

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

NEED TO REDEFINE LITERACY: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL

**4TH INTERNATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE FORUM ON TEACHER
CHALLENGES FOR EFA INAUGURATED**

New Delhi: May 29, 2012

Literacy needs to be redefined in the context of 21st century requirements, keeping in mind the huge advances in technology. This was stated by Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development, while inaugurating the '4th International Policy Dialogue Forum on teacher challenges for EFA' here today. He also called upon UNESCO to take a lead towards this effort. The Minister also inaugurated a walk-in-exhibition for showcasing contemporary approach to teacher education in India.

Shri Sibal underlined that in India while a lot has been done in the field of education, a lot needs to be done in regions where challenges are the greatest. In this manner can we prevent demographic advantage turning into a demographic disaster, he added. He said that we need to strategize for less advantaged regions. He pointed out we need to redefine the role of teachers, to empower the students so that they are skilled to get jobs as they leave the school.

The minister stated that challenges regarding quality teachers can be overcome by creating of pool of pedagogy. Data banks with high quality teacher education material can be set up which can be accessed by all. He also suggested that a pool of high quality teachers could be created whose teaching can be web cast. He also stated that a system of evaluation for teachers, which could be in the form of self evaluation, is required so that teachers can enhance their skills.

The Conference was also addressed by Smt. Anshu Vaish, Secretary, School Education and Literacy and Mr. Joao Cravinho, Ambassador and Head of Delegation (Delegation of the European Union to India), and Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director and UNESCO (Representative to India, Bhutan.). Shri Ashok Thakur, Secretary Department of Higher Education gave vote of thanks .

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All (UNESCO) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India are jointly organizing the International Conference on Teacher Challenges for Education for All in India from 29th-30th May 2012 at New Delhi. This will focus specifically on Teacher

Challenges for Education for All in India and will provide a platform for discussion on the following six areas:

1. Continuing professional development of teachers in India
2. Decentralization: challenges and steps forward
3. Feminization of the teacher force
4. Public-private partnerships to address the teacher gap
5. Inclusive education for children with special needs
6. Monitoring & Evaluation

The objective of the policy dialogue forum is to deliberate on the aforementioned six areas and the issues that fall under their premise with a view to generate recommendations that could inform future policy decisions at the central and the state levels.

Eminent Indian Professionals on Teacher Education would be leading the discussions on the identified themes. In addition the conference will bring together a wide range of stakeholders from non-governmental and civil society organizations at the national level as well as participants and experts from over 45 countries and international organizations. There will be an opportunity for sharing policy related experience with other participants to generate recommendations to inform policy decisions in the field of teacher education.

The selected themes for the international conference are of special relevance to us in India especially in view of the revised teacher education project that has been approved by the Government of India for implementation during the 12th Plan (2012-17).

The Conference proceedings will be webcast on our website: www.teindia.nic.in.

MV/GK