



## 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, [Click here](#)**

### **Apeejay Signs MOU with Dutch and French Universities**

Apeejay Institute of Design (AID), New Delhi and Apeejay Stya University (ASU), Haryana signed (MOU) with AKV| St. Joost, Avans University of Applied Sciences, Breda, The Netherlands and Willem de Kooning Academy Rotterdam/ University of Applied Sciences Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Further looking for long-term partnership in academics and research, Apeejay Stya University has signed two (MOU) with its School of Management Sciences and School of Design & Visual Arts with EM Normandie, Caen, Le Havre, Deauville, France (E.M Normandie- Normandy Business School) and with Ecole Supérieure Des Arts Appliqués De Troyes (Groupe Esc- Troyes- Champagne) respectively.

## 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, Gurgaon, 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: [Click here](#)

## Partnership

Dear Partners,

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

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

## Editor

**[Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Singh](#)**

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## ASPECT

### 'Never let school interfere with your education'

With the police occupying space in several schools in the Posco project area in Orissa, teachers wonder how to hold classes.

"Freedom from fear" and "Punishment-free zone" read the slogans on the school walls. These signify the end of corporal punishment. They take on a different meaning, though, when schools are occupied by the police, as they are around Dinkia and Govindpur, the villages resisting the State's takeover of their farmland for Posco's mega power and steel project .

Children here grabbed national attention when they joined their parents in the protests against the forcible land acquisition. And still more when the fall in school attendance drew the wrath of Orissa's Women and Child Development Minister Anjali Behera. Her concern that children remain in school is unexceptionable. Her belief that they were not there only because they had joined the protests is misplaced.

In this State, millions remaining in the classrooms are unlikely to get an education. Besides, Orissa has "not served midday meals in most schools since mid-June," says Biraj Patnaik, Adviser to the Supreme Court's Food Commissioners. "And they are sitting on over Rs.146 crore of last year's disbursement for the scheme from the Central government."

#### Reactions

But back to the villages. "Four of our six rooms are occupied by the police who are here to deal with the agitation," says a teacher at the Balia nodal Upper Primary School. This school runs till to Class 7. "Every morning, all the children assemble, we take attendance — and then dismiss Classes 1-5. How to teach them?" The police occupy space in several schools. They have vacated one in Balituth but remain in at least four others including Balia.

"In school," says angry 10-year-old Rakesh Bardhan in Govindpur, "they teach us the story of Baji Rout." A 13-year-old boatman and legendary Oriya hero shot dead by the British when he refused to ferry them across a river in pursuit of freedom fighters. "They tell us, 'you should emulate Baji Rout and the way he stood up for his homeland.' But when we stand up for ours, they react badly."

How do their teachers feel about this? Bishwambar Mohanty, aged 14, scoffs: "What can they say?"

They know that if we lose our land and village — there will be no school either." One teacher says: "They have seen police fire rubber bullets on their parents. They've seen their betel vineyards and their homes destroyed. And said that all this is good for Orissa's development. How else can they react?" Another student asks: "They are turning their guns on our parents and they want us to remain in school?"

#### NCPCR visit

A team of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights came here, concerned by the "misuse" of the children in the protests. At the end of their visit, while asking the protestors to keep children out, the team also called on the government "to withdraw police forces sheltered in schools meant for the education of children."

"If the government orders us, obviously we will find other shelters," Jagatsinghpur District Superintendent of Police S. Devdutt Singh told The Hindu.

Meanwhile, teachers have been given the additional task of talking to the parents of "absentees." "The BDO demands a daily report on attendance and how many parents we have met," a teacher grumbles. "As if we don't have enough paperwork already, 'with 74 records to keep updated'."

Govindpur Upper Primary School has 240 students and four teachers. Of these, only one is a regular teacher. The others are shiksha sahayaks ("assistant teachers") and gana sikhyak ("mass educator"). Last month the State recruited 20,000 shiksha sahayaks to fill vacancies amongst regular teachers. Many sahayaks are poorly-trained and ill-equipped to teach. In the panchayat of the Posco area, there are only "acting headmasters." In many schools across the State, the headmaster's post remains vacant for years. There are also 29,000 vacancies for primary school teachers in Orissa. "They'd have to pay more if they filled those up properly," grins one teacher. In Tirlochanpur village, 400 students go to a school without a single regular teacher.

Shorn of the jargon offered under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, this amounts to recruiting "teachers" at pathetic salaries. Shiksha sahayaks get a consolidated Rs.4,000. If they last six years, they might be absorbed as zilla parishad teachers. The "gana sikhyak" ("volunteer teachers" under the Education Guarantee Scheme) is worse off. "They are least qualified and shouldn't be teaching, but they are," says an official. They earn Rs.2,250 to Rs.2,500 a month. Less than what a landless labourer earns in 30 days of Mahatma Gandhi

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) work. Spending less by paying “teachers” a pittance has helped gut the system. “Why will qualified people join this profession now?” asks one.

The poor quality breeds, as across the country, a huge private tuition industry. Some teachers earn more from tuitions. Others are not qualified to do even that. Some don't teach at all. And there's a welter of other problems. A spirited effort, within these limitations, to clear the mess and discipline the system by a committed Education Secretary has resulted in a backlash. Aparajita Sarangi now faces 85 cases filed against her in the courts by disgruntled school management committees and teachers.

Back in Dinkia and Govindpur, students are less visible in the protests, but are still there. “Now,” says one, “a different small group goes each day.” These children seem to be up on Mark Twain's dictum: “Never let school interfere with your education.”

### The Real War With India

If we want to compete, we need to invest more in higher education

It's hit an all-time low. Pakistan's commitment to the higher education sector has been scaled back by 10 percent at the same time that India has raised its higher-education budget by 25 percent. This reduction is in addition to the 40 percent cut imposed last year. This shortsightedness imperils economic growth by stunting prospects of a viable middle class.

India has a population six times the size of Pakistan's. Its GDP, at \$1.8 trillion, is 10 times larger than ours. Its growth rate is 8.5 percent, ours is 2.4 percent. Its value-added exports, at \$250 billion, are more than ours by a factor of 15; and its FDI, at \$26 billion per year, dwarfs ours by a factor of 22. India is set to surpass Japan to become the world's third largest economy by 2014. This has all been made possible, in no small measure, because of India's human capital. Pakistan needs to take a leaf out of their book to realize the possible.

The World Bank identifies several key factors to achieve and sustain economic growth: education, a skilled workforce, information and communication technologies, and innovation. These are the veritable pillars of a knowledge economy. Likewise, the [World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011](#) lists higher

education and training, technology readiness, and innovation as essential for competitiveness.

Catching up to the rest of the world must start now. And there is much ground to cover. For Pakistanis between the ages of 17 and 23, access to higher education is at 5.1 percent—one of the lowest in the world. (India is at 12.2 percent and aiming for 30 percent by 2020.) Pakistan has 132 universities for a population of 180 million and a student population of about 1.1 million. India has 504 universities with an enrollment of over 15 million (its enrolment target is 40 million by 2020). Pakistan has approved funding for two new universities. Over the next five years, India will have established 29 universities and 40 other institutes. Pakistan can today produce about 700 Ph.D.s every year (up from a dismal 200 in 2002) while India can produce 8,900 and China some 50,000.

It's the middle class that makes the difference. India's represents 32 percent of the total population and is growing at 1 percent annually. By investing heavily in education and entrepreneurship, they hope half the population will qualify as middle class by 2040. Pakistan's middle class is about 12 percent of the population, and struggling as more and more people slip below the poverty line each year.

India's political leadership is putting out all the right signals. India has a Knowledge Commission headed by a world-renowned expert serving as an adviser to the prime minister; a Ministry of Human Resource Development, and a strong and centralized University Grants Commission. New Delhi alone is spending 3.5 percent of GDP on education, with 1.03 percent, or \$11.5 billion, on higher education alone. This federal allocation is in addition to the states financially supporting university budgets, in some cases covering up to 80 percent of their costs. Pakistan is spending only about 1.3 percent on education and 0.22 percent on higher education.

Sixty-four years ago, Pakistan and India started out evenly enough in terms of education and skilled-workforce levels. India has overshot us and is now competing with the big boys, swiftly and dedicatedly catching up with the developed world in higher education, science, technology, innovation, and research. Pakistan cannot afford to be left behind. We cannot allow security threats, the financial and ideological allure of Islamist radicalism, and bad governance to defeat us. Shoring up higher education and innovation are the solutions that will yield tangible, long-lasting benefits. Yet we are only capable it seems of dialing down attention to areas that can guarantee our success. Pakistan must push to improve and expand higher education. With so

much at stake and so much we can do, this is the wise way forward.

**Source:** From the July 29, 2011, issue, 2011/[News Week](#)

### NEWS

#### Informal East Asia Summit (East) Education Ministers Meeting

Improving Education Quality through Regional Cooperation

The Informal East Asia Summit (EAS) Education Ministers Meeting to improve Education Quality through Regional Cooperation in the region is being held in Bali, Indonesia. The meeting was addressed by Dr. D. Purandeswari, the Minister of state for Human Resource Development. Speaking on the occasion the Minister emphasized on generating stronger domestic demands through creation and strengthening of the social welfare net, and through skill development.

She said education is a key sector, which encompasses all these factors and therefore we must focus utmost attention on the growth of educational opportunities.

Dr. Purandeswari expressed the hope that the new thrusts in cooperation between various Asian countries will not only open the doors for industry-academia interface, fresh partnerships between institutions, collaborative research projects, increased student mobility among others but more importantly, responsible interventions by stakeholders in the reform process of our education sector.

Giving details of the funds earmarked for the higher education sector for India in the current five year plan period the Minister said, an outlay of Rs 85,000 crores (US\$18.8 billion) has been made for the Plan which is a 9 fold increase over the 10th Five Year Plan period.

She said we want a Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) target of 30 percent by 2020 and it is estimated that the total enrolment of students will go up from the present 16 million to more than 42 million by 2020. Thus, about 700 to 800 additional universities will be required to be established in India in addition to the 579 existing universities and institutions.

In addition, Government is planning to provide vocational education and skills training to about 500 million youth.

**Source:** 19-July, 2011/[PIB](#)

#### India-US higher education summit in October

Aiming at more collaborations in higher education, India and the US will host a summit in Washington this October.

A statement issued after the talks between US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna said the summit will be held Oct 13 to "highlight and emphasize the many avenues through which the higher education communities in the US and India collaborate".

"The US and India plan to expand its higher education dialogue, to be co-chaired by the US Secretary of State and Indian Minister of Human Resource Development, to convene annually," the statement said.

It said the summit would incorporate private and non-governmental sectors and higher education communities to aid government-to-government discussions.

The US said a special initiative named "Passport to India" has been created to encourage American students to study and intern in India. Over 100,000 Indian students are now studying or interning in America.

The US-India Science and Technology Endowment Board, established by Clinton and Krishna in 2009, plans to award nearly \$3 million annually to entrepreneurial projects that commercialize technologies to improve health and empower citizens.

"The two sides are strongly encouraged by the response to this initiative, which attracted over 380 joint US-India proposals. The Endowment plans to announce the first set of grantees by September 2011," the statement said.

The two countries will also focus on strengthening teaching, research and administration of both US and Indian institutions through university linkages and junior faculty development at higher education level.

The statement said the India-US Science and Technology Forum, now in its 10th year, has convened activities that have led to the interaction of nearly 10,000 Indian and US scientists and technologists.

As a follow up to the successful US-India Innovation Roundtable held in September 2010 in New Delhi, the two sides agreed to hold another Innovation Roundtable in early 2012.

**Source:** 19-July, 2011/[IANS](#)

## **Education Industry to witness a heavy influx of investments**

Survey by apex industry body, Assocham, predicts an investment of Rs 4,500 cr over next three years

Education industry is one of the booming and the most evolving economic sectors in India. With over 1 million schools providing education from K-12 (kindergarten – Class 12) to over 200 million students, the government spending on the sector is expected to rise in the 11th five year plan.

According to the recent survey by ASSOCHAM, Private Equity (PE) and venture capitalists (VC) firms are likely to invest Rs 4,500 crore in the education sector over the next three years. The booming education sector in India has opened a wide playground for Private Equity (PE) and venture capitalists (VC). PE investment in the education sector has increased from \$129 million in 2009 to \$183 million in 2010.

Testament to the growth opportunities in the education sector is the recent investment of \$ 15 million from Fidelity Growth partners India (FGPI) in Classteacher Learning Systems. Classteacher Learning Systems, a pioneer in educational content solutions in the country, is one of the leading entities to promote the new face of education. The investment will be used to further the company's product portfolio and strengthen Classteacher's role as an organization that combines technology and innovation as part of its commitment to education.

**Source:** 19-July, 2011/[Business Standard](#)

## **Education bill prod for tutors**

The Assam government will bring a bill to make the teachers of government schools accountable for the poor performance of their students. Education minister Himanta Biswa Sarma today told the House that the proposed bill is likely to be introduced in the next session of the Assembly.

In reply to a cut motion on grant for the education department, Sarma said people have lost faith in government schools because of decline in the quality of education. "Quality teacher is the fundamental right of a student," the minister said.

He said the proposed bill would link teachers' performance to students' achievement. According to him, the proposed bill would seek to put in place a mechanism for invoking accountability in the education system. "A teacher will have to go on voluntary retirement if students perform poorly," the minister said.

Sarma said as education minister, his top priority was to improve the performance of the students and not welfare of the teachers. He said the state government was mulling introduction of vocational matriculation examination in Assam. "We want to have two types of Matric exams. One will be vocational and the other academic," he said.

According to Sarma, the vocational Matric would have seven subjects, including computer education, construction, and so on, which will provide skills-based training to students. The basic idea of the government is to provide students interested in vocational education and training with employable skills in terms of relevance and quality at the school-level itself.

He said those students who are not good at their studies could opt for vocational Matric. It is also expected to increase the overall pass percentage of this examination. Sarma said chief minister Tarun Gogoi would study similar models in foreign countries before deciding which will be best suited to the state.

The minister also criticised the students' organisations for taking the students of government schools for agitation. "I want to ask them why they only take students from government schools for agitation and not from private schools?" Sarma informed the House that against a vacancy of 6,000 teachers' posts in high schools, the government has recruited contractual teachers.

"All the posts of headmasters of high schools, which are lying vacant, will be filled up within 15 days," he told the Assembly. During discussion on the cut motion, AIUDF legislator Aminul Islam expressed concern over the fact that Assam's educational ranking is 26 in the country and six — out of the seven states — in the Northeast.

"It is a cause for concern that among the northeastern states, Assam is only ahead of Arunachal Pradesh," he said. The AIUDF legislator said in backward char and tea garden areas of the state there were schools with only one teacher against 80-odd students. "If we have to reach somewhere near states like Kerala in the educational ranking, we have to develop the education system in the char and tea garden areas of the state," he said.

**Source:** 19-July, 2011/[The Telegraph](#)

## **Chennai govt. moves SC, challenges HC order on uniform syllabus**

The state government on Tuesday filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court challenging the

order of the Madras high court asking it to implement [Samacheer Kalvi \(uniform syllabus education system\)](#) in schools across Tamil Nadu.

In its order on Monday, the Madras HC struck down Section 3 of the Uniform System of School Education (Amendment Act 2010), passed by the AIADMK government, as unconstitutional. Section 3 sought to defer the implementation of Samacheer Kalvi, introduced by the previous DMK regime, for academic year 2011-12.

In its appeal, the state government is likely to take the same stand as it did in the HC that the amendment did not contemplate indefinite postponement but implementation within a reasonable time. The AIADMK government will also take the stand that the Samacheer Kalvi syllabus was not up to the required standard.

School education minister C Ve Shanmugam , secretary D Sabitha and advocate general A Navaneetha krishnan are in [New Delhi](#) for the appeal. Senior counsel P P Rao is likely to appear for the state, though sources said other senior advocates from the Supreme Court were also being consulted. The case is expected to come up for hearing on Thursday.

### *10 CR TEXTBOOKS IN GODOWNS, SCHOOL BOOKS WAITING TO BE READ*

Ending nearly two months of uncertainty about the common school syllabus, the Madras high court on Monday ordered the implementation of Samacheer Kalvi from Classes 1 to 10 and directed that the prescribed textbooks be distributed to schools by July 22.

Now, with the state government deciding to appeal against this judgement in the Supreme Court, it looks like the deadline will not be met.

Nearly 10 crore textbooks have been printed and dispatched to godowns across the state. With just two more days to go for the deadline the state government has still not issued orders to the regional godowns for the distribution of textbooks to schools.

In May, before the assembly election results were announced, the Tamilnadu Text book Society sent out book order forms to schools through the officials concerned, including the inspector of matriculation schools and the chief educational officer.

These officials then handed over the forms to zonal school, which co-ordinate activities for around 10 schools in their vicinity. While schools were still in the process of placing orders, the new AIADMK

regime postponed the implementation of the Samacheer Kalvi syllabus.

"We expect fresh orders to be taken to figure out the number of books each school would require. Whether the Supreme Court admits the state government's petition or not it seems unlikely that all schools will get text books by July 22. I don't think the Tamilnadu Textbook Society will take up the responsibility of delivering the books. We will be asked to queue up in front of the respective regional godowns," said the principal of a matriculation school in the city.

An official at the Chennai district godown in Taramani, who declined to be named, said, "We have stocked enough number of Samacheer Kalvi textbooks and also those based on the old syllabus. They are ready for distribution and can be delivered to all schools within a few days. But we are yet to receive any news on which textbooks to distribute. Also, private schools have not placed any orders with us."

Schools, however, continue to buy Samacheer Kalvi textbooks for Classes 1 and 6 directly from the godown as these were introduced in the last academic year itself.

After the new regime came to power in the state, printers throughout the state, including 30 from Sivakasi, were engaged to print books under the old syllabus. Sources said that only 25% of these books have been printed till date. On Tuesday afternoon, all of them were ordered to stop printing the old textbooks.

