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IUST Hosts Seminar on Cancer Prevention and Early Detection

Experts Call for Greater Focus on Awareness, Environment and Early Diagnosis

Awantipora, June 17: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), in collaboration with the Kashmir Oncology Forum (KOF), organized a one-day seminar on “*Cancer Prevention and Early Detection: Bridging Science, Awareness and Action.*” The seminar was organized by the Watson-Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine in collaboration with the Office of Dean Outreach, Centre for AYUSH Sciences, University Health Centre, and Frontier Research Institute of Interdisciplinary Sciences. The programme was sponsored by the J&K Science, Technology and Innovation Council (JKSTIC) and J&K Bank Ltd.

The inaugural session was attended by Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice-Chancellor, IUST; Dr. Aabid Hussain Shalla, Dean Research, IUST; Prof. Shad Salim Akhtar, President, Kashmir Oncology Forum; Prof. Javid Rasool Bhat, Vice-President, Kashmir Oncology Forum; and several distinguished healthcare professionals and academicians. In his address, Prof. Romshoo emphasized the importance of strengthening cancer awareness, promoting preventive healthcare, and fostering collaborations among academia, healthcare institutions, and civil society to address the growing cancer burden. He highlighted the role of universities in generating scientific knowledge and translating research into meaningful public-health interventions.

Prof. Shad Salim Akhtar underscored the significance of early detection and timely intervention in improving cancer outcomes and called for stronger public-awareness initiatives, sustained research efforts, and greater collaboration among healthcare professionals, researchers, and policymakers. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Aabid Hussain Shalla highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary research and innovation in addressing complex health challenges.

Earlier, welcoming the participants, Dr. Rais Ahmad Ganai, Head Watson–Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine, underscored the importance of cancer awareness and early detection, urging students to play an active role in promoting health awareness within their communities. The inaugural session, moderated by Ms. Aanisa Nazir, concluded with a vote of thanks by Prof. Javid Rasool Bhat.

The technical sessions featured lectures by Prof. Shad Salim Akhtar, Prof. Malik Tariq Rasool, Head, Department of Radiation Oncology, SKIMS; Dr. Mir Mohammad Hussain, Medical Oncologist, SKIMS; Dr. Shahida Naseer, Additional Professor, Department of Radiation Oncology, SKIMS; and Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Sofi. Participants were deeply moved by the testimony of cancer survivor and awareness advocate Mr. Rouf Sikandar, whose personal journey reinforced the value of hope, resilience, and early diagnosis. Interactive panel discussions and student engagements explored challenges and opportunities in cancer



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prevention and screening, while winners of the cancer model-making competition were felicitated during the valedictory session.

The seminar brought together oncologists, medical practitioners, researchers, academicians, healthcare professionals, students, and members of civil society to deliberate on recent advances in cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment. The programme served as an important platform for dialogue between researchers, clinicians, and policymakers, reinforcing the collective commitment towards reducing the cancer burden through awareness, early detection, and collaborative action.

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