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Amrita becomes first university in India to get Unesco Chair for gender equality and women's development

Adarsh Jain | TNN | Nov 2, 2016, 08:31 PM IST



Representative image

COIMBATORE: The United Nations has officially made Amrita University India's first ever Unesco Chair on gender equality and women's empowerment. The official bestowing of the Unesco Chair on the Coimbatore-based university took place in Paris on Wednesday during a spiritual programme of Amrita University's chancellor Amritanandamayi Devi.

Guests at the event included Ruchira Kamboj, ambassador and permanent representative of India to Unesco, and Peter Wells, chief of higher education section, Unesco.

Amrita University vice-chancellor P Venkat Rangan handed over the signed agreement on behalf of the university to Wells.

Peter Wells said, "There is no greater force for development, resilience and peace in the world than girls' education. Universities such as Amrita have a guiding and strategic role to play in this quest."

The chief of higher education section, Unesco, said, "This UNESCO chair will be at the crossroads of research and action, with the ambition to develop toolkits focusing on vital areas, from skills to health to climate change, on mobile technology applications, and better mapping of vulnerabilities."

Amrita University will be mapping out vulnerabilities of women and girls at various levels and from different perspectives. Through research, study, training and an exchange of best practices, it will try to find out the best possible solutions, replicable by others across the world.

Amrita University vice-chancellor P Venkat Rangan, said, "Even in the most advanced countries, there are very few such dedicated initiatives. In the coming four years, we will identify vulnerabilities of women and girls in India and ways of addressing. The focus will be vulnerability mapping as a result of security, education, and skill-development, social and cultural environment, climate change, disaster risks and health and sanitation."

Launched in 1992, the Unesco Chairs Programme comprises a global network of more than 700 universities across 128 countries. It promotes international inter-university cooperation and networking to enhance institutional capacities through knowledge sharing and collaborative work. Through the network, higher education and research institutions all over the globe pool their resources to address pressing challenges and contribute to the development of their societies.