



24TH LEARNERS' DAY

His Holiness the **Dalai Lama** graced **IGNOU's 24th Convocation**; **1,11,898** learners received Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates and **28 meritorious students** were honoured with **gold medals**

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FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

IGNOU: Challenges and Prospects

The ODL system in the country took roots on a visionary's belief that education was not only the shortest road to inclusion and empowerment in our time, but even more so in a young democracy eager to redeem the promise of providing access to higher education to all segments of society. For a majority of Indians living in villages and small towns, just reaching a centre of higher learning was and is a challenge and the ODL system has to facilitate access to education. We should not wait for learners to come to seats of learning. Instead, seats of learning would have to reach out wherever learners are across the length and breadth of the country. We have, today, more than 400 programmes on offer for learners.



The cumulative strength of our students stands at around 2.4 million. The programmes are delivered through 67 regional centres, which include 47 IGNOU Regional Centres, nine North-East Regional Centres, six Army Regional Centres, four Navy Regional Centres and one Assam Rifles Centre. We are in the process of working out arrangements with the Air-Force so as to extend ODL based educational interventions to them as well. We have more than 3000 Learner Support Centres at the cutting edge level. We have about 48,000 Academic Counsellors who interact with our learners on a part-time basis.

The University also has a considerable international presence in 43 countries. We have 82 overseas Partner Institutions abroad including those under individual MoUs, the Pan-Africa network, UNESCO and the Rajiv Gandhi Fellowship. In order to sustain this, IGNOU envisages a proactive role for itself by ensuring quality ODL interventions and sharing professional capabilities and resources, to maintain and coordinate standards of Distance Education in the country and abroad.

Education through ODL is **certainly cost-effective** in comparison with face-to-face education for obvious reasons. Additionally, learners can remain **economically productive** even as they study to acquire qualifications.

The ODL system has a relatively short history, and there is a paucity of relevant research on its various facets. It is, therefore, absolutely essential to promote basic and applied research by offering research degree programmes in all Schools of Studies. This is expected to generate a vibrant and enabling environment in the University for conducting research. We are also in the process of identifying specific areas for institutional research, encouraging inter-disciplinary research teams, and encouraging discipline-specific systemic research to enhance quality of instructional delivery and learning for students.

The University has been mandated to reach out to the marginalised and disadvantaged sections of our society. There is a crying need to initiate special measures to attract learners from the various disadvantaged groups. We are in the process of enhancing access by spreading the network of study centres from the district level to the block level, networking with SOUs and CCIs and using ICT in a proactive way in difficult terrain and inaccessible regions.

Special efforts are being made to strengthen the University's presence in the North-East, Jharkhand, Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh, the Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput region in Orissa, Jaisalmer and Barmer in Rajasthan and other low-literacy regions. We are planning to conduct special drives to enroll marginalised groups (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, the differently-abled, women learners) in our programmes. Free education is being provided to all jail inmates across the country. We are now in the process of using emerging and innovative technologies to provide access and opportunities to the differently-abled, tribals and women by cloning the best practices from successful models.

M. Aslam
Vice Chancellor

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India's first sign language centre at IGNOU

IGNOU took a major step towards the upliftment of India's three million hearing population by inaugurating the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) at its main campus on October 4.

The foundation stone laying ceremony of the country's first sign language training and research centre was done by Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development (HRD) and Shri Mukul Wasnik, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment.

"This Centre is a first of its kind in India offering full-time teaching combined with distance learning for short-term and full-fledged programmes," said Wasnik, while delivering his address at the Convention Centre.

"Indian Sign Language (ISL) is at a nascent stage. We need to think innovatively in order to increase awareness and sensitise people in this regard. We can also conduct sign language classes through video conferencing or other ICT enabled tools," he added.

Terming disability as a process of "growing up", Sibal addressed Wasnik and said, "If we can utilise the information and technology tools to use Braille language, then I am with you."

"Our ideas and language are derived from speech and its functions. The knowledge of sign language comes not by the study of deaf people, but it comes while studying with



Union Ministers Shri Kapil Sibal and Shri Mukul Wasnik and former VC Prof. Pillai, along with other dignitaries, at the foundation stone-laying ceremony of ISLRTC at IGNOU on October 4.

them. The ISLRTC has a great responsibility to promote continuous research and scholarship for the evolution of the deaf language by building bodies of language and literature," Sibal added.

The ISLRTC has been established with the support of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. IGNOU will make five acres of land available for the Centre at its Maidan Garhi campus. The government has accorded approval for creation of 35 posts for the Centre. The Centre will be established at

an estimated cost of Rs 44 crore over five years. Dr. Madan Vashistha, professor at Gallaudet University, Washington DC, has been appointed full-time director of the Centre. The building project for the Centre will be completed within one year, while the recruitment shall be completed within two months.

A Centre for Sindhi Language and Culture (CSLC) was also inaugurated on the occasion by Sibal on the IGNOU campus for promoting the language. ■

Rajiv Gandhi International Prize to Azim Premji

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) conferred the Rajiv Gandhi International Prize for Technology in Education and Development on the Azim Premji Foundation.

The award was presented by Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development and Communications and IT, to Azim Premji at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi on September 28.

