

FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION

Patna, November 29. A two-day workshop titled “Empowering Marginalized Communities by Bridging the Skills Gap: Strategies for Inclusive Upgradation & Employability in Bihar” commenced today. It has been jointly organized by the University of Reading in the United Kingdom and Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI).

Dr. Andrew Fleming, the British Deputy High Commissioner to East & North-East India and the Guest of Honour pointed out that 58 % of Bihar’s population is under 25 years and there is no reason why it cannot taste economic success. In order to do that, he said that understanding Machine Learning (ML) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be key. They will be the right skills to possess for the future. IIM-Bengaluru Professor Ritwik Banerjee’s presentation on “Does Teachers’ Caste Bias Affect Students’ Mental Health: Evidence from Bihar, India” highlighted the pressing and critically important need to measure the mental health status of children in Bihar as well as in India. He said that prevalence of mental illness is high among school children in Bihar and teachers have an important role to play in it.

Earlier, Professor Ajit Sinha, Director, ADRI, while delivering the Welcome Address, brought up the fact that technology is changing rapidly these days and obsolescence comes quickly. So, we have to work towards protecting our areas of work. Setting the context of the workshop, Member-Secretary of ADRI Dr. Ashmita Gupta mentioned that occupational rigidities exist in the labour market and skill development programmes need to be targeted to address these gaps.

The inaugural session was followed by two technical sessions. The workshop was attended by academicians, researchers, policy makers, and civil society members from India and abroad. A Vote of Thanks was proposed by Dr. Gupta.

APrasad

(Abhishek Prasad)