

Small steps mark big leap in NEP-2020 implementation: KU VC



Srinagar, November 22: To foster dialogue, exchange ideas and chart a path towards realising the transformative potential of NEP-2020 in higher education by bringing together academicians, scholars and students on a common platform, the National Education Policy (NEP) Cell, Kashmir University (KU) Wednesday inaugurated a two-day national conference here.

Titled 'National Education Policy-2020 and Higher Education: Implementation, Accomplishments and Road Ahead', the conference is hybrid in nature with participants joining both in-person and online.

During the inaugural session, KU Vice Chancellor, Prof Nilofer Khan emphasised the imperative need for capacity building among stakeholders to ensure optimal outcomes.

“The varsity has aligned the entire curriculum of its undergraduate programmes with NEP regulations,” she said.

Highlighting the preparations gone into implementing the policy while taking all stakeholders on board, she said key parameters like local needs, requirements, infrastructure and human resource were taken into consideration.

“The mindset has changed as our small steps made a big leap in successfully implementing the policy,” Prof Khan said, adding that as a mentoring institution Kashmir University has a pivotal role in ensuring NEP’s proper implementation.

Prof Nilofer Khan said that there is scope of improvement in implementing skill and technology components and that a lot needs to be in terms of infrastructure and human resource availability.

“This conference will identify the loopholes that possibly impede the policy’s large-scale implementation and the two-day deliberations could lead us to possible resolution of the issues flagged with periodic review,” she added.

Pertinently, the Kashmir University is the first institution to take a lead in implementing the NEP-2020 in all its affiliated colleges offering undergraduate courses.

Dean Academic Affairs, KU, Prof Farooq Ahmad Masoodi highlighted the issues and concerns regarding the policy implementation, however, he hailed NEP-2020 as an aspirational framework offering vast opportunities for the student community.

“Whenever you take a lead, there is always a risk factor limiting your progress, however, a significant level of awareness has been generated and it is high time we take our administrative staff into the fold and make the objectives very clear to all the stakeholders,” he stated.

Acknowledging the contributions of the architects of the policy, Dean, College Development Council, KU, Prof Khurshid Ahmad Butt emphasised the transformative impact of NEP-2020 on India’s education system.

He said, “Its comprehensive implementation will revolutionise the education landscape as NEP-2020 has very far-reaching consequences and it covers the entire gamut of education.”

Registrar, KU, Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir highlighted the composition, content and context of NEP-2020 policy framework.

Referring to the gross enrollment ratio (GER), he said: “There are issues in terms of quality of education and HR (human resource) availability as NEP envisages 50-55 percent GER by the year 2035”

Dr Mir lauded the varsity’s pioneering efforts in implementing NEP-2020 at the undergraduate level, expressing commitment to fully harness its benefits.

Professor at the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies (ZHCES), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, Prof Saumen Chattopadhyay, in his keynote deliberated on the challenges in implementing NEP at higher educational institutions, offering insightful recommendations to address these hurdles.

“There has to be a match between higher education and job market and we need to orient students to choose their own academic and professional trajectories,” he said, adding that there is need for unravelling the rationale behind NEP-2020.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Chief Coordinator, NEP Cell, KU, Prof Mushtaq Ahmad Siddiqi highlighted the significance of the two-day conference while outlining its objectives.

He said, “NEP lays the foundation of our education system that encourages inclusion, critical thinking, problem solving, flexibility of choice, skills and experiential learning.”

Deans of different schools, heads of various departments, academic counsellors, faculty members, research scholars, NEP volunteers and students attended the inaugural session.