Instituted by the University in its Silver Jubilee Year, the prize is given to an individual or an institution that has made significant contributions in education, particularly educational technology, for development in developing countries across the world. It comprises a cash component of Rs. 5 lakh and a citation. Azim Premji Foundation is the first awardee for the laurel.



Union Minister for HRD Shri Kapil Sibal presenting the award to Azim Premji.

A book comprising silver jubilee lectures, compiled by the Pro-VC Dr Latha Pillai and Associate Professor Dr Babu P. Ramesh, was released by the union minister. Premji released a CD containing the interactive multi-course IGNOU study material.

In his bid to let children go beyond the boundary of classroom and teachers to acquire knowledge through IT, Sibal announced the launch of a tablet computer by next month. "Soon, a \$35 computer will be made available to every child in school. The tablet shall help enhance the quality of learning of children."

"We lack quality teachers in our system. One of the big initiatives in the 12th Five Year Plan would thus be to introduce national teacher education mission. It is only then that we would be able to get quality teaching and learning."

Premji outlined three major experiences giving meaning to his contributions. Focussing on the basics of education through equity, he said, "You can't build skyscrapers in air. We need a solid foundation to address the demands." ■

24TH CONVOCATION

1,11,898 learners received Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates and 28 meritorious students were honoured with gold medals at the 24th Convocation organised at the Campus in New Delhi



Learners at the 24th Convocation at the IGNOU Headquarters in New Delhi on September 5, 2011.

24th Learners' Day at IGNOU

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has certainly lived up to its name of the 'World's Largest University' and proved that it certainly has what it takes to cater to a mammoth four million students, by conducting its 24th Convocation – the third graduation ceremony this year.

More than 1.10 lakh students received Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates at the Headquarters and Regional Centres across the country, in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and Ministers of State for HRD Dr D. Purandeswari and Shri E. Ahamed, on September 5.

The Tibetan spiritual leader was conferred with a Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by the University for his outstanding contribution to world peace and development.

"On this great occasion, I congratulate IGNOU for playing an important role in the development of education. I thank the University for conferring me with this award. I also congratulate the successful learners," The Dalai Lama said.

As many as 23,780 Bachelor's degrees, 12,482 Master's degrees, three Ph.D., 29,269 Diplomas and 46,364 Certificates were given out during the ceremony. Besides, 28 gold medals were awarded to students from Delhi.

The University also awarded Degrees, Diplomas and Associate Degrees to more than 53,000 Army personnel for programmes offered through the Army Community Colleges.

Ujwol Sreshtha received the Prof. G.

Ram Reddy Memorial Gold medal for securing the highest marks in Master's in Sociology. Sini K. Nair received CEMCA cash award of Rs. 10,000 for the Best Female Student in any Degree Programme Pertaining to Technology. Stalin, from Bachelor's in Social Work, received the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award (gold medal and cash prize of Rs. 10,000), while Pooja Sharma, from Master's in Social Work, received the Mother Teresa Memorial Award.

For the first time, five cash awards of Rs. 5,000 each were also distributed to the on-campus students of Master's in Social Work, in collaboration with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India

(CBCI). A total of 1,11,898 students received their laurels in 44 Regional Centres of the University, which was telecast live through Gyanvani and Gyandarshan.

The learners also got an opportunity to attend career counseling sessions, which were held in the Classroom Block of the university campus. "Career Counseling and Guidance sessions were organised on the Convocation day, since many learners were present to receive their degrees and wanted to know about the employment opportunities available to them," former VC Prof Pillai said. The University organised an exhibition representing 21 Schools of Studies. The highlights of the exhibition were stalls from various NGOs/partner institutions. ■

Centre for Tibetan Studies soon

His Holiness the Dalai Lama inaugurated a new Centre for Tibetan Studies at the University campus, which aims to preserve the Tibetan culture in India and Nepal.

"When you talk about Tibetan studies, all the important subject matter has been taken from Indian traditions. Historically, due to Buddhism spreading in Tibet, we share a guru-disciple relationship. It is all your treasure which we studied and followed in our lives. Now is the time to return to the original source. The establishment of the centre can show the usefulness of the study of inner-science," said the spiritual leader.

"There are around 300 volumes of Buddhist texts translated from India, specifically from Pali language and very few from Chinese language. These can be summed up in three heads: science, concept and Buddhist religion."

The Dalai Lama said the establishment of the Buddhist centre can show the usefulness of the study of inner science.

"Moral ethics is the basis of a happy individual, community and family. Inner strength, honesty and truthfulness are the essence of moral ethics. Like education, one should also give importance to moral ethics in life. It is the basic thing for a human being," he said. ■

India should lead the world: the Dalai Lama

His Holiness the Dalai Lama conferred with Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) for his outstanding contribution to the global peace and development

India has greater potential and should lead the world in the 21st century through non-violent principles, said His Holiness the Dalai Lama, while accepting the Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) from IGNOU at the University's 24th Convocation in New Delhi on September 5, 2011.

"I'm a lazy student, and getting one more honorary degree without any effort is great," the Tibetan spiritual leader said.

Addressing the gathering at the event, he said that every effort should be made to settle all issues that crop up in the world through dialogue in the 21st century.

