

**National University of Educational Planning and Administration**

**Special Convocation to Confer Honorary D. Litt. Degree**

**on**

**Mr. Koichiro Matsuura**  
**Director-general, UNESCO**

**Venue: New Delhi**

**Date: November 11, 2009**

## **Convocation Address**

**Shri Kapil Sibal**  
**Hon'ble HRM, GOI and President, NUEPA Council**

Mr. Director-General, UNESCO, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, NUEPA, distinguished faculty and students of NUEPA, invited guests;

**Ladies and gentlemen!**

I feel greatly privileged at being invited to give this special convocation address. I am thankful to the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor of NUEPA for giving me this opportunity.

In this age of knowledge explosion, new disciplines are emerging. Planning and management of education as a specialized subject has become all the more important in recent times to regulate and align schooling systems to the needs of the changing national and international contexts. I am delighted that we have a national level organization, NUEPA, which is engaged in

preparing the type of manpower we need now to deal with the subject matter. I congratulate the Vice-Chancellor and his colleagues on their efforts to provide high quality university education in educational planning and administration.

Let me begin with a brief reflection on the challenges of managing human resources in an era of borderless economies, sustainability of which depend heavily on creation and management of knowledge. Knowledge is becoming obsolete so fast that it has virtually become synonymous with 'change.' In addition, in an interdependent world, the increased global flow of information made possible by new information technologies, creates demand for higher-level cognitive skills and for continuous learning. This is because the skills people acquire in school and in the workplace become obsolete more quickly. We need new and more complex skills to respond to accelerating technological change. How education and training systems respond to these changes and challenges will have far-reaching implications for growth and competitiveness of developing countries and for income distribution.

In recent years, knowledge and innovations hold the key to economic development. We all know that economic development does not necessarily lead to human development. Education plays a key role not only to create human capital but also 'social capital'. This helps generate huge positive externalities in terms of building relationships, strengthening cooperation, maintaining peace and facilitating the process of building humane societies.

It is perhaps pertinent here to say a few words on the goal of development. This has undergone complete transformation; it is no more 'economic growth' or increased per capita income. It has been reconstructed from 'economic growth' to 'quality of life. In between these two extreme goals of development lie the independent goals of 'equitable distribution of the

benefits of economic growth'; 'provision of basic needs of life'; and 'sustainable development.' Economic development has become a sub-set of human development. Thus the role of education goes beyond the concept of human capital. Promoting education is not just for increasing national income or international competitiveness but for building inclusive and humane societies. Education thus must cater to economic development in the conventional sense of accelerating the growth rate but also to social development in the sense of securing for everyone a better quality of life.

India as a 'globaliser' is just one and half decades old. From 1950 to the early 1990s, India had an economic regime of "state-led growth with social justice." The planning strategy was geared towards ensuring distributive justice, balanced regional growth and positive discrimination in favour of the disadvantaged sections of the society. Its service led to an inclusive growth strategy which positioned India as one of the leading economies in the world. As such 'education' occupies a key place in the national development agenda not just to promote the current trend of economic development but also to promote creation of international social capital and South-South Cooperation. Hence, Government of India vigorously promotes all levels of education. While it has made 8 years of formal schooling or its equivalent a fundamental right of every child in the age group 6-14, appropriate interventions are being made to expand secondary, general higher education, professional and technical education. The country is also taking a lead role in the development of human resources in this part of the globe, i.e. South and West Asia.

At this stage, please allow me to highlight major initiatives being taken by India to promote international cooperation in general and South-South Cooperation in particular. India is one of the founder members of United Nations, reflecting a commitment in promoting international cooperation and understanding. The National Policy on Education (1986) and its Programme

of Action (1992) has made direct reference to the promotion of International Cooperation as an important objective of education -“India has always worked for peace and understanding between nations, treating the whole world as one family. True to this hoary tradition, education has to strengthen this world view and motivate our younger generations for international cooperation and peaceful coexistence.” Recognizing the profound impact of education, educational exchange between nations we believe contributes to national and collective self-reliance. The Government of India has initiated various activities to enhance bilateral and international collaboration in the education sector. Cooperation in the field of education has global and regional parameters.

The MHRD has been initiating independent agreements in the form of Educational Exchange Programme (EEP) with various countries to give a more focused attention to meaningful cooperation for sharing best practices in the field of education for mutual benefit. The EEP signed by the Ministry is of an over-arching nature within which the apex bodies/ institutions under the Ministry can go for specific arrangements with their counterparts in different countries.

Universities and institutions of higher learning have been playing a key role to promote the needs and aspirations of higher education and research not only for Indian students and scholars but also to students of developing countries where facilities and research are not adequate. The objective is to allow students after completing their study in India, to reflect upon and develop appreciation for the diversity of our culture and our economic, political and social ethos.

