



## 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](#)

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Fellowships for six months to two years in various disciplines.

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Regular workshops and lectures on a variety of subjects.

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### ***Internships/Mentoring***

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

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

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## 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****Need innovation in education system: President**

President Pranab Mukherjee Saturday called for innovative changes in India's education system to reclaim its lost glory. "Improvement in our academic system calls for innovative changes. Our examination system must incorporate modern methods of evaluation. Top quality teachers must be recruited," the president said here while addressing the second convocation ceremony of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bhubaneswar.

"A spirit of competition amongst universities must be infused. Academic regulation must be streamlined to create a more flexible, transparent and student-friendly educational system," he said. The president also said the country's efforts at expanding higher education infrastructure had yielded positive results but very few academic institutions in the country can claim global rankings due to lack of quality.

"As per an international ranking, there is not a single Indian university, including the IITs, amongst the top 200 universities in the world," he pointed out.

He said the leading universities of the West and universities even in countries like China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia are ranked higher than any Indian institution," he said. "In the past, for about 1,800 years beginning th sixth century BC, we had an unbeatable higher education system represented by universities like Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Valabhi, Somapura and Odantapuri," he said. "They were a magnet for knowledge seekers from distant places. But today, we languish behind many nations," he said.

**Source:** 07 September, 2013/ [The New Indian Express](#)

**NEWS****Gov. for safety of girl students**

The rising crime against women, especially young girls in the state, prompted governor K. Sankaranarayanan to ask authorities of higher and technical education to ensure that women grievance cells in educational institutions were active. He further asked the authorities to make them accessible to the girls and encourage them to bring cases of molestation and sexual harassment to the notice of the concerned authorities

immediately. He was speaking at a sensitisation workshop on "Measures to Tackle the Menace of Sexual Crimes against Women" at SNDT Women's University, Mumbai on Saturday.

He said that apart from the government, parents, society and educational institutions have the responsibility to ensure that girls are safe and supported in their colleges, homes and in society.

Mr Sankaranarayanan asked educational institutions to ensure that women's grievance cells were active and functioning and also asked them to give confidence to girl students to report incidents like eve-teasing, taunting, use of inappropriate language, indecent gestures, inappropriate contacts etc. to the cell. He added that on the opening day of the college, all girl students should be assured of their safety and security and should be informed of the mechanism to redress their grievances relating to sexual harassment and violence.

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) organised the workshop at the instance of the ministry of human resource development. Varsha Gaikwad, minister for women and child development, D.P. Sawant, minister of state for higher and technical education, Dr S.S. Mantha, chairman of AICTE, Vasudha Kamat, vice-chancellor of SNDT Women's University and representatives of technical education institutions in the state were present in the workshop.

**Source:** 01 September, 2013/ [The Asian Age](#)

**National Symposium on 'Development and Nurturing of Emerging Interface between Medical Science and Biotechnology' held**

A National Symposium on "Development and Nurturing of Emerging Interface between Medical Science and Biotechnology" was held in Gauhati University today. The seminar was inaugurated by Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare.

Addressing the inaugural session Shri Azad said the history of biotechnology is several centuries' old, beginning with identification of organisms for production of cheese and bread, different kinds of alcohols, enzymes and many antibiotics over the years. Development of hybrid animals and plants for producing better varieties for milk or meat production are the examples of utilization of genetic re-combinations for commercial purposes. During recent years translational research has emerged as an important area for healthcare in general and the biotechnology and the pharmaceutical industries in particular. Over the years, biotechnology has become much more refined since we are now able to operate at the gene level. In case of healthcare applications, science has now moved from genetics





in which selected genes were targeted and studied to genomics in which the structure and function of the genes of a particular species can be studied simultaneously by using DNA chips. Molecular methods are proving to be very useful in diagnosis and tracking. A recent example has been the effective tracking of sources and control of polio by the Enterovirus Research Centre of ICMR, Mumbai.

Shri Azad said Government has been supportive, resulting in the rapid strides in biotechnology and medical products in the country. Sensing the need to nurture cutting edge research, the Government of India created a Department of Biotechnology two decades ago. Today, substantial financial support is being extended not only through Department of Biotechnology, but many other central agencies such as Department of Science and Technology (DST), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO), Ministry of Environment & Forests and Indian Council of Medical Research under the Department of Health Research of Health Ministry. These agencies are not only nurturing the interface between our national requirements and the biological sciences but also spurring innovations by making intense efforts on translational and implementation research. The process has received a greater impetus during the last three years with dedicated infrastructure to identify and translate leads into products, processes and technologies for improving the healthcare delivery services.

He said the people of North-East face peculiar problems because of its geography and long international borders with several countries which make human population vulnerable to transmission of many communicable diseases like influenza and vector borne diseases. The challenge posed by lung fluke in the North-East, a disease that is clinically confused with tuberculosis due to its signs and symptoms. The problem of meningitis outbreaks and increase in number of adult cases of Japanese Encephalitis in some districts of Assam has caught our attention. Recent data from the ICMR's National Cancer Registry Programme has been an eye opener showing a very high prevalence of mouth (hypopharynx) and upper gastrointestinal tract (oesophagus) cancer, which is several times higher when compared with other parts of country. For example, oesophagus cancer in East Khasi Hills is 14 fold higher than that in Delhi and 5 fold higher than that in Dibrugarh in Assam. This problem of clustering of cancers in East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Kamrup District of

Assam deserves special attention and research programmes are being planned to understand the specific causes to mount an effective response.

