



## IIM Ahmedabad's initiative to strengthen Arunachali languages laudable: Lokhande, September 16, 2022

ITANAGAR, 15 Sep: "It is a matter of great happiness that IIM Ahmedabad has come forward to support the promotion of Arunachali languages," said Investment & Planning Commissioner Prashant Lokhande, addressing the institute's Billion Readers (BIRD) team, which was here from 12-14 September to explore the possibility of implementing BIRD in Arunachal Pradesh.



The BIRD initiative aims to ensure that every Indian becomes a fluent reader and a lifelong learner in their mother tongue. Lokhande informed that the indigenous affairs department will be the lead state partner of the BIRD initiative.

Indigenous Affairs Director Sokhep Kri briefed the visiting team on the various language groups in the state, and the progress achieved so far by the government and community-based organisations (CBO) in developing and promoting standardised indigenous scripts. BIRD founder-leader Prof Brij Kothari apprised the participants of the IIM Ahmedabad's initiative and its same language subtitling (SLS) innovation.

"SLS is a scientifically proven solution to support reading and language learning. It adds subtitles in the same language as the audio to audiovisual content that people love to watch, like folksongs, folktales, films on TV, streaming, and online videos. What you hear is what you read," Kothari said.

Members of the BIRD held discussions with CBO representatives of Galo, Adi, Idu Mishmi, Kaman (Miju), Khamti, and Singpho language groups. Lohit Youth Library Network coordinator Sathyanarayanan Mundayoor, who was also present, said that the "SLS has the potential to encourage a wider use of Arunachali languages and scripts, creating a society of fluent readers."

The BIRD team has offered to create SLS-powered content in the indigenous languages by drawing on Arunachali folksongs and folktales. "The content would then be distributed on TV and social media platforms to encourage the usage of and reading in indigenous languages," Kothari said, adding that "Arunachal Pradesh could well be the first state to scale BIRD's SLS innovation in India and the world, for language learning and literacy." More information can be found at <https://billionreaders.org/>

Online article: <https://arunachaltimes.in/index.php/2022/09/16/iim-ahmedabads-initiative-to-strengthen-arunachali-languages-laudable-lokhande/>