



Announcements

ASERF has instituted **Dr Stya Paul Young** Educationist Award' for honouring Young Educationists who have demonstrated their potential by making an impact on Indian education. Applications from the eligible scholars are invited for the Award of the year 2013. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

Apeejay Stya University announces admission for the session 2013-14

Apeejay Stya University is offering diverse catalogue of technical, scientific, management and liberal arts courses for the Fall Admission 2013-14. Applicants for admission accepted on the basis of comprehensive merit, judged by their academic excellence, their extracurricular achievements, and their utilization of the resources they have had available. As part of the application, the University recognize a number of examination scores to establish academic excellence, including AIEEE, GMAT, SAT, SAT-II. **For more,** [click here](#)

Apeejay Stya University announces Founder's Scholarship

On the Death anniversary of our beloved founder Dr. Stya Paul, Apeejay Stya University (ASU), Haryana announces a Merit - Based Scholarship Scheme for *Undergraduate, Post Graduate and MBA Courses*

Please visit our website for more: [click here](#)

Get Involved

Fellowship opportunities

Fellowships for six months to two years in various disciplines.

Workshops/Guest Lectures

Regular workshops and lectures on a variety of subjects.

Scholarships

Need-based financial aid to deserving student

Faculty Sponsorships

By seeding a named faculty seat or fellowship

Internships/Mentoring

Internships can be in diverse areas from services, government and nonprofit. [See Details](#)

Please visit our website for more: [click here](#)

Also discover the Apeejay Edge: [click here](#)

Partnership

Dear Partners,

The Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation (ASERF) invites news, articles, resource material, opinions and analyses on relevant educational issues that can be highlighted in our by-monthly e-bulletins and on the ASERF portal.

We request if you could spare a few moments of your valuable time to have a look at our website and guide us on our regular initiatives.

Editor

[Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Singh](#)

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ASPECT

You have to incentivize education for first-generation learners'

Rahul Singh, Bihar's secretary of primary school education, says the large number of children requiring education is a challenge

Bihar is battling to provide quality access to school education, amid tragic examples of things going horribly wrong as with the recent mid-day meal deaths. Enrolment has risen but the quality of education imparted needs improvement. The state administration said the overall growth in education is quite encouraging. Rahul Singh, secretary of primary school education in Bihar, said in an interview that the large number of children requiring education is a challenge and the state government is gearing up to improve the quality of education. Edited excerpts:

Wherever one goes, it's a sad picture of education. What has gone wrong?

I may not agree entirely. Education is a wide subject. You have to be specific.

Why is there so much focus on schemes than on real education? Is education falling victim to policymaking in the state?

I don't share that perception completely. Yes, there are governance issues; there is some issue of mid-day meal fund flow, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (movement for universalization of elementary education) implementation, general teaching atmosphere and number of out-of-school children. As per an estimate, the state has some 271,000 out-of-school children, which I believe is an understatement. In Bihar, number is a challenge.

Everything is focused on bringing children to schools.

If you analyse school enrolment, you will see many of the children are neo-literates. They are the first-generation learners. So, attracting them to schools is very important. This reflects in the census data also (literacy rate in Bihar grew from 47.53% in 2001 to 63.82% in 2011). You have to incentivize education for first-generation learners. Education is a merit good. The willingness to pay is less, and here the state steps in for the positive externalities.

Still, you see both physical and human infrastructure lagging.

Under the SSS (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), we have opened 21,919 schools. But 8,600 have no land or building (of their own). We are trying to correct it.

Teacher recruitment and training is another issue. But this is a chicken and egg problem (you want teachers first or training first). Of the total teachers in Bihar, 152,000 are now enrolled for training courses in IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) to comply with the NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) training requirements. Some 98,000 have passed.

Girls have outnumbered boys in government schools. But critics say because of teaching quality, parents send boys to private schools and girls to government schools?

One may debate about why more girl students are in government schools and whether parents send boys to private schools and why. Some may also talk about the incentive schemes, but from the perspective of a state, it's not a small achievement. The school education system is a matter of scale in Bihar and, at times, we face the governance problem. We are trying to bridge the gender gap and its negative now—more girls than boys.

If you look at the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe students' enrolment, it's quite good. As against 15% population, the enrolment is 19% (at the primary level). In Class 7 and 8, enrolment (of both the categories) is 14%. For the 15% minorities, the gap is zero.

The out-of-school children number is 271,000, but it's an understatement. But the data is a broad indication that the system has some flaws and we need to fix it. According to the District Information System for Education (DISE), there are 2.08 crore students in Bihar's (elementary) schools. But we have done our estimate now, and the fresh figure is 1.92 crore, a drop of some 16 lakh students. (DISE is managed by the Union government.)

What about retention of students?

In 2006, at least 5.6 lakh students gave the Class 10 board exam in Bihar, 33% of whom were girls. In 2013, we have 14.4 lakh students in Class 10 and 44% are girls. So the total number of girls now is more than the total number of students appeared in 2006 Class 10 board exam.

But quality still remains a victim?

We are making efforts to improve that. We have now opened clustered resource centres and have asked every school to name the best teachers as in-charge of Class 1 and 2. From this year, we have provided a learning facilitation manual for teachers (on how to teach better).

Soon, we are going to start learning assessment for Class 3, 5 and 7 students. This will be done by a

private agency selected through competitive bidding in 2% of Bihar schools. It will be rolled out in September, and, from November, we will roll out in 100% of government schools. This will be repeated every year. The aim is to find the gap and then find ways to plug it.

Source: August 08, 2013/ [Live Mint](#)

NEWS

State lowest in spending on rural education: Industry body

Odisha ranks lowest among states with average rural household monthly expenditure on education being just about Rs 52, as per a study conducted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham), the country's leading industry body.

An [Assocham](#) media release issued here put Haryana on the top with highest average rural household monthly expenditure on education worth over Rs 373. The industrial body conducted the study titled 'Evolution of Indian Rural Markets: During 2004-05 to 2009-10'.

"Although we have made great strides in improving India's education scenario, much ground still needs to be covered as our education system is still plagued by low enrolment rates, lower attendance and retention rates, high teacher absenteeism, irregular classes, poor teaching standards and other related issues," the release quoted Assocham national general secretary D S Rawat as saying. "The government needs to shift its focus on increasing the enrolment rates and reduce school drop-outs in rural areas," he said.

Gujarat has a clocked massive growth rate of about 126% in rural household monthly expenditure on education across states during the period. Punjab, though ranks second with about Rs 305, registered about 10% growth in the sector.

Source: August 01, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

National Archives of India Launches e-Abhilekh

The quarterly newsletter of the National Archives of India entitled e-Abhilekh was launched by the Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Shri Ravindra Singh here today. This news bulletin has been planned with the objective of disseminating information for the development of Archives.

The inaugural issue provides information about the activities of National Archives of India, States/Union Territories Archives, Archives of Business and other learned institutions for the

period April-June 2013. The special feature of the issue is on International Archives Day and International Archival Organisations.

The newsletter is available on the website of the National Archives of India (www.nationalarchives.nic.in) for the users.

Source: August 01, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

Commercialisation of education flayed

The All India Students Democratic Organisation (AIDSO) protested against the commercialisation of education, increasing fees and lack of facilities across institutions in the state. Hundreds of students from various districts in the state gathered at Town Hall to protest.

They demanded that the state government increase aid to government schools and colleges and increase their number to ensure that students get quality education. "Education is unaffordable nowadays and fees are skyrocketing. Girls are not safe in colleges and even within universities," said national president of AIDSO M N Sriram.

He pointed out that there are many schools and colleges where seats were not filled, while many students were denied quality education. Veteran freedom fighter H S Doreswamy, who inaugurated the AIDSO conference, reminded students of their responsibilities as young leaders of tomorrow. "If you want to solve problems, you have to do it yourselves. Nothing will change if you don't act," he said.

Source: August 01, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Finishing school to hone soft skills

The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and Young Indians (YI) inaugurated finishing school here in the city on Thursday in association with the Institute of Excellence in Higher Education (IEHE). The school aims at improving employability of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward classes students in the industry.

Addressing students, chairman of CII Bhopal zonal council K Vaidhyanathan said, "The necessity of soft skills is very important in today's world to place you at a good platform in the competitive mainstream industry. If one is confident in his or her speech and actions, it opens doors of opportunities for them."

The objective of the finishing school is to provide soft skill coaching to students graduating from engineering, business management and law institutions.

Saloni, a third year student of political science from IEHE, said, "I am looking forward to these classes and expect a lot from them."

"These classes are good but unfortunately we will have to miss our main classes," said Kiran Dhakad, a student.

Source: August 02, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

Haryana govt to set up 'Prarambh' school for teacher education

To make Haryana a preferred destination for school education, the state government has decided to set up 'Prarambh' a first-of-its kind school for teachers to help them develop their professional skills.

"The programme is a giant step towards the fulfilment of the vision of the education department to bring best quality teachers to the 47 lakh-odd students in the state," an official spokesman said.

"Prarambh will seek to address the quality issue in elementary and secondary teacher education with built-in mechanisms for innovation. It will be an autonomous institution having collaborations with national and international agencies of repute," he added.

It will have its dedicated 10-acre campus in Jhajjar, just 50-km away from Gurgaon, the spokesman said. "A four-year integrated Bachelor of Education Programme is the first offering from the Prarambh School of Teacher Education," he said.

The programme will cover the academic content from degree to post-graduation level. This would be a residential programme on the lines of the other top-notch undergraduate programmes, including engineering and medicine courses in the best of institutions in the country, the spokesman said. He said that a high-powered committee under the chairmanship of Surina Rajan, Surina Rajan, Department of School Education has been constituted for creating curriculum for this programme.

Source: August 02, 2013/ [Business Standard](#)

600 million mobile internet users expected by 2020. Kapil Sibal

Union Minister for Communications & IT and Law & Justice Mr. Kapil Sibal said today that a combination of liberal M&A and FDI policies will facilitate the required investments, and spur renewed activity in the telecommunication sector.

Speaking at the CII National Telecom Summit 2013, organized in partnership with Department of Telecommunications, the minister remarked that "industry and government need to empower the

common man through affordable services, data and devices". He also stressed on the urgent need to establish an indigenous fab facility in the country.

Mr. M.F. Farooqui, Chairman Telecom Commission and Secretary, DoT reiterated the Government's resolve to collaboratively address all constraining issues with the industry, through dialog.

"We are also hoping to issue M&A guidelines within the next two months and Unified Guidelines in next few days", he added.

Dr. Rahul Khullar, Chairman TRAI was forthright in his views on problems facing the industry. He also emphasized on the critical need to use telecom infrastructure for public service in the fields of disaster management, financial inclusion and digital transactions, in the long term.

Building further on expected data growth, Mr. Kiran Karnik, Chairman, CII National Committee on Telecom & Broadband said that future possibilities will be opened up by broadband, leading to widespread impact in the fields of education, health, financial inclusion, skills and training and thanked DoT for creating Joint Working Group on Broadband on CII request.

This is chaired by Mr Kiran Karnik with Co-chairman Ms Rita Teotia, Additional Secretary, DoT.

Kicking off the session, Mr. Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General CII, welcomed the FDI move and the expected M&A regulations, and emphasized that prompt implementation of NTP 2012 will bring the sector back on track.

Mr. Kapil Sibal also released an A.T. Kearney – CII white paper on "Serving India's Digital Consumer", on the occasion.

Mr. Mohit Rana, Partner, A.T. Kearney said that delivering to expectations of the 600 million 'digital customers' in 2020 will require operators to develop new capabilities and ecosystem partnerships.

The government needs to provide adequate spectrum at market relevant prices, which will bring back capital investments in the sector.

The summit with theme "Building communications: Accelerating development" was attended by representatives from government, leaders from the Indian telecom, IT and electronics industry including Samsung, Qualcomm, EMC2, ATC, BSNL and NEC, and focused on growth opportunities in telecom business and necessary imperatives to carve out a sustainable growth roadmap.

Source: August 02, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

IAN invests in online education startup IndiaCollegeSearch

Indian Angel Network (IAN), a national network of angel investors investing in startups and early-stage ventures, has invested an undisclosed amount in IndiaCollegeSearch, an online search engine for Indian colleges and universities. The investment was done by IAN members Anupam Mittal, Vikram Upadhyaya, and Varun Khurana. The startup was co-founded by Anirudh Motwani and Parul Bansal in 2010, and this is the first time IAN has invested in an incubatee company. As part of the investment, Upadhyaya and Khurana will join the board of the startup.

Indian Angel Network has over 225 members and has funded around 50 startups across sectors like IT, mobile, healthcare and education - both in India and abroad. In 2011, IAN invested over \$8 million in 11 startups and last year, this amount increased to \$11 million, invested in 17 companies.

Early this month, IAN formed a sub-group called IAN Impact, which will focus on social enterprises addressing the problems of people living at the bottom of the pyramid. IAN Impact will put in up to Rs 2 crore in six early-stage companies per year.

IAN investments this year

July 2013: SnapLion Global Ltd, the company that owns and operates SnapLion.com, an online platform to create sleek, interactive mobile apps for anyone wishing to engage their fans in real time, received undisclosed round of funding from India Internet Group, Blume Ventures, and Rehan Yar Khan-led Orios Venture Partners. Silicon Valley-based investors including Vuclip CEO Nickhil Jakatdar and Piyush Shah, apart from Indian Angel Network members Rajan Anandan, Sandeep Soni and Gaurav Sharma, also participated in the round.

July 2013: Delhi-based social tech company Gram Vaani Community Media Pvt Ltd, whose social platform features voice and video-based local media offerings, raised \$500,000 in its first equity investment round from IAN, along with a few unnamed investors.

March 2013: Invested an undisclosed amount in online education company Rank Junction Pvt Ltd which runs RankJunction.com, a ranking platform for competitive exams.

Feb 2013: Invested an undisclosed amount in Seattle-based Mobilewalla, a search portal for mobile apps, with IAN members Rajan Anandan, Venkat Raju and Sharad Sharma leading the investment round. As part of the investment, Raju joined the Mobilewalla board.

Feb 2013: XinLab Inc., which operates under the brand Vuclip, acquired Mumbai and Toronto-based mobile video streaming startup Jigsee in an all-stock deal while early investors Indian Angel Network (IAN) and venture capital firm Sequoia Capital, who had invested in Jigsee two years ago, swapped stake to become shareholders of VC-backed Vuclip.

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Source: August 02, 2013/ [Reuters](#)

Bringing Indian education closer to Nepal

The two-day education fair, Rec India Education Fair 2013, commenced on Friday with the objective of providing information about Indian colleges and admitting interested Nepali students to the colleges at the fair.

More than 4000 students visited The Everest Hotel in Baneshwar, said the press coordinator of the fair, Ramesh Puri. He claimed that the fair was successful in connecting the students and the colleges as well as providing the required information to the interested students.

Organized by The Knowledge Network, the fair had 50 stalls giving information on more than 150 courses offered by 80 institutes. According to Puri, students are attracted to Indian colleges because the language, culture and the overall environment are agreeable to them. Visiting students stated that they want to study in India because of the belief that those who have Indian degrees get better jobs and better pay.

Nitesh KC, who's leaving to study MBA in ITM University in Gwalior, India, said the practical approach to studies is what attracted him. Though the fees are steeper in India, the fact that employees prefer those with Indian degrees has made him decide to study there, he said.

Universities like Sharda University, Vignan University, and International Group of Institute have participated in the fair.

Source: August 02, 2013/[MyRepublica](#)

Tech Mahindra Ltd. Signs MOU with five Indian Universities to groom students

Tech Mahindra Ltd. a specialist provider of connected solutions to the connected world and enabling future digital enterprises, today announced that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with select Indian universities to impart industry ready skills in IT Infrastructure Management Services (IMS). The program aims at creating a pool of resources to meet the demand across various facets of the IMS segment.

