



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 2011. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

Apeejay Stya University announces admission for the session 2011-12

Apeejay Stya University is offering diverse catalogue of technical, scientific, management and liberal arts courses for the academic session 2011-12. 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, and SAT II.

For more, visit: www.apeejay.edu/asu

Get Involved

International Two-Year Teaching Fellowship

The Apeejay Stya University invites applications for its two-year teaching fellowship in India. Applicants would be based in Sohna, Gugoan, Haryana India, and take up to three classes in the subject of their proficiency. Fellows would gain experience in teaching in another culture, within an extremely innovative university system.

Please visit our website for more:

<http://apeejay.edu/asu/getinvolved/fellowships.php>

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**No excellence sans equity in education**

At a recent conference in the Capital, Mr Kapil Sibal, Union Human Resource Development Minister, said his vision was to bring university education to the doorsteps of students, especially in small towns, with use of technology.

He was talking about virtual universities — connecting Indian universities with the best in the world by using technology. But good intentions aren't enough. The ground reality is quite different.

Two recent books – 'Quality, Access and Social Justice in Higher Education' by Mr K.N. Panikkar, Mr Thomas Joseph, Ms Geetha G and Mr M.A Lal and 'Emerging Trends in Higher Education in India' by Mr K.N. Panikkar and Mr M Bhaskaran Nair – bring out the gaping holes in our policies and implementation of reforms in higher education.

Both the volumes, published by Pearson India, contain essays by eminent scholars, educationists and grassroots practitioners, with most of them almost unanimous on one point – excellence cannot be attained without equity. And this can be achieved only if there is strong political will.

A case in point is Kerala. The State has the highest literacy rate in the country, but higher education standards were found to be wanting. Prof Panikkar points out that with various initiatives such as setting up of the Higher Education Council, the State Government has successfully introduced choice-based credit and semester system at the under-graduate and post-graduate level.

And one big reason why this system is yielding dividends is that all the stakeholders – the State, the teaching community, the students and private participants – were involved at every stage of the modernisation process. As a result, enrolment in higher education in Kerala has seen significant growth. Against the national average of 8 per cent, Kerala has a record 18 per cent, though still not satisfactory.

Privatisation not the remedy

While it is a fact that globalisation has brought with it the need for greater excellence and skills, in India there are only a few such institutions, and those too are accessible only to a select few.

There is a view that the answer to all these ills is privatisation. Arguing against this is an essay by Jandhyala B.G. Tilak in the first book which draws attention to the fact that in India, the private system has actually worked in 'out-distancing' the public

Citing examples of some developed and developing countries, the essay contends that while private participation is desirable, privatisation is not. He concludes that only countries with strong public higher education system have developed economically and socially.

Valuable insights

The essays in both the books offer valuable insights into the debates and challenges that the country faces in the sphere of higher education.

With the trouble brewing over the imposition of semester system in Delhi University, all stakeholders, especially the authorities and teachers could take a leaf out of these volumes to provide a meaningful future to students and make full use of the country's demographic advantage. As educationist, Prof Anita Rampal, rightly said recently, "We need to change the mindset that sees education merely in terms of employability".

Source: [The Hindu Business Line](#)

NEWS**Monitoring of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme**

To ensure effective implementation of the Mid-Day-Meal scheme, there is a detailed monitoring mechanism at the school, block, district, State and the National level. More than 10.59 crore children studying in classes I to VIII in 12.61 lakh Government, Government aided, local body and National Child Labour Project schools, in the country, are getting cooked and nutritious mid-day meals.

According to the reports of the State Governments, till 30th September 2010, 5,20,891 inspections have been carried out. Government of India Review Missions on Mid Day Meal Scheme comprising members from Central Government, State Government, UNICEF and office of Supreme Court Commissioner have reviewed the scheme in five States during 2009-11. In addition 36 independent Monitoring Institutes have been engaged with defined terms of reference to monitor and supervise the Scheme on a biannual basis. The Supreme Court Commissioners have also evaluated the scheme in six States of the country.

Source: [PIB/04-March, 2011](#)

Opening of IIITs

The Government has approved setting up 20 new Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) on Public Private Partnership (PPP) basis. As per the approved scheme, the Central Government, the Governments of the respective States where IIIT will be established, and industry will be stakeholders. The capital cost of each IIIT would be contributed in the ratio of 50:35:15 (57.5:35:7.5 in the North Eastern region) by the Central Government, the State Government, and industry respectively.

In addition, the State Governments will provide 50-100 acres of land, free of cost, for establishment of IIIT. The Central Government will also provide Rs.50.00 crore for faculty development programme and meet the recurring expenditure upto Rs. 10.00 crore during the first four years of setting up each IIIT.

Source: [PIB/04-March, 2011](#)

Reservation of Seats for EWS

The High Court of Delhi in its interim order had directed that the private schools of the capital, which have been allotted land by the government agencies, shall earmark at least 10 per cent of seats for admission of students belonging to the economically weaker sections and 5 per cent for wards of the staff of the schools.

As per Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009:

“all recognized unaided private schools imparting elementary education shall admit in class-I, to the extent of at least twenty-five per cent of the strength of that class, children belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and provide free and compulsory elementary education till its completion.

Source: [PIB/04-March, 2011](#)

'Principals to go back to class'

Principals of schools across India may soon head back to class under a national plan drafted by an expert panel set up by human resource development minister Kapil Sibal to train school administrators in modern leadership skills.

The panel, headed by National University for Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) Vice Chancellor R Govinda, has proposed a first-ever national programme and network of institutions dedicated to training school administrators.

A proposed National Programme for Leadership Training in School Education should be implemented by a national authority headed by the HRD minister, the panel has said in recommendations to the ministry, top government sources told HT.

The programme is to be implemented through a National Centre for Leadership Training in School Education supported by a network of similar institutes across the country, the report of the panel says.

The National Centre can be supported with five other regional centres to start with, but the network must be expanded to over 20 centres across India over a five year span, the panel has recommended.

The panel blueprint proposes a detailed 10-month course at the centres. “The blueprint is aimed at creating a cadre of school administrators trained in modern leadership skills, within five years,” a member of the expert panel said.

Sibal set up the panel last year after extensive meetings with school principals, and the minister is keen to put in place a national programme for training school administrators in skills that will allow them to lead their institutions into the future.

Source: [Hindustan times/06-March, 2011](#)

Reality check on foreign varsity Bill

Only 21% of Indian students in the US who participated in the most comprehensive study yet of their future plans said they would have stayed back in India for higher education even with access to American teachers. The finding is significant because it comes as Parliament is set to debate the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill aimed at allowing top foreign varsities into India.

Human resource development minister Kapil Sibal has repeatedly argued that the Bill will help curtail the loss of US \$ 4 billion currently spent by Indian students in seeking higher education abroad.

But the findings of the study titled “Will they return” by Tata Institute of Social Sciences political science professor Venkatesh Kumar, and David Finegold, Dean of Rutgers University’s School of Management and Labour Relations suggest the task may not prove easy.

Out of a total of 998 Indian students in the US who participated in the study, 855 answered questions on whether they would have stayed back in India with access to American faculty. Among these respondents, 35% said they would still have traveled to the US for higher education while another 44% said they are unsure.

The absence of professionalism, work ethic and cutting edge research were cited as the biggest factors by students for wanting to pursue higher education in the US.

About half the respondents – 54% -- said they are keen to return to India but after working for a few years in the US. “Another key finding was the high fraction of students who said they wanted to give something back to Indian higher education,” said Kumar, currently a Herbert Humphrey Fellow at Pennsylvania State University.

The researchers used regression analysis to distinguish trends based on the qualification students were pursuing, their academic stream, age, sex, marital status and presence of children. They also studied reasons why the students left India for American higher education.

The Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management, central, state and deemed universities across India face a faculty crunch that has left the country with one of the world’s worst higher education student-teacher ratios in the world.

Source: [Hindustan times/08-March, 2011](#)

India on mind, Carnegie Mellon University thinks digital

Carnegie Mellon University President Jared Leigh Cohon has been trying to push “digital education” as the next big revolution in the sector.

Just a few years ago, Cohon, one of the most respected educational administrator in the US, met Apple CEO Steve Jobs, requesting him to insert an application to deliver undergraduate courses on the iconic iPhone, on an experimental basis.

Jobs refused point-blank, saying educational applications were “boring”.

Cohon, however got a more encouraging response from Facebook’s maverick co-founder, Mark Zuckerberg. He went to him with a simple offering — digital education is good, but it misses out on social interaction that students develop while living on the campus. So could Facebook fill in this gap in the digital platform? Zuckerberg told Cohon he did not understand the digital education business, but he would be willing to integrate Facebook if the university built applications for such an interaction.

Cohon says: “Digital education is a disruptive technology, as it could bring education at a lower cost to the masses. But, more important, it is an ideal way to reach markets like India, where cost is a key factor and the majority knows English.”

Mellon may be a private university, charging a steep \$50,000 annually with no scholarships at the undergraduate level — certainly more expensive than other competing US universities. But the high costs have not deterred Indian students from coming here in droves. They constitute over 8 per cent of Mellon’s 11,000-strong student fraternity, and, as many as 150 of them are in the undergraduate studies. This is the reason why Mellon is aggressively pushing, despite its constraints in making India one of the key markets in its ambition to become a global university.

“Our strategy in India is clear — we will collaborate with local institutions, as we don’t have huge resources to invest. We will offer our faculty, courses and technology. India is surely one key market for us,” says the soft-spoken Cohon. As part of that gameplan, Mellon has tied up with Shiv Nadar Foundation and is offering undergraduate courses in their university in engineering, mechanics and computers. In the four-year course, students study for two years at Mellon and two in India, and get a Mellon degree.

But the next step is to go for post-graduate studies as well as research with the Nadars, though no time period has been envisaged for this. Cohon is also looking at tying up with Indian companies to set up centres for research and post-graduate programmes for their employees. He says Mellon has been able to commercialise products and technology developed in its labs and research centres. “We can collaborate with companies or institutions like the Indian Institute of Technology to commercialise products or technology built in labs,” says Cohon.

Mellon is also open to the Indian corporate sector providing funds, which could be used for financial assistance to students in the US. But, he also believes that the chances of such deals is rare, as Indian companies are more keen on setting up their own universities and foundations of education within India.

Mellon believes the experimental digital education model could be an attractive proposition for markets like India, where most students know English. Building the course

material, of course, costs a lot — about \$1 million for one course, but the cost can be spread across a larger number of students. Cohon says: “Of course, the key issue is to ensure quality of content and have intelligence built into the software to assess whether a student is learning. Surely, these programs that we are now working on at the undergraduate level will be prepared at a fraction of the cost of a physical course, but a business model has to be built.”

Have US universities fundamentally changed after the financial meltdown and 9/11? Are these universities losing their earlier attractiveness? Cohon answers in the affirmative. He says there are three things. One, in the aftermath of 9/11, there has been a significant rise of universities in Australia, Singapore and western Europe, especially because getting student visas in the US was getting increasingly difficult. Two, the financial meltdown obviously meant that many of the rich families and companies, who funded universities, reduced their support. So financial assistance dried up. And three, non-US universities are improving in terms of quality and are also cheaper in many cases.

Mellon, however, has already taken rapid strides globally. It has set up a Mellon campus in Qatar, and is running programmes in Greece, Portugal, Australia and Singapore, to name a few. In Qatar, for instance, the financing of the campus, including paying the staff is completely taken care of by the Qatar Foundation. In Portugal, its programmes are supported by the government, which wants the country to become a higher educational hub. In Greece, it is supported by a local telecom company.

So, is Mellon looking for government financial support? Cohon rules that out, saying the Indian government already has many other areas in education that it has to look at on priority. But, he is looking forward to a legal framework that would define the entry of foreign universities into the country.

Cohon also wants the perception that Mellon charges heavily and makes massive profits to change in India. “We are a not-for-profit organisation and our fees are higher because we are a privately run institution,” quips Cohon.

Source: [Business-Standard/08-March,2011](#)

92% Indian students in US ready for future back in India

Nine in ten Indian students in the US who participated in the largest known and most comprehensive study yet of the community’s future plans are keen to return to India to pursue their careers. As many as 84% of those planning to return to India are interested in jobs combining research and teaching the study found, in findings with major implications for policy makers here grappling with a crippling faculty shortage. Most of them however said they would not accept a pure teaching job.

The study, conducted by researchers from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Pennsylvania State University and Rutgers University is the largest effort yet to look at diverse aspects of future plans of Indian students in the US and factors driving their decisions. The study was released in the US today.

“The high percentage of those open to returning and their interest in higher education careers presents a big opportunity for India,” TISS political science professor and study co-author Venkatesh Kumar told *HT*. Kumar’s co-author is David Finegold, Dean of the Rutgers School of Management and Labour Relations. The authors plan to make the study – the largest and most diverse they know of – an annual effort.

Out of 998 respondents who agreed to participate in the study, 76% said they were planning to return to India, were in the process of returning or had just returned. Another 16% said they would go wherever they received the best job, regardless of the location. Only 8% student respondents said they would definitely prefer to stay back in the US.

About half the respondents – 54% -- said they are keen to return to India but after working for a few years in the US. “Another key finding was the high fraction of students who said they wanted to give something back to Indian higher education,” said Kumar, currently a Herbert Humphrey Fellow at Pennsylvania State University.

The researchers used regression analysis to distinguish trends based on the qualification students were pursuing, their academic stream, age, sex, marital status and presence of children. They also studied reasons why the students left India for American higher education.

The Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management, central, state and deemed universities across India face a faculty crunch that has left the country with one of the world’s worst higher education student-teacher ratios in the world.

Source: [Hindustan times/08-March, 2011](#)

Private sector jobs top choice, politics last, for Indian students in US

Corporate jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and research-cum-teaching are at the top of the wish list for Indian students in the US keen to return to their homeland to pursue careers, suggests the most comprehensive study yet of this community’s future plans. The study, conducted by researchers from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Pennsylvania State University and Rutgers University is the largest effort yet to look at diverse aspects of future plans of Indian students in the US and factors driving their decisions.

TISS political science professor Venkatesh Kumar and David Finegold, Dean of the Rutgers School of Management and Labour Relations are the authors of the study, released in the US today.

The researchers calculated the average interest of students in diverse work areas on returning, on a scale of 5. Corporate jobs topped the list with a mean score of 3.75 followed by entrepreneurship at 3.53 and research-cum-teaching at 3.37.

“More worryingly from the perspective of strengthening the Indian state, far fewer individuals are interested in returning to India to pursue careers in the public sector or politics,” the authors have said in the study. Politics – with a mean score of 1.92 – figured last on the wish list of students keen on returning to India.

Strong research opportunities were a key factor for PhDs and post-docs in deciding whether they would return, the study found.

Among those keen to teach and pursue research on returning to India, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) were top preferences.

Central universities followed by state universities, deemed universities, private universities and colleges were less preferred destinations.

But the study findings also show that a majority of those willing to get back to the higher education sector were willing to do so without a research component.