To promote cooperation among countries of the South Asian region, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established when its Charter was formally adopted on December 8, 1985 by the Heads of State of the Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal,

Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SAARC provides a platform for the peoples of South Asia to work together in a spirit of friendship, trust and understanding. Realizing the importance of education as an essential pre-condition for human development, SAARC has emphasized on the promotion and exchange of education. Cooperation in education entered the SAARC agenda early with the establishment of a Technical Committee on Education in 1989. Since reorganization of the SAARC Integrated Programme of Action (SIPA) in 1999, this subject has come under the purview of the Technical Committee on Human Resources Development. A SAARC Chair, Fellowship and Scholarship Scheme are in operation. A SAARC Consortium of Open and Distance Learning (SACODiL) has been created with a view to standardization of curricula, mutual recognition of courses and promotion of transfer of credits. A SAARC Teachers Forum has also been established.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> Summit of SAARC countries at New Delhi, it was decided to establish the “**South Asia University**” in India, as a world-class institution of learning, which would be an important symbol of the connectivity of ideas and of the youth that would build the knowledge economies of the future. The agreement signed proposes a unique model of higher education for South Asia with undergraduate education in the native country and post-graduate education in SAU. They also decided to strengthen cooperation and dialogue on educational matters through development of exchanges between academics, experts, policymakers, students and teachers. They called for inter-institutional cooperation, partnerships, and other regional initiatives in the field of education.

Besides, UNESCO has been kind enough to agree to our proposal to establish the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) as a UNESCO Category I Institute at New Delhi in its last general Conference to promote education for peace and sustainable

development. The overall focus of the Institute's activities will be on: fostering a culture of peace in Asia and the Pacific region through education; promoting sustainable economic and social development; promoting respect for all human rights; ensuring equality between women and men; fostering democratic participation; advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity; supporting participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge; and promoting international peace and security.

ITEC is the flag bearer of the Indian Governments technical cooperation effort and is essentially bilateral, launched in 1964. Under ITEC and its corollary SCAAP (Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme) 156 countries in Asia, East Europe, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America are invited to share in the Indian Developmental experience acquired over five decades of India's existence as a free Nation. ITEC aims at extending cooperation and partnership for mutual benefit. It is response oriented and it addresses the needs of developing countries for building knowledge, capacity development and human resource development. Indian Technical Economic Cooperation has five components viz (1) Training in India of nominees of ITEC partner countries; (2) Projects and project related activities such as feasibility studies and consultancy services; (3) Deputation of Indian experts abroad ; (4) Study Tours. (5) Aid for Disaster Relief (ADR). India spends about Rs. 500 million annually on ITEC activities. Since 1964, India has provided over US\$2 billion worth of technical assistance to developing countries, including neighboring countries (assistance to whom is administered separately).

As many as 45 Institutions in different parts of India have been empanelled for conducting training courses. These training courses cover a wide variety of subjects such as Information Technology (IT); Parliamentary Studies; Accounts & Finance; Mass Communication; English Language Courses; Rural Development; Teachers' training; Bank Management; Educational

Planning & Administration; Entrepreneurship Development; Secretariat Training and Management; Standardization & Quality Assurance; Repair and Maintenance of Telecom Equipment and Computers; Fertilizer Quality control; Food Technology; Tool Design; Poultry Training; Manpower Research; Statistical Education; Non Conventional Energy Resources; IT in Law Enforcement; Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development; Water Resources etc.

In recent years projects have been financed across Asia. Through these projects India assists developing countries to establish useful infrastructural facilities with technological means and skills appropriate to their resources and needs. Through project assistance, India also demonstrates the skills, technologies and human resource capacities, which she has acquired in the course of her own development.

A number of autonomous bodies and educational institutions fully financed by the government of India are also involved in promoting international cooperation with Asian countries .The University Grant Commission, the Indian Council of Social Science Research are responsible for exchange of personnel and material in the field of education, science and culture. The National Council of Educational Research and Training and National University of Educational Planning and Administration are contributing significantly towards human resource development in the education sectors of Asian region. Many educational planners and administrators are being trained by NUEPA through International Diploma Programme for Educational Planner and Administrator (IDEPA). Indira Gandhi National Open University and National Institute of Open Schooling have extended their facilities to many Asian countries. The knowledge sharing and capacity developments have remained a focused area of India's educational cooperation with other Asian countries.

Several Indian institutions as members of the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP) are engaged in promoting regional cooperation for educational advancement. ANTRIEP, is a network of national institutions in Asia with a vision to create synergy between participating institutions in order to reinforce their capacities to respond to the growing and increasingly diversified needs for skill development in educational planning and management in the region. It was constituted in 1995 with the aim of facilitating increased cooperation between a number of Asian institutions that are concerned with training and research in educational planning and management and to help them engage in cooperative activities. It comprises 17 member institutions from 10 countries. It serves as a forum for exchange of research and field experience pertaining to the problems and issues in educational planning and management. Major activities include collaboration on themes of common interest, exchange of innovation among member institutions through ANTRIP Newsletter. NUEPA is the focal point for the ANTRIEP.

We are grateful to UNESCO and its leadership for assisting us in many ways to promote our agenda of regional cooperation in this part of the world. It's indeed a great moment for us to recognize and honor the fabulous work and significant contributions of Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, to the development of education and culture across the globe.

Thanks.

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