"Recognizing the need for a veritable talent pool for the infrastructure managed services globally, Tech Mahindra and select Indian universities come together to develop future ready talent for a connected world of great opportunities." said Vineet Nayyar, Executive Vice Chairman, Tech Mahindra.

The Academy at Chandigarh leverages 'Megh' - Tech Mahindra's Cloud content delivery platform. The courses under this initiative cover the entire spectrum of IT Operations, Network Operations and Cyber security. 'Megh' has a designed capacity to train over 5000 associates.

In the first phase of this program, Tech Mahindra has tied-up with select five Indian Universities. This tie-up facilitates students to be fully prepared to meet industry requirements with the right level of skills and aptitude.

"Through this partnership, Tech Mahindra aims to establish a strong academic connect and help create skilled resources to meet the requirements of tomorrow's Digital Enterprise. The IMS Academy has successfully graduated several students since its inception in 2011 in Hyderabad and with this MOU, we now take a giant leap by collaborating with the Universities through the launch of our second Cloud based Academy." said Shrikant Vaze, Senior Vice President, Tech Mahindra.

The global infrastructure management services segment is expected to grow exponentially, and in order to ensure India maintains its edge in helping meet this requirement, it is imperative to have a ready pool of skilled resources. As a step in this direction, Tech Mahindra is supporting universities in the country by providing training material, faculty from the industry and simulation lab exercises. The course curriculum is created with a focus on developing expertise in various domains of IT Infrastructure Management Services.

Source: August 04, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

India's first tech kid

Something monumental took place in the 1950s that prompted then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru to say, "Here I stand at this place and my mind inevitably goes back to that infamous institution for which this place became famous not now but 20 or 30 years ago — the Hijli detention camp. Here in the place of that Hijli detention camp stands this fine monument of India today representing India's future in the making."

The Parliament had earlier passed the Institutes of National Importance Act to set up the first Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur in 1951. Now with 16 such institutions across the country, IIT is synonymous with excellence in technical education. Standing at its threshold, I knew this was the best start to a journey through some of the finest institutions in east India, despite the rains.

IIT-KGP, which started off with 224 students and 42 teachers now has a sprawling campus of 2,100 acres with over 550 faculty members, 9,000 students and 1,700 staff members. Owing to its remote location, one that interestingly houses the world's longest railway platform, IIT-KGP is a township on its own.

Growth

In the 1960s, research was kick-started in various fields of engineering. Seventies brought in an era of sponsored research and consultancy. The next decade was dedicated to the establishment of niche centres and courses in computer science, biotechnology and industrial engineering. Many multi-disciplinary centres, R&D centres and Vinod Gupta School of Management came into existence in the 90s. The new millennium ushered in advanced centres in water resources, bioenergy, intellectual property law, telecommunication and entrepreneurship. This decade, however, proves to be the most exciting, as Vision 2020 aims to make IIT-KGP a global leader in technical education and research.

Programmes

Being a public, autonomous body, this centre of excellence has 19 departments, 17 centres and 25 R&D units. IIT-KGP also has been setting an example for younger IITs through the years with their initiatives. Academic programmes include a four-year BTech (hons) in 17 areas, five-year BArch (hons), its popular five-year integrated MSc and dual degree (BTech and MTech), joint MTech/MSc and PhD programmes, two-year MCP, MBA, MHRM, three-year MMST, MTech, LLB and PhD programmes. Several interesting courses are offered in BTech —

aerospace engineering, agriculture and food engineering, biotechnology and biochemical engineering, civil, chemical, electrical, mechanical and mining engineering, computer science, industrial engineering, ocean engineering and naval architecture, etc.

MSc programme is offered in the fields of chemistry, exploration geophysics, applied geology, economics, mathematics, computing and physics. MTech programmes in farm machinery and power, soil and water conservation, water resource development and management, aquacultural engineering, post harvest engineering, structure, geotechnical engineering, transportation engineering, hydraulics, environmental engineering, microwave engineering, fibre optics and lightwave engineering, machine drives and power electronics, etc. Admission to their courses is through IIT-JEE.

Vision 2020 is a roadmap developed by IIT-KGP to build an advanced research ecosystem in India with funding of Rs 400 crore and help from government and industry. It is also part of the fundraising efforts by the institute which will help to set up and promote new schools of interdisciplinary research, a technology-driven medical school and also engage in knowledge transfer with institutes abroad.

The campus

Replete with a man-made lake, there are academic blocks, library, laboratories and a museum. The Technology Students Gymkhana is complete with amenities for all clubs and sporting activities. All the new buildings will have solar panels to help make the campus greener. Students use bicycles around the campus. They will begin measuring carbon credits in the near future. A fully residential campus, there are 18 hostels/halls of residence (named after freedom fighters) and staff quarters.

A technology guest house, CEC guest house and alumni guest house are always open for visitors. You can flag a cycle rickshaw on the campus to take you around. Apart from their regular catering facilities, the campus has many eat outs where you will find students huddled late into the night, snacking and studying. The tech market is the go-to place for all grocery needs and there are three banks on campus. A post office, BC Roy Technology Hospital, make the campus complete.

Promoting the brand

Professor Amit Patra, dean of alumni affairs and international relations, says, "The alumni members of IIT-KGP help in counselling, guiding, providing

internship opportunities, and help even when one wants to establish startups. The My Imprint programme has been started by students who would like to leave their mark when they leave. They pledge to donate Rs 1,000 per month or a percentage of their annual pay (minimum one per cent) for the institution's development.

The funds will be used to assist with student participation in global events, giving financial aid to needy students, building student amenities or improving infrastructure, institutional development and brand building." Their Alumni Affairs and International Relations cell enables a free-flow of information and updates. He continues, "The Institutional Development programme was launched to strengthen the domestic ranking of the institute as well as enhance their international image. Several alumni and non-alumni members are involved in supporting growth plans and promoting the KGP brand."

The domestic and global chapters of IITs help in bringing back real-world knowledge and in uniting students of IIT. The Pan-IIT global conference was held in New York last year and will be held in Houston this year. Batch endowments also take place.

Student activities

Alankar is the annual magazine of IIT-KGP. Their Spring Fest and techno-management fest, Kshitij, are very popular among the students. They believe that it encourages them to innovate and compete. Guest lectures and workshops are also conducted regularly. The various societies housed in the Gymkhana include Adventure, Robotics, Dance, Western music and Dramatics. Rinshul Chandra, vice-president, Technology Students Gymkhana, and a final-year student of chemical engineering, says "Our days are packed with academics and extracurricular activities. As someone who represents the student community, I can confidently say that students have a voice in the decisions made by the authorities. We are consulted for feedback and are given complete freedom to take our brand forward. There is a great sense of belonging among students. Since Kharagpur is a small industrial town, our life is completely on campus. Authorities have ensured we have all comforts within our reach."

Placements

Prof Sudhir Kumar Barai, professor-in-charge of training and placements cell, says, "Around 212 companies offered campus placements last year and the total number of students placed amounts to 1,416. Three students bagged salaries of Rs 80 lakh

per annum while eight others have got annual offers of Rs 75 lakh each from Google and Microsoft respectively.

Other organisations like Facebook, Schlumberger, Deutsche Bank, IBM, Capital One, Rio Tinto, ITC, Samsung, Flipkart, Times Internet, E-Bay and American Express also hired our students." Prof Barai was also enthusiastic about the training programmes conducted to help students get placed and excited to share that a large number of their students received pre-placement offers right after their internships.

R and D output

They have developed 187 technologies and incubated 12 new companies in the last three years. In the last five years, sponsored research and consultancy amounting to Rs 650 crore through 1,578 projects have taken place.

An advanced VLSI design laboratory, Centre for Railway Research, Centre of Excellence in Information Assurance, General Motors Collaborative Research Laboratory in Electronics Controls and Software, National Program in Marine Hydrodynamics, PK Sinha Centre for Bioenergy, R&D centre in collaboration with DBC, Rural Technology Action Group, Steel Technology Centre, Tea Engineering Research Centre, Vodafone Essar-IIT Kharagpur Centre of Excellence in Telecommunications are some of the pioneering initiatives undertaken on the campus.

Some student innovations have won several awards and accolades like the autonomous underwater vehicle, Formula 1 car and LOCUS technology solving water crisis

Source: August 05, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Education on wheels

To travel is to discover yourself and the world you live in. That's why the University of Delhi is coming up with the much-awaited educational trip "third in the Gyanodaya series, an initiative by the vice-chancellor, Dinesh Singh.

Starting September 2, a group of around 850 students (approximately) will board the Gyanodaya Express, a train that will depart from New Delhi, taking students on their one-week education trip to understand the culture and various facets of India. The third installment of Gyanodaya marks a lot of firsts for the initiative.

"This is for the first time that close to 200 international students from the United Kingdom will be a part of the initiative. Also, this is the first co-ed trip which will see participation from both boys

and girls and representation from the Equal Opportunity Cell, School of Open Learning, Non-Collegiate Women's Education Board, Sports Council along with the National Social Service (NSS) and National Cadet Corps (NCC)," informs Amrita Bajaj, assistant professor, Shaheed Bhagat Singh college, who is a part of the initiative. She adds, "The earlier installment gave a chance to NCC and NSS girl candidates. This year, the initiative truly represents the spirit of University of Delhi with almost every institution sending some students for the journey programme."

This year, the Gyanodaya Express is headed towards the greener pastures of Punjab "the land of rich culture, tradition and rapid modernisation and will be flagged off from Safdurjung Railway Station, to cover Amritsar, Ludhiana, Chandigarh, and Kurukshetra. Students will visit 'Swarn Mandir,' Jaliawala Bagh, Wagha Border and interact with various industries in Ludhiana and Chandigarh.

"Students have already been assigned projects, which will be based on their interaction with the industry and experience with the culture and people of the places they visit. The trip will facilitate intermingling, interaction and understanding between students from the UK and their counterparts in DU.

It will instill a sense of pride in Indian students in showcasing to the international students the rapid strides in our urbanisation as well as diversity of our great nation embedded in deep cultural and religious lineage," adds Bhatia.

"Though it is an educational trip, that doesn't mean that we don't have fun. As a part of last year's Gyanodaya Express, I visited almost all the states in India and was mesmerised by the diversity our nation offers.

It is very interesting to see how people stand united even with so much diversity in their culture, religious practices and ideologies. Visiting the Sabarmati Ashram will remain a lifetime experience for me.

To date, I can't get over the hospitality we received in Gujarat," recalls Priyanka Singh, a student who was a part of the educational trip last year.

This is the first co-ed trip which will see participation from boys and girls and representation from Equal Opportunity Cell, School of Open Learning, Non-Collegiate Women's Education Board, Sports Council, National Social Service and National Cadet Corps

Source: August 05, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

Aspiring doctors flock abroad as education cost surges in India

Cheap medical education in countries like China, Russia, Ukraine, Philippines and Nepal is attracting many aspiring doctors from India who cannot afford the exorbitant cost of private medical education in India and are unable to make it to the limited seats in government medical colleges.

Last year, almost 4,000 doctors who studied abroad entered the Indian health system after clearing the screening test meant for foreign medical graduates.

It is estimated that over 9,000 students leave India each year for medical education abroad, with China the most popular destination followed by Russia and Ukraine. The number is steadily increasing, up from about 2,500 in 2004 and 4,500 in 2006. However, the percentage of students who clear the screening test, which is mandatory for foreign medical graduates (FMGs) to be allowed to practice in India, has hovered around 25%. Last year, it touched 28% with 4,000 of the 14,000 students who sat for the exam clearing it.

According to the National Board of Examination, which conducts the test, of the over 14,000 students who sat for the test in 2012, over 8,000 were from China, over 1,700 from Russia and over 850 from Ukraine. "Many students who do not clear the screening test take it several times. So the number of students taking the test in a year would include a large number who did not clear it the previous year. The test is held twice a year," explained NBE spokesperson Dr Vinay Gupta.

Dr Gupta said the pass percentage was highest for students from Nepal, about 34%, followed by students from Bangladesh (30%), Russia 28% and China (27%). However, China has the largest number of Indian students in medicine. Hence 27% clearing the exam last year meant 2000 made-in-China doctors entering the health system out of the 8,000 medical graduates from China who took the exam compared to just over 110 students from Nepal out of the 328 who appeared for the screening test.

Medical colleges in Nepal using the same syllabus as Indian colleges could be a reason for the better pass percentage of students from there.

"The difference in the cost of a medical education in private colleges in India and in these countries is huge. In China, your entire medical education could be completed in Rs 15-25 lakh, less than half what it would cost to even buy a seat in a private medical college, excluding the additional expense

of tuition fees, food and board costs. China is amongst the cheapest destinations for a medical degree and has a large number of seats," explained an FMG from Nepal.

"Medical education in these countries is the only option for a lot of middle-class families looking to fulfill the dream of their children becoming doctors. However, the Medical Council of India seems to be hell bent on making it as difficult as possible for them to be able to practice once they return. The screening exam is made deliberately very tough, often including questions from post graduate level.

They make them run from pillar to post for everything and insist on holding the screening test only in Delhi," complained Dr Najeerul Ameen, president of the All India Foreign Medical Graduates Association. He alleged it was a ploy to help private medical colleges in India by discouraging students from going abroad.

NBE executive director Dr Bipin Batra denied that the exam was deliberately made tough. "In most countries it's even tougher with the examination including tests to assess the clinical skills of FMGs along with written exams before they are allowed to practice. Here we have just one written test covering what a regular medical graduate is supposed to know," explained Dr Batra.

It is the difference in the medical syllabus, the quality of teaching in many of the colleges abroad and the language of instruction in them which made it difficult for students when they returned, he added. Students who have cleared the screening test agree that the questions are from undergraduate syllabus, but do feel that it is a tough exam to clear.

Students who clear the screening test face further harassment as the MCI eligibility certificate issued on clearing the exam could take six months or more.

"You could lose an entire year waiting for the certificate. No FMG can apply for registration, take any exam for post graduate seats or even get a residency without the certificate. It is almost as if you are being punished for having gone abroad to study medicine," said a medical student who cleared the screening test last year but is yet to get the certificate.

Source: August 05, 2013/ [Times of India](http://timesofindia.com)

Young achiever: Changing lives

At an age, when people prepare themselves for a prospective future, 16-year-old Arshad Balwa, an IB Diploma student at Dhirubhai Ambani International



School, Mumbai, and Dhananjay Bansal, an IB Diploma student of the Doon School, Dehradun, are charting out a future for young students and underprivileged workers across Mumbai.

Arshad, through his NGO (Write Step), imparts training to students and helps them to become professionals. Dhananjay Bansal, on the other hand, through his NGO (Metamorphosis), aims to educate needy support-staff workers by honing their English language and computer skills.

Arshad has always wanted to contribute to the society, be it through his NGO, which helps promote adult literacy, or by taking up socially relevant and urban renewal issues of Mumbai.

His efforts have been recognised by awards, including the ASSOCHAM National Education Award 2013, the Indian Education Award 2013 and Thought Leader Awards 2013.

When in June 2013, Uttarakhand witnessed devastating floods and landslides, the NGO's volunteers collected an amount of Rs 3,36,000 which was donated to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

While Arshad's story is inspiring, Dhananjay Bansal's endeavour deserves a mention too. Dhananjay established his NGO (Metamorphosis) in 2009, when he was only 12 years old. Today, it coaches around five people in English and hones their computer literacy skills.