Source: [Hindustan times/08-March, 2011](#)

MCI turns down foreign varsity Bill

The Medical Council of India (MCI) has opposed the government’s proposed Foreign Educational Institutions Bill to allow and regulate foreign universities in India, refusing to support the landmark legislation which the world is watching. The country’s apex medical education regulator has written to the human resource development (HRD) ministry arguing that the MCI’s rules do not allow it to support the proposed legislation, top government sources have told the *Hindustan Times*.

The MCI’s opposition may delay the Bill, which is critical for a number of top global universities to partner with Indian institutions or set up campuses here.

Several institutions in the US and the UK have been eying the Indian market, especially as higher education in those countries is currently facing a major financial crisis.

Till the Bill is enacted, foreign universities cannot set up campuses here, or offer twinning arrangements with Indian institutions.

The opposition to the Bill comes even as the Parliament Standing Committee on HRD finalises its report on the Bill. The House panel today summoned the University Grants Commission to depose on the Bill.

Sources said the UGC broadly supported the Bill. But the MCI’s opposition will not be easy for the government to ignore, as it is the designated statutory authority for

recognizing foreign educational institutions keen to enter India, under the FEI Bill.

Some government sources, however, indicated that the MCI may yet be convinced into revising its stand.

The MCI has argued that under its rules, any institution — including foreign institutions keen on offering medical degrees in India — must undergo the Council's rigorous scrutiny.

“Our concern is that the FEI Bill, while designating us the statutory authority, does not allow the rigorous scrutiny prior to an institute starting its campus, that we are required to do under the rules,” an MCI source said.

“The only way out is to change the MCI's rules,” the source added.

Source: [Hindustan Times](#)/08-March, 2011

Fake Educational/Technical Institutes

The UGC has identified 21 fake universities/institutions functioning in different parts of the country in contravention of the UGC Act, 1956; out of which, 8 are in Uttar Pradesh, 6 in Delhi and one each in Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. Similarly, the AICTE has also identified 350 unapproved institutions running technical and management courses/programmes in violation of the AICTE Regulations.

Out of these 350 unapproved institutions, 75 each are in Delhi and Maharashtra, 52 in Andhra Pradesh, 34 in West Bengal, 30 in Uttar Pradesh, 27 in Karnataka, 17 in Haryana, 14 in Tamil Nadu, 9 in Chandigarh, 4 in Gujarat, 3 in Punjab, 2 each in Bihar, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Goa, and one each in Uttarkhand and Kerala.

The name of such fake universities and unapproved technical institutions has been included in the list maintained by the UGC and the AICTE, respectively and is placed on their respective official websites for information to the students and general public. Further, the State and UT Governments have been requested to take action under Indian Penal Code against these fake/unapproved universities and institutions. A legislative proposal to prohibit unfair practices in higher educational institutions has been already introduced in the Parliament.

Source: [PIB](#)/09-March, 2011

IITians launch home learning device for students

Hyderabad-based Edutor Technologies launched Edutor Advantage e40, India's first hand-held home learning device for school students.

After a six-month pilot project, the firm, floated by a group of young IITians, launched the device designed for Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) students from class 3 to class 10.

The touchscreen device is preloaded with a student's class-specific, curriculum-aligned content.

Advantage e40's highly intuitive and interactive touchscreen interface and multi-media content ensures children are fully engaged, grasp concepts and remember them far more effectively, said a company official.

The device also offers self-assessment with its practice tests and questions for every topic. Advantage e40 is aligned with CBSE's new Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) initiative.

The device also features extra-curricular activities like basics of cricket, yoga, karate, spoken English content and Wikipedia topics.

Ram Gollamudi, CEO of Edutor Technologies, told reporters that the firm planned to sell 30,000 to 40,000 devices in the next 18 months.

"Edutor Advantage is designed to give Indian students a measurable home learning advantage. Advantage e40 user interface is very intuitive and easy to use for children of all ages," said Ram, an electronics engineer from the [Indian Institute of Technology \(IIT\)-Madras](#).

"Research shows that when multiple senses such as sight, sound and touch are used simultaneously to learn, there is a significant boost in understanding and memory. Our device is based on the multi-sensory learning principle," said Ram, who spent the last 15 years in the US, working in tech firms.

Priced at Rs.5,845 with four percent taxes, Edutor Advantage is available in leading bookstores. One-year content in the form of a chip is available at Rs.1,635.

To start with, Edutor Technologies has rolled out its product in [Hyderabad](#) and other parts of Andhra Pradesh. It plans to extend its reach to other southern states before targeting the market in north India.

As the country has 75,000 CBSE schools, Edutor is targeting a huge market. Ram pointed out that Hyderabad alone has 200,000 CBSE students.

Source: [The Times of India](#)/09-Marcg, 2011

Madrasas Qualifications

Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of Personnel and Training have issued notification on qualifications/certificates of the State Madrasa Boards which have been granted equivalence by the corresponding State Education Boards so that of their Secondary and Senior Secondary qualification have been equated with corresponding levels of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Council of Board of School Education in India (COBSE) and other School Examination Boards, for the purpose of employment and entry to higher levels of education.

Source: [PIB](#)//09-March, 2011

National Vocational Education Qualification Framework

Under the centrally sponsored schemes of “Vocationalisation of Secondary Education”, financial assistance is made available to the States to introduce vocational stream at the higher secondary stage. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has initiated the process of developing a National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF) to put in place a nationally recognized qualification system, covering higher secondary school, vocational education institutes, polytechnics, colleges and institutes of higher education. The time line for the implementation of the framework can be decided only after the development of the framework is completed.

Source: [PIB](#)//09-March, 2011

Promotion of Sex Education

Ministry of Human Resource Development after consultation with representatives of State Government and other stakeholders has introduced an educational programme, known as Adolescence Education Programme (AEP) at secondary and higher secondary level. It is being implemented by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and several States and Union Territories in the country. This programme focuses on making students aware of the concerns of adolescence stages and dangers of HIV/AIDS and substance use; helping them to acquire necessary life skills to enable them to avoid risky situations; to take informed decisions and to develop healthy and responsible behaviour.

Source: [PIB](#)//09-March, 2011

Smart Schools

Under the revised Centrally Sponsored Scheme “Information & Communication Technology in Schools”, there is a provision to establish 150 smart schools in the country. A sum of Rs. 25.00 lakh is provided to States/UTs to establish each smart school. 55 smart schools in 11 States and 2 UTs have been cleared so far. State wise details of smart schools is as under:

Sl. No	State/UT	No. of Smart Schools Recommended
1	Andhra Pradesh	5
2	D & N Haveli	2
3	Daman & Diu	2
4	Himachal Pradesh	5
5	Kerala	5
6	Manipur	4
7	Meghalaya	4
8	Nagaland	4

9	Punjab	5
10	Sikkim	4
11	Tamil Nadu	5
12	Uttar Pradesh	5
13	West Bengal	5
Total		55

Source: [PIB](#)//09-March, 2011

AICTE nod to foreign tech schools to operate

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has allowed foreign institutions to set up campuses and impart technical education in India even as a proposed Bill seeking to facilitate their entry is yet to be passed by Parliament.

However, the technical education regulator’s new policy, which replaces the one formulated by it in 2003, does not permit foreign institutions to offer their own degrees.

According to the new ‘approval norms’, foreign institutions can set up campuses or collaborate with technical colleges approved by the AICTE anywhere in the country. For this purpose, foreign institutions can also collaborate with any company established under Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956, the new AICTE approval norms say.

Under the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation and Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010 — which the government introduced in Lok Sabha last May and is now pending with a parliamentary committee— foreign institutes can offer their own degrees.

They also don’t need to register as a society or a trust or a Section 25 company as the revised AICTE policy mandates. Societies, trusts and companies registered under Section 25 of the Company’s Act are not-for-profit institutions.

“After being registered as a society or trust or a company under the Act, a foreign institution will have to submit a detailed proposal for approval from the AICTE to run their courses under the new norms,” a top AICTE source said.

Accreditation by an authorised agency in a parent country with acceptable grades where grading is available, will be the condition for a foreign institution interested in starting operations here.

Once approval is given, the foreign institutions will be bound by the AICTE’s advice on admissions, entry qualifications and the conduct of courses or programmes “as may be communicated to them from time to time,” the source said.

The proposal from a foreign university seeking equivalence of technical courses at various levels for mutual recognition of qualifications for the purpose of imparting such courses in India under collaborative arrangements or otherwise will

be considered by the council through its standing committee.

Source: [Deccan Herald](#)/10-March, 2011

'PE investment in edu up 8 times since 2005'

The country's largest housing finance company HDFC has said there is a surge of private equity interest in education-a sector into which it is planning a foray.

Speaking at an event on private equity in education in Mumbai on Wednesday, Keki Mistry, vice-chairman and chief executive officer, HDFC, said that private equity investment in education has touched \$190 million in 2010, an increase of more than eight times of \$22 million in 2005.

According to Mistry, investments in the Kindergarten to class XII segment will grow from \$20 billion at present to \$33 billion by next year. HDFC is planning a foray into fastest-growing this segment. Mistry called for allowing greater foreign investment in the sector.

Source: [Times of India](#)/10-March, 2011,

Setting up of International Technical Institution in Singapore

The Singapore Government had suggested formation of a Joint Working Group (JWG) at the Government-to-Government level for setting up of an International Institute of Technology at Singapore. However, Human Resource Development Ministry is of the view that a working group at institutional level would be more appropriate especially since the proposed institute is to be set up by the IITs and not by the Government of India. The HRD Ministry has already recommended the names of the members for JWG from the Indian side. The Government of Singapore is yet to suggest their representative for the JWG.

Source: [PIB](#)/11-March, 2011

HP announces funds for education in India

Expanding its commitment to education, Hewlett-Packard (HP) on Friday announced plans to invest US\$ 1 million to support a new Education Innovation Challenge Fund for India, led by a consortium of leading education organisations in India.

The fund will grant public and private (not-for-profit) education institutions the opportunity to pursue novel approaches to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) learning for the 21st century.

Madhav Chavan, CEO and president of Pratham Education Foundation, Ashok Kamath, Chairman of Akshara Foundation, and Sridhar Rajagopalan, Managing Director of Education Initiatives, are serving in an advisory role as the fund gets established at an independent non-governmental organisation (NGO). The goal is to operationalise the fund by August 2011 and encourage other private sector organisations to support and promote

innovations in STEM education through similar donations of cash, equipment and expertise.

“HP is committed to empowering students and teachers globally and improve the models of STEM education to enable them to address some of the bigger social challenges around the world and in their communities. The Education Innovation Challenge Fund is meant to motivate institutions and students to think out-of-the-box for solutions and ideas that are both collaborative and creative in furthering STEM education in India,” said Jeannette Weisschuh, Director of Global Education Programs, Office of Global Social Innovation, HP.

The announcement was made on the sidelines of the first ever HP Catalyst Summit in Delhi, which brought together over 100 global education leaders from 11 countries, Indian policy makers and government representatives, to address critical Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education challenges in India and globally.

Co-organised with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), the HP Catalyst Summit Delhi explored topics such as the effective use of tablet PCs for teaching and learning, cloud computing in education and converting textbooks into social media platforms for conversations and assessment. Agastya International Foundation will also be conducting a hands-on mobile science learning event to families and students in Delhi.

Source: [The Hindu](#)/11-March, 2011

Filling up of IIT Posts with Foreign Faculty

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are now free to recruit permanent faculty. However, to enable eminent academicians from foreign nations to serve in the IITs as faculty upto 10 per cent of their faculty strength, the Council of IITs has recently resolved to take up the matter with Ministry of Home Affairs for streamlining/liberalizing the procedure for allowing foreign faculty in IITs on a permanent basis.

Source: [PIB](#)/11-March, 2011

AICTE makes minor changes in admission norms for b-schools

New Delhi: The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) on Friday made minor changes in its norms that had been formulated for admission to postgraduate diploma in management and postgraduate certificate in management.

The apex body in India for technical education regulation has clarified that the B-schools can now chose the [Common Admission Test \(CAT\)](#), Management Aptitude Test (MAT) or the examination conducted by the states for providing admission to students. B-schools will also be allowed to pick students for admission using a combination of these tests.

The AICTE had recently released controversial norms for management institutes, which had been criticized by b-schools. The AICTE has now offered a minor concession in norms but has not addressed the major demands of b-schools, for which they had even approached the Supreme Court.

The state governments which will be managing the admission procedure will then offer seats to students in Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) institutions which would be based on the combination of tests that have been picked by the b-schools and ranking of the student according to that.

The notification by the AICTE on December 30, 2010 that had proved to be controversial had directed that the state governments would decide whether students would be admitted to b-schools through CAT, MAT or the state government's test.

The latest decision of the AICTE regarding the admission process for b-schools does not address several concerns that had been raised by b-schools after the December 2010 notification.

Institutes have argued that giving the state governments the power to manage the admission procedure for b-schools, including the decision of where a student will finally get admission was an attempt to taking away their autonomy. They also said that this could lead to corruption and red-tapism.

Source: indiaedunews/12-March, 2011

Infrastructure status for hospitals, educational institutions

In a move aimed at encouraging public-private partnerships in hospitals and schools & colleges, the finance ministry has categorised capital spending on them under infrastructure.

With the new status, they shall be eligible for viability gap funding or VGF.

Finance minister Pranab Mukherjee, in his reply on the budget discussion in the Lok Sabha on Friday, said, "Investment in education and health sectors has a high priority in our policy framework. Henceforth, capital stock in educational institutions and hospitals will be treated as infrastructure sub-sectors.

Accordingly, capital investment for these sub-sectors will be eligible for the VGF scheme of the ministry of finance." He added that detailed guidelines on the same would be announced shortly.

VGF is given to make infrastructure projects, which otherwise don't make commercial sense, feasible.

The scheme for providing VGF was devised in 2005. The extent of the VGF granted under the scheme may go up to 20% of the total cost of the project. A competitive bidding

is done and projects are awarded to the private participants on the basis of the VGF quoted.

Talking of inflation, Mukherjee said tackling high inflation is a top priority of the government. In this regard, he announced extension of the interest subvention scheme of providing short term loans to farmers at 7% interest with additional interest subvention for timely repayment to fish farmers and fishermen.

"This would benefit over 20 lakh fish farmers and fishermen engaged in fishing operations in the country," he added.

Stressing on the need to preserve the agriculture produce in the wake of the rising food inflation, Mukherjee informed the house about a slew of measures taken by the government on storage capacity creation.

"Storage capacity to the tune of 150 lakh metric tonne through private participation has been fast-tracked. A 2.6 lakh metric tonne capacity will be in place by end of this month," he stated.

Source: DNA India/12-March, 2011

IGNOU-KVS Sign MoU for Training of Teachers

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangthan (KVS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a national level programme of continuous training of KVS teachers. The MoU was signed in the presence of Minister of State for HRD Dr. D. Purandeswari. Also present were Secretary, School Education and Literacy, Smt. Anshu Vaish, Prof. V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU and Shri Avinash Dikshit, Commissioner, KVS. The MoU was signed by Registrar, IGNOU (Shri U.S. Tolia) and Jt. Commissioner (Admn.), KVS (Shri O.M. Prabhakaran).