### *Story So Far*

In May, the Tamilnadu Textbook Society distributed book order forms to the education officials concerned. The officials, including the inspector of matriculation schools and the chief educational officer, handed out the forms to zonal schools, which co-ordinate activities for around 10 schools in the vicinity. Zonal schools were asked to collect orders in their zones.

This year, schools that required books for more than 500 students were asked to place the orders directly at the godowns. Even as schools were preparing the orders, the AIADMK government postponed the implementation of Samacheer Kalvi syllabus. On July 18, the Madras high court set aside the state government's order and directed that common school syllabus textbooks be delivered to schools by July 22. Now, fresh indents need to be taken to figure out the number of books each school would require.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### AICTE extends recognition to BPharma course

The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) has extended recognition to the BPharma course in the Government Pharmacy Institute, Patna, for the 2011-12 session. The BPharma course was introduced in 2009 on the occasion of the silver jubilee celebration of the diploma in pharmacy course of the institute.

The institute had introduced the BPharma course following stress laid on technical education by CM Nitish Kumar, said the principal of the institute, Rajiv Ranjan Prasad. He said the AICTE had earlier given recognition to B Pharma course for two years. He said the Pharmacy Council of India has been invited to inspect the running of the BPharma course in the institute. He added that the diploma in pharmacy course of the institute is one of the oldest in the country and infrastructure for this is being modernized as the state department of health has decided to run state drug analysis laboratory here. He said efforts are on to modernize the Government Pharmacy Institute to pave way for research on drugs in Bihar. He said the government has decided to fill up the posts of the faculties in the institute on contractual basis and this would be followed by filling up of the posts by the Bihar Public Service Commission.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### Karnataka: row over Bhagwad Gita classes

A circular issued by the Karnataka government has asked teachers to set aside three hours a week for classes on the Bhagwad Gita, which hasn't gone down well with the 8,600 minority schools in the State. Education Minister Vishveshwar Hegde Kageri said that any protestors to the Gita classes should leave the country.

"Only those who want to promote religious ideologies of foreign countries are protesting the Bhagwad Gita classes... If they want to promote their ideologies, they have no place in this country... They should leave," Kageri said.

The minority schools petitioned to the Governor on Tuesday to Kageri from his post.

Minorities Insitutions' Federation Chairman C R Mohammed Imtiaz said, "It's unconstitutional... It's a breach of the oath he's taken... We've told the governor to dismiss him."

The Karnataka government now says that the Gita classes are not compulsory for all schools to implement.

State Govt. spokesperson S Prakash said, "Some motivated people are trying to create a controversy... It's not a government programme... It's a programme by a private mutt... The government has only said to make it available one hour for."

The issue is not whether learning the Gita is compulsory or voluntary, the issue is school hours and school resources are being used to teach a particular religion and that's being seen as an attempt at saffronisation.

"Tomorrow someone will want to teach the Quran and the Bible... If religious books are for studying in school, what's the fate of students? Let Kageri make special arrangements to teach the Gita in temples and mutts... We're also proud of our religion." said C R Mohammed Imtiaz.

However, The BJP has come out strongly in support for the implementation of the Gita classes saying that it is just moral education that will be taught to the students.

BJP Spokesperson S Prakash said, "When you want to teach moral education to students, you shouldn't think of it as waste of resources... Schools are not spending any money... The mutt is organizing it... Nothing wrong in it."

Right or wrong - the issue will be decided by the High Court soon. It takes up the case from Thursday onwards.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[ibn Live](#)

### Role reversal in Andhra Pradesh: Students to evaluate teachers

State schools will see a role reversal in their classrooms soon. Starting this academic year, students will be asked to evaluate the performance of teachers.

As per a decision taken by the department of school education, students of both private and government schools will be allowed to evaluate the performance of teachers in the classroom from this December.

The evaluation sheet will have questions on teachers ranging from their teaching skills to their attendance and also whether they are approachable. It will also evaluate the approach adopted by the teachers in class, especially towards students who are poor performers. The exercise is meant to be an extension of the project started by child protection committee about four years ago, whereby a complaint cell against teachers was set up. The process will become integral to the promotion of teachers as their marks will be taken

into consideration during the annual appraisals in private schools. In government schools, the promotion of teachers will also depend on the marks given by students. A report on the performance of teachers will also be sent to the DEOs concerned. School education department officials said the DEO would ensure private schools enforce the programme.

Officials said that the teachers will be evaluated on a ten point scale. "We thought of a new evaluation process as the department felt that teachers should be accountable to students. The process will be introduced in classes V to X and we are even thinking of extending it to junior colleges that fall under the school education department," said a senior official.

Teacher associations have, however, opposed the move stating that the government should not link the performance with promotions. "The government is already conducting tests to evaluate the teachers as per the instructions of the Right to Education Act. With this new evaluation, the pressure on teachers will mount. This is not a good trend," said N Narayana from [United Teachers Federation \(UTF\)](#).

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### HP govt. says private university a necessity

Fighting allegations relating to promotion of private universities over public ones, the government on Tuesday expressed incapability of setting up more institutions of higher learning.

Addressing media, education minister Ishwar Dass Dhiman said of the 19 private universities that were issued the letters of intent, 11 had been set up. He said the areas of Chamba, Mandi and Kullu districts were a priority, as no private university had been sanctioned at these places.

Fending off opposition charges of providing government land to these institutions, he said, "No such land had been allotted. Congress is leading a misinformation campaign, which is harming the new institutions and the students."

He said the state's [gross enrollment ratio \(GER\)](#) in colleges and universities was 18%, which was higher than the national level of 12% but the target was to raise it to 25% by 2016-2017.

Government uses 19% of its budget on education and to keep [Himachal Pradesh University \(HPU\)](#) functional, an annual grant of about Rs 50 crore was being provided.

He said the 11 private universities had enrolled 5,865 students for the current session and had provided employment to 2,044 people.

The education minister said the degree courses available in these universities were accepted all over the country. "To maintain education standards and to regulate the administrative systems, an education regulatory commission would be constituted soon," Dhiman said.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### Rs 400cr push for education

As many as 300 middle schools will be upgraded to high schools over the next three months to widen the reach of secondary education in the state.

The proposal put forward by the state for effective implementation of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan was approved by the department of school education and literacy, which operates under the aegis of Union ministry of human resource development, on the concluding day of a two-day meeting in the capital.

Secretary, department of school education and literacy, Anshu Vaish, also sanctioned Rs 400 crore for project implementation in the first phase, against Rs 500 crore sought by the state.

Vaish also approved another proposal of the state government to strengthen basic infrastructures in 300 existing high schools in Jharkhand by providing facilities like a library, laboratory, toilets, drinking water, art and craft learning guidance and computer laboratory.

Citing the example of facilities being provided in middle schools in Madhya Pradesh, Vaish said the high school students are given midday meals comprising kheer and puri. "Moreover, all students are provided with textbooks and bicycles, to ensure that they attend school regularly," she said, adding that a similar pattern should be adopted by Jharkhand.

"We are in the process of implementing the Right to Education Act at the secondary level too. Midday meals are also being considered for secondary students in other states, with Jharkhand being one of them," she said.

Speaking to The Telegraph, the state nodal officer of Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan, Mukesh Kumar Sinha, said as many as 1,477 secondary schools were required in the state. "We have already upgraded 597 middle schools in March 2011," Sinha said, adding that once the budget was

sanctioned, another 300 high schools would be upgraded.

“We are also going to start training of special teachers, organise exposure visits for teachers within and outside the state, exposure visits of students of Class X and special coaching classes for weak students,” he said.

According to officer on special duty in the state human resource department, P.K. Jha, Rs 400 crore for the 2011-2012 fiscal would be utilised to upgrade high schools and also to improve infrastructure.

“Last year, we had put forward a proposal for Rs 331 crore under Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan, which was not sanctioned by the Centre,” he said.

Chairman of National Institute of Open Schooling S.S. Jena rued that children barely above 14 years of age were working in mines. “We need to target children between 16 and 18 years old to check the dropout rate. It would be only possible by recognising the specific needs, especially socio economic factors, and plan accordingly,” he said, adding that statistics showed that the highest dropout rate was in Godda and West Singhbhum (80 per cent).

The aim of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan is to universalise secondary education by reaching out to children in the age group of 14 to 18 years. Introduced in Jharkhand last year, the mission tries to stop the dropout rate after a child completes primary education as part of the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan.

Through the mission, the Centre wants to strengthen 44,000 existing and open 11,188 new secondary schools around the country by March 2012. At present, Jharkhand has 13 lakh students studying in 1,151 high schools in the state.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[The Telegraph](#)

### **NGO portrays bleak picture of primary education in state (Jharkhand)**

In Jharkhand, 9.9% children in rural schools up to Class VIII know nothing about mathematics. At least 18.8% students can only identify numerals between 1 and 9 whereas 19.2% can identify numerals up to 99. As far as division and subtraction-related problems are concerned, 19.2% can subtract and 32.9% can divide.

These are excerpts from statistical findings highlighted in the [annual status of education report \(ASER\)](#) for 2010 prepared by an NGO, Pratham.

Findings based on exhaustive survey of primary schools in 22 districts give an indication of the standard of primary education in the state.

Education is considered the backbone of society and given the implementation of right of children to free and compulsory education (right to education act) being implemented in state since April 2010, the onus of providing adequate educational infrastructure to the students is on the state government.

Though there is hardly any tool available to assess the level and quality of education being imparted to the students at primary level in absence of any matriculation kind of examination, studies like these help policy makers fine-tune their strategy.

According to statistics available with the office of [Jharkhand Education Project Council \(JEPC\)](#), nearly 64 lakh students are enrolled in 39,193 government schools at the primary level. The number of sanctioned posts of teachers in these schools is around 47,000 out of which nearly 25% posts were vacant since long. As Jharkhand Academic Council conducted preliminary test for appointment of teachers against 13,807 vacant posts of primary teachers in the state, a silver lining seems to have appeared.

Primary education director D K Saxena believes that there are four pillars for successful implementation of the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. He says that a number of schools, quality and availability of teachers, drinking water and sanitation facility and proper student-teacher ratio are key factors. "Education is not just building schools or enrolling students, it actually means the quality of education being provided to them to make the students stand in the fight for bread in future," he said.

Even as the effort to fill up all the vacancies of primary teachers at one go is an unprecedented step taken by the government it is less likely to suffice the actual need. The appointments are likely to fill up all 47,000 posts of primary teachers catering to 39,000-plus schools but with this figure the RTE binding of pupil-teacher ratio of 30:1 is far from being resolved.

Here comes the role of para-teachers who have been demanding regularization since long. Roughly, 79,000 para-teachers are currently engaged with the government schools and many of them appeared for the competitive examination conducted by JAC on Wednesday.

Once the vacancies are filled up, the para-teachers who were up in arms against the government for regularization of service would have no scope of

absorption unless new posts are created. "We are happy that without bending the rules, we have given opportunity to the para-teachers to join as regular teachers provided they crack the two-level competitive examination," said JAC chairperson Laxmi Singh.

However, the recruitment drive is likely to create more vacancies of para-teachers as they would then be serving as regular ones. "Once vacancies of regular teachers is filled up, candidates would be reluctant to join as para-teachers knowing well that there were no more sanctioned posts for regularization," said Vinod Mahato, one of the para-teachers appearing for the exam.

**Source:** 21-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### BHU aims for global recognition

The Banaras Hindu University (BHU), founded by great visionary and one of the nation-builders Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in 1916, intends to establish itself as a global hub of higher education.

"In fact, we have already established our presence in the international academic world, attracting foreign universities and students," said vice-chancellor DP Singh while talking to TOI. The university has merit of a global university with facts like collaborations with a number of prestigious foreign universities in study and research programmes. "We have collaborations with 70 institutions from 16 countries while we also have affiliations for research with 50 institutions from 20 countries," the V-C said and added presently over 500 foreign students from 48 countries including the US, UK, [Canada](#), France, Germany, Australia and Argentina were studying at the university. An international Students Centre helps the foreign students in choosing appropriate programmes and logistic matters.

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"It is the uniqueness of BHU in having a fine synergy of teaching and research with undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD programmes that attract the foreign institutions for a tie-up," said the V-C, adding the university deserved a remarkable position in international scenario with its research volume, reputation, conducive teaching-learning environment and abundant resources. According to him, the multi-faculty character of BHU is the main feature that draws the attention of foreign institutions for research as well as faculty exchange programme. The university comprises 16 faculties, 131 departments, four institutes, a women college, and four interdisciplinary schools. Besides, the university also has nine centres of interdisciplinary research and study.

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"For a foreign institution interested in academic programmes in [India](#) the BHU is the best option because it offers all disciplines on a single campus," he said and added the BHU's foreign collaborations were increasing gradually. The BHU offers a full spectrum of programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels ranging from oriental subjects like Veda and Jyotish to modern disciplines like medicine, surgery, biotechnology, bioinformatics, biomedical and other subjects in science, agriculture, engineering and management. The university runs approximately 500 programmes at different levels.

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He said several departments had been upgraded due to their high research attainments that include 17 UGC Special Assistance Programmes (Centres of Advanced Studies -8, and Departmental Research Support 9), 10 DST-FIST (Fund for Improvement of Science and Technology) programmes and 12 other programmes. "Contemporary and competitive research activities have been the hallmark of teaching in almost all the faculties and departments of BHU," he said and added the university was currently a host to 512 externally funded research projects with total funding support of approximately Rs 122 crore during 2010-11.

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According to him, the growth in the research output of the university is indicative of the fact that it climbed up from the sixth position (2008) to the third (2010) on research and development front among the top universities of the country as per the survey reports of the National Institute of Science and Technology and Development Studies, [New Delhi](#), made on the basis of H-Index calculations.

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**Source:** 21-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

## IGNOU to start Asia's first sign language institute

NAGPUR: In the city for inaugurating a special vocational course developed by IGNOU's regional centre, its vice-chancellor VN Rajasekharan Pillai spoke on a number of issues relating to distance education in the country. Pillai also informed about the sign language institute coming up in IGNOU's [Delhi](#) campus which is a first of its kind in entire [Asia](#).

### Excerpts

Q. What is your view on distance education in [India](#) and where it should be in the distant future?

A. Distance education is the best way for students to enhance their skills for the marketplace. I firmly believe that anyone should have access to education anywhere and anytime. That is the true essence of distance education. Technology is changing very fast and it will prove to be a strong partner for IGNOU to bring education to a student. 95% of IGNOU's study material is online through our E-Gyan Kosh initiative, there are many instruction videos which we have been uploaded. Research shows that by 2022, India's 60% population will be aged less than 32 years. With such a potent workforce we need to arm them academically so that they are ready to take on the world. Distance education will play a vital role in this.

Q. What role will conventional universities play? The enrolment numbers for distance education overall are increasing, will this make conventional universities irrelevant down the line?

A. No never. In fact conventional and open universities will have to play a collaborative role. The reason I say this is because our course materials are designed and developed by teachers who are employed with conventional universities. So we would want them to ultimately offer these courses (from IGNOU) through their own conventional universities, thus adding a variety to the educational knowledge a student gains. This is the way open and conventional universities in the rest of the world are operating and we should also look in that direction. Lot of people say that with technology coming into force teachers may lose their jobs etc. But I believe that teachers will get more work but will need to adapt to the technology which will deliver more and more of the study material to students.

Q. What are the latest projects that IGNOU is working on?

A. Yesterday the ministry of social justice and empowerment asked us to go ahead to establish the first sign language institute in entire Asia. It will be called the Indian Sign Language Institute and will be based out of our Delhi campus with a dedicated infrastructure of its own. Here we will train students from all over the world in the sign language so that they can impart education in schools or colleges for the deaf and mute. We are always looking for collaboration with other universities so that education can reach more and more students. In Nagpur also you saw how we have started the bachelor preparatory course in Marathi medium and a specific course for prisoners.

**Source:** 22-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **Pre-school education likely to come under Right to Education Act's ambit**

The Human Resource Development Ministry is looking at ways to bring pre-school education, which covers children between four and six years, within the ambit of the Right to Education Act. This is in consonance with the suggestion made by the Sonia Gandhi-led National Advisory Council.

However, the logistical and financial pressures of the inclusion of approximately four crore children under the RTE are a cause of concern. But it is argued that the inclusion of pre-school learning under the free and compulsory education law could pave the way for reforming early years of learning.

According to sources, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said that a final decision on increasing the ambit of the RTE will be taken by the end of July.

The inclusion of children between the ages of four and six years will mean reworking the ambit of the ministry of women and child development, which administers Integrated Child Development Schemes (ICDS) targeting children below the age of six years. An inter-ministerial taskforce headed by Planning Commission member Sayeeda Hameed is already looking at restructuring ICDS.

The NAC is of the view that the ministry's anaganwadi programme should cover children up to the age of four. Simultaneously, the Planning Commission's sub-group on elementary education is examining the possibility of widening the reach of the Right to Education to include children between the age of four and six years. The sub-group of the Central Advisory Board of Education, which is examining the possibility of extending the free and compulsory education law to cover

secondary education, will also be asked to look into the inclusion of pre-school learning.

In its present form, the Right to Education Act covers school education from classes 1 to 8.

The biggest impediment to include children between the age of four and six years under the RTE is the logistical and financial pressure that it will entail. The move will mean adding four crore children to the free and compulsory education recipients. It will also require setting up additional 10 lakh classrooms, and hiring at least 10 lakh trained nursery teachers.

An estimate suggests that it will cost at least 2 lakh per classroom to implement the expansion plan. There will also be recurring costs such as teachers' salaries, learning materials.

**Source:** 22-July, 2011/[Economic Times](#)

### **Mixed response to the Common Medical Entrance**

The proposal of the Medical Council of India (MCI) to conduct a Common Medical Entrance Test from next year has received mixed responses in Karnataka with the Medical Education Minister S A Ramadas criticising it and Consortium of Medical, Engineering and Dental Colleges of Karnataka (COMEDK) welcoming it. Minister S A Ramadas informed The New Indian Express that he had raised three important issues on which MCI had not clarified through any forum or media. "I had written to MCI and the Union health ministry stating that common education proposed includes only allopathy.