Shri Azad said ICMR is taking steps to set up advanced centres in different states of North East which will be coordinated by its Regional Institute at Dibrugarh. A Multi-disciplinary research unit has been established in Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh. Laboratories have been approved for Guwahati, Assam and Agartala, Tripura and planning for establishing ICMR Centres at Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh is at an advanced stage. The Health Ministry will do its utmost to ensure coordination with DBT, DST, DRDO and other science departments to get the maximum benefits from improving the medical and life-sciences research scenario and its consequent impact on medical education and patient care in Assam and other North Eastern states.

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



### **Oracle to enhance IT skills of teachers, students**

UP government has decided to launch a pilot project with US-based software and hardware company Oracle in Noida to enhance IT skills of teachers and students in four government inter-colleges in Noida and Gautam Budh University in Greater Noida.

Company officials, led by Ajay Kapoor, director, Oracle Education Initiative, met senior officials of Industry, Technical Education, Secondary Education and Vocational Education Departments Monday and proposed to extend the project to rest of the state.

The company has proposed to provide Oracle software to assist, train teachers in latest IT-enabled education tools, prepare IT courses and arrange guest lectures.

"We have decided to give them the opportunity to work in four government inter-colleges in Noida and also for Gautam Budh University," Principal Secretary, Industry, Surya Pratap Singh said.

**Source:** 03 September, 2013/ [The Indian Express](#)

### **1.45L professional seats vacant this year**

As the 2013 admissions in technical professional colleges closed, it became evident that expansion in the sector took place without checks on reality or scientific projections. A total of 1.45 lakh seats are unfilled as new colleges have applied to start operations.

The slowdown in enrolment has intensified over time. Vacant seats have risen 30% from 1.12 lakh last year.



Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan has set up a 20-member committee headed by Institute of Chemical Technology vice-chancellor G D Yadav to list reasons for the vacancies, suggest a solution, state how quality can be enhanced and suggest which courses must be stopped.

Vacancies in electronics and telecommunication have few takers and nearly 100 colleges have vacancies ranging from 30% to 90%.

Among the biggest concerns is the quality of teaching staff and curricula updated to industry requirements. Many colleges rely on visiting faculty and teachers often do not have prerequisite PhDs.

Rangan Banerjee, Forbes Marshall Chair Professor in the Department of Energy Science and Engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay, who mapped engineering education in 2006, realized no agency centrally tracked the number of engineers India was producing.

"Engineering education was ramped up at an unsustainable rate. Quality was not maintained," he said.

For other streams, experts said students had become cautious about quality they want to join. "The slowdown in industry is also to be blamed for drop in enrolment, especially in MBA courses," a college principal said.

Directorate of Technical Education chairman S K Mahajan said the state had to come up with a clear policy.

The All-India Council for Technical Education no more approves opening and closing down of colleges after a Supreme Court order.

"Maharashtra must set up a technical university. Most big states have it, but our state's finance department claims there are no funds," said a source.

Programme	No. of institutes		Total seat intake		Vacancy	
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
Engineering	365	363	1,54,827	1,48,294	52,400	41,603
MBA	411	409	45,997	45,441	17,740	12,800
Diploma engg	483	441	1,73,802	1,54,436	59,802	51,050
MCA	146	145	13,385	13,350	9,932	4,080
2nd year MCA	145	NA	7,942	NA	2,499	NA
Bpharm	153	149	9,955	9,712	1,558	972
DPharm	196	193	11,136	11,899	682	1,086
Hmct	9	NA	470	NA	143	NA
Total	1,908	1,700	4,17,514	3,83,132	1,44,756	1,11,591

(Source: DTE, NA is not applicable)

**Source:** 04 September, 2013/ [The Times of India](#)

### IIT, Taiwan varsity sign Mandarin deal

Inaugurating the Taiwan education programme to teach Mandarin for students of IIT-Madras on Wednesday, Tien Chung-Kwang, ambassador, Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre, said that a mere 500 students from India pursue various courses in Taiwan and the country has thrown open lot of opportunities for Indian students.

"We had a meeting in Delhi this week to study the feasibility for economic cooperation with India. IIT-Madras is the fourth institute in India where we have started the Taiwan programme," he said.

IIT-Madras and National TsingHua University (NTHU) in Taiwan signed an MoU on Wednesday to promote Mandarin among Indian students, and to facilitate better understanding between higher education institutions of both the countries. Taiwan education programme is co-funded by NTHU.

"This initiative will contribute to strengthening IITM's teaching and research programmes on China studies," Professor Bhaskar Ramamurthi, director, IIT-Madras said.

Lih J. Chen, president of National TsingHua University, said in the past decade, more number of outstanding Indian institutions of higher learning are making an impact on the human resource demands of Taiwan's academic institutions and high-technology industries. In particular, IIT campuses, of which Madras chapter is one of the outstanding ones, he noted

**Source:** 05 September, 2013/ [Deccan Chronicle](#)

### Foreign universities shrink courses to woo students

As the crumbling rupee makes Indian students reconsider their overseas campus plans, universities in some countries have started introducing new scholarships and flexible academic options to keep the flow from India going.

From this year, many institutions in New Zealand will allow students to opt for 'condensed' master's programmes. "They will have to cover the same content in a shorter time. Students signing up for a two-year masters course may be allowed to complete it in 12 to 18 months," said Ziena Jalil, regional director, South Asia for Education New Zealand.

Many Australian institutions also offer this option. Students may be allowed to apply for credit subject exemption based on recognition of prior learning if they have studied the same or similar courses earlier at an appropriate level. Others may be allowed to put in longer work days to complete the credits required. In Australia, students are allowed to forego their holidays (like the three-month Christmas break covering December, January and February) to complete the course at one stretch.