Speaking on the occasion Dr. Purandeswari said that there is a need for continued professional development of teachers to meet the demand of quality in education. She appreciated the launch of the IGNOU-KVS training initiative. She added that this step is of immense significance in view of the importance of teacher training in the light of the Right of Education Act.

The target group for this training includes primary teachers, graduate teachers and post-graduate teachers. Under the present collaborative programme, the teachers of KVS would be required to undergo 6 months training including at least 15 days face to face programme with pre-training assessment and post training follow up, feed back cum assessment. The training would focus on content upgradation of teachers with respect to their own special subject areas. They would also be given in-depth training on new knowledge and its relevance to their work. Teachers would relearn new and innovative classroom management techniques and strategies for improving quality of teaching. A team of Experts would draw up a detailed training design, which would be periodically reviewed. Feedback on the training would be taken for

continuously upgrading the quality of the programme. The duration of the programme will be six months. The training would be conducted in English and Hindi medium.

The Methodology for the training programme would be:

- Face to face interaction
- Self learning
- Audio video support
- Teleconferencing with a two-way audio and one-way video facility.
- Self-learning printed course material packages
- Assignment for assessment and feedback
- Practicals at designated institutions
- Work-related field projects/functional assignment as per programme requirement.
- Telecast of video and audio programmes on National Network of Gyan Darshan and Gyan Vani
- Resource support through eGyankosh

The teachers would have to undergo an evaluation. Certificates upon completion of programme would be provided by IGNOU. A JCC consisting of representatives from IGNOU and KVS would be formed by the Vice Chancellor of IGNOU and the Commissioner, KVS to prepare appropriate modalities of Training Programmes and its smooth conduct.

Source: [PIB](#)/14-March, 2011

Over 50 Higher Education Institutes & 8 Universities to accept NAT scores this Year

- Application Forms available at Syndicate Bank branches till May 3rd, 2011
- The common entrance test to be held on May 22nd , 2011
- Uttarakhand Technical University became the latest to accept NAT scores

National Aptitude Test (NAT) 2011, the all-India level common entrance test for admission into courses in various streams — management and allied programs like BBA, BCA, MBA, MCA, PGDBM, Hotel Management etc. —will be held on May 22nd, 2011.

The sale of NAT forms will begin from March 28th, 2011 and the last date of sale of forms is May 3rd, 2011. The last date of submission to SAHEI is May 7th, 2011. Results will be declared on May 31st, 2011.

First held in 2005, NAT is conducted by SRDE's Association of Higher Education Institutions (SAHEI), established under the aegis of Society for Research & Development in Education (SRDE) every year in an effort to facilitate a single window system for the students

seeking admission in non-science streams such as management and other professional programmes available in different institutions on the panel of SAHEI.

About 55 Institutions across the country are conducting admissions to their professional courses through NAT scores. These institutions comprises of eight Universities including the prestigious Uttarakhand Technical University and Himachal Pradesh University that have also decided to consider NAT for admission to their various colleges. Conducted by different higher education institutions, NAT facilitates admission to candidates at both the 10+2 level and 10+2+3 level through NAT-UG (Under-graduate) and NAT-PG (Post-graduate) tests respectively. The NAT 2011 bulletin will be available across the branches of Syndicate Bank and other prominent outlets on a cash payment of Rs.650. This includes the cost of the form, bulletin and examination fee. NAT has been recognized by over 130 Universities and Institutions till date. The list of 2011 Institutions is available in the NAT bulletin and also on www.natindia.com.

NAT has also been recognized by the Himachal Pradesh University for granting admission to candidates to its regular MBA programme in all its affiliated colleges. G.J.University of Science & Technology has also recognized the NAT scores for admission to their MBA/MCA programmes under distance mode as well. Several other State Govt. Universities are in the process of recognizing NAT scores.

About NAT

NAT is an All India Level Common Entrance Test administered under the aegis of SRDE's Association of Higher Education Institutions (SAHEI), Delhi. The Entrance Test is available for students at the Under Graduate (NAT-UG) and the Post Graduate (NAT-PG) levels for fulfilling the requirements of different Higher Education Institutions on a common platform and thereby enabling access to various Professional, Vocational, Management and Allied programmes like BBA, BCA etc. at the UG and MBA, PGDM etc. at the PG levels in these Institutions. The NAT Bulletin carries the list of Institutions which accept NAT scores for admission into their UG and /or PG programmes. The NAT system facilitates itself as a Common Entrance Test for Institutions who wish to screen them on the basis of NAT Test.

The NAT Test is a valid, objective, transparent and secure testing system conducted in the paper-pencil format each year for different Higher Education Institutions. NAT (Paper-pencil mode) was first held in 2005. NAT Online has also being commenced from the year 2010 on round the year basis for facilitating students and Institutions through 30 test centres available across the country. The cost and other characteristics of the test have been kept identical except that the NAT Online test shall be conducted through Computer-based mechanism as against OMR format in paper-pencil system.

Source: [Business standard](#)/14-March, 2011

Kuwait firm eyes health & education sector in India

The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), an autonomous government body responsible for managing various funds for the Arab nation, today said it plans to invest in education and healthcare in India.

"Kuwait Investment Authority is scouting for opportunities in education and healthcare in India," Kuwait Ambassador S M Al-Sulaiman said at an interactive session with Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and Industry here.

However, nothing had been finalised so far. KIA so far already invested about \$1 billion in India.

Kuwait Petroleum Company was negotiating to join ONGC and IOC for investing in fertiliser, oil & gas and petroleum sector, Al-Sulaiman said.

He said they were also discussing with India to their airlines to touch more cities like Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata and Hyderabad.

Source: [Business standard](#)/14-March, 2011

Government plans common curriculum for science, maths

There could soon be a common curriculum for science and mathematics in schools across the country, Union Minister of State for Human Resource Development D Purandeswari said today.

"We are contemplating such an idea where all the schools would have the same curriculum at least in subjects like science, mathematics and commerce. The idea has been agreed in principle by the council of all the State education departments and we are expecting this to be implemented by 2013," she told reporters on the sidelines of a conference on Education for Sustainable Development Future of Education in India, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry here.

Though implementing a core curriculum for subjects like social sciences would have several issues to be considered, subjects such as science and mathematics, which have same implications nationally, should be brought under a single curriculum.

However, she added that the success of implementation depended upon the support of state governments, since almost one million schools are run under the control of the states, compared to only 11,000 operative under the Central Board of Secondary Education.

"The central government has ambitious plans to allocate six per cent of the public expenditure for education, and this is not possible without the support of state governments," she said in her address to industry and institutions as the chief guest of the meeting.

The government's current allocation on education is 3.8 per cent of the public expenditure.

"The government and industry should work together to make quality education affordable and accessible. The government is bringing in a slew of regulatory Bills including the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill and Foreign Universities Bill.

Source: [Business standard](#)/14-March, 2011

CAG report lists shortcomings in secondary education

Asks govt to take measures to fill vacancies, rationalise deployment, strengthen vocational training and build adequate infrastructure in schools across Punjab

There is a 23 per cent shortage of teaching staff in government schools. The deployment of teachers in commerce and mathematics streams was not done as per norms. The schools do not have adequate classrooms, toilets, playgrounds and desks either. All these points were highlighted in the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India report.

As intimated by Director, Public Instructions (Secondary Education), the CAG says, against 74,198 sanctioned posts of teachers, 17,366 posts (23.40 per cent) were vacant. The posts have been sanctioned with reference to one teacher for 40 students in Classes 6 to 10 and one teacher for 60 students at Plus Two level. In Amritsar district, three posts of commerce lecturers in three schools with a strength varying from 10 to 37, have been vacant since 2005-06, whereas six commerce lecturers were deployed in four other schools in the district with no student in the stream. Also, 51 per cent schools have no security guards.

Twenty per cent schools in the six districts checked had shortage of desks and 27 per cent did not have enough classrooms, while 15 per cent schools had no playgrounds and 11 per cent schools no toilets, the report said.

The CAG said the objective of imparting vocational training to the students of Class XI and XII was broadly not achieved. Also, the pass percentage in Class XII was stagnating during 2005 to 2010.

The performance audit of secondary education in the state disclosed that funds released for various schemes during 2005 to 2010 were far below the budgetary provisions and were grossly under utilised. The state government also did not utilise Rs. 124.58 crore of the Central funds released during the same period.

According to the Punjab Education Policy 2002, there was supposed to be a Jan Sampark Abiyan every year for one week when all officers of the state and the district administration were to visit schools for spot evaluation of the existing facilities, redressal of the problems of students and teachers and to meet community leaders for their assessment of schools. But scrutiny of records said no such abhiyan was held between 2005 and 2010.

It has been recommended by the CAG that the government should fill up vacancies and rationalise deployment of staff,

identify the chronically poor performing schools and take measures to improve them and strengthen vocational training. Besides, the report said, the government should make proper infrastructure — classrooms, toilets, playgrounds and furniture.

Source: [Indian Express](#)/14-March, 2011

CORE Projects bags biggest education project from Haryana Govt.

CORE to implement ICT project in 2622 schools across Haryana valued at Rs2.95bn

In one of the biggest ICT (Information and Communication Technology) projects, India's largest global education company, Core Projects and Technologies Limited has bagged a prestigious contract from Haryana Government aimed at benefiting five million students in 2622 schools of which 5 schools will be developed as "Smart" schools.

The ICT project, valued at about Rs. 295 crores, is a part of the Government program aimed at strengthening school education across the country. This project is expected to augment the focus of the Government to improve the quality of education in schools by ushering in enhanced use of technology.

The project envisages the use of computers and bio-metric devices to enhance delivery of quality education in the schools and to monitor student and Teacher performances. CORE will also develop software to support monitoring and evaluation of teachers and students for the State's Education Department including asset and maintenance management System and Help Desk facility at state level.

"This is an important milestone for not only CORE, but also the Indian education sector as it reiterates the Government's intent to step up the momentum of reforms in the sector. There is a concerted effort to seamlessly blend technology with classroom learning to benefit larger sections of the society." said Sanjeev Mansotra, Chairman and Managing Director of Core Projects and Technologies Limited.

"This breakthrough is also an acknowledgement of CORE's excellent global implementation ability and track record in executing large-scale projects. We are extremely happy to be associated with the Haryana Government," Mansotra said.

Source: [India info line](#)/14-March, 2011

Establishment of the Mahatma Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) at New Delhi

The Union Cabinet today approved to establish the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) as a Category I Institute of UNESCO at New Delhi which was recommended by the UNESCO Executive Board, at its

182nd session held in September, 2009 and approved by 35th Session of General Conference of UNESCO in October, 2009.

It will put India into the category of select countries with a Category I Institute of UNESCO. Currently there are eleven Category I Institutes of UNESCO in the world, out of which 9 are located in the developed countries while the remaining two are located in developing countries namely, Ethiopia and Venezuela. Further it will serve as a platform for India to emerge as a global leader from the Asia-Pacific region in the areas of education for Peace and Sustainable Development.

The mission of the Institute will be to strengthen educational and knowledge base for promoting education for peace and sustainable development and to contribute to the peace education and sustainable development-related research and capacity building needs of Member States with focus on Asia and the Pacific region.

The MGIEP will be managed through an Operational Agreement between UNESCO and India. It will be administered by a 12 member Governing Board to approve programme and budget of the Institute and give policy directions. The Governing Board shall be assisted by a four-member Executive Committee including the Chairperson.

The estimated expenditure for setting up this Institute will be Rs.223.68 crore over a period of seven years.

Source: [PIB](#)/15-March, 2011

CBSE schools start conducting Class X exams

Schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have started conducting Class X examinations.

Under the new system, students can either opt for examinations conducted by the board or their schools. However, only the board will declare the combined results of Class IX and X, in June or July.

"The CBSE had asked all schools to conduct exams from Class I to IX before March 15 and of Class X from March 15. We are following these instructions. The board has issued CDs containing question papers for Class IX and X to all schools. The teachers will mark the answer sheets and the data will be sent to the CBSE before March 30. The result will be moderated by the board before declaration, along with the result of those candidates who took the exam directly," said Harmeet Kaur Waraich, secretary of Sahodaya Schools Complex in Ludhiana. About 40 per cent students, from schools in the city appeared for the board exam, while the remaining have opted for the school exams.

The students who opted for the board exams include those who want to join professional courses after Class X and those who want to shift to other boards.

“Interestingly, the mark-sheet that will be issued by the CBSE for Class X will not mention whether the child appeared for the exam through the board or school. It will be the school authorities that will certify the exam the students appeared in,” added Waraich.

Source: [Indian Express](#)/16-March, 2011

State of helplessness' on far-off exam centres

The state government expressed helplessness for the inconveniences caused to students following the allotment of examination centres for the annual HSC examinations far away from their schools. With the board examinations starting Wednesday, it is too late to make any change in the arrangements, official sources said.

Even though the school and mass education department announced examination centres will be located within five km of a school, many centres in the interior areas are about 30 to 40 km from schools. Parents, teachers and political parties have strongly objected to this.

Admitting violation of rules, school and mass education minister Pratap Jena said, "I received some complaints of violation of board guidelines for selection of examination centres. We would conduct an inquiry into this and take disciplinary action against officials responsible for such irregularities." Jena said, "Since we don't have enough time in our hands, we cannot change the examination centres." Official sources said Jena had brought the matter to the notice of the chief secretary and sought his intervention.

Sources said, with examination centres located at distant places students have to stay near the Centre for lack of proper transport facilities. They also face several problems like accommodation, food and toilets during their stay. "So the government had decided to have examination centres within five km from schools. But it was not implemented properly," an officer of the Board of Secondary Education said.

According to guidelines, district collectors and inspectors of schools would send a list of examination centres to the board for final selection. "After large-scale violations were found in selection of centres, officials are making alibis," the officer said.

A total 485,894 students in 8,207 schools will appear for the exam this year. Out of which, 434, 907 regular candidates will appear in 1,950 examination centres and 50,687 ex-regular candidates will appear in 281 examination centres. About 76 squads and 27 central squads will supervise the exam.

Source: [The Times of India](#)/15-March,2011

UGC lists out 21 fake universities in India

According to a new alert by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the Badaganvi Sarkar World Open

University Education Society in Gokak, Belgaum, is a fake university.

It is one of the 21 fake universities and institutions in the country that are running in contravention of the UGC Act, 1956.

Eight of them are in Uttar Pradesh, six are in Delhi and one each is in Bihar, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and West Bengal.

Those institutions running unauthorised technical and management programmes outnumber them.

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) pegs their number of institutions at 350.

While Karnataka has 27, Delhi and Maharashtra have 75 each, Andhra Pradesh 52, West Bengal has 34, Uttar Pradesh 30, Haryana 17, Tamil Nadu 14, Chandigarh nine, Gujarat four, Punjab three, Bihar, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Goa two each and Uttarakhand and Kerala have one each.

