

‘Genomics Towards Better Health’: Need for multidisciplinary collaboration in genomics: Dr Jitendra Singh

Valuable tool in identifying rare genetic diseases: KU VC



Srinagar, Sep 23: To expose young students to the recent and evolving technologies in genomics and their applications in public health and to provide them an opportunity to broaden their career prospects, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Innovation (CIRI), Kashmir University (KU), in collaboration with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) organised a two-day symposium here.

The symposium, titled ‘Genomics towards Better Health’ brought together participants from within and outside Jammu and Kashmir to explore the multifaceted aspects of genomics and its potential in enhancing healthcare outcomes.

Minister of State (MoS) for the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh who presided over the valedictory function emphasised the need to understand and harness the power of genomics in healthcare.

Highlighting the significance of diverse cultures and disciplines working together in the scientific world, he said: “In the field of genomics, collaboration knows no boundaries. To achieve success in scientific endeavours, we must bring together different cultures and perspectives, fostering an environment of innovation and discovery.”

Reiterating that genomics is a potent tool for research, drawing significant interest in finding novel treatments for various medical conditions, he encouraged continued growth and integrity in the field of genomics research.

While welcoming Dr Jitendra Singh, KU Vice Chancellor, Prof Nilofer Khan underscored the importance of understanding genomics in the context of better health.

She said genomics is emerging as a valuable tool in identifying rare genetic diseases that had previously taken years to diagnose.

Acknowledging the pivotal role played by CIRI in elevating the university's profile on a global scale, Prof Khan said, "CIRI is playing an important role in promoting quality interdisciplinary research and leading in generating funds to set up world-class scientific infrastructure at the university."

While thanking Dr Jitendra Singh, KU Registrar, Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir said genomics is a new phenomenon that has the potential to shape the social and economic fabric through timely diagnosis and treatment of genetic diseases.

"The university is trying to infuse support to develop a centralised facility at KU for the benefit of the masses and is contemplating to start centres on genetics and virology with government support," he said.

Noted endocrinologist and Head, Department of Clinical Research, SKIMS, Srinagar, Prof M Ashraf Ganie highlighted the pivotal role of genomics in the prediction, prevention, and treatment of diabetes while emphasising its significance in evaluating the validity and clinical utility of diseases.

During a special ceremony, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the ICMR India Diabetes Study and Diabetes Educator Programmes at the function.

Senior Scientist IGIB, Dr Munia Ganguli who proposed the vote of thanks at the valedictory thanked KU VC while hoping to do more such collaborations in future as well.

Meanwhile, during the inauguration held Friday, Director IGIB, Prof Souvik Maiti stressed the importance of introducing genomics at various academic levels and proposed a collaboration with KU to provide training to students of the varsity at his centre in New Delhi.

Dean, Research, KU, Prof Irshad Ahmad Nawchoo encouraged students to explore this interdisciplinary field and emphasised the significance of knowledge and resource sharing for academic and research development.

Coordinator, CIRI, KU, Dr Altaf Bhat underscored the immense importance of genomics in improving health outcomes and its potential for discoveries, diagnostics, and start-ups in revolutionising the healthcare landscape.

Scientist, IGIB, Dr Sonam Dhamija proposed the vote of thanks while research scholar at CIRI, Dr Wafa Khan conducted the proceedings of the inaugural event.

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