

KU to offer foreign language courses at UG level

Prof Punjabi chairs Academic Council meet

Srinagar, June 26:

Kashmir University's Academic Council, the highest decision-making academic forum of the varsity, has approved the proposal for introduction of various foreign language courses at the undergraduate level, besides starting postgraduate courses in different specialised branches of Dentistry.

The decision to this effect was taken at the Academic Council meeting held in the university on Saturday, after a gap of five years.

he KU vice-chancellor, Prof Riyaz Punjabi chaired the meeting, which was attended by Deans of various KU faculties, Heads of the Departments besides principals and academics from various affiliated colleges of the University.



In his inaugural remarks, Prof Punjabi stressed on the need to convene such meetings in time, asserting that they were a "vital component" of effective functioning of the varsity. "Such meetings give a sense of belongingness to Deans, Heads of Departments and academics as they become an integral part of decision-making process in the academic arena of the university," he said. "I don't see any reason why we have not met so far. This way we are deprived of our colleagues' wisdom while taking the academic decisions. It deprives the entire educational fraternity of healthy growth."

Prof Punjabi dealt extensively with the emerging challenges in the higher education arena in the state. "Higher education in the state is facing many challenges and we need to gear up and meet these challenges," he said, calling for exploring the opportunities of collaborating with other institutions in academics and research, and also to have more funding for the university.

The agenda of the meeting was discussed threadbare. The members had a healthy debate over the agenda of the meeting.

The KU Registrar, Prof S Fayyaz Ahmad, conducted the meeting in the capacity of ex-officio secretary. "During Prof. Punjabi's tenure, many academic initiatives have been taken. The Vice Chancellor has tried to streamline the institution and bring quality in teaching, extension and research process of the varsity," said Prof Fayyaz, adding the academic council meeting indicated democratic decision-making process at the university.

Pertinently, meeting is the largest academic body comprising of Vice Chancellor who is also the chairman; Deans of Faculties of both Universities viz. Kashmir and Jammu; heads of departments of the University; 6 Principals and 4 Professors of affiliated colleges of the University, besides co-opted members that are nominated by the VC, while the Registrar is the ex-officio Secretary as provided under the Kashmir and Jammu Universities Act 1969. The powers and functions of the Academic Council include control and regulation of standards of teaching and examinations in the University; promotion of research within the University; advise the Syndicate and University Council on academic matters besides many other functions related to furthering academic excellence in the University.

The last such meeting was held on 17th February 2005.