

# KU's initiative on promoting entrepreneurship, building start-ups reaches North Kashmir

**SRINAGAR:** To unlock the potential of medicinal and aromatic plants in North Kashmir, the Department of Botany, North Campus, Kashmir University (KU), organised a two-day capacity building programme here.

Titled, "Cultivation, Processing and Marketing of High Value Medicinal and Aromatic Plants concluded on March 23 at the Campus in Delina, Baramulla, an official statement issued here read.

The programme is part of a mega initiative of Kashmir University for promoting entrepreneurship and building start-ups.

"The initiative reflects KU's attempt to provide service to local communities and engage people in meaningful collaboration with the institution," an official spokesperson said, adding that.

As part of the initiative, an array of programmes have already been conducted across different departments and campuses of the varsity, he added.

Unemployed youth, farmers, entrepreneurs and researchers of North Kashmir, attended the programme at North Campus witnessing an overwhelming participation of the local women as well.

Director, North Campus, Dr Sheikh Ghulam Mohammad, highlighted the significance of tapping the vast natural resources available locally to develop entrepreneurship and start-up ventures within the valley.

"To orient our future enterprises, these programmes pave the way towards building a culture of entrepreneurship and start-ups," he said.

Programme Convener/Organising Secretary and Coordinator, Department of Botany, Dr Bilal Ahmad Mir, emphasised on the significance of such events in forging ties of the institution with local populace.

"These plants not only offer solutions for various health ailments but also contribute to economic prosperity, environ-



mental conservation and cultural heritage preservation," he said.

A series of indoor theoretical and outdoor practical sessions were held in the campus emphasising on the diversity, cultivation, conservation and marketing phase of medicinal plants and mushrooms.

Led by expert agronomists and botanists, the sessions delved into the intricacies of soil health, agro technique developments, government policies and conservation and cultivation practices, it read further.

Prof Yash Pal Sharma, Department of Botany, Jammu University, highlighted the importance of conservation, development and sustainable management of medicinal plants.

Dr Irfan Hussain Banday, National Medicinal Plant Board, Department of AYUSH, reflected on cultivation and economics of some high altitude medicinal plants.

Dr Aijaz Hassan Ganie, Department of Botany, North Campus, introduced the participants to different agro-techniques for cultivation and commercialisation of medicinal plants.

The participants also visited the field station of CSIR-IIIM situated at Boonera where they learned how to transform raw plant materials into value-added products.

The final session focused on marketing strategies, providing valuable insights into market demand, consumer preferences and branding techniques, the statement added.