



IUST holds Conf on Impact of Fasting on Spiritual and Mental Health

Awantipora, April 13: To necessitate the spiritual upgradation of the society and highlight the significance of Ramadhan, the International Centre for Spiritual Studies (ICSS) of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) held a One Day Conference on the theme "*Impact of Fasting on Spiritual and Mental Health*" in collaboration with Shamah Foundation (A Women Concern based in Kashmir) here on Tuesday.



Several key figures, eminent religious scholars, health experts from across the valley delivered special lectures during the conference which commenced with recitation of the Quran and Naat-e Rasool (PBUH).

In his presidential address, Vice Chancellor, IUST Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, the Chief Guest on the occasion, deliberated upon social, spiritual and mental benefits of fasting for the wellbeing of an individual and how it boosted unity within a community. Prof. Romshoo congratulated ICSS for conducting such a useful and intellectual exchange as it would contribute towards the upliftment of human character and spiritual understanding.



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Shaykh-ul-Hadees, Darul Uloom Raheemiyyah Bandipora and eminent religious scholar, Maulana Mufti Nazir Ahmad Qasmi in his distinguished lecture referred to the first Hadith of Bukhari “Inna mal aamalu bi-niyaat” (i.e., the actions are rated according to the intentions) and said that before fasting or any practice, correcting intentions was needed. He underscored significance of fasting at multiple levels, as the benefits were not just confined to physical starvation of a human body but went beyond ‘if fasting was observed in a pure and proper way’ and it could stop us from wrong doing in any profession we are in. “While controlling our eyes, ears other body parts, mind, emotions from evil practices, we could achieve the spiritual cleansing, a revered dimension of fasting and worship according to Islam,” he added.

Renowned psychiatrist and Director Institute of Mental Health and Neuroscience Kashmir Prof. Mushtaq A. Margoob, explored the psychological dimension of fasting. He said that fasting not only meant abstaining from eating but also controlling basic instincts, evil desires, emotions and feelings that lead us to stress and anxiety. He discussed how fasting in Ramadhan over a period of time trains us with self-control over body, emotion and desires. Prof. Margoob, who is also the visiting professor of the university touched the subject of mental health according to WHO and said it is a state of wellbeing in which humans realize their potential and capabilities and then fight with stress and anxiety to live a productive and healthy life which would finally contribute to the welfare of the society.

Prof. Qayyum Hussain, Hon’ble Vice Chancellor Cluster University Srinagar, the Guest of Honor on the occasion talked about the relationship between Ramadhan and science and emphasized the physical importance of fasting. He also stressed on ‘healing due to fasting’ as it broke-down the nonessentials cells and could stop many diseases like Parkinson’s, dementia, Cancer etc.

Earlier Director ICSS, Prof. Hamidulla Marazi highlighted the spiritual and mental benefits of fasting in his welcome address and called on the significance of exploring research in this direction to contextualize these dimensions. He further added that ICSS would continue with such



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programmes in future and would work to make the Centre a pivotal platform for spiritual education.

Also during the event, Trustee of Shama Foundation, Haji G.M. Dug detailed the work and functions of Shamah Foundation. The event, which was attended by Deans, Officers, HoDs, faculty members students and scholars of the university concluded with vote of thanks by former Incharge of ICSS and Dy Director IUST Dr. S. Iqbal Quraishi.