

International Forum on Adopting an ICT Perspective to Education and Learning, New Delhi, India

October 31st to November 4th, 2016

Dear all, (Participants from 14 countries, officials, academicians, school teachers including National ICT Awardee Teachers)

Living in a modern society without ICT is unimaginable. Think how often and how many ways we are using the internet, mobile phones and computers. The technologies that enable this have been integrated in every aspect of our day to day living. Globally, as well as, in India ICT accessibility has increased many fold. As a result, opportunities for utilizing ICT solutions and e-services for the entire society, including the rural and remote areas, and disadvantaged groups, have transformed the landscape for development. The world now is a global village.

The Digital India programme is a flagship programme of the Government of India. This was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri. Narendra Modi on 2 July 2015 with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. This campaign is to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improving online infrastructure and increasing internet connectivity. Also, make the country digitally empowered in the field of technology. It is centred on three key areas – Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen, Governance & Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens. The digital India and skill India programmes have facilitated development of digital skills, scale and speed.

One of the key elements covered under Digital India is improving quality of Education. Several ICT initiatives, like, creating OER platform, providing online courses and disseminating information digitally through mobile apps been successful in bridging the divide that existed due to diversities in the country. Now, every nation is working towards enhancing the quality of education. I am happy that the ICT forum would share the success stories that could be a great learning and enhance experience of each other. I think it will pave the ways for holistic development.

Attempts to enhance and reform education through ICTs require clear and specific objectives, guidelines and time-bound targets. Mobilization of required resources, and the commitment at all levels to see the initiative through is needed. Some essential elements of planning for ICT are, rigorous analysis of the present state of the educational system, development of e-contents and regular training of teachers on use of ICTs to improve teaching learning.

Our Hon'ble Prime Minister has been deeply concerned with the education of children with special needs. ICTs need to be used for education of such group of learners as well. This forum needs to deliberate on meeting the needs of the special children comprehensively.

There are many other flagship programmes launched by the Govt. of India, such as, Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat, Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao, Sugamya Bharat, Swachh Bharat, and Swasth Bharat Abhiyan. ICT, especially social media need to be used for information awareness and education of the masses.

ICT ought to be instrumental in building and meeting all the global divides in the best possible ways and facilitate meaningful, happy and healthy lives. We need to have international collaboration and consortiums employing ICT.

I wish this collaborative learning amongst many countries, NCERT and UNESCO will be functionally enriching.

Jai Hind! Jai Bharati!

UPENDERA KUSHWAHA

***MINISTER OF STATE FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA***