

‘Non-scheduled Languages’:

Lesser-known languages treasure houses of indigenous knowledge: Expert



Srinagar, March 6: To get insights about the significance of revitalisation of non-scheduled languages and understanding the strategies relevant for documenting the lesser known languages, the Department of Linguistics, Kashmir University (KU), Wednesday inaugurated a two-day international conference here.

Titled ‘India as a Linguistic Area with Special Reference to the Non-scheduled Languages’, the conference is being organised in collaboration with the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysuru and Society for Endangered and Lesser Known Languages, Lucknow.

On the occasion, Controller of Examinations, Dr Majid Zaman Baba, appreciated the department for undertaking such academic endeavours which are “quite relevant to the teaching and learning of languages”.

“Linguistics plays a definitive role in technology especially machine translation,” he added.

In his keynote, Chairman, Centre for Linguistics, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Prof Pradeep Kumar Das, shared insights about the significance of revitalisation of non-schedule languages. He talked about different strategies that are relevant for documenting the lesser known languages.

“We need to standardise these language in order to implement NEP which lays emphasis on the utilisation of local languages/mother tongues as medium of instruction at the school level,” Prof Das added.

Chairman, Department of Linguistics, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and President, Linguistic Society of India, Prof Muhammad Jehangeer Warsi, talked about the significance of lesser known languages.

“These are treasure houses of indigenous knowledge and with the loss of a language, the treasure gets lost,” he said.

Director, Society for Society for Endangered and Lesser Known Languages, Lucknow, Prof Kavita Rastogi, talked about various activities undertaken by the society. She thanked the department of Linguistics for hosting the conference.

Earlier, while outlining the theme of the conference, Head, Department of Linguistics, Prof Aejaaz Mohammed Sheikh, said that despite the differences, the languages found in India have got certain similarities at the phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical levels.

“Presence of echo words, reduplication, retroflexion, etc., is prevalent in languages across the country that needs to be appreciated and examined at a large scale,” Prof Aejaaz added.

More than 40 delegates from AMU, JNU, BHU, Nagaland University, University of Gujarat, Mumbai University, etc. are attending the conference.

Besides, three plenary lectures, scheduled to be delivered by Prof Kavita Rastogi and Prof Kakali Mukherjee and an online lecture by Prof Shobanna Chelliah, from Indiana University, USA are part of the conference.

Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, Dr Sheeba Hassan, conducted the proceedings of the inaugural session while as, Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, Dr Saima Jan, presented the formal vote of thanks.