

Speech of His Excellency Shri M.O.H, Farook ,Governor of Jharkhand on the occasion of launching ceremony for Saakshar Bharat Mission and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan in the State on 31st July,2010 at Ranchi.

Shri Wilfred Lakra, Advisor to Governor, Chief Secretary, Director General NLMA, Secretary, Human Resource Development, Jharkhand, Officials, Artists. Students, ladies & Gentlemen.

I am extremely happy to formally launch the Saakshar Bharat Mission and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan in the State today and I congratulate every resident of the state and the functionaries for playing a crucial role in eradicating illiteracy.

Education is the overarching parameter for socio-economic development of any individual, community or country. This is a proven fact that a relatively more literate society has access to the benefits of development in a better way. Literacy makes people aware about their surroundings, events and issues. It enlightens them about their rights, duties and entitlements. Only a literate person can contribute and participate in the development process fully.

In our State the overall adult literacy is just 54 percent while the female literacy is as low as 40 percent. This is certainly one of the most telling reasons of the low development indicators in the state.

Two decades back National Literacy Mission had been started in the country to impart functional literacy to the non-literates. However, in spite of the success met through the literacy mission, the female literacy rates have been abysmally low in most of the states in general. This has affected the empowerment of women and has been a real impediment in their socio-economic development.

Saakshar Bharat, the literacy program in its new avatar, has been devised aiming at achieving 80% adult literacy levels in the country. The mission was formally launched by Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh on the International Literacy Day last year. The program is to cover all adults

in the age group of 15 years and beyond but women are going to be the prime focus and predominant participants in it.

This mission presently covers 17 districts of Jharkhand where Female literacy rate is below 50%. It is a great pleasure to know that Saakshar Bharat has already been rolled out in four districts of our State. About one million people are to be made literate in these districts. This is an uphill task. I, however, am sure that efforts and commitment of the literacy workers will certainly bear the fruits and Jharkhand would develop as a role model in the implementation of Saakshar Bharat.

Dear neo literates, I pass on the torch of literacy in your hands to brighten the life of every non literate by triggering a chain of literacy around yourself. I further appeal to you to respect this invaluable gift of literacy by sustaining it through continuing education programmes and skill development training. Only in such environment can literacy survive for time immemorial.

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is yet another very important program to be taken up in the State with the vision of universalization of Secondary Education. Till now the focus has been on providing a sound base for the school education structure by strengthening the primary education sector. The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is to provide free access to good quality secondary education to all young persons in the age group of 14-15 years irrespective of gender, creed, religious denominations, physical and mental disabilities and socio, economic status so as to enable them to progress towards becoming active citizens capable of contributing positively to their own holistic development and that of the state and country as a whole.

Our State has planned to increase the gross enrollment ratio in the secondary education from existing 29 percent to 50 percent by 2011-12 and to further enhance it to 100 percent by 2016-17. It also plans to reduce the dropout rate by 15 percent annually and to ensure 100 percent retentions by 2020.

I hope that the launching of Saakshar Bharat Mission and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, the two very important national programs

would lead to a better educated and more literate and aware citizenry in the State.

I once again congratulate all the people involved in the planning and implementation of these programs as well as the people who are going to be the beneficiaries of the programs. I wish all the success for Saakshar Bharat and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan in the State.

Thankyou.