The names of such fake universities and unapproved technical institutions have been included in the list maintained by the UGC and the AICTE, respectively, and are posted on their official websites for students and general public.

In addition, both the higher education regulatory boards have requested the state and Union Territory governments to initiate action under the Indian Penal Code against these fake/unapproved universities and institutions.

A legislative proposal to prohibit unfair practices in higher educational institutions has been already introduced in Parliament.

Source: [Express Buzz](#)/ 16-March, 2011

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Education, infrastructure critical to sustainable growth in India: Buchanan

Michael Buchanan is managing director (global economics, commodities & strategy research), Goldman Sachs. On the sidelines of the Institute of International Finance conference in Delhi, Buchanan spoke to Ritu Kant Ojha about the need to reform subsidies possibility of asset bubble in rising crude oil prices, and its impact on the Indian economy along with the affect of Eurozone crisis on India's growth. Excerpts:

Emerging economies are driving growth — China, India, and south east Asian countries. What are their risks if the Euro zone crisis deepens? What about India where exports are not really a big part of the GDP?

In developed markets, there is a growth pick up and that is helping Indian exports. Indian exports have been strong recently. So, it is a sustainable if not dramatic recovery, but that will help all of Asia. India is less exposed to that extent,

but nonetheless, that will help all of Asia in terms of providing a solid external backdrop. This, of course, means that it adds for the need of monetary tightening throughout the region because the external backdrop is very strong.

Do you at times worry about the so-called demographic dividend that everyone talks about in India? Is it only manufacturing that can create jobs in millions, whereas manufacturing is just 15 per cent of the GDP?

I think one of the critical reforms is on the education side. Providing an education system that can help provide jobs is a great boost to the economy, a demographic dividend. Of course, it may become a political risk if jobs are not found. We really need to see expansion on the industry side as that will be a good source of jobs. One of the important things is infrastructure growth that we are seeing in India. So, we would encourage improvement in infrastructure, not only airports, but also in terms of transport system and so on. These sort of reforms are very important in providing basis for expansion of the industry and help in creation of jobs. So I think a combination of education and infrastructure will be absolutely critical to turn what is a potential opportunity from a strongly growing labour force to something which delivers a sustainable growth.

What is your outlook on global crude, commodity prices? Gold, silver have hit all-time high? Do you see an asset bubble?

I don't think there is an asset bubble. The speculators can boost prices for a very short period of time. They can bring forth what might otherwise take many months to happen but they are not actually using the commodities. There are some exceptions in the precious metals but for most of the commodities, they are not part of the final delivery. The underlying supply and demand balance would determine the price. And that is exactly what is being seen in your oil market at the moment.

Surely there is some speculation which might be bringing forth the price rises, which, otherwise would have gone down as oil prices are impacted because of what we are seeing in North Africa. The issue is really the fact that there is certain capacity in the oil market globally and so if you do take off supply in some specific countries then you need to see oil prices rising to curtail demand and make demand meet that level of supply.

Did you manage to go through India's Budget this year? Do you find the high expenditure compression realistic?

Unless we see these reforms very quickly, of the fuel, fertilisers, and food subsidies, it is very hard to see now these subsidies will reduce. How is it going to be achieved unless there are significant reforms very quickly. Looking at the global prices, they need to be rapid for the targets to be achieved.

Source: [Indian Express](#)/04-March, 2011

Right to Education will spell end of 'free' education

A member of the Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Adhikar Manch and a known reformer in the field of education, Dr Anil Sadgopalan, is fighting towards removing or reforming the Right to Education (RTE) Act.

He insists that India's education system should be based on the philosophy of Phule-Gandhi-Ambedkar and education should be free and equal for all.

"The RTE Act should be withdrawn immediately and it should be replaced with a new Act which is founded on the principle of equality and equitable quality of education, and which can be delivered only through a common school system, wherein every school will be a genuine neighbourhood school and government school system will give full space for expressing India's diversity," Dr Sadgopalan said while giving his views on the RTE Act.

The Bhopal based Dr Sadgopalan is currently in the city giving lectures from February 28 till March 6 on Nai Talim, under which he is touching upon various topics such as the education system of Phule-Gandhi-Ambedkar, effect of corporatisation on current education system of India, political economy of education and more.

Dr Sadgopalan further said that, "At the rate which corporatisation is taking place in India's education system, the day is not far when education will become too expensive for the common man. Currently, the government itself is worsening the situation of government schools and education institutions to the extent that they themselves end up selling education land to corporates and allowing them to build expensive education systems. By 2015, education will turn into a business worth Rs2.5 lakh crore."

Dr Sadgopalan puts forth his seven-point agenda to reform the education system, which was actually written in our constitution, as told by him.

He continues his fight against corporatisation of people oriented and high quality education and is currently working on research on the educational philosophy of Phule-Gandhi-Ambedkar for a possible reconstruction of India's educational system for the future.

Source: [DNA India](#)/05-March, 2011

Affordability a critical issue in Indian Higher Education: Kapil Sibal

In its second report for the EDGE Conference, The Parthenon Group examines the current state of student financing in higher education in India.

The Parthenon Group, a leading strategic advisory firm with rich experience in global education industries, today released a report on 'Financing Indian Higher Education'. Mr. Kapil Sibal, Honourable Union Minister for Human Resource Development, released the report at the EDGE Conference 2011 in the presence of Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha. Also present were Robert Lytle, Partner and Head, Education Center of

Excellence and Karan Khemka, Partner, Mumbai Office Head, of The Parthenon Group.

The report was presented by Robert Lytle as part of the 'Funding Education in the Emerging Market' session held at the conference. Other eminent speakers such as Raja Parthasarathy, Senior Managing Director, IDFC Private Equity Company Limited and Dr Arundhati Tuli Banerjee, Director, Global Initiatives, Director, MIT-India Program, were a part of the discussion, which was moderated by V Sivaramakrishnan, President - Education Services, Manipal Education.

In its second report for the EDGE Conference, The Parthenon Group examines the current state of student financing in higher education in India. It outlines successful case studies from countries such as the US, where an extensive student financing system combined with the emergence of the private higher education sector have helped close the tertiary enrollment gap in low-income demographics. Given the lower government appropriations (a 0.3% of GDP as of 2009 by India vis-à-vis 1.7% by USA), Indian institutions fund a large portion of their operations from tuition fees. While in the US, tuition represents only 5% of top quintile households' income, 11% is spent by Indian families. What makes a student's case in the country even more compelling is that Indian students fund almost 57% of tuition fees through family funds, savings or job-related income. This clearly implies that a lot of low-income students have to forgo higher education.

Commenting on the release of the report, Robert Lytle, Partner and Head, Education Center of Excellence said: "India's ability to sustain its economic growth in the future will be governed by its ability to grow its tertiary enrolment ratio in order to create an educated and employable workforce. Constraints for growth include a gap in higher education supply as well as students' inability to finance their education. Competition for publicly-funded seats is fierce which makes it prohibitive for a large portion of lower-income families to enroll in a post-secondary institution."

As a solution, the report recommends that capital-efficient higher education will help boost the country's tertiary enrolment ratio. In order to be able to afford private higher education, students need to have access to financing and a successful student loan system is critical.

"There are significant issues with the current student financing system in the country. 93% of Indian students do not take educational loans. Some of the reasons cited in the report are lack of awareness, complexity of application process and unfavorable loan terms. The lack of standardization norms make the loan application process complex, long and difficult" says Karan Khemka, Partner, and Mumbai Office Head, of The Parthenon Group.

Elaborating on the proposition of the report for improving India's student financing system, Robert Lytle says, "The

government, banks and educational institutions play a crucial role in providing students the means to access funds for tertiary education. While Unique Identity (UID) numbers would facilitate tracking individual information, the government needs to also infuse a competitive market for lenders by facilitating the flow of private capital in the country. Regulation of loan criteria is also necessary to eliminate discrimination."

Banks and educational institutions need to work together to streamline the loan applications process and align it with the school application process. A two-way channel of communication needs to be set up between the bank and educational institution. This will enable accurate and enhanced flow of student information to the bank and at the same time, institutions will be able to inform students about the benefits and drawbacks of loans" says Karan Khemka.

Source: [India info line](#)/11-March, 2011

'Parents must understand a child's flair'

Kolkata, Mar 11 (IBNS): The most critical thing for children to have a successful career is that their teachers and parents must understand their field of interest and not force just a random choice on their shoulders, said a noted educationist here on Friday.

"Teachers and parents should learn to recognise the flair of the students and be sympathetic to that choice for them to have a fruitful career," said Dr Bharati Roy, an eminent educationist, at a talk session here.

The programme was organised on the sidelines of the launch of an education directory 'What Next' for prospective higher education students in West Bengal published jointly by education company JIS Group and trade lobby The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The directory aims to provide students an easy access to the colleges and courses in the state that they might want to take up after completing their 12th grade.

The talk session organised on the occasion of the directory's launch also saw the participation of the vice chancellors of Jadavpur University Pradip Narayan Ghosh and West Bengal University of Technology Sabyasachi Sengupta.

Ghosh said that for a student to make a right decision after completing their school education they must take a break and think over what they really want to do instead of pursuing a stereotype career option.

"After being oppressed by parents and toiling for 12 years, the first thing a student should do is take break. They should read books, literature and contemplate on what they want to do and not dive right into a rat race for a 'good job'," he said.

India's lack of higher education infrastructure and faculty also came up in the discussion and the panelists spoke on the perks of pushing ahead for a doctorate degree which opens several high-paying and challenging avenues.

In a session that bashed roaring trade of private tutoring unanimously, the consensus reigned in on the fact that education and career is first a student's own choice and best advice for them would be to go in for something for which they have a genuine fascination.

Source: [India Blooms News Service](#)/11-March,2011

MHRD says entry of foreign universities beneficial

The Human Resource Development Ministry has answered the queries raised by a parliamentary standing committee on the entry of foreign institutions in India. The ministry has said that the proposed bill will limit brain drain and attract quality faculty from abroad.

The ministry feels that the potential foreign education providers (FEPs) will help in brain gain as they are expected to attract quality teachers from abroad. Allaying all fears of probable mass exodus of faculty from Indian universities to the foreign ones, ministry said presently also teachers can switch jobs for better emoluments, research or teaching freedom. "Exodus of faculty, if at all it takes place after the entry of FEPs, will at least be within the country, not outside.

Even today, certain outstanding teachers are leaving institutions and going abroad for various reasons. This trend can get arrested or at least slowed down," it said. However, experts feel that a second level of teacher recruitments should be done by the institutions in order to face any eventuality. "There is a possibility that the FEPs will poach faculty from existing institutions.

To meet that challenge, the institutions should create a second level of faculty. There is no dearth of talent in our country," said educationist N.R. Madhava Menon. The parliamentary standing committee has also asked ministry that the bill might allow sub-standard colleges to open their shops in the country.

To this, the ministry replied that only institutions with 20 years of standing in their home countries would be allowed to set up campus in India. But the president of the Federation of Central University Teachers Association, A.N. Mishra, was not convinced. "Twenty years of standing does not prove an institution to be an excellent institution in research and teaching.

My impression is that only third-rung institutions from foreign countries will come to India," he said. Former Delhi University vice-chancellor Deepak Pental also felt foreign institutions might not be interested in research here. "Do you think they will bring their research facilities to conduct high quality research here? Unless the government gives them some research grants, the foreign institutions may not be interested in science and technology. They may offer courses in humanities and management as these courses do not demand much investment," Pental said.

Source: [South Asia](#)/11-March,2011

Public-Private Partnership Critical For Quality in Higher Education

The Government of India has given more thrust to the education sector in the 11th plan by increasing the plan allocation upto 19 percent of the gross budgetary support" said Dr D Purandeswari, Hon'ble Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Government of India in her inaugural address at the Conference on "Education for Sustainable Development" organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here today.

Dr Purandeswari said that the education system should respond to the changing needs of the stakeholders, especially when our country is moving on the fast track of economic growth. Universities and institutions in the country should focus on quality in education – not only in infrastructure, curriculum, but also in the quality of faculty for the benefit of students. She urged the State Governments to increase the funding to the Universities and also enact the Right to Education Act to ensure an holistic development in the education sector.

Speaking about the issue of employability, the Minister said that the Government – Industry collaboration would help in addressing the employability issues. The Government could only provide broad based education, and it is the private sector, which should come forward in providing vocational skills to suit their requirements, said the Minister. She urged the private sector to setup more skill development centres to meet industry requirements.

Mr Arun Maira, Member, Planning Commission, Government of India in his keynote address emphasised on three key elements of education such as; innovation in delivery, new methods of learning and job-oriented education which would make the higher education in India more relevant in today's context.

Mr Maira pointed out that the education system should align with the emerging economic trends especially keeping in view the employment potential of high growth sectors. He said that the manufacturing sector is one of the key contributors of economic growth and employment generation. Higher Education institutions should prepare themselves to meet the manpower requirements of high growth industry sectors such as manufacturing, where India has a global competitive advantage.

In his special address, Mr S Gopalakrishnan, Chairman, CII Southern Region & CEO & Managing Director, Infosys Technologies Ltd said that the education should be taken as an enabler of sustainable development and it should also aim at developing people with right attitudes, skills and knowledge.

Mr Gopalakrishnan said that Industry- Institute clusters need to be formed to achieve excellence in the education especially in the fields of curriculum development, research and faculty training. He also said that technology should be deployed in education delivery systems with the help of

open learning platforms to reach out to large section of people.

Mr C R Swaminathan, Conference Chairman & Chief Executive, PSG Industrial Institute in his theme address said that mainstreaming of education must now be realigned to promote awareness, attitudes and skills that will aid in sustainable development. Changes in the systems of work, the technologies we use, etc would also help in achieving sustainable development, he added.

Ms Nandini Rangaswamy, Chairperson, CII Tamil Nadu & Managing Director, Chandra Group in her welcome address emphasised the need to strengthen the skills training capability in the country to meet the growing demand for skilled work force. To achieve sustainability and development, the richness of skills available in society must be harnessed through partnerships involving academia, industry and government said Ms Nandini.

Mr N K Ranganath, Vice Chairman, CII Tamil Nadu & Managing Director, Grundfos Pumps India Pvt Ltd proposed the vote of thanks.

Source: [India Education Diary](#)/13-March, 2011

Revised NCHER Bill incorporates 'agreement'

Incorporating the provisions of the 'agreement' arrived at with the expert group of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to resolve the turf-war over the jurisdiction of medical education, the Human Resource Development Ministry-created task force has revised the Higher Education and Research Bill specifying the role of and giving representation to health and medical education in the proposed body.

The Bill that seeks to establish the National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) has been sent to various Ministries for their comments, and is being keenly studied by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare that had strongly opposed the inclusion of medical education under the proposed overarching regulatory body on the ground that it was linked to health services while the NCHER had said that since all education was governed by the university system and there were multi-disciplinary areas of research, all education should come under one regulator. The comments of the Health and Family Welfare Ministry will be crucial in this regard since its National Commission for Human Resources for Health (NCHRH) Bill will have to be revisited if both the Ministries stick to the agreement.