"No religion, no matter how good, can ever be universal. But science and philosophy can be," he said.

"An individual can use education either for constructive or destructive purposes. To use it in a constructive way, one must have more inner strength and self-restraint. If one uses it for destructive purposes, then it would be the biggest disaster of humanity," he added.

More than 1.10 lakh students received Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates at the Headquarters and 44 Regional Centres across the country. This was the University's third convocation this year.

Emphasising the role education plays in shaping the future of a country, the Ti-



Dr. D. Purandeswari, Minister of State for HRD, and Shri E. Ahamed, MoS for External Affairs, presenting Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

betan spiritual leader said, "Today, on this great occasion, I congratulate the University for playing an important role for development of education. I thank the University for conferring me with this award. I also congratulate candidates who have got their degrees."

Terming India as the "most populated and stable democratic country" in the

world, the Dalai Lama lavished praise on the country's "sophisticated culture" and said that the ancient traditions followed by Indians are of relevance even in the present day world.

"India has greater potential and should lead the world through non-violent principles. Education plays a big role in shaping a country's future," he said. ■

STRIDE: 'Developing Research Proposals in ODL' workshop

STRIDE organised a five-day workshop on 'Developing Research Proposals in Open and Distance Learning' during November 27-Dec 1, 2011 at the IGNOU Headquarters. The main objective of the workshop was to develop full-fledged research proposals in areas of ODL and online learning.

The national workshop was inaugurated by VC Prof. M. Aslam where 28 people from all over the country (five from SOUs, four from DEIs and 17 from IGNOU) participated. The workshop was co-ordinated by Prof. Santosh Panda, STRIDE.

The pre-workshop activities included: reading of related literature and developing a draft research proposal provided to the participants; workshop presentations and revision of draft proposals within workshop; and post-workshop follow-up and support for the finalisation of research proposals.

The resources, developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), were used in the workshop. The one-on-one mentoring sup-



Participants and the resource team with the VC at the workshop.

port to the participants was provided by six resource people from IGNOU, including STRIDE. ■

STRIDE's induction meet for new teachers

'Distance Education Theory and Practice' programme inducts them into the ODL system

The Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education organised an induction programme on 'Distance Education Theory and Practice' for newly recruited teachers of IGNOU from November 21-25.

This programme was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor Prof. M. Aslam and coordinated by Prof. P. K. Biswas and Dr. Rampelli Satyanarayana, Associate Professor at STRIDE.

The main objective of the programme was to orient the participants with the concept, theory and practice of open distance learning with special reference to IGNOU.

Prof. delivered valedictory address and distributed certificates to the participants.

Thirty five (35) newly recruited teachers attended the programme and 22 senior faculty members of different schools and divisions were invited as resource persons.

Prof. Basanti Pradhan, Director, STRIDE and other resource persons shared their



The participants at the 'Distance Education: Theory and Practice for Newly Recruited Teachers' meet.

experiences with the newly-recruited teachers and inducted them into the ODL system during the 19 technical sessions.

The participants expressed their satis-

faction and also expressed their views by saying that they have acquired the relevant knowledge and skills and now are confident to undertake their tasks at IGNOU. ■

Typing training on computers for IGNOU's JATs

STRIDE organised a workshop on 'Typing Training on Computers for Promoted Junior-Assistant-cum-Typists (JATs) of IGNOU' during November 21-25 and a typing test on November 26.

The five-day workshop was organised in collaboration with Administration and Computer Division for the newly promoted/appointed JATs from the cadre of Attendants.

The objective of the workshop was to explain the typing software and various related applications, explain the procedure for typing on computer, discuss the organisation of files in the computer, acquaint them with word processing in computer, familiarise them with various components of MS word and MS Excel and, discuss the Email and its functions.

Thirty-three JATs, working at the Headquarters/Regional Centres participated in this workshop.

U.S. Tolia, Registrar, (Administration)



The typing training on computers for promoted Junior-Assistant-cum-Typists (JATs) of IGNOU.

inaugurated the training programme and motivated the participants to improve their typing skills. The staff of STRIDE Administration Division and Computer Division acted as resource persons during the training programme.

Vice Chancellor Prof. M. Aslam expressed the importance of the non-teach-

ing staff of the University and appreciated the enthusiasm of the participants towards attending the training programme.

The programme was coordinated by G. Mythili, Analyst (Selection Grade), STRIDE, along with officials from Administration and Computer Division.

WORLD DISABILITY DAY

Deaf film festival deals with disability issues

Fifteen documentaries and short films screened at the event to promote awareness

Marking the World Disability Day, IGNOU organised a two-day 'India Deaf Film Festival 2011' from December 3-4, 2011.

The University's two centres, National Centre for Disability Studies (NCDS) and the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC), organised the festival in association with 'Deaf Leaders India.'

Hearing-impaired members from all over the country participated in the film festival. Fifteen documentaries and short films were screened at the festival, including 'Parents with a Child', 'True or False' and 'The Silent Song – A Love Story'. The festival concluded with an award ceremony.

