



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, SAT-II. **For more,** [click here](#)

Apeejay Stya University announces Founder's Scholarship

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

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

Get Involved

Fellowship opportunities

Fellowships for six months to two years in variety of fields.

Workshops/Guest Lectures

Regular workshops and lectures on a variety of subjects.

Scholarships

Need-based financial aid to deserving student

Faculty Sponsorships

By seeding a named faculty seat or fellowship

Internships/Mentoring

The University has many students looking for opportunities to put their skills to practical use. Internships can be in diverse areas from services, government and nonprofit.

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

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

Partnership

Dear Partners,

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

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

Editor

[Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Singh](#)

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ASPECT

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON EDUCATION BY PRIME MINISTER WITH THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS ON TEACHERS

The Prime Minister addressed the two National Commissions on Teachers **on 26th March, 1983**. Apart from the Chairman and Members of the two Commissions, the Minister of State, the Education Secretary, Prof. M.G.K. Menon, Member, Planning Commission, Chairman, University Grants Commission, and Bureau Heads of the Ministry were present.

Prof. D. P. Chattopadhyaya thanked the Prime Minister for the initiative taken in setting up the two National Commissions. He felt that the justification for the constitution of two more commissions was to be found in the changing needs of our society and the necessity to have an in-depth study of the milieu of education especially in the context of national integration and the objectives of education.

The Prime Minister thereupon addressed the members. What follows is a gist of her observations.

While it goes without saying that education is of great importance, we must be clear here about what we mean by "Education". In India we have so far taken a narrow view, narrower than in other countries, identifying it with the formal system of education. We derived our ideas from the British. While the British have been changing their system, we have not. Does our present education fit the Indian society ? While the needs of any society keep on changing our education system does not seem to meet the needs of even our old problems not to speak of the new. There is talk of centralisation and decentralisation. In the matter of education, the common concern should be to inculcate knowledge of our national principles and national pride. In the international context, we talk of co-existence of countries with different ideologies. India, as a country of considerable diversity in regard to religion, caste, etc. it is even more important in the national context that we learn to live in harmony. Anything that weakens this tendency must be fought. The adverse consequences of communal tensions harm everyone in the long run equally. We are proud of our tradition of tolerance. At the same time there is much intolerance in the country. It is for education to inculcate an atmosphere of tolerance and

understanding. If the nation does not survive, education cannot.

Our aim is development. The term "development" has so far been identified with economic development. Because of our poverty and backwardness economic development is important. But economic development by itself does not take a country forward. Even advanced countries face problems which they are not able to tackle. At the top of the tree there are persons producing ideas. But a vast number of people there find the technological world too much. A group of children from India who went to Sweden were stunned by the impact of development there. They felt that the parents were not looking after their children properly and institutional care for the handicapped, retarded, etc. has to some extent led to a domestic neglect or want of feeling. Development means the development of the personality of the individual. In Government, we tend to think in terms of statistics-percentage of literacy or illiteracy and so on. But we must remember that ultimately statistics are made up of individual human beings with different personalities.

While we must emphasise the mother-tongue, which is extremely important, there is need for children to learn other languages to get on in today's world. Communication with ordinary persons is not possible unless one knows their language. We must somehow get the country back to the three language formula. Even China has started English as a compulsory subject to be learnt from the KG level onwards. The international importance of English is growing. Even if English is banned at the school stage as some States tried to do, it is the poor children who are affected in the long run since those who can afford always manage to give their children a knowledge of English.

Education is concerned with development of personality. How does a child learn ? It is through what he is familiar with. In the old days we were taught pounds, shillings, pence, which we had never seen. The children in our rural areas find a number of subjects taught to them in the school as foreign to them as pounds shillings pence were to us. How do we bring flexibility to the education system so that the children learn what is relevant to them ? And there is an active link between the environment and the subject taught in the class room.

There is also the need to adjust the school hours and holidays to local factors. The children should be available to help their parents in their field or at their home when they are needed.

While nobody favours child labour and exploitation, children helping their parents is not work. The parents should not be deprived of the help they get from their children. If children are useful to parents, parents will be more enthusiastic about education. Of course, children must have full opportunities for education and play.

Some of the school classes have too many children. The teacher has no contact with the children sitting at the back. Teachers gain the respect of children if they combine understanding and firmness. It is necessary that they themselves do their homework. In the case of children, homework is a burden and children can do without it.