So, what about students wanting to learn the Indian systems of medicine, pharmacy, nursing and paramedical education?" questioned the minister. He pointed out that the standard of education differed from state to state and a single entrance exam would only deprive some students and isolate many others in the country. Issues such as inclusion of deemed universities within its ambit and a separate rank list for the states too need to be addressed, he said. Meanwhile, executive director of the Consortium of Medical, Engineering and Dental Colleges of Karnataka (COMEDK) S Kumar said that the MCI's announcement was a welcome news for students.

Currently, the students are forced to face the backlash of allowing several medical institutions becoming deemed universities by facing several admission procedures and writing innumerable entrance exams. "It is an excellent move, but only if implemented in the right way. A single nodal agency

determining a national rank list is an excellent idea; but only when the right of admission remains with the states and private institutions. Single exam should not mean single admission.

MCI can begin with releasing separate rank lists for states," he explained. MCI officials meanwhile said that only when the entrance exam was centralised the standard of education in all states would be uniform. Complaints such as high fees demanded by private institutions would also be solved and help the eight lakh students sitting for various exams annually and most importantly make medical education merit based, said MCI officials. A meeting with the state government is now expected before the syllabus and other details would be announced. The only announcement now is that the Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) will conduct the test from 2012. Last year, this proposal was rejected by several states including Karnataka.

MCI shelved the idea following a stay sought by a resident of Tamil Nadu. He had cited that the state had abolished the system of entrance exams and streamlining admissions through an exam would defeat the purpose of education for all. However, a recent Supreme Court verdict gave MCI the go ahead to conduct the exams.

**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[Ibn Live](#)

### **State ready with draft rules on Right to Education**

The debate on Right to Education (RTE) Act has begun again with the Centre on Thursday remaining firm on implementing it without any dilution and insisting on 25% inclusion of underprivileged children by private schools. Though implemented in 2009, Karnataka is among many states yet to notify the rules for implementation.

The Times of [India](#) spoke to primary and secondary education minister Vishweshwara Hegde Kageri to get a status report on the act that is aimed at sending every child to school.

Excerpts :

What is the status of the RTE act in Karnataka?

The law department scrutinized the draft rules and suggested some minor changes. We are incorporating these changes. It will go to the cabinet soon for approval, and will then be sent for notification. I cannot give a date as of now, but can assure you that it will be at the earliest.

When other states could implement it, why the delay?

Tell me, how many states have implemented it? Two or three, not more. It requires some time to process and get things set. We received 2,000 objections, and all of them have been carefully scrutinized.

Funds have been the bone of contention between the Centre and the state in implementing the RTE? Any consensus?

We are discussing it with the Centre, but officials there are not at all clear on the issue. They have said that states should generate funds. All the states have made it clear that we need central support. We need crores of rupees to implement the Act.

How much have you set apart in the state budget?

We haven't figured it out yet.

What about other preparations?

We have taken up awareness programmes in a big way. A series of events have been planned to involve school development and monitoring committee members, teachers, alumni, parents and officials to spread awareness about RTE. There are organisations involved at all levels. Gram panchayats had come out with a white paper on their preparedness to implement the law during the Shalegagi Naavu Neevu programme. Most of them have executed the main points, like identifying infrastructure solutions.

**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **Teachers cry foul as govt's aims at common syllabus in state varsities**

The state government's plan to introduce minimum common syllabus in all the state universities has run into rough weather, as teachers in Lucknow University and affiliated colleges feel that the move will hamper autonomy of the universities.

Criticising government's stand, educationist, Prof Mohd Muzammil said, "Asking board of studies to approve the syllabus drafted by them is infringement on universities, which are considered as one of the most independent academic bodies. There can be a big degree of commonality."

Voicing his disappointment, Prof Sudhir Kumar, a science teacher in the university said, "This move is indicative that after having financial control by imposing State and Universities Act, 1974, and bringing in registrar and finance officer for administrative command, common syllabus is nothing but to have academic control on the universities. These are all systematic efforts of the

government to bring the universities under its direct control."

Similar views were shared by head, department of sociology, Prof Rajesh Mishra. "There is a lot of inequality in terms of quality of students, standard of education, pedagogy in universities and colleges in east UP and those located in west UP. Forcing a common syllabus without upgrading might lead to sub-standardisation of higher education." He also added that the thought will also lead to some kind of restriction on creativity of teaching and research.

A philosophy teacher, Prof Rakesh Chandra felt that government has rushed up in taking such an important decision. "The idea to bring in commonality in all universities is not bad. But, it requires a deeper thinking, and systematic approach," said Prof Chandra. He said that the department after making required corrections has sent the syllabus back.

Prof Nar Singh heading the department of applied economics found that the concept is sure to bring down the quality of education. "The syllabus designed by higher education officials within a day is no different from what we have at present. Implementing it at this moment will lead to confusion, as academic session will begin today," he said.

On the contrary, the state government's while directing all universities to apply common syllabus justified that this would make the process of formulating question papers and evaluation of answer sheets easier. The syllabus of 63 courses at UG level will be upgraded to meet contemporary demands, which will help students in getting admission to post-graduate courses in different universities and transfer from one varsity to another.

The government accepted after Sehgal Committee headed by vice-chancellor, Kanpur University, Prof Harsh Sehgal recommended introduction of MCS. Partly agreeing to this, a teacher in the university said, "Higher education is a specialised area and various departments in different universities have their own standard and level of competition with central universities."

Teachers gave the example of Bihar, where the university surrendered its autonomy and succumbed to the government. The condition of higher education there is now well known to everyone.

**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### Govt. mulls HR planning, management centres at varsity level

Eyeing to enhance the gross enrolment ratio in higher education to 30 per cent by 2020, the government is mulling 'Human Resource Planning and Management Centres' at the university level to assess teacher requirement and plan their professional growth. The existing 'academic staff colleges' may be subsumed within the proposed centres or upgraded to their level. The aim is to set up these centres with "appropriate autonomy to assess teacher's requirement and plan for the professional growth of teachers through research and faculty development programmes such as seminars, training, workshops, incentive and award schemes," an HRD Ministry official said.

The plan is a critical component of the 12th Five Year Plan for the Department of Higher Education and would come up at a meeting in Guwahati on July 25 in connection with the formulation of programmes during the Plan Period. Several other strategies like 'brain gain policy' and scheme for attracting non-resident Indians have also been proposed in the plan leading to faculty development.

They also include attracting young post-graduates and doctoral students to teaching and enhancing autonomy of institutions in filling faculty positions. Greater utilisation of scientists and technologists available with research laboratories or in industries has also been suggested along with extensive use of technology to supplement the face-to-face interaction between teachers and students.

**Source:** 24-July, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

### Technical education review staff working without pay since Jan

For almost three decades, the staff of the National Technical Manpower Information System (NTMIS) have been collecting data on technical education, tracking students after they graduate from technical institutes, and making projections for the Ministry of Human Resource Development. However, beginning this year, they have not received their salaries and some of them have been forced to spend from their own pockets to continue the work. Worse, they claim that despite repeated requests there has been no response from the government. The HRD ministry, however, counters this by saying the staff failed to submit its reports and hence, the government stopped its grants.

The NTMIS, created by the government in 1983 with 20 nodal centres in various states, is funded by

the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), which, in turn, receives grants from the HRD Ministry.

Sunita Sharma, who works as a research associate at the Chandigarh nodal centre, said the eight-member team has taken a Rs 8 lakh loan from Punjab Engineering College to help them continue their work. "We have been working without salary since January 2011. We are in charge of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh. We collect data on institutes, teacher-pupil ratio, what sort of jobs they get after completing the courses, etc. This data is used in policy-making," she said. The nodal centres are using postal services to track students in view of lack of allowances. In some instances, they have resorted to using their own funds, she said. "We have send several petitions to the ministry, but there has been no response. Now, we have no recourse but to approach the court," she said.

Each nodal centre has an eight-member team, which consists of four field investigators and four researchers. In Punjab alone, there are more than 100 colleges that they keep track of.

Out of the 21 nodal centres, 16 are located in different higher education institutes and collect information regarding supply of technical manpower, student information through graduate follow-up survey, and institutional information. Every nodal centre produces an Annual Technical Manpower Review of the region, which includes information from engineering graduates and diploma holders two years after their graduation and from establishments employing technical manpower within its jurisdiction. This data is processed to suggest a plan for development of technical education.

President of NTMIS Sapna Mehrotra said the nodal centres have been submitting their reports and despite having written to the ministry several times, they haven't received any assurances. "Our work is getting affected and we no longer function properly," she said.

Without the crucial data and such monitoring of institutes, there will be an unprecedented mushrooming of private engineering colleges, said another official. "The HRD Ministry and AICTE are apparently going to disband this system. That would mean that there will be no system to monitor the exact requirement of technical manpower," the official added. AICTE chairman S S Mantha could not reached for comments.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Indian Express](#)

### Govt raises OBC quota in education institutes

Delhi cabinet on Monday approved the proposal to increase OBC reservations in higher education institutes from the existing 15% to 21%. A government official said they have also decided to increase the number of seats in its higher educational institutes by 12%. With this increase, the combined percentage of reservation of seats has now gone up to 39%.

As there is no ST population in Delhi, officials said they have already written to the home ministry to allow it to abolish the 1% quota for them.

"Our government is committed to safeguard the interests of all communities," Delhi chief minister Sheila Dikshit said.

The cabinet also decided to allow existing higher educational institutions in Lal Dora, extended Lal Dora and other non-conforming areas this year. The increase in intake and addition of courses by these institutions has also been approved.

The cabinet's decision will benefit 24 institutes.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

### Centre for skill development opened

There is a dire need to train the trainers before the trainees, is how T V Jayaraman, CEO of Everonn Education Limited, summarised the premise of their ambitious project, the first part of which, the Master Resource Centre for Skill Development, was inaugurated in Chennai on Monday. This centre is the first of its kind in the country, with similar ones coming up in Hyderabad, Bangalore and Ahmedabad by the end of this fiscal quarter. "We are attempting to develop 'Master Trainers', who are highly qualified, to impart industry-specific skill training to the unskilled masses in our country," explained P Kishore, MD, Everonn Education Ltd.

The facility at Perungudi was inaugurated by S Ramadorai, Advisor to the Prime Minister, National Skill Development Council. In his brief address, the VP of TCS said that this project should "look to increase the employability of youth, not merely within the country but also overseas."

The general idea of the programme is for these master trainers, who will be equipped to train young professionals in every leading industry using international-standard content, to work through Everonn Multi Skill Development Centres that are slated to come up across the country. "We are looking at setting up centres in 270 places in India through which we can hopefully make 1.5 crore people employable over the next decade," said an

ambitious Kishore. This is in line with a joint venture between Everonn Skill Development Ltd and NSDC called 'International Skills School'.

With a target of setting up 70 centres in the first year, he announced that with 20 centres close to ready, another 59 centres would be ready within 30 days. The proposed number of MRCs stands at 12 with a vision of training 58,400 master trainers across this period. Well-equipped and aesthetically designed, the MRCs as well as the training centres will have aspirational infrastructure, said Kishore.

The Government of Tamil Nadu is working towards introducing several advanced concepts and technology-powered learning in vocational institutes, announced Santosh Mishra, Director-Employment and Training.

"We have several exciting projects in the pipeline that will make the government's education structure smoother within two years," he added. B Santhanam, MD, Saint Gobain Glass India, advised the centre to enforce soft skill training even amongst the bottom-rung staff.

He also announced that Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) would be happy to collaborate with Everonn to put up a technology-showcase and related themes.

**Source:** 26-July, 2011/ [ibn Live](#)

### **Indian researcher gets \$10,000 Commonwealth scholarship**

Canada's Carleton University, which has become the prime institution in forging educational and research exchanges with India, has awarded its \$10,000 Commonwealth Scholarship to an Anna University researcher.

Under the grant, researcher Selladurai Madhiyan will travel to [Canada](#) to work with Carleton's P.R. Sundararajan in his work on temperature-tolerant polymers, the Ottawa-based university said Wednesday.

Sundararajan's pioneering polymer research holds major applications in the aerospace and microelectronic circuits industries. The polymers he is developing with his students could one day be used as membranes, filters or cushion materials in high-temperature environments, the university said.

Chennai-based Anna University has an on-going research partnership with Carleton University.

Sundararajan, who himself comes from India, has helped four students from Anna University secure

scholarships to leverage their capabilities to promote research at the top Canadian university.

According to Sundararajan, "The ongoing partnership with Anna University provides hands-on training that will have real-world benefits. We have a lot to gain in terms of highly qualified professionals if these students settle in Canada after their graduation."

The Commonwealth Scholarship is part of the new thrust that the India-Canada relationship in education and research has received after the signing a higher education accord by the two countries last year during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit here for the G20 summit.

Carleton is the only university in the world to have a full-fledged India-centric Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology, Trade and Policy to raise awareness about bilateral studies and public diplomacy, and develop initiatives to build a better understanding of both countries.

University president Roseann O'Reilly Runte signed MoUs with many Indian institutions during her trip to [India](#) in February.

Carleton University also held the Canada-India Education Summit and the Canada-India Innovation Summit last month.

**Source:** 28-July, 2011/ [Times of India](#)

### **IIT-Bombay students chase dreams, not big money**

For many students of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B), money is not everything. Most students have shunned lucrative job offers by corporates and have instead chosen fields of research and education.

One of the most prestigious educational institutes in the country, the IIT-B on Friday declared its placement report for the June 2010-2011 batch. Almost 1,200 students from eight graduate and post-graduate courses participated in the campus placements; 950 got jobs.

The report says there has been a 50% rise in the number of jobs offered and 250 companies (a 33% increase) visited the campus.

The report said there are 286 students from the A-list category with pay packages of Rs8.5 lakh and above per annum. The highest pay package received this year is over Rs25 lakh per annum.

"Though the number of students opting for lucrative engineering jobs is higher, there has been a significant rise in the number of students opting for

co-engineering, research-oriented jobs," said professor Ravi Sinha, in-charge of placements at IIT-B. "The number of companies that came for R&D jobs was a lot higher compared to previous years. However, education-related jobs were fewer."

Looking at the trend this year, Sinha told DNA that inviting more companies from R&D, education and public sectors will be one of the institute's prime objective during the next placement season.

The report states 16 R&D organisations offered around 70 positions this year. Several IIT-B students were inclined towards a career in government or public sector organisations. Around 45 students were recruited by these organisations while 37 students, including several with a doctorate, were offered jobs by educational institutions.

**Source:** 29-July, 2011/ [DNA India](#)

### **Indo-Polish agreement on higher education likely**

The central European nation of Poland and [India](#) are working on an agreement in higher education that will focus on promoting bilateral ties between universities and institutions of higher learning in both countries, said Piotr Klodkowski, Poland's ambassador to India, here on Saturday.

Engineering, medicine, coal mining and information technology are some of the areas that promise lots of potential for collaborative academic endeavours, Klodkowski said, during an hour-long interaction with reporters at a meet-the-press event organised by the Pune Union of Working Journalists.

"We are identifying a couple of working groups that will analyse different elements of the proposed agreement, which may come through by the end of this year," he said. "Several Polish universities are interested in recruiting students from foreign countries, including India," he said.

He said Poland also has significant expertise in the area of coal mining technology apart from information technology (IT), which has, off late, emerged as a good market, covering central and east Europe, with several Indian IT companies establishing their presence.

Referring to the Indian human resource development (HRD) ministry's Foreign Education Providers (FEP) Bill that is currently pending in Parliament and promises entry for FEPs into India, Klodkowski said the bill comes as a "promising development".

This is particularly true for those universities in Poland, which have very strong technology base and might be willing to invest in India, he added.

He, however, said that Indian students aspiring to higher studies in the [European Union](#) (EU) countries, need to learn languages other than English, considering the EU policy that students should know at least two or three languages other than English, which undoubtedly remains a global language.

Apart from higher education, Klodkowski identified energy security, technology transfer and joint ventures, culture, travel and tourism as the key areas where much of the Polish embassy's effort is focussed on vis-a-vis international relations.

"The current value of trade between Poland and India is estimated at \$1.3 billion," he said and added, "We have been active in some of the economic sectors like defence and machinery. Similarly, coal mining and clothes from the Indian side."

Investment by Polish companies in India has been on the rise while big Indian companies like Tata, Infosys and Zensar have made themselves visible in Poland, he said.

**Source:** 30-July, 2011/ [Times of India](#)

### **Unified school education mooted; PM to take a call**

Aiming to bridge the gap between high-and low-quality school education, the government is working to bring in a single system and curriculum to teach students at the secondary and higher-secondary levels.

A plan is being worked out to bring education up to Class 12 under the ambit of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA).

An expert group constituted by the Planning Commission has suggested that since there are anomalies in the 10+2+3 pattern, there is an urgent need to unify the secondary and higher secondary education systems all across India.

According to the note recommending suggestions in the school education system, a copy of which is with this newspaper, the expert group has asked the Planning Commission to make appropriate allocations while finalising the 12th Plan document.

Sources in the Plan panel revealed that the proposed changes have been incorporated in the 12th Plan's (2012-17) approach paper.

Planning Commission deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia will make a presentation on the approach paper to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh next week and, if it is endorsed, it will be put up for the approval of the Union Cabinet.

Plan panel member and former Pune University vice-chancellor Narendra Jadhav headed the expert group. The Planning Commission, as part of its efforts to finalise the 12th Plan document, has constituted a number of expert groups on key social and infrastructure sectors.

**Source:** 31-July, 2011/ [Deccan Chronicle](#)

### **Centralised admission process chief clarifies criteria for CBSE students**

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) students, who have given internal school examinations for their standard X, are not eligible for admission to the standard XI of the Maharashtra state education board.

This was disclosed to DNA by centralised admission process (CAP) committee chief, Sunil Magar on Saturday.

This assumes significance in the light of 114 CBSE students' admission claims being rejected by the CAP committee on the grounds of their not giving the CBSE board examination.

Magar told DNA that they were not to be blamed as they were merely following the state government's circular, which reached them on June 15.