The amended Bill proposes to include the chairperson of the NCHRH as an ex-officio member of the seven-member National Commission for Higher Education and Research. Three members will be whole-time members while the remaining three will be persons of eminence and standing in the field of medical education and research.

The medical education sector will be represented in the General Council by one person, by rotation, from among heads of institutions of national importance in medical

education, other than the All-India Institute of Medical Science, New Delhi. The AIIMS will be permanently represented in the General Council.

The General Council will discharge functions related to determination, coordination and maintenance of standards in higher education and research, the re-worked draft says, adding that regulations for the minimum standards will be determined and maintained for equivalence of degree or diploma, norms and processes for establishment of colleges and enrolment of students in so far as they relate to health education by the regulations issued by the National Commission for Human Resources for Health.

The Board for Research Promotion and Innovation, as proposed under the NCHER, will have two persons of eminence and standing in academia with significant and proven contribution to research in medicine and allied fields who will be nominated by the National Commission for Human Resources for Health.

Source: [The Hindu](#)/13-March, 2011

Continuing along path of education reform

Wish list from this year's budget from an education sector standpoint include, announcements around the following:-

- Policy initiatives to encourage private participation in PPP models & education services;
- Dilution of FDI conditions prescribed for construction development of education institutions;
- Income-tax incentives and tax holidays for creation of education infrastructure;
- Expansion of service tax exemptions for services provided to or by education institutions;
- Announcement of a roadmap for passing of pending Higher Education Bills in Parliament.

The Indian private education sector offers considerable opportunities for the private sector. In the context of higher education, the Ministry of Human Resource and Development has targeted an increase in the gross enrollment ratio from the current 12% to 30% by the year 2020. If this is to be achieved, India would need over 300 new Universities and 20,000 new Colleges to be set up. Significant expansion in the number of K-12 institutions is also required. These supply gaps cannot be achieved through public funding alone and there is an acute need for the private enterprise to significantly increase its participation in the sector.

Education in India comprises of the regulated and unregulated segments. For example, segments such as vocational training, test preparation centers, ICT services, etc, are subject to little or no regulation. On the other hand, K-12 education and institutions that offer degrees or diplomas comprise the regulated segment. Under Indian laws, the regulated segment requires the institution to function under a not-for-profit format and has been historically subject to archaic laws and multiple regulations. Subject to CSR initiatives, the not-for-profit mandate and

the regulatory framework may have dissuaded private capital from entering the regulated segment. While it may be too much to expect the Government to make the structural change required to move towards a for-profit-model, the Government through policy could encourage private sector participation through public-private partnership models and education services.

The private sector can be encouraged to provide much needed real estate and infrastructure to K-12 schools and higher education institutions. Both K-12 legislation such as those of CBSE, ICSE and State Boards and higher education legislation such as certain Private University laws permit the institution to lease land and buildings subject to minimum lease tenures. A pain point in this context is India's Foreign Direct Investment ("FDI") regulations, as applicable to real estate. While foreign investment up-to 100% is permitted in real estate, stringent investment and development conditions have been prescribed. One such development condition is the requirement to develop a minimum of 50,000 square meters per project, which is in particular difficult to comply with for school projects. The Budget should take steps to dilute the FDI regulations for the education sector on par with those of other infrastructure segments such as hotels and hospitals in which FDI is permitted without restrictions. A lease model may help the education institution achieve scale faster and will result in a win-win situation for both the Government and the service provider.

Under the domestic tax law, education is a 'charitable activity', which entitles not-for-profit entities to claim income-tax exemptions on their income. However, no similar incentives are provided to entities engaged in the development of infrastructure for education purposes. The dearth of high quality infrastructure in both private / State institutions justifies the need for tax holidays for entities that invest in the creation of education related infrastructure. Such tax breaks could be structured on the same lines as the deductions contained in tax law for the development of other infrastructure segments such as industrial parks, hospitals, etc. Such a policy will positively impact the creation of additional capacities and among others would help the Government achieve its social objectives around implementation of the Right to Education Act, 2009 and its targeted gross enrolment ratios.

The fees charged by recognized education institutions to students are not subject to service tax. However, most services consumed by such institutions are subjected to service tax and as a result the tax burden is passed on to students. The Finance Minister could consider exempting services rendered by entities to recognized educational institutions from the levy of service tax. Under the current service tax code, taxable service categories such as immovable property rentals and business support services provided to recognized education institutions are not subject to service tax and it would be helpful if the exemptions can be applied across a larger list of taxable

service categories. If such an exemption is provided, this would reduce the cost of imparting education by a few percentage points and would make it easier to comply with the RTE Act and sixth pay commission norms.

While staying on the subject of service tax, the definition of commercial coaching and training centers was widened in the last budget. This year it is rumored that the service tax net would be widened to include additional education services. Human resource development is one of India's most critical challenges given our demographic profile and the Minister should weigh the potential revenue collection with access and equity to achieve inclusive growth.

As is common to other sectors as well, tax and policy certainty is critical while making investment decisions; else the risk weightage for the sector increases. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has proposed a large number of Bills including the Foreign Education Providers Bill and the Unfair Practices Bill. The passage of such Bills would help the process of reform and would add to policy certainty across the higher education sector. We are hopeful that the Finance Minister would in his Budget provide a road map towards enactment of pending Bills; which otherwise may share the fate of several other legislation which either does not get enacted or are enacted after significant delays.

Source: moneycontrol.com

Out before they are in

While education can be the best equaliser of inequities, the way our system works, it only perpetuates existing socioeconomic differences.

"On your marks, get set..." Even before the academic race begins, many Indian children are on the back foot. From jostling for entry into 'premium' playschools to coaching classes for toddler interviews to finding the right 'contacts', parents run from pillar to post to admit their child into a 'good' school. Following a High Court directive in 2007, schools in Delhi have done away with gruelling admission interviews and instead rely on a points system based on residential proximity, siblings in school, parent's alumni status, education and achievement, with leeway for schools to include their own criteria. Even though Delhi has banned unnerving interviews, the admissions process is still harrowing because the root causes of this skewed demand and supply have not been tackled. The dearth of high quality schools continues to confront the capital with parents queuing up in the wee hours to get admission forms from dozens of schools. Demand for the best schools continues to skyrocket; applications received by these institutions are around 10 times the number of available seats. In contrast, a few of the lesser known ones do not even fill their seats.

The fact that our country sports gross inequalities is all too evident in the domain of education. Ironically, education, which is one of the best equalisers, serves to perpetuate stark socioeconomic differences that plague our nation.

Even before a child can compete, she is left behind by a system that favours the privileged few who can make it to the better schools. The consequences of receiving substandard education in the primary classes are indeed damaging and long-lasting as a weak academic foundation leads to a downward spiral. A study in the U.S. examined outcomes on two average eight-year-olds who were given teachers who differ greatly in quality. The child with an excellent teacher is almost 50 percentile points ahead of the child with the poor teacher after three years.

The Delhi example highlights the fact that there are no quick fixes to tackle this educational conundrum. As Sunil Khilnani says, nothing short of an “educational revolution: revolutionary in methods, scope, speed- above all, in will” will suffice. Only by increasing the number of primary schools, attracting a talented workforce, providing excellent teacher training, improving the infrastructure of existing institutions and upgrading our curricula to meet 21 {+s} {+t} century requirements, can we avoid a farcical school admissions process. According to Tony Wagner, “Teaching all students to think and to be curious is much more than a technical problem for which educators, alone, are accountable.” Thus, the government and civic society must work collaboratively to set up sterling schools. Further, existing schools, both government and private, need qualified, competent and sensitive teachers who are able to engage, extend and empathise with students.

Neglecting the foundation

Recently, the Union Minister of Human Resources announced that India should have Navratna universities on par with the Ivy Leagues. While this may be a laudable aim, we cannot neglect the foundational stones on which these halls of learning must rest. Producing a few students who are internationally competitive does not make our educational system world-class. As Krishna Kumar, the former Director of NCERT, writes, “No country can hope to build an industrial human resource by merely harnessing the cutting edge. It is the excellence of the average person that gives an industrial economy its edge.” Thus, unless and until we provide creative and considerate education for all our children, India will not be able to harness its demographic dividend.

Towards Inclusion

Getting a child with a learning difficulty admitted into a regular school can be a herculean task. Many schools close their doors just because a child is differentlyabled, even if the child is able to cope in the mainstream after receiving intervention. Even schools that profess to practise inclusion skirt around the issue saying they are not equipped to deal with a particular child. Rare indeed is the school that wants and tries to gear itself up to the challenge. A school that is inclusive in letter and spirit embraces a recalcitrant child, provides supplementary services, models tolerance, exhibits flexibility by making necessary accommodations and, as a result, grows richer.

Schools may understandably bemoan that they do not have the resources - both material and personnel - to meet the special needs of these students, but change, alas, does not come about without a will. A willingness to accept that all children are worthy of being educated. As Jerome Bruner puts it, “We may take as perhaps the most general objective of education that it cultivates excellence; but it should be clear in what sense this phrase is used. It here refers not only to schooling the better student but also to helping each student achieve his optimum intellectual development.”

Source: [The Hindu](#)/13-March, 2011

Tertiary Education: National Ills and Regional Confusions

Tertiary education, generally termed as higher education, is not in an enviable position in this country and particularly so in this region. We have lost focus, direction and the commitment which were there upto about the early 1980s. While the emphasis on science education has been salient, it has not yielded the kind of results expected from the pre-eminence given to its funding. Social science research too has been very laggard and with little attention from the funding authorities.

All these are happening at a time when almost all the countries, including India, are appreciating the necessities and compulsions of a knowledge economy. While some tend to interpret knowledge economy as something to be related to the market orientation for profit only, we are absolutely wrong in doing so. The concept and approach of knowledge economy is an outcome of the centering of human beings as the core of development discourse as compared to the earlier focus on materials. Besides, use of existing knowledge in execution of every functioning has been underlined as the means to enhance common efficiency and address poverty issues at the level of individuals and households.

Chinese Scenario: A comparison with the Chinese would be interesting and frightening in this regard. They are expecting that they would get the Nobel Prize in stemcell research within a decade or so. Despite the long emphasis on science in national funding, can Indian science afford to have any of such confidence? Further the Chinese balance in emphasising research across disciplines stands far superior to the Indian imbalance. The budget of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences alone would be about five times that of the Indian Council of Social Science Research. We can even go over to the least developed province of China, Yunnan. The Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences alone has eleven research institutes under it. Further, undergraduates from two universities in China, Peking and Tsinghua, have beaten Yale, Cornell and Michigan in completing Ph.D. from American universities in recent years. Still further, China have got universities and medical colleges within the top hundred of the world whereas India has none; this is about the mainland China only and without taking into account institutes in Hong

Kong. Imagine higher education scenario in India was far superior to that of the Chinese in the pre-1980 period.

National Ills: The ills of the core of Indian tertiary education are stark. First, the country does not have a history of sustaining institutes of higher learning.

This is how we have allowed all the pre-eminent centres of teaching and research to degenerate over the years. Secondly, there is over-centralisation in higher education administration, curriculum and provision in this country. This has prevented the emergence of an open and thriving knowledge generation system. Third, while heterogeneity has been the reality of the country by any conceivable yardstick, the tertiary education authorities in the country have been busy with efforts for homogenising higher education across the country. This has led to absolute irrelevance, lack of focus and commitment in the entire sector.

Peripheral Confusion: The North Eastern Region shares all the national ills characterising higher education. But it has also added some of her own. The peripherality of the region is in two clear aspects. First, there is the usual geographical one. But the geographic aspect is unique when it applies to the region. While the usual periphery is conceived in a uniform and linear way, the region is peripheral with a break. Second, the region is peripheral when it comes to exercise of authorities in higher education is concerned as well.

The worst part is that the peripheral characteristics and the national ills at the core are coupled by some gross confusions about tertiary education in the region.

Before we come to these, we can profitably recall the missions of higher education. They are the provision of teaching, involvement in research and rendering of social service.

Given these three components of the higher education mission, we now need to situate our scenario and identify the space where the sector should be playing an active role. The prevailing paradigm of tertiary education in the country is one based on industry-academics interface, and we have just blindly replicated it in the region.

This is how the lack of relevance and appropriateness of the tertiary education institutes are getting increasingly exposed in this part of the country. The region simply does not have a robust and identifiable industrial sector. So the higher education paradigm based on industry-academics interface would be plain irrelevant in this part of the country. The only interface we should nurture and have should be one of society and academics. This important aspect of relevance and contribution to the social cause has not yet dawned on the education policy makers and authorities in the region. This is why we have not been able to make the kind of headway which we could otherwise.

Another very important failure of higher education in the region is the absolute neglect of the significance of undergraduate education. This is the most critical input in the entire structure of the tertiary education system. But we have allowed all our colleges to decay, thanks to the manoeuvres of the government. Remember all our colleges were competitive and excellent centres of learning before government entered the scene. Now the onus is definitely on the culprit to see to it that corrective measures are put in place to restore the lost glory of the colleges in the region.

If we want a robust future of our region, the most critical input would be to have a clear vision of the society-academics interface and restore glory to the colleges of the region. Education authorities have a role to play here.

Source: kanglaonline.com/ 13-March, 2011

How to Prevent Child Marriage through Education

Imagine: in your hometown, only three in 100 girls ever learn to read. Female students in high school are a rarity, and a girl's reputation is so fragile that she is rarely permitted to venture beyond her village unescorted -- not even to go to school. It may sound unfathomable, yet this is the universal reality for the young women living in Mewat, Haryana, a rural part of northern India where tradition dictates that a teenage girl's "marriage-ability" and manual labor take precedence over her human rights.

International nonprofit Lotus Outreach has worked with locals in Mewat since 2007 to implement the Lotus Education as a Right Network (LEARN) project. When officers pushed the issue of female attendance, the indigenous Muslim Meo tribe showed great hesitation to let young girls travel alone to reach schools in neighboring villages. But in 2010, Lotus Outreach found a simple yet effective solution: trusted local owners of minivans were hired to safely chaperone village girls to school each day in a new project called the Blossom Bus.

"The improvements LEARN officers have brought to schools were instrumental in convincing these families to take a leap of faith and break with social conventions by sending their adolescent girls to available schools," says Glenn Fawcett, Lotus Outreach Executive Director of Field Operations. "Our first three buses were immediately fully booked and the waiting list is growing every day."

Mewat's misfortunes clash sharply with the surrounding areas. The capital city of New Delhi -- with its shopping malls and thriving commercial activity -- is only two hours away. Yet here houses are made of animal dung, water buffalo roam into school yards, and electricity is a rarity. With a female literacy rate of 3 percent, Mewat ranks among the most regressive districts in terms of girls' education in all of India.