Even little children are getting home work. If necessary, the school can be extended by half an hour or 45 minutes so that children do not have to do homework. The teaching of some subjects can be combined. At a very young age it is possible to learn languages through games or any other subject. The language to be learnt can be spoken say at meal times. It may be possible to synthesise Geography and History with other subjects.

Children develop at different Paces. This is why it is necessary for the teacher to devote individual attention to the children. Teacher training should take care of this aspect. Teachers should learn to handle children properly. It has been said, "There are no delinquent children. Only delinquent parents". And this applies to teachers as well. If teachers (and parents) knew how to handle students, we would not have so much of student trouble.

There is too much emphasis on examinations. I would prefer a system without examinations but we have examinations to obviate chances of favouritism. There is at any rate need for a system which does not encourage cheating. May be there is a case for examinations which allow the looking up of books, so that the tendency to cram in the last week is discouraged. Education is training of the mind, which will 'help us to continue learning and not mere acquisition of information. A person must go on learning as long as he is alive. Teaching through local circumstances and inculcation of the habit of observation are a must. We must give a great deal of importance to environment. Children must get to know their area. They must not merely be able to appreciate the beauty of environment but must also become aware how damage to environment would damage the earth and the future of the human race. This must form part of education in various subjects. Children manage to learn a lot more these days than earlier, and

learning many things at a much lower age. There was a recent magazine item of how toddlers were being taught to use computers. The burden on children are becoming greater. But while they work, they learn in a more concentrated way. They have a tremendous capacity to be absorbed in anything that interest them. Learning should not be a painful obligatory duty but must be enjoyed.

Tolerance for various points of view and for feelings of others need to be inculcated in children. We in this country give a great deal of importance to ranking. Children should be prevented from thinking that anyone is high or low. They must be taught to respect the thinking of others. That is the only way we can combat the feeling of communalism and casteism. Although children are generally more liberal and understanding, sometimes children tend to be cruel to animals or to other children with handicaps largely because they are not aware that it causes pain. They should learn to accept difference.

Mental fitness is linked to physical fitness for a normal child. Sports and games are important both for the individual and for the health of the nation as a whole. Unfortunately, sport itself is ceasing to be fun and games are becoming an industry that is too competitive with resultant tensions.

Inculcation of fundamental values is necessary. This is fundamental. All religions accept certain basic values. We have done nothing in education to inculcate this thinking. People should practise what they preach. Young people are idealistic. If the need for observing certain values is put to them properly, it is bound to have effect.

It is undesirable to have too many "don't's" for children. As parents and as teachers we have to create an atmosphere of tolerance and self-respect in children. They must also develop sympathy for weaker sections.

Far greater attention has to be paid to primary education than to higher education. We are losing whole generations of people. Why should everyone go to University ?

Can we have a special test for recruitment to services without insisting on University qualifications ? If a person does not want to do research, why can't he take to some vocational education or trade etc. It should also be possible for people who have taken to vocational courses to go in for higher education.

People say that standards are falling particularly in higher education. In our efforts to help the weakest,

we have made people somewhat caste-conscious. While we should not compromise on standards, the weaker sections should be helped suitably to catch up. We stress achievement. But education is not what you know but what you are. Good education should make people adaptable.

We cannot turn ourselves away from modern technology. I am sorry that we have people who are resisting computers. Computers may initially make a few people unemployed but by making things more efficient different types of jobs are created.

Education is not just for the elite but it must go down to every boy and girl.

When people see that they stand to gain by change, they will adopt it and go forward. It is not true that tradition stops progress. We must be able to use traditions for our purposes as Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave did. Vinobaji used to draw on mythology for ideas on family planning. Sometimes rural children who are educated tend to feel that their uneducated parents are inferior. This should not happen.

The reading habit needs to be inculcated. Sometimes programmes on television help in this. The 'Gandhi' film led a number of children wanting to read everything on Gandhi. Some films tend to glorify violence and to show women as inferior. I regard it as the biggest insult to me when I am called the only man in the Cabinet. In films the good are shown somehow as not being very intelligent. Even if they win in the end, it is not because of their own qualities. I should like a small group from among you to go into the question of how to use the media for education. There is tremendous scope for utilisation of radio and other mass media which reach out to rural areas for educational purposes.

