



October 9, 2024

2-day National Conference on Kashmiri Language inaugurated at IUST

Awantipora, Oct 9: In an endeavour to preserve and promote Kashmiri language, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) is holding a two-day national conference, which was inaugurated today. The conference titled 'Technological Intervention in Promoting Kashmiri Language' is being organised by Habba Khatoon Centre for Kashmiri Language and Literature, IUST and sponsored by Le-Khidmah Foundation Ganderbal.

The inaugural session was presided over by Prof Shakil A. Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, IUST who said that aim of the conference is to bring together linguists and technologists to discuss the scope of intervention of technology in the promotion of Kashmiri language. He said that in the era of AI/ML and IR 4.0 which envisages fusion of different technologies and skill sets the need for leveraging technology for promotion of Kashmiri can't be exaggerated. He also said that the importance of learning and teaching native language has been emphasized in the NEP 2020 and it has been established by Research that learning outcomes are better when teaching is undertaken in the mother tongue.

Guest of honour and renowned Kashmiri poet, Zareef Ahmad Zareef, said that parents should encourage their children to converse in Kashmiri. In his key-note address, noted author and poet, Prof Shafi Shauq, said that there is a need to develop glossary for different subjects in Kashmiri which calls for a collaborative effort. He said that the languages have evolved due to the innate desire among humans to convey, their emotions, thoughts and experiences and are a cause for human civilizations. He emphasised that it is important to make most out of the technology to help preserve Kashmiri language through platforms like Google Translator, Alexa, Duolingo and so on.

Speaking on the occasion, Dean Academic Affairs, IUST, said Kashmiri language is the identity of the people of Kashmir, yet they struggle to communicate in their mother tongue. He said that to develop workable AI and Natural Processing models, there is a need for digitalization using OCR and ICR technologies to develop meta data for functional language models. He said that at IUST Kashmiri courses are favourite among students especially among non-native speakers. Registrar, IUST, Prof Abdul Wahid, said the technology offers numerous means that can help preserve Kashmiri language.

Dean, School of Humanities and Social Science, IUST, Dr Munejah Khan also spoke about need for promotion of Kashmiri language. Earlier, welcoming the guests, Dr Afshana, Coordinator, Habba Khatoon Centre, IUST, gave an overview of the Habakhattoon centre and its thrust areas in terms of the research aimed at promotion of the language and collaboration. She said research papers covering various aspects of the conference theme are being presented in the conference. She also thanked the sponsors of the conference.

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