"The advantage lies in reduction of subjects of study, fees and time taken to complete the course. In some cases, you will not have to pay for courses

exempted, while a condensed course means a shorter stay overseas resulting in lesser expenses," said Robert Dlinger, owner and director of overseas education agent Dlinger Consultants. The understanding is that students who complete their courses earlier can start paying off their debts earlier.

In the US, Concordia University, New York, which has partnered with Women's Christian College in Chennai for an American Transfer Programme, allows students to get an American degree in three-and-a-half years instead of the usual four years, and a PG degree in 4.5 years instead of the usual six years.

In the UK, so far there has been no condensed course as most masters programmes are of much shorter duration than elsewhere, said representatives of UK universities. "But if the scenario from last month (if the rupee continues to fall) persists, than we may have to look at scholarships to encourage students to apply," said Vanivijay Yalla, India representative of Anglia Ruskin University in the UK.

Some have started announcing new scholarships. Aggressively marketing their courses at the New Zealand education fair that has been going to Indian cities since last week, representatives said that universities will offer all international PhD students the same fees for domestic New Zealand students. Germany has started a new study scholarship for architecture students looking to complete a course of extension studies without gaining a formal degree or qualification and those who want to complete a master's degree in the country.

**Source:** 06 September, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### Tripura is now the most literate state in India

India's northeastern state of Tripura achieved the first position in literacy with 94.65 percent, beating Kerala (93.91 percent), Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar announced in Agartala on Sunday.

"Tripura jumped to first position among the states of the country in literacy from the 12th position in the 2001 census and the fourth position in the 2011 census," Sarkar said at a function on the occasion of International Literacy Day.

Sarkar said that after Tripura attained 87.75 percent literacy in the 2011 census, a government survey was conducted by the eight district magistrates in August 2012 which found that only 131,634 people of the state's 37 lakh people, including those aged 50 and above, were illiterate.

"Over 8,254 voluntary literacy workers (VLW) have worked tremendously with full dedication under

8,152 adult literacy centres to make the leftover (131,634 people) unlettered people literate," the chief minister said.

Over 85 master trainers have supervised the work of the VLWs, who have worked at the village and habitation levels. Anganwadi workers under the social welfare department have also assisted the VLWs in their endeavour.

"The final evaluation of the neo-literate people was conducted across the state August 10-25 under the supervision of the (Kolkata-based) Indian Statistical Institution (ISI)," the chief minister said, adding that the state's literacy had now risen to 94.65 percent from the 87.75 percent in the 2011 census.

The state government felt, Sarkar said, that after the final report of the ISI, the state's literacy would cross 96 percent.

According to the 2011 census, literacy level is 93.91 percent in Kerala and 91.58 percent in Mizoram, among the most literate states in the country. The national literacy rate, according to the 2011 census, is 74.04 percent.

The Tripura success story is attributed to the involvement of local government bodies, including gram panchayats, NGOs and local clubs under the close supervision of the State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) headed by the chief minister.

Former census director Dilip Acherjee, who has also held the post of school education department secretary in the state, told a news agency: "In Tripura, increase of female literacy is better than their male counterparts."

"The literacy rate of females during the period of 2001 and 2011 census rose from 64.91 to 83.15 percent, with an increase of 18.24 percent, while in the case of men the increase was just 11.18 percent -- from 81 to 92.18 percent," Acherjee said. It was under Acherjee's supervision that the 2011 census was conducted in Tripura.

While Mizoram and Tripura are among the toppers in literacy in India, another northeastern state, Arunachal Pradesh (66.95 percent), is placed second-lowest in literacy in the country, just above Bihar, which recorded the least literacy of 63.82 percent.

**Source:** 09 September, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

### Foreign varsities get independent access to India

The government has decided to allow foreign universities to operate independently in India, set up campuses and offer degrees without having a local partner—a move that finally opens the gates for foreign educational institutions seeking to establish a presence in the country.

To foreign universities, the move presents an opportunity to tap a country with a population of 1.2 billion. To Indians (at least those who can afford it), it is an opportunity to receive quality education without leaving India (and without paying in dollars). And to India, it could mean significant foreign direct investment.

The department of industrial policy and promotion (DIPP) and the department of economic affairs (DEA) have agreed to allow overseas universities to operate as so-called Section 25 or non-profit companies under the newly passed Companies Act, the human resource development (HRD) ministry said on Tuesday.

Companies registered under Section 25 of India's Companies Act cannot distribute profit or dividends to members, which means that the foreign universities cannot repatriate money—a constraint that was criticised by at least one expert.

Several foreign universities have been keen to enter India to tap a higher educational market that is worth Rs.46,200 crore and expanding by 18% every year, according to *40 million by 2020*, a report from audit and consulting firm EY. They have been constrained by the need to do so through partnerships.

The Foreign Education Providers' Bill is still awaiting parliamentary approval. Tuesday's announcement, which is effectively an executive order, doesn't need to be approved by Parliament and could see a rush of foreign universities to enter India.

"The ministry had sought comments and observations of the department of industrial policy and promotion and the department of economic affairs on the rules. Both DIPP and DEA have supported the proposal," the HRD ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

Ministry officials said that the details are being vetted by the law ministry and an official notification will be published soon.

With the powers vested in it through the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, the ministry will allow foreign universities to set up campuses in India and award foreign degrees. Currently, a foreign university needs to join hands with a local education provider to offer courses and the degrees are not considered foreign degrees.

Under the proposed rules, foreign universities can set up campuses in India once they have been notified as 'foreign education provider' by UGC. An educational institution wishing to operate in India needs to be in the top 400 in one of three global rankings: the UK-based Times Higher Education Ranking; Quacquarelli Symonds ranking published

in UK again; and the China-based Shanghai Jiao Tong University rankings.

An HRD ministry official said that at least 20 foreign universities—mostly from US, followed by Australia and Canada—have expressed their desire to enter the market.

