

Nirmala Sitharaman launches work on cosmology centre in Mysuru

Astrophysics data must benefit nation, humanity, says minister

MYSURU, PTI/DHNS

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Sunday that COSMOS, coming up on the University of Mysore (UoM) campus, would be more than just a planetarium to gaze at the sky on a real-time basis as it will offer data which can be used by young scientists for "future learning".

The minister was speak-

ing after laying the foundation stone for the Cosmology Education and Research Training Centre (COSMOS) on the campus of the Sri Jayachamaraja Wadiyar Centre for Higher Learning of the UoM at the foot of Chamundi Hill here.

"It is going to give you all the data that you can use," the finance minister, who is a Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka, said.

Coming up at an estimated cost of Rs 81 crore from Nirmala's MP Local Area Development (MPLAD) fund, the project is expected to be ready by March 2023.

She said the country needs a centre where real-time data which is related to astrophysics is available to students and researchers.

The minister said that she wanted a centre of astrophysics where not only the current data, but also past data is available to students, where they can use it in a guided way with proper teachers, faculties and scientists.

Nirmala said she wanted India to have a lot many young scientists to have that advantage to grow to become a scientist who can use the data in such a way that it can benefit individuals, state, country and the humanity.

On the selection of Mysuru to realise her dream project, she said the city has always stood for good learning ecosystems.

"I've always felt Mysuru was a place (to set up Cosmos). Look at the number of writers, look into the number

of artists, look at the creative geniuses who lived in Mysuru. It's a little planet to itself where learning become so charismatic. Learning is charismatic because of the way it has been cultivated in Mysuru," she explained.

Quoting principal scientific advisor to the Government of India, Prof K Vijay Raghavan, who was present on the occasion, she said, "Prof Raghavan uses this word - democratise learning, make it available for everybody and make it available in such ways in which each person can utilise it."

Mysuru-Kodagu Lok Sabha member Pratap Simha urged Vijay Raghavan to approve a Technology Business Incubator (NIDHI-TBI) for UoM.