History books should not spread casteism etc. For instance while writing about Shivaji, emphasis can be placed on Shivaji's tolerance. As Dr. Radhakrishnan said, 'Indian' does not mean merely being born in the geographical area called India, but in adhering to certain values and ideas that India stands for.

The quality of education needs to be improved. You cannot have half the population educated at a lower level. There should be no sense of inferiority. Every citizen should have the opportunity to grow to his or her full stature or potential.

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture. Govt. of India, 1983/[MHRD](#)

NEWS

Education Innovation Fund for India launched

The Education Innovation Fund for India (EIFI), a collaborative project between the Hewlett-Packard Office of Global Social Innovation and the India Council for Integral Education (ICIE), an initiative of the Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry, was launched here on Tuesday.

Among those present at the launch were the US Consul General in Chennai Jennifer A. McIntyre, Editor-in-Chief of TheHindu N. Ram, Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute Vice-Chancellor S. Rangaswami and ICIE Chairman Vijay Poddar.

EIFI has been set up to provide grants to schools, universities and organisations that support and encourage innovative projects which bring about a transformation in the field of education. It would be a platform that identifies ideas from all over India and finds ways to implement these ideas on a larger scale, which would help the country as a whole.

HP has already given US \$ 1 million to the Sri Aurobindo Society, which would be managing the fund. A Rs.1 crore grant would be given to the 'Most Promising Project in Educational Innovation'.

There are also other grants, including one where 15 applicants could get up to Rs.15 lakh each and another for young learners and young innovators. The young learners and youth innovators grants are part of the initiative to encourage innovation in education among the youth. All youth learners would receive an award amount of Rs.11,000 each if chosen. They would also receive a grant up to Rs.1 lakh depending on their project requirement.

Grant awards that are to be chosen by a jury consisting of prominent leaders in various fields would be announced in January, 2012. Details about the grant can be had from www.eifi.aurosociety.org

Source: 31-August, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

MP govt. to recruit over 95,000 teachers

The appointments will be made in various categories to meet the requirement of teachers following the implementation of the Right to Education Act

The Madhya Pradesh government has decided to appoint 95,599 teachers in various categories to meet the huge requirement of teachers following

the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act.

The decision to sanction 95,599 new posts of teachers was taken by the state cabinet, official sources said.

The decision will put a burden of Rs 742.57 crore on the exchequer, of which a major share will be borne by the Centre, the sources said.

Out of the 95,599 posts sanctioned, 31,599 will be of Assistant Teachers, 6,383 of Headmasters of primary schools, 26,026 of Teachers, 5,547 of Headmasters (middle schools), 13,022 of part-time instructors for health and physical education and 13,022 of part-time instructors (arts education).

The state's Professional Examination Board will recruit these teachers by conducting an examination, and till the process is completed, guest teachers will be appointed against these sanctioned posts.

The cabinet has also decided to establish 100-seat girls' hostels in 201 educationally backward development blocks in the state.

Girl students of class 9th to 12th, belonging to all the sections of society, will be able to stay in these hostels.

These hostels will be for those girls who lack educational facilities in their villages.

For providing computer education in schools, the cabinet decided to establish modern computer labs in 2,000 government high/higher secondary schools in the state.

Source: 01-September, 2011/[iGovernment Bureau](#)

Classrooms for Universal Primary and Secondary Education

It is estimated that approximately 2.91 lakh and 1.77 lakh classrooms are required at the elementary and secondary stage of education respectively.

As per District Information System for Education (DISE) 2009-10, there are a total of 58.00 lakh classrooms at the elementary level (Government – 38.18 lakh, Aided – 5.23 lakh, Unaided – 14.59 lakh).

As per Secondary Management Information System (SEMIS) 2009-10, there are 5.78 lakh classrooms at the secondary level (Government – 2.50 lakh, Aided – 1.43 lakh, Private – 1.84 lakh).

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a total of 15.93 lakh classrooms have been sanctioned since

inception, including 2.68 lakh in the year 2010-11 and 2.20 lakh in 2011-12.

Under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) 48,884 classrooms have been sanctioned during 2009-10 to 2011-12 to fill the gap.