The circular states that CBSE students who appeared for standard X internal school examinations were not eligible for admissions through CAP.

"These students will have to seek admission to the junior colleges run by the CBSE itself. This way they will not miss their one year. Also, it is totally right on our part to demand for board examination results, as we do not recognise the internal school exams," Magar said.

The CBSEPA founder, Prakash Shinde, told DNA on Saturday that they were keen to meet the state education board chief so that their children are not deprived of their basic right to education.

"Our children will face a year's loss. Their careers will be at stake. Our children must get admissions like other students who are pursuing their studies in colleges of their choice. We have given a list of our demands to the CAP committee chief, Sunil Magar," he said.

**Source:** 31-July, 2011/ [DNA India](#)

## **ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE**

### **What does the real education mean?**

Education occupies a pivotal position in the development of every society. Education widens the horizons of our mindset, opens up new vistas for mankind and empowers the powerless. Studies world over have revealed that education is the most important instrument for the empowerment of women. It is only through education and training that they prepare to play their roles in the nation's social, economic and political spheres as equal members of society. One of the key factors in determining the success of development is the status and position of women in the society. The neglect of women in the development process of any country constitutes a human resource waste. As the primary enrolment for girls' increases, so does the gross domestic product per-capita of the country increase. Countries that fail to raise the level of education of women, have to pay for a slow rate of growth and reduced income level. Education can enable women to discover, explore, and expand upon their hidden potential.

Many research studies conducted, so far, reveal that education leads to women's emancipation and helps them to break the glass ceilings and enter the world hitherto monopolised by men. Emphasising the importance of women's education Gandhi ji says: "if you educate a man, you are educating an individual only and if you are educating a woman, you are educating a family". The best investment of a nation is the one in the education of its women folk which forms half of world population. Education of women has a multiplier effect. Better educated mothers bring up better educated children and thus the benefits of education are passed on from one generation to another. It leads to more equitable distribution of resources, social benefits, stronger and happier families, better services and a good healthcare of children. As per a study a one year increase in mother's education leads to 9% decrease in mortality rate of children under 5 years of age. Woman education helps a country reduce its poverty, improve productivity, reduce pressure of population and provide a better future to the citizens of the country. Education is the only means by which she can establish her own independent existence, her own individuality and equal partnership with men. An educated woman develops confidence to participate actively in the political, social, and cultural life of the community. This in turn equips women with better mobility, expression, understanding, and ability to make decisions and accept responsibility. Furthermore, educated women have demonstrated a better ability

to keep control over their husband's expenditures, maintain their own economic independence, improve household management, and contribute to the family income pool.

In the modern world, the role of the women goes much beyond the home and the bringing up of children. She is now adopting a career of her own and sharing equally with the man the responsibility for the development of society in all its aspects. This equal partnership will have to continue in the fight against hunger, poverty, ignorance and ill health. Education will enable women acquire skills and self confidence. By education a woman can be a better parent, competent worker and an informed citizen. It will equip women with good decision making powers. The children of educated mothers are more likely to go to schools. No country or society can work to its potential without adequately investing in developing the capabilities of its women folk. The need for involvement of women in all aspects of development process is felt everywhere as the social gains from education of women are substantial. Since women are supposed to play a great role in the development of a nation in the context of family and the society at large, their education will act as a life line for their development and prosperity.

At the global level, the women form one third of world's illiterates. One hundred million children approximately including sixty million girls are without access to primary education. In developing countries particularly, women have lesser access to education, employment opportunities, income and power and are most deprived section of society. The maternal mortality rate in developing countries is about 18 times high as compared to that reported in industrialised countries. The human development index is extremely gender insensitive. For the past two decades, particularly since the Jomtien Conference on Education for All (1990), the subject of women-related educational access has gained increased attention. Indeed, the subject of educational access has been gaining increased attention, ranging from the classical-liberal economic approach of the World Bank, to the human rights approach of agencies as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). In the context of India's planned development, female education has assumed special significance since independence. All its 5 year plans have laid much emphasis on increasing the opportunities of education for girls under which special measures have been taken for improving and enhancing the education of girls. However in spite of the various commendable provisions available in the

constitution and various initiatives undertaken by the Government even after 50 years of independence, the female education in India presents a dismal picture. The gap between men and women in terms of education keeps on widening.

In Jammu and Kashmir also, despite the progress made during the last 50 years, female literacy remains very low, particularly in the Kashmir valley as the education of women was given least priority and as a consequence illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness were rampant among women. After 1947, all successive governments in J&K attempted to improve the conditions of women by providing them free education which had a qualitative impact on the role and status of women. The Kashmiri women in general developed an interest and motivation to come out of their homes for education, employment and entertainment. Education, modernization and urbanization have helped Kashmiri women to find themselves at par with men in the highest offices of the government. Kashmiri women in urban as well as rural areas work in and outside their homes and are socially and economically productive. Their subservience to men has diminished and their economic contribution has notably increased.

As per a survey conducted by the Government in 2008, the literacy rate in the State was 65.67% and for female it stood only at 57.11% compared to 73.30% for males. The gender gap in the literacy is 6.19% in favour of males. As per 2011 Census, Jammu and Kashmir State has recorded a literacy rate of 68.74 %. The literacy rate among female has been reported to be 58% while as it is 78% among male. Districts of Jammu, Samba and Leh have recorded the highest literacy rates of over 90%, while as Bandipora, Ganderbal, Budgam, Ramban, Kulgam and Reasi districts have reported the lowest literacy rates of less than 60%. On the whole, there has been an improvement in education of women in cities and towns while as in rural and far flung areas the situation is still unsatisfactory. Our State figures among the poor female literacy level states like Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Manipur and Utter Pradesh. From the technical and vocational educational point of view our women folk lag far behind. Our enrolment of women in higher education is lowest. We have a limited number of women research scholars in the field of science and technology. There is dearth of female doctors, female judges and female administrators.

The stereo type mindset of people is also responsible for the educational backwardness of women in the rural areas. The parents take the

education of daughters as a futile exercise and wastage of money and resources. Their attitude towards the education of daughters is totally different because they think that after marriage of the daughter they are not getting anything. They prefer the education of sons as they consider them as their future assets. With the result most of the women folk in rural and far flung areas is illiterate and ignorant. They are not aware about their rights and duties. There has been an increase in the enrolment of girls at primary and secondary levels but not at higher education level. Hardly 2 or 3% of girls reach the level of higher education.

The Government, community, NGOs and other social and religious organisations have to come forward for highlighting the essence of female education. Feminists will have to continue their struggle to make women aware of the benefits of education. The schools and colleges need to be safe places where parents will prefer to send their daughters happily. The flagship Mid Day Meal Scheme and Sarva Shiksha Abihayan need to be implemented properly. Separate allocation of budget for women's education is a crucial requirement. New schemes for girl education in backward and remote areas should be a matter of concern for the policy makers.

For attaining a sustainable economic growth both formal as well as non-formal education for women is indispensable. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system of education has emerged as a tool with immense potential for creating widespread access of knowledge for women. It allows women to overcome the barriers of time, space and socio-economic conditions and to bring a variety of learning resources to meet their educational needs. ODL system has the potential to educate and train them while preserving the Islamic identity and socio-cultural traditions. Women from all walks of life have continued to seize the opportunities of ODL programmes to improve on their education, get better job and improve on their standards of living. Full time house wives and working women can pursue the much craved training, skill development and education in the open and flexible learning environment.

It becomes imperative for the policy makers, planners and the educationists to initiate such measures which will help in enhancing the enrollment of girls in schools and higher education institutions. The drop-out rates of female students needs to be studied properly. The existing gaps in education of boys and girls need to be identified. The creation of a suitable infrastructure like separate girls schools, female teachers, nearby

schools, washrooms, transport facilities and a secure environment is the need of the hour. Some special provisions and schemes for girl students like scholarships, free books, uniform etc will go a long way in overcoming the barriers in female education. The Bihar Government provides bicycles to the school going girls which facilitates their reaching the school in time and saves them from the menace of overcrowded buses or covering long distances by foot. This initiative has helped the state in motivating girl students to attend their schools and has increased their enrollment. Initiatives like this can attract our girl students from rural areas towards schools.

Special measures need to be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, reduce gender gap, create a gender sensitive educational system, increase enrollment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate lifelong learning as well as development of vocation and technical skills by women, with a special focus on women belonging to weaker sections of society. A gender sensitive curriculum has to be developed at all levels of educational system in order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination. As education is a fundamental right of every individual irrespective of caste, colour, creed and sex, denial of this right to any individual is the violation of the basic human rights. Therefore, it becomes imperative for the government to make education mandatory for all the sections of the society especially for female folk who have yet not availed this opportunity fully.

**Source:** 17-July, 2011/ [Roshan Ara/Greater Kashmir](#)

### **Education Bills: Guv, Nitish on collision course, Speaker to step in**

The state government and Governor Devanand Konwar are not in agreement regarding five education Bills, which may reportedly curtail certain financial and appointing powers of the Governor in his capacity as the chancellor of state universities. Konwar recently returned three Bills, terming them as "money Bills". Early this year, he had returned two education Bills on the same ground.

The Governor, who reportedly had 14 Bills to clear till a month and a half ago, cleared 11 of them, but returned three terming them as "money Bills". Raj Bhavan sources said the three Bills are Bihar University Service Commission Bill 2011, Bihar University Tribunal Bill 2011 and Bihar State School Teachers and Employees Dispute Redressal Tribunal Bill 2011. All three, according to the Governor, would have "financial implications" if passed in the

present form. However, the HRD department insists that they are general Bills.

Six months ago, the Governor had returned Bihar University Commission Bill 2011 and Patna University (Amendment) Bill terming them "money Bills". Speaker Udai Narain Choudhary gave a ruling during last budget session and called it "general Bills". Konwar, however, has asked fresh questions regarding the Bills.

Sources said Konwar in his capacity as the chancellor of universities in Bihar wants to constitute a commission to ensure appointment and promotion of employees and teachers, as against the state government's stand.

The government's proposed education Bills, according to the Raj Bhavan, will minimise the Governor's say in appointment of vice-chancellors besides curtailing his financial powers.

While Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has played down the controversy by dismissing any "stand-off between the Governor and government", HRD Minister P K Sahi and some other ruling party members have requested the Speaker to take a call on the three Bills in the current Assembly session. The CM said: "Let the Speaker decide the nature of Bills. There have been constitutional provisions in place and the matter should be resolved soon."

Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi was more forthright. "After we raised objections to the Raj bhavan sitting over 14 Bills two months ago, seven Bills were cleared in a day. The delay from Governor's side is not doing any good to the government's development agenda," he said.

**Source:** 17-July, 2011/[Indian Express](#)

### Who pays for the RTE?

Sameer Singh\* is an owner of a private school Shastri Park. He receives no funds from the government or any NGO. He employs eight teachers, two peons, four helpers, one principal and is responsible for the education of more than 400 students. All this is done on a monthly fee of 400. Even then the collection comes to only about 90%; as most students are from the poorer sections of the society with household incomes between Rs 3000-7000 per month. Though MCD recognised till class 5 it runs till class 8 and also has a playschool; the expenditure on bribes alone amounts to Rs 20,000 a year. But Sameer Singh is a happy man. He is serving the poorer sections by providing them with quality education –which is what drove the students from nearby government

schools to these budget private schools and still managing to eke out a profit on the seemingly paltry fee of 400 a month. This was one of the many fascinating facts revealed in a study I undertook under the CCS on budget private schools in north east Delhi. For most of these schools, staff salaries make up around 60-75% of their total annual expenditure while monthly fees makes up 70-80% of their total revenue. As they have little access to formal finance expansion is slow and difficult as to recover costs the monthly fees would have to be increased. This adversely affects enrolment due to low household incomes. But till now it does seem to be a happy story. The parents seem satisfied with the low fees and better education compared to neighbouring MCD schools and the owners are making a profit.

But the RTE Act may just prove to be the undoing for these schools –and the students too. August will mark two years since the RTE Act was notified and government recognition for all private schools across the nation made mandatory; and failure resulting in closure. Recognition requires the fulfillment of RTE stipulated norms pertaining primarily to land area and teacher salary. To ascertain the impact on monthly fees of RTE compliance my study used a sample of five budget schools and estimate the increase in monthly fee required to meet it. The average monthly fee charged by these schools was found to be Rs 270. To ascertain the rise two periods were used the initial ten years required to recover expenditure on land and the later period after. Just to break even the average increase in the first ten years the new monthly fees would have to be Rs 1940 –an increase of 618%. Even after the land cost has been recovered the average fees, to break even, would have to be around Rs 698 to meet increased teacher salaries –still an increase of 258%.

The RTE Act's focus on making recognition mandatory results in blurring out the bigger picture. An increase in monthly fees entails a significant drop in enrolment which would cause budget schools to shut shop. Instead of ensuring a compulsory education the RTE Act actually limits the choice that parents have in terms of what schools to send their children too.

If the RTE does get implemented, government schools will be the only choice left. But didn't the parents consciously select budget school over neighbouring government ones? It almost makes you wonder who exercises the right in the Right to Education Act.

**Source:** 19-July, 2011/[RTE India](#)

### India Needs More Health, Education Spending for Inclusive Growth, Sen Says

India needs to spend more on basic health care and education if economic growth is to benefit all members of society, according to Amartya Sen, the first Indian to win the [Nobel Prize](#) for economics.

Higher public spending must also be part of Prime Minister [Manmohan Singh](#)'s efforts to restore public confidence following a corruption scandal involving the sale of mobile-phone licences, Sen, 77, said in an interview in Edinburgh on July 18.

Economic reforms to boost investment have been stymied as Singh's allies block changes in protests against government corruption and food-price inflation that averaged 18 percent last year.

"The reform process has not stopped, it has halted and it will start again if the government survives," Sen said. "It will also have to make the growth much more inclusive. Education and health-care expansion are the biggest part of that because an illiterate laborer with very indifferent health is not in a great position to seize the opportunities that globalized economic relations provide today."

[India](#)'s democratic agenda is increasingly concerned with narrower issues such as corruption and inflation, said Sen, who was giving a lecture at a conference in Edinburgh to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of philosopher David Hume.

"There isn't enough voice in India about the totally urgent need for expansion of basic education and basic healthcare, particularly basic health care, much further than has happened," said Sen, who won the Nobel Prize in 1998 for his work on [welfare economics](#).

#### *Corruption*

The increasing exposure of corruption in the economy, which had been present for a long time, would have caught whichever government had been in power, Sen said.

"So the first priority is to ride out the present crisis, to generate confidence in his government," Sen said. "There is no question that if the government had acted quicker it would have saved a lot of embarrassment today. I don't doubt it is very clear to him he should have acted earlier."

Economies of countries such as India, [China](#) and [Brazil](#) won't be much affected by the sovereign debt crisis because of their focus on economic growth, Sen said.

"In the case of India they are running a deficit at a level that would put [Greece](#) to shame but they don't have a payment problem because the country is growing at 8 percent a year," he said.

Greek Prime Minister [George Papandreou](#) last month won parliamentary approval for a new 78 billion-euro (\$109.5 billion) five-year package of budget cuts and state asset sales to secure further international aid from the European Union and the [International Monetary Fund](#) in an attempt to avoid defaulting on its debts.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Bloomberg](#)

### Retired teachers for debate on higher education

Welcoming the HRD minister's proposal for holding a public debate on the status of [higher education](#) in Bihar, [Patna University Retired Teachers' Association](#) (Purta) has volunteered its cooperation in this noble cause. Alternatively, the association has offered to organize such debate on the Patna University (PU) campus next month, soliciting the minister's patronage.

The Purta, at its executive committee meeting held here under the chairmanship of Bakshi Vidyanand Sinha, observed that if the government is at all serious, it can easily visualize that the university education in the state is in acute crisis -- administratively, financially and academically. Absence of full-time vice-chancellors, acute resource crunch, dearth of competent faculty and staff, poor condition of libraries and laboratories, dilapidated buildings, all reflect the critical state of higher education in the state. There has been a regular decline of university autonomy all these years. Instead of solving the real problem in the university system, any cosmetic change by the state government here and there will serve no useful purpose, he said.

The executive committee reiterated its demand for withdrawal of the recent university amendment Bills, calling them "anti-teacher, undemocratic and counter productive." It had earlier requested the chancellor not to give his assent to these Bills.

"It is unfortunate that the government is bent upon converting these controversial Bills into Acts without removing their harmful features.

The constitution of a search committee for selecting suitably qualified persons for the posts of VCs, and constitution of a separate authority by the government with overriding power are really harmful to the interest of teachers as well as the

growth of these institutions. The draft proposal of all the statutes, ordinances, regulations and rules shall be sent to the authority for its approval.

By this amendment, the government is trying again to deny the existing statutory benefits to the teachers and pensioners, which they are getting since the last three decades," it added.

The meeting was attended among others by J P Singh, B N Singh, Rajeshwar Prasadn Sinha, R C P Sinha, S W M Subuktagin, N K P Sinha, and S K Ganguli.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **Govt. seeks more clarity on education loans**

The finance ministry wants state-owned banks to define the terms and conditions for sanctioning education loans in an effort to reduce arbitrary decisions by bank officials.

In draft guidelines circulated to the banks last week, the government has suggested steps to make the process of sanctioning and disbursing education loans more transparent, customer friendly and standardized.

A finance ministry official who did not want to be identified said the current system is heavily dependent on the discretion of the branch manager of the bank. The ministry wants "approval conditions" defined so as to reduce this discretion, this person added.

Bankers said the government also wants to ensure students understand the terms of the loan contract.

"It is clearly in banks' interests also if the student understands the terms and conditions well. It will help banks reduce the NPAs (non-performing assets) in this segment," said Vivek Mhatre, general manager in charge of retail banking at Union Bank of India.

The education loan portfolio of public sector banks stood at Rs.43,074 crore on 31 March. Bankers say defaults in this segment are 2-5% of the portfolio. Defaults are higher in loans of less than Rs.4 lakh, where banks cannot ask for collateral or personal guarantees.

