

Union Education Minister addresses closing ceremony on India-Spain conference of Higher Education

Conference strengthens bilateral academic and research cooperation landmark gathering of academic leaders from both nations concludes in New Delhi

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Union Minister for Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan addressed the closing ceremony of the **India-Spain Conference on Higher Education** in New Delhi today. The two-day conference was organised on 19-20 February 2026 with the active support of the Embassy of Spain in India. The conference coincided with the India AI Impact Summit 2026.



While addressing, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan said that as we celebrate the Spain-India Dual Year 2026, marking 70 years of diplomatic ties, education, research, and youth exchanges are central to the shared vision of the two countries. The Minister noted that India's National

Education Policy 2020 enables global academic collaboration and extended a warm invitation to leading Spanish universities to set up campuses in India. He emphasized that India is open, ready, and welcoming.



He said that on the sidelines of the India AI Impact Summit 2026, one message is clear : AI must strengthen human judgement, creativity, and ethical responsibility, not replace it. He added that democracies must lead in shaping responsible innovation and stated that India and Spain are committed to doing exactly that. Shri Pradhan said that the conference is about moving from dialogue to delivery. He remarked that the bridges of knowledge built today will shape the confidence of the youth tomorrow.

Dr. Vineet Joshi, Secretary, Higher Education, stated that the conference has brought together leadership from the higher education systems of India and Spain at a defining moment in the bilateral partnership. He noted that the deliberations over the past two days were focused and forward-looking, reaffirming that education remains central to India–Spain engagement. He emphasized that universities play a vital role in driving innovation, economic growth, technological advancement, and people-to-people ties.

H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio March Pujol, Ambassador of Spain to India, said that Spain is honoured by the presence of the Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan. Emphasising that knowledge strengthens societies and guides future generations, he underlined the vital role of universities. The Ambassador stated that the purpose of the meeting is to begin a collaborative process with the full involvement of universities from Spain and India. He noted that discussions have started on joint research, mobility of teachers and students, and support for start-ups. He expressed hope that the process would mature during 2026 and that a similar meeting could be held in Spain later this year, potentially leading to the signing of memorandums of understanding and agreements. He acknowledged the interest of the Government of India in encouraging Spanish universities to establish campuses in India. He

recalled that the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, had conveyed to the President of the Government of Spain that academic collaboration is an absolute priority and had offered maximum facilities for Spanish universities willing to open campuses in India.



Prof. Eva Alcón, President of CRUE, said that the Spanish universities, together with the Government of Spain, remain firmly committed to strengthening international academic cooperation with India. This summit marks not a conclusion, but the beginning of a long and meaningful partnership. She looks forward to working together to advance equitable access to higher education, sustainable development, and global health. Achieving these shared goals requires balancing local priorities with a global vision.

From Spain, over 30 Rectors and senior academic leaders representing the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) participated, reflecting a strong institutional commitment to deepen partnerships with Indian Higher Education Institutions. From the Indian side, about 70 Indian Higher education institutions participated.

At the India-Spain Conference on Higher Education. <https://t.co/4yhFWtE0kj>
— Dharmendra Pradhan (@dpradhanbjp) February 20, 2026

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With...

— Dharmendra Pradhan (@dpradhanbjp) February 20, 2026

Together with H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio March Pujol, Ambassador of Spain to India, delighted to address the closing session of the India–Spain Conference on Higher Education. As we celebrate the Spain–India Dual Year 2026 marking 70 years of diplomatic ties, education, research and... pic.twitter.com/aH1lauPQSh

— Dharmendra Pradhan (@dpradhanbjp) February 20, 2026

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