Source: 02-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

VC meet highlights higher education lacunae

There is a stark difference between the hype around higher education and the real picture as most of the universities in India are facing challenges of shortage of quality teachers, lack of funds, obsolete curriculum and wrong government policies, vice chancellors of various universities pointed out at the two-day 'East Zone Vice Chancellors' Conference' that began at KIIT University here on Friday. Some 30 vice chancellors from universities of eastern India participated in the conference, organised by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU).

Expressing concern about higher education, AIU president P T Chande said, "Around 50% posts are vacant in universities and colleges across the country, while a large number of teachers are quitting jobs due to faulty government policies. Most of the universities lack quality teachers, thanks to the faulty selection procedures."

Pointing out the limitations of selection procedures of teachers like NET (National Eligibility Test) and SAT, Chande said, "Teachers are not a manufacturing community and it involves interaction between students and teachers for a better teaching-learning process. NET and SAT only tests the brilliance of candidates but their communication abilities should also be tested."

The vice chancellors further alleged that the Centre is showing a step-motherly attitude towards state universities and not providing adequate funds. They also demanded the withdrawal of clause 12B in the UGC Act that prescribes certain standards for universities for being eligible for funds. "There are a large number of new universities facing some teething troubles. The UGC should provide a timeframe so that they can prepare themselves as per the norms. We cannot kill the universities without allowing them to grow," Chande said.

Raising question over the functioning of different regulatory bodies like the UGC, the AICTE and the MCI, Chande pointed out, "These bodies are stifling the growth of education under the guise of regulating institutions without giving functional freedom."

Also raising questions about the benefits of the proposed foreign university bill, Chande said, "Foreign university bill is a serious challenge for India's higher education sector. We are indirectly inviting foreigners to invade our country intellectually. Before allowing them to open their shops here we must improve the quality of our institutes so that we can compete with them."

Inaugurating the conference, state higher education minister Badri Narayan Patra said, "I hope the two-day deliberation will come out with a good number of recommendations for the government to work upon. The input of academicians is required more than that of politicians to form successful policies in the education sector."

UGC member and founder of KIIT University, Achyuta Samanta said, "It is a platform to discuss issues of higher education and the problems faced by various universities. The meeting will also play a catalytic role in forming policies for higher education."

Source: 02-September, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Bihar launches education quality campaign

The campaign christened as 'Samjho Sikho' is a joint effort of the Bihar Education Project Council and Unicef

After achieving success in school enrollment, the Bihar government — on the occasion of Teachers' Day on Monday — launched a scheme to improve the quality of education in the state.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar launched the 'Samjho Sikho' campaign, which will cover nearly 71,000 elementary schools across Bihar, reports IANS.

The 'Samjho Sikho' campaign is a joint effort of the Bihar Education Project Council and Unicef. The state government is spending Rs 50 crore on the project.

"After achieving success in enrollment in schools, now our target is to improve quality of education in the schools," Nitish Kumar said after launching the scheme at a function attended by students and teachers here.

He said the state government has outlined 20 parameters that will be followed by all schools.

"I have also written a letter addressing teachers that will be read out to students," he added.

The Chief Minister's letter, that suggests ways to improve quality of education, has been circulated to all elementary schools.

He said that in the last five and a half years, the state government has worked hard to ensure that children are enrolled in schools.

"The government's measures have succeeded to a large extent as only 2.5 per cent children are now out of school. In November 2005, 12 per cent children were out of schools," Nitish Kumar said.

He said that regular assemblies should be organised in all schools, and the last period should be fixed for sports and cultural activities.

About 38 campaign vehicles that will travel across the state were also flagged off on the occasion. "It is a part of the campaign to create awareness among people," state's Human Resource Department Principal Secretary Anjani Kumar Singh said.

According to Census 2011, Bihar has a literacy rate of 63.8 per cent, against the national average of 74 per cent.

Source: 05-September, 2011/[i government.in](#)

Lessons on Integrity and Honesty

Central Vigilance Commission in its Annual Zonal review meeting held in July this year had asked Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to explore ways to increase lessons on integrity and honesty in schools. CBSE adopts/adapts the curriculum formulated by NCERT and prescribes/recommends textbooks prepared by NCERT for class IX to XII. The lessons on integrity and honesty are well integrated in languages, science, social sciences and environmental education.