The ministry has proposed that banks give loan applicants the name of a bank executive they can approach to track the status of their application. It has also asked banks to tell applicants how much money they can borrow to meet additional expenses besides the tuition fee.

Students generally take a student loan to pay tuition fees and meet additional expenses such as hostel fees, books, laptops and field visits. Banks transfer the tuition fees directly to the institutes but release the additional expenditure to the students.

"They (banks) can clearly state that the additional expenses ceiling will be a certain percentage of the tuition fees, say 50%," the ministry official said. "At present, it is left to the discretion of every bank manager who may sometimes feel that the student is overstating the additional expenses. Each bank can decide its own limit."

The ministry has suggested that bank branches compile the placement track record of institutes in their area and consider that as the basis for approving student loans.

"A bank branch can compile the placement data of colleges in that particular area to determine the loan paying capacity of the borrower.

This will ensure that there is no discrimination between students from the same college—where one is given a loan and the other is not," the ministry official said. "This is particularly so in loan applications below Rs.4 lakh, where the borrower does not need to give any collateral."

The ministry has also asked banks to clearly state that a loan taken during the so-called moratorium period will be classified as a second education loan. Banks typically let students complete their course and take a year to get a job before they start repaying the loan—this is known as the moratorium period.

Currently, a second loan is defined as a loan taken immediately after the first loan, but the ministry official said the interpretation of "immediately" can vary depending on the discretion of a bank official.

The ministry's move follows a report submitted by a committee constituted by Indian Banks' Association (IBA) to suggest modifications in the model education loan scheme launched in 2001-02.

The committee, headed by Indian Bank chairman and managing director T.M. Bhasin, has recommended the creation of a credit guarantee fund financed by the banks and the government. Banks can use this fund to recover losses from bad education loans.

The ministry official quoted above said the government is open to the creation of a credit guarantee fund and has asked IBA for a detailed proposal.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[live Mint](#)

**One-click education**

*Looking to upgrade your knowledge? Just log on to the best schools on the World Wide Web and pick up some new learning*

My daughter, attending her first year in college, wanted to know how to calculate marginal utility. Utility is a pivotal concept in economics. The utility you have for a Ferrari is perhaps more than what Sachin Tendulkar would have for it. The utility you have for an umbrella right about now is higher than it would be, say, in December. And while we can all imagine that owning a second Ferrari would be great, we can't imagine what we would do with a second umbrella. What is happening is this: The marginal utility of each additional Ferrari or umbrella is changing

The previous generation used Paul Samuelson's classic text *Economics: An Introductory Analysis*, first published in 1948 and now in its 19th edition, to study the subject. Samuelson, a Nobel laureate who possessed wit, cutting insight and awesome mathematical rigour, transformed not only the way economics was understood, but how it was taught. Today, it is different. You don't have to even know who Samuelson was. It is enough to quickly look up the Internet—it must, however, be said that not knowing Samuelson expresses a dreadful, even nauseating, poverty of learning. Maybe you ought to look him up first, before moving on to marginal utility (Samuelson wrote his first published article—A Note on Measurement of Utility—as a 21-year-old doctoral student at Harvard).

The Web is a fabulous place for learning (always suspected it, eh?). There isn't a thing they teach you in class that hasn't been better expressed by someone on the Internet. Try "marginal utility" to start with. It's an eye-opener. There are brief explanations, powerful 60-second videos that get to the bottom of the concept with real life examples, seriously interesting classroom exercises on how to use calculus to solve marginal utility problems and how to calculate diminishing marginal utility.

We all know that the Web is a deep information resource. But over the years it has begun to make available a very high quality of learning that is often inaccessible to most of us in real life. Here are some websites you may enjoy and find enriching. This doesn't mean you skip reading Samuelson's *Economics*, should that be an area of interest to you.

*Economics*

Look up AmosWEB ([www.amosweb.com](http://www.amosweb.com)) for a stunningly concise collection of lessons in microeconomics and macroeconomics. Microeconomics deals with the study of individuals and companies, markets and industries. Macroeconomics deals with the economy and its attendant characteristics such as inflation, gross domestic product, fiscal policy and business cycles. The two courses are broken up into chapters, and each chapter is highly detailed- but never so deep that you get an I-am-sunk feeling in the pit of your stomach. For example, the lesson on business cycle is broken up into 26 short pages. The page that presents the overview is just five bullet points. I would say that if someone in office gave you grief by using the term "business cycles" and you went "duh?", this is the place to look up. The site features a way to test yourself on what you have learnt and grade your learning. A professor of economics at the Oklahoma State University develops the course material for AmosWEB.

*Justice*

Don't skip ahead just because this section is called "Justice". Isn't that what we question and deal with each day? The first complete course available online from Harvard is on justice ([www.justiceharvard.org](http://www.justiceharvard.org)). It is by Prof. [Michael Sandel](#), who has taught political philosophy at Harvard since 1980. Prof. Sandel is the author of 'The New York Times' best-seller 'Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?' His lectures on political philosophy and his examination of everyday life are riveting. Not surprisingly, Prof. Sandel has the kind of following rock stars do. The fascinating aspect of watching this 12-part video series is that it makes you think about yourself. Prof. Sandel and 'Justice' are so good, you would probably be willing to give up watching the next season of cricket's IPL for this.

*Music*

There are way too many places on the Internet that teach you how to play a musical instrument. But they come with a catch: A few videos are free, and then they try to sell you a self-learning DVD. But if it is real guitar you want to learn, then why not with Gibson, who make what are easily the world's best guitars? The Gibson website ([www2.gibson.com](http://www2.gibson.com)) offers lessons with [Arlen Roth](#), who has performed with Simon and Garfunkel, [Bob Dylan](#), [Don McLean](#), [Pete Seeger](#), [Jack Bruce](#), James Taylor (tough luck if you were thinking Rihanna and Katy Perry). The site has downloadable video lessons that you can carry away with you for offline use. You can also get the Arlen Roth degree in guitar playing. Roth gives a homework assignment to his students

every month and the submissions are uploaded on YouTube. Roth listens to the submissions, offers advice and comment, and a printable report card or certificate is mailed to the student. The lessons are graded for beginner, intermediate, advanced and expert levels, with music styles from blues to funk and rock.

### *Cooking*

The number of people trying to teach you to cook online is revoltingly large. But hard as you try, you won't find [Nigella Lawson](#) except for a couple of tips and tricks she hands out on a few sites. The place to go to is Jo Sawant's site, [www.sizzlingpots.com](http://www.sizzlingpots.com). Now Sawant may not be a Nigella Lawson, but she is just as good when it comes to things like Fish Masala Curry (rainbow trout in masala) or a quick-fix shrimp pickle ("Chanda 'Maushi' style!" as Sawant puts it on the website). She cooks Indian, Italian, Mexican, French and fusion. And come to think of it, the ex-property management professional does look as glamorous as Lawson when she does all those succulent vegetarian meatball recipes.

### *Chemistry of sports and the kitchen sink*

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has what it calls MIT OpenCourseware ([ocw.mit.edu](http://ocw.mit.edu)). It makes available almost all of MIT course content, starting with aeronautics and astronautics, and works its way down to biological engineering, planetary sciences, media, management, urban planning and writing—in all, 2,000 courses. For most, this should be adequate for a lifetime of learning. The most popular courses at the moment are the ones on computer sciences, linear algebra and classical mechanics. The site has a separate section for high school teachers and students that can help in the understanding of concepts taught in class. Courses come with one or a combination of the following—lecture notes, assignments and solutions, projects and examples, exams and solutions, images, multimedia. Many of the video lessons, like the 50-minute one on human genetics, have subtitles.

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[live Mint](#)

## A Good Education 'Ecosystem' Prevents Brain Drain

KUALA LUMPUR, July 20 (Bernama) -- In the last two decades, India has produced some of the world's finest industry professionals, particularly in the field of IT and engineering, who are highly sought after by companies in the Silicon Valley in the U.S. and the world over. Yet it managed to escape one of the maladies synonymous with such an achievement - brain drain.

How was it possible?

Manipal Education and Medical Group (MEMG) Advisor T. V. Mohandas Pai said this was because India has an excellent education system - an ecosystem that helps it retain the best and the brightest.

"What is special about the Silicon Valley is that there is an ecosystem of venture capitalists, universities and entrepreneurs," he recently told Bernama during an interview at Manipal University's Bangalore campus.

"For that to happen, the education sector needs to work very closely with the industry. You need capital and entrepreneurs who will start small companies."

India has successfully done this and the proof is its IT hub, Bangalore. IBM, Microsoft, Accenture, and Sun Microsystems are just a few of the world's top software companies which have set up bases there. It is not a surprise that the city has, for some time now, earned the nickname of the Silicon Valley of India, taken from its namesake in Santa Clara Valley, California. Big names are coming in droves and becoming major contributors to India's phenomenal growth in the field of software engineering.

This was reflected in Bangalore's gross domestic product (GDP) last year - a whopping USD65 billion, said Mohandas. The field of IT alone has contributed some USD27 billion to the figure.

### GOOD PEOPLE, GOOD PAY

Naturally, Bangalore's IT professionals are highly paid.

"The rule India follows in IT is that when they choose to work here, we pay them a better compensation compared to what the average is in the country. But if they choose to go abroad they get paid like anybody else there," Mohandas said.

Mohandas should know, being the former Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of one of the world's best global technology services company, Infosys Limited. That stint earned him the "Best CFO in India" by Finance Asia. He later on went to become its Human Resources Director and board member, before resigning recently.

Currency conversions aside, IT professionals in Bangalore are paid handsomely for their services.

Bangalore-based career portal Cybermedia Dice Careers Ltd and custom research firm TNS reported in 2006 that IT professionals were earning as much as Rs.5 million (RM339,384) annually.

The latest report by online company PayScale on the salary, benefits and compensation given to IT professionals revealed a median salary of up to Rs. 1.1 million (RM75,000) annually.

Added with generous perks and higher purchasing power, these companies have sealed the deal for many.

"Furthermore, they have their families here. They may travel - but they will come back," said Mohandas.

But attracting these Fortune 500 IT companies is no easy feat without enough rigorously educated youngsters, he said.

"You need people. But not just anyone - you would need the cream of the crop."

This is certainly something that is happening in India, in a very big way. It is rich pickings for the nation with a population of over a billion people.

Graduates in popular fields, like IT and engineering, number in the millions. Mohandas said India can afford to pick the best and offer them lucrative job prospects within the country.

Bangalore, itself, has 650,000 people employed in the IT sector, who could also work overseas, he said.

## INDUSTRY READY

With hundreds of thousands of students graduating every year and job prospects in the best of multi-national corporations, India's best students scramble to gain the edge that will give them an added advantage over their competitors. Academic excellence alone is insufficient, as it is simply too easily earned by many.

In meeting this need, the Manipal Group has teamed up with India's largest private bank, ICICI, to set up the nation's first corporate university.

The ICICI Manipal Academy for Banking and Insurance (IMA), located in its Bangalore campus, trains personnel handpicked by the bank itself and turns them into 'industry ready' graduates.

IMA's Deputy Director, Col C. Krishnan, said the syllabus and training modules at the academy were a result of detailed discussion and planning between the university and ICICI.

"This way the students are always up to date on the current industry needs and practices," he said.

ICICI also handles the entire screening process and selects 350 students in each new batch for the University, four times a year.

Training is very rigorous at the academy, with emphasis not only on application of knowledge but also on overall development of personality.

A group of Malaysian journalists had the privilege of visiting the academy recently and witnessed the students engaging in role-playing as bankers and clients, simulating real-life transactions.

Krishnan said students enrolled at the academy have completed their first degree and are between 23 and 26 years of age. The one-year programme, which includes three months of industrial training, will give them an extraordinary advantage over their peers from other institutions.

"When they have completed the programme and are absorbed into the banks, they will go in as assistant managers in top-tier management. That is how valuable they are," he said.

The joint venture is so successful that other banks in India have started discussions with the university for possible collaborations. The university is also collaborating with the Corporation Bank, one of India's largest public sector banks.

Sharing the same building with the academy is its Media and Entertainment faculty. In a similar fashion, the faculty has also produced graduates who are absorbed into some of the world's best animation studios with setups in India, including Dreamworks and Pixar.

The faculty uses blended learning methods that include e-games, simulators and online learning.

In line with the industry needs and development, the faculty is also introducing a Master's degree in game art, with a course content endorsed by the industry.

## ENSURING GRADUATES ADD TO HUMAN CAPITAL

Meanwhile, the Manipal Education and Medical Group is set to open the Manipal International University (MIU) here in September.

Its vice-chancellor, Dr Ravindra, M.P said that MIU would engage the corporate sectors while determining university courses and syllabi to ensure marketability of its graduates.

He said the move was in line with the Manipal Education Group's philosophy of ensuring that their graduates were also adding value to the country's human capital.

"I personally believe that Malaysia is complete in terms of infrastructure and overall environment. But unless you have a larger number of highly educated people, you will only get jobs at the bottom of the pyramid."

Dr Ravindra said the objective was to ensure that Manipal graduates in Malaysia move higher in terms of the value chain in the market. This would be done by replicating the formula used in its most successful institutions in India, while tailoring it to suit the Malaysian environment.

MIU's temporary campus will be at the Malaysia Airlines Academy in Kelana Jaya and is expecting around 600 students for its first group. It is targeting to have 20,000 students by 2021, with an investment of USD200 million (RM602 million) for its development over time.

staggering levels not only in the professional courses, such as law, medicine and management, but in undergraduate courses as well. The Economist noted recently that fees at American universities have risen five times as fast as inflation over the past 30 years.

In the UK, the government last year allowed universities to almost triple their fees with effect from September 2012. In India, there is anecdotal evidence of fees having risen sharply in professional courses. In non-professional courses, government institutions still charge only modest fees. However, in professional courses, where private colleges dominate, the total fees, including capitation charges, can be exorbitant. How to price higher education and how to ensure access are among the important policy challenges facing the country. But, first, we need to understand what is causing prices to rise so fast in the first place.

In higher education, we have three choices. One, we can have a government-dominated system where education is subsidised. Two, we can allow private universities and colleges to come up with the freedom to charge whatever the market can bear. Three, we can allow private institutions freer entry but regulate fees and make provisions for subsidising needy students.

In non-professional courses, we still have the first model. In professional education, we have attempted to move towards the third model but have ended up closer to the second one. There is regulation of fees in some areas but this only covers the official fee. The official fee is often only a small component of the overall fee, with a large component being collected under the table.

Several arguments are made for privatisation of higher education and market-driven fees. Investment in higher education has high payoffs and can, therefore, be financed by loans. Needy students can be taken care of through scholarships or interest subsidies. Subsidised education provided by the government imposes huge fiscal costs, which, in turn, come in the way of both creation of fresh capacity and quality. Competition in higher education will help moderate fee levels.

Every one of these propositions is questionable. In India, the student is not an independent entity. He is part of a family unit for which the student loan is one of several loan obligations. An education loan undoubtedly adds to the burden of the family. Funding of scholarships is woefully inadequate. Merely letting fees rise does not lead on to superior quality - quality is poor at most private professional

**Source:** 20-July, 2011/[Bernama](#)

## Policy challenge: How to price higher education & ensure access

Higher education costs have tended to soar in many parts of the world. In the elite private universities of the US, fees have reached

colleges despite the huge fees charged. It is also not true that competition helps moderate fees.

**Source:** 21-July, 2011/[Economic Times](#)

### Common entrance test cause for concern

The Centre's decision to conduct a common entrance test (CET) for admission to MBBS courses at all government and private medical colleges across the country has left the medical education authorities in state worried. "Our main concern is what will happen if a sufficient number of students from Orissa don't qualify in the all-India test," said Dr P K Das, the state director of medical education and training.

The Union health ministry and the Medical Council of [India](#) (MCI) reached a consensus on Monday that the CET would replace all other entrance tests for admission into the 271-odd medical colleges, including over 130 private institutes, in the country. The proposed test will be held by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), ensuring uniformity in medical education across the country. The [MCI](#) will prepare the course structure for the test, sources said.

As per MCI guidelines, students have to secure at least 50% marks in Plus II as well as in the entrance test. Though the 50% qualifying mark in Plus II is not being seen as a problem, the authorities fear an adequate number of students from the state may not get 50% marks in the all-India entrance test. "In such a scenario, seats meant for our students may be transferred to students from other states," Das said.

He added the state government has conveyed its apprehension to the Union health ministry and the Medical Council of India. "We have suggested to them that in such a situation, the state should be allowed to have the alternative option to take its own students to fill the vacant seats," he said.

Orissa has five medical colleges in all, three government and two private. There are a total of 450 seats in the three government colleges, of which the state's quota is 384. There are another 100 seats in private colleges. The seats are likely to go up by 150 in the next academic session, bringing the total number of seats to 700. If enough students from Orissa don't qualify in the test to fill all the reserved seats, some of the seats in the state may go to outside students, the medical education authorities fear.

"Since the medical CET will be a national-level examination, it won't be according to our syllabus and, so, sufficient students from the state may not

qualify in it," said Sita Ram Mahapatra, vice-chairman of Orissa Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE).

"We are facing a gross shortage of doctors. If students from outside the state are allowed to take admission in the seats reserved for students from Orissa, they would go back after completion of their courses. This will worsen the problem of shortage of doctors in the state," Mahapatra added.

The CET decision has evoked mixed reaction from students. "I will now have to appear for just one test and fill up one application form," said Srikant Kumar, an aspirant. However, another student, Sanjeeb Sahu, fears his months of preparations would go waste. "I am preparing only for the Orissa JEE. In an all-India test, both the syllabus and the question pattern will be different. I will have to start all over again," said Sahu, who has been taking coaching for medical entrance tests in the city.

**Source:** 22-July, 2011//[The Times of India](#)

### Cloud computing can counter illiteracy: Managing Director, HP India

She may not like the description, but she is the first lady of [Indian IT](#). In an industry where the proportion of women is relatively high-almost half of fresh recruits in recent years have been women very few have risen to senior management positions. Hardly any has become the head of a significant company.

