

Union Education Minister inaugurates Ānandam: The Center for Happiness in IIM Jammu

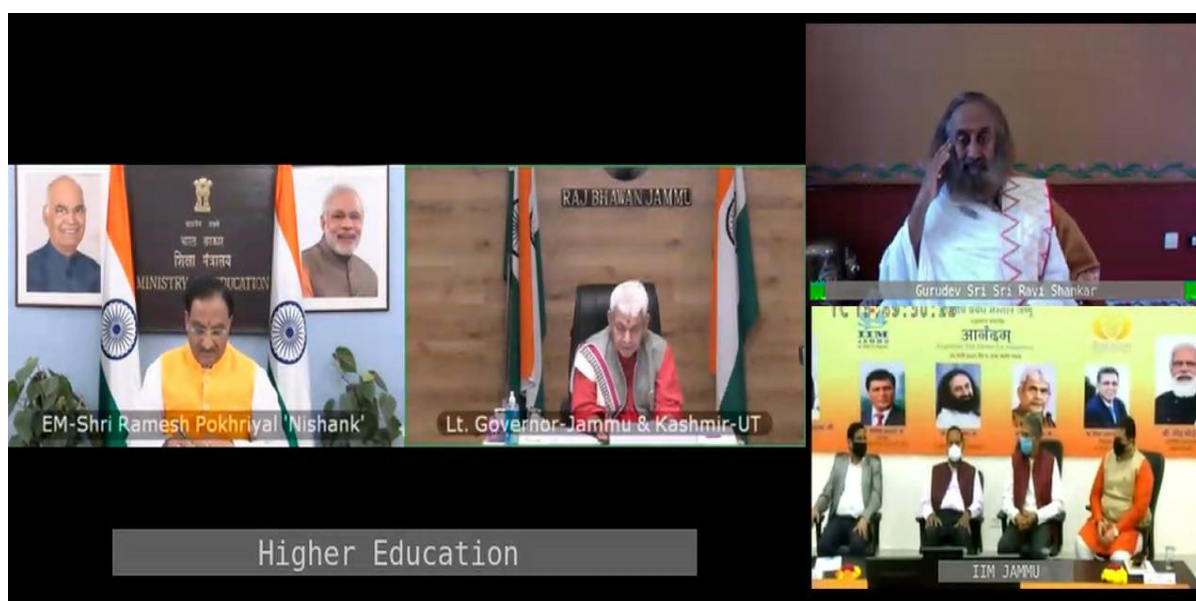
Incorporating happiness in academic curriculum crucial towards empowering our nation- Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’

The Center for Happiness aligns with the National Education Policy 2020, aims to achieve holistic well-being for all - Union Education Minister

New Delhi

30th March, 2021

Union Minister of Education Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ inaugurated “Ānandam: The Center for Happiness” virtually today. Lieutenant Governor, Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha; Founder, Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar virtually graced the occasion. Dr. Milind Kamble, Chairman, Board of Governors, IIM Jammu presided over the event, whereas Prof. B. S. Sahay, Director IIM Jammu was also present.



Speaking on the occasion Shri Pokhriyal congratulated IIM Jammu for the new venture and defined the need for Ānandam: The Center for Happiness. He said that incorporating happiness in the academic curriculum of students is a very crucial step towards empowering our nation. This step will take our education system to newer heights, similar to the times of ancient Indian universities like Nalanda and Takshashila. He explained that how Ānandam: The Center for happiness aligns with the National Education Policy 2020 that aims to transform India’s education system by 2021. He concluded his speech by encouraging other institutions in our country to have their own center for happiness, to help students live a stress-free life.

The Minister said that students and faculty tend to undergo stress due to deadlines, coursework, teaching-load, and professional and personal life pressure. This tends to result in depression and anxiety amongst the teachers as well as students. Hence, the center will help people

overcome mental stress and help spread positivity and it will encourage and propagate holistic development for all the stakeholders at IIM Jammu, he added.

He further said that the purpose of establishing 'Ānandam' at Indian Institute of Management Jammu is to bring holistic well-being.' Regular physical exercises at the Center will contribute to the wellness at the physical level for both the students and the faculty, he added. Shri Pokhriyal further informed that the Center envisions that all shall attain the state of ānanda through conscious efforts. There are going to be practices for breathing exercises like prāṇāyāma and mindfulness, which help in enhancing vitality. Other than this, the practice of Meditation and contemplation will also be encouraged.

The Minister also informed that the prime activities envisaged under the concept of 'Ānandam: The Center for Happiness' will be divided into five broad categories, namely, Counselling, Holistic wellness, Elective courses on Happiness Development, Research and Leadership & Faculty Development. The Advisory Board of Experts for the Center constitutes of numerous experts from academics, research and industry, he added.

Addressing the participants Shri Sinha provided his idea of happiness wherein he gave us an example of our neighbouring country, Bhutan, which is ranked very high in the happiness index. He said that "The right way to measure wealth is to measure happiness and not money". He explained the benefits of yoga, meditation, and other spiritual practices for students to maximize their overall performance that staying happy is the best prayer that anyone can offer to a god and is real idea of happiness.

The Center for Happiness acquires its name 'Ānandam' from the Indian wisdom tradition where the pure consciousness is being as "anandam". "Ānandam" doesn't aim for only happiness but knowing the truth, doing good and enjoying the beauty around. The tagline for "Ānandam" further reinforces its ideology that it will work for the well-being of all. The tagline "Sarvabhūtahiteratāḥ" stands for being always engaged for the well-being of all.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar provided the concept of eternal happiness as he talked about the need for setting up a Center like "Anadam" focused on discovering happiness through wisdom and ancient knowledge. He emphasized on the importance of addressing mental health problems and challenges faced by youngsters and guided us to overcome these challenges by explaining the importance of learning the right skills and incorporating positive vibrations through spiritual practices. He concluded by saying that staying happy is the best prayer that anyone can offer to a god and is real idea of happiness.

Chairman BoG, Dr. Milind Kamble put forth the achievements that IIM Jammu has achieved in a short span of less than five years. He emphasized on the fact that an initiative like "Anandam: The center for happiness" will develop the mental well-being of the students during and even after the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director IIM Jammu ensured that the objectives of the Anandam: The center for Happiness will be achieved by ensuring a flow of positive energy in the campus. It will be ensured that the teachers, staff and students are happy in the campus.

The event was attended by many dignitaries from Jammu, including Vice-Chancellor Sri Mata Vaishno Devi University and Director, IIT Jammu, along with the teaching and administrative staff and students of IIM Jammu.

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