



## Press Release

### **CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY 2021: 08.09.21**

Organised by: Prof. U. C. Kumar & Mr. Avijit kundu

**Prof. U. C. Kumar** briefed about about the International Literacy Day and its importance:

*International Literacy day* was declared by UNESCO in the year 1966 and celebrated for the first time in 1967. The main aim is to highlight the importance of literacy to individual, communities and societies at large. It is celebrated every year to remind the public of the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights. So, celebrating international literacy day is a brilliant way to raise awareness of the value of literacy and to encourage children and adults alike to develop their literacy skills. This year the theme is “ Literacy for a human – centered recovery: Narrowing the digital divide”

After the brief introduction about the *International Literacy day*, he requested Prof. D. P. Mishra (Honourable director) to welcome the participants and address them.

**Prof. D. P. Mishra** welcomed the participants and talked about the “**Substance of Literacy and Overall literacy status of India**”. He also expressed the details about the International Literacy Day.

After the welcome address by Honourable Director, Senior faculty members and respected Swami Vedatitananda of Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math addressed the gathering.

**Prof. P.Sarkar**, Department of Electrical Engineering, speaking on this occasion, delivered on the issue of “**Good governance and partnerships for technology enabled literacy learning**” in the context of prevailing pandemic as well as the initiatives taken by the government of India and states governments to mitigate the digital divide between the urban and rural areas where net connectivity, mobile phone, tablets and computer are major impediments to sustain online classes.

He also opined that partnerships among multi-stakeholder, like, telecom companies for ensuring the high quality internet speed to access seamless online courseware, free on-line open courseware developers and free distribution of tables or laptops at school level by government to the needy students are the needs of the hour.

He also highlighted that Government of India has sanctioned a budget of Rs 93223 crore during 2021-22 to support both higher and school education to implement the NEP 2020 with the creation of 1500 new Adarsh vidyalaya and national research foundation to support higher education with a budget outlay of Rs 50000 crore for the next five years. This will act as a catalysis in enhancing technology enabled literacy learning as well.

**Swami Vedatitananda** started by recognising the value of digital learning in the time of Covid pandemic. If we did not have access to this mode of teaching-learning, it would have been a great loss to students all over the world. But, inequality among students leads to differences in access to logistic infrastructure. Many students don't have smartphones, laptops, or internet connections. For technical education, complete shift to digital mode of teaching-learning is impossible. There is a necessity of hands-on training in labs and workshops. But, until situation improves, we need to continue with digital learning platforms. Swami Vivekananda said, 'The teacher has to come down to the level of the student and teach.' As teachers, we should not lose sight of this great message.

**Dr. Rayapati Subha Rao**, Department of Mechanical Engineering, in his speech, highlighted the actual meaning of literacy by saying that to have more literacy of a region or state means converting the illiterate to literate. Recent Statistics show that still much more to be done in this area. Kerala has highest literacy rate and Bihar has the highest literacy rate. Literacy is more among males and less among females.

To overcome this, governments have gone for **Vayojan Vidya Kendras**, whose aim is to deal with Primary literacy, Primary Education, Continuing Education and Skill Education. Other aspect is to ensure students attend schools. To have maximum students joining the programme, 'Mid-day meal scheme' is offered in schools. Incentives are being given to parents, who send their students to schools. Some governments are offering free books, clothes etc. to make sure more children join the school for education. Drop outs also are to be taken care. Facilities in schools are to be improved. During pandemic state governments used doordarshan to teach students according to their syllabus. Most of the groups could not have the access to high end devices, DD was very much useful for them.

The celebration ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Sukanta Naskar, Depart of Education and Management. At the outset, he expressed his sincere thanks to the Hon'ble Director for his constant encouragement and inspiration and address details about the International Literacy Day. He also expressed his profound gratitude to the spakers who were kind enough to deliver talks in this occasion. The session ended with a token of appreciation to the participants for making the event a grand success.

Prof. U.C.Kumar

Civil Engineering Department