

National workshop on sharda script begins at KU



Srinagar, Oct 30: The Department of Persian, University of Kashmir (KU), commenced a 15-day National Workshop on Sharda Script (Basic Level) at the Main Campus. The workshop aims to familiarise participants with the fundamentals of the ancient Sharda script, promote its preservation, and encourage research on Kashmir's rich manuscript heritage.

The event is sponsored by the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM), Ministry of Culture, Government of India under Gyan Bharatham initiative. The workshop will continue till November 11, featuring expert sessions on the fundamentals of Sharda script, manuscript preservation, paleography, and transcription techniques.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said that the University remains committed to preserving and promoting India's linguistic and cultural heritage.

“The Sharda script holds immense historical and cultural value for Kashmir. By reviving interest in it, we are not only safeguarding a tradition but also reconnecting with a vital part of our identity,” she said.

Shri Samar Nanda (IAS), Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, GoI, and Dr. Anirban Dash, Director, NMM, Ministry of Culture, in their virtual addresses, commended the University’s initiative and emphasised the need to train young scholars in traditional scripts to expand manuscript research in India.

Dean Academic Affairs KU, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, said that the workshop provides a platform for scholars and students to engage with one of the oldest writing systems of the region and understand its relevance in contemporary manuscript studies.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in preserving ancient scripts and manuscripts, noting that such efforts strengthen academic and cultural linkages across institutions.

Dean, School of Arts, Languages & Literature KU, Prof. Aejaz Mohammed Sheikh, said that learning the Sharda script opens up a new dimension for understanding Kashmir’s intellectual history, while Dr. Dharminder Kumar, Director, LD Institute of Indology, University of Ahmedabad, spoke about the wider significance of documenting Sharda manuscripts.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Head, Department of Persian KU, Prof. Jahangir Iqbal, said that the workshop aims to build a foundation for future research in the field of manuscript studies and script revival.

The inaugural event was attended by deans, heads of departments, faculty members, scholars, and students of the campus. The event proceedings were conducted by Dr. Shadab Arshad, faculty at Department of Persian KU while vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Shahnawaz Shah, faculty at Department of Persian KU.