Dhananjay has been selected to present a Science Research Paper at the International Schools Conference at the Hutchins School in Hobart, Australia, in October 2013. With Indian intellect recognised across the world platform, the global community is taking note of the young Indian acumen, which has answers for world issues. Agencies like the World Trade Organisation have acclaimed works like the 'Role of the Multilateral Trading System in Global Governance,' a research paper on trading systems by Arshad, which has been praised by Pascal Lamy, director-general of the World Trade Organisation. Commenting on Arshad's works he said, "Good illustration of how trade opening works for peace... a link between global governance and good governance."

The only Indian student to have been invited and interned at the World Trade Organisation, Arshad is one of the three students selected from India to attend the Leadership in the Business World Program at Wharton.

After all, as a Chinese proverb says: Fresh ideas and young legs is what drives the country. For, the

country is of the youth and they should be its destiny creators."

Source: August 05, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

CBSE brings students closer to Indian culture, heritage

To help students know more about India's rich heritage and culture, the Central Board of Secondary Education has introduced a new elective subject, 'Knowledge Traditions and Practices of India' (KTPI) for classes 11 and 12.

The course combines various disciplines of study such as mathematics, chemistry, fine arts, agriculture, trade and commerce, astronomy, surgery, environment, life sciences and many others subjects, directly linking the students to the traditional knowledge of Indian culture.

Apart from helping teachers to understand distinctive cultural background of every student, the course aims at making students familiar with Indian texts, thoughts and civilisation.

Students will be able to analyse ancient literatures and learn their relevance in current context.

"This is a unique course, which is not about humanising India's past but learning from the past and doing better in the future.

We need to find answers to our present-day questions from the rich history that we belong to," said a senior CBSE official.

Gaining such knowledge in different disciplines would help students develop better understanding of traditions as well as contemporary practices.

"Teachings of one's own culture and heritage will definitely impart self awareness and self esteem to the students," said another CBSE official.

CBSE said that the course has been introduced with a view that students can use the traditional wisdom of India to relate to current times.

Through a research project and viva voce, students will explore Indian values, tradition systems and seats of wisdom by going to various places of historical significance.

Nearly 30% weightage will be reserved for such projects.

The newly introduced course titled 'Knowledge Traditions and Practices of India' has received an overwhelming response from the educationists and the teaching community all over India.

It aims to engage students with a sense of exploration and discovery at the same time

highlighting the concepts and major achievements in various disciplines of knowledge.

The board also clarified on the qualifications required by teachers to be able to teach these subjects.

The science based modules can be taught by teachers who have done post graduation in science while the humanities based modules can be taught by post graduate teachers of humanities subjects.

Source: August 05, 2013/ [Hindustan Times](#)

IFC invests \$2.3 million in Avanse for higher education

World Bank group member International Finance Corporation (IFC) Tuesday said that it has started investing \$2.3 million (Rs.14 crore) in Avanse Financial Services for providing [education loans](#) to Indian students.

"The private sector can play a significant role in improving access to quality education, especially in emerging markets," said Serge Devieux, IFC director for South Asia, in a statement.

"IFC's investment in Avanse will help students access financing for pursuing higher education while shaping the market for education finance."

According to IFC, its investment in the start-up firm which is also an associate company of Dewan Housing Finance could help an estimated 90,000 students avail education loans over the next seven years.

Apart from providing the equity infusion, IFC will also advise the firm to strengthen its credit appraisal, underwriting processes, and risks management systems.

IFC cited that alternative financing channels are needed in India as there will be a growing demand for higher education expected in mid-sized and smaller cities. However, education [loans for students](#) of premier educational institutions are hard to come by.

Currently, India is one of the world's largest education markets, has over 150 million people in the 18-23 years age group.

"IFC's investment is an endorsement of our business plan in promoting growth in an underserved market," said Kapil Wadhawan, chairman, Avanse Financial.

"With IFC's global industry knowledge and expertise, Avanse can demonstrate the viability of financing higher education in India."

Dewan Housing is an existing client of IFC. In 2003, IFC provided a loan of around \$12.5 million to the company. IFC has also co-invested in Aadhar Housing Finance, a company jointly promoted by DHFL Group and IFC that provides home loans for low income segments.

IFC is one of the largest multilateral investors in private education in emerging markets, investing to improve access, lower costs, and help students prepare for employment.

IFC's education portfolio stands at over \$660 million across 42 projects in 24 countries, including in some of the poorest countries in the world. The total value of these projects is about \$1.8 billion.

Source: August 06, 2013/ [News Track India](#)

Microsoft Launches Office 365 University for Higher-Education Students

Microsoft announced the availability of Office 365 University for full-time and part-time students studying in accredited colleges and universities in India. Students can now subscribe to Office 365 University which includes the latest and most complete set of Office applications and works across 2 PCs or Macs, comes with Office on Demand and an additional 20 GB Premium SkyDrive Storage-all for Rs. 4,199 for a 4-year subscription. Offices 365 University will empower students to study better resulting in future jobs and provide them a winning edge in the young and competitive Indian job market.

"Office 365 University is in a class by itself and university students will love the capabilities of new Office," said *Ramkumar Pichai, GM - Microsoft Office Division, Microsoft India*. "Office 365 University will be a trusted and integral part of students' everyday always-on, always-connected life, taking full advantage of the cloud and touch capabilities, all at the best price. The special pricing for students will help provide them with opportunities and empower them to develop the necessary skills to be successful in the fast-paced campus environment, making them future ready as they join the workforce of tomorrow."

"Office 365 University will make my life much easier as I can now study, work and enjoy on the move, can edit and share documents/notes in real-time and store more on the cloud. As students, we are always looking for cutting-edge technology at the best price to learn and collaborate, and this makes a real impact on our student life. I can now move from the house to college to the playground across devices and manage my day-to-day assignments

and tasks anywhere anytime," said *Shaurya Mittal*, a student of *Sri Venkateswara College, New Delhi*.

Purchase Process

Students need to go online at www.office.com/verify to verify their eligibility in order to activate Office.

During the verification process, students will need to fill out their university credentials, or international student identity card (ISIC) details.

Alternatively, they can submit documentation through the manual verification process.

The academic verification process is completed online; post which students can purchase Office 365 University from the online Microsoft store.

Eligibility and Verification Process

Apart from full-time and part-time enrolled university and college students, faculty and staff in accredited institutions are also eligible to purchase an Office 365 University subscription.

Microsoft Office 365 University is built on the company's philosophy of empowering youth to imagine and realize their full potential by connecting them with greater opportunities for education, employment and entrepreneurship by:

- 1.helping them strengthen education and expand digital inclusion
- 2.giving them inspiration and tools to imagine new opportunities; and
- 3.helping youth realize new opportunities of employability and entrepreneurship

About Office 365 University

Office 365 University will be offered online and at retail locations in 52 markets worldwide. Features include: -

- The latest and most complete set of Office applications – Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, Outlook, Publisher, Access –
- Office on Demand -- Additional 20 GB Premium SkyDrive Storage and default save to Sky Drive
- Install Office on up to two PCs or Macs, for use by a single person

Source: August 06, 2013/ [It News Online](#)

AICTE to review scheme of setting up polytechnics

AICTE estimated the total cost to be Rs 15 crores per polytechnic, excluding land

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has set up a committee to revise the scheme of setting up of polytechnics under the Public Private Partnership mode in the country. The government had approved the scheme to provide financial assistance to set up 300 polytechnics under PPP mode during XI Plan. However, the response of the private partners to the scheme was poor. AICTE estimated the total cost to be Rs 15 crores per polytechnic, excluding land. The scheme provides for Rs 3 crores Central Fund towards capital assets, Rs 2 crores by the State Government and a minimum of Rs 10 crores by the private partner.

Source: August 7, 2013/ [Business standard](#)

New Scheme of Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Evaluation

Percentiles are a good basis of comparing different Boards and they are non-discriminatory, stated Minister of State Dr Shashi Tharoor in Lok Sabha today. They take into account the variations in examinations conducted by different Boards, he said. Based on this year's examination data, the cut-off percentile score for top 20 percentile varies from one Board to another. Since different Boards evaluate differently, percentiles have been used to ensure a fair comparison of students belonging to different Boards.

In the new scheme of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) (Advanced), only the top 1.5 lakh candidates (including all categories) based on their performance in the JEE (Main) qualify to appear in the JEE (Advanced) examination. The admissions to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are based only on their category-wise All India Rank in JEE (Advanced), subject to the condition that such candidates are in the top 20 percentile of successful candidates in class XII examinations conducted by their respective Boards in applicable categories. The admission to the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) are based on combined merit list created by giving 40% weightage for performance in class XII Board marks normalized on percentile basis with the remainder 60% weightage for performance in the JEE (Main). This system has been applied uniformly to all the candidates, and, therefore, the chances of students getting affected does not arise.

This was stated by Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Dr Shashi Tharoor in a written reply to a Lok Sabha question today.

Source: August 07, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

Vocational training to 'plug the hole' in formal education

"Take a bowl; put two cups water, one cup milk, sugar, tea powder. Heat." This is one of the methods of making tea proposed by a student in the English class at Unnati, Sadanandanagar.

The English teacher, Kanthimathi, interjects: "Bowl or utensil?" to which another student says: "No. Bowl is used for servicing..." Again, Ms. Kanthimathi says, "Yes, you are right. Bowl is meant for 'serving'; to make tea, we use utensils or vessels."

Watching this class in progress, it would be difficult to believe that the class is full of either graduates or adults who are dropouts. But hailing from less privileged economic backgrounds in rural areas, these two-hour English classes every day in the 70-day vocational course is as good as their first English lessons — one that would guarantee them a job that pays by the end of it.

Need to earn

Take the case of Syed Patel, a B.Ed. graduate from Yadgir. "No English, so no job," he says, asked why an aspiring teacher would now be training for an administrative job. "I just need to earn, any job will do," he says immediately, laying to rest any further doubts on his choice.

Nandish. H., an Arts graduate from Bellary, whose farmer brothers are the only bread winners, knows the importance of getting a job only too well. That is why he has abandoned all dreams of pursuing M.A. in English to become a lecturer as he simply "cannot afford it." He is perfectly okay with "hanging clothes, attaching sizes to clothes and answering customer queries" at a major retail chain.

Successful alumni

As many 4,000 youngsters like Syed and Nandish have successfully landed jobs across the retail, hospitality, administration, and the grooming industry since the inception of 'Unnati' in 2003.

Each batch has an overall strength of 150 with 30 students each in the six to nine vocational courses. Those admitted are trained for free, with free accommodation and food, but are required to be from below poverty line families to be eligible. While the concentration is on dropouts to "plug the hole" in the education system, an increasing

number of graduates have begun enrolling in these courses, said Ramesh Swamy, trustee of the SGBS Trust that runs 'Unnati'.

Training in basics

Beginning with "restroom training", the students, irrespective of which course they are pursuing, are compulsorily trained in English, life skills, values and computers.

"While 82 per cent of our alumni are still working in various companies and 12 per cent have gone on to pursue higher studies. Seven dropped out — most of them women," Mr. Swamy said, sharing statistics from an impact study on Unnati's alumni.

Among the alumni is Gururak Kasigavi, from the retail and marketing course, who shifted to working in the 'procurement and verification' department of the Aadhaar project from his earlier job, earning at least Rs. 5,000 more in the process.

Source: August 08, 2013/ [The Hindu](#)

Schools not fulfilling RTE norms given two months to upgrade

With over 90% of city schools still to meet infrastructure norms required under the Right to Education Act (2009), the blacklisted schools have been given a second chance. The school education department has given the institutions two months to comply with these norms or else face de-recognition.

As per the RTE act, schools were supposed to comply with ten infrastructure norms stipulated in the act by August 31, 2013.

However, considering that 1,600 schools out of 1,703 in the city have not fulfilled the norms, the department gave them some extra time. "Majority of the schools have not fulfilled these norms.

It would be impractical to derecognize them all. Hence the extension has been given," said Mahavir Mane, state director of primary education.

Hindustan Times had reported on July 20 that only 103 schools in the city had fulfilled the norms.

Majority of the schools have missed out on implementing two to three norms like kitchen sheds, ramps, and pupil-teacher ratio, which schools say are difficult to follow practically.

Mane added that individual schools will be given time depending on which infra-structure they need to build.

Though relieved, some schools fear the time given might not be sufficient.

Even schools that have been pulled up for not having big classrooms will not be able to meet this deadline.

The RTE requires classrooms to be at least 400 square feet, but most city schools have only 300 to 350 square feet.

"The BMC is not giving permission to expand the classrooms. Most of the classrooms are built according to the rules before RTE," said Prashant Redij, vice president of the association of private schools.

Schools that do not upgrade their infra-structure in the time given will have to pay a fine upto Rs. 10,000 per day and could lose their recognition.

Source: August 08, 2013/ [Hindustan Times](#)

EC-Council eyes 40,000 cyber professionals in India by 2014

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday announced reservation in higher education in the state for minorities while attending Eid prayers in the city's Red Road.

"We want youths and children from minority communities to advance in studies and become doctors, engineers and professionals in different other fields," Banerjee said, stating that reservation of seats would be introduced in higher education from 2014 educational curriculum.

She also announced that other avenues of business would also be made available to the minorities including opening of shops and other such small scale enterprises in the districts.

The chief minister attended the largest Eid prayer gathering on Red Road in the heart of the metropolis.

Prayers were held at other places too including at Nakhoda Masjid, the largest mosque in the city.

Eid-ul Fitr marks the culmination of month-long fasting and prayer during the holy month of Ramzan.

People of all hues, from little children to aged persons adorned in new dresses, attended the Eid prayers followed by ritual hugs.

Eid was celebrated with fervour in other parts of the state also.

In Darjeeling Hills, which has been affected by an indefinite bandh called by [Gorkha Janmukti Morcha](#) demanding a separate state, the celebrations remained subdued.

Source: August 09, 2013/[Times of India](#)

Internship must for engineering graduates

Engineering students are all set to go the way of medicos from this academic year with regard to internship. State universities will implement "mandatory internship" in all its affiliated engineering colleges for students taking admissions into BE/ B.Tech courses from this academic year as per the directions of All India Council for Technical Education, to improve employability skills among engineering graduates.

The state has the worst employability record with less than 10 per cent engineering graduates finding employment from the thousand of engineers being churned out by over 700 engineering colleges. The internship period will vary from 3 months to 24 months in the final three semesters, depending on the branch of study.

Unlike medical students, there is no such provision for mandatory internship for engineering students in the state. Some colleges have been adopting "industry-oriented projects" for students pursuing third and fourth year to help them secure jobs in good companies during campus recruitment drives.

Since this is being done on an 'optional basis,' only few city colleges with good track record have been giving hands-on training to students. "The mandatory internship is being introduced from this year as per the directions of AICTE issued in May this year.

This will be applicable to students in fifth, sixth and seventh semesters which will vary from 3 months to 24 months depending on the branch of study. The aim is to enhance the employability of students," said Prof N.V. Ramana Rao, registrar, JNTU-Hyderabad.

He said the initiative is being undertaken as part of the AICTE's National Employability Enhancement Mission. AICTE is also planning to launch its own job portal.

Project report for IIIT in Lucknow sent to HRD ministry

Construction of the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) building in Lucknow is likely to begin from next month. Technical education department has sent the final project report to the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) for approval. Technical education officials are hopeful that by month-end they will get the Centre's nod. Subsequently, the agency for constructing the building will be finalised and work will begin by next month.

First in Lucknow and the second in UP, the IIIT will come up at the IT Park in Chak Gajaria. For this, the state government has already handed over 50 acres land to the technical education department. Sources said MHRD has earlier raised objections to the proposal sent by the technical education department on July 12. On August 7, a meeting was held and all objections were clarified after which the final project report was sent to the MHRD.