"Universities such as Duke University, California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and VirginiaTech are some of the names that have shown interest," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

*Mint* could not independently verify this. In September 2012, the University of Chicago Booth School of Business' deputy dean Robert H. Gertner told *Mint* that the school was exploring opportunities to open an executive education centre in India.

The degrees awarded by foreign universities in India will be considered foreign degrees and students holding these degrees need to get an equivalence certificate from the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), the HRD ministry said in its statement. These universities will also function under the UGC rules.

### *The profit motive*

A foreign university cannot repatriate money that it makes in India. And any university seeking entry to India must be accredited by bodies in its home country. "Quality control is key and we will build the safeguard mechanism with each of the universities," a second official in the HRD ministry said.

An expert was critical of these provisions. "On the one hand you are saying, we want top 400 institutes to come and on the other, you are not allowing them to repatriate surplus to the home campus. It's a fundamental problem. I think there is still an inherent trust deficit between the government and the (foreign) educational institutes," said [Pramath Sinha](#), founding dean of the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.

"They have to stop questioning everybody, at least the best of the institutes. This problem was there in the Bill and if they are retaining it in the executive order, it will be a huge drag," added Sinha, who is setting up a liberal arts university, India's first, in Haryana.

The two HRD ministry officials said enough changes have been made to make it attractive for foreign universities to enter India. The India campus will function as a branch campus of the parent, rather than as an independent campus. The universities will offer the same degree they are offering in their parent campus. And the ministry has reduced the deposit universities have to maintain with the ministry (and which they will forfeit in case of any violation) from Rs.50 crore to Rs.25 crore.



To be sure, it will not be easy for foreign universities to acquire land, especially in the context of India's new land acquisition law. "We will not facilitate the university in getting land at a concession. Anyway, procuring land and other infrastructural facilities in India will be way cheaper than in developed countries," said the first ministry official.

He added that there were still three things that would attract foreign universities to India: a huge education market and the young demography to grow that further; lower recruitment and research costs; and the opportunity to offer executive education programmes and consulting services to Indian companies.

The second official grandiosely described the ministry's move as "liberalizing the higher education space the way India economy was liberalized between 1991 and 1993".

Manish Sabharwal, the chief executive of staffing and training company TeamLease Services Pvt. Ltd, said that India remains an attractive destination for education. In many countries there are two problems, he added—demography and cost—but in India both the issues are in the right place. The problem, he said, is in the details.

Anton Muscatelli, vice-chancellor of the UK-based University of Glasgow, too stressed the importance of details. The Indian government's willingness to allow universities to come into India should certainly boost the entry of foreign universities, but the details will be important, he said. His own university, he added, has several partnerships in India and will continue to work with strong Indian partners.

Once it is notified, the ministry's order will render irrelevant the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill 2010, a brainchild of former HRD minister Kapil Sibal, who is currently in charge of the telecom and law ministries.

**Source:** 10 September, 2013/ [Live Mint](#)

### **UNESCO, Nigeria to Strengthen Ties in Education**

The United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is partnering with the Federal Government of Nigeria in the area of education, science and technology, youth empowerment and gender equality.

This was made known when the Director-General of UNESCO, Mrs. Irina Bokova, paid a courtesy visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Abuja yesterday.

Speaking during the occasion, Mrs. Bokova pledged the organisation's support to President Jonathan's transformation agenda in the area of sustainable development and peace.

Also, the DG noted that UNESCO's partnership with FG is geared towards encouraging child education; establish vocational education for skill acquisition and youth empowerment in order to circumvent youth restiveness in the country.

"We will adopt the mid-term strategy of the UNESCO organisation of course; Nigeria is interested in the cooperation in terms of education, youth empowerment, gender equality, science and research.

I have pledged our support for UNESCO to the transformation agenda of the president in all the areas of sustainable development, maintenance of peace and then of course is to share our delight that tomorrow (Thursday), we will open our new office; UNESCO office of West Africa here in Abuja. I hope this is going to be a strong office and we can work also closely with Nigeria in the area of quality education and in science and innovation and of course culture because we know that is a great and diverse country.

"I will put a strong emphasis on education, the ambitious program at 2020 in order to make education one of the drivers of competitiveness and transformation of the country, making it the real leader in science innovation and research.

When I think about education, I want to emphasize two things, first, access to education, to give all the boys and girls access to education." She said.

In her response, the Minister of State 1 for Foreign Affairs, Prof. Viola Onwuliri stressed the importance of the establishment of UNESCO office on West African in Abuja, adding that such move will further strengthen UNESCO's programme in education and science and technology in the country.

The Minister said, "With this visit, she is going to open a regional office of UNESCO in Abuja, an office that will take care of West Africa and even beyond. We are really very happy about that and a lot of issues are going to be discussed in the area of strengthening our educational system.

She mentioned a whole lot of things like areas of cultural relationship and science to which it's all what UNESCO is all about.

She is working very hard to further the course of UNESCO, relating with countries and helping countries in dealing with issues; so that through education, science and culture, they can better confront security and other challenges."

**Source:** 12 September, 2013/ [Leadership](#)



### Steps to improve education quality

Five IITs feature in the top 400 list of the latest QS world ranking universities. That no other Indian university has found a place in the top 4% of the world's universities is shocking.

India must build human capital to reap the demographic dividend and, more important, compete in a knowledge-intensive global economy. Radical steps are needed to improve the quality of our universities across disciplines and at all levels.

The expansion of higher education calls for a massive increase in investment and raising the efficacy of public spending in education. More support is needed for state universities that operate on thin budgets.

