

Report

Conclusion of the two day Consultative Conference on ‘Teaching Philosophy at school level: problems and prospects’

A two day Consultative Conference on ‘Teaching Philosophy at school level: problems and prospects’, was organised by the Mata Sundri College for Women in collaboration with the Indian Council for Philosophical Research (ICPR) from 19th to 20th November 2024 at its college premises. The conference was attended by a galaxy of philosophers, practicing philosophers, and academicians in the country.

In his inaugural remarks, Shri Sanjay Kumar, IAS, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India, implored the gathering to ponder over the complex set of reasons that leads to relatively low attraction of Philosophy at college and university level. He was of the view that Philosophy’s decline was part of the generic decline of liberal arts. He called for a wider debate to arrest the trend. He also lamented the fact that Indian Philosophers like Shankaracharya do not get the right space in global academic discourse. But he expressed confidence that the New Education Policy (2020) that was rooted in the traditional Indian knowledge system, was capable of putting Indian philosophical contribution in right perspective. He also commended Mata Sundri College for taking early lead in implementing the four-year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) that has a core paper on ‘Philosophical and social logical perspectives of education’.

The ubiquitous consensus over the two-day deliberations was that teaching Philosophy at the school level is an important proposition in this age of consumerism and materialism. It is important to look for appropriate teaching pedagogy to suit the tender minds. It also emerged that the traditional Indian knowledge system has a lot to teach in developing a school curriculum.

Dr Garima Mani Tripathi, Convenor, informed that the proceedings of the conference with its recommendations, would be submitted to the Secretary, Department of Education and Literacy. She also informed about the plans to have a series of specialised lectures from different parts of the country to gather more inputs and suggestions on this issue.