The CBSE affiliated schools are encouraged to have eco clubs, integrity clubs, Health and Wellness Clubs and Heritage Clubs as co-curricular activities. The CBSE has also brought out teacher manuals on value education to help teachers to integrate human values in teaching. The CBSE has also decided to send a detailed circular to CBSE affiliated schools asking them to hold year long programmes and activities in schools to create awareness among school children regarding human values.

Source: 07-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

Uniform Syllabus Not Proposed to be Implemented

There is no proposal to implement uniform syllabus and uniform education system throughout the country. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 (as modified in 1992) recommends that the national system of education will be based on a

National Curriculum Framework (NCF), which contains a common core along with other components which are flexible. In August 2009 the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) emphasized the need for all States to modify their curriculum, syllabi and textbooks on the basis of NCF-2005.

CABE has endorsed the need for a core curriculum in Science and Mathematics at Secondary and Higher Secondary levels across all Education Boards in the country, so as to provide a level playing field to all students to join professional courses. In a meeting of the Council of Boards of Secondary Education (COBSE) on 16th February, 2010, 21 Boards unanimously decided to adopt core curriculum in Science and Mathematics at Senior Secondary level. Accordingly, NCERT has developed core syllabi in Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics at Higher Secondary stage in collaboration with COBSE and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

There is no proposal to introduce a system of continuous and comprehensive evaluation and grading of students at classes 11 and 12.

Source: 07-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

Fake Educational Institutions

The Central Government, through University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), keeps a watch over the fake universities and the unapproved technical institutions.

The UGC has identified 21 universities/institutions as fake running in various parts of the country, in contravention of the UGC Act, 1956, out of which 8 are in Uttar Pradesh, 6 are in Delhi and 1 each in Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. Similarly, the AICTE had identified 348 institutions running technical and management courses/programmes in violation of the AICTE Regulation dated 6th January, 2005.

Out of these total number of unapproved institutions, 75 each are in Delhi and Maharashtra, 52 in Andhra Pradesh, 34 in West Bengal, 30 in Uttar Pradesh, 26 in Karnataka, 17 in Haryana, 14 in Tamil Nadu, 9 in Chandigarh, 4 in Gujarat, 2 each in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Goa and 1 each in Uttarakhand and Kerala.

The UGC has taken legal action in various courts against 6 of these fake universities. The State Governments have also initiated action against

certain fake universities. Show-cause notices have also been served by the UGC to some of the fake universities/institutions and by the AICTE to the unapproved institutions for closure of their programme.

With a view to check the growth of such institutions, wide publicity is given by the UGC and the AICTE every year through print/electronic media as well as on their official websites, cautioning students and parents not to take admission in fake and unapproved institutions.

A public 'Appeal' was issued by the Ministry sometime back that students must satisfy themselves that courses offered by institutions are recognized under the relevant laws and are of quality and repute and that in case of any doubt, necessary clarification may be obtained from the relevant statutory bodies, such as the UGC, AICTE. The State/UT Governments have also been advised, from time to time, to issue necessary instructions to the Districts/Police Administration to take immediate action against such institutions. The last such communication was issued at the level of Minister of Human Resource Development on 2nd May, 2011.

Source: 07-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

President to Inaugurate International Conference on Education

The Ministry of Human Resource Development is organizing a three-day International Conference on 'Women's Literacy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development.' The President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil will inaugurate the Conference which starts tomorrow. Fourteen countries including India will be participating in the Conference. Essentially the SAARC nations and the E-9 countries will be participating. These countries include: Brazil, China, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Mexico, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan and Nepal besides India.

The three-day Conference will have sessions on subjects such as Centrality of Women's Literacy to Inclusive and Participative Development, Emerging International Perspective on Adult Education and Lifelong Learning, Innovations in Design & Delivery of India's Adult Literacy Programme and International Cooperation for Promoting Adult Education. The conclusion of the Conference will be presided over by Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Finance Minister where an 'outcome document' will be presented.

Source: 07-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

No Indian Varsity in Top 200 Global Rankings

Britain's Cambridge University topped the QS World University Rankings, followed by Harvard University of the US

Indian universities have slipped in the prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) global ranking with not even a single varsity making it to the top 200.

The Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi (IIT-Delhi) marks the first entry for India at the 218th rank in the list. It is followed by IIT-Bombay at 225th position. IIT-Madras follows at 281st position. The report was released on Monday.

