

'Harness new technology to change face of higher edu'

Eminent speakers interact with students at a symposium at FLAME

Ajit Balkawade

In order to change the current state of higher education in the country, new technology must be harnessed and teaching methods of liberal education must be implemented.

This was suggested by eminent speakers at a symposium on 'The current state of higher education and institution building in India', hosted by the Foundation for Liberal And Management Education (FLAME) on its Lavale campus in Pune on October 1.

The seminar was addressed by Kiran Datar, advisor, National Knowledge Commission; Jayant Narlikar, founder-director and professor emeritus, Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) and YSP Thorat, former chairman, NABARD & executive director, Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Stressing on the need to integrate new technology with the advent of beneficial technologies, renowned astrophysicist Narlikar said, "There is a problem in today's education system and it needs a solution, which is technology. Internet can help in expanding a classroom-like situation. In astronomy, for example, Internet star-gazing is a very common phenomenon that is gaining momentum in the recent years."

He further spoke on reservations and said that reservations should be there at en-



Renowned astrophysicist Jayant Narlikar speaking at the symposium at FLAME on Saturday



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try level and should be limited thereafter.

Sharing her views, Datar said, "The arts curriculum at the University of Delhi has not been changed in the past 50 years. Education at university level needs restructuring. The process of re-structuring an educational institute is extensive. It is spoken about extensively, but is never attempted."

She said that new technology must be harnessed to revolutionise higher education in the country.

Speaking about the philosophy of education and the role of educators in shaping a student, Thorat asked

whether students are encouraged to make their own choices and take responsibility for their choices or are they taught survival lessons only.

He also asked the students whether they knew the meaning of life and how would they prioritise the elements of life.

The seminar was organised to honour Parag Shah, the founder of FLAME, who recently retired from his post as chairman of the institute. The conference ended with a question and answer session, wherein the speakers tackled questions from students and faculty.