Principal secretary technical education department Neeraj Kumar Gupta told TOI the Centre had raised minor objections related to financial structure.

"The queries are sorted out and final report sent back to the Centre. We are trying our best to finish the construction work and begin classes in record time." Sources said the chief minister, on August 6, pointed out in his review meeting that construction of IIIT was a priority for the state.

Under the proposed PPP model, the investment sharing will be on 50:35:15 basis. While the Central government will take care of 50% of the total cost, the state government will invest 35%. The selected private player will put in the remaining 15%. In Lucknow's case, UP Electronics Corporation (UPEC) is chosen as the private partner. The total project is estimated at Rs 128 crore. Going by this, the Centre will pool in Rs 64 crore, the state government's share is Rs 35 crore and UPEC is supposed to pay Rs 19 crore. Sources, however, said the total project will incur a cost of Rs 150 crore. The state government has earmarked Rs 20 crore for setting up an IIIT in the annual budget 2013.

"Implementation of the public-private partnership (PPP) will boost the technical education in the state. There are plans to establish another IIIT in western UP, preferably Noida," said a committee member.

In UP, at present, there is one IIIT at Allahabad which is on the same PPP model. In February, the committee formed to assess the viabilities and modalities of the inclusion of private sector in technical education submitted gave the recommendations to the state government. The proposed IIITs will have special emphasis on post-graduate programmes and research and development, says the report.

The state government, in 2009, had planned to hand over 25 polytechnics and 125 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) to a private partner after bidding. Even some short listings of the firms were done in order to fill Request for Proposal (RFP) but

ultimately it was put on hold. Technical officials are hopeful that IIIT will not meet the same fate.

Source: August 12, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

HRD Ministry started process to set up 2,500 model schools under PPP mode

The process of setting up 2,500 model schools under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode has been initiated by selection of entities. This was stated by Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Dr. Shashi Tharoor in Rajya Sabha today. He said that, however, the estimated number of schools to be set up is dependent upon the interest shown by the private entities. The Ministry has identified 3,203 blocks in the country, which are not educationally backward.

The private entities will acquire land and then develop, design, build, finance, provide infrastructure, operate, maintain, manage and own these schools. The Government will contribute to the recurring cost on a per capita basis for the 980 select students of maximum student strength of 2,500 per school permitted under the scheme. Besides, a sum equal to 25% of such support for each sponsored student, not exceeding an amount equal to 10% of the capital investment in the school, shall also be provided as infrastructure grant. The initial agreement for such provision of quality education would be for 10 years for each school, which is extendable by mutual consent.

The Government has decided to set up 6,000 model schools at the rate of one school per block as benchmark of excellence. Out of these, 3,500 schools are to set up through the respective State/UT Government in educationally backward blocks (EBBs) and the remaining 2,500 schools are to be set up under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode in blocks which are not educationally backward. The model schools are to be set up based on the Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) template with infrastructure and faculty as per norms of the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan.

This was stated by Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Dr. Shashi Tharoor in a written reply to a Rajya Sabha question today.

Source: August 12, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

Vacant seats show ignored benchmarks

Once an education hub brimming with eager scholars, Maharashtra is now staring at huge vacancies in colleges, with 53,264 engineering (nearly 40 per cent) and 20,184 management (nearly two-third) seats remaining unfilled.

However, a proposal to help it recover from this slump may stay on paper.

The All India Council For Technical Education (AICTE), which gives approval to these institutes, has washed its hands of the matter saying it cannot stop clearing new colleges if they fulfill the criteria.

A report by the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) recommends a cap on the number of seats that should be approved based on the institute's quality, surprise checks on colleges, especially those with 70 per cent vacancies, and synergy between industry and placement cells at institutes. Changes in curriculum as per industry needs, compulsory accreditation and encouraging accredited institutes to go for autonomy are other recommendations.

However, the workability of these suggestions depends on intentions of the state, institutes and industry, say academicians and bureaucrats. So far, none has shown any interest in stepping in. And that holds true for other parts of the country as well.

A previous DTE committee, which had also done some soul-searching and benchmarked Maharashtra's performance against elite international institutes, had failed the state miserably on all counts. Maharashtra's placement rate was pegged at 44, way below Cambridge University's 95.2 per cent and Harvard and Boston's 83 per cent and 82 per cent, respectively. The state's student gender distribution (male: female) was 73:27 as against 50:50 for Harvard, 42:58 for Boston and 52:48 for Cambridge. In student: faculty ratio, Maharashtra was at 19:1 against Boston's 4:1. All these are critical parameters.

The fact that a study of the top 10 Asian universities in terms of teacher-student ratio showed no institute from Maharashtra speaks a lot about the state of the system here.

Source: August 13, 2013/ [Indian Express](#)

Deuba for employment generating education policy

Nepali Congress (NC) senior leader Sher Bahadur Deuba has said that the new constitution should bring employment generating education policy.

Speaking at a programme organised by the Nepal Students' Union here on Tuesday, the NC leader said the government should pay special attention for education as it has vital role to run the nation.

Also speaking at the programme, NC central leader Bimalendra Nidhi said that education policy should be drafted with a focus on the needs based on geographical necessity.

On the occasion, educationist Prof Dr Prem Narayan Aryal stressed for preliminary education and for this local bodies should take special initiative.

Former Member-Secretary of Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) Prof Jaya Bahadur Tandon said that technical education could not take better space in the country due to poverty, unemployment and political instability.

Source: August 13, 2013/ [The Himalayan Times](#)

HRD minister Pallam Raju launches National Repository of Open Education Resources

The HRD minister M M Pallam Raju launched the National Repository of Open Education Resources (NROER) on Tuesday, on the occasion of the conference on ICT for School Education in New Delhi. Inaugurating the conference, he said that the school education has in the recent times witnessed immense growth.

Also present on the occasion was minister of state for HRD, Shashi Tharoor who said that his ministry is continuously working towards inclusiveness of education. In order to make education inclusive, the use of ICT would be quite beneficial. Although technology may not replace the teacher yet it will make teaching more attractive.

Elaborating on the initiative, Ashok Thakur, secretary for higher education said that ICT initiative is not just about promoting school but teachers as well as students also. He said that at present 400 universities and 20,000 colleges are being connected through ICT highways.

Over 200 delegates from the government, NGOs and the private sector are participating in this two-day conference. The conference brings together a variety of stakeholders- policy leaders, practitioners, researchers, implementation agencies and developers of content to examine the policy in the light of their insights and impressions, identifying gaps in the system and suggesting a roadmap for implementing the policy. It aims to evolve a roadmap for using ICT into schools and help teachers and children make best use of the opportunities that ICTs provide. Based on National Curriculum Framework, the ICT Curriculum for teachers and students intends to provide a holistic introduction to ICT in education. The National

Repository is a collaborative platform, which proposes to bring together the best of digital resources for different subjects domains, across different stages of the school system and in different languages.

Some of the issues to be taken by the conference are ICT for education: Exploring the potential; implementing the national policy on ICT for school education in India: Challenges and Issues; Showcasing ICT practices - Going Beyond computer Literacy; showcasing ICT practices - learning from state/ BOOT partners/NGO Experience; e-Governance Mission Mode programme in school education. This Conference is being organized by MHRD and NCERT.

Source: August 13, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

Australia costliest in higher education

Students who want to pursue higher education in Australia will have to dish out `23.61 lakh per year (US\$38,516), making it the most expensive country for overseas students according to a research survey by UK-based global banking giant HSBC.

The average university fee in Australia is \$25,375 per year and cost of living is \$13,140, resulting in a combined average cost that is higher than the USA, United Kingdom and other countries, the research says.

The USA is the second most expensive country for overseas students, with the average cost of university fees at \$25,226 and living expenses at \$10,479, putting the average annual cost at \$35,705 for international students. However, overseas students in Ivy League universities could pay over two thirds (67 per cent) on top of this amount, with average total costs reaching \$58,760 a year.

The UK was third most expensive overall with annual fees of \$19,291 and living costs of \$10,177. International student costs in UAE, Singapore and Hong Kong are all above \$20,000 per year, as a result of higher costs of living in these three premier emerging market destinations, the research study states.

International students studying in Germany pay an average \$635 for study costs and a further \$5,650 in living costs, bringing the annual total to \$6,285, a sixth of the cost of studying Australia.

Malik Sarwar, Global Head of Wealth Development, HSBC, said: "With rising affluence, particularly in developing markets and an increasingly

competitive workplace, we expect appetite for international education to continue to grow.

Even though the market for higher education remains segmented and therefore mispriced at an international level, it is inevitable that the cost is going up everywhere. Provisioning for the cost will be a challenge for families with these aspirations so they need to plan ahead."

The research was compiled from data in 13 countries around the world. Fees represent the average tuition cost for international students based on the top 10 largest institutions in each relevant country (sourced from individual institution data). Cost of living sourced from Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA) Global Education Rankings 2010, Expatistan and HSBC Studying Abroad Research (October 2012).

Source: August 14, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Governor role to improve education scenario sought

The increasing incidents of unrest in the State Government-run universities and deteriorating level of education has left the academicians worried.

Students' agitations over faculty crisis and lack of promotional avenues for the teachers are some of the problems which all the seven Government universities are facing today. The All Odisha University Employees' Federation on Tuesday sought intervention of Governor SC Jamir in the matter.

Submitting a memorandum to the Governor, they said a review commission should be set up by the State Government to look into various problems that universities are facing.

They demanded that teaching, research and extension activities of all universities should be reviewed by Government, an independent inquiry made into financial irregularities, measures for recruitment of both teachers and staff recommended and teaching and research standard of the universities improved.

Later speaking to mediapersons, Bhabani Shankar Hota, former MP and president of the All-India University Employees' Confederation said Government should constitute a State university grant commission on lines of the UGC to look after State universities.

"The State university grants commission would review and scrutinise fund requirement of every university. It would help in streamlining the funds sanctioning process and also look into promotional avenues for teaching staff," said Hota.

They also demanded vacancies in different universities to be filled up. Around 50 per cent of teaching and more than 1,000 non-teaching posts are lying vacant in the universities.

"It is unfortunate that these days universities are functioning like Government departments. Universities should be dealt in a different way and the Government must expedite the process of recruitment to fill up vacancies at the earliest," said Hota. Over 4,000 employees of various universities of State are registered members of All Odisha University Employees' Federation.

Source: August 14, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

No Indian university in top 100 world rank list

Indian higher education institutions have yet again failed to hit the top 100 in world ranking. Not even one higher education institution, including the IITs, figure in the Webometrics ranking of world universities.

The Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), the largest public research body in Spain has done the ranking, based on a composite indicator that takes into account the volume of web content, visibility and impact of web publications and the traffic their website receives.

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, has been ranked at 294, followed by IIT, Madras, at 419 and among state universities in Tamil Nadu, Anna University bagged 1,290, whereas Madras University touched 2235. Amongst private universities in Tamil Nadu, VIT has been ranked at 2,490 and SRM at 2,860.

Prof L.S. Ganesh, dean (students) at IIT, Madras said some parameters in these rankings need to be debated as they do not fit all higher education institutions equally. "It will be good if we have a web presence to attract more people to our website. Content and packaging are different entities, we have good content but we don't package it well online," he said.

Former Madras University vice-chancellor Prof S.P. Thyagarajan pointed out that most university websites remain obsolete without any updating. "Many universities don't have search options on their home pages, nor discussion forums nor a question box. Most universities have not developed this culture but most students across the world first get into the institute's website for details. If we keep these obsolete, how do you think we will be in the top ranks?" he asked.

A web administrator at a higher education institute noted that most government university websites

were either outsourced or maintained by those with minimum knowledge of websites.

Source: August 14, 2013/ [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Russian universities increase 375 seats for Indian students

The Russian Universities have informed EDURUSSIA - the official admission processing office for students from India, that it can enroll an additional 375 students this year. "This will benefit students aspiring to study medicine, dentistry and engineering who have been unsuccessful in securing admission to the course of their choice in India," said Manoj Patki of EDURUSSIA. He said that 375 seats have been added in premium universities such as the Moscow Medical Academy, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Nizhny State Medical University, Tambov State University, Astrakan State University and Saratov State Medical Academy. The international students admissions department of EDURUSSIA also said that students enrolling for these premium universities have a special advantage as they will receive a European Appendix with their degree which enables them to avail scholarships in most European nations for post graduation. For more information visit www.edurussia.in

P A Inamdar to help with Sachar Committee

P A Inamdar, president of the Maharashtra Cosmopolitan Education Society, has been appointed as a member on the committee to evaluate the implementation of the Sachar Committee report and the Prime Minister's New 15 point programme. The committee has been constituted by the Ministry of Minority Affairs. The committee is also expected to recommend corrective measures for effective implementation of government programmes and schemes for the welfare of minorities. The committee will submit its report within six months.

MIT to represent India in Abu Robocon

A team from Maharashtra Institute of Technology will be representing India this year at the Abu Robocon annual robot competition. The competition started in 2002 for engineering colleges and polytechnic students in the Asia- Pacific region. The competition will be held from August 17 to 19 at Danang in Vietnam. The theme of this year is based on the concept of 'Green Planet'. Sarvesh Chakradeo, Charudatta Parkhe, Aishwarya Hendre and Ashwin Jain are leading the team of 15 students. The MIT team is guided by Prof. Prakash Joshi, Prof. Savita Kulkarni and Prof. Saket Yeolekar. Robocon India is a national level competition and

the winner represents India in the International event. 81 teams participated this year. The MIT team was the winner of the competition held in March 2013 at Balewadi Sports Complex in Pune. This is the second consecutive year that MIT is representing India. Last year the team won the Mabuchi Motor Award for an outstanding performance.

Source: August 15, 2013/ [Indian Express](#)

Need to improve quality of education: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said today there was need to improve the quality of education and much still remained to be done to reform India's educational system.

"Many of our schools still lack drinking water facilities, toilets and other necessary infrastructure," Manmohan Singh said in his address to the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Independence Day.

"There is a need to improve the quality of education. To achieve this, it is necessary to lay more emphasis on training of teachers," he added.

Lauding the efforts made by the government, the prime minister said: "We have enacted the Right to Education Act to provide every child in the country the opportunity for education."

"Almost all our children are today being imparted education in primary schools. The number of young men and women going to college has more than doubled in the last 9 years," he said.

The prime minister said new schemes for scholarships have been implemented on a large scale to enable poor children and those belonging to the weaker sections access opportunities for education.

"Today, the central government provides scholarships to more than two crore children," he said.

In the higher education sector, the prime minister said: "Many new institutions have been opened in the area of higher education. For example, 8 new IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology), 7 new IIMs (Indian Institute of Management), 16 new central universities and 10 new NITs (National Institutes of Technology)."

He said new institutions have also been opened to boost scientific research.

"Steps have been taken to attract students to the

study of science and encourage Indian scientists working abroad to return to India," he added.

Source: August 15, 2013/ [Ndtv](#)

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Experts brainstorm in ensuring higher education for all

Around 32 research scholars, professors and assistant professors from different streams explained the importance of higher education, with an emphasis on how it has been elusive to marginalized students.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamika Shiksha Abhiyan which promised to be a strong foundation for primary and secondary education in India in the eleventh five year plan that later resulted in no efforts in improvement section of quality.

To address the related concerns, University of Mysore and Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy is organizing a two-day meet on 'Inclusive higher education and marginalized sections: Dynamics and discourses' at Educational Multimedia Research Centre auditorium.

University of Mysore VC K S Rangappa, who inaugurated the meet here on Thursday, said: "Many vulnerable students are denied of higher education. There should be no compromise in this, as everyone should get equality in education and other basic facilities."