In Mewat, the immediate resource gap occurs in the form of transportation. Because few villages have secondary schools and allowing a girl to travel alone is widely believed to be imprudent by the pious Meos, female education

typically ends at the primary level. This low ceiling feeds into a downward spiral for the female population by diminishing the return on a girl's schooling, and increasing the impetus to keep her at home, at work in the fields or marry her off to another provider.

In the three years LEARN officers have worked in the district they have found that given the option, many Meos would happily see their daughters advance in the formal education system. Since the launch of the Blossom Bus last spring, the sight of chattering school girls in bright pink headscarves stepping off one of the white mini-buses after school is a common sight.

Thirteen year-old Murshida, along with three of her sisters (ages 15, 14 and 12), were recently selected for the project. "My two eldest sisters stopped going to school after the 5th grade and were married at 14 and 15," Murshida says. "I wanted to study further after I passed grade five two years ago, but was refused by my father who was planning to marry me off."

When LEARN Officer Suraj Kumar approached her mother about sending her and her sisters back to school, Murshida's heart leaped. Her marriage hadn't yet taken place -- there was still time to take another path.

Suraj proposed supervised transportation, even allowing for one person from the family to serve as the chaperone.

After discussing the idea with the girls' parents, Suraj was able to secure their consent and now all four girls are back in school. "That was the most memorable day for the four of us," Murshida says. "Now we will not be pushed to marry before we turn 18."

By demonstrating that with a little attention and effort a few kilometers need not stand in the way of female empowerment, Lotus Outreach intends to spark a broad movement favoring girls' education in Mewat.

Today, 12 vans in full-time operation keep 50 ambitious young women on track to complete high school. The cost per girl is \$150 per year.

The implications of continued female education are profound. The greater bargaining power of an educated woman is felt by the entire household, since women are estimated to invest twice as much in their families compared to men.

Moreover, educated women delay childbearing, space pregnancies, and raise healthier and better-educated children. The Blossom Bus aims to lead the way in reinstating female education as a norm rather than an anomaly.

Lotus Outreach is a California-based 501(c)(3) dedicated to ensuring the education, health and safety of vulnerable women and children in the developing world. The Blossom Bus is one of several successful projects it operates in Asia today.

Source: [The Huffington post](#)/14-March, 2011

Reinventing the M.B.A.

B-schools are overhauling curriculum to turn out more innovative, socially responsible leaders.

Lindsey Olier Barnes had just arrived in Bangalore, India for a monthlong internship at IT giant Infosys when she encountered one of the real-world problems she'd heard so much about back at Stanford University's [Graduate School of Business](#). The Infosys group to which she was assigned had been tasked with getting managers to focus on new products as well as the company's traditional niche, providing cost-cutting solutions to clients. The move was out of the comfort zone for many managers, and a constant complaint of her colleagues in the group was, "They won't listen."

So Barnes took a page from her Leadership Labs course. She made a point of hearing out the managers before launching into her own spiel, so she could "address the root causes of their concerns." Suddenly they seemed more receptive and started asking questions about the new strategy. By letting them voice their worries about what the change could mean for them and their employees, Barnes says, she earned their trust. She had learned that "people don't care about how much you know until they know how much you care."

Barnes's communication coup is exactly the kind of outcome business educators have in mind as they rethink M.B.A. programs to de-emphasize traditional discipline-based courses like marketing and finance in favor of a focus on leadership skills, innovation, social responsibility, and a global perspective. A handful of elite institutions, including the [Yale School of Management](#), Stanford, and, most recently, the [Wharton School](#) at the University of Pennsylvania, have led the charge with radical curriculum overhauls.

But John Fernandes, president and CEO of AACSB International—The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, which accredits b-schools, estimates that upwards of 75 percent of schools have made some changes to their curricula. "In many instances, you are seeing them being destroyed and rebuilt," he says. The capacity of the leaders "that society expects today is so demanding and so broad that everyone is rushing to meet those needs."

Yale rolled out its new curriculum in 2006, after a yearlong review in which administrators found a widening disconnect between M.B.A. programs and the business world. The school eliminated traditional coursework in favor of interdisciplinary classes focused on the "organizational perspectives" of different parties. So, for example, instead of taking a finance class, students take courses on the investor and the customer and learn about the fundamentals of finance in each class from those different perspectives. Economics is similarly taught from various viewpoints, including those of competitors, the state and society, and operations.

The old case study method of instruction has been revisited, too. Rather than consider pre-digested summaries of company situations, students tackle "raw cases" packed with original data. Instead of being presented with an income statement, for example, they must mine the considerably bulkier annual filing to the Securities and Exchange Commission for data. The raw cases "push us to understand," says second-year Yale student Jason Hill. "They purposely put in more material than you could ever look at, but you have to learn where to look."

Another buzz phrase in b-school circles these days is "leadership development." It's a key component of the M.B.A. programs deemed most successful by David Garvin, a professor of business administration at [Harvard Business School](#) and coauthor of [Rethinking the MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads](#). The ability to guide others and give staff members critical feedback must be developed, Garvin argues, through exercises and experiences that develop self-awareness and an appreciation of how coworkers affect one another. Stanford similarly stresses what Dean Garth Saloner calls three leadership capabilities: critical analytical thinking; innovative thinking; and personal leadership.

A challenge for M.B.A. programs today is that many of the industries in which their grads will be leaders don't yet exist. "Today they work in hedge funds and biotechnology," says Wharton Dean Thomas Robertson. "None of that existed 20 years ago." Wharton has appointed a vice dean to focus specifically on ensuring that innovation is everywhere in the new curriculum, which was approved last December. One new course content area, for example, is Management of Operations, Innovation, Information, and Decisions under Uncertainty.

The recent financial upheaval has also led M.B.A. programs to focus more on social responsibility. Business schools have been blamed for fostering the culture of greed—or at least short-sightedness—that led to the crisis. As a result, says AACSB's Fernandes, schools are exploring how to change their curricula to produce responsible leaders who don't focus solely "on profit maximization."

Stanford, for one, has introduced an ethics class with guest lectures by industry veterans. Students are presented with real-life issues such as "spinning," a controversial practice in which investment banks offer stock options to executives with whom they do business in advance of an initial public offering. "I do believe that business schools have an obligation to society to be a force for good," says Wharton's Robertson.

Perhaps no curriculum change has been more widely embraced by educators than the global component. Stanford now requires students to do an internship, a service-learning project, or a study trip in a country where they haven't lived or worked before the start of their second year. At the University of Michigan's Ross School

of Business, students spend the last seven weeks of their first year immersed in small-group field projects at real companies. One team is traveling to South Africa to help an alternative energy company develop a leasing model for a fuel cell power plant.

Three years ago, Emory University's Goizueta Business School introduced a 10-day break during spring semester so students could earn credit by traveling abroad with a faculty member to explore a topic relevant to the host country in association with local and multinational firms. Students visit Costa Rica, for example, to help develop the local coffee farm industry.

"It's one thing to teach the political economy of China and India," says Harvard's Garvin. "It's another thing to get on the ground in field projects in those countries and actually try and get something done."

Source: [US News](#)/14-March, 2011

Puppets for education offer numerous benefits

Puppets have been part of our history and daily lives since their origination in India around one thousand B.C. They have become a source of entertainment for both adults and children. One of the reasons for society's fascination with these characters is their versatility as a vehicle for creativity and learning by children. The website [www.puppetsforeducation.co.uk](#) was established as a source for all types of puppet related items such as hand puppets, living puppets and puppet storybooks and much more, all of which can be used to develop and expand a child's education.

This website offers an extensive collection of high quality [puppets](#) in a wide range of characters that will stir a child's imagination. Their offerings of puppet storybooks based on popular and time-tested children's fables serve as a springboard to extend their mind's eye. Hand puppets, which are full of personality, especially inspire a child to use the [puppet storybooks](#) as a basis for more exploration into imaginary worlds.

The [hand puppets](#) offered by Puppets For Education allow a child to become a surgeon, a fire-fighter, a princess or even a world-famous ballerina. Parents will enjoy watching their child grow their vocabulary and creativity right before their eyes. The advantage of hand puppets is that they allow a child to animate the puppet and become more intimately involved with the characters.

The [living puppets](#) line offers the opportunity to further expand a child's fantasy. These full-body personalities are 26" tall with movable mouth, hands and head. They all come with removable and changeable clothing, such as swimsuits, shoes and jackets. Their construction of soft material makes them instantly cuddly. Living Puppets come in both boys and girls with bubbling personalities just waiting to come to life.

The objective of the Puppets for Education website, [www.puppetsforeducation.co.uk](#) is to provide a person or

animal for just about anything a child can imagine, and they accomplish this goal. They only offer high-quality products that will inspire children and have the durability to last for years. Their customer base with many repeat buyers is a testimony to their prompt product delivery and patient customer support. Their experienced staff are always available to advise parents in their selection of the best characters to meet their children's needs. This company knows their products and is always able to find the appropriate character for any situation which is one of the key reasons they have gone from strength to strength.

[More.....](#)

Source: [News Broadcast.uk](#)/14-March, 2011

Teaching the art of philanthropy

Last week, a motley group of philanthropists from across the globe went together to watch Indian philanthropists in areas ranging from education and healthcare to micro-credit go about their routine in Bangalore.

Among the 15-odd charities they met across seven days were the Akshara Foundation, an NGO that promotes literacy; Milk Route, a for-profit, supply-chain network for rural milk producers; Janaagraha, which works to improve urban governance; and Labournet, which works to improve lives of blue collar workers.

The site visits were interspersed with talks by domain specialists such as economist Amir Ullah Khan, and Ramya Venkataraman, who leads McKinsey's education practice in India.

Considering that Indian philanthropy is as yet emerging, this was an unusual event. What would philanthropists from the UK, Canada and England be trying to learn in self-help group meetings by south Indian NGOs?

These altruists were all participants in an exclusive workshop held by a London-based non-governmental organization that aims to teach what it refers to as strategic philanthropy. Known as the Philanthropy Workshop (TPW), and conducted by the Institute for Philanthropy, this programme was started in association with the Rockefeller Foundation in 1995 to teach philanthropists how to derive maximum impact from their donations.

Strategic philanthropy, according to Salvatore LaSpada, chief executive of Institute for Philanthropy, is about finding long-term solutions to problems, rather than treating symptoms. It is about the broader impact and systemic changes. And often, it is simply about cost efficiency.

TPW alumni say this approach is missing among a surprising majority of philanthropists, leading to wasted efforts and indiscriminately written cheques that don't really make a difference. "There are a lot of (philanthropic) organizations with serious inefficiencies," said alumnus Albert Pace, the founder of the Canadian Pace Family Foundation, which also works in the area of healthcare in countries in southern Africa.

He tells the story of a network of wealthy Pakistani gentlemen in London. "They were funding every Pakistani charity that came to them—almost 50-60 of them. Each was writing up to one cheque a day. One day, they accidentally run into each other, start talking, and notice something is very wrong."

The philanthropists, Pace said, realized they were all funding charities whose work was exactly the same; multiple fund-raisers were being carried out for the same causes. So they gave the charities a mandate to consolidate their overheads and management, and reduce the fundraising.

"It became far more efficient," Pace said, "The charities didn't have to worry anymore that they were carrying on in a hand-to-mouth fashion. And their costs also reduced."

Another alumnus is 31-year-old Texan Katherine Lorenz, a grandchild of George P. Mitchell, founder of a Fortune 500 oil-and-gas company, and a philanthropist. As the third generation in a billionaire family, Lorenz herself is a full-time philanthropist, having co-founded Punte a la Salud Comunitaria, a non-profit organization working to eradicate malnutrition in rural Mexico.

For inheritors such as Lorenz who have already made up their minds to work for charity, the challenge is not finding the funds. It is getting the most bang out of the philanthropic buck, as Lorenz puts it.

"There is enormous research available about how to carry on a business, measure returns, handle mergers and acquisitions, but when it comes to philanthropy, there is very little," she said.

But how can philanthropy be taught? One way is through shared research.

One of the institute's collection of research papers discusses the relative merits of spend-out model of charity, where the organization exhausts a sum of money by a given date, vis-a-vis the endowment model where small amounts are disbursed across the lifetime of a charity.

"Basic economics dictate that if a trust or foundation's investment returns do not exceed the inflation rate, the real value of the endowment will never be paid out, which some argue, defeats the purpose of giving," the paper stated.

It referred to another 2007 paper by Ogden T. that argues that in its first 100 years of existence, the Carnegie Foundation has given away only 20% of the value of Andrew Carnegie's founding gift.

The Institute for Philanthropy does not give financial or legal advice, though. "If you look at our research, you will see we usually teach using a case-study model," said Salvatore LaSpada, the institute's chief executive officer. "We show donors the options they have and help them figure out what they want to do. We educate them on the how, not the what."

“Philanthropy is a deeply personal thing and no one can advise a donor on what cause they should be passionate about,” says Lorenz, who is deputy director at the New York office of the institute.

However, LaSpada says the workshop is not just about sharing anecdotal information. “We are all about concrete tools and frameworks to analyse social problems.”

The workshop is made of three modules, each of which is for a week, spread out over a year. The first focuses on areas such as strategy formulation, assessing the health of nonprofit organizations and crafting a communication strategy. One of the ideas discussed here is what LaSpada calls mission-related investing.

“You have a big pile of money and use a part for philanthropy. But how do you best use the remaining to produce the right social benefit? If you are working for better women’s reproductive healthcare, you could also invest in biotech companies in the area,” he said. “And if you are funding advocacy for climate change, you might want to look at research on fuel-efficient cars.”

The second module, held previously in Vietnam, Ghana, South Africa, and Brazil, looks to apply the learning in a global setting. This was what was held in India last week.

The third module focuses on advocacy, coalition building and collaboration. After the workshop, the alumni network continues to have access to the institute’s research and meets through advanced alumni modules, network gatherings, skill building sessions and field visits.

What are the participants taking home from the workshop? Said alumnus Lynne Smitham, founder of the Kiawah Trust that works in the area of health and education in India, “When I first came to TPW, one round of our funding commitments was coming to an end. So we took the opportunity to sharpen our focus on women’s empowerment and helping girls in school. We also changed our geography to northern India (Kiawah was earlier focused on southern India and Africa) because we felt we would have the maximum impact there. We also commissioned a second piece of research on women’s empowerment.”

Pace also agreed he is far more tuned-in to the impact of his charity. “We didn’t even know what effect we were having before this. Now, we get reports, pictures; I can see the product of my money. I know, for a fact, that the water that comes out of the pipe down Mt Kenya is actually clean.”

Meeting with potential collaborators is another big upside of TPW. “We went to Rwanda with the workshop and met Josh Ruxin (founder) of the Access Project. As a result, we are now building a hospital with them to reduce the travel time to the nearest healthcare centre in the districts of Rwanda,” said Pace.

Source: Live.Mint.Com/15-March, 2011

Higher education is catalyst to major economic change

Excellence in higher education rests more on people keen on learning than on the learned ones, was the general consensus reached during the second annual convention of Higher Education Forum (HEF) held at ITM Business School, Kharghar.

