



Goonj 2025: A grand celebration of Culture, Sports and Best practices inaugurated at JU

Jammu, March 19: Goonj 2025- a two-day multi-genre festival celebrating cultural and literary excellence, sports, and institutional Best Practices was today inaugurated at the University of Jammu. Now in its second consecutive year, Goonj exemplifies the University's commitment to fostering holistic development and interdisciplinary learning. Envisioned by Prof. Umesh Rai, Goonj-2 has been successful in reverberating the zestful ambience in the campus. The festival was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor Prof. Umesh Rai, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, alongside Dr. S.P. Vaid, IPS, former Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, who attended as the Guest of Honour.

In his inaugural address, Vice Chancellor Prof. Umesh Rai highlighted *Goonj 2025* as a platform that brings together culture, sports, and academics, allowing students to explore their potential beyond the classroom. He noted that such events encourage collaboration across disciplines, helping students think critically, express themselves creatively, and engage in meaningful learning experiences. He emphasized that education is not just about acquiring knowledge but about developing a well-rounded perspective that prepares students for the future.

Prof. Rai spoke about the university's efforts to integrate innovative teaching and learning practices, applauding the *Best Practices* for offering a space where departments could share their most impactful initiatives. Acknowledging the remarkable efforts of faculty and students in showcasing their best academic practices, he called upon everyone to take ownership of their institution. "The strength of a university lies in the dedication of its students and faculty. When we take pride in our institution, we contribute to its growth, making it a hub of excellence and innovation," he stated.

He commended faculty and students for their dedication to programs like *Design Your Degree*, which aligns with *NEP 2020* and equips students with skills that meet industry demands. He also acknowledged the university's strides in research and infrastructure, mentioning key developments such as the *Innovation Tower*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Building*, and *advanced sports facilities* and also acknowledged the support of Govt of JKUT in various initiatives of the University.

He concluded by encouraging students to take an active role in their education, embrace new opportunities, and contribute to society with confidence and creativity. He expressed his appreciation for the efforts of faculty, staff, and organizers in making *Goonj 2025* a vibrant celebration of talent, learning, and innovation.

Earlier, Prof. Rai, accompanied by the Guest of Honour and senior functionaries of the University, inaugurated Best Practices stalls set up by teaching departments and offsite campuses of the University. These exhibits showcased pioneering academic initiatives and research-driven innovations, reinforcing the University's dedication to excellence in education and skill development. Acknowledging the faculty and students for their relentless pursuit of academic advancement, the Vice Chancellor emphasized that Goonj serves as a catalyst for knowledge exchange and intellectual growth.

Addressing the gathering, Guest of Honour Dr. S.P. Vaid, IPS emphasized the significance of Goonj in fostering teamwork, creativity, and a competitive spirit. Reflecting on his own experiences, he underscored the need for synergy across disciplines and institutions to drive national progress. "India's growth depends on breaking down traditional silos and fostering collaboration. The showcase of the Best Practices at Goonj is a commendable initiative that highlights how institutions can work collectively to enhance learning and innovation," he stated.

Encouraging students to realize their full potential, Dr. Vaid urged them to actively contribute to nation-building, particularly in alignment with India's Vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. He emphasized the importance of practical education and skill application in shaping the leaders of tomorrow. Applauding the University's progressive implementation of NEP 2020, he encouraged faculty and students to embrace its transformative framework and draw inspiration from India's rich cultural heritage for future growth.

Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Anju Bhasin, while addressing the inaugural function of Goonj 2025, highlighted the festival's role in cultivating resilience, teamwork, and creativity among students. She emphasized that Goonj is not just a celebration of talent but a platform for holistic learning, where sports instill discipline and endurance, while literary and artistic activities nurture critical thinking, eloquence, and innovation. Commending the Best Practices Showcase for reflecting the university's commitment to academic excellence and interdisciplinary learning, she encouraged students to embrace the festival with passion, integrity, and a spirit of collaboration. She further remarked that Goonj mirrors life itself, where success is not defined by a single achievement but by the journey, the lessons learned, and the experiences gained along the way.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Prof. Prakash Antahal, Dean Students Welfare, described Goonj as a vibrant cultural and intellectual platform that allows students to showcase their artistic, literary, and creative talents. Prof. Monika Chadha, Chairperson, Campus Cultural Committee, provided an overview of the festival, detailing its diverse range of competitions, performances, and interactive sessions designed to celebrate talent across multiple disciplines.

Among others present on the occasion included Prof. Meena Sharma, Dean Planning and Development, Prof. Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research Studies, Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Registrar, Prof. Naresh Padha, seniormost faculty, Prof. Rajiv Rattan Sharma, Director Colleges, Prof. Pankaj Srivastava, Director CDOE, Deans, Rectors, Directors, Heads of teaching departments, faculty members, officers, office bearers of various associations, staff, scholars and students.

Around 500 students from the teaching departments of the University of Jammu, its offsite campuses, affiliated colleges and Cluster University of Jammu are participating in various activities of Culture, Sports and Exhibition of Best Practices which include Light Vocal Singing, Elocution, Short Film Making, Poster Making, Skit, Folk Dance, Poetry Recitation, Basketball, Volleyball, Handball, Kho-Kho, Table Tennis,

Athletics and Relay Races. The vertical of Best Practices is being looked after by Prof. Pankaj Srivastava, Culture by Prof. Monika Chadha and Sports by Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba.

The inaugural function was ably conducted by Prof. Sarika Manhas, Co-Chairperson, Campus Cultural Committee who also presented the vote of thanks. The events of DSW are conceived, planned and organised by the team consisting of Prof. Prakash Antahal (Dean Students Welfare), Prof. Monika Chadha (Chairperson, Campus Cultural Committee), Prof. Sarika Manhas (Co-Chairperson, Campus Cultural Committee), Dr. Pritam Singh (Associate Dean SW), Dr. Shallu Sharma & Dr. A.R. Manhas (Deputy Chief Proctors), Dr. Harleen Kaur & Dr. Ripudaman Parihar (Assistant Dean, SW), members of Campus Cultural Committee, Ms Mansi Mantoo (Media Officer), Supriya, AR, Sumeet Sharma (Drama Instructor) and Ifra Kak (Cultural Officer).