Industry too should offer generous grants and fund research in universities to expand access and ensure world-class production and delivery of products and services. QS rankings show poor research citations for Indian faculty. Clearly, we need to integrate teaching and research. Poor remuneration turns away talent.

Teachers must get better pay and research-active faculty should be offered functional autonomy as well. True, the cost of education would go up when private universities try to bridge the demand-supply gap. So, student loans must become cheaper. Letting the better class of foreign universities enter will help integration with the global knowledge system.

Unlike India, some universities in Asia have continued to move up in the rankings. The National University of Singapore, for example, has become the region's highest-ranked institution. Reforming education has to begin with schools, of course.

They need teacher accountability and commitment, investment in facilities and better pedagogy. And all of them call for decentralisation of school administration and active involvement of local communities in school management.

**Source:** 13 September, 2013/ [The Economic Times](#)

### Corruption undermining higher education in India

People of India are deeply concerned about the form and extent of corruption in almost all walks of life. What is particularly alarming is the conspicuous corruption in higher education undermining the foundations of society. It has become so pervasive, making it difficult to assess the root causes.

The general perception, however, is that the increasing degree of political interference in higher

education is a dominant factor. It occurs in many insidious forms, making it appear almost legitimate.

For instance, the state legislations on appointment of Vice-chancellors (V-C). In a few states, the chancellor, who is generally the governor, is required to consult the state government in selecting the name of a person from the panel submitted by the search committee. It is an open secret in some states that the ministers demand from the persons in the panel to shell out a few crores to be appointed as V-C. Currently, in one state the amount ranges from Rs 5 crore for smaller universities to Rs 50 crore for large universities with hundreds of affiliated colleges.

V-C aspirants accept the bait as the amount could later be collected from the affiliated colleges and from the various appointments and promotions in the university. It is sad that in several instances the chancellor/governor is also known to indulge in such collections through intermediaries. It is not difficult to see the spiralling effect of such a practice deeply penetrating every level of the academia.

For aided colleges, the state education ministers delay the sanction of faculty positions against existing vacancies till the college managements pay up the amount on the basis of number of vacancies. The logic is the managements should collect the amount from the selected teachers. The teacher in turn would engage in all forms of illicit practices to recoup the sum from the students and others. This is one reason for many competent persons not choosing to apply to some of the aided colleges.

Likewise, stories about demands made on PhD scholars by research guides sound like fiction but, unfortunately, are too widespread to be ignored. Besides demanding sexual favours, thesis supervisors and examiners extract sizeable sums from the helpless students before final approval.

Another cause for concern is the corruption in granting approval for new institutions. Many worthless institutions had obtained the status of deemed universities through bribing. So is the case with technical institutions.

Of late, the establishment of private universities under state legislatures has become a lucrative venue for huge illicit collections in some states. Many such universities tend to resist any form of regulation to maintain quality and standards of academic programmes. Hopefully, the proposed mandatory accreditation process will help raise the credibility of academic programmes of such institutions.

These are matters that need urgent attention at a time when the higher education system is poised for a steep growth. Fortunately, such undesirable



practices are confined only to a few states in the country, though the number of institutions and persons affected are significantly large. In general, the institutions under the purview of the Central government are largely, though not entirely, free from such atrocious practices. Examples of several Central, state and private institutions which have demonstrated their ability to function unaffected in such a vicious environment can be emulated by others.

Fortunately, the regulatory authorities concerned with higher education at the Central level and in some of the progressive states are conscious of the prevailing malady and hopefully some of their initiatives will bear fruit.

**Source:** 15 September, 2013/ [The New Indian Express](#)

### ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

#### Higher education ignored

There has been too much focus on primary education.

Going by the reams of data and research material on primary education, it would seem that higher education is a poor cousin of primary education in India. Or, that it is considered merely a secondary part of a process and would take care of itself, if the first were fixed.

There is no argument that a solid primary education edifice would make the progression to secondary and higher levels smoother.

The ASER Survey 2011, an all-India representative survey of school children in rural areas, found that only 58 per cent of children enrolled in class three to five could read a class one text. Less than half — at 47 per cent — were able to do simple two-digit subtraction.

And only half of the children in classes five to eight could use a calendar.

So it is obvious that we have to not only scale and expand the reach of education to underserved areas of the country, but to establish clearly achievable benchmarks of quality outcomes to ensure educational consistency up the chain.

#### Need for perspective

But that is where the relationship ends, because we have seen that primary and higher education are two distinct ends of a process, each beset with its unique characteristics, limitations and possibilities.

Higher education indicators in India prove conclusively that this correlation is misplaced and can be singularly damaging to the country's education landscape.

Startling facts abound to prove this point. India's gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education is just around 18 per cent compared to China's 30 per cent, the US's 83 per cent and South Korea's 91 per cent.

A Nasscom-McKinsey study states that only one out of 10 Indian students with degrees in humanities, and one out of four engineering graduates are employable.

Worse, only 30 per cent of universities, 16 per cent of colleges and 10 per cent of management institutes are accredited in the country.

Clearly, the emphasis we have given higher education is way behind optimal.

It could be argued, perversely indeed, that in the pursuit of fixing our multilevel, multidimensional problems with primary education we have almost sacrificed higher education at the altar.

However, this cannot go on and although there are signs of both worry and repair, we need to do a lot more, more quickly, to have any impact.

To begin with, we have to place policy in perspective with reality. Education as a right is constitutionally enshrined but the delivery of this enshrinement is stunted, owing to excessive state control at almost every level — a clear case of intention thwarted by effort!

#### PRIVATE involvement

There is, therefore, an urgent need to unshackle the system and allow private partnership on a massive scale to energise the sector and bring the fruits of education to a mass of India's underserved learners at both ends of the market.