Conference co-ordinator V G Siddaraju said the conference is being organized at the national level. "Nearly 100 experts from different streams are attending conference. They will brainstorm on issues concerning decline in higher education among vulnerable students."

"In order to bring back, several issues will be discussed in higher education on both the days of conference like, quality in India, problems of SC/ST/OBC and minorities in attaining higher education, Rashtriya uchchar shiksha abhiyan and marginalized sections, new debates, equity and equality, judicial contributions, adopting new policies, private public partnership, foreign universities, gender and regional disparity" he added.

Jinusha Panigrahi, assistant professor in the Institute for Studies In Industrial Development (New Delhi), presented a paper on 'Inclusive higher education and its access by the under privileged'. "The meet will reach out to many students aspiring for higher education," the assistant professor said.

Hanumantha G H, an LLM holder, said: "Higher education has been sidelined. We have to ensure that vulnerable students and women join the mainstream."

Dr R Balasubramaniam, executive director of Swamy Vivekananda Youth Movement, presided as the chief guest. National Law School India University VC R Venkata Rao, and Ramesh, director of Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy (UoM), were present.

The conference is aimed at outlining the present higher education scenario of marginalized sections in India, developing new concepts, giving insights, knowledge, necessary strategies to ensure quality higher education in the wake of globalization for marginalized sections in India, and deliberating on related policy initiatives and mechanisms.

Source: August 01, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

Indian Firms Tapping Leadership as a Route to Growth

At a time when most Indian firms are cutting costs to improve bottom lines in a sluggish economic environment, a select few are taking a contrarian route and investing heavily on developing leaders.

At least a dozen owner driven companies, including CK Birla group, Dr Reddy's, GMR, Jindal Steel, Reliance Industries and Sterlite, are said to be investing Rs 5 to Rs 15 crore on leadership development over and above their regular training allocation.

As more and more organisations view leadership development as a route to growth and invest in Leadership Development initiatives, the Human Resources space is galvanizing into action. The

Big 4 consultancy firms are moving beyond strategy-based solutions to advice on achieving excellence -- both at operational and execution levels.

Leadership – A Tool for Growth

While most organisations implement learning and development programmes to train employees, some Indian companies are aggressively using Leadership Development as a tool for growth.

"Leadership development is now being oriented for the growth of the company in domestic and global markets as also for the succession plan," says Yogi Sriram, Senior Vice President, Corporate HR of India's largest engineering & construction conglomerate L&T, which offers leadership programs across all levels and functions.

Companies across sectors, old and new economy alike, are taking note of the complex nature leadership in today's fast-paced world of changing variables and faster communication.

"In order to perform sustainably in today's competitive markets the culture of the organization, and its ability to innovate and to satisfy stakeholders depends on the quality of the leadership," says Sonia Stojanovic, who served as a Senior Practice Expert in Organisation Behaviour at McKinsey's New York office.

"Today's leaders need to be more agile and flexible to make course changes, in challenging situations and in turbulent times," says Sriram. These skills can be inculcated via leadership programs, by providing 270 degree feedback, which help the individuals develop leadership behaviours and consistency.

Considered a softer side of an organisation, not so long ago leadership interventions are beginning to show quantifiable gains. "We have seen phenomenal results from our six-month leadership program where we trained 200 people in three cohorts for two months each. It has ploughed back Rs 218 crore for us, in actual terms," says Rajeev Bhadauria, Director, Group HR at steelmaker Jindal Steel.

Jindal Steel plans a six month leadership development intervention this year for hundred additional employees, involving workshops, action learning projects and one-to-one coaching.

"Earlier the Big Four had leadership programs concentrating on only 30-40 people in an organisation. This model is not relevant now. We need leadership to be available across all levels of an organisation," says Bhadauria.

Expanding the Market

To tap into this opportunity, many consultancy firms have set up a separate Leadership Practice or a Leadership Institute, which enables them to undertake leadership intervention in a more focussed way and at a large scale.

"McKinsey started it in the mid-90s and now almost all the bigger consultancy firms Deloitte, PwC, Bain have set up practices for leadership development. Today, leadership has become complex. Earlier the leader was the boss but now, a single individual cannot do it," says Stojanovic.

This development is expanding the market, feel Santhosh Babu, CEO Coach and Founding MD of Organisation Development Alternatives. The pie is

expected to grow to more than Rs500 crore over the next 18-24 months.

The 16-year old Organisation Development Alternatives (ODA) conducts a year-long leadership development program for companies like Vodafone, Engineers India Limited and MSD. It also partners Jindal Steel in its leadership development initiative.

The demand for leadership is spurred as much by the need to have a leadership pipeline in place, especially for Indian family-owned businesses, as by the need to build agility, specifically in people, as an area of competency.

Generic drugmaker Ranbaxy is among the companies transforming its culture and moving into the next orbit of growth. It considers leadership development as one of the many tools for building this culture.

Source: August 01, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

Massive change ahead, but trust paramount

THE issue facing western universities is not how many international students they will recruit, but the impact of enormous demand from developing countries will have on their systems.

Put simply, the traditional model of universities does not scale up very well and will be entirely unsuited to the educational demands of hundreds of millions of students that will emerge from the developing world in the coming decades.

Many universities have been struggling with how to approach massive open online courses (MOOCs). The problem many face is how to monetise free content. But what if the real problem was, having lost the monopoly on providing content; they also lost their monopoly on certifying that knowledge.

The most profitable internet-based firms are not content providers, but trusted aggregators of information. Google, Facebook, YouTube, Wotif and eBay do not create content or supply services; they bring people who want something together with people who have something.

Imagine if the Indian government turned the table on the western universities and spelt out the courses it wanted taught, the standard to which it wanted them taught, and where it wanted the material delivered - in person or online. Now imagine that they went to the cash strapped western universities and asked them to bid for the work?

Imagine if Google wanted to train 1000 of its staff in privacy law or the US Department of Defence

wanted to train 10,000 of its staff in procurement. Should they shop around to see what the universities are offering or should they post their requirements up in a trusted aggregator and wait to see what the market offers them?

Australian universities already accept that courses completed at other universities can count towards a degree they award. Similarly, meta-universities such as the Open Universities Australia network and the Australia New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) already joint market their offerings and certify the quality of the end result. But why stop at a dozen universities? Why not networks of 80 or 800? And if trans-Tasman institutions can be trusted in ANZSOG why can't trans-pacific or truly global, and truly massive, networks be developed?

The sector is already heading in these directions, but many of those responsible for steering universities seem to be navigating as if their monopoly to certify that knowledge is fixed and permanent. But what if the university networks usurp universities themselves? What if developing countries invest heavily in the ability to match students to content providers and to certify what they have learned rather than invest in the ability to convey content?

Regardless of the direction in which university reform takes, the most important resource will be trust. Trust in the quality of the content, the motivation of the teachers and the reliability of the certification that takes place at the end of the content delivery. Just as individual universities are more likely to work closely with institutions they know and trust, so too are countries. This is why the recent bilateral talks between the Australian and Indian ministers for higher education are so significant. While the internet makes exchanging information easier, trust is still built face to face.

University education has, and will continue to, provide a key role in the generation of social, technological and economic advancement. The massive expansion in worldwide demand for higher education is both an opportunity and a threat for universities as we know them. While the motivation to deliver high quality education at the lowest price is shared between developing countries and Australian vice-chancellors, their support for the status quo is likely to differ substantially.

Source: August 02, 2013/ [The Australian](#)

Spend more on higher education

The position of Indian universities has consistently been falling year after year in almost all international rankings. For instance none of the

Indian universities figure in the latest (2013) Time Higher Education (THE) ranking of the top 100 world universities under 50 years old. In the 2012 rankings of 400 universities India had just one university compared with nine of China. Last year, India was the only BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) nation that did not have a single university among the top 200 on the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) list — the most reputed global rankings of institutes for higher education. Even our high-profile IITs and IIMs fail to match international standards of excellence.

Every year India's underperformance on the world stage in higher education as revealed by these rankings is being lamented by the media. Even the top political leaders including ministers join others in expressing concern. For instance, speaking at a conference of vice chancellors of central universities prime minister Manmohan Singh said that "too many of our higher educational institutions are simply not up to the mark. Too many of them have simply not kept abreast with the rapid changes that have taken place in the world around us in recent years, still producing graduates in subjects that the job market no longer requires. It is a sobering thought for us that not one Indian varsity figures in the top 200 universities of the world today". Most rankings consider universally accepted parameters such as quality of teaching, research prowess, pedagogical innovations, international outlook and generation of intellectual properties like patents, publications and citations. Defending our poor performance by excuses like biases, defective methodology of ranking and "scams" will result in more failures.

India with its 600 universities and 35,000 colleges is the third largest education system in the world. But 68 per cent of these universities and 73 per cent of colleges are found to be medium or low quality by Indian standard itself. With a severe shortage of quality higher education institutions, India faces the challenge of educating nearly 30 per cent of its 1.1 billion people. Certainly, India requires many more institutions of higher learning since nearly 100 million students are going to the higher education market in the next 10 years. In such a scenario improving the standards of existing universities and establishing quality institutions should be our priority.

But in the absence of raised budgetary allocations the public infrastructure for higher education could not keep pace with the increased demand. The public expenditure on higher education in India is very low at 0.6% of the GDP, compared to 2.7% in the USA. We need to step up our expenditure on

research to pursue large-scale innovation. The private sector, which contributes one-fourth of our country's expenditure on research and development, should increase their share of spending to levels prevalent in nations such as Japan, US and South Korea. Realising the importance of higher education in human resource development successive finance ministers have resorted to marginal increases in budgetary allocations to the education sector. A key problem in India's efforts to upgrade higher education has been undue focus on spending without realising what it should be doing.

For shortage of good academic institutions in India thousands of meritorious students prefer foreign universities for higher studies. According to a recent report Indians are spending nearly \$1 billion on higher education abroad.

It should be realised that the quality of faculty is crucial for a successful university. Many universities in India do not attract competent and committed faculty due to poor salaries and working conditions. Excessive politicisation and victimisation practices being followed by some universities take a toll on faculty commitment. Enhancing quality in all facets of education is the need of the hour. A targeted long-term perspective plan is required for training well-qualified, competent and committed teachers. Quality research environment is a prerequisite for cutting-edge research. For this, greater financial support and better infrastructural facilities should be ensured. As Delhi Technological University vice chancellor Dr P B Sharma says, "Research as a passion and a mission is yet to emerge as a hallmark of Indian universities."

Steps should be taken to reduce the disconnect between higher education institutions and industry requirements. The possibilities of private sector contributions in higher education should be fully exploited. The practice of big business houses and philanthropists promoting quality universities in the west could be replicated in India. But before initiating such private sector participation in higher education the government should ensure that there are proper checks and controls on the activities of such entities. Also it is our recent experience that the mushrooming of substandard schools and deemed universities have resulted in the deterioration of educational standards in India.

The recent decision of UGC to allocate funds for studies with potential to hasten the country's progress is a welcome step. As president Pranab Mukherjee said, "India's priorities for research and innovation should be conditioned by our socio-economic realities. The Indian innovation strategy

should focus on generating ideas that promote inclusive growth and benefit people at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid. Our higher academic institutions should play a vital role in inclusive innovation. They should mentor grassroots innovators for development of their ideas into useful products”

Upgrading the higher education sector especially in terms of patents filed and cutting edge research output is essential in improving India’s global ranking. Our sustainable economic development depends on human resources. A quality higher education base is essential to reap full benefits of our demographic dividend. In its mission to redress inefficiencies in higher education, the strategies of the 12th plan focus on technical education, distance learning, quality research, infrastructure, faculty and curriculum content. Wholehearted, co-ordinated efforts of the government departments and the private sector are needed to realise the plan’s educational goals.

Sources: August 02, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Asia to Play Defining Role in the 21st Century: Anand Sharma

Asia is poised to play a defining role in the 21st century global economy, said Mr. Anand Sharma, Union Commerce and Industry Minister while addressing CEO’s and heads of leading industry chambers representing 13 business organisations from 9 Asian economies including India, Japan, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and Chinese Taipei, at the 4th Asian Business Summit held on 30-31 July in New Delhi organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

He appreciated the role being played by the industry organizations in joining hands to promote regional integration to achieve sustained growth in the region. He looked forward to the recommendations of the Summit which he hoped to take up at the next East Asia Summit in Brunei on August 19.

Mr Sharma said that the current negotiations to reach an agreement on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) are a step forward in achieving regional integration of the Asian economies.

Responding to questions from the participants, the Minister stated that to promote trade and Investment in India, the government has further liberalized FDI policies in sectors like multi-brand retail, insurance etc. and implemented new

manufacturing policy. He urged the foreign investors to avail these new opportunities.

Speaking at the Summit, Mr. S Gopalakrishnan, President, CII and Executive Vice Chairman, Infosys Ltd. said that the Asian economies need to increasingly look at each other for markets and sourcing of goods in view of the constraints posed by the fragile global economic environment.

The Asian region accounts for about half of the total population of the world and 30% of the GDP and the region has 3 of the four largest economies on the world in terms of PPP, he said. These include China, India and Japan. He urged for efforts to integrate regional economy through stimulating growth through appropriate fiscal and monetary policies, cooperation in energy security and environment, innovation and technology and human capital development.

Mr. Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII said that although the Asian economies have been successful in overcoming the impact of the global recession, we need to be prepared to avoid difficult situations arising out of unforeseen factors and work towards achieving economic integration of the region based on partnerships.

The Asian Business Summit has emerged as an important forum for leading business organisations across Asia to meet and deliberate upon the key issues that confront Asian Economies, identify new cross border economic partnership opportunities as well as build a roadmap for accelerating the region’s economic progress.

The 4th Asian Business Summit aimed at increasing collaboration among Asian Economies to stimulate Asia’s growth, fiscal and monetary cooperation to enhance real economy, energy security and environment sustainability, regional infrastructure development, innovation, technology & human capital development and development challenges.

The CEOs participating in the 4th Asian Business Summit included Mr. Hiromasa Yonekura, Chairman, Keidanren (Japan) and Chairman, Sumitomo Chemicals; Mr S Gopalakrishnan, President, CII; Mr Vikram Kirloskar, Chairman, CII Innovation Council & Vice Chairman, Toyota Kirloskar Motor Private Ltd; Mr Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII; Mr Wang Jinzhen, Vice Chairman, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), China; Ms Yin Yuanping, Executive Vice Chairperson, China Enterprise Confederation (CEC), Mr Suryo Bambang Sulisto, Chairman, Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN); Dr Seungcheol Lee, Vice Chairman & CEO, The Federation of Korean Industries; Mr Egmidio S Jose,

Chairman, Philippines Japan Economic Committee, Philippines; Mr Tony Chew Leong Chee, Chairman, Singapore Business Federation ; Dr Theodore Mao-Hsiung Huang, Chairman, Taiwan Committee on East Asia Businessmen's Conference; Dr Kenneth C. M. Lo, Chairman Chinese National Association of Industry & Commerce (CNAIC); Mr Chartsiri Sophonpanich Chairman, The Joint Standing Committee on Commerce, Industry and Banking of Thailand.

At the conclusion of the 4th Asian Business Summit, a Joint Statement was adopted by the participating organizations, which would be presented to their respective governments for their national policy formulations.

Source: August 02, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

Indian education obsessed with exams

Kavita Burumle (not her real name) spent two years in coaching classes in Kota, in India's Rajasthan state, preparing for medical competitive examinations. She comes from a small rural town in the neighbouring state of Maharashtra and hence stayed in a hostel in Kota.

Unfortunately, despite spending two years and substantial money in these coaching classes, she could not get into any decent medical school.

Her days in coaching classes and self-study used to start from 6am and end around 9pm. Similarly, before she came to Kota, her parents would send her to private tuitions in her home town which were from 8am to 10:30am. Her regular school started at 12 noon and finished at 6pm.