The observance of the World Disability Day aims to promote an understanding of

disability issues and mobilise support for the dignity, rights, and well being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the interpretation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

The films largely constructed the society's perception of people with disabilities. From its beginning until today, the images reflected by films have evolved towards more positive and normalizing perspectives.

With different degrees of depth and success related to disability, the films screened were a reflection of the impact that the combination of the media and social realities can manage to achieve.

The films showcased the impact of stereotyping self-image and development of attitudes among the people and revealed, at the same time, the efforts to counter stereotyping with alternative programmes.

Efforts could be targeted at reconstructing public understanding and guidelines for the broadcasting industry as well as government policies to promote fair and equitable portrayals in media. ■



VC Prof. M. Aslam inaugurating the 'India Deaf Film Festival 2011.' (Below) Prof. Aslam with the children who received certificates at the valedictory session of the film festival.



“The observance of the World Disability Day aims to promote an understanding

of disability issues and mobilise support for the dignity, rights, and well being of persons with disabilities. It seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the interpretation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of life.”

— Prof. M. Aslam, VC, IGNOU

26TH FOUNDATION DAY



Prof. S.K. Sopory, VC, JNU, delivering the Foundation Day Lecture at the IGNOU Headquarters.

Enabling education for the disabled

IGNOU announces nine scholarships for disabled students to mark its 26th Foundation Day; Prof. S.K. Sopory, VC, JNU, delivers the Foundation Day Lecture

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) celebrated its 26th Foundation Day on the birth anniversary of late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi on November 19, 2011.

Vice Chancellor Prof M. Aslam announced nine scholarships for disabled students pursuing technical/professional courses at the graduate and post graduate level with the aid of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. He also made the staff members of the University to take a pledge against discharging their duties with honesty, dedication and sincerity.

“We have 445 programmes today, developed by 21 Schools and some Centres of the University. The cumulative strengths of students is 22, 93,327 as on November 15, 2011, 67 Regional Centres, including 47 IGNOU Regional Centres, nine North-East Regional Centres, six Army Regional Centres, one Assam Rifles and four Navy Recognised Regional Centres and more than 3,324 Learner Support Centres. We have 82 Partners Institutes. It’s not that distance education is in isolation. We are very much there. We are there with re-

sponsible numbers,” Prof. Aslam said.

Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), delivered the Foundation Day Lecture on ‘The Current Higher Educational Scenario in India’.

“IGNOU’s admission policy has given preference to socially backward people. We

must emphasise on how to foster excellence in teaching and research. We have to maintain a specific policy. We must make students choose life for career and not career for life,” Prof Sopory said.

“Universities are dynamic systems, which bring new ideas from compartmentalised divisions. There should be more emphasis on transferring knowledge,” he added.

Harsh Bhal, Chairman cum Managing Director, National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) announced 1,500 scholarships in favour of people with disabilities.

“Under this scheme, a student with visual or hearing disability is also provided one-time facility of aids and appliances. This scholarship scheme is being implemented from the current academic year and includes total fee reimbursement, books, stationery allowance and maintenance allowance. This scholarship scheme is also applicable to distance education universities like IGNOU. It is also available to those students who are pursuing Ph.D. or M.Phil. degrees.” ■



Children performing during the 26th Foundation Day celebrations.

“We have 449 programmes, on offer by 21 Schools and some Centres of the University. It’s not that distance education is in isolation. We are very much there. We are there with responsible numbers.” — VC Prof. Aslam

Science Olympiad winners felicitated

IGNOU, UNESCO honour winners of the competition with certificates, medals and prizes

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) felicitated the winners of the IGNOU-UNESCO Science Olympiad 2011 at an award function, organised at the IGNOU headquarters on November 14.

The Olympiad was organised by IGNOU's Raman Chair for Science Education in all SAARC nations through an objective test on August 21, wherein a total of 4,400 students from India, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka participated.

Of these, 950 toppers were chosen to receive merit certificates. Forty-two top-most performers took a tougher second test on November 13 and were chosen to receive Gold Medals from Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt. of India.

The top-most seven achievers received INTEL Awards of Excellence for their overall best performance and four received the Subject Excellence Awards in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

These merit certificates, awards, medals, and prizes were given as due



Winners of the 'IGNOU-UNESCO Science Olympiad 2011' at the IGNOU Convention Centre.

recognition of these brightest and outstanding youngsters with a view to give them a sustained interest in basic sciences.

Chief Guest Armoogum Parsuramen, Former Director and UNESCO Representative in New Delhi, remarked that a teacher should speak from his/her heart and not from books.

VC Prof M. Aslam emphasised that till date, IGNOU has 449 academic programmes with 2.2 million students.

Ashutosh Chadha, Director Strategic, Director Corporate Affairs Group, Intel Asia Pacific, stated that the issue is not understanding science, but how to apply it in real life for global problems of energy, water, health. ■

Seminar on history and cultural aspects of Mathematics

The Indira Gandhi National Open University organised a two-day 'National Seminar on History and Cultural Aspects of Mathematics Education' on December 2-3, 2011.

The seminar was organised by IGNOU's Sir C.V. Raman Chair for Science Education, in collaboration with the Mathematics discipline of the School of Sciences.

