

# Shri Sanjay Kumar chairs International Conference on 'Spectrum of Literacy' on the eve of International Literacy Day 2024

## Multilingualism is one of the central pillars of National Education Policy 2020 - Shri Sanjay Kumar

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Shri Sanjay Kumar, Secretary of Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), chaired an international conference titled "Spectrum of Literacy" today at the CIET, NCERT, New Delhi. The Ministry of Education, Government of India, organized this virtual conference as a prelude to International Literacy Day 2024, to be celebrated tomorrow in an event at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.



Smt. Archana Sharma Awasthi, Joint Secretary, DoSEL; Prof. Dinesh Prasad Saklani, Director of NCERT; Smt. Joyce Poan, Chief of the Education Sector at UNESCO's Regional Office for South Asia; and other dignitaries attended the conference. It brought together global and national experts, educators, policymakers, and literacy advocates to explore the diverse and evolving dimensions of literacy in today's world.

Shri Sanjay Kumar in his address mentioned how the definition of literacy now includes Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Literacy, critical life skills, like digital, financial, and legal literacy, etc. Literacy should help people navigate through life, he emphasised. He said that ULLAS is the framework under which we must work to bring down the literacy gap between the urban and rural populations and between males and females. Literacy is to become a powerful force of change and we must carefully negotiate with the strategies and frameworks that underpin our efforts, he said.

Highlighting this year's theme of International Literacy Day, Promoting Literacy Through Multilingualism, he mentioned that one of the central pillars of the National Education Policy 2020 is multilingualism. Children learn best when they are taught in their Mother Tongue, he added. He underscored the importance of educating women so that their representation increases in the workforce.

Smt. Archana Sharma Awasthi, Joint Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), delivered the inaugural address and gave a presentation highlighting the role of ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, a program introduced to foster adult literacy across the nation.

The conference featured two engaging sessions titled "Exploring the 'Spectrum of Literacy' in India" and "Global Perspectives on Literacy Chaired". The first session was chaired by Dr. Amarendra P. Behera, Joint Director, CIET, NCERT. The session focused on diverse perspectives on literacy within India. Speakers included Ms. Kesang Sherpa, Member Secretary, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE); Dr. M.K.S. Sundaram, Principal Secretary, Basic Education Department, UP; and Prof. Jai Prakash Dubey, Director, Delhi School of Journalism, University of Delhi.

The second session was chaired by Prof. T.G. Sitharam, Chairman AICTE. This session provided an international perspective on literacy. Renowned global experts such as Mr. Nicholas Jonas from Germany, Prof. Iddo Gal from Israel, and Dr. Anke Grotluschen from Germany discussed critical issues ranging from adult literacy to the impact of artificial intelligence on literacy. Dr. John Benseman provided valuable insights on "Literacy in Social Spaces". The event concluded with a summary of the steps ahead.

The conference, underscoring the theme "Spectrum of Literacy", reflected the broad and diverse challenges and opportunities in education globally. It concluded with a call to action to strengthen partnerships and collaborations to build a literate (Jan Jan Saakshar) and inclusive world.

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