She had no time to play and this focus on competitive examinations robbed her of her childhood. Children all over India go through this grind year after year and for what? By creating a whole generation of uni-dimensional citizens we in India are playing with fire.

This is not the only way for children to excel. There are other models of children's education which give well-rounded education. Such models exist all over the country but are few in number and need to be replicated. I will describe our small experiment in this area.

When my wife and I came back in 1981 from the US to stay in a small rural town of Phaltan in Maharashtra, there were no good schools. Hence when the time came for our daughter's education we helped start a Marathi-medium primary school and then a high school for them. Thus whichever class my elder daughter went into, the school added that.

The basic premise of our school was to give a good all-round education. So there was ample time given for outdoor activities and other creative activities like arts and crafts. Also, attending extra tuition classes was not allowed by the school.

In the initial stages it was very difficult to get students because parents were horrified at the thought of sending their children to a school which did not focus on competitive examinations and cramming for the students.

The principal, who was an American but naturalised Indian citizen, went from house to house requesting the parents to send their wards to our school. After our elder daughter got quite good marks in the state secondary board, the Phaltan residents woke up to the value of education in our school. And when our younger daughter got a position in the board, then suddenly people realised that it is one of the best schools in town. Today for 25 or 30 seats, we get around 150 to 200 applications.

Our children benefited greatly from this school and education. Our elder daughter went to do her PhD in mechanical engineering in the US and is at present a researcher in a major US company. Our younger daughter did her Masters degree in education from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and now teaches in our school.

Most of the schools put a tremendous burden on the children to study for competitive examinations so that they do not have any time to play. Children are attending one class after another from morning till night. This robs their childhood and in the process we are creating a whole generation of extremely focussed children who only know how to react to the pressures and inputs and have no time and inclination to think, reflect or get involved in any other creative activity.

Besides, they are constantly in fear of failing or missing out on passing the competitive examinations. Thus we are creating a whole generation of Indians who start their life with fear. This fear creates life-long psychological knots and mental problems and in extreme cases leads to suicides that we witness with increasing frequency.

Also, as children they would like to play and indulge in childhood activities but because of pressures of the parents and the school, they start telling lies to hide these activities.

Inculcating the telling of lies in our children is the biggest tragedy, and this habit, learnt during the formative years, continues throughout their lives. This habit then gives rise to irresponsible behaviour and subsequently leads to corruption.

Also, hardly any school curriculum has courses on moral science or on how to become good and responsible citizens. Hence, we are creating zombies who hardly learn any skills and are focused only on passing exams and nothing else.

It is also being increasingly observed that most of the students, after passing the entrance exams and entering into IITs, medical schools and management institutes, do not know very much about their subjects, but mostly excel in how to pass these exams. With the present quality of teaching, even in some of the prestigious colleges, leaving much to be desired, we are raising a whole generation of engineers, doctors and others who are very inadequate in their professions. This does not bode well for the country.

Also, because of the focus on cramming for exams, children never learn to think independently and to develop curiosity. This is carried into their professional education and hence we are hardly producing any researchers or thinkers in the areas of science and engineering.

So what is the remedy? India needs to increase drastically the number of educational institutes in every sphere; give autonomy to them; have a good national watchdog for maintaining the quality of education and create one examination board for the whole nation.

Besides there should be compulsory subjects taught at all levels on humanities, social sciences and how to become good citizens.

Let a thousand flowers bloom in children's education. Healthy competition and demand for good schools will automatically lead to excellence so that we can help produce students who are able to think independently and are curious about everything around them and in their life.

Besides, we also need to create avenues for gainful employment for children who want to do things other than engineering and medicine.

All these efforts will take a long time to show their effect and hence the reforms in education need to be done now for the future betterment of the country.

Source: August 02, 2013/ [Gulf Times](#)

Quality of teaching in private sector should become the focus: Raghuram Rajan

For India, where plenty of capacity has been created in higher education, quality of teaching should become the focus now, particularly in private sector institutions, according to Raghuram

G. Rajan, Chief Economic Advisor, Union Ministry of Finance.

This was imperative since lot of education will come from the private sector and for ensuring that the students passing out need not be re-educated by companies that recruit them, he said here on Saturday. Prof.Rajan was delivering the fourth Kuruvila Jacob memorial oration organised as part of the tenth annual function of the Kuruvila Jacob Initiative for Promoting Excellence in School Education.

Speaking on 'what can we do to build a higher education system in India?', where we are and why we need this,' he suggested that it was time to measure the output. Such an assessment should also be treated an input for the accreditation process of the institutions. The engineering student should at least be able to design if not build a bridge.

Capacity wise there were no issues, he said, citing media reports of no takers for hundreds of seats in engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu. Quality institutions to train and teach the teachers and those where ideas were nurtured were the need of the hour. Good education, he said, was the surest way to a good job.

A passion for teaching was extremely important otherwise schools will degenerate, Prof.Rajan said, underscoring the need for full transparency with regard to the opportunities that exist for the students. This would help avoid situations where after engineering the student takes up manual labour, an indication of how much they have been hurt by the system.

The culture of an institution come from founding fathers, he said, adding that educationist Kuruvila Jacob was a visionary, who achieved multiple objectives with multiple instruments.

Students and alumni of Madras Christian College High School launched the Kuruvila Jacob Initiative for Promoting Excellence in School Education in 2004 to mark the centenary year of the educationist, who was the headmaster of their school. The function was organised by the Kuruvila Jacob Memorial Educational Trust.

Convenor S.Viji said the educationist, who was also principal of schools in Hyderabad and Mumbai, laid emphasis on all round development of students. Another Convenor, N.Murali, said though the initiative, started in a small way, provided a sense of fulfilment, there still was some way to cover.

Source: August 04, 2013/ [The Hindu](#)

Are MOOCs the answer?

They are the buzzwords in the education sector. The popularity of these open courses is gaining steadily, with thousands of students across the globe enrolling online.

The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion – is it worth the name?

— Swami Vivekananda

The quote paints a picture of how education should be delivered in an ideal world. However, the reality is the exact opposite, especially in India. Over the years, there has been a phenomenal growth in the number of students enrolling in higher education. But, looking at the current scenario in India, several hindrances have resulted in students being deprived of the best of education – including easy access to the same, top-quality content, and the ability to translate the knowledge imparted into enhanced job readiness.

With only a handful of institutions in India imparting world-class education, and despite the Government's recent efforts to increase their number, there is no justice for the rapidly increasing student population. The gravity of the situation was recently noted by the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee, who said that despite there being over 650 degree-awarding institutions and over 33,000 colleges in the country, there is a supply-demand gap and a lack of institutions providing quality education. Moreover, there is a dearth of well-qualified professors due to the fact that teaching is not seen as a lucrative profession in India which results in many faculty positions lying vacant across colleges and universities. The President also advocated that it is important to introduce innovative technological solutions like e-classrooms to overcome this crisis.

India has an extremely competitive job market and there exists a disparity between the quality of education imparted and the skill-sets required for jobs. Most school and college classrooms across the country unfortunately have a teacher-student ratio of 1:40, making it very difficult for the teacher to give quality time to each student.

New modes of education like Massively Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are well-poised to alleviate this problem. MOOCs leverage information technology to reduce the burden on on-campus professors and facilitate a more interactive learning experience for large numbers of students. Students

can view core course content and collaborate with their peers online, freeing up professors to spend more time focusing on the clarification of the most challenging concepts in class.

Given the above-mentioned scenario, these courses are becoming tremendously relevant for supplementing the current degree programmes in India.

"Flipped classroom"

It is no exaggeration to say that MOOCs are the current buzz of the education sector. They are, without doubt, rapidly changing the game for higher education, executive education and employee development programmes. The popularity of MOOCs has been growing steadily with hundreds of thousands of students from around the world enrolling in online courses offered by faculty from the world's top schools. This interest is expected to further increase as we hear more stories of students successfully securing jobs and college admissions after obtaining MOOC certification.

A MOOC is an online course aimed at large-scale interactive participation and open access via the web, or simply, e-learning. MOOC providers can be broadly classified into two groups on the basis of the courses offered. The majority of MOOC providers offer courses spanning a broad spectrum of topics in the Sciences, Humanities, and Arts. A smaller number of MOOC providers offer an integrated curriculum of courses in application-oriented disciplines. Examples of the latter include Udacity, which offers an integrated curriculum of computer science courses, and the Academic Financial Trading Platform (AFTP), which offers an integrated curriculum of business and finance courses. There is substantial interest among several top universities and business schools to offer such integrated MOOC courses for credit in a "flipped-classroom" framework, wherein students can engage in online learning from top international faculty at home in order to learn the basics of a topic, and then interact with an on-campus professor to problem-solve and reinforce understanding.

For example, several Indian universities have expressed their eagerness to incorporate MOOC courses such as those offered by AFTP as part of their business and economics curricula. The demand among Indian students for instruction from globally-recognised faculty is a strong driver for these partnerships. Similar partnerships have been developing in the U.S. Examples include the use of Udacity's MOOC platform for the delivery of remedial math and science courses at California's

San Jose State University and the delivery of a master's programme in computer science at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

MOOCs and open access

MOOCs offer Indian students the opportunity to learn as well as gain certification of course mastery from the best professors in the U.S. and Europe. Given the limited capacity of seats at top U.S. and Indian universities, these features enhance the competitive edge of large numbers of Indian students in the global job market, and can also improve their chances of admission to top U.S. and European colleges and graduate schools. Globally, a number of renowned educational institutions, including Harvard and MIT, have included MOOCs as part of their teaching programme, either directly, or through associations.

Eventually, MOOCs will evolve beyond the delivery of online courses to becoming a pervasive resource where open access to cutting-edge university research (as well as teaching) will play a pivotal role in guiding the decisions of individuals in matters that affect their lives the most.

Source: August 04, 2013/ [The Hindu](#)

Raising the bar

Blaming students for a school's poor performance at the exams would not convince POJ Lebba, who headed the committee set up by the Kerala government to examine problems in secondary education sector and suggest remedial measures. He submitted his recommendations on April 16. Proper attention to secondary education is the solution, asserts the 77-year-old, who has over 36 years of experience in teaching and management.

Milestones galore

Lebba graduated from College of Engineering, Thiruvananthapuram, in electrical engineering (1958). He majored in electrical machines during his post graduation at Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai (1964). For the next eight years, he served as professor of electrical engineering at TKM College of Engineering, Kollam, and Kerala. In 1976, he was appointed as principal of the same college. At TKM, he increased the number of courses to more than 10 from three. He also worked as an AICTE consultant from 1992 to 1994. Lebba was offered the post of pro vice-chancellor of Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), which he turned down. He was also a consultant for Water and Power Consultancy Services (India), a Government of India undertaking. Presently, he is the secretary of the Muslim Educational Society, Kozhikode.

"Over the past few years, the pass percentage of secondary examinations in Kerala has shot up and stands above 90 per cent. Even while it brings cheer, we can't ignore the fact that there are still children who are forced to study something they don't want to. This should change," he says.

Uniform syllabus

In his report, Lebba suggested revising the curriculum of secondary education in Kerala, as the present one is five years old. He is particularly worried about the vocational sector where things don't happen by chance — you can't get up to speed with technological advancements unless you put your heart and soul into it, he says. The solution for this is a uniform syllabus. "Rather than segregating things into CBSE, ISCE and state syllabi, a common curriculum can root out all issues. Due to regional flavours, some subjects may require modifications — history is a case in point. By making minor modifications wherever necessary, for science and other subjects, following the same structure everywhere in India can be recommended," he says.

Accreditation

Lebba also recommends that an independent body of academicians like NAAC should rate schools. "Accreditation differs from approval as when the latter necessitates a minimum requirement, former seeks something above the mark and hence quality can be brought in," he explains.

Steps to rectify

Lebba has a two-point plan to make secondary education sector more fruitful — admit quality students and appoint well-trained faculty members. "Professional colleges in the government/aided sector boast of good pass percentage and results. This is because they admit result-oriented students, thereby making things easier for the school," he says.

But in self-financing colleges, students who are able to bear its fee structure alone will join and this affects the results. At the same time, if these colleges reduce fee to attract the kind of students who opt for government/aided sector, he says, it will strive for survival.

Call for more dedication

When it comes to teachers, Lebba finds they are not committed to their work. "Teaching is looked upon as a temporary platform until they land a steady job. If teachers are going to be paid poorly, their insistence on government or related jobs is understood. This is a cycle since their predecessors

also came in with the same notion. Ultimately, quality of education slumps," he laments.

Need for more autonomy

Giving a nod for autonomous colleges, according to Lebba, can reduce the burden of universities. Yet placing this mere idea itself invites brickbats from staff and students alike. "When the number of colleges under a university increases, monitoring the quality is difficult. As far as Kerala is considered, one university in each of its 14 districts is needed," he says.

Role models

Lebba credits two professors — S Hariharan and RE Bedford — for succeeding in his academic journey. Professor Hariharan who taught him electrical engineering had a good approach to students and his way of teaching inspired him to become an academician. RE Bedford, a teacher at IIT-Bombay, Mumbai, was also a great inspiration. As a teacher, Lebba's greatest achievement was mentoring many a good engineer, who are now in every part of the world.

Source: August 05, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Expensive Medical Education in India Forces Students to Venture Abroad

It is not that easy to become a doctor in India, even if you are brilliant and hard working. Limited government seats and towering costs of private medical college seats are forcing medical students to head abroad, reports Rema Nagarajan of TNN.

Cheap medical education in countries like China, Russia, Ukraine, Philippines and Nepal are compelling many Indians to pursue their education in these nations.

Previous year witnessed a staggering 4000 students entering the Indian Health System after clearing the screening test for foreign medical graduates (FMG's).

"The difference in the cost of medical education in private colleges in India and in these countries is huge. In China, your entire medical education could be completed in Rs 15-25lakh, less than half what it would cost to even buy a seat in a private medical college, excluding the additional expense of tuition fees, food and board costs. China is amongst the cheapest destinations for a medical degree and has a large number of seats," explained an FMG from Nepal, as reported by Nagarajan.

Source: August 05, 2013/ [Silicon India](#)

Hyderabad set to give Telangana head-start as education hub

The emergence of Hyderabad as a major education hub augurs well for the proposed Telangana State. The city has quite a few technical institutes, management colleges, universities and research centres.

The capital of present Andhra Pradesh would give a head start for the new state in view of its strong institutional base and high literacy rate of 81 per cent. Incidentally, the district of Mahboobnagar, with the lowest literacy rate of 56 per cent is also in Telangana, as per the Socio-Economic Survey of Andhra Pradesh (2012-13).

INSTITUTIONAL BASE

Apart from Osmania University, the oldest university in the State, the city has three central universities, including the top-ranked University of Hyderabad . The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad National Urdu University and English and Foreign Languages University make Telangana strong in specialised education as well.

Hyderabad now houses many institutes of global repute such as the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology and the National Remote Sensing Agency, and a host of defence laboratories, and space institutes. The ICICI Knowledge Park and the Shapoorji Pallonji Biotech park offer lot of scope for research and entrepreneurship. They have attracted considerable talent.

The city and surrounding areas are home to a mix of top business and engineering institutes. The Indian School of Business, Indian Institute of Technology – Hyderabad (campus coming up in Medak district), Tata Institute of Social Science Research, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Birla Institute of Technology & Sciences, Narsee Monjee, ICFAI would continue to drive human resource development and knowledge base in Telangana State. In addition, over 250 private engineering colleges, medical colleges and nearly 50 business schools have sprung up in and around Hyderabad .

