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***IUST launches Lal Ded Literary Society: Holds Literary Fest amid Foundation Week celebrations***

Awantipora, Nov 11: To promote the literary talent of youth, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on Monday launched the official literary club of the varsity by the name of 'Lal Ded Literary Society.' The society was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof Shakil A. Romshoo, during the Literary Fest, organised by the Editorial Committee, IUST, in association with the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL).

Congratulating the organisers on the launch of the society, Prof Romshoo remarked that it marks yet another significant milestone in IUST's endeavour in preserving culture, heritage and literature. He emphasised the need for collaborations between various institutions in promoting the literature. "IUST is always eager to foster clubs that ignite students' passions," said Prof Romshoo in his presidential address.

In her address, celebrated Kashmiri poet and Sahitya Akademi Awardee, Prof Naseem Shafaie, who was the guest of honour, shared several insightful anecdotes to highlight how literature is celebrated worldwide and urged the IUST administration to establish a 'literary village' — a space dedicated to celebrating the language and culture of Kashmir, drawing an inspiration from the teachings of Lal Ded.

Dr Shabnam Rafiq, Programme Office at JKAACL and a special guest at the event, expressed enthusiasm over the establishment of the Lal Ded Literary Society at IUST. He said their academy is at the forefront of any efforts to promote and preserve the literary culture of Kashmir. Dean Academic Affairs, IUST, Prof A H Moon, congratulated the editorial committee for establishment of the literary club and said that the literary club shall also help to promote the objectives of National Education Policy, 2020.

Prof Abdul Wahid Makhdoomi, Registrar IUST, said literature is an expression of human emotion. He added that students must toil hard to reach great heights. "Ultimately those who work hard will be rewarded, and we will have great literature experts coming up from IUST in future," he added. Earlier, welcoming the guests, Dr Mujeeb Liyakat, Chairperson Editorial Committee said, literature is important for several reasons, including understanding the world, developing critical thinking skills, learning empathy, cultivating wisdom and shaping the society. Member, Editorial Committee, Dr Rabia Noor, gave an overview of the Lal Ded Literary Society, and said that the society aims to be a hub for critical thinkers and problem solvers, and a space for writers, readers and orators to share their ideas.

The literary fest featured a range of activities including poetry recitation, essay writing, Lal Vakh recitation and debate competition. The proceedings of the event were conducted by Isma Hamid, and Heeba Din, proposed a vote of thanks. A short film capturing the essence of Lal Ded, produced by the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, IUST, was



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screened during the event. The daily English newspaper, Greater Kashmir, served as the media partner for this occasion and Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development were one of the sponsors of the event.

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