

Mumbai Regional Centre organises Symposium on 'The Changing Landscape of Distance and Online Education' held in Jalgaon

On February 22, 2025, the Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE) at Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), Hyderabad, in collaboration with Iqra H J Thim College of Arts and Science in Jalgaon, organized a one-day Symposium and Orientation Programme titled "The Changing Landscape of Distance and Online Education." The event was held at the Iqra H J Thim College, a Learner Support Centre (LSC) of MANUU and aimed to highlight the growing significance of distance and online education in modern academic settings.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Abdul Karim Salar, President of Iqra Education Society, Jalgaon, and featured a distinguished lineup of speakers. Prof. Mohammed Razaullah Khan, Director, CDOE presided over the event, with Mr. Asim Khan (IRS) as the Chief Guest. The symposium also included addresses from Dr. Munaf Shaikh, Deputy Registrar at KBC North Maharashtra University, Dr. Pramod Pawar, former Dean of Humanities at KBC North Maharashtra University and Mr. Shaikh Akhlaque, a career counselor. Dr. Shaikh Abul Barkat, Regional Director at MANUU Mumbai, served as the Chief Organizer and Dr. Nisar Ahmed Peerzade was the convener.

The event began with a recitation from the Holy Quran and the ceremonial lighting of a lamp by Dr. Salar. A video presentation of the University Tarana, along with a recorded message from the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of MANUU, Padma Shri Prof. Ainul Hasan, was also shared with the attendees. Dr. Shaikh Abul Barkat gave a thematic address, focusing on the transformative role of distance and online education and the efforts of MANUU in promoting inclusive education, especially among female learners and madrasa students.

Dr. Munaf Shaikh emphasized the intellectual and cultural legacy of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, after whom the university is named, and linked MANUU's contributions to overcoming educational challenges. Career counselor Mr. Akhlaque Shaikh advised students to pursue careers based on their interests and intellectual curiosity rather than societal pressures, highlighting the underrepresentation of Muslims in various sectors.

The Chief Guest, Mr. Asim Khan, shared his experience of using online platforms for UPSC exam preparation and stressed the importance of language inclusivity, noting that Urdu, like other Indian languages, is accepted for UPSC exams. He encouraged students to persist in their efforts, emphasizing the power of consistent progress and the importance of mental health.

Dr. Abdul Karim Salar spoke about the longstanding collaboration between Iqra Education Society and MANUU, starting in 2009 with the establishment of a Distance Learning Centre. He praised MANUU's role in promoting the Urdu language and urged the audience to help spread the university's mission across the Khandesh region. Prof. Razaullah Khan concluded the event with an address on the growth of India's higher education system and the integral role of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in achieving the national goal of a 50% enrollment rate by 2035.

The event underscored the importance of distance and online education in ensuring access to quality education for all, with a special focus on marginalized communities, and highlighted MANUU's ongoing efforts to expand its educational offerings through new programmes and initiatives.