Department of Political Science, Prof Peerzada Irshad Ahmad Shah delivered the welcome address and spelt out the objectives of the two-day seminar.

Dr Aijaz Ashraf Wani, Seminar Coordinator, introduced the theme of the event and highlighted broad contours of the expected deliberations and outcomes.

Dr Javid A Dar conducted proceedings of the inaugural session, while Dr Anjum Ara delivered the formal vote of thanks.