

66th All India Adult Education Conference Inaugurated at KIIT, Bhubaneswar

January 21-23, 2026



The 66th All India Adult Education Conference (AIAEC), themed “*Fostering Adult and Lifelong Learning for All,*” commenced with a grand inaugural session at the KIIT Auditorium, Campus 5, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

The conference was inaugurated by eminent educationist, philanthropist, and social reformer Prof. (Dr.) Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS). The event is jointly organized by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA) and KISS Deemed to be University.

More than 210 delegates from 15 States and 2 Union Territories participated in the conference, bringing together academicians, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and grassroots workers to deliberate on strengthening adult and lifelong learning in India.

Inaugural Session Highlights

The inaugural session began with a conference video presentation followed by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by Prof. (Dr.) Achyuta Samanta, Prof. Saranjeet Singh (Vice Chancellor, KIIT & KISS), Prof. L. Raja (President, IAEA), Shri Suresh Khandelwal (General Secretary, IAEA), and Prof. Rajesh (Director In-Charge, IAEA). A welcome song by students added a cultural touch to the proceedings.

Welcome Address

Delivering the welcome address, Prof. L. Raja emphasized the transformative role of institutions like KIIT, KISS, and KIMS in promoting inclusive education. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, he remarked that in the case of Prof. Samanta, “*My work is my message*” truly reflects his lifelong commitment to education and humanitarian service. He highlighted the importance of collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and lifelong learning in achieving the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*.



Chief Guest Address

In his inaugural address, Prof. (Dr.) Achyuta Samanta highlighted innovative initiatives undertaken by KISS, including a unique literacy programme where students teach at least ten individuals during vacations. He stressed that “*poverty creates illiteracy and literacy eradicates poverty*,” underlining the role of education in social transformation. He also emphasized simplicity, humility, and value-based education as pillars of lifelong learning.

Book Releases



Several important publications were released during the inaugural session, including:

- *Life for Lifelong Learning*
- *Adult Education Strategies for Sustainability*
- *The Lodhas* by Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra

- *Hills Kharias of India* by Dr. Manoj Kumar Behera

These works contribute significantly to the academic and policy discourse on adult education and sustainability.

Academic Engagement and Thematic Sessions

The conference featured 15 parallel academic sessions, covering diverse sub-themes such as:

- NEP 2020 and lifelong learning
- Employability and skill development
- Women empowerment
- Tribal education and cultural preservation
- Community participation and sustainability

Around 100 research papers were presented by scholars from across the country, fostering rich academic dialogue and exchange of ideas.

Odisha Declaration Adopted

A major outcome of the conference was the adoption of the Odisha Declaration, reaffirming commitment to:

- Strengthening adult and lifelong learning systems
- Promoting employability and skill development
- Leveraging AI and digital technologies

- Supporting tribal and indigenous knowledge systems
- Enhancing public-private partnerships
- Advancing inclusive and sustainable education

The declaration aligns with the national vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*.

Valedictory Session

The valedictory session, held on January 23, 2026, was graced by Prof. N. K. Ambasht as Chief Guest. He emphasized the growing importance of lifelong learning in the age of Artificial Intelligence and the need to move beyond traditional classroom-based education.

The conference concluded with a vote of thanks by Shri Suresh Khandelwal, who appreciated the efforts of organizers, delegates, and host institutions. Certificates of appreciation were distributed to faculty, staff, and volunteers of KISS for their contribution.

Conclusion

The 66th AIAEC marked a significant milestone in advancing the discourse on adult and lifelong learning in India. With strong participation, insightful discussions, and actionable outcomes, the conference successfully reinforced the role of education as a lifelong process essential for national development and social transformation.

Cultural evening



A cultural evening was also organized by the students and scholars of KIITs Fine Arts Department, young artists and a few delegates which was overwhelmingly enjoyed and appreciated by the delegates