Educationists shared their thoughts and understanding on the topic “Towards Excellence in Higher Education” during the event organised in partnership with DNA.

The day-long convention, divided into two technical sessions, saw an array of topics pertaining to higher education and its scenario in India being raised for faculty members to take note and consider implementing relevant changes.

While the first session saw panel discussion from corporates and stakeholders perspective and second was panel discussion on building blocks of excellence in institutions.

With detailed statistical analysis on the status of those seeking higher education in relation to USA and China, the deliberation raised pointed on quantitative expansion that should enable higher education to evolve from multiple zone of ignorance to excellence.

“Education in India, both primary and higher, is indicated by various committee report at an abysmally low level. If India is to become global competitive economy then the need to strengthen education has to be felt internally. Higher education is the catalyst for bringing about economical change and thereby its transition from efficiency to effectiveness and finally to excellence would bring about startling results,” said founder and convener of HEF, Dr AK Sengupta.

At the convention, Dr Anil Kakodkar, former chairman of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and chairman of the High Power Committee for Reforms of Higher and Professional Education in the state of Maharashtra delivered the key note.

The guest of honour was former director, IIT Madras and former Chairman of AICTE Dr R Natarajan and President Emeritus, Pace University, USA Dr David Caputo.

A special address on the topic was also given by founding director of Mastek, Ashank Desai. Dr PV Ramanna, chairman of ITM Group of Institutions, gave the welcome speech.

The convention saw speakers laying emphasis on bringing about excellence within faculty and the institute as against projecting individual excellence.

The observation was loosely based on the whopping financial figure released by USA of US\$ 7.5 billion being earned purely from Indian students enrolled for higher education.

"Higher education's evolution or excellence relies primarily upon the faculty. A good faculty coupled with proper access to education that's affordable which eventually instills a sense of accountability and enables students to measure their cognitive gains will be the driving force for acquiring excellence in higher education. In USA, average graduates reel under debts in the process of studies thereby prompting them to seek alternative options instead of opting for higher studies," Caputo said.

Rhetoric remarks on the present day functionary role of institution in churning out graduates and Ph.Ds rather than striving for enhancing skills and knowledge needed for being employ worthy was mentioned repeatedly.

The little stress on making education industrial-oriented and bringing about bilateral communicative existence between industries and institutes was opined to be necessary.

"We need to create an education system where we are able to impart knowledge at all frontier. Teaching has to be conducted in an environment of research and knowledge together.

The research conducted has to have participation of the society and industry concerned for higher education to co-exist productively. Higher education needs to be a proper amalgamation of the best of teacher, pleasure in research work, feel the spirit of innovation and practically experience of this transition into work," Kakodkar said.

The corporate speakers for the occasion included President (HR) Mahindra & Mahindra, Rajeev Dubey; CEO, Global Talent Track, Dr. Uma Ganesh; EVP & Head, Emerging Markets; Mr. P A Krishnan; Global CEO, Zensar Technologies Dr. Ganesh Natarajan.

A parallel understanding driven by the speakers jointly in achieving excellence in higher education was the need to have value driven education and moralistic understanding of success.

So higher education success was opined to rest upon the process of thinking, doing and being. Having the approach of 'We' over 'I' following willingness to listen and emphasis on trust was informed to be of equal importance.

"Without leadership quality that not self seeking rather governed by trust and openness to emphatically listen and create a win-win situation as against the norm of win and lose trend while striving to make profit is integral for higher education to achieve the oft spoken excellence," Dubey opined.

Source: [DNA India](#)/15-March, 2011

Public Awareness Programs Should Be Conducted

According to the experts, India has the world's one-fourth cervical cancer patients. It is an alarming situation for any country. India should start public awareness campaign programs. These should be implemented aggressively in the public education.

Cervical cancer is the most frequent and dangerous cancer which affect women in India. Statistic records claim that around 366 million women are affected by cancer. This includes children from the age of 15 and older. The global figures are over 530,000 in one year. Among it, India alone contributes 134,000.

Every year, almost 73,000 women die of cancer disease. The projected statistical count of cancer patients by 2025 is 204,000. The deaths expected are 115,000.

According to India, the mortality rate is 15.2%. The percentage according to the rate of US is 1.7%.

There are vaccines which can reduce the long term incidence and mortality of the cervical cancer. But there are no immediate benefits.

Till now, early detection of cancer is the most important factor behind the cure of this disease.

This is the similar case for Brazil. Brazil is also a developing country as India. Over there cervical cancer stands as the second most frequent cancer among women.

Source: [Top News](#)/15-March, 2011

Doctors' panel has freedom to regulate medical education: Govt

The six-member panel of eminent doctors, which replaced a tainted Medical Council of India last year, has 'total freedom' to regulate medical education in the country, Rajya Sabha was informed.

"Board of Governors (of MCI) has total freedom whatsoever. We do not interfere except for policy directions," Health and Family Welfare Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said during Question Hour.

The government had in May last year dissolved the MCI, which was set up 76 years ago to regulate medical education in the country. The general council of the MCI was superseded on May 15, when the Centre promulgated an ordinance following the arrest of MCI president Ketan Desai by the CBI on charges of corruption.

It was replaced by a six-member panel of eminent doctors led by gastroenterologist S K Sarin.

Azad said applications for six new medical colleges in Gujarat were received by MCI for 2011-12, of which four were government-run while two were private societies run institutions.

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The Board of Governors of MCI approve of any medical college after inspection of facilities including faculty, hospital infrastructure and clinical materials.

In case of the proposed medical colleges in Gujarat, deficiencies were found in infrastructure, clinical material and faculty and so approval has not been granted.

To a separate question, Azad said the Government has enacted the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010 that will prescribe standards and a range for price that private and government hospitals can charge for a particular procedure.

"After the act is enforced, public will get relief" from overcharging and sometimes unnecessary medication or hospitalisation by some hospitals, he said.

"When range and standards are decided, these complaints will reduce if not completely be eliminated," he said.

But so far only four states - Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim - have passed resolutions in their respective assemblies for adopting the act.

The act will also be applicable on UTs, he said adding states have been requested to pass relevant resolutions in their assemblies.

Health is a state subject and it is primarily the responsibility of the state governments to regulate or monitor the functioning of clinical establishments.

Source: [Indian Express](#)/15-March, 2011

Plan for Education like any other financial goal in life

A good education is an asset that can never be taken away, an investment that can never depreciate. Hence, when a survey tells us that young parents in India believe that education determines a child's future and if they are able to give the right input to the child in terms of a good education, they have done their job, it echoes the sentiments of many parents we meet. However, with the rising cost of education, parents have to save and bear the burden of rapidly-increasing fees right from preschool, school to college.

The rise is certainly alarming for the large section of middle-class parents in India, who will not be able to afford the cost unless they do early financial planning. Considering the most common career aspirations a parent may have for a child? an MBA, an engineering degree or medicine. Let's take an example of doing an MBA from a premier management institute. The cost of doing an MBA from IIM-A has increased from . 3.16 lakh in 2003 to . 12.5 lakh in 2009, an eduflation of nearly 22%. Even if we take a moderate inflation rate of 11%, an MBA could cost over . 22 lakh in the next 10 years.

In the research Education Insights with IMRB International, we found out that the majority of parents in the country? nearly 81%? are concerned about the rising cost of their children's education even more than their

health, lifestyle or marriage. Around 30% of the parents are concerned more about the educational expenses than performance in school or marks. A large section of parents, 57% in metros and a whopping 71% in non-metros want to send their children to play school which increases the education expense early. For 69% of the parents, school fee is one of the top concerns while selecting a playschool.

Source: [The Times of India](#)/16-March, 2011

We need to increase literacy level to 95%'

With over 20 years of experience in academic governance at the University of Pune, Bhushan Patwardhan has been convener of the national committee on Promotion of Indian Higher Education Abroad, member of the taskforce on the National Knowledge Commission and Planning Commission, consultant to WHO Geneva and SEARO. He has also worked as chief (academics) with Manipal Education in Bangalore. Patwardhan has now been appointed vice chancellor of the Symbiosis International University (SIU) and will take charge in the last week of March. Presently, he is director of the Institute of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine, Bangalore. He spoke to DNA on Ayurveda, quality research and the need to improve the literacy rate...

Why do we lag behind in generating quality research? What are the real problems?

Research should not be seen in isolation for the purpose of getting degree qualifications like PhDs. We need more research programmes, teachers and facilities with a balance of affordability, accessibility and quality. Creating a research culture through mentorship and support from networks of research institutes must be closely connected to graduate research in universities.

Confluence of interdisciplinary faculties like science, engineering, biomedicine, information technology, cognitive sciences and artificial intelligence are just a few examples that I would like to experiment with. India needs more holistic, flexible and vibrant universities where research becomes an integral part of every curriculum.

Ayurvedic therapies have many worthy aspects that have been proved. Shouldn't its label of being an alternative therapy be removed now?

In India and abroad, scientists are trying to investigate the huge potential of Ayurveda. It is now beginning to be appreciated through the lens of modern science. Emerging commonalities between biomedicine and Ayurvedic science remain exciting. I hope that better insight into interrelations between the basic principles of Ayurveda and modern science will happen in a complementary and integrative way rather than conflicting or competitive manner.

Certain significant developments have boosted systematic research on various aspects of Ayurveda and traditional medicine in India. Under the science initiative in Ayurvedic research, the Department of Science and Technology has supported several collaborative projects on science and

Ayurveda, which involve a network of institutions. The focus was on subjects like the genomic basis of Ayurvedic phenotypes, metabolic and immunologic correlates of the traditional procedure of panchakarma; and the microstructure of metal-based Ayurvedic drugs in powder form. All such initiatives would certainly help in the expected renaissance of Ayurveda.

We always talk about promoting industry-academic cooperation, but nothing concrete happens in practice. Why?

The major change to befall universities over the last two decades has been identification of the campus as a significant site of capital accumulation. This has resulted in systematic conversion of intellectual activity into intellectual capital and, hence, intellectual property.

The level of cooperation is certainly increasing. The research and development facilities of large corporations are working closely with academia. Several Indian professors and scientists are interacting with industries and many new collaborative initiatives are emerging. This will get further intensified if universities are able to create a conducive environment for innovation and research on their campuses.

How can academics and research activities be made relevant to the needs of society? India is now at the crossroads where we need to increase the literacy level to 95% of the population for social mobilisation and use of technology to create the best possible skilled manpower for nation building.

To make the country self-sufficient, our skilled manpower must get adequate incentives. These incentives must be available to those who pursue higher education to contribute towards nation building. The financial aspects of the education system as a whole will determine the levels of all attributes, including but not limited to excellence, equity, commitment, autonomy, accountability and most importantly, its relevance to societal and national development.

Higher education in India has many threats — scarce finances, inadequate faculty, lack of innovation and autonomy, poor germane content and global competition. Information technology supported by space-based communication systems are changing the needs and character of higher education.

Source: [DNA India](#)/15-March, 2011

RESOURCE

Summary of Economic Survey 2010-11

Robust growth and steady fiscal consolidation have been the hallmark of the Indian economy in the year 2010-11 so far. The growth rate has been 8.6 percent in 2010-11 and is expected to be around 9 percent in the next fiscal year. The growth has been broad based with a rebound in the

Agriculture sector which is expected to grow around 5.4 per cent. Manufacturing and Services sector have registered impressive gains. Savings and investment are looking up while exports are rising. However food inflation, higher commodity prices and volatility in global commodity markets have been a cause of concern underscoring the need of fiscal consolidation and stronger reserves. These are some of the high points of the Economic Survey 2010-11, presented by the Finance Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee in Lok Sabha today.

Recognizing the fact that inflation continues to be high even though it has come down markedly from where it was at the start of the fiscal year, the Survey underlined the need to monitor emerging trends in inflation on a sequential monthly basis. In order to check food inflation, it has suggested, the Government should improve the delivery mechanisms by strengthening the institutions and addressing corruption. The survey has pointed out that the inflation is expected to be 1.5 percent higher than what would be if the country was not on the growth curve.

The Survey has observed that a rise in savings and investments and pick up in private consumption has resulted in 9.7 per cent growth of GDP at market prices (constant) in 2010-11. Savings rate has gone up to 33.7 percent while the investment rate is up to 36.5 percent of GDP in 2009-10.

The Survey points out that the agriculture sector growth in the first four years of the 11th Plan (2007-12) is estimated at 2.87 per cent. The foodgrain production went up to 232.1 billion tonnes from 218.1 billion tonnes in 2009-10. With a relatively good monsoon the agriculture-sector is expected to grow at 5.4 per cent during 2010-11. The rising food inflation and the critical role of agriculture underline the need for a larger investment in agriculture enroute to the second green revolution.

The Survey reports that the industrial output growth rate was 8.6 per cent while the manufacturing sector registered a growth rate of 9.1 per cent in 2010-11. During April-November 2010 telecom, crude oil production, civil aviation sectors performed well while the power generation, cement and fertilizer production, railway freight traffic and cargo handling at major ports have grown at comparatively lower rates. Six core industries registered a growth of 5.3 per cent (provisional) in April-December, 2010 as against 4.7 per cent during the same period in 2009-10.

Economic Survey 2010-11 has highlighted the increasing role of infrastructure services which have been deepening rapidly with rising investments. However unmet gaps still remains large and accelerated investments will be needed in the next Plan period for addressing delays, cost overruns and regulatory and pricing impediments. The telecommunications sector has done exceedingly well as the tele density has increased from 20.74 per cent in 2004 to 143.95 per cent in 2010 in urban areas. While in the rural areas it has gone up from 1.57 per cent in 2004 to 30.18 per cent in 2010.

Lauding the role of services sector as the potential growth engine, the Survey has called for the policies to promote further opportunities in new areas in global demand such as accounting, legal, tourism, education, financial and other services beyond the IT and business process sectors.

The Survey points out that the exports in April-December 2010 went up by 29.5 per cent while the imports during the same period registered a growth rate of 19 per cent. The trade gap narrowed down to US \$ 82.01 bn in the same period. Balance of payment situation has improved due to surge in capital flows and rise in foreign exchange reserves which have been accompanied by rupee appreciation. During current fiscal foreign exchange reserves increased by US \$ 18.2bn from US \$ 279.4 bn in end April 2010 to US \$ 297.3 bn in end December 2010.

The inclusive growth agenda of the Government is reflected in the 59 per cent rise in Net Bank Credit . The expenditure on Social sector programs has been stepped up by 5 percent point of GDP over the past five years.

The Survey points out that Gross Fiscal Deficit is 4.8% of GDP in 2010-11 as against 6.3 percent of GDP in the previous year. The Revenue deficit in the current financial year has been 3.5 percent of GDP as against 5.1 percent in the previous year.

The Economic Survey 2010-11 has expressed satisfaction at the progress of fiscal consolidation and the role of monetary policy on tackling inflation, ensuring availability of funds and expansion of credit growth. It has called for efficient taxation of goods and services by a new GST, raising revenues, installing stronger safeguards and measures to accelerate financial inclusion.