The seminar was a conscientious exercise to seriously deliberate on the historical development and influence of culture on the development of the learning and



The 'National Seminar on History and Cultural Aspects of Mathematics' Education at the IGNOU campus.

teaching of Mathematics, specially in our country.

Many experts drawn from all over the country, along with other participants, deliberated on subjects ranging from historical perspectives and cultural influences on the teaching of mathematics, professional development in mathematics education to the modality of creating mathematics curriculum and syllabi over the past several decades.

This is the first time that such a seminar was organised in India. ■

factoids



Under the 'Know India Programme' of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), 37 students from 11 countries recently visited IGNOU to acquaint themselves with the ODL system.

Time to create a pool of expertise, says VC

Vice Chancellors of seven State Open Universities meet to discuss emerging ODL scenario

The Indira Gandhi National Open University held a day-long meeting of the Vice Chancellors of the State Open Universities at the University Headquarters in New Delhi on December 10.

Vice Chancellors from seven State Open Universities attended the meeting, while other universities were represented by their Registrars and Deans of Schools.

The objective of the meeting was to discuss the activities of the Inter-University Consortium (IUC), a consortium set up as a service centre on ICT-enabled interactive multimedia and online education for the distance education system in the country by IGNOU. During the meeting, the issues related to the Distance Education Council (DEC) were also discussed.

In his opening remarks, Prof M. Aslam, Vice Chancellor, and DEC chairman, stressed upon the role of open universities and other distance education institutes to create a pool of expertise. He presented the emerging scenario of open and distance education in context with IGNOU and other state open universities.

Prof Madhu Parhar, Director, IUC, explained the aims and objectives for which IUC was established in IGNOU. She highlighted the achievements of IUC, specially



Vice Chancellors of various State Open Universities at the IGNOU headquarters.

focusing on the technology-enabled capacity building of the faculty of State Open Universities.

Vice Chancellors felt that IUC, within IGNOU, can take a lead role in developing a strategic plan with the help of the state open universities to reach out with quality. This can be done by developing a common repository of the e-content and the learning material.

Vice Chancellors also opined that a common curriculum can be developed where all the open

universities can work together. Another common agenda of discussion was the target of achieving the Gross Enrollment Ratio with quality.

While explaining the role of DEC, Dr Nalini Lele, Director, DEC, said that the Council aims to promote and coordinate the open and distance education in the country.

The Vice Chancellors agreed that the policies of DEC can be reviewed, which includes the grants given to all the State Open Universities. ■

New e-library services to support ODL system

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has introduced a suite of e-library services by converting the existing services into e-services and exploring many other ways to support its distance education system, such as increasing the scope of e-resources accessed, better methods of seeking information, saving time in the information search and delivery, and significant rise in the use of e-resources and article downloads by students and faculty.

“With the introduction of digital media and virtual information systems on the web, IGNOU Library System has been able to overcome the challenges of accessibility to library resources, reaching



The library's collection of e-resources has grown to over 22,000 full-text e-journals, databases and e-books.

out the unreached to support curriculum needs of faculty and distance learners through its network of Regional Centres,” said Sudhir K. Arora, University Librarian.

On campus, IGNOU users are able to access these e-resources from any computer connected to the campus network.

‘Explore how radio can teach you best’

Radio can be an effective means of distance education due to its low cost. This was the prevailing thought at the discussion between Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Deutsche Welle (DW) experts.

Germany’s international broadcaster DW visited the IGNOU campus aiming to expand its existing collaboration in new areas.

Erik Bettermann, Director General, DW and VC Prof M. Aslam discussed the ongoing collaboration and the need to explore new areas of collaboration.

In the course of discussion, Prof Aslam elaborated on the role and place of IGNOU in the higher learning. “IGNOU’s mandate is to ‘reach the unreached’. In this mission, the University has made significant contribution



VC Prof M. Aslam and senior IGNOU faculty with the Deutsche Welle team from Germany.

in distance learning across the world.”

He stressed on the need for IGNOU and DW to explore possibilities of working together on how radio broadcast can become an effective tool of learning. The DW ex-

perts welcomed the suggestion and agreed to further explore its possibilities.

During the visit, the German delegation also interacted with the students of journalism, electronic production and media management.

The two global institutions have already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) while collaborating in conducting training programmes in the streams of online journalism, training methodology and media management.

Petra Schneider, Director of Distribution of DW, Adelheid Feilcke, Director of International Relations of DW and Prof Subhash Dhuliya, Director of School of Journalism and New Media Studies were also present during the discussion. ■

‘Employment Enhancement Strategy’ for learners

The CPC was established in 2005 to help learners’ placement. Prof. B.B. Khanna from School of Management, IGNOU, took charge of the Cell on November 15, 2011. According to Prof. Khanna, placement is essentially a function of the quality of student and credibility of the institution. The core objective of CPC is to devise and implement ‘Employment Enhancement Strategy’ for IGNOU learners.

“Being a new entrant, our endeavour would be to create, stabilise and maintain a niche in the fiercely competitive ‘Employment Market’. Placement, being a highly coordination oriented function, requires JIT (Just-in-time) approach of handling regular operations. Responding to market requirements with matching efficiency will be one of the key elements for survival in the market,” says Prof Khanna.

