

International Conference:

**'Centres of Educational Excellence and Sites of Knowledge in Early India up to 13th Century A.D: History, Dimensions and New Researches'**

Two days International Conference on “Centres of Educational Excellence and Sites of Knowledge in Early India up to 13th Century A.D: History, Dimensions and New Researches (CESKE-2018)” was organized under the aegis of the Nari Samvaad Prakalp (NSP) and the Department of History & Social Sciences, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya College (DDU), University of Delhi in the campus of the DDU

College, from October 12th to 13th, 2018. The Conference underlined the significance of the ancient centres of learning, with Takshashila and Nalanda being the foremost centres, which attracted students from all over the world. These sites of knowledge provided education, shelter and food free of cost to the students and never discriminated on account of caste, creed, religion or gender. However in the present day scenario, a lot of misinformation about the Indian University system is being created which seems to be a concern regarding the Indian Universities not figuring in the top ranking Universities or educational institutions of the world. About thirty presentations were made by scholars from France, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bihar, Bengal, Pondicherry, Delhi and other parts of India. There was a strong representation of senior scholars and young researchers from about fifteen Universities and research institutions in the Conference. A special panel on the *'Role of Women in Education'* was organized, which was chaired by Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNC. As the Indian gender discourse is quite different in nature from that of its Western counterpart and it is necessary that the Indian perspective pertaining to role of women in education needs to be brought out through such panels. Thus in Indian perspective, it is very necessary to understand the unique position enjoyed by women in ancient Indian tradition and how up till now the position continues to be strong.

The sessions were followed by screening of a small documentary on the Sharada Peeth, an ancient seat of learning of Kashmir. A Special session of *'Shastratha'*; the age-old traditional Indian practice of debate and a *'Vachika Abhinaya'* titled *'Rise Woman Rise'* were also organised during this International Conference.