Last year, IIT-Bombay was at 187, IIT-Delhi at 202 and IIT-Madras at 262.

The list has been topped by Britain's Cambridge University, followed by Harvard University of the US.

In separate subject wise category, the English department of Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University has secured the 51st rank in the category of English language and literature.

The survey ranks universities on different categories including academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per faculty, international faculty and international students.

In the QS Asian ranking, while the likes of IIT-Kanpur, IIT-D, IIT-M, IIT-Kharagpur and IIT-Roorkee climbed rankings, IIT-Bombay dropped two places.

The Asia ranking has been topped by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

At 36th place, IIT-Kanpur - which was ranked 37th last year -- became the top Indian university in this category.

Source: 07-September, 2011/*i government*

President: Increasing Female Literacy Can Become Force Multiplier for Pushing Socio-Economic Development

The President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil has said that increasing female literacy has the potential of becoming a force multiplier in pushing forward the socio-economic development of the nation. She said, "If we make women literate, they will be self-reliant and the beneficial impact on society will be manifold.

It has been observed that where women are literate, the rate of infant mortality comes down and the quality of life improves. Literate women are more aware about diseases and their

treatment; with better capability to deal with sickness and disease, and the confidence to approach medical assistance when required." She was speaking on the occasion of the International Literacy Day Celebrations. She also inaugurated an International Conference on "Women's Literacy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development", simultaneously.

The President also emphasized that an approach to literacy is required that is both holistic and relevant for development.

She said, "An approach to literacy that is both holistic and relevant for development, by linking it with the learning of other skills necessary for human and socio-economic development, can bring greater benefits. Linking literacy with broader skills, such as technical and vocational skills is important."

On the occasion the President gave away the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize, the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy and the Saakshar Bharat Literacy Awards. The Saakshar Bharat Literacy Awards include the Satyen Maitra Memorial Literacy Awards, NLM - UNESCO Awards, and the Decadal Literacy Awards.

Speaking on the occasion Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for HRD and External Affairs welcomed all participating countries in the Conference. He underlined the centrality of literacy in inclusive development.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. D. Purandeswari, Minister of State for HRD stated that it is imperative to align the literacy programme of the country with international benchmarks. She pointed out that increasing literacy level enhance skill and learning abilities.

Fourteen countries including India are participating in the Conference. Essentially the SAARC nations and the E-9 countries are participating. These countries include: Brazil, China, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Mexico, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan and Nepal besides India.

The three-day Conference has sessions on subjects such as Centrality of Women's Literacy to Inclusive and Participative Development, Emerging International Perspective on Adult Education and Lifelong Learning, Innovations in Design & Delivery of India's Adult Literacy Programme and International Cooperation for Promoting Adult Education.

Source: 08-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

Education loan to be based on repayment potential of student

Meritorious students intending to pursue higher studies will be sanctioned loans by banks based solely on their assessment of employability and earning potential to repay the loan, and not parental income/family wealth, as per the revised bank-wide 'model education loan scheme'.

Non-merit students, getting admission in technical and professional courses under management quota, will be ineligible to get loans under the model scheme for pursuing higher education in India and abroad. So, banks will have to formulate separate schemes for such students.

As loans for education are an investment for development of human capital, resulting in economic development and prosperity, the focus of the model scheme is on repayment of the loan from future earnings of the student after completion of education.

In this regard, banks may consider introducing a system of assessing the employability of students through campus placements, according to the revised scheme put together by the Indian Banks' Association.

“To avoid subjectivity in assessment, it is suggested that banks may fix from time to time the earning potential for various courses, percentage of income to be considered for repayment, and so on.

“This will ensure that the decision to sanction an education loan is based on sound commercial logic, besides serving a noble cause,” the association said.

The model scheme has been revised and simplified to ensure that disputes at the ground level arising out of differing interpretations, among others, about the scope of the scheme and student eligibility are minimised.

repayment period

Recognising the fact that not all students get remunerative jobs after completion of higher studies and also to prevent slippages, the new scheme has extended the repayment period to 10 years for loans up to Rs 7.5 lakh and 15 years for loans above Rs 7.5 lakh.

As per the earlier model scheme, education loans had to be repaid in five to seven years after commencement of repayment.