Conversely, while the market for higher education is growing, the supply is constricted due to paucity of quality teachers. Academicians must be highly paid but in an environment of accountability.

Allowing universities and institutions the freedom to scale up or down their remunerative models in accordance with their market strengths would streamline the current mismatch in the teaching profession and give a fillip to deserved, merit-based employment to teachers.

Similarly, there is a contradiction in terms that while we argue for a freer environment for institutions to exist, a number of those that are already existent do not conform to state accreditation norms and remain unrecognised. This is further complicated by excessive state-administered regulation.

#### Accreditation methods

Two things need to be put in place: a simplified template of regulations, and a trusted and simple accreditation methodology outside the clutches of established bureaucratic norms.

If teachers can be outsourced and allowed to teach on contract, so can a qualified third party accreditation system be employed to allow for an easier, faster and more transparent validation model.

This would release one of the biggest bottlenecks in higher education delivery and at the same time force 'fly by night' institutions out of the market.

India's youth needs an equal chance to compete for itself globally. Skill-based, relevant and contemporary curriculum is, therefore, the need of the hour.

New possibilities are emerging in the employment market. Our colleges and institutions must respond to these new developments quickly, nimbly.

Old ideas in higher education must make way for new initiatives because technology based, IT-enabled education will define the contours of the next decade. India must be ready for this challenge with concrete plans to foster a new culture of higher education policies.

Today, owing to the huge demand-supply gap, there is a need for creation of 1,500 colleges and universities to reach a respectable Growth Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 30 per cent. But higher education is a bullish sector.

**Source:** 03 September, 2013/ [The Hindu Business Line](#)

### **State of education: Untrained, underpaid teachers, students with declining learning ability**

On Teacher's Day on Thursday, the status of education 2012 report brought out by an NGO paints a sorry picture of India's education system. Sample these: 53% of Class 5 students were unable to read Class 2-level text while 47% of Class 5 children could not solve simple two-digit subtraction problems. Ironically, 2012 was declared as the year of mathematics in India.

India is counted among the world's biggest public-funded school education systems and has around 5.8 million teachers in 1.3 million schools. However, only 75% of the teachers are trained, a drastic fall from 2008 when the figure stood at 90%.

The study holds this lack of training responsible to a large

extent for the falling levels of learning among students." There are 8.1 lakh untrained teachers in the country, with four states -- Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal -- accounting for 72% of them," a planning commission report on the 12th five year-plan said. This number does not include a large number of ad-hoc teachers who are virtually running primary schools in many of these

states.

Around 40% teachers in primary schools in educationally-backward states such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and UP have been appointed on temporary basis. Many of them have studied till higher secondary and draw a paltry salary of about R5, 000 to R7,000 per month. On an average, three teachers are in-charge of five classes at the primary level as against the Right to Education norm of at least one teacher per class. Around 10% of schools with more than 150 students have just one teacher for everything – administration, teaching and ensuring healthy mid-day meals.

"A highly motivated and skilled teacher can bring a lot of difference to the life of a child. Education is not only about text books but also about a child's ability to think and innovate," said Madhav Chavan, chairman of the NGO, Pratham. To improve education standards, experts said the government should consider senior secondary schools as training grounds for primary school teachers and skill up gradation. Teachers' skill set needs to be tested regularly and students should participate in teachers' performance appraisals. Higher salaries and permanent jobs should be used as motivational tools.

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

### **Central law needed to monitor higher tech, med education: SC**

The Supreme Court Friday asserted the "extreme necessity" for a central law to rein in unethical practices in higher technical and medical education in the country to keep up the standards of education and ensure students do not become the source to fund such institutions.

A Bench of Justices K S Radhakrishnan and A K Sikri expressed concern over mushrooming medical, engineering and pharmaceutical colleges, compromising on quality of education in name of autonomy. The court called upon for "serious introspection" with regard to state of affairs, particularly medical education.

"Private medical educational institutions are always demanding more number of seats in their colleges even though many of them have no sufficient infrastructural facilities, clinical materials, faculty members, etc. Reports appear every now and then that many of the private institutions conducting medical colleges are demanding lakhs and sometimes crores of rupees for MBBS and post-graduate admission in their respective colleges," pointed out the Bench.



"Central Government, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Central Bureau of Investigation or the intelligence wing have to take effective steps to undo such unethical practices or else self-financing institutions will turn to be students financing institutions," it cautioned.

The court's observation is significant in the wake of the pending review petition by the government and the MCI against the scrapping of the common medical entrance test. The majority verdict had ruled in favour of the autonomy for the medical colleges, particularly minority institutions, but the dissenting judge Justice Anil R Dave had highlighted the necessity of having a common test.

The court's observations came as it dismissed a petition by private Rohilkhand Medical College and Hospital, Bareilly, challenging the decision of MCI on July 13 this year for increased intake of students for MBBS students.

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

### Standards compromised

A majority of educational institutes in Rajasthan fall way below benchmarks set by State education regulators, finds a study

Most of the higher and technical educational institutions in Rajasthan fall short of the standards prescribed by regulators such as the State government, the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE). There is a general lack of awareness and concern towards quality issues as well as accreditation of courses.

With these findings, a recent study titled 'Innovative applied research in technical and higher education in Rajasthan' has recommended institutional reforms ensuring collaboration between industry and academia for research and coming together of institutions for creating new knowledge at the intersection of existing disciplines. The report was submitted to the Rajasthan State Planning Board by president of Manipal University, Jaipur, Prof. Sandeep Sancheti, at a round table conference on 'A roadmap for higher education in Rajasthan' recently organised by the Board in collaboration with the Central University of Rajasthan in Pushkar.

