PRESS RELEASE

Azim Premji University hosts 6th Annual International Conference of Comparative Education Society of India (CESI)

The three day conference was inaugurated at the campus today

Bangalore, December 14, 2015: The 6th Annual International Conference of Comparative Education Society of India (CESI) was inaugurated today at the Azim Premji University Campus. Along with Azim Premji University, the three-day conference on ‘Education: Domination, Emancipation and Dignity’, is being co-hosted by Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC).

Mr Anurag Behar, Vice-Chancellor of Azim Premji University inaugurated the conference. The highlights of the first day were three distinguished panels of speakers and eight academic sessions where researchers presented their learnings on different aspects of education. Mr Behar, spoke about the genesis of Azim Premji University, an institution designed to pursue Human Development and ensure quality Education in government schools. To achieve this purpose, he also mentioned that a multi-disciplinary faculty was carefully selected and efforts are made to admit students from socially challenged backgrounds of semi-urban areas.

Prof Avijit Pathak, Jawaharlal Nehru University gave the inaugural lecture and said, “Education is not just a way to transmit social heritage. It’s not just a method of imparting skills and mastering knowledge. It’s also the place to express existential anguish and strive for human worth. This moral assertion by educationists should be encouraged, especially when new forms of authoritarianism are growing and technocratic consciousness seeks to replace the forces for social change”.

Professor Poonam Batra, President of CESI, recounted the journey of this voluntary body of researchers. While the earliest founders wanted Comparative Education to grow as a science, the later contributors have steered the discipline into understanding education in rich and poor contexts and developed and under-developed countries.

The invited panels today included Society, Economy and Education in Karnataka; Language, Power and Identity and The Importance of Teacher Agency. The main speakers were Professor(s) R. Govinda (NUEPA), R.S. Deshpande (ISEC), Padma Sarangapani (TISS), Imtiaz Hussain (AMU), Caroline Long (University of Pretoria), Jan Berkvens (Netherlands Institute of Curriculum Development, Amsterdam) and Anita Rampal (University of Delhi).
The topics of eight academic sessions included - Cultural constructions of Social Inequality; Higher Education pathways and Social Inequality; Governance and Policy Making in Education; Critical Pedagogies and the Politics of Knowledge; Gender, Patriarchy and Education; Policy Issues in Assessment and Evaluation; Social Construction of School Knowledge; and Science, Technology and Education.

A Yakshgana performance by Tharikita Kala Kammata from Batwala (Dakshin Kannada) was also held for the entertainment of the guests from different parts of India and abroad. The notable feature of the conference was an exhibition of rare Educational documents, in different languages, from the colonial period. It was curated by Dr Varadarajan Narayan of Azim Premji University.

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