Under the new scheme, banks can charge processing fee for considering loans for studies

abroad. The fee, however, has to be refunded upon the student taking up the course.

Further, in the case of those student-borrowers who would like to clear the education loan faster on account of better-than-anticipated earnings, banks will not levy penalty for prepayment.

loan to siblings

The model scheme says that collateral-free loan of up to Rs 4 lakh per student is student-specific and not family-specific. So, there is no restriction on giving a second or a third collateral-free loan to other siblings when one of the siblings has already taken a collateral-free loan.

Source: 08-September, 2011/[The Hindu Business Line](#)

Developing nations seek India's help to raise literacy

Leaders from Africa and South Asia say India's gains in promoting literacy can be an example for others

Several countries in South Asia and Africa have sought India's help to improve education and literacy levels, particularly among adults.

The requests emerged at a conference attended by 14 countries, including India. Leaders and experts working on education met in New Delhi to celebrate International Literacy Day on Thursday and prepared a road map to promote literacy for "inclusive and sustainable development".

“India has displayed an example and E-9 countries can learn from it. Here, they can share the best practices,” said Qian Tang, assistant director-general of education at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). “Your achievement will bring change in the world.”

E-9 countries include Pakistan, India, Nigeria, Brazil and Mexico. They account for half of the global population, as well as two-thirds of people who lack basic reading and writing skills, according to UNESCO.

India has a literacy rate of 74%, a jump of 9.2 percentage points from 2001 and 22 percentage points from 1991. Currently, 15 of its states have achieved a literacy level of 80% or above, one of the UN's millennium development goals of 2015.

The male-female literacy gap has also reduced to 16.7% in 2011 compared with 21.6% a decade ago, according to government statistics.

Expressing her eagerness to share best practices in education and literacy practised in India, President Pratibha Patil said, "even today, in the world, about 774 million adults lack basic literacy skills, two-thirds of whom are women."

Patil said improving literacy should be both holistic and relevant for development. "Linking literacy with broader skills, such as technical and vocational skills is important," she said, adding female literacy focus will push socioeconomic development of nations.

Leaders from other nations said India's gains in promoting literacy can be an example for other nations.

"India is a leader and we can learn how they have achieved the scale," said Allah Bakhsh Malik, secretary, department of literacy and non-formal education in Pakistan's Punjab state. Malik was one of the Unesco awardees of 2011 for promoting literacy.

Mostafa Ragab, chairman of the Egypt's Adult Education Authority said that post the January revolution, the country wants to emphasise on education. "Our literacy rate is 27% and we have come to India to learn how they have structured their system to achieve the high literacy level."

He said after the ouster of president [Hosni Mubarak](#), the country is looking to build its education infrastructure and here India can be a model.

Prime Hazika, director of the national literacy services of Burundi, said more than 40% of the African country's population is illiterate. "We will talk to authorities to help fund literacy projects in our country. You are talking about ICT (information and communication technology) in promoting adult literacy but it has not reached many people in our country."

Jibrin Paiko, acting executive secretary, national commission for mass education, Nigeria, said it is important to learn from India, its focus on literacy and how the country has structured it.

India has successfully rolled out a special programme to improve literacy among women in 269 districts of the 365 target districts over the past two years.

Even economically backward states such as Bihar have made considerable progress. Overall, Bihar has reached a level of 65%, an increase of nearly 16 percentage points in a decade.

"From giving free cycles to girl students to recruiting women teachers, the state has taken

steps and is reaping the dividend," said Anjani Kumar Singh, Bihar's principal secretary, department of human resource development. "We are committing some Rs.20,000 crore on education in our state every year."

Singh said that while India is a good case study for the participating nations, it can learn from countries such as Pakistan on how to reach out to minority communities successfully.

Among other things, India will share its Web-based planning and monitoring system, a transparent fund flow and accounting system that it has achieved with cooperation from some state-owned banks and an ICT-based teaching methodology that it has adopted in some of its states.

Source: 09-September, 2011/[Live Mint](#)

UK skills providers eye India to train its young workforce

A delegation of over 60 UK skills providers are exploring opportunities to strike partnerships in India, which is looking at converting its young population into trained workforce to sustain phenomenal economic growth.