Neelam Dhawan's accomplishment, therefore, is extraordinary. She was the managing director of Microsoft [India](#) between 2005 and 2008. And since then, she's been the managing director of [Hewlett-Packard](#) (HP) India, a company which according to some estimates is the fourth largest IT company in the country, after TCS, Infosys and Wipro , with close to \$5 billion in revenues.

Yet, many reading this would have barely heard of her. The Delhi-bred economics graduate from St Stephen's College, who did her MBA from Faculty of Management Studies in [Delhi University](#), does not appear in these pages often, and neither in other media. We think that is partly because she chooses not to flash her credentials and accomplishments.

She, however, offers a more modest explanation: "Indian companies get the first spot, and rightly so. Their chairmen are here, their CEOs are here, their global decisions are made here, and that's why it is big news.

But if you look at HP or any other American firm, our global leaders are in the US. And you have enough announcements coming from there. We

focus on how to do well in India with the strategy our company has. That's why any MNC would keep a much lower profile in the Indian media. And that's why most of us keep a low profile."

But given that India is such an important destination for outsourcing, and now also a rapidly growing market for IT, aren't important decisions taken here? Dhawan says the decisions taken here are "not earth shattering", not something that will change the way the organization works. But she says India's extraordinary growth has impacted the way decisions are taken. "I must say this, the India market changes every quarter.

The first of January what you think is going to happen, by March that's not true. It's that dynamic. So we need to keep adapting." At one stage it looked like manufacturing would move rapidly towards automation and HP started investing towards that; and then it found that it was power and utilities that was doing it more.

Banking was all about core banking solutions till recently, and now it's all about mobile banking and financial inclusion. Dhawan says what the government wants to do also transforms from quarter to quarter.

"So India is a very exciting, demanding economy. And we need to keep pace with it, think differently." Can a huge company like HP be nimble enough to manage these changes? Dhawan says that's done by combining quarterly plans with yearly ones. "We begin every year saying these are the big things we should work on; we align with our corporate strategy and what we think will fit here. This year the big thing we think is [cloud computing](#).

So we have a whole strategy on cloud and we are now very focused on it." But every quarter, HP India identifies emerging developments. Financial inclusion became big towards the end of last year. "So I have to think through how core banking and financial inclusion can get linked, and should cloud be part of that strategy. It is necessary to think strategy every quarter. Strategy is always a work in progress in India."

Banking, telecom, and more recently government are areas that are moving the most rapidly for HP. Utilities, particularly power, infrastructure, transport and airport modernization are other big IT opportunities that Dhawan sees. Indian Railways has been a big HP customer for many years. "Now even road transport is looking at adopting IT," she says.

HP's success in India has been a result of innovative adaptation of its solutions to the requirements here. The banking sector's financial inclusion initiatives will not turn profitable for many years. And Dhawan is acutely aware of that. So she's determined to create solutions that "ensure our customers remain competitive".

For government schools, the company has just launched what it calls a lab-in-the-box. HP took a shipment container, painted it, made windows on it, installed a DG set, provided for cooling, provided a VSAT connection, and set up 13-14 student desks and one teacher desk with computers, all inside the container. NCERT courses can be obtained online.

"Since schools don't have space to have a computer lab, we created this compact lab for NCERT as a pilot. They are using it for teacher training. But if a school says it needs a lab, NCERT can just ship one," says Dhawan.

We point out that several technology companies are doing such pilots but most are yet to prove themselves to be scalable. But Dhawan is convinced that India's problems of vast illiteracy and low levels of education will get solved with cloud computing.

"Take CBSE, you can have the courseware and the books on the cloud. You could have an NCERT cloud or an ICSE cloud. Students can download the courseware from wherever they are. We can have videos of the best teachers teaching the courses on the cloud. And any school can simply view these videos."

She says if students need books, they can simply print it from the cloud. With cloud, everybody will have to pay far less, since it is shared by millions of students. "These experiments have to work; otherwise we will never get a society that has uniform access to education."

**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **India's future depends on quality of primary education: Kalam**

The future of the nation depends on the quality of primary education imparted, former President Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has said.

Emphasising the importance of education, Dr. Kalam said, while addressing students at a school here on Friday, that primary education must be made a fundamental right of Indian citizens.

Primary education needs to be approached more creatively where dedicated teachers nurture young children who can prepare themselves for the

challenges of the future, he said at the seminar titled "Evolution of the Unique."

The syllabi should engage the children and lead them to enjoy the process of learning, he said.

Dr. Kalam also stressed on time management as a rule for achieving success and said that children must be taught to set a goal for themselves and be motivated to work hard to achieve it.

Interacting with the students for about an hour, he also responded to their questions on issues relating to terrorism, corruption and India's relationship with Pakistan.

**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

### **It is time we rewrote India's research story**

Tamil Nadu's intellectual and industrial strength can provide a winning combination to position itself as the academic research capital of India. Like Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra, the State has clear policies in promoting industry clusters — automobile, biotechnology, IT and agriculture. It needs a sound policy aimed at promoting academic research in educational institutions with industry collaboration and the present State government is capable of providing this policy leadership fully leveraging the presence of reputed higher educational institutions — public and private — and industry leaders.

India spends only 1% of its GDP on research compared to 2.7% and 3.4% by the U.S. and Japan. This is just 3.7% of the global R&D expenditure and has remained constant at this level for the past five years, while China has increased it from 13% to 18% in the same period. Only 4% of the total R&D expenditure in our country is from higher educational institutions, putting India the lowest amongst its global peers — China (10%), Japan (14%), the U.S. (17%) and Canada (35%).

In terms of research productivity, the picture is not encouraging enough. India has 7.8 scientists per 1,000 population compared to 180.66 in Canada, 139.16 in the Russian Federation, 53.13 in Korea and 21.15 in the U.S. Though the number of institutions participating in research in India increased in the last 10 years, 80% of the publications come only from 10% of the institutions. In terms of publication output measured by the number of papers published in journals indexed by Web of Science, the Indian share has remained flat under 3% for the last 10 years. The share of Brazil, South Korea and China

has substantially increased during the same period, putting India in the 13<sup>th</sup> position.

India's research papers were cited on average 3.2 times, putting it in the 119<sup>th</sup> position out of 149 countries, a little ahead of China (2.9). Among developing countries, India ranks first in publication outputs in four areas — Agriculture, Energy & Environment, Biology & Biochemistry and Plant & Animal Sciences. Though patent filing in India is increasing, it is still behind its Asian peers and significantly less than that of leading international players.

Many countries have undertaken crucial reforms to rejuvenate research in higher education. The inspirational Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 enacted in America unlocked laboratory research in U.S. universities to create an economic impact and the well-being of Americans through the creation of new innovations, companies and products. The average number of annual university patents was 200 before 1980 and jumped to 1,600 during the next decade, out of which 80% came from federal-funded research projects and universities became the economic growth engine. Campuses began to script success stories that saw the birth of the Internet, Google, pharma products, software and engineering solutions, revolutionising corporate America.

China's spending on research and development has steadily increased to 1.5% of its GDP and is higher than that of most other developing countries. Since 2000, the number of papers by scholars based in China published in Science Citation Index (SCI)-listed journals has quadrupled. China has outperformed every other nation, with a 64-fold increase in peer-reviewed scientific papers since 1981, with the focus on chemistry and materials science. The Chinese government has urged scientists to publish in reputable English-language journals, offering promotions and other rewards as incentive. China's enormous investment, at a rate above the rate of inflation, at all levels of the system — schools to postgraduate research, has been the spine of such a resurgent research boom.

The Indian academic research story needs to be rewritten. There are inherent systemic problems that plague the research environment. Less than 1% of the total students enrolled in higher education are pursuing Ph.D. and this is not in pace with the overall growth of students in higher education. The overall quality of doctoral studies in many institutes is questionable. With large faculty vacancies and a poorly qualified faculty, the quality of research in higher education institutes, including the IITs, which have a 20% vacancy, is diluted.

A survey conducted by the UGC shows that a quarter of the faculty in Indian higher education institutions spends less than five hours per week on research. The quantum of extramural support given by Indian agencies to higher education institutes is insignificant compared to the funding received by other leading institutes abroad. The research budget of Harvard University for the year 2008 was Rs.250 billion. During this period, the total extramural grant disbursed for R&D projects to Indian academia was Rs.12 billion and by the UGC alone was Rs.1.3 billion. Look at the contrast! There is need for an enabling environment for the corporate sector to work with universities on research/commercialisation.

### *TN can take the lead*

Tamil Nadu can take the first-mover initiative in formulating a University Research Policy aimed at addressing these four major lacunae in the academic research landscape of India and improve the State's research scorecard. Such a policy will not only catapult higher education in the State to greater heights but also fuel its economic engine. In doing so, the State should also rope in private providers who are an integral part of the higher education system. There are miles to go in the research race but thankfully there is a favourable track for Tamil Nadu to win the race due to its political leadership with a visionary foresight.

**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

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**Source:** 23-July, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

### **B-Schools plan course revamp for industry-ready graduates**

Indian business schools will together attempt at changing the course curriculum last tweaked by some of them in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial meltdown.

Driving the change this time will be corporate needs in emerging markets and not just economic

compulsions. This is the first time that B-Schools will jointly brainstorm on curriculum.

A few institutes including the IIMs introduced subjects like ethics and social-cultural environment two years ago when MBA education was under fire for causing the sub-prime crisis and later failing to contain the global recession. Now companies picking up grads from campuses are increasingly seeking on-field experience, sending institutes into a huddle for a long-term revamp plan.

Some 65 representatives from various 30 B-Schools (including six IIMs) and some companies will meet at a conference on Friday to kick off what is termed as a process to decide the road ahead for management education in [India](#). Roadmap that emerges from the conference will be shared with Indian B-Schools to help them reformulate their curricula," says IIM-A faculty Vijaya Sherry Chand who is a member of the conference's organising committee.

"We (B-school passouts) are as good or bad as graduates from any other discipline. Industry interface is seriously missing (in the curriculum). Students need to interact with the present genre of corporates which will be far more interesting than their academics," says an IIM-Calcutta alumnus who steered a multi-million dollar acquisition last year.

In February, [Harvard Business School](#) said it would move away from its case-study approach and focus more on ethics and team work. The changes are aimed at creating leaders of competence and character, rather than those with connections and credentials, it said.

Harvard school professor Srikant Datar says, business schools in the West are changing and reforming their curricula to reduce the current focus on "knowing" (facts, framework, theories) to "doing" (capabilities and techniques) and "being" (values, attitudes, and beliefs).

At the same time, there is greater emphasis on "thinking" how to think critically and make logical arguments using deductive, inductive, causative, or analogical reasoning," says Datar who has authored *Rethinking the MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads*. The book will form base for discussion between Indian B-Schools at the conference that is jointly being hosted IIM-Ahmedabad and IIM-Calcutta in Ahmedabad. The two schools will make own presentations.

Says IIM-A director Samir Barua: "There is a need to bring in changes in the current management education to meet changing market requirements

and future demand. Changing the curriculum is not possible overnight, but we will use the collective ideas in future for the curriculum change."

The idea would be to disseminate the outputs widely so as to start a national debate on what needs to be done to revamp management education so that it becomes more relevant and responsive to the emerging needs of the nation. B-Schools will make the education imparted more relevant to the needs of emerging economies...What are the changes in curriculum, processes and philosophy underlying management education in some of the leading business schools? How relevant are those innovations and changes to the needs in the Indian context?," the conference brochure read.

Datar who will also attend the conference believes there are a large number of unmet needs in areas such as global perspectives, leadership development, critical, innovative and integrative thinking and execution and implementation. "As business educators, we need to engage our students in thinking deeply about the roles and responsibilities of business towards various stakeholders and to emphasise the limitations of the models we teach," he added. According to him, the MBA degree is facing serious challenges.

"Over the last 10 years, we have seen decline in enrollment of 25-30% or even 50% at highly ranked US and European schools outside the top 15 schools. Prospective applicants are being discouraged by many employers from going to full-time MBA programs. Schools are giving much more attention to innovation and execution. To teach these skills, schools in the West are beginning to adopt different pedagogies such as experiential learning.

They are recognising, for example, that innovative thinking, just like swimming, is best learned through repeated practice in real situations. Unlike other professions, a manager's success depends on motivating and inspiring others. Schools are using leadership laboratories to train students to examine their own strengths and weaknesses, with the goal of building their skills in self and relationship management," he said.

An IIM-C faculty said that the study is being finalised and there is a need to address issues like what type of skill sets do recruiters need. "We are also thinking of recruiters' perspective for fresh candidates and experienced candidates. We will discuss about the weightage given to on-field experience and classroom education. The discussions will initially lead to a re look at the

current curriculum and it will impact our future curriculum," he added.

IIM-Rohtak, which will have its first placement season next year, believes that there is need for including new aspects in the MBA course. "B-Schools currently focus on professional excellence, but equal focus should be given to value system and social commitment. In changing business environment, managers with these qualities, will ensure faster growth of organisations," IIM-R director P Rameshan told ET.

"The current management education is not up to the industry requirements. MBA students are not ready to take on the corporate world, as what they have learnt (theory) and what is needed (practical) knowledge are different. There should be more of interactive sessions for students with the guest faculty members from various fields like manufacturing industry, service industry, entrepreneurs, faculty from government offices like treasury, RBI, PF, labour office etc to know more about the various act and compliance's as per the applicable industry.

Also, internships should be of a whole semester," said Dinesh Gehlot, assistant VP of Credila (HDFC Ltd Company). He added that management education needs curriculum with emphasis on imparting education in regard to political, ethical and philosophical nature of management practice.

Sanjit Paul Singh, director of Gurgaon headquartered HR firm S&S Associates says corporates now demand for greater domain expertise. "B-Schools teach various concepts in classroom and corporates expect their application in real world from grads.

Also, more than 90% MBAs go to corporate world only after completing study and just 10% come with some work experience. B-Schools need to change enrolment criteria or they should increase the duration of internship to match the recruiters' requirement," he says.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### A lesson in loans

The purpose of education loan introduced by the government in 2001 was to ensure that meritorious students did not discontinue studies for want of funds. Subsequently on the basis of complaints from students and parents on the difficulties faced by them in securing loans, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revised the scheme to ensure "more affordable terms and conditions". Yet, there are innumerable complaints of eligible students being

denied the loan, of inordinate delays in grant of loans, of banks demanding collateral security even for amounts that do not require any and cases of corruption and harassment of applicants. I do not know how many students are aware of this, but in such cases as these, they can complain to the nodal officer of the bank and if he does not resolve the issue, complain to the banking ombudsman ([www.bankingombudsman.rbi.org.in](http://www.bankingombudsman.rbi.org.in)). I give below three cases decided by the ombudsman .

In the first case, in violation of the guidelines framed by the RBI and the Indian Banks Association which clearly state that no collateral security is required for loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh, the bank had taken as security, LIC policies and a fixed deposit of Rs 75,000 from a student who had taken a loan of Rs 2.98 lakh. Also, in violation of its own terms and conditions of sanction, it started recovering the EMIs two years ahead of schedule and without any notice to the customer and even slapped cheque bounce charges. The banking ombudsman directed the bank to return the securities, reverse the cheque bounce charges and reschedule the EMIs.

In another case, where the bank returned the application papers after three months (as per guidelines, it is to be disposed of in 15 days to a month) saying that the loan disbursement officer was ill, the ombudsman directed it to pay Rs 10,000 towards compensation and also reconsider the loan, which was duly sanctioned.

In the third case, where the bank had rejected an application on the grounds that "certificate courses" were not covered under the education scheme — this had been upheld by the ombudsman too — the appellate authority under the scheme intervened. The authority pointed out that the guidelines on the educational loan scheme provided only an indicative list of all eligible courses. The bank was free to extend the loan to any course not covered in the list, with the avowed objective that no eligible student should be deprived of higher education for want of finance. The bank was directed to grant the loan.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[The Telegraph](http://www.telegraphindia.com)

### **The right formula to achieve excellence in education**

The sustained quest for excellence in education is visible across the globe and within Indian metros as well. Over the years, Mumbai's educational institutions have also been constantly raising the bar and benchmarking themselves against the best in the world. A closer look at the various aspects

across different fields reveals how well Mumbai scores.

### *Strong industry linkages*

Dr. Hanif U Kanjer, Founding Director, Rustomjee Business School, explains that excellence in management education is reflected in aspects like strong industry linkages, providing live project opportunities to enable application of knowledge, development of EQ and SQ in addition to IQ. "For instance, at Rustomjee Business School our focus is to go beyond the text by getting students involved in a wide variety of activities ranging from army-training, rock climbing, rappelling, river rafting, parasailing, flute classes, and intensive technology-based learning. Another important aspect is integrating the syllabus to offer content from the best professional programs such as CFA, ICWAI, and NSE, which are highly valued by the industry.

For example, in corporate finance, economics, financial accounting, we have incorporated the syllabus offered by professional certification courses, which provides our students the option of appearing for the certification exams along with their management studies, enhancing their employability. Our outbound programs are aimed at providing students exposure to international as well as rural India environments, which serves as an excellent study of contrasts and opportunities," he says.

### *Practical experience counts*

According to him, Mumbai scores very high when compared with other cities across the world and even within India. "I studied at the London Business School in London, UK, and have worked in New York. When I compare the learning opportunities and linkages provided by these international destinations, Mumbai compares very favorably. Right from its multicultural context, to its diversity of income groups, and its entrepreneurial spirit, Mumbai offers an excellent environment for gaining practical experience as well as the best academic opportunities."

### *Rich resource base*

"Mumbai, being a financial hub, offers an extremely strong pool of industry professionals who demonstrate strong academic passion and a desire to impart knowledge. At Rustomjee Business School, we have incorporated a series called Success Talks wherein we require students to interview successful CEOs, entrepreneurs, and business managers - and Mumbai is a rich resource base in this space. Last year, we had our students work on a live project for Dr. Amit Lala from the

Harvard University, who was keen on establishing a chain of orthodontics clinic in India. Based on the feasibility study conducted by our management students, he established his first clinic in Mumbai. These opportunities in live projects set Mumbai apart," he opines.

