## World Environment Day 2025 Celebrated at Gautam Buddha University Theme: "Ending Plastic Pollution"

Greater Noida, June 5, 2025 — Gautam Buddha University proudly observed the 52<sup>nd</sup> World Environment Day 2025 today with the global theme "Ending Plastic Pollution", emphasizing the urgent need for sustainable solutions to one of the world's most pressing environmental challenges. The "Brainstorming Session" was held at the VC Board Room, Administrative Block, and was organized by the Department of Environmental Science, University School of Vocational Studies and Applied Sciences, Gautam Buddha University. Prof. (Dr.) Saumitra Mukherjee, Former Dean, School of Environmental Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest of the event that was presided by Prof. Rana Pratap Singh, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Gautam Buddha University who also welcomed the Chief Guest. Dean Academics and Dean of the School of Vocational Studies and Applied Sciences, Prof. N.P. Melkania introduced the theme of the World Environment Day 2025 and formally introduced the Chief Guest in his opening address.



The chief guest Prof. Mukherjee delivered an insightful keynote address on the catastrophic impact of plastic pollution on ecosystems and human health, while emphasizing the importance of collective action and policy-level changes. He reiterated that Kshitij, Jal, Pavak, Gagan, and Sameera are not merely elements of nature, but deep metaphors that reflect the essence of human life and existence. He illustrated the menace of plastic pollution with the painful example of solid plastic waste choking one of the JNU Check dams constructed under his supervision that was once a crucial water source of JNU. He highlighted the importance of nanotechnology based on iron oxide nanoparticles in the remediation of microplastic-polluted environment. Further he discussed his research on reclaiming arsenic polluted water using his patented column-filtration technology. He also encouraged the faculty members to undertake research in the area of nano-remediation aimed to combat plastic pollution.

In his inaugural remarks, **Prof. Rana Pratap Singh**, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Gautam Buddha University highlighted the university's commitment to environmental stewardship, encouraging research and innovation aimed at reducing plastic waste. He said that 'urethane' a type of plastic monomer used in the synthesis of the polymer 'polyurethane' (PU) has severely adverse health effects on living organisms as it is a potent carcinogen. He emphasized that epoxides formed from various types of monomeric plastics such as polystyrene and Bisphenol A are often toxic, bioactive, and persistent in nature and may cause adverse impacts on human health and environment. These DNA binding substances are strong mutagens that often trigger mutations leading to oncogenic activation.

Prof. Melkania highlighted the global and Indian perspectives on the extent and impacts of plastic pollution. He called upon to embrace the traditional ways of living based on simplicity and sustainability. Dean of the School of Humanity and Social Sciences, Prof. Bandana Pandey briefly discussed the utility of gate keeping model for the spread of environmental awareness on plastic pollution and other contemporary environmental issues.

During the brainstorming, panel came up with several practical strategies for reducing plastic dependency and promoting circular economy models. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from faculty members and research scholars of the Department of Environmental Science, and environmental experts, fostering a vibrant dialogue on sustainable practices and environmental responsibility. **World Environment Day 2025 at Gautam Buddha University** reaffirmed the institution's dedication to promoting ecological awareness and nurturing

environmentally conscious citizens for a better future. The formal Vote of thanks was extended by Dr. Bhaswati Banerjee, Head of the Department of Environmental Science. The program was ended with the chanting of National Anthem.

