

MU to introduce cleanliness hr in curriculum

Deepthi.Sanjiv
@timesofindia.com

Mangaluru: Mangalore University (MU) is set to introduce a dedicated 'cleanliness hour' as part of its curriculum. Vice-chancellor PL Dharma told TOI that the university was awarded Green Campus status in 2023, prompting the administration to find sustainable ways to uphold and expand this recognition.

"We realised that maintaining this status requires continuous efforts. To make it more impactful, we decided to educate students and integrate cleanliness into the academic framework. This is probably a first-of-its-kind initiative," he said.

As part of the initiative, the university is adopting a policy-driven approach to cle-

anliness. "Cleanliness is not a one-day affair; it must be ingrained in the curriculum. We have decided to allocate one hour every week in the timetable for discussions on cleanliness. These discussions may cover national and international cleanliness drives, environmental movements, or practical measures to maintain clean premises," Prof Dharma explained.

Since incorporating cleanliness into the syllabus is an official process, the Board of Studies chairpersons have been instructed to approve and submit the proposal to the VC. Once approved by the academic council, it will become an official policy applicable across 45 departments.

"I have proposed it for the PG programmes to start with. In a phased manner, we



WAITING FOR APPROVAL: Board of Studies chairpersons have been instructed to approve and submit the proposal on cleanliness hour to Mangalore University VC PL Dharma

will extend it to the UG programmes," he said.

The idea, the VC said, was inspired by Sheena Shetty of the Jana Shikshana Trust, who previously served as the Ombudsman for Dakshina Kannada district. "He asked if MU could collaborate on cleanliness efforts, and since I was already working with him, I agreed. As a result, the Konaje gram panchayat and Jana Shikshana Trust have

partnered with us to conduct cleanliness drives. Around 3,000 students from the university will participate in public demonstrations at least once every six months, and we are also considering organising cleaning drives," he said. As a first step, the university has worked towards making its campus plastic-free. "We have ensured that plastic bottles are not used; instead, we provide water in

glasses, and use cups, and saucers. We are strongly discouraging plastic use at all levels," he said.

Prof Dharma said efforts to segregate waste into dry and wet categories in residential quarters have been taken up. "A notice on waste segregation has already been issued. We are also exploring percolation pits for water management," he added.

Encouraging afforestation, the university has urged students to plant saplings instead of cutting cakes on birthdays.

"Until Friday, 23 saplings were planted to mark birthdays. We encourage students to celebrate by planting a tree—preferably a fruit-bearing one. They can also plant one in their mother's name," he said.

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