The report is based on a comprehensive survey carried out in 75 institutions of higher learning over a period of six months. The areas in which the appraisal was made included industry-institute interaction, societal connections, funding, creativity and innovation, mentoring and promotion, scientific research, technical education system brand and stakeholders' groups supporting the institutions.

Prof. Sancheti said that talented students from the State choose their destinations elsewhere for fulfilling their career ambitions because most of the higher educational institutions do not enjoy any direct or indirect branding or any effective partnership with reputed organisations. "The benchmarks prescribed by various agencies are not followed in right spirit so as to raise the bar to the best of national or global level."

Private universities functioning in the desert State are often family-driven, rather than professionally driven, and lack the right set of experts in the governing boards. With such leadership and control (or the lack of it), even with the best of intents, they are unable to achieve the desired level of outcomes and performance.

Barring a few cases, Rajasthan does not have educational institutions set up or run by big industrial houses. The local entrepreneurs with limited financial capabilities often start the institutions, which do not enjoy good financial health and most of the revenue is consumed in paying salary to the staff and meeting other essential requirements. The same is the case with the government-run institutions, according to the study. Research is generally not promoted or not considered to be an integral part of academic activities. While the investment of time and money in research activities is meagre, the provisions for recognising brilliance in research or funding the State-driven project are also missing.

There are hardly any institutions with high standards in the State awarded by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) and other agencies such as ABET, CII, NASSCOM and ISO.

The mushrooming of educational institutes from only one private engineering college in 2001 to 134 in 2013 and 33 private universities in a matter of eight years speaks volumes about rise of demand, states the study.

Fifty per cent of the surveyed institutions admitted that they have no grants or finance to carry out research, while the other half agreed that they have funds only partially to meet the research purpose. Besides, most of the courses run in the institutions are stereotyped and lack multi-disciplinary approach.

"A large number of institutes are unitary type and they are unable to groom students in a holistic manner and impart knowledge of associated fields essential for their survival in profession in the later years," said Prof. Sancheti. Eighty per cent of the institutions surveyed admitted that they have no

professional development fund for faculty development.

Experts at the round table conference made several recommendations for improving the higher education scenario in the State and laid emphasis on augmenting investment in research and supporting innovations and entrepreneurship. Planning Board member and chairman, working group on education, Prof.

Ashok Bapna, said youth must be trained for developing necessary skills which can help them get meaningful employment. "To harness demographic dividend of the young population, we need an education system that can deliver quality and create skilled and industry-ready workforce."

The desert State, thus, faces an enormous challenge for bringing the standard of higher education on a par with the benchmarks at the national level. Clearly, the challenge is compounded by the factors such as excessive burden on teachers, limited opportunities, inadequate resources and other lucrative career options, which make it difficult to retain the faculty of high quality.

**Source:** 12 September, 2013/ [The Hindu](#)

### RESOURCE

#### **Do away with PPP model, follow RTE Act: educationists**

Activists and educationists on Thursday said they were against further deepening of the current multi-layered schooling system in the country.

Under this system, there are schools catering to various sections of society. The Union HRD ministry has proposed the setting up of model schools under this system, through public-private partnership (PPP) models.

However, activists and educationists at a meeting on Thursday said this system needed to be done away with and called for a State-funded common schooling system and proper implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

The meeting was organised by the Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation (HRF) and RTE Forum Tamil Nadu.

V. Vasanthi Devi, former vice-chancellor, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University said universal education was achievable only through a common schooling system and that the PPP model would eventually lead to the model schools going into private hands.

Ossie Fernandes, director, HRF, said they had passed resolutions demanding that the PPP model be abolished, the Supreme Court verdict on exemption of minority institutions from some provisions of the RTE be reviewed by a full bench of the SC, the RTE Act be strictly implemented in unaided schools and schools be monitored by an independent body.

and conversion of government schools into English-medium ones in the State be stopped.

"A common statement will be signed by the delegates and handed over to the State and Central government in a few days," he said.

Educationist S.S. Rajagopal, Prince Gajendra Babu, general secretary, State Platform for Common School System, Prof. Arunan, honorary president, Tamil Nadu Progressive Writers and Artists Association and S. Arumainathan, State president, TN Federation of Students' Parents Welfare Association were among those who participated in the consultation.

**Source:** 06 September, 2013/ [The Hindu](#)

#### **What Young India actually wants**

Community Youth Collective has galvanised youth into preparing a 'unmanifesto' to be presented to political parties ahead of the 2014 general elections.

One of the easily forgotten themes of debates that have surrounded the upcoming elections is the lack of youth participation and absence of genuine representatives in Parliament.

Indian history has witnessed many young people leading the country towards independence; both Gandhi and Nehru became politically active at a young age.

However, over the last few decades, our enthusiasm seems to have been muted, arguably due to deep-rooted corruption and government insensitivity towards various social issues.

Although it is true that the biggest success of our democracy is attributed to its representative character, the striking absence of the youth in the political arena has been largely overlooked.

A youth representation (age group 25-40 years) of only 6.3 per cent in the current Lok Sabha, even though 50 per cent of the population lies in that age bracket, can't be called parliamentary presence? Can it? What is it that "Young India" actually wants?

As a part of an endeavour to create spaces for youth where they can engage in politics all the year round in every twist and turn of the political story and not just on voting day, an event titled, My Space; My Unmanifesto was held on August 19 at



Vishwa Yuva Kendra, New Delhi. We've all heard of 'manifesto' but what is an 'unmanifesto'?

"Just like Humpty Dumpty's un-birthdays in Alice and Wonderland, which are celebrated throughout the year except on the day of the birthday, we want young people to participate in democracy all year around, not just on the day of the elections and create a participative democracy rather than a representative one," says Arjun Shekhar, Founder, Community Youth Collective (CYC).

