

KU, NITI Aayog discuss roadmap to boost innovation ecosystem through ATL enhancement in J&K



Srinagar, Sept 03: To strengthen the tinkering and innovation ecosystem across the UT of J&K, the University of Kashmir (KU), in collaboration with the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, on Wednesday convened a strategy and preparatory meeting on Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) enhancement.

The meeting brought together key stakeholders to deliberate on ways of improving the functioning of ATLs and ensuring sustained mentorship support.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, expressed pride over the University being designated as the Nodal Agency for 127 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) across J&K.

“The University is committed to nurturing innovation, creativity, and problem-solving among our young students, ensuring that these labs become true launchpads for future innovators of our region,” she said.

The meeting was attended by Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Director Colleges J&K, Prof. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Directors of School Education—Naseem Javaid Chowdhary (Jammu) and Dr. Ghulam Nabi Itoo (Kashmir), Joint Director from J&K Science

Technology and Innovation Council along with senior representatives from Boeing India, and Nodal Officers of ATLs and Atal Incubation Centres.

During the session, Mr. Shubham Gupta, Innovation Lead, AIM, NITI Aayog, presented the ATL enhancement strategy and roadmap for ATL Sarthi.

He emphasized that sustained mentorship, stronger institutional linkages, and capacity building of teachers would be critical to scaling innovation across J&K.

He also highlighted AIM's proposal for a structured district-wise implementation framework involving KU faculty, scholars, and students, along with plans for state-level exhibitions, hackathons, and the introduction of 500 new ATLs under ATL 2.0, representing an investment of nearly ₹100 crore in the region.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Dr. Javaid Ahmad Shiekh, Nodal Officer, ATL Sarthi, KU, provided an overview of the programme's objectives and expected outcomes. He said the collaboration would ensure robust monitoring mechanisms, stronger industry linkages, integration with Atal Incubation Centres, and regular capacity-building workshops for ATL teachers.

The deliberations also focused on establishing a joint monitoring and reporting framework with NITI Aayog, greater integration with the School and Higher Education Departments, and initiatives to empower ATL teachers to mentor young innovators more effectively.