### *Development of students*

Shruti Mehta, Managing Partner and Operations Head for Teacherni.com, feels that aspects like the pedagogy - quality and approach of teaching including tools and resources provided; moral, social and cultural development of students; relevance of coursework and accreditation by qualified and established entities are quite important. "Mumbai has always been a centre for excellence and has steadily improved resources. It has been enhancing institution capabilities with technology advancements," she says.

### *Capturing the essence of learning*

Vishwas Deshpande, Managing Trustee, Vidyalankar Dnyanpeeth Trust and MD, Vidyalankar Classes, emphasises that there is a big difference between being 'qualified' and being 'educated'.

He underlines the fact that while being qualified means getting the degree certificate per se, being educated means capturing the essence of learning.

### *Global best practices*

"Socrates said that the test of knowledge is how to apply it. For Vidyalankar, imbibing excellence in education' is an unending passion. It is not only taking up lectures and adhering to syllabi. We make every effort to ensure that our teachers adopt the best practices in the world and students measure up to the International standards.

Since Vidyalankar has collaborated with Universities both in the US and the UK, our staff has had opportunities and avenues to mingle with top faculty. Recently Dr Chhajer and Ms Cheelan Bo-Linn of 'Centre for Teaching Excellence' UIUC conducted a three-day workshop on 'The foundations of excellence in teaching.' Excellence in education is all about competing with our own selves and raising the bar perennially," he declares.

### *Mumbai is uniquely positioned*

Highlighting the position of Mumbai as a Metropolitan City, which has always been an ideal to emulate for India, he says, "Some of its best in class institutes like IIT Bombay and ICT are top educational brands. The 150-plus year old Mumbai University also is placed well in this respect. Mumbai students have several opportunities to

gauge themselves and excel in the field of education.

Mumbai's unique position as the commercial hub and industry nerve centre makes way for internship opportunities for students across the board. For years the highest number of students, in the top 100 at IIT JEE have been opting for IIT Bombay," he points out.

### *Industry relevant*

Smeeta Gulvady, Vice President & Head of Centre of Learning, Thomas Cook (India) Ltd., feels that the key aspects that define excellence in education are quality industry endorsed content, which is relevant to the changing needs of the industry, continuously upgraded curriculum, a mix of practical exposure and classroom training, experienced and qualified faculty.

These are coupled with opportunities for all round development of students to give them a head start in life.

"Besides being a commercial capital, Mumbai is an educational hub with plethora of options in higher education, professional training programs whether science, IT, commerce, research, architecture, management, vocational and specialised training. With the exposure and opportunities available in Mumbai, students are both, inclined and willing to pursue vocational and specialised programs," she points out.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[DNA India](#)

### **Blossom and Bloom**

*Achyuta Samanta, founder, Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences and World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) finalist from India, speaks about his journey.*

It has been said that we must blossom and bloom wherever we are planted. Achyuta Samanta, founder, Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) award finalist from [India](#) is one such person who has carried forward this idea.

Being born in poverty, becoming fatherless at a tender age of four, and supporting a big family actually gave him the strength to look beyond himself and reach out to the neglected, underprivileged and deprived tribal children. He was determined to educate himself and through scholarships. He finished his schooling and completed his higher education, but wasn't happy yet. He couldn't forget his difficult childhood and

decided to ensure that the poorest of the poor get an education.

"I would travel 300 km on my bike everyday and I would go from house to house and ask people for money to start an industrial centre. I would be insulted and humiliated but I didn't give up. I had no monetary support. The only thing I had while starting, 18 years ago, was a passion to reach out and help the neglected and underprivileged children," says Samantha.

With hard work and persistence he started an ITI with just 12 students in one room, under the banner of Kalinga institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), which became KIIT University. Later, funded by KIIT, he established the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and 18 years later, it has bloomed into Asia's largest free residential school for tribal children providing education to more than 15,000 tribal children, from kindergarten to postgraduation.

"This institute is a unique experiment. It was difficult in the beginning, to persuade the tribals to let their children come to school; finally they did send their children," says Samantha. They started the school with 125 tribal children and are affiliated to the Orissa Board.

### SOCIAL IMPACT

KISS has had a huge social impact. "Unless the tribal people are brought into the mainstream, there is no question about thinking of development. KISS has fulfilled the management development goals and APJ Abdul Kalam's 'Vision 2020.' Students are not joining Maoists and Naxals, girls are getting educated without the liability of parents, child marriage is being prevented, and we ensure that when the students complete their education, which is at par with other schools, they have a job in hand," says Samantha.

Talking about some of the challenges that the tribal children face when they first come from a natural setting to a formal structure, Samantha says, "Our facility has children from 62 tribes and 13 primitive tribes who live in very deep forests. When children first come to our school, we have to counsel them in almost every aspect. They are not used to the lifestyle. We have to take care of them physically. Some of them have health problems when they first come in. They speak their own dialect and slowly through counselling they learn Oriya. We have to be very patient. The teachers, who are a mix of tribal and general teachers, act like more than just teachers by giving children love and support, besides education."

Even though KIIT has taken a huge loan, he still wants to reach out to more children. "Some people and corporates donate money but that isn't adequate to run the school. The government has sanctioned yearly-aid-grant of Rs 1.5 crore from the ministry of tribal affairs, but that isn't enough either. The parent organisation, KIIT, has a Rs 400 crore loan on it. In the coming days, we would like to expand to other districts of Orissa," he concludes.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### Employment through computer education

Computer literacy has become almost a mandatory skill in the 21st century to flourish in the [job market](#). Students begin early from school, and go on to more specialised computer education, being offered by several institutes. One such institute is the Oxford Software Institute, which provides [job-oriented learning](#) certified by the ministry of labour and employment, government of [India](#).

Computer education is much more than just being familiar with basic programmes like keying in text, several specialised courses are available such as multimedia - web and animation course. In this tech era, every organisation and institute wants to get recognition through the internet. That's the reason why the corporate world always requires people who can design and maintain websites for organisations. Students, who are creative and interested in the web, can opt for a web-animation course.

Nowadays, every office has computers and they require maintenance from time to time. Students, who have a knack for computer hardware technology, can opt for hardware and networking course. Students are given training to assemble and troubleshoot computers and prepare networks of computer.

Be it a small commercial establishment or a reputed organisation, every company has an accounts department. But, nowadays, one cannot get a job by merely having knowledge about accounts because every company needs a computer accountant. That's why many students are pursuing courses on computer accountancy. Besides the above mentioned three courses, Oxford also provides courses for data entry operator, net programming and spoken English. Students can opt for any of the courses based on their aptitude and eligibility.

Many are under the impression that these courses are expensive. But that's not entirely true. Oxford

charges students an affordable fee for lab maintenance, which is related to the selected course and duration, ranging from Rs 3,400 to 20,000.

**Oxford Software Institute** is a unit of Hindustan Software Education Ltd, an ISO 9001:2008 company. For the last 14 years, industry-expert trainers have been providing computer education to students. The only criterion for admission is the entry test. The forthcoming admission test is on July 31 at Hotel Jaypee Sidhartha, Pusa Road, **New Delhi**, registration for which can be done for free at any nearest Oxford centres.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **Brand equity**

**Phil Baty**, editor of Times Higher Education **World University Rankings**, writes on the controversial but important measure of academic reputation survey in university rankings.

They are always controversial, but one of the most common complaints about university rankings is that they use surveys to rate the reputation of institutions. Such measures are based on style over substance, the critics say, and do little to recognise up-and-coming universities, or those without a famous name.

But carried out with proper care, reputation surveys can form an important part of a serious ranking, helping to provide a valuable tool for students, academics and policymakers alike.

A university's reputation for excellence in teaching and research is a top priority for students who will invest tens of thousands of dollars in their degree. Reputation may be subjective, but students need to know their degree certificate has a brand that carries respect in the global job market.

And if you ask the right people the right questions, a reputation survey can provide valuable information.

For its 2011-12 World University Rankings, due out this Autumn, **Times Higher Education magazine** will draw on the views of more than 17,500 academics from 137 countries who took part in the survey carried out by our rankings data provider **Thomson Reuters**.

Each respondent was invited to take part because they were statistically representative of both their country, based on **United Nations** data, and of their academic discipline, no volunteers were allowed. Some 28% of respondents were from **Europe** and

18% were from **Asia** and the **Middle East**. Views from the Indian subcontinent will be properly balanced against those in the traditional superpowers of the West.

The survey asks respondents to judge institutions in their specialist fields, based on direct, personal experience. They are asked, for example, where they would send a highly talented undergraduate student for the best postgraduate teaching.

A reputation survey should be one that students can trust. But reputation is just part of the picture. Despite the faith placed in it, the survey is used in just two of at least 13 separate performance indicators that are used to build the THE World University Rankings.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **Sex education: a few lessons**

Most parents apparently believe children should start learning about sex when they're eight – here's why they're right

'Broad and structured sex education will provide grounding in relationships, biology, safety, health, respect for others and consent.' Photograph: David Levene for the Guardian

According to a survey run on the **Netmums** parenting website, the majority of parents believe children **should start learning about sex** and relationships when they are eight years old. I can hear them already. The shocked and outraged tones of the other "moral" majority reacting to yet another progressive plot to corrupt children. "We'll have no sex education here!" Or if we must, let them wait until they're actually doing it. That is sad, because such views are themselves transformative, turning sex from a natural and evolving topic to a dangerous threshold, making childhood sexualisation more, not less, likely.

*Talking about sex starts much earlier*

Children use sexual terms long before they reach the age of eight (year 3). Listening recently to year 1 conversations, I overheard boys talking about "having sex" (they mean "cuddling"). They insult each other using terms such as "gay". Discussion of sex runs through the playground discourse like Blackpool through a stick of rock: it's just very badly formed.

*Talking about sex needs to start earlier*

A straw poll of local school kids suggests little useful sex education is received before the age of 13. That's two years after the average age at which

girls begin their periods – five years after some. If you're not told about such stuff at home, how terrifying to be eight and suddenly bleeding. A range of studies report puberty starting earlier in western societies – and while the reality of sexual experimentation may not be as graphic or extreme as the tabloids would have us believe, that, too, can begin long before 13.

Sexual orientation and identity, too, can be obvious at a very early age (from six onward): once more, how scary to grow in an atmosphere that makes "queers" always the butt of jokes with no balancing official information.

### *Sex doesn't have to be sexual*

Many of the dirtiest, smuttiest most adult things about sex are just that: adult. There is a depressing read-across from adult values to child: many people assume that a child doing something "sexy" understands their behaviour and intends the result. Children learn through play. Girls dress, use makeup and dance in ways that would be erotic if their mums did them – but absolutely aren't when they do. Children can be educated about sex without focusing on the erotic.

### *It's never too young to learn respect*

The most misleading thing about this debate is that opponents caricature sex education as being about just one thing. In fact, broad and structured sex education will provide grounding in relationships, biology, safety, health, respect for others and consent. These will be introduced at the appropriate point using language appropriate to the age discovering them. In a world in which many adult relationships continue to be conducted through the emotions of childhood – and one in four women (and one in five men) are still suffering domestic violence – early sex ed is as much about learning the most basic of lessons – the right to say no – as anything else.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Guardian UK](#)

### **Education for life, or for work?**

*The higher education white paper proposes that universities should train students for their future jobs. But not all academics are keen*

Kim Hughes studies a bar of chocolate in the way that most of us would examine a diamond necklace. She has no thought of eating it, but admires its design and the effort that has gone into its construction. Having completed Nestlé's graduate training programme last year, she is now a "focused improvement specialist" charged with reviewing confectionery production systems.

Hughes competed against hundreds of other hopefuls in a gruelling recruitment process to gain her place at Nestlé, but acknowledges she was lucky to have graduated before her chances of finding work receded dramatically.

Latest figures from the [Higher Education Statistics Agency](#) show that among the graduate class of 2010, only 62% were in work six months after leaving university, with a further 7% combining work and further study. This is an improvement on the previous year, but is still well below pre-credit crunch levels.

The universities minister, David Willetts, seized on the figures to justify proposals, outlined in the higher education white paper, to make universities work with employers to develop and "kitemark" courses, and boost enterprise skills training for [students](#). He also pointed to the wide discrepancy between individual universities, ranging from a 100% employment record at the University of Buckingham to 78% at the University of East London, as evidence that poorly performing courses should be named and shamed, so that students could make informed choices about what and where to study.

However, many academics are less than enthusiastic about the prospect of training students for work. Dr Wendy Piatt, director general of the elite Russell Group, says its member institutions aim to provide students with fundamental skills, such as problem-solving, analytical techniques, creative thinking and innovation, so that they are adaptable to new work environments. "Developing these high-level skills and qualities, rather than training for a specific job, is one of the vital roles universities should play," she says.

Professor John Brennan, director of the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information at the Open University, has studied graduate employability for the past 20 years and sees real danger in "training for work" displacing "education for life" in the student experience.

"Employability of graduates is a shared responsibility between employers and universities, but you really have to consider whether you are in the business of preparing students for their first job or for lifelong careers," he says. "I would say that in the UK, there is very often a four- or five-year transition period between a graduate leaving higher education and becoming established in his or her career."

In one research project, Brennan compared UK and German HE systems, concluding that graduates in each country might be at "about the same point" by

their late 20s, the German having spent a long period in vocational higher education, while the Briton gained experience of employment after a much shorter degree course.

"There are real advantages to the UK system of having a short study period at university," says Brennan, "but you have to ask, what can reasonably be taught during a three-year degree and what is best left until graduates begin their career?"

Brennan is the first to admit that providing relevant work experience, such as placements and internships, can be of great benefit. The real concern, apparently shared by graduates, is the government's intention to allow businesses to influence the core content of degree courses.

Before joining Nestlé, Hughes completed a five-year course in biomolecular and medicinal chemistry at Strathclyde University, which included a year in industry. "Experience of the workplace definitely helped me to get on to the Nestlé training scheme," she says. "Even the part-time job I had as a student taught me more work skills than my course, but I don't see employability as something that should be taught in academic situations."

A report by Edge, the education charity, published shortly before the white paper, recommends that universities should consult employers on the design of degree courses and put employability at the centre of strategic planning.

According to the report, employers expect graduates to have attributes including team-working, communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving and even managerial abilities, in addition to a knowledge of their degree subject.

"There is a tendency for employers to want their graduates 'oven-ready' and it is not fair that some are let down by their universities and are at a disadvantage to other graduates when applying for jobs," says David Harbourne, director of research at Edge, which commissioned Glasgow University to conduct the study.

"Some academics regard employability as a function of the university careers office and will not sully their hands with it. There is a balance to be struck, but you cannot argue that a student of English literature is not going to think about the job they are going to do when they graduate."

Some universities have embraced the principle of employability skills in their mission statements and websites. For example the University of

Hertfordshire proclaims that "employability is at the heart of everything we do"

A different approach is being taken by AC Grayling's proposed New College for the Humanities in London, which plans to charge fees of £18,000. Its graduates will come away with a degree and a separate diploma for an additional course that includes practical professional skills such as financial literacy, teamwork, presentation and strategy.

Professor Alan Smithers, director of the Centre for Education and Employment Research at the University of Buckingham, says many employers have only vague, or unrealistic, ideas of what they expect universities to teach. "For example, how do you teach teamwork?" he asks.

There are risks in allowing employers to influence course design, he says. "Sandwich courses were set up by universities working with industry, but many of them were popular with neither students nor employers. Students were put off their subject because, for example in engineering, they spent a year filing bits of metal in a factory, and it turned out most employers recruited engineering graduates from more academic universities anyway."

Professor Roger Brown, co-director of the Centre for Higher Education Research Development at Liverpool Hope University, says: "Universities should aim to provide a good rounded education that equips students for the rest of their lives ... The employability proposals in the white paper are dangerous nonsense because they are based on extraordinarily unreliable and poor-quality information."

But universities needn't worry too much, he says. "These sorts of ideas have been a theme of government policy since the 1980s and have never really been implemented successfully."

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Guardian uk](#)

### Private tuitions by school teachers

Realising the importance of education in overall development of the Nation, Govt. of India has made right to free and compulsory education for children within 6-14 years of age (RTE Act), a fundamental right. However, a critical analysis of various clauses mentioned under the RTE Act of 2009, would reveal the inherent difficulties in achieving those clauses. For instance one of the clauses within the act mentions that "no teacher shall engage himself or herself in private tuition or private teaching activity" (RTE Act 2009, 8). An account of private supplementary education (private tuitions) reveals that as many as 70% of students receives private

tuition in urban India (PROBE report 1999). In rural India alone, there are 26% students between the ages of 6 and 14 (ASER 2010) receiving some form of tuition supplementing mainstream education. Although it is hard to pin down the percentage of students getting private tuitions by mainstream teachers, however even if it were considered to be half of the total sum, the numbers are massive.

While private supplementary tutoring or 'shadow education'- as many researchers say, may have positive consequences, e.g. in improving students' learning, providing constructive activities for pupils during out of school hours, and providing income and employment for tutors, studies shows that it has negative consequences too. It can distort mainstream curricula, it can create pressure on young pupils, it can exacerbate social inequalities and lastly, there are possibilities of manipulation of clients by tutors, especially in situations where mainstream teachers provide paid supplementary tutoring for their own mainstream pupils. In many cases, it has been found that teachers have complete control on whether a student fails an exam or passes it (except in examinations conducted by a board). Therefore, teachers exploit this fact to their advantage by forcing students to take tuition from them. Further, to some extent, parents favour to invest on private tutoring for their wards hoping they will perform better and have an edge over others.

However, even if demerits are high in the shadow education system, the idea of banning tutors is a bit like trying to eliminate robbery by ensuring that the entire population is poor. Further, even if restricting mainstream tutors is what RTE talks about, the challenge is how to restrict them? Should states come out with individual framework? What would be school administration's role in such a case? What is that local authorities would be doing? There could be long list of questions without straightforward answers!