The Economic Survey 2010-11 has lauded the Government's efforts in addressing social and financial inclusion. The specific schemes for Scheduled Castes, Tribes, OBCs and the regions such as North-East, expansion of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan , National Rural Health Mission, in terms of coverage as well as the spending and monitoring have found specific mention in the report. The survey has advised that a better convergence of the schemes to address the issues of unemployment and poverty alleviation could avoid duplication and leakages.

A call for reforms in the university and higher education and correcting the demand supply mismatch in the job market has been made in the report. It says the gap in resources for higher education may be met on the basis of public private partnership without diluting the regulatory oversight of the Government.

The Survey has also made specific mention of Government's active engagement on issues related to climate change with expanded financing of programs and better policies.

The Economic Survey has suggested that in the long run the potential engines of growth for the country could be from skill development and innovative activity and therefore, efforts should be made to promote them.

Regarding the outlook for the Indian economy, the Survey says that despite the risks of global events, such as volatility in commodity prices like crude oil exacerbated by political turmoil in the Middle-East, the Indian economy seems poised to scale greater heights in terms of macro economic indicators. It sums up by stating that the real GDP growth is expected to reach the 9 per cent mark in 2011-12 and the next two decades may well see the economy growing faster than it has done any time in the past.

Source: [Press Information Bureau](#)

Union Budget 2011-12 Highlights

- Critical institutional reforms set pace for double-digit growth
- Scaled up flow of resources infuses dynamism in rural economy
- GDP estimated to have grown at 8.6% in 2010-11
- Exports grown by 9.6%, imports by 17.6% in April-January 2010-11 over corresponding period last year
- Indian economy expected to grow at 9% in 2011-12.
- Five-fold strategy to deal with black money. Group of Ministers to suggest ways for tackling corruption
- Public Debt Management Agency of India Bill to come up next financial year
- Direct Tax Code (DTC) to be effective from April 01, 2012
- Phased move towards direct transfer cash subsidy to BPL people for better delivery of kerosene, LPG and fertilizer mooted
- Rs.40,000 crore to be raised through disinvestment in 2011-12
- FDI policy to be liberalized further
- SEBI registered mutual funds permitted to accept subscription from foreign investors who meet KYC requirement
- FII limit for investment in corporate bonds in infrastructure sector raised
- Additional banking license to private sector players proposed
- Rs.6000 crore to be provided in 2011-12 for maintaining minimum Tier I Capital to Risk Weighted Asset Ratio (CRAR) of 8% in public sector banks
- Rs.500 crore to be provided to regional rural banks to maintain 9% CRAR

- India Microfinance Equity Fund of Rs.100 crore to be created by SIDBI
- Rs. 500 crore Women SHG Development Fund to be created
- Micro Small and Medium Enterprises MSME gets boost as Rs. 5000 crore provided to SIDBI and Rs.3000 crore to NABARD
- Existing housing loan limit enhanced to Rs.25 lakh for dwelling units
- Provision under Rural housing Fund enhanced to Rs.3000 crore
- Allocation under Rashtirya Krishi Vikas yojna (RKVY) increased to Rs.7860 crore
- Allocation of Rs.300 crore to promote 60000 pulses villages in rainfed areas
- Rs. 300 crore vegetable initiative to achieve competitive prices
- Rs.300 crore to promote higher production of nutri-cereals
- Rs.300 crore to promote animal based protein
- Rs.300 crore Accelerated Fodder Development Programme to benefit farmers in 25000 villages
- Credit flow to farmers raised from Rs.3,75,000 crore to Rs.4,75,000 crore
- Rs.10,000 crore for NABARD's Short Term Rural Credit Fund for 2011-12
- 15 more mega food parks during 2011-12
- National food security bill to be introduced this year
- Capital investment in storage capacity to be eligible for viability gap funding
- 23.3% increase in allocation for infrastructure
- Tax-free bonds of Rs.30,000 crore proposed by government undertakings
- Environmental concerns relating to infrastructure projects to be considered by Group of Ministers
- National Mission for Hybrid and Electric Vehicles to be launched
- 7 Mega clusters for leather products to be set up
- Allocation for social sector increased by 17% amounting to 36.4% of total plan allocation
- Bharat Nirman allocation increased by Rs.10,000 crore
- Rural broadband connectivity to all 2.5 lakh panchayats in three years.

- Bill to amend Indian Stamp Act to introduce. Rs.300 crore scheme for modernization stamp and registration administration
- Significant increase in remuneration of Angawadi workers and helpers
- Allocation for education increased by 24%. Rs.21,000 crore allocated for Sarv Shikshya Abhiyan registering an increase of 40%
- 1500 institute of higher learning to be connected by March 2012 with Knowledge Knowledge Network.
- National Innovation Council set up. Additional Rs.500 crore for National Skill Development Fund
- Plan allocation for health stepped up by 20%
- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme liberalized further
- Rs.200 crore for Green India Mission
- Rs.200 crore for cleaning of rivers
- Rs.8000 crore provided for development needs of J&K
- 10 lakhs Aadhaar(UID) numbers to be generated everyday from 1st October
- Fiscal deficit kept at 4.6% of GDP for 2011-12
- Income Tax exemption limit for general category in individual tax payers enhanced from Rs.1,60,000 to Rs.1,80,000
- Qualifying age for senior citizens lowered to 60; senior citizen above 80 year to get Rs.5,00,000 IT exemption
- Surcharge on corporate lowered to 5%

Source: [Press Information Bureau](#)

India aims to have a doctor for every 1,000 people by 2031

[India](#) has just one doctor for 1,700 people. In comparison, the doctor population ratio globally is 1.5:1,000. An internal note prepared by Medical Council of India's 'Undergraduate Education Working Group' said the target being put in place for India is 1 doctor for 1,000 population by 2031.

The note, available with TOI, also looked at the situation in other countries. [Somalia](#) has one doctor for 10,000 population, [Pakistan](#) has one doctor for 1,923 population and [Egypt](#) has one doctor per 1,484 population. China's doctor population ratio stands at 1:1063, Korea 1:951, Brazil 1:844, [Singapore](#) 1:714, Japan 1:606, [Thailand](#) 1:500, UK 1:469, US 1:350 and Germany 1:296.

The note said an in-depth analysis of the number of doctors in the country was done. The next exercise that the working group undertook was to estimate the number of doctors needed to achieve this target. The working group looked at the existing number of medical colleges, the current intake

of these colleges and the critical mass of doctors that would be needed to achieve this target.

Currently, there are 330 medical colleges with an intake of approximately 35,000 students. With this intake, the shortfall of doctors by 2031 is estimated to be 9.54 lakh.

The note said that in view of the projected increase in population, the existing medical colleges would be unable to meet this need and the current intake of medical colleges and the critical mass of doctors needed to be at least doubled to achieve the target.

The working group also looked at the problem of teacher shortage in medical colleges. India at present needs 29,400 teachers but there is a shortfall of 6,340 teachers. There will be an additional need for 35,740 teachers in India soon, the report said.

According to the detailed break-up, subjects like anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, pharmacology, pathology, surgery, medicine and forensic medicine each need 2,000 faculty members. But almost all these departments have a current shortfall of 500-1,500 teachers. Additionally, all these departments would each need 2,100-3,500 teachers in the near future.

Community medicine at present needs 2,400 teachers and has a shortfall of 500 teachers and would additionally need 2,900 teachers.

Gyneacology currently requires 1,600 teachers and would need an additional 1,760 faculty members.

Under short-term solutions, the committee recommended increasing the intake in existing medical colleges wherever adequate infrastructure of teachers and equipment was available. It also suggested attaching established medical colleges to district level hospitals or secondary hospitals run by government agencies.

In medium-term solutions, achievable in three years, it was recommended to upgrade larger district hospitals and augment their infrastructure to become community medical colleges through public private partnership.

Under long-term solutions, achievable in five years, starting new medical colleges and hospitals was recommended, preferably in states and areas underserved by doctors and medical colleges.

According to a Planning Commission report, India is short of six lakh doctors, 10 lakh nurses and two lakh dental surgeons. Ironically, Indian doctors who have migrated to developed countries form nearly 5% of their medical workforce. Almost 60,000 Indian physicians are estimated to be working in countries like US, UK, [Canada](#) and Australia alone.

The note was prepared by a committee including Prof George Mathew, principal, Christian Medical College; Prof Nilima Kshirsagar, former vice-chancellor of Maharashtra University of Health Sciences; Prof J M Kaul, professor of anatomy, Maulana Azad Medical College; Prof Sandeep

Guleria, professor, department of surgery, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, and Brig Chander Mohan, former head of radio diagnosis at Army Hospital (Research and Referral).

Source: [Times of India](#)/07-March, 2011

Indian students in US keen to return home: Survey

Only eight percent of Indians in postgraduate education in the United States "strongly prefer" to stay in the country after finishing their studies, a survey said on Tuesday.

Researchers at Rutgers University, Pennsylvania State University and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences studied the intentions of 1,000 students who are doing or have completed masters, Ph.Ds or post-doctorate qualifications.

A majority, or 53 percent, of them planned to return home from the United States after a few years of work, while a fifth of the 1,000 respondents (21 percent) said they were either in India already or were actively looking to return.

Sixteen percent said they would take the best job regardless of location, while "only 8.0 percent strongly prefer to remain in the US," the study concluded. Another 2.0 percent were classed as "other".

The findings show that India is luring back an increasing amount of overseas talent to its own colleges, university faculties and companies, reflecting the shift in global economic power from the West to Asia.

Economists are beginning to speculate about a "reverse brain-drain," the inversion of the long-standing trend that has seen talented individuals from developing countries study and then work in the West.

"We expected that more students would lean heavily toward remaining in the US," David Finegold, dean of the Rutgers' School of Management and Labor Relations and one of the study's authors, said in a statement.

India's booming economy, better chances to secure a good job, the promise of an affluent lifestyle and being closer to family were the factors fuelling the movement home, the survey said.

The main "hurdles" dissuading the highly qualified respondents from returning to India were fears about red tape and corruption, it said.

Source: [Economic Times](#)/08-March, 2011

'Girls go to govt. schools, boys to private'

At a time when Women's Day is being celebrated with much fanfare the world over, India has a long way to go when it comes to educating 'Sita'.

While a growing number of parents across rural India have begun sending their girls to school, there's a countrywide preference for sending boys to private schools and girls to government schools.

Educationists feel this has a lot to do with the perception that private schools are better than government schools, and that if one has to spend on education, the perceived return on investment is higher for a boy.

According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2010, one of the most authoritative private surveys for rural India, the percentage of girls in government schools is higher than boys in the seven to 14 age group, while the percentage of boys is higher in private schools.

When it comes to making a choice, families have probably decided to send their daughters to government schools and sons to private schools, as there is a popular perception that private schools are better than government schools," says Rukmini Banerji, director, ASER centre.

"The numbers come as a little surprise. Private schools are a lot more expensive than government schools. Parents would probably choose to send their sons to private schools, if they had the money, as they feel private schools deliver better quality and are more career-oriented," says Sonia Gill of the All India Democratic Women's Association.

Interestingly, while the gender divide exists in most states, it is almost negligible in Maharashtra and Bihar, far less than the all-India average.

While the figures come as a little surprise for Maharashtra, known to be a more progressive state, Bihar has seen a dramatic narrowing in the gender divide.

Source: [Times of India](#)//09-March, 2011

Education in the US, careers in India

In a surprising finding, a recent study has concluded that an overwhelming majority of Indian students pursuing higher education in the United States would prefer to return home to begin their professional careers.

Only eight per cent of the nearly 1,000 Indian students who were surveyed expressed strong preference to stay back in the US. The rest are either planning to return home or are undecided as of now, says the joint study conducted by Rutgers University, Pennsylvania State University and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

Nearly 74 per cent of the respondents plan to return to India eventually or had already done so, with most (53 per cent of the whole sample) preferring to get a few years of work experience in the US prior to returning, the study noted. About 16 per cent said they were looking to find the best job, regardless of the location. "The results are surprising and encouraging for Indian universities. We expected that more students would strongly opt to remain in the US," says David Finegold, dean of the Rutgers' School of Management and Labour Relations, and one of the authors of the study.

The study, however, is a small sample of about 100,000 Indian students currently enrolled for graduate and higher studies in American universities.

These pointers are strongly counter-weighted by some strong reasons advanced for returning to India. As many as 475 students cited family reasons, while 406 said they wanted to give back to the motherland and 238 said they would want to return for reasons of comfort with society/culture. "Our results suggest many young academics want to pursue a faculty career in India, if policymakers address some of the key issues facing the Indian higher education system," Finegold said.

Source: [Express Buzz](#)/14-March, 2011

Gender preference leads to imbalance in Asian countries

A preference for sons in some Asian countries has been well documented for centuries. Now a study suggests the practice has led to significant imbalances in the male/female population in China, South Korea and India that could have long-lasting implications.

According to the Canadian Medical Association Journal, over the next 20 years, this practice will lead to an excess of males—between 10%-20% in large parts of China and India.

The sex ratio at birth (SRB)—the number of boys born to every 100 girls—is typically 105 males to 100 females. But since the 1980s, the availability of ultrasound technology has spurred sex selection, particularly in countries where males are highly prized.

South Korea was the first to report a high SRB due to sex selection. By 1992 their SRB was 125. In Northern India, disparities were just as high.

Researchers say in China, the one-child policy has contributed to therising SRB. They say the country's huge population means a largeexcess of males. By 2005, China's SRB was 121.

"In 2005 in China, it was estimated that 1.1 million excess males were born across the country and that the number of males under the age of 20 years exceeded the number of females by around 32 million," said Therese Hesketh, study author and professor, UCL Centre for International Health and Development, London, United Kingdom.

In rural areas of China where a second child is permitted if the first born is a girl, the use of sex-selection abortion to make sure the second child was a boy is common.

The problem with all this researchers say, is that there can be consequences to an imbalanced sex ratio. Many of these men will not marry or have children in a society where marriage is universal. These men, researchers say, may be psychologically vulnerable and prone to depression, aggressive behavior and violence.

Solutions to the problem, researchers say begin with government-led public education campaigns, reducing sex selection and addressing the long-standing attitudes of son

preference. They say while this won't help reduce the current imbalances, it will help future generations.

These campaigns have led to some reductions in SRBs in South Korea and China. "However, these incipient decline will not filter through to the reproductive age group for another two decades, and the SRBs in these countries remain high," Hesketh said. "It is likely to be several decades before the SRB in countries like India and China are within normal limits."

And while China, India and South Korea all have laws that now prohibit fetal sex determination and sex-selective abortions, only South Korea, the study says, strongly enforces that law.

Source: thechart.blogs.cnn.com/14-March, 2011

Contribute

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Researchers are also invited to send in their published documents so that they can be hosted on this site.

Please email your contributions to aserf@apeejay.edu

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