Beyond Hyderabad too , the National Institute of Technology in Warangal as well as the Kakatiya University can be catalysts to growth. Similarly, the proposed IIT, Medak and IIIT in Basar in Nizamabad district, can have a role in the spread of education in the region.

LOSS TO SEEMANDHRA

All of these have made Hyderabad is a preferred choice for the recruiters and companies intending to

invest in Andhra Pradesh. The availability of a huge talent pool has attracted many IT pharma and biotech companies so far. It is expected that this would continue.

Losing Hyderabad would be big loss for Andhra and Rayalaseema regions as a substantial number of students regularly go to Hyderabad to pursue higher studies. While there is no central university in Andhra and Rayalaseema regions, Andhra University in Visakhapatnam has been a major centre of learning in addition to universities in Guntur, Ananthapur and Tirupathi. It will have to ramp up its focus on technical and management education to be recognised as an educational hub in the years to come.

Source: August 05, 2013/ [The Hindu Business Line](#)

Time to reboot education system, says PM's advisor

It is time to reboot the education system in the country, which is in need of resuscitation, said S Ramadorai, advisor to the Prime Minister in the National Skill Development Council and the vice-chairman of Tata Consultancy Services.

Delivering the Second C K Parhlad Memorial Lecture, organised by Aspen Institute of India and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) recently, Ramadorai said: "We are not working smart, not learning from what is happening in other nations and not planning ahead."

He said that the education system, as a conventional model of assorted brick and mortar schools, would soon be questioned as the global universities were going online. He said that most universities, below the upper tier, would have to integrate with a second virtual university into the standard one. He also highlighted how the US is planning to provide more than 99 per cent students with high speed Internet. He said that the 21st Century model demanded shedding of traditional mind sets. "Online resources like wikis to broadcast, are allowing children and adults to pursue education of their own. This can also help empower children in rural areas of India, which lack quality teachers." Ramadorai said and added that schools and universities on cloud computing was real possibility.

"We need to work out a plan to make on-demand learning, a reality using the national IT backbone on the rural broadband which is currently under implementation," he said.

He also highlighted how several IITs, Nasscom and several private technology companies had joined hands to provide free online courses. "This could

help 1,00,000 to 1,50,000 people a year and make them ready for job," he said.

He said the need of the hour was to have job-led growth and for this, one had to cultivate entrepreneurs and promote small and medium enterprises. He also suggested a constituency model that would aim to leverage the local MP and his field office as a powerful last mile solution for a student.

"On a national scale, if each MP is responsible for training 5,000 youth in his or her constituency, then in the next five years we will have 1.5 crore skilled workforce. The model is already being implemented in certain pockets and we are planning to scale it up," he said.

The second one is the National Service Scheme (NSS), a youth-focused initiative that has grown considerably with 0.4 million to 2.3 million members operating in 219 institutions this year. There is a move by the Ministry of Youth Affairs to reposition the NSS by introducing skills training, he said. "A 10-university pilot is being launched this year and if proves successful, will provide a demonstrable model for future," he added. He also highlighted the Maharashtra initiative, which is trying to bridge the demand for skilled labour by launching a portal next month.

Source: August 05, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Our education is on par with the best in the world'

Having submitted her thesis on Cultural Studies on the feminist reading of traditional Indian philosophical texts, Sushumna Kannan seems to be waiting for her work to be discussed and also teach her research to students.

Currently in the US, she says that she chose the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society in Bangalore as it was one of the best centres in India for working on cultural studies, but according to her, the thinking among the faculty and scholars was rather one-sided when a more broad minded view could have helped.

She says, "When in the US, I realise that my education was on par with the best in the world; only the format was different. Indian libraries however, are in dire need of more grants if they want to acquire western scholarship."

She now has plans to do a post-doctorate or go for teaching or even go for more research through funding. "And I would love my work to be discussed more; it is especially relevant in times wherein

there is confusion on how to relate with other cultures or with India's own past," she says.

Proud of her Indian roots and culture, Sushumna feels that colonialism has left a sour feeling that we are inferior to the West.

"But a scientific explanation shows that this is not the case and that our philosophical traditions are as complex, if not more, as the western traditions," she says, adding, "This understanding would relieve the cultural pressure of appearing hip and broad-minded which often is merely aping the west, without really engaging with it either in a scientific manner," she adds.

Sushumna is a Bangalorean and was born and brought up here, except for the two years that she spent in Hyderabad for a Masters' Degree.

Source: August 06, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

Out of court

Multiplicity of higher education regulators is a concern for policy to address

With the Supreme Court's rejection, a few days ago, of the review petition filed by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the stage is set for an arduous tussle over jurisdiction between the AICTE and the University Grants Commission (UGC). In April this year, the SC had restricted the role of the AICTE in regulating technical education provided by colleges affiliated to universities. It also held that MBA courses did not come under technical education. While the judgment was hailed by many technical colleges, in government and bureaucratic circles, the curtailment of the AICTE's powers caused much anxiety. Consequently, the government sought a review of the SC's April order.

The judgment held that colleges affiliated to a university are not required to obtain permission from the AICTE before starting a course in technical education. The SC held that the role of the AICTE vis-a-vis universities and their affiliated colleges was supervisory and not regulatory. In reaching its conclusion, the court relied on the definition of "technical institution" under the AICTE Act, which excludes a university from the regulatory purview of the AICTE, and Section 12A of the UGC Act.

Section 12A allows the UGC to regulate the fee that may be charged for certain courses. Further, the UGC may recommend that the university disaffiliate a college found violating the regulations framed under Section 12A. This section defines a college as an institution of study recognised by a

university as providing instruction in a course, the qualification of which is granted by the university. Arguably, this definition is aimed at distinguishing between a college and a university. But the SC subsumed the former into the latter.

The definition of a university under the AICTE Act is in line with the UGC Act. A reading of the definition of "university" with the definition of "college" under the UGC Act leaves no doubt that the two concepts were intended to be different. Any other reading renders the AICTE Act an otiose piece of legislation, as almost all technical institutions are also affiliated to universities (which alone have the power to grant degrees under the UGC Act). It appears that the Supreme Court was inclined to read the phrase "university" in a more expansive manner to bring colleges out of the regulatory control of multiple bodies — the UGC, the AICTE and universities. Although this is a valid policy concern, it would have been best done through a legislative amendment.

Source: August 07, 2013/ [Indian Express](#)

Quality in engineering education essential'

That a majority of the engineering graduates in our nation find it extremely difficult to seek employment makes for a depressing fact. Equally if not more depressing is the fact that these graduates lack the required skills to get the right employment opportunity. In order to tide over the problem, Dr T Murugesan, an academician from Malaysia, advocated the need for integrating quality into the technical education system.

Delivering the Dr M A Govinda Rau Memorial Lecture on revisiting engineering education towards sustainability at the Alagappa College of Technology (ACT) on Monday, Dr T Murugesan, a professor at Universiti Teknologi Petrona, Malaysia, suggested that this must be achieved with an approach involving all the stakeholders – educationists, administrators and industry representatives. "It has also been found that many graduates lack a proper vision towards their career. The tendency to blame teachers alone for the current scenario isn't fair as the problem is much larger," he articulated.

Dr Murugesan, who had obtained his PhD in chemical engineering at the Anna University and taught at the ACT, said that the humongous number of colleges in the nation was also proving to be a problem. Quoting statistics of the AICTE, he said that with over 3,000 colleges in the nation churning out 14 lakh graduates annually, there tends to occur a dip in quality that can be overcome only with the parallel increase of facilities amongst other factors. In this regard he dwelt on international accords such as the Washington Accord that seek to achieve

equivalence of technical education courses across nations. "Abiding by such accords would also mean adopting the student-centred method of learning. This will lead to well-rounded graduates with the right technical competence," he added.

Earlier, M Mathusuthanan, faculty of the ACT rued the "commodity-like conversion" of engineering courses in the nation. He rued that students from a vast majority of the colleges end up in mundane job opportunities in order to make a living.

The programme was organised by the Chennai regional centre of the Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers.

Source: August 07, 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

OPINION: India's Leaders Need To Do More For Higher Education

Sometime late last summer, I was sitting in Professor Varun Sahni's office at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, in New Delhi. Among other things, we got to talking about higher education in India.

Varun is a former colleague from my Goa University days, where we both taught during the early 1990s soon after he returned from Oxford with a doctorate in politics. Since then, he has also been a vice-chancellor at Jammu University and has firsthand experience of India's challenges in the higher education sector, including running a public university.

I recall that we agreed that the higher education scene was changing in some ways and there were reasons to be hopeful about the future. Other than express qualified optimism, there was something Varun said that day that stuck at the back of my mind.

"Any political party that promises to deliver good quality higher education will win the next elections and win again if it succeeds," he declared.

I had nearly forgotten all about my chat with Varun until recently when the magazine India Today published the results of an opinion poll it conducted among 18- to 30-year-olds in ten Indian cities.

No cookies for guessing what topped the list of their main concerns! Education ranked first, beating corruption, employment and inflation.

I suspect that if a poll is carried out among Indian parents whose children are approximately in the same age group, education would still rank among the top three concerns, perhaps even first. As I have discussed in these pages before, Indian parents with college-age children are a stressed

lot. Only a select few students get admitted to the handful of good colleges in the country. Most have to make do with lesser institutions which offer at best average to mediocre quality education. Despite the country's growing prosperity over the past two decades or so, not many parents can afford to send their children to the US or Singapore.

Overall, I can think of several reasons why India's political parties, especially the ruling Congress party, should go the extra yard or more to address the concerns of 18- to 30-year-olds and their parents.

First, parliamentary elections are due in 2014. By addressing those issues that India's young are concerned about, the Congress can hope to secure their vote. By cooperating with the Congress (which heads a coalition government), its allies as well as opposition parties can signal to voters that they too are concerned about the future of young people and compete effectively for the same votes.

It helps a great deal that India has a large and growing pool of young population. According to estimates, by 2020, there will be 550 million people under the age of 25. Political parties should be salivating at the prospect of winning the hearts and minds of such large numbers of voters.

Second, irrespective of their ideological leanings, all political parties are concerned about economic growth. Today, India is experiencing an economic slowdown which helps no one. However, the country can hope to overcome this challenge by taking advantage of its demographic dividend – understood as the difference between the sizes of the working population relative to that of the dependent population. Any political party that can do its bit to put the country back on the road to high growth – in this case by improving higher education in a manner that reduces the current 'skills crisis' and at the same time, provide meaningful employment to young Indians – can expect to gain at the polls.

I am quite certain that Varun is right – those political parties which take up the cause of higher education will be rewarded by voters. However, curiously, India's parties are showing no real urgency to do so. India Today has reported that there is a huge mismatch between the priorities of young India and politicians with the latter busy attending to just about every other issue other than education.

To be fair, a few reforms have been approved by the government. For example, the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010, has been OK-ed to clear the way for the

entry of foreign universities. More is needed, however, to make a real breakthrough in higher education.

There are no clear answers to why politicians do not seem particularly interested in addressing the concerns of young Indians and their parents. Students of political science are taught that one of the main differences between countries with elected governments and those without is that the former are more responsive to public concerns because they would like to be reelected. India's democracy appears to be an exception in this regard. A new book – *An Uncertain Glory: India and Its Contradictions* – by Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen is not the first to expose these contradictions of India's democracy and in showing that China's leaders – who do not have to contest free and fair elections – have done far more than India's elected representatives in addressing the most pressing public needs.

Pratap Bhanu Mehta, a political scientist who heads the think-tank Center for Policy Research, New Delhi, has pointed out on several occasions that it is a puzzle why India's democratically-elected representatives are less responsive to public concerns than China's unelected leaders.

Bookmark this page. In a forthcoming op-ed, I will try to explain and speculate on why India's political parties have not done more in taking up the cause of higher education.

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Disclaimer: This article does not necessarily reflect the views of Asian Scientist or its staff.

Source: August 12, 2013/ [Asian Scientist](#)

Over 25 lakh students benefited under the interest subsidy scheme in Higher Education

The Lok Sabha was informed today that more than two crore students studied in colleges and universities in the country. Replying to a question, the Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Dr. Shashi Tharoor said that over 25 lakh students have benefited under the interest subsidy scheme so far which constitutes 12.5% of the students in higher education.

The Central Government has introduced a scheme to provide interest subsidy for the period of moratorium of Education Loans taken by students from Economically Weaker Sections. That means whose annual family income is below Rs. 4.5 lakh per year. Also the loans should have been taken from scheduled banks under the Educational Loan

Schemes of the Indian Bank's Association to pursue technical/professional education studies in India.

The Central Government does not provide any interest subsidy on primary and secondary education.

The Central Government has taken the following steps so that the maximum number of students can avail the benefits of the subsidy.

§ State Governments have been required to declare designated authorities for the purpose of issuing the family income certificate;

§ The subsidy scheme has been extended to all the banks coming under the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934; and

§ The IBA has recently issued a revised Model Education Loan Scheme permitting banks to consider meritorious students eligible for loans under this scheme even if the students chooses to pursue a course under the Management Quota of private institutions.

This was stated in a written reply to a question.

Source: August 15, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

RESOURCE

Higher Education Searches Rise on Google, Reveal Marketing Opportunity

Attention marketers: demand is high on mobile devices for higher education info, and online programs from traditional universities are highly sought after, according to new Google research that was revealed during the first Hangout on Air for Google's education team.

The demand for education info in Google's search engine shot up 4 percent, year over year (YOY). Brand-related terms that have the school's name within the query were a key player in the growth:

What's interesting to note, said Google's Jennifer Howard, was brand searches on for-profit schools was flat YOY, while searches for traditional universities grew. Specifically, searches for traditional universities and their online programs are on the rise.

Howard said these types of queries show a shift in mindset that means students could be more interested in traditional universities with online programs versus the types of schools that historically have offered online education.

Also of interest was the 142 percent growth YOY in terms related to MOOCs (massive open online courses). Howard said that while there's still a hefty debate about the validity of MOOCs, data shows

students are considering it as they're going through the research process.

Terms related to specific degrees saw an 8 percent YOY growth. Of these types of searches, MBAs consistently top the charts:

Education Trends in Paid Search, Mobile, Local

So how these education queries affect the paid side of search in Q2? Even though demand was up, clicks were down 7 percent. This drove CPC of education-related terms up 12 percent.

Howard said marketers need to focus on relevancy. "We think there's an opportunity to think about what messaging we are putting into the paid search ads ... think about differentiation."

Mobile is another area educational marketers should be mindful of. Mobile education queries were up 49 percent YoY according to Q2 data:

Geo-focused terms are also on the rise. "Terms that have a geolocator in them, and that are using that as a modifier have grown 11 percent year-over-year, while terms specifically indicating 'online' as a qualifier have declined 10 percent year-over-year," Howard said.

"The hypothesis here is that students are more interested in potentially staying closer to home, are more interested in offerings where they have either a campus or they have some other way of interacting with the community or teachers or the classroom itself, versus some of the trends we've seen in the past regarding distance learning."

Howard said educational institutes without a physical location should think about how to stress any community-related activities that surround its educational offering, whether it's forums, student organizations, or something else.

Alternatively, if you do also have a campus, think about how you can maximize on this trend for geofocused educational searches.

Sources: August 01, 2013/ [Search Engine Watch](#)

India's Knowledge Process Outsourcing market will cross \$30 billion in next two years: ASSOCHAM

Despite slowdown, India's Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) market is growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 30% annually and may touch \$30 billion by 2015, India's from the current level of \$20 billion, according to ASSOCHAM.

The rising demand for profession-based services is expected to drive the growth in the industry in areas of research for capital and financial markets,

legal works, editing jobs for international publishing houses among many others, reveals the ASSOCHAM recent paper on "Current scenario of Indian KPO Industry".