Effective cooperation of RSD will greatly facilitate smooth operations of CPC, as most of the Campus Placement activities will be held at RCs’, and SCs’ campuses throughout the country.

In the ‘short and medium term,’ the cell envisages the following activities for pursuing its objectives:

- Devising, implementing, and periodically reviewing ‘Employability Enhancement Strategy’ for IGNOU learners.

- Planning, organizing, and monitoring Campus Placement Events/Job Fairs throughout the country at our RCs, and SCs, with the help of RSD. Devising strategies to enhance the ‘Employability Quotient’ of the learners through variety of means, including Personality Development, Skill Assessment, Soft Skills Development, and other Placement Enablement activities.

- Encouraging and supporting job aspirants to develop and transform themselves into ‘Job-worthy Talent Pool’.

- Conducting Employability Tests for the job aspirants, validated and accepted by corporate houses.

- Inviting job aspirants (IGNOU’s current/pass out students) and Companies to register with the CPC for employment.

- Maintaining close coordination with the client Companies.



Learners at the IGNOU campus.

- Mining, Warehousing, and managing learners’ data to cater to the market requirements.

- Career mapping of job aspirants to help explore alternate career options.

- Providing Virtual Platform to learners, empowering them to practice, improve, and continuously refine their Interview skills.

- Communicating with students through emails and SMSs regarding available job opportunities and providing them career counseling and uploading job opportunities on CPC website.

- Establishing network for Industry-Academia interface, and maintaining close interaction with industry associations and confederations.

- Creating advisory group of relevant corporate executives to provide guidance and feedback for improving our functioning and performances.

- Promotional activities to support CPC’s visibility in the media/business world though participating directly/indirectly in relevant activities. ■

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All RTI applications need to be addressed: VC

IGNOU's Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE) conducted a one-day workshop on Right to Information (RTI) Act for Public Information Officers (PIOs) to develop awareness and skills of all the officers of the university at its headquarters in the capital.

The objectives of this workshop were to expose the participants to the RTI Act, its various provisions, provide skills to handle the RTI queries keeping in view the provisions of the Act.

Vice Chancellor Prof M. Aslam emphasised upon the attitudinal change as well as the quality of information that needs to be given keeping in mind the RTI Act.

"At no cost should we violate our statutes. Unless we do that we won't be integrated. Our image depends upon what type of answers we give. Every RTI application needs to be answered," the vice chancellor added.

Neemo Dhar, Advisor, Public Relations and Spokesperson of DDA, chaired the ses-



Vice Chancellor Prof. M. Aslam addressing the participants at the workshop on Right to Information Act for Public Information Officers at the IGNOU campus.

sion and gave an overview of the Act. "After the implementation of the RTI Act, we have the right to information. This Act promotes accountability and transparency. The public must develop the habit of asking questions to increase the accountability and relevance of this Act," she said.

The session was also chaired by U.S. Tolia, Registrar, IGNOU, who discussed the various aspects of the Act, along with some myths associated with it.

"As a PIO, we must not create any information but apprise the public with what has already happened," he said. ■

Training on financial management for DDOs

IGNOU's Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE) organised a one-day workshop on 'Financial Rules and Regulations for Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs)' of the University.

"The objectives of this workshop were to expose the participants with the rules and regulations of financial management at IGNOU, identify issues and problems in managing decentralised finances, and formulate strategies for efficient and effective management of finances and related matters," said VC Prof M. Aslam, while inaugurating the workshop.

"Financial management in any organisation is vital for augmenting its efficiency and effectiveness. IGNOU has switched over gradually from a centralised financial management system to a decentralised one. This transition has brought many issues and challenges in managing finances in Schools/Divisions/Units/Centres. We have organised this workshop to address these issues and find strategies for efficient management of finance," said Prof Santosh



Workshop on Financial Rules and Regulations for DDOs of the University at the IGNOU campus.

Panda, Workshop Coordinator and Professor, STRIDE.

The workshop discussed various aspects of financial rules and regulations pertaining to contingent charges, imprest and depart-

mental advances, record of contingent expenditure, postage accounts, miscellaneous expenditure, responsibility of drawing officers and responsibility of controlling authority. ■

Expedite online registration for Navy personnel

The academic scrutiny will be done rigorously in the 'Sagardeep' project, says the VC

As part of the IGNOU-Indian Navy project 'Sagardeep', the registration and certification of the Navy personnel, who have already undergone training and education, should be expedited.

This was the outcome of the meeting between Vice Admiral of Navy R.K. Pattanaik, (AVSM, YSM) and IGNOU Vice Chancellor Prof. M. Aslam.

It was agreed that once the academic committee has finalised the structure of certificate, diploma and associate degree in various areas, the university can go for online registration in those areas. Subsequently, degrees, diplomas, etc. can be issued.

It was decided that both the collaborating partners will discuss the issues in a joint consultative committee for a speedy implementation of the 'Sagardeep' project.

The VC assured that IGNOU will fast-track the project. However, the academic scrutiny will be done rigorously. He added that "we will strengthen the IGNOU-Navy academic committee by nominating a few more academics from IGNOU."

The VC also informed that, "We are constituting a separate committee to work out the modalities and finalisation of online registration."

