

**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India**

\*\*\*\*\*

**DG UNESCO Ms. Audrey Azoulay Commends India for Promoting  
Education of Girls  
Acknowledges India's Role as Crucial for Achieving SDG Goals  
HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank Says India's  
Initiatives in the Education Sector can also Benefit Other  
Countries**

**New Delhi  
4<sup>th</sup> February, 2020**

The Director General of UNESCO Ms. Audrey Azoulay has commended India for successfully promoting education of girls in the country. On a three day official visit to India, Ms Azoulay spoke to the media today, and said that India has influenced the vision and objectives of UNESCO through the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi. She expressed confidence that India and UNESCO would carry forward this relationship further to realize their shared objectives. Terming her earlier meeting with the Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal “ Nishank as a very fruitful one, she said she was very happy to note India's efforts at making quality education available to every section of the society.

Ms Azoulay had met Shri Nishank on Tuesday, when the two sides discussed the initiatives being taken by India in the education sector. Shri Pokhriyal informed the Director General that the Gross Enrolment Ratio of girls in the country had, for the first time, surpassed that of boys across various levels. He also talked at length about the various schemes like NISHTHA, LEAP, ODB- Smart Classroom, DHRUV, SWAYAM MOOCS Portal that India has taken up. Ms Azoulay noted India's work with satisfaction and said that India's role is crucial for realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. She also made a special mention of the programmes for enhancement of management skills of teachers and said that this gap was being felt in many other countries too. She was also happy to note India's efforts at ensuring inclusion in education and also the use of technology in this field.

Shri Nishank reiterated India's commitment to the attainment of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. He said India is working to further UNESCO's objective of making quality education available to everyone. The Minister also added that a New Education Policy is on the anvil, which has been formulated after the largest ever process of consultation with stakeholders. This policy will go a long way towards attainment of SDG Goal 4. Shri Pokhriyal further said that India is keen to promote Yoga and Ayurveda courses which are in great demand abroad, and UNESCO can play a pivotal role in the same. He said India's work in the field of education can also be shared with other countries of the world.

During their meeting on Tuesday, Shri Pokhriyal and Ms Audrey Azoulay signed the Operational Agreement extending the presence of Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) for a further period of 5 years. MGIEP is a New Delhi based UNESCO's Category 1 Research Institute, maintained wholly by the

Ministry of Human Resource Development that focuses on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7 towards education for building peaceful and sustainable societies across the world. In line with its vision of 'Transforming Education for Humanity', the institute's programmes and products are designed to mainstream social and emotional learning in education systems, innovate digital pedagogies and to put youth as global citizens at the center of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development.

DG, UNESCO and Shri Pokhriyal also laid the foundation stone for the premises of MGIEP.

The Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay is in New Delhi for a 3day visit to India from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2020. Her visit re-emphasizes India's close ties with UNESCO since its inception in 1946 and the shared ethos of promotion of peace and intercultural dialogue. She visited the city of Jaipur yesterday. The Director General will also call upon Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during her visit.

\*\*\*\*\*

**NB/AKJ/AK**