A new Central University for Himalayan Technology will be set up in Uttarakhand says Human Resource Development Minister
Highlights the need for a Rashtriya Aavishkaar Abhiyaan and National Framework for Ranking Universities/Colleges
National e-Library to be established by the end of this year, says Smt Smriti Irani

The Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani has said that a new Central University for Himalayan Technology will soon be set up in Uttarakhand. The Institute will also have international faculty, the Minister said, while having an interactive session with state representatives at the Conference of State Secretaries of Higher and Technical Education in New Delhi today.

Smt. Smriti Irani expressed concern at the large number of Institutes and Universities mushrooming in various parts of the country with no standard facilities or full faculty. She asked the States to monitor such Institutes to ensure that they conform to the standards. The Minister also supported a strong "Know Your College" drive whereby it would be possible to get the details of Colleges on the website, which would help the students to make correct choices.

The Minister sought the help of states to create an enabling environment for education of children in backward areas, minorities, women, weaker sections and tribal zones. Special steps are being taken by the Ministry to meet needs of higher education of students from the North-east in the form of collaborative efforts with premier institutes of the country, she said.

Mrs Smriti Irani highlighted the need for a Rashtriya Aavishkar Abhiyaan to make science interesting for children, system of finding patents and to make parents and communities a part of the innovation realm. She asked the States to revisit the Right to Education Act in the light of their experiences. The fragmentation between the Primary, Secondary & Higher Education should be removed and skill development should start at the school level while continuing upto the higher levels, she added. Technology will be leveraged for empowering the students and teachers. For this, the Ministry proposes to launch a large number of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) and also establish a National e-Library by the end of this year, she explained.

The Minister also said that there should be a National Framework of Ranking of Universities & Colleges suited to the local conditions, circumstances and requirements. The Shaala Deep Programme of schools can also be replicated in colleges, she added.

Shri R. Bhattacharya, Secretary (SE&L) and Shri Ashok Thakur, Secretary (HE)also expressed their views on the subject. The representatives of States presented their states specific issues as well as ideas to improve the quality of higher education.

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