It was also agreed that the Navy will identify and prioritise the order in which these are to be presented. The VC expressed the hope that the processes worked out for this collaboration will serve



Vice Admiral of Navy R.K. Pattanaik (AVSM, YSM) with VC Prof. M. Aslam.

as model for similar collaborations.

In the beginning, the VC apprised the Vice Admiral with distance education system in the country and gave him a presentation about the university and its various components and various processes.

Admiral Pattanaik appreciated the achievements of IGNOU and the kind of work IGNOU is doing in the area of higher

education. He highlighted the training and education provided by the Navy, adding that it's a very rigorous process where the sailors are given a holistic education. He requested the vice chancellor that his colleagues should meet the faculty and senior management of the University to understand the teaching and training methods being provided by them. ■

IGNOU December exams completed successfully

Addressing the academics, officers and staff of IGNOU, VC Prof. M. Aslam stated that for the first time, the University was able to complete its December 2011 Term-End Examination successfully all over the country. He applauded the joint effort of all involved in the effort, particularly Student Evaluation Division. He added that IGNOU can reach new heights only when each of us takes our tasks and challenges seriously.

He exhorted the IGNOU community to take the University to new heights. ■



VC Prof. M. Aslam addressing the IGNOU community on the 63rd Republic Day.



Dignitaries and participants at the inauguration of the International Conference on Diaspora and Development at IGNOU.

Engaging diaspora for development

The connotations of the term Diaspora has gone far beyond forced exile and desire for homeland. Today, Diaspora is a generic concept of a trans-national population, and India represents this concept in a major way," said Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), at the inauguration of the two-day International Conference on 'Diaspora and Development: Prospects and Implications for Nation States', held at the Indira Gandhi National Open University's Convention Centre on September 7.

Jointly organised by the School of Extension and Development Studies (SOEDS) and the School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-

disciplinary Studies (SOITS), the conference broadly addresses the socio-economic, political, cultural and gender issues to provide holistic perspectives in understanding the interlinkages in diaspora and development.

The conference saw the participation of diaspora experts from over 25 countries, who deliberated upon various themes such as Diaspora and Development Dynamics: Issues, Strategies and Practices; Diaspora Finance and Socio-Economic Development; Human Development; Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion; Diasporic Writings; Gender in the Diaspora; and Films & Theatre.

"In many ways, IGNOU is like the Diaspora. In most countries, Diaspora is quite a

small community, but it punches far beyond its weight. IGNOU is doing the same in many ways," said Dr. Singh, who was the Chief Guest at the event.

Prof. Mizan R. Miah, Director, School of Social Work, Southern Illinois University, USA, delivered the Key Note Address on 'The Global Community of Diaspora: Contributions, Challenges and Prospects.'

While delivering the Valedictory Address, Shri Gurucharan, CEO, Indian Council for Overseas Employment (ICOE), Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Govt of India, pointed out that the overseas Indian community needs a mainstream focus. "The country needs to engage the overseas communities to participate in development," he said. ■

Implementing RTE a collective responsibility: VC

Implementing of the Act of Right to Education is just not enough to promote education in India," said Vice Chancellor Prof. M. Aslam at the National Summit on 'Academia- Corporate Interface for Up-skilling Leaders of Tomorrow'.

The summit was organised by the Discipline of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, in collaboration with the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"It is high time we should join hands together and help the upcoming generation to get the best education, irrespective of the strata to which they belong. Schools should come up with a motive to help chil-



Vice Chancellor Prof. M. Aslam speaking at the National Summit on 'Academia-Corporate Interface for Up-skilling Leaders of Tomorrow'.

dren," Prof. Aslam said, while giving his views on the session focussing on the psycho-educational perspective of the Right to Education Act.

"Children belonging to any level of the economy today are more curious to gain information. Each one of them have access to mobile, Internet and other technologies. Mobiles can be a very convenient device for imparting education and information," he added.

He also mentioned that transactional analysis should be involved as an important component for everyone, including the teachers being trained. ■

Fine arts lessons for Tihar inmates

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) organised a four-day workshop for Tihar Jail inmates to expose them to various art forms like painting, music and theatre.

The workshop was conducted by the students and teachers of IGNOU's School of Performing and Visual Arts (SOPVA). While the painting and theatre workshop was organised for male inmates, the

music workshop was for female inmates.

SOPVA Director Prof Sunil Kumar stated that during the workshop, the inmates were not only introduced to the Fine Arts like Painting, Music and Theatre, but were also given a chance to actively participate in the activities and produce their own work of art.

"Further, this exposure may also be helpful for the inmates to opt this as pro-

fession and mode of expression through arts of their choice later on," he added.

To conclude the workshop, a music and play presentation and an exhibition of paintings made by the inmates was organised.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Pravin Sinclair said the concept of training inmates in arts will not be confined to Tihar Jail only, but similar activities may be conducted in other jails as well. ■



Participants at the ICT Training for Teachers in Agartala.

i-CAT conducts ICT training for 350 school teachers in Agartala

IGNOU Institute for Competency Advancement of Teachers (i-CAT) has initiated a project on ICT training for 350 school teachers in Bishalgarh block, West district, Tripura.

Sponsored by SSA Rajya Mission, Tripura, the project is being implemented

in several batches, jointly by i-CAT and IGNOU Regional Centre Agartala.

The ninth batch successfully completed the training in the third week of September.

The project is likely to be completed in next two months.

FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

Continued from Page 2

...Effective student-support services is an important pre-requisite for the success of any ODL educational intervention. We at IGNOU are working out strategies to improve the completion rate, reduce the drop-out rate, provide sustainable, quality education, and enhance the credibility of the ODL system.

In order to achieve this, the measures expected to be taken to make our student support services more effective, we plan to equip all Study Centres and Regional Centres with adequate ICT equipment and other infrastructure to connect them with the Headquarters for prompt data transmission and retrieval, information sharing and redressal of learner difficulties, provide an opportunity for greater interaction with learners and reduce response time in admission, on-time distribution of material and declaration of results; carry out tracer-studies on learner performance and experiences and regularly monitor the quality of support services.

We at IGNOU hope to live up to the country's expectations of providing quality education to the less privileged, upgrade the skills of the aspiring and provide enrichment opportunities wherever they are in demand.

Registration portal for IAF personnel

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has launched an online registration and management portal — www.community.ignou.ac.in — for the Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel under the project Akashdeep, which enables airmen to complete their Bachelor's degree.

"This collaboration could be a model for many countries in terms of size and services. In terms of University, we are getting empowered by providing such a capacity and showing that a university too can undergo such collaborations," said former VC Prof V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai while launching the portal.

Air Vice Marshal Satyendra Kumar, Assistant Chief Of the Air Staff (Education), said that this initiative will reach out to the airmen posted anywhere in the country where they can register themselves for an Associate Degree



Former VC Prof. Pillai with Air Vice Marshal Satyendra Kumar at the launch of the portal.

online. "Keeping in mind the highly demanding job of the Air Force personnel, they can register themselves through this portal of IGNOU," he added.

As many as 10 airmen registered themselves in person after the portal launch ceremony. ■

Prof. VN Rajasekharan Pillai completes his term

Prof. V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai completed his term as IGNOU Vice Chancellor on October 20, 2011. Along with him, the terms of Pro-VCs — Dr. Latha Pillai, Prof. Parvin Sinclair, Prof. K.R. Srivathsan and Prof. P.R.

Ramanujam, were also co-terminated. IGNOU organised a farewell for the former VC and Pro-VCs and remembered services rendered by them. The farewell function was chaired by Prof. M. Aslam, the new VC.

17th Convocation

Arjun Singh inaugurates EDUSAT

December 2005 : Union Minister for Human Resource Development Shri Arjun Singh, inaugurates the EDUSAT supported Rajiv Gandhi Project via teleconferencing at IGNOU.

- Dr Anbumani Ramadoss, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare launches first-of-its-kind Post-Graduate Diploma in Community Cardiology via teleconferencing.
- IGNOU inks MOU with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to promote cooperation in the field of agricultural education.

January 2006 : IGNOU observes special teleconferencing session on Best Practices at the 32 Regional Centres of the University and brainstorming session on Student Support Services at the EMPC.

- IGNOU launches six month Certificate programme in Health Care Waste Management.

Upcoming Events

1. Discussion on 'Emerging Issues and Challenges in Social Work and Practise' at IGNOU on February 15, 2012.
- 2) North-East Regional Directors' meet at IGNOU on February 16, 2012.

Prof M. Aslam takes over charge of IGNOU

Before taking over the functions of IGNOU Vice Chancellor in October 2011, Prof. M. Aslam was Director, School of Continuing Education at the University. He has earlier served as Director, the National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE), IGNOU, from Dec. 2006 to Feb. 2009 and Director, SOCE, IGNOU, from May 1998 to May, 2001.

He served as Director (Trg) at the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia & the Pacific (CIRDAP), an international and inter-governmental organisation based in Dhaka, between 1981-88.

Prof. Aslam has rich and varied experience, both at national and international levels in University Administration; ICT, Communication and Extension; Distance & Continuing Education; Multimedia in Distance Education; Training Methodology; Rural Development; Training skills; Monitoring and Evaluation; Panchayati Raj



Prof M. Aslam, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU.

and Social Change in his 33-year career.

A multi-media package developed by him for capacity building of elected members of Panchayats was conferred COL President's 'Award of Excellence' at the PAN Commonwealth Forum in March 1999. He

was also conferred, 'Professional Excellence Award' of Mewat Development Society by the Union Minister for Panchayats in August 2007.

Prof. Aslam is Fellow of the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank, Washington DC, 1986.

Prof. Aslam served as consultant/Expert to FAO and UNDP of the United Nations; EDI of the World Bank; Commonwealth Advisory Services, Inc, Philippines; NISTADS; UNESCO; ADB/Price Waterhouse; AARRO; UPSC; ESCWA of the United Nations; Commonwealth of learning, and others.

He has authored nine books and contributed chapters in four books, authored and published dozens of papers and reports. He served as visiting faculty to as many as 16 institutions in India and abroad.

Being member/life member of various national and international organisations, Prof. Aslam has visited 36 countries across the world. ■