

Need to move away from treating students as memory banks for degrees medals Manoj Sinha

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New Delhi, Apr 3 (PTI) We need to move away from treating students as memory banks for degrees and medals, and the new National Education Policy (NEP) is driving a shift to fostering critical thinking in classrooms, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Thursday.

Sinha made the comments at the day-long Bharat Shiksha Summit, 2025 organised here by Balaji Foundation, a think-tank.

Leaders from across the political and educational fields came together to discuss NEP's transformative potential, focusing on its emphasis on

multilingual education, innovation, and bridging the gap between industry and academia.

"India has been a centre of learning since ancient times. From Takshila to Nalanda, we have always been pioneers in education," said Sinha noting a shift in focus under the NEP, emphasising the move away from rote memorization towards fostering creativity and critical thinking in classrooms.

"We need to move away from treating students as memory banks for degrees and medals. The focus now is on conversation, innovation and empathy in the classroom," he added.

Sinha also stressed the importance of integrating ethical values into education to build character.

"It is not enough to hear our inner voice, we must work hard to realise our potential," Sinha emphasised, quoting luminaries like Srinivasa Ramanujan, Mahatma Gandhi and Sachin Tendulkar as examples of individuals who followed their passion to success.

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Shri Brajesh Pathak praised the NEP's emphasis on mother-tongue education.

"Teaching in one's mother tongue helps students understand and retain knowledge better which is critical for both personal growth and national development..the policy would empower future generations to create jobs rather than seek them," Pathak said.

"Bharat has been the heart of education since the Vedic age but the British changed our education system to make us subordinates. The NEP is a significant step in restoring India's educational dignity," he said.

Naveen Jindal, Member of Parliament, underscored the importance of education as a key driver of national transformation.

"Education should not merely be a policy priority — it should be the benchmark for national progress," he said. He praised the NEP for offering students the opportunity to shape their educational paths according to their interests and talents.

"As we march towards a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed Bharat), we must ensure that our education system prepares students for the future, especially with the rise of AI and technology," Jindal noted.

Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), highlighted the flexibility introduced by the NEP.

"For years, foreign education systems were praised for their flexibility. With the NEP, India is finally offering the same flexibility, enabling students to pursue multidisciplinary education," she said.

Mittal welcomed the NEP's stance on internationalization, noting that

many foreign universities, which were previously restricted, are now allowed to establish campuses in India.

"Applications from 10-15 foreign universities are already in process, signalling a new era of global academic collaboration," she said.

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