The delegation, led by the UK India Business Council (UKIBC), brings in a range of skills and education providers including, A4e, City of Westminster College, Tribal, Edexcel, City & Guilds and Hull College.

The delegates, including senior government officials and skills providers will participate in an interactive seminar, being jointly organised by UKIBC and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) along with the British Council, UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) and UK Trade & Investment (UKTI).

The delegates will attend the 4th Global Skills Summit organised by Ficci in Delhi and also visit Kolkata.

The UK is the partner country for the summit and David Blunkett, MP for Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough will address the inaugural session.

"India has acknowledged its need to convert its young population into a skilled, trained workforce to continue its phenomenal economic growth," Blunkett said, adding, "The UK has a strong competitive advantage in the education and skills sector, and is capable of world class skills provision."

UKIBC CEO Richard Heald said, "The UK has an internationally recognised competitive advantage in

skills provision. The shared history, language and culture between the two countries should mean that the UK is regarded as the partner of choice to drive forward the skills agenda in India".

Source: 14-September, 2011/[Times of India](#)

IIT fee set to increase fourfold from 2013

The government has effectively signalled its willingness, going forward, to do away with wholesale subsidized education

The government has decided to effect a conditional fourfold increase in the education fee for the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) to Rs. 8 lakh.

The increased amount will, however, be recovered in a staggered manner after the student is employed. For this, the IITs will enter into a tripartite agreement with the employing company and the graduate.

The fee hike, to be implemented from 2013 in all the 15 IITs across the country, will, however, exclude students belonging to scheduled castes/tribes and other backward classes with parental income less than Rs. 4.5 lakh per year.

As an incentive, the increased fees will also be waived for those who skip the job market and prefer academics.

The government has effectively signalled its willingness, going forward, to do away with wholesale subsidized education.

The decision was taken at the IIT council meeting comprising officials from the IITs and human resource development (HRD) ministry officials.

"There has been demand for a blanket increase of fees for students, but we have decided not to burden those who are falling under the underprivileged category," HRD minister Kapil Sibal said after the IIT council meeting in Delhi on Wednesday. The minister confirmed that the increase will come into effect in two years.

Sibal said that education of each BTech student costs the IITs around Rs. 8 lakh for the entire four-year period—implying a subsidy of Rs. 6 lakh.

The HRD ministry took its cue from a government panel, which recommended an increase in tuition fee for IIT students from an annual Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 2-2.5 lakh (Rs. 8-10 lakh over four years) to help the premier schools improve their standards, both in terms of physical and intellectual infrastructure. At the BTech level, the IITs admit nearly 10,000 students every year after a national-

level entrance that tests around 500,000 students every year.

The IITs will have an agreement with employers for repaying the additional fees, Sibal said.

"The moment the students gets a job, the institutes will have an arrangement with the employers to reimburse the extra money from their salary on an instalment basis," he said.

The government is creating an electronic database for all students to help manage the system.

Waiving the fee for those pursuing academics will also help quadruple the faculty base of the IITs from 4,000 to 16,000 in a decade, besides giving research a boost, the minister said.

"By 2020, we are planning to admit at least 10,000 students in the postgraduate and research category of IITs to boost the research and development facility in the country," Sibal added. "The move is to make IITs research-oriented organizations from the current undergraduate focus."

Currently, there are around 1,000 students in these categories, according to HRD ministry data. Experts welcomed the move.

"The fee should be in line with the cost of education. Hiking the fee is good as it will make the IITs financially a little better and less dependent on government funding," said Bharat Gulia, senior manager (education practice) at consulting firm Ernst and Young.

The decision should, however, be practically implemented so that employers aren't discouraged by a complicated process, he said.

IIT students were sceptical about the decision.

"Many students have family responsibilities. To deduct a portion of the salary will definitely pinch," said an IIT Delhi student who didn't want to be named. Another pointed out that IIT graduates who move on to management school may be able to unfairly claim a fee waiver.

Sibal reiterated that the IIT council was deliberating on a single entrance exam for all engineering colleges by 2013.

"We are examining it, but it needs the approval of the state education ministers and the Central Advisory Board of Education," he said. "We have two years' time and hopefully, we will reach there."

There may be political resistance from the states against such a move.

“We will see whether this single entrance exam is for all central government-run engineering colleges or all colleges across the country,” he said.

The various admission tests include the IIