

THE NEWSLETTER

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CEMCA

COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

The Covid-19 Pandemic, ostensibly, is behind us. Human resilience won the battle. Countries are opening again. But the abrupt transition from F2F to impromptu online learning, better described as Emergency Technology Response (ETR), without the backing of scientific instructional design needs to be researched to understand the impact of the new mode of delivery when institutions had to be closed.

Many Organisations (KPMG 2021, UNESCO 2022, OECD 2020, McKinsey 2021 and others) have conducted studies to identify several issues like the attitudes, factors, impact on learning outcomes, acceptance etc., related to (impromptu) Online education during the Pandemic. Mixed results have been reported in all these studies.

CEMCA, in collaboration with four Indian State Open Universities (SOU): Dr B R Ambedkar Open University, Andhra Pradesh, Netaji Subhas Open University, West Bengal, Uttarakhand Open University, Uttarakhand, and Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University, Assam conducted a study to understand the perceptions, challenges and opportunities of online learning during the lockdown. The respective universities conducted online surveys. More than 1200 students responded.

Study indicate that online learning offered flexible learning opportunities, helped maintain continuity, enabled communication with peers and teachers, and improved learners' ICT capabilities. Students reported challenges like Internet connectivity, lack of access to the devices, sense of isolation and inadequate ICT skills.

One significant impact of closure was that science students could not conduct science experiments in the Labs. CEMCA organised capacity building workshops for higher education teachers on Virtual Labs. A study to find out the impact of these workshops was conducted by CEMCA. Teachers from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Malaysia responded to the online survey. Teachers reported a positive benefit of Virtual Labs in teaching and learning and mentioned it as a valuable instructional tool to help students understand critical concepts and ideas.

The primary purpose of the two research studies was to inform action and contribute to critical knowledge in the field, as the closure of institutes will have a long-lasting impact on education.

Online education is an extensively researched area. Researches were conducted on mainstream well, designed online education programmes. Online education during the Pandemic was a different brand, often without an instructional design. With the experience of online education practice during the Pandemic, educational institutions need to reconstruct their policy responses for the new norm. All stakeholders, including the governments, must make sure that they adopt a resilient approach, establish e-learning solutions in the institutions, and have innovative programmes in place so that students can make better use of new approaches to enhance their learning outcomes.

CEMCA seeks contributions from partner institutions so that we may share research studies and institutional best practices with a larger audience.

Director

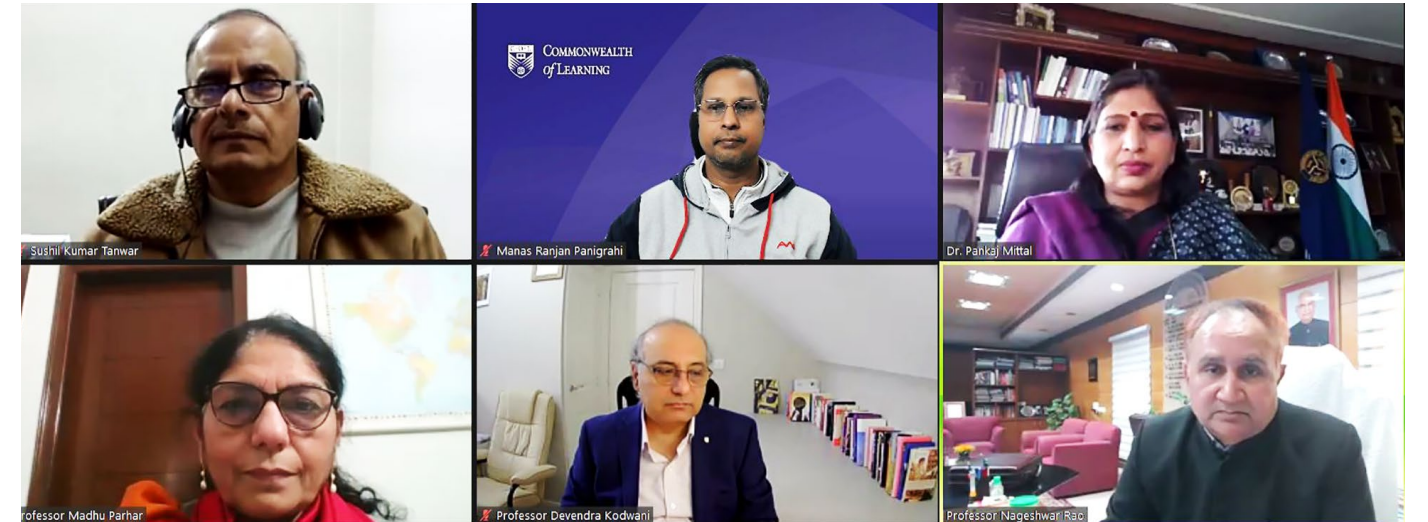
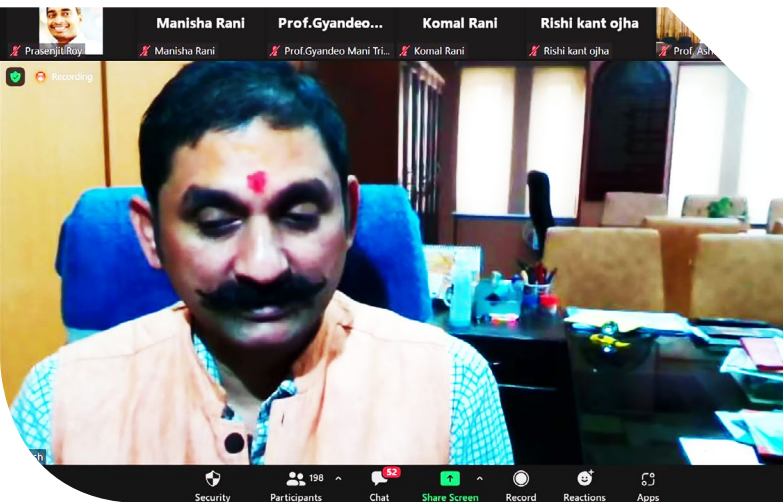


Blended Learning Approach for Teaching

Capacity Building of Teachers in Bihar

CEMCA extended support to Mahatma Gandhi Central University (MGCU), Bihar for the implementation of blended learning in Bihar. An online capacity-building program was organized in March 2022 where 294 participants registered. Out of which 224 participants (157 Male and 137 Female) were from different DIETs of Bihar. Participants designed and developed blended learning lessons. Other themes covered were synchronous and asynchronous learning environments, LMS, MOOCs, ICT tools etc.

Three integrated workshops on enhancing the capacity of Higher Education Teachers to implement Blended Learning were conducted in West Bengal by CEMCA in association with Netaji Subhash Open University (NSOU) between January 2022 and March 2022. These workshops were organized in a face-to-face mode in Nadia and Kolkata districts and online mode for the Jalpaiguri region. A total of 174 (127 Male and 47 Female) participants were trained in these workshops. Workshop facilitators covered the topics like Blended Learning and Developing a Blended Learning Program (using ICT Tools), Diversified Learning Styles and Cognitive Levels of the different students with eloquence, the scope for Value Addition while implementing the Learning Models, Development and Delivery of MOOCs and OER, Participatory Planning and Course Design for Blended Learning material, etc.



Webinar on “Instructional Design for Online Courses”

CEMCA organized a webinar on “Instructional Design for Online Courses” on 28 January 2022. The webinar was chaired by Professor Nageshwar Rao, Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. Prof. Devendra Kodwani, Professor of Financial Management and Corporate Governance, Executive Dean Faculty of Business

and Law at The Open University UK learning, and Professor Pankaj Mittal, Secretary-General, Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi spoke about improving the quality of online courses and the holistic future of higher education and emphasized on the role of creating engaging content and adhering to instructional design’s best practices. More than 100 participants from Asian Commonwealth countries attended the webinar for knowledge sharing in online course development and instructional design.

Adoption of Open Educational Resources (OER)

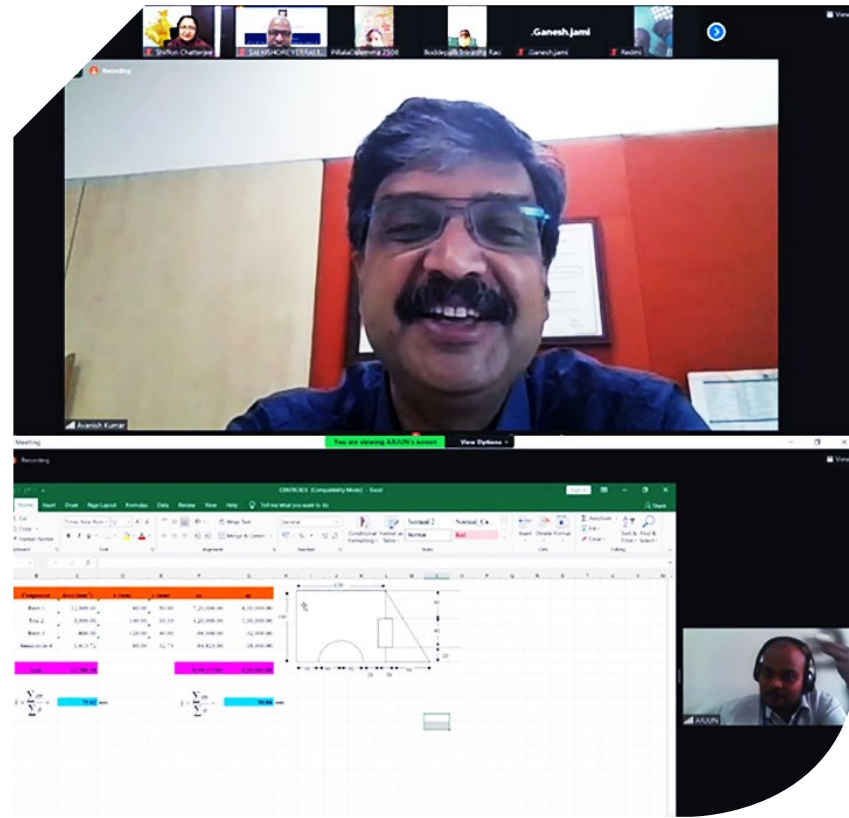
CEMCA supported U.P. Rajarshi Tandon Open University, Uttar Pradesh to adopt Open Educational Resources (OER) and to develop institutional policy. An online capacity building program for the university teachers, academic counselors, study centre coordinators and leaders was organized from 17-19 January 2022 both in synchronous and asynchronous mode. Universities’ Vice-Chancellor Prof. Seema Singh inaugurated the workshop and encouraged the faculty members to use and create OER in

developing learning material in her speech. A total of 202 (167 Male and 35 Females) participated in the workshop to learn about OER and its creation.



ICT training for Teachers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

An online training program on “ICT for Teachers” was organized by CEMCA in collaboration with the GMR Varalakshmi Foundation. The program was conducted in January 2022 for 60 teachers and para-teachers of Government schools in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana respectively. The workshop was focused on enabling teachers to use a variety of ICT tools for teaching, learning, and assessment. Tools for content creation, delivery, and management were demonstrated and explored. ICT-enabled strategies for student engagement were discussed.



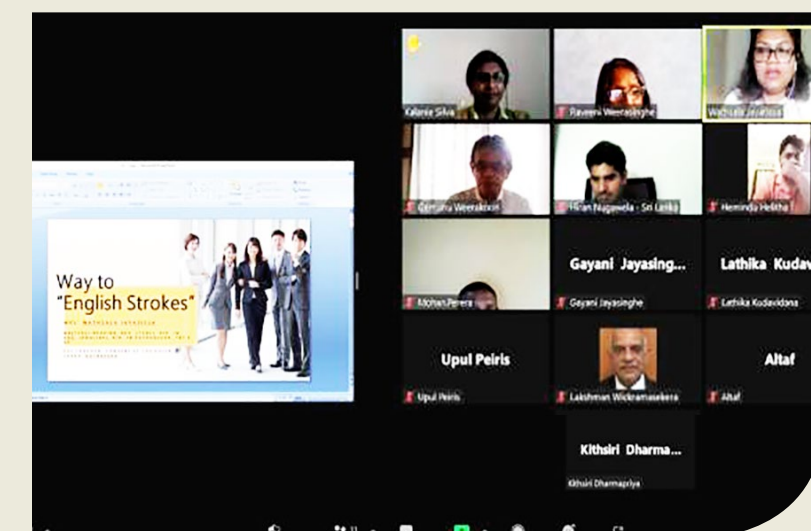
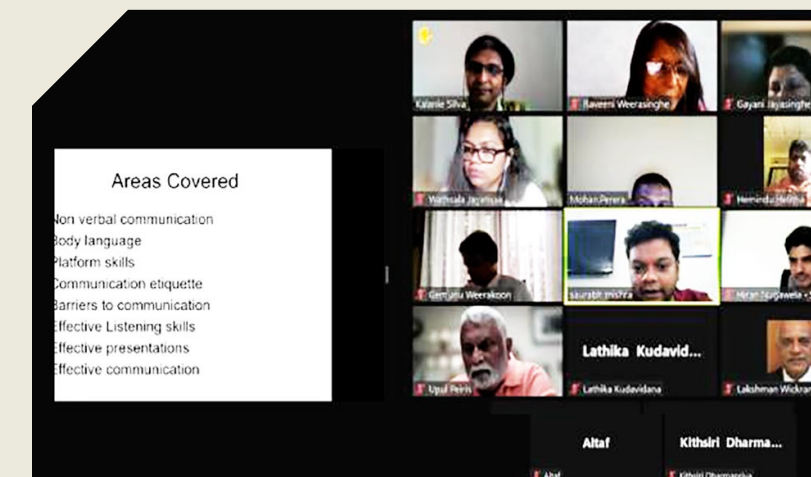
Up-skilling of Logistics Sector Workers in Malaysia

CEMCA extended support to 21CC Education to conduct upskilling of 100 blue-coloured loaders and pickers working in Malaysian logistics companies. These workers were mostly migrants from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Thailand. Five logistic companies in Malaysia namely: Raya Airways, Dexlo, SnT, lorry.com and PKT Logistics Group onboarded their 144 employees (Male-75, Female-69) to undergo this upskilling training program. Participants were trained through a self-paced online course on the 21CC mobile app and were mentored and hand-held in face-to-face sessions on company premises by the experts in Malaysia. This training program helped these marginalized communities’ workers to improve their earnings/productivity.



Employability Skill Training in Sri Lanka

CEMCA supported a local NGO in Sri Lanka to mobilize and enrol 250 marginalized community youths (Female-185, Male-65) in online employability skills and spoken English courses linked to labor market needs. Sri Lankan trainers conducted this course via the zoom platform from November 2021 to January 2022 in batches. The course consists of modules of Effective Communication Skills, IT & Computer literacy, Interview Skills, Resume Drafting, Teamwork and Leadership, Time management, Personality Development, Professionalism and Work Ethics, Effective Planning and Spoken English.

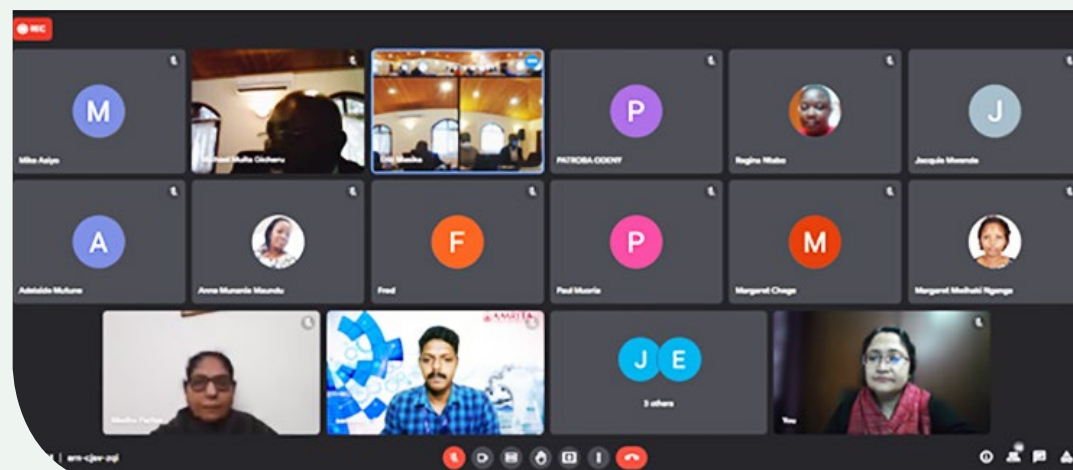


Workshop on Virtual Labs for Kenyatta University

CEMCA supported an awareness workshop on virtual labs for teachers at Kenyatta University, Nairobi on 12-13 January 2022. The workshop was organized by the Commonwealth of Learning

(COL), Vancouver in partnership with Kenyatta University. During this online workshop, an overview of virtual labs was provided; experiments from Physics, Chemistry, and Biological Sciences were demonstrated; and research insights into the use of virtual labs were presented. Twenty instructors from three Schools at Kenyatta University - the Digital School of Virtual and

Open Learning, School of Pure and Applied Sciences, and School of Engineering & Technology attended the workshop.



Online Skill Training for Women and PwD

CEMCA extended its support to CSC E-Governance Services India Limited (CSC SPV) to provide free online skill development training & certification in optical fiber splicer course to 2500 women and 2500 Persons with Disabilities

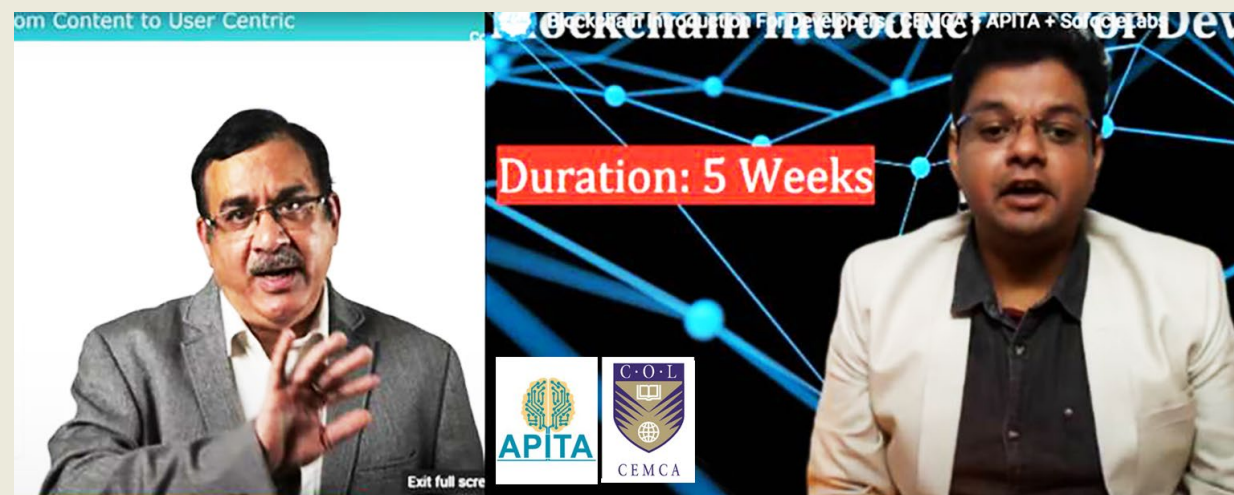
(PwD) through CSC's skill training centers. The training was conducted between December 2021 and February 2022. This course will provide the opportunity for marginalized communities to acquire the required skill and work towards boosting growth and productivity in the Telecom sector in near future.



Blockchain MOOC offered for Job Aspirants

CEMCA in association with Andhra Pradesh Information Technology Academy (APITA), Govt of Andhra Pradesh and with technical support from the Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur launched 2nd cycle of the "Blockchain Introduction for Developers" course. This massive open online course (MOOC) was offered from 3rd January 2022 till 6th February

2022. 5949 participants (Male-3165, Female-2739, Not specified-44) registered for this course from 44 countries across the globe. This course helped professionals and freshers across the globe to upskill themselves with Blockchain technology and opt for better jobs and high salaries with acquired knowledge.



Presents



Baby Care-Giver Video Course

Understanding the need to address the skill up-gradation of the domestic worker workforce of India to compete with the world standard, CEMCA supported Domestic Workers Sector Skill Council (DWSSC) to design and transform their "Baby Care-Giver (Non-Clinical)" course text content into informative video content. This online course (developed under the CC-BY-SA license) consists of 22 video modules that were scripted and conceptualized by domain experts and master trainers from DWSSC. This video tutorial course will help to train aspirants registered under various government schemes with DWSSC.

Broadcast of Bamboo for Sustainable Development Tutorial Episodes

CEMCA in association with Federation for MSME clusters (FMC) developed audio podcasts in 4 Indian languages on the use of bamboo products for sustainable development. These podcasts were broadcast in 7 states of India with the help of 20 community radio stations in February-March 2022. These audio podcasts motivated and educated rural entrepreneurs and agripreneurs to opt for bamboo farming and manufacturing/selling bamboo-related products.



Sustainable Farming techniques workshop for farmers in Bangladesh

CEMCA conducted a 6-days workshop in Bangladesh on sustainable farming techniques and the use of IPM technologies for year-round vegetable production. This workshop was conducted in batches for 309 marginalized community farmers (Male -226, Female-83) in villages of 2 districts of Bangladesh from November 2021 to January 2022. The sessions in the workshop included the agriculture lab visit (Sher-e-Bengal agricultural university), government schemes'



orientation by the officials of the Department of Agriculture Extension Bangladesh, and inclusive programs by agricultural scientists and experts/ professors of agricultural universities.

Faculty Development Program conducted for faculties in Andhra Pradesh

CEMCA in association with APITA - Andhra Pradesh Information Technology Academy (Govt of AP) organized a faculty development program (FDP) in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh on 21st March

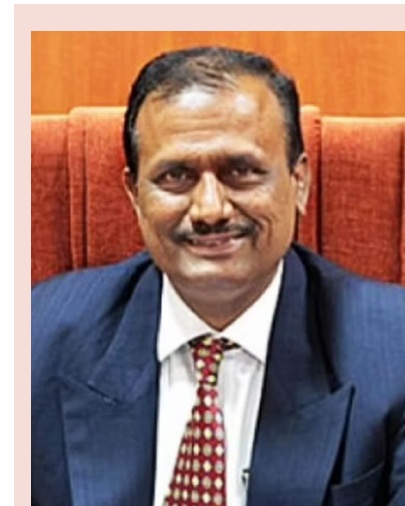
2022 on "Advanced Technologies and Teaching Methodologies". 47 faculties (Male-27, Female-20) from various engineering colleges of Andhra Pradesh were upskilled in advanced technologies of Microsoft Azure and Teaching Methodologies. CEMCA will be supporting APITA to upskill 500 higher education faculties from Andhra Pradesh by organizing a series of such FDP workshops across the state.



