



Raj Bhawan Information Wing, Uttarakhand

**Press Note**

**“ICT and Distance learning are rewriting the history of education”, says Governor**

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Uttarakhand’s Governor, Smt. Margaret Alva, said here today that the two most important technologies of the modern era- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Open and Distance learning (ODL) - have greatly impacted society and are rewriting the history of education.

Inaugurating the two-day international conference on “ICT–Initiatives, Policies and Governance” organized by Uttarakhand Open University at Doon University, the governor said she was glad to note that renowned academicians and IT practitioners had gathered at the university to deliberate on the nature and scope of ICT in the contemporary world.

“This meet is aimed at the convergence of open and distance Learning, and ICT,” said the governor adding that it was good that institutions like the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) which has given a qualitative dimension to the global Open Educational Resources movement, Doon University which seeks to redefine higher education in Uttarakhand, and Graphic Era University which is a major stake holder in the development of education in the state, had joined hands to make the event a success.

“The on-going ICT revolution has changed the way we look at, and interact with, our world. It has significantly improved Services across all sections. But more than anything else, it has revolutionised the transfer of knowledge and information,” she said. You no longer need to ask anyone about anything: it’s just a click or tap away. This tremendous access to every kind of information has enhanced transparency of governance and rendered policy formulation and debate, a much richer enterprise.”

The governor said that with universities opting for greater use of technology for education, the open and distance learning acquired a definite edge over its traditional counterpart. “The winner at the end of the day is the learner who has a choice whether to join a conventional place of learning or opt for ODL,” she said.

Smt. Alva stressed the need for creating a network of institutions and resources, first at the state level, and later at the national level.

Further, she said, a COL accreditation to the courses offered by state universities would help the learners to carry forward their course credits to other institutions across the globe.

The governor also said that UOU, with its dynamic IT-savvy vice chancellor Prof Vinay Kumar Pathak, was trying to set a new bench mark for State Open Universities. “UOU’s association with Doon University, and the Commonwealth of Learning, is in the right direction. Although UOU has moved to harness the power of ICT in the dissemination of knowledge and its operational functionality, the future is full of challenges,” she said.

She said the conference should therefore focus on the issues of access, equity and inclusiveness with regard to the computing and IT technologies. The governor requested the Vice Chancellors present on the occasion to join hands with the Uttarakhand Open University and create a strong IT-enabled transparent universities’ network and OER systems.

Among those present on the occasion were Professor Girijesh Pant, V.C. of Doon University, Prof. Asha Kanwar, Vice President, Commonwealth of Learning, Prof. R. C. Joshi, Chancellor, Graphic Era and Prof. Durgesh Pant.