CYC along with around 26 other national youth organisations galvanised the youth online, and on the ground, into preparing 'Unmanifesto', the manifesto of the youth, to be presented to the political parties ahead of the 2014 general elections. Through workshops and online dialogues that were initiated in another event in February, 2013, they successfully collected thousands of young voices, wherein young people have spoken clearly and emphatically about what they would like political parties to promise in the coming Delhi elections and next year in the Lok Sabha elections, if they want to secure their votes.

Besides the 5,000 promises collected (on ground and online), there were about 600 young people present at the event to add to the list. An interim list of the top ten wishes of youth was presented to parliamentarians — Meenakshi Natrajan, MP, Congress, and Manvendra Singh, BJP.

Along with Amitabh Behar, ED, National Foundation for India, who moderated the panel discussion, the parliamentarians were engaged in a deep dialogue with young people who were a part of this campaign.

"This process is not to do away with political parties. We have to collaborate with them and they are not our enemies," Amitabh said.

Though there is a palpable sense of frustration about government inaction, young people who strongly believe that the only yardstick for participation cannot be representation alone thronged the venue.

For them it's not about who gets elected and how, but about actions that are taken on behalf of the people and for the people. It is as if they instinctively understand that their elected representatives have no major role to play, other than smiling through billboards that greet us on festivals.

"Mandate 35 per cent reservation of youth in legislative assemblies and cabinet equivalent bodies along with 33 per cent reservation for women," said Dibya Ranjan Mishra, who presented the young people's manifesto to Mr. Manvendra Singh.

### *Access to education*

One of the highest voted promises that young people seek from their leaders is that integrated India gets educated for a better and brighter future.

One of the strong demands that featured high on young India's list is the allocation of 5 per cent of GDP on education.

Further, they feel that vocational training, strengthening life skills and job placement should be mandatory in every institute for higher education. Initiating an 'Employment Guarantee Scheme' that provides respectable work to young people right in their home towns is one of the suggested ways that can possibly transform 'big' dreams into reality.

On burning issues such as reforming our education system, the youth wish to voice their aspirations; they want to actively collaborate with the governing bodies to create better education facilities and a more student-friendly education system.

They also believe that reservation/quota should include financial criteria along with caste.

The MPs promised to carry these youth voices to their respective manifesto committees.

A strong advocate of youth leadership, Ms. Meenakshi Natrajan said, "I have learnt a lot from this process. And I approach such spaces with humility with an open mind. I feel development is about uplifting the last person in the line. Sometimes people think our connection is through problems — they demand and we solve these problems for them. But in reality I am not here to solve others' problems. I am a collaborator in a project in which you have to solve your own problems. The role of an MP is about legislation and not execution. I'll ensure that we have an interface between the youth and the manifesto committee."

Mr. Manvendra Singh agreed, "Some of these promises are familiar but others are new to me and have opened my eyes to some of the issues we should be focusing on."

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

### **CBSE on a mission to banish rote education**

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) with Chairman Vineet Joshi at the helm is on a mission to veer the school education system away from a tendency to reward rote-learning.

Case in point is their implementation of the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system in 2009 despite fears expressed by school managements and parents alike that it would lead to laxity and deterioration of students' performances. Along with aggressively promoting



teacher training initiatives, the board will also focus on career counselling initiatives in the coming months, Mr. Joshi told *The Hindu* here on Tuesday.

In the city to attend the handing-over ceremony of the donations collected by the CBSE schools in the State for the Uttarakhand Chief Minister's Relief Fund and to address teachers during a conclave organised by the Kerala CBSE School Management Association on Wednesday, Mr. Joshi said that the need to foster a demand for alternative courses will be underlined when he meets educators here.

There are a number of novel electives the board now offers such as legal studies, human rights and gender, theatre in education, mass media and production and retail, but the number of takers in Kerala has been nil, he said.

"Naturally schools would not offer unless parents express interest. Here, most parents are exposed to options such as engineering and medicine at the high school level and hence are a little apprehensive about exploring others even though their child might have a clear aptitude for it. We need to provide all the right information to parents through career counselling centres in schools. The pilot project of a students support centre we plan to establish in Uttar Pradesh may also be replicated in other States based on how well it fares," Mr. Joshi said.

He also spoke about the Students Global Aptitude Test (SGAI) which, for the first time, is being held in November this year for students of Class X in a bid to give more time for them to decide on the stream they should choose in Class XI.

"There are no straightforward questions on the subject matter but the test is based on psychometric principles that would help them make an informed decision. So far, only around 3 lakh out of 12 lakh students have taken the test and so we have a long way to go in terms of reaching out to more students," he said.

For such measures that require spreading awareness among students and parents, teacher training must be improved, Mr. Joshi stressed. In fact, this objective could have a positive ripple effect on other activities of the board such as their new international curriculum, CBSE-i.

Among 500 schools that have applied in the country, 70 schools were approved by the selection committee, said Mr. Joshi, who added that they were being restrictive. Management and teachers were judged carefully as they do not want the syllabus to be used as an excuse for simply raising the fees.

"We are positioning it as an alternative for the international baccalaureate or the Cambridge

IGCSE. It is the teaching methodology that differentiates it. It is activity-based, stresses on IT skills and even includes provisions to weave into the syllabus current developments that would be a great connector for students," Mr. Joshi said.

He also pointed out how the first batch of students that passed out of Class XII after undergoing the CCE system had actually fared markedly better than the previous batches.

"It is still too early to comment, but it seems as though the reduced mental load in Class X actually helped them excel. Again, we have a long way to go in terms of improving the teaching practices in this field as well," he said.

**Source:** 11 September, 2013/ [The Hindu](#)



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