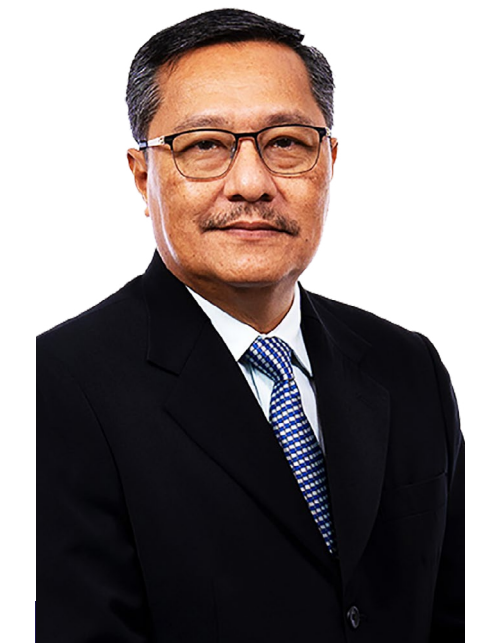
Updates



CEMCA welcomes **Mr. T K Kaul** as the new Head of Administration and Finance who took up his appointment in March 2022. He has vast experience in dealing with issues related to Administration & Finance and worked previously as Registrar, Sikkim University (a Central University) for about seven years. Prior to that, he served for several years at Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).



It is a pleasure to welcome and sincerely congratulate **Prof Dr. Prashantkumar Patil** for his appointment as the new Vice-Chancellor of Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU). CEMCA looks forward to his support in strengthening our association with YCMOU.



CEMCA warmly welcomes the new Vice-Chancellor of Open University Malaysia, **Prof Dr Ahmad Izanee Awang**. We wish him good luck with the new responsibility and look forward to collaborate with the University under his leadership.



We would like to place on record CEMCA's sincere appreciation of **Dr Shiffon Chatterjee** for her valuable contributions during her term from October 2020 to March 2022 as Senior Programme Officer, and we wish her good luck in her future endeavor.

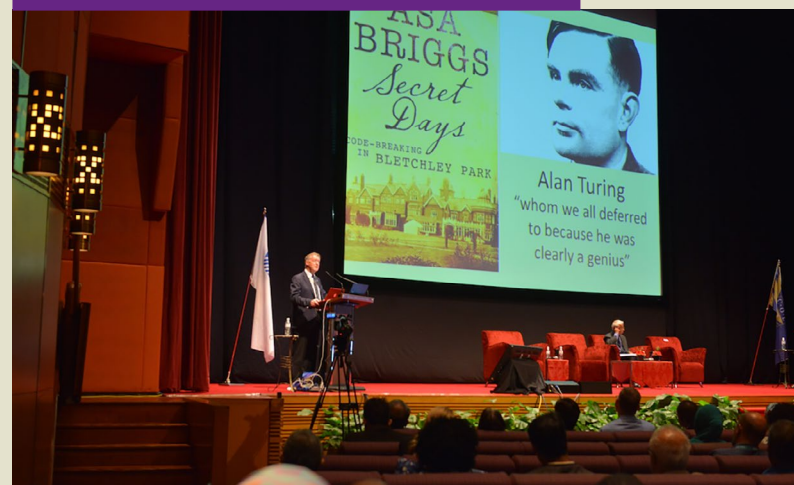
Coming together at PCF10



Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and Athabasca University (AU) will host the Tenth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF10) in Calgary, Canada, from 14 to 16 September 2022, at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre. The theme for the upcoming event will be the role of open learning in fast-tracking the transformation of education for the future.

The main attraction of this event will be:

Keynote presentations



A keynote on each of the four sub-themes of the forum will be presented, as well as on the Asa Briggs Lecture.

Paper presentations

Participants' research papers, case studies, etc., will be presented in the parallel sessions.



Workshops



Presenters will demonstrate the findings of key research projects or guide the participants to develop specific skills in a step-by-step manner.

Panel discussions



Experts will make presentations facilitated by a moderator for questions and answers.

Poster presentations



There will be one poster session, where all the forum posters will be displayed.

Exhibition



This is a space for paid exhibitors, who would present educational technology-related products and services to Forum participants.

Marketplace



Here delegates can demonstrate and discuss their technology, OER or innovative services and practices in one-to-one conversations.

 For more information: <https://pcf10.org>.

Moments...



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