

## **We need Saraswati more than Lakshmi"- CM announces Saraswati Yojna**

Chief Minister Narendra Modi, who has been taking centre stage with his televised address on Teachers' Day for the last couple of years, on Saturday urged youths to give 100 hours each year for the cause of society. In other words, it meant they would be roped in government-supported programmes like teaching the underprivileged, Nirmal Gujarat and so on.

Termining the job of a teacher a "way of life", Modi declared that nobody should be illiterate in Gujarat and hence, every literate should teach at least one illiterate. His address at Tagore Hall was expected to reach one crore students across the state through TV.

As many as 20 children from across the state had been handpicked and dressed in school uniforms to ask Modi questions at this programme. Before the question-answer session began, Narendra Modi clarified that this was no press conference and he was participating in it in the capacity of a "common citizen". His words should not be misconstrued as the official line, he pointed out.

This was obviously referring to the huge goof-up made last year when after Narendra Modi's mention in support of open book exams, the education department, within a couple of days, went ahead and announced the implementation of the open book system, causing immense confusion.

Narendra Modi also said that the state needed the experience of retired and talented teachers and exhorted them to come forward to "add to the quality of education, by volunteering to guide teachers in schools in their neighbourhood".

"We need Saraswati more than Lakshmi now although we are chasing the latter more," he said, announcing the government's plans to launch a campaign to improve quality of education on November 12, 13, 14 this year.