ASSOCHAM Secretary General Mr. D S Rawat said presently, domestic KPO industry is facing stiff competition from countries like Philippines, Russia, China, Poland and Hungary as these are emerging strong contenders for KPO business in view of qualified KPO professionals, low-cost advantages, domain expertise, location advantage, sales and marketing capabilities and data compliance.

A vast pool of highly educated professionals in engineering, medicines, management and professionals in the field of accountancy, company secretary and legal fraternity would be required to serve the industry. Number as per rough estimates should be well within the range of over 6-8 lakh against the current numbers of 3.5 Lakh.

While releasing the paper Mr. Rawat added that it is difficult for KPO companies to always find a qualified, experienced and talented workforce in India. Considering the situation that there is no dearth of engineers, doctors, MBAs, lawyers etc. in India, the KPO industry is banking on availability of this talented pool to fill up its seats, but now they are facing the supply crunch.

It is the kind of shortfall predicted between target and realistic growth that is worrying. If the industry is unable to sustain the momentum, it is quite possible that the other alternative destinations will become increasingly attractive for the clients. The nature of the KPO work makes it easier for clients to switch, adds Mr. Rawat.

Indian KPO companies can see these findings on the manpower availability coming out of the research either as a limiting factor or a challenge for their growth. The resource requirement should be seen as a challenge and addressed, added Mr. Rawat.

The potential solution is expanding into tier-2 and tier-3 cities. There is sufficient untapped potential in these smaller cities but the questions on how to leverage on these opportunities without adversely affecting organizational and logistical effectiveness is a challenge. This approach of distributed working looks more promising for the KPO companies than traditional IT or BPO companies. Lot of work that is part of KPO can be done by individuals or small teams – remote work is also possible. The KPO work is knowledge intensive and it should be possible hence for these companies to come up with working models that can tap into the isolated resources pools available in smaller towns across India, adds the ASSOCHAM.

The second way is to partner with educational institutes to ensure that students passing out of universities have the right skill set. Both the approaches are being followed by Indian IT companies to certain extent so there is opportunity for KPO companies to learn from already existing partnerships and grow the scale to address their own requirement, reveals the paper.

The KPO sector deals with confidential data, including financial data, treasury and cash management functions and investment portfolio decisions and needs to address the issue of data security raised by international clients, said Mr. Rawat.

The Paper also predicts that KPOs has also other advantages like better work tools and processes, more sophisticated client centricity, higher billing rates and more domain focused organisations.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are likely to be the major growth drivers for the KPO sector. According to estimates, out of the 20 million SMEs in US and Europe, about 15% can benefit from KPO services due to reduced complexity, ability to compete effectively with small and large competitors, shorter time to market, higher flexibility, overall lower costs and potentially higher quality for the same costs.

In fact, in the near future, KPO is likely to be driven by factors like breadth and depth of coverage, domain expertise, location advantage (e.g., near-shoring and language capabilities), sales and marketing capabilities, data compliance with respect to regulatory standards (especially those defined by the United States, Canada and the European Union) and the management of business risks.

The KPO industry is maturing and the range of services being provided has expanded as the market has developed. From its initial beginnings in research and analytics, the definition of KPO currently includes a variety of services, such as legal process outsourcing and clinical trial management.

China is an attractive location for companies that run and manage all phases of the clinical trial process, as it offers a significant pool of potential patients in an important emerging market. Along with China, the Philippines is also becoming an increasingly important player in the KPO market. It has started to carve out a niche for itself in a number of key areas, including healthcare outsourcing (providing industry-specific services to hospitals and healthcare providers).

Sri Lanka has also focused on developing skills around specific service lines. For example, the country has a significant number of qualified accountants, capable of providing the kind of high-end complex tasks associated with service areas such as equity and credit research.

Almost any kind of research and information gathering can be outsourced to India. Popular KPO services include:

- Equity research
- Business and market research
- Intellectual property research
- Medical and legal research
- Financial research
- Research reports
- Research in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals

India an ideal KPO destination as:-

- India has a large availability of post-graduates, PhDs and MBAs with experience in KPO
- India's professionals are proficient in popular KPO software like SPSS, SAS and MS Excel. Indians are also highly proficient in English
- As of 2013, the total market size of the KPO industry in India has reached over \$20 billions
- India currently caters to over 70% of the world's KPO industry
- As of 2013, the Indian KPO sector has employed over 3,50,000 knowledge process outsourcing professionals
- India has trained KPO experts who have advanced analytical, technical and interpretation skills
- India's favorable government policies and time zone make it an ideal outsourcing location

Source: August 03, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

Investments in online edu to improve access, enhance skills

The country needs to bet big on investments in online education, making it available to those struggling and aspiring for higher achievements, said S Ramadorai, vice chairman, Tata Consultancy Services, and advisor to the Prime Minister in the National Skill Development Council (NSDC).

Delivering the second CK Prahalad Memorial Lecture 2013, organised by the Aspen Institute India and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), he said: "We need to work out a plan to make on-demand learning a reality, using the national IT backbone or

the rural broadband which is presently under implementation."

The country needs hub-and-spoke models to leverage the limited resources, and you may even need to blend software and human intervention, and there are a host of strategies for every situation. This can be one of the most exciting phases in Indian education. "We need to bet big on such investments and plan for the future. The strong incentive from the government and private players will create new business models. Indians are very good at that. Venture capitalists and angel investors will be attracted and slowly we can build a very vibrant ecosystem," he added.

The 21st century model demands that we shred up the traditional educational models. Online resources, from the Wikis to Podcasts to training videos are allowing both children and adults to pursue education on their own. It would be a great supplement to the learning schools and colleges; schools and universities on a cloud are a real possibility, he said.

One small step towards this was the recent announcement of about seven Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), and Nasscom along with other private technology companies deciding to join forces to launch a bunch of free online courses.

Potentially, these courses could help under 1,000 to 150,000 people a year get high quality education and, more excitingly, make them job-ready. The courses will be offered in the model of massive open online courses or MOOC.

However, "the worry is how can we make this less elitist and bring such to those who are struggling and who aspire for higher achievement," he added.

He said that time has come for a national portal with educational materials freely available for the public. One has to look at how the country could develop that and cultivating more entrepreneurs through this.

The government is looking at various models for skill development and one of it is the constituency model in which the local Member of Parliament and the field officer could take the responsibility of developing skills among at least 5,000 youth from their constituency. The model is already under implementation and is expected to scale up in future.

Another model is to utilise the National Service Scheme across colleges to develop skills among youth. The model has already been implemented in

10 universities as a pilot starting this year and plans are on to touch 30,000 students through the model.

Given that 93 per cent of the working people are in the unorganised sector, and most are in the least developed places in India, it requires a deeply penetrative effort which also addresses the local needs and sensitivities. Aligning with NGOs and social entrepreneurs is important and the PPP model in all aspects of training is the need of the hour.

"My own appointment as the advisor to the Prime Minister indicates the need for crossover efforts for any approach to be successful, collaborative forces with the ecosystem is absolutely critical," he added.

Source: August 04, 2013/ [Business Standard](#)

75% engineering students in Rajasthan unemployable: IIM Study

If you think you will make a good engineer and you have it in you, think again. To check the quality and standards of technical education in Rajasthan, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Udaipur, has conducted a study, which has surprised many. A whopping 75% of the total engineering students are 'unemployable'.

According to the survey, the employable percentage stands at 25% students. It is not just the technical knowledge, but in a lot of other things, the students fail to impress the interviewers.

The study was conducted in collaboration with the Working Group on Education and State Planning Board, Rajasthan.

The report underlines reasons responsible for the declining quality include teacher-students ratio, rural-urban divide, gender inequity, high number of gross enrolment ratio (GER), lack of good communication skills and poor knowledge of English.

The report states that the country is one of those in the world which has highest teacher-students ratio. According to the AICTE, there is a shortage of 42,831 MTechs in engineering institutes.

Lack of academic and professional approach towards the teachers also plays a spoilsport in a student's life.

Commenting on the student's efficacy, Shashi Kant Sangi, director, Purnima Group of Colleges, says. "It is not just the knowledge, every student can have that. It's about right attitude that keeps a student in hunt for a job. Engineering aspirants in Rajasthan lack this," he says.

"Rajasthan being a hub of engineering colleges, it's easy for students to grab a seat. And, society has a set mindset. Parents don't go by their ward's talent. They rather go by what is 'hit' in the neighbourhood. This is like a nightmare for the students, and suppresses them," Sangi adds.

Source: August 04, 2013/ [DNA India](#)

'Indian academics work closely with India Inc: study

While many Indian institutions struggle to perform better in various global educational rankings, they show a relatively strong record of working closely with the industry, a new index released by the Times Higher Education on Sunday said.

The 'World Academic Summit Innovation Index' has found that academics from the Republic of Korea were the most commercially valuable in the world, with its top universities attracting the most cash from big businesses. Among the world's top 30 countries ranked, India bagged the 10th position.

The data is based on the top 400 institutions listed in the 2012-13 Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Three institutes of India, including IITs at Bombay, Kharagpur and Roorkee had figured in the list last year — but all were below 226th position.

The total income from the industry was divided by the total number of researchers in these three institutes to arrive at the average figure of \$36,900 per researcher in India .

"Every year, IIT Bombay receives considerable financial support from the industry for research and development. We are building up research facilities to enable our professors to provide cutting edge research support to address the competitive and technological requirements of industries," says IIT Bombay director Devang Khakhar.

"We are seeking research tie-ups with the industry and plan to set up a research park in the campus to enhance such collaborations." he said.

Source: August 11, 2013/ [HindustanTimes](#)

US higher education creates 'white racial privilege'

A new study argues the US higher education system magnifies racial and ethnic inequality by funneling white students into more selective and better-funded colleges.

Although many minorities are unprepared for college in the US, whites who are just as unprepared are still presented with more

opportunities and more likely to receive a bachelor's degree, a new report says.

While the number of minority students entering the nation's higher education system is growing by the thousands every year, they are being funneled into underfunded institutions while white students are concentrated in more elite and selective universities, according to researchers at Georgetown University.

The report, released on Wednesday by the university's Center on Education and the Workforce, found that the same racial and ethnic divide found in the nation's K-12 schools is repeated in higher education, perpetuating what researchers call a "white racial privilege."

The postsecondary system mimics and magnifies the racial and ethnic inequality in educational preparation it inherits from the K-12 system and then projects this inequality into the labor market," the report says.

Although African-Americans' and Hispanics' participation in higher education has been growing faster than white students, the report found that whites are over-represented in the nation's 468 most selective and well-funded colleges and are increasingly vacating the less selective open-access, two- and four-year colleges, which admit a majority of their applicants. On the other hand, African-American and Hispanic students are concentrated at 3,250 of these open-access colleges.

Between 1995 and 2009, freshman enrollment for African-Americans and Hispanics increased by 73 percent and 107 percent respectively, while freshman enrollment for whites only increased by 15 percent, the report says. Still, the large majority of new white enrollments - more than 80 percent - have been at the top 468 colleges, while more than 70 percent of new African-American and Hispanic enrollments have been at open-access colleges.

White enrollment at elite institutions compared to the rest of the college-aged population has also been increasing. In 1995, whites made up 68 percent of the college-age population and 77 percent of enrollment at top schools - a 9 percentage point advantage. By 2009, that advantage increased to 13 percentage points.

The report also says the country's higher education system does not treat students equally, regardless of their qualifications. Although many minorities are unprepared for college, whites who are just as unprepared are still presented with more

opportunities and more likely to receive a bachelor's degree, the report says.

While more than 30 percent of African-Americans and Hispanics with a high school grade point average of 3.5 or higher attended community colleges, only 22 percent of whites with the same GPA attended the same level of schooling. Likewise, the report found that 57 percent of minority students with scores higher than 1200 out of 1600 (the SAT scoring scale changed to a maximum of 2400 points in 2005) on the SAT eventually received some sort of certificate or degree, compared to 77 percent of whites with similar scores.

Because more whites end up in more elite schools, the system disproportionately tracks many qualified minorities on "educational pathways that don't allow them to fulfill their educational and career potential," the report says.

Access to top institutions is important because the schools spend anywhere from two to nearly five times as much on instruction per student as open-access colleges. This matters because the extra spending leads to higher chances of attaining a bachelor's degree, which the report considers an "important threshold for racial equality in education and earnings." "It is difficult to clearly mark the point where racial discrimination ends and economic depravation begins, but the evidence is clear those both negatively affect educational and economic opportunity and are most powerful in combination," the report says. *US News & World Report*

Source: August 13, 2013/ [Press Tv](#)

Expansion, excellence, equity – key drivers for innovation in India: Sam Pitroda First-ever CII India Innovation Summit held in Chicago

"Diversity has always been the backbone of innovation in India. In solving the challenges of development, demography, and disparity, will need expansion, excellence and equity. Today, as a nation of a connected billion, a first in the history of the world, we need to leverage emerging technologies, including social media, to help alleviate the enormous problem of poverty," said Dr. Sam Pitroda, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Public Information Infrastructure and Innovation, in his keynote address at the India Innovation Summit organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here on July 18.

The summit, organized in partnership with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (CCGA), the US-India Business Council (USIBC), PanIIT Alumni

Association and TiE Midwest, brought together creative minds, experts and entrepreneurs, financing institutions and economic development officials, packing the hall with tremendous energy and enthusiasm. Discussions encompassed key policy interventions, funding mechanisms, and partnership opportunities between India and the US in the innovation space.

Madhav Lal, secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), emphasized leveraging collaborations to scale up innovations, and the growing role of technologies to enable this cross-sector engagement. "I would like to see more collaborative networks between the governments, industry, academia and institutions, cutting across country borders," he said. The MSME Ministry was one of the agencies that also had an exhibit booth at the summit, which had on display their various initiatives that facilitate innovation among smaller companies.

Other agencies that participated in the exhibition included the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC).

CII president S, Gopalakrishnan, who was leading a CII CEOs delegation to the summit, said that the need of the hour was to empower a large number of people using mobile connectivity and cloud computing platforms and make them a part of the knowledge revolution, which would ultimately contribute to economic growth. "Innovation generates economic value, new jobs and a culture of entrepreneurship. By virtue of its relationship with competitiveness, innovation emerges as a factor in promoting economic growth," he said.

Stressing the need to enhance public-private partnership (PPP), Vikram Kirloskar, chairman of CII Innovation Council and vice chairman of Toyota-Kirloskar Motor, said, "Mutual trust will lead to mutual benefit. The public and private sector cannot be working in isolation." He further elaborated on the recent formation of the Global Innovation and Technology Alliance (GITA), which manifested as PPP-model based, a non-profit company jointly incorporated by the Technology Development Board (TDB) of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, and CII.

On enabling innovation in education, Dr. Naushad Forbes, chairman of CII National Committee on Higher Education, highlighted two major areas of engagement: to build capacity in the administrative leadership in higher education institutions and connecting Indian companies with leading US

universities. "As Indian companies invest more in Research and Development, there is a heightened need to connect them to leading research institutions and universities," he said.

The government of India has declared 2010-2020 as the decade of innovation, and the upcoming launch of the India Inclusive Innovation Fund seeks to catalyze the creation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, targeted at innovative solutions for the bottom of the pyramid. In this context, Chandrajit Banerjee, director general of CII, expressed that US-India collaboration presented a huge opportunity. "A lot remains to be done in India on the innovation front, and we believe that the power of collaboration between India and the US – two countries with a diverse, democratic and creative people – would yield tremendous results. We are delighted to hold the India Innovation Summit for the first time ever in Chicago, and hope to see many fruitful partnerships emerging from this interaction," he said.

Sources: August 13, 2013/ [India Tribune](#)

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