

Empower Our Students To Achieve Their Fullest Potential: VC, OP Jindal Global University

Prof C Raj Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of OP Jindal Global University, speaks with BW Businessworld about supporting e-learning in pandemic, the responsibility of an educator in society and the future of education at weekly dialogue, Wednesday Wisdom.



**JGU Vice Chancellor, Dr C. Raj Kumar
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by **Onam Gupta**

As the COVID-19 pandemic spread this year, one area that has undoubtedly witnessed significant changes is education. When schools and colleges throughout the world were compelled to lock their doors in order to prevent the spread of the virus, alternate techniques and technologies had to be implemented relatively immediately. Online learning has evolved into a need rather than a choice. The future of education has been altered by online schooling. However, it is becoming the "New Normal" for all.

Prof C Raj Kumar is the Founding Vice-Chancellor of OP Jindal Global (Institution of Eminence Deemed to Be University). When the institution was founded in 2009, he was selected as the VC. Professor Kumar is a well-known legal expert who specializes in human rights and development, comparative constitutional law, terrorism and national security, corruption and governance, law and disaster management, legal education, and higher education. He believes that the most important

lesson we learnt in the pandemic is our ability to innovate and have a strong sense of resilience. He states, "In a country like India, millions of young people want to be educated. Institutions to impart an education that is inspiring young people and to create ideas that are going to transform society."

E-Learning

With the development of e-learning, where instruction is done remotely and on digital platforms, education has altered drastically. Since Prof Kumar talking about the current status of Indian universities 'From March 2020, almost all of them could not physically open the campus and almost all of them had to somehow deliver education in an online format. So even without The ed-tech situation, we have all recognized the importance of it'.

Prof Kumar also believes that the Pandemic has shown what a realistic, long-term model of online learning is. 'Imagine also for a moment that if we did not have these tools, these aspects of flexibility, the learning aspirations for millions of people across the country would have been simply not possible would they would have been deprived of that. Online lessons were the educational institutes' sole choice for enhancing the children's learning. On a never-before-seen scale, online programmes were the most effective approach to get students back on track with their studies.

Supporting Education and Educators

Teachers have an important role in education, particularly in the lives of the students they instruct in the classroom. Prof Kumar Shares his views on this 'Act and empower our students to achieve their fullest potential, be it in the form of providing you know, sharing once, knowledge and expertise, but also to help them drive through their future aspirations to write letters of recommendation to help them, draft their own statements of purpose or applications. It's a whole range of responsibilities that the faculty members undertake towards achieving the full potential of our students. The teaching profession, without a question, has been at the forefront of adapting to this shift, with so many new methods used by teachers to reach out to students. The teaching profession has not run away from its duties, whether it is through video lectures, video links, online classes, exams or assignment submissions.

Prof Kumar also discusses his role in supporting students, "I have open houses in which I invite students to join in those open house conversations with me and to talk about building the future of the university efficient and the 5th and the last is that to empower our students to become lifelong learners. The learning the project does not stop at the time when they complete their degrees and we need to ensure that they are constantly having a sense of curiosity and inquisitive mind."

Education over the next 5 years

India holds an important place in the global education industry. Prof Kumar says, "I do believe that you know the potential of our universities is quite significant. It's absolutely important that we paid attention. It's important to recognize how universities can build the future of societies and such is the attention that needs to be paid, and I'm seeing the change happening. I do believe that the future is bright. Over the coming decade, modern technology will provide education to many more people all over the world, allowing for greater specialization in curriculum and teaching techniques than ever before."

He also talks about the importance of interdisciplinary education, "Gone are the days when a single discipline university, single discipline institution can achieve the fullest potential of the kind of education that is needed today. There is a strong need for having liberal arts, humanities. To the heart and centre of the Indian education system, we need to ensure that engineers and doctors are also made to study

history and political science and law and sociology and anthropology so that they can understand the social context better."

While the pandemic has been a difficult time, Prof Kumar also feels that the Pandemic has demonstrated what a viable, long-term paradigm of online learning looks like. Online programmes proved to be the most efficient method for getting students back on track with their academics. In today's society, teaching takes on many forms, and a teacher must act as an external parent, counsellor, mentor, role model, and so on. 'Kids do not remember what you try to teach them. They recall who you are'.