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[RTE India](#)

### 'Indian IT needs more specialists'

The Indian information technology is in need of more 'specialists' even as the industry is tapping new markets and getting engaged with new global customers, said Mr Som Mittal, President, Nasscom.

The IT industry is to touch revenue of \$70 billion and employ nearly 2.8 million — making it one of the largest employers in the organised sector. "We should move from trainable [students] to industry-

ready to specialists. This is the movement that the IT industry should work on by finding out new ways of doing things," he said in his inaugural speech at the two-day Nasscom HR Summit.

### *Specialisation*

Mr Mittal said the educational system is also under pressure to train students to become specialists in any area, such as remote management system, software engineering, engineering services, CADD design or third party software report. "Our colleges produce research students but not specialists in a sector," he said.

The IT industry should accelerate the process of specialisation among students — this is important for the industry, he said.

### *Capacity*

Regarding shortage of capacity for the industry, Mr Mittal said this was not a major issue. However, the industry needs to put in more effort to increase the capacity. The number of engineering colleges has nearly doubled to 3,300 from 1,700, and around 6,50,000 graduates enter the job market every year. This number will increase to one lakh in the next couple of years. Graduates should not only be trainable but also employable, then companies would not need to spend 18 weeks on training, he said.

The industry annually spends nearly \$1.3 billion on training and 're-skilling' students, putting enormous pressure on companies' operating costs. "We need to increase the pool of trainable people," he said.

### *Workforce up*

According to Mr Rajendra Pawar, Chairman, Nasscom, in the last 20 years the number of people in the industry has grown by nearly 50 times. Last year alone, the industry added 10 per cent of total workforce.

With nearly 3.7 million students getting into higher education each year, the challenge is to make them industry ready as they pass out from the colleges. There is a huge imbalance in the industry as only one-fourth of the total workforce comprises women — this should be more than half, he said.

**Source:** 27-July, 2011/[The Hindu Business Line](#)

### **HRD ministry not averse to include pre-school education under RTE**

The HRD ministry is not averse to including pre-school education under the watershed Right To Education (RTE) Act but says it will study its implications before making a decision. The National

Advisory Council had asked the HRD ministry to examine bringing pre-school education under the ambit of RTE Act saying that in absence of any regulatory mechanism the children enrolled in pre-school remain neglected.

The NAC wanted the children in the age group of four and five years should also be covered under the law as it is the poor children, who are deprived of pre-school education.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has asked the HRD ministry to study the NAC recommendations and said a decision would be taken in August.

A Planning Commission working group on elementary education for the 12th five year plan is examining the suggestion.

"Most members are of the view that pre-school education should be part of NAC," said a senior plan panel official, adding that the commission was working on its possible financial implications.

The HRD ministry has decided that the sub-group of the Central Advisory Board of Education to examining the possibility of extending the law to cover secondary education up to class 10 will be asked to look into the inclusion of pre-school learning.

The possible change in law can have both administrative and financial implications. Welfare of children below the age of six year is domain of the Women and Child Development ministry, which runs Integrated Child Development Scheme.

And, the ministry does not have expertise on educational issues.

Unlike elementary education, only a few state governments have pre-schools. Providing infrastructure for pre-schools would be huge, a plan panel official said.

It will mean adding four crore children into the formal education system and construction of additional 10 lakh classrooms.

The ministry has also said that madarsas does not come under the definition of schools under the RTE Act and therefore, the provisions of the law are not applicable to these religious schools.

The ministry had already issued a guideline in November 2010 saying that madarsas are protected under section 29 and 30 of the Constitution and RTE law does not come in the way of continuance of such institutions or the rights of children in such institutions.

**Source:** 30-July, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

### 'Bring changes in higher education'

Senior Congress leader and Union minister of Road Transport and Highways, C P Joshi drew the attention of HRD minister [Kapil Sibal](#) for public private partnership in higher education. He hinted Sibal (without naming him) for bringing fundamental changes in the higher education system to bring it in consonance with the need of the time. ?

He was addressing a meet of 40 vice-chancellors from different universities on the first day of a two-day West Zone Vice-Chancellors' Conference at the City Palace hotel in Udaipur. The conference is being organised by Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur in collaboration with Association of Indian ? Universities, New Delhi. ?

The theme of the Conference is "Higher Education in India: A Perennial Quest for Excellence". Experts and academicians discussed reforms brought in by Sibal on education, from scrapping Class X board exams to introducing central universities. ?

Taking a cue from his counterpart, Montek Singh Ahluwalia Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission expressed his displeasure over Sibal's proposal of establishing 14 world-class universities in the country.

He said, "It's better to support 50 universities with potential for excellence in place of establishing 14 world-class universities. It will boost the gross enrollment ratio."

**Source:** 30-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### IITs' PhD jinx: BTechs command higher pay

Foreign universities that would come scouting for young teachers to the Indian Institutes of Technology were conspicuously missing this recruitment season. But a range of private and deemed Indian universities from across the country did land up offering hardly attractive pay scales defined under the Sixth Pay Commission.

When they were pitted against the big guns—the consulting and finance offers—the IITs realized that the PhD jinx continues to haunt them. Every tech school recorded a higher average salary figure for their BTechs as compared to their PhD fellows, most of who joined research labs or signed up for teaching positions.

"It's a trend that continues. The average salary on campus is Rs 7 lakh, but the average salary for PhD candidates is less than that of the BTechs," said an IIT Bombay official. The scenario is same on every campus. The slump in the average salary for PhDs

also aggravated as universities from West Asia that came shopping for faculty did not turn up this year.

In the last two years, Alfaisal University, [Saudi Arabia](#) (which offered an annual compensation to the tune of Rs 19 lakh apart from housing and other facilities), Texas A&M University, Indian School of Business, [Hyderabad](#), were among the education providers that visited IITs and paid salaries comparable to industry.

This year, most IITs saw a desi crowd as institutes like ICFAI, SRM University, Tamil Nadu; Saroj Education Group, Lovely Professional University, Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge, Vigyan University, K L University and Manipal University took a handful of students.

Every IIT saw a fall in students signing up for teaching posts. At IIT-Kanpur, 45 students joined educational institutes last year; this time around the number stood at 32, said Ramkumar Janakarajan, placement head. Annual compensation remained almost the same as last year. Most of the universities offered between Rs 3 lakh and Rs 6 lakh a year.

IIT-Kharagpur's placement head S K Srivastava said 67 master's students and 15 PhD candidates took up teaching jobs this year. "The number was higher last year when more educational institutes had visited the campus." But several research firms, Srivastava added, had offered better salaries to PhD students this year.

IIT-Delhi's placement head Kushal Sen said it probably wasn't correct to compare the salaries of BTechs, MTechs and PhDs as they all took up varied job profiles.

"The salary that an MTech student gets from a core engineering firm cannot match the package that a consulting firm would offer a BTech."

Sure, but the placements again drove home the point that the BTechs at IITs managed to grab the best deals. In 2005-06, Rangan Banerjee and Vinayak Muley, in their report on engineering education in India had mentioned this irony that exists only on Indian campuses.

"The average MTech and PhD salary is lower than the average BTech salary in India. But the ratio of average starting salary of graduates to masters and doctorates for MIT, [USA](#) and [University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, USA](#) shows that the average masters' salary is 22-26% higher than the bachelors'; the doctorates' salary is 45-58% higher than the bachelors'."

**Source:** 30-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

## RESOURCE

### Low internet literacy even in urban India: Report

Union Minister of State for Information Technology Sachin Pilot has promised that a "21st century" infrastructure would be set up for high speed broadband access; while a report that he released expresses concerns about "low internet literacy" even in urban areas.

Pilot released the report 'Innovation In Telecom' by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) here yesterday. He did not give any time-frame for ushering in "21st century" infrastructure, nor did he comment on the report.

PwC report says that "even in the urban regions, Internet literacy is quite low, and so is the usage. It will take a generation for data usage to pick up.... Non-voice services, including value added services and SMS form just five to 15 per cent of total operator revenues, which goes to over 50 per cent for operators in major countries. The number for mobile data would be still lower."

Rural teledensity has still not reached the targets and the Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund created for the telecom industry has not been utilised adequately, it said.

Most product innovations still originate from the Western economies while Indian companies seem to be content adopting them. One of the reasons is lack of proper research infrastructure, education and investment, the report adds.

"Talent is one drawback we severely face in India. While India produces twice as many engineering graduates as the United States, only less than five per cent have basic vocational skills essential for fruitful employment," it said.

"Only about 25 per cent graduates in India have the skills that deem them fit to work for multinational companies. This is because most institutes in India are built with the idea of meeting the demand for graduate education, focused on enrolling as many students as possible," the report added.

The report also expresses concern about the anxiety among telecom sector investors about clarity in telecom policy.

**Source:** 24-July, 2011/[Economic Times](#)

### Fiscal gains of inclusive education

An instructive reference in 'Poverty and Social Exclusion in India' from the World Bank ([www.oup.com](#)) is to the Roma (gypsies), who

number about 10 to 12 million in Europe and represent the largest trans-national minority in the region. The Roma, one learns, account for the main poverty risk group, suffering from low educational attainment, high unemployment, and poor human development outcomes; and that their low educational levels are reflected in employment rates of 60 per cent, on average, relative to the majority population, and much lower earnings.

Drawing on information from [www.romaeducationfund.hu](http://www.romaeducationfund.hu), the book reports the worrying findings of a recent study across four Central and Eastern European countries, viz. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Serbia – that an annual economic loss of 5.7 billion euros and a fiscal loss of 2 billion euros are estimated to be incurred by the four countries as a result of reduced productivity and additional costs incurred to finance the social security of unemployed Roma. “In fact, it warns that these losses will only increase over time as younger Roma join the working-age population.”

An interesting insight from the Bank is that the annual fiscal gains from investing in the education of Roma are significantly higher than the costs incurred even if all Roma people were to be educated. The URL cited above, it should be heartening to note, is one such positive initiative, in the form of the Roma Education Fund, with emphasis on giving Romani children a good education start by focusing on access to pre-school and successful transitions into and through primary education. “While the impact of the fund is yet to be assessed, funded projects reached about 30,000 Roma students in 2008, among whom 800 graduated...”

**Source:** 24-July, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

### **India Digest: Indians Spend More on Kids' Education**

Indian families are investing heavily in their children's education and spending more on healthcare at the expense of basic needs like food, reveals a recent [NSSO survey](#) report on spending patterns of households.

Between 1999 and 2009, expenditure on food increased by about 70% among rural families and 78% among urban ones. But the spending on education jumped up by as much as 378% in rural areas and 345% in urban areas.

Even after correcting for inflation, the expenditure on education increased by a phenomenal 162% in rural areas and 148% in urban areas during the

decade. Compare this to the overall household expenditure on all items, which increased by a mere 8% in rural areas and 20% in urban areas after adjusting for inflation.

And, it is not just the same people who are spending more on their children's education. In 2004-05, when the previous such survey was carried out, 40% of rural and 57% of urban families said that they were spending on education. The latest survey records a big jump in these numbers - 63% of rural and 73% of urban families were getting their children educated.

Expenditure on health too has shown a considerable increase though not as much as education. At current prices, spending on medical care in hospitals increased by 152% in rural areas and by 136% in urban areas. The corresponding figures after adjusting for inflation are 38% and 31%. Spending on non-institutional medical care - medicines, tests, fees etc - jumped up by 60% in rural areas and 102% in urban areas. After adjusting for inflation, this works out to a decline of about 12% in rural areas - possibly an effect of the National Rural Health Mission - and a modest increase of 12% in urban areas.

As in the case of education, the increase in the proportion of families accessing institutional facilities is remarkable. From a mere 1.3% of rural and 1.5% of urban families getting institutional care in 2004-05, the proportions have risen 10-fold to 13% in rural and 14% in urban areas. The proportion of families reporting non-institutional spending remains at about two-thirds of the total.

The 66th round of NSSO's survey, carried out between July 2009 and June 2010 covered 2,01,649 households. Only key data has been released this month and detailed reports covering various aspects of India's family economics will come out over the year.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[Times of India](#)

### **Economics Journal: India's Opportunity Gap**

If you're poor and underprivileged in India today, how likely is it that you'll have access to opportunities to improve your lot in life? To what extent does where you've come from determine where you'll end up? And will your children have opportunities that you didn't?

In this 20th anniversary year of economic reform, which has given us an annual economic growth rate currently at about 8.5%, millions have been lifted out of poverty. The flip side is that growth has also led to an increase in inequalities in wealth and

income. In simple terms, the pie is getting bigger, but some people are getting a smaller share of that bigger pie.

A recently released *UNDP report* puts things in perspective, by highlighting the many facets of inequality that characterize India today. The study's headline finding is that India's ranking in the global human development index would fall by 30% if inequalities of income, education and healthcare were accounted for. To put things in concrete terms, with no adjustment, India is already ranked at 119 out of 169 countries, worse than Namibia and Vietnam and better than Pakistan and Congo.

Even India's best performing state in this index, Kerala, ranks below Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Gujarat, often cited for its economic success, ranks slightly below India as a whole, and like India would lose about 30% of its ranking when the inequality adjustments are made.

To some observers, higher inequality at least for a while is the price we have to pay for higher growth. They would cite the famous "Kuznets curve," a staple of development studies which claims to show that inequality first rises and then falls with economic development.

What this misses is that unequal outcomes in areas such as income may be the result of underlying inequalities of opportunity, such as access to education and health. Unequal access could also be the result of belonging to an underprivileged group, such as a religious or ethnic minority, or in the Indian case specifically someone belonging to a Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Class.

Let's take inequality of opportunity as reflected in unequal access to education. Even with the deck stacked against you, a good education has the potential to open doors and take you places. Conversely, it's common sense that someone less educated won't do as well in the workforce and therefore will earn a lower income. While inequality of access to education in India is well-documented by scholars and one of the highest in the world, what is less understood as yet is how to quantify the impact on outcomes such as wages and income.

A few recent statistical studies have begun to plug the gap. Ashish Singh of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research in Mumbai finds that the percentage of total wage inequality that can be accounted for by inequality of opportunity, including education, is anywhere from 13% to 34%

on average. This means that someone's wage could be up to one third lower because they lacked access to opportunity, in particular education, compared to someone who was educated.

At least in theory, you have some control over how much education you seek, assuming you get access. But an inherited social hierarchy, such as caste, creates a problem of a different order of magnitude, since there's nothing you can do about this. Further, while the impact of access to education on income is pretty straightforward, the effect of caste is more difficult to pin down. Since belonging to an underprivileged community tends to go together with other deprivations such as lack of access to education, health or land, it's very difficult to isolate the effect of caste per se.

A [recent joint study](#) by researchers at the University of Maryland and the National Council of Applied Economic Research in India, found that caste matters. They find in particular that lower castes have less land, lower educational status, poorer nutrition and health care, and fewer social connections to get help when needed. This results in lower income and poor social outcomes.

For instance, in villages with predominantly lower-caste inhabitants, the average consumption expenditure per person is on average 2,200 rupees less per year compared to someone who's upper caste, adjusting for differences in education and landownership. Without this adjustment, the actual difference is 9,019 rupees, strongly suggesting that belonging to a lower caste and the other inequalities of opportunity tend to go together. Overall, while educational differences can "explain away" some of the difference in outcomes, about half of observed income inequality seems to be caused by a difference in caste.

Let's come back to the questions I started with. The answer to the first question is unequivocal: if you're from an under-privileged background, chances are that you'll do less well than someone who's not. Likewise, the answer to the second question – to what degree does where you're from determine where you'll go – is "it matters a great deal."

As for the third question – will your kids get chances you didn't – it's more a function of aspiration than of statistics. And this is the crucial one because social cohesion requires you to believe that even if things are bad today, they'll be better for your children and that everyone has a shot at being successful. The possibility of upward mobility is often the glue that binds us together.

While the political empowerment of underprivileged groups in India is well-developed, as evidenced in

particular by state-level politics, the corresponding empowerment in access to opportunity clearly lags behind. This poses dangers as unequal access in turn may convert positive aspiration into its opposite: resentment. And resentment has the potential to breed unexpected, roiling social unrest. Just look across the Gulf: India has a vibrant democracy, which distinguishes it from the authoritarianism that characterizes the countries in turmoil in the Middle East. Still, it's something to bear in mind while we reflect on 20 years of reform.

**Source:** 25-July, 2011/[The Wall Street Journal](#)

### **Entrepreneurship Education in India: Trend and Factors Assessment Survey, 2011**

“Entrepreneurship Education in India” report analyses the growing market for Entrepreneurship education in the country and assess some of the key factors that are influencing growth and strategies and good practices that industry has to follow in order to have a world class entrepreneurial education system.

This report uses primary and secondary research to estimate the current market sizing, segmentation and market forecast. Surveys and interviews have been conducted to evaluate growth drivers and growth barriers.

Report further analyses future opportunity areas and organizations that are active in India's Entrepreneurship education landscape.

#### *Key Report Takeaways:*

Liberalization and opening up of Indian economy in the 1990s pushed entrepreneurship in the country with removal of barriers to start business, easy availability of finance and setting up of institutions for the development of entrepreneurial talent.

Entrepreneurship education is still at nascent stage in India, with only 44,500 students enrolled for entrepreneurship programs, and this number is expected to grow at a CAGR of 20.4% to reach 54,700 by 2012.

Revenues from Entrepreneurship education programs reached INR7.9 billion in 2010 and are estimated to grow at a CAGR of 13.7% to INR10.7 billion by 2012.

In 2010, there were some 1,500 students getting Entrepreneurship education from the institutions that are solely into Entrepreneurship education, while 4,700 students had enrolled to entrepreneurship programs at various business schools and institutions across India.

Aspiration to do well and independently achieve success has emerged as the top reason driving the growth of entrepreneurship programs, followed by inspiration from Indian and foreign innovators, liberalization and favorable business environment and unemployment.

Unawareness about the advantages of entrepreneurship education, shortage of quality educators and absence of quality content, have been some of the hindrances for future growth of the market.

**Source:** [Indagatio Research](#), June 2011, Pages: 73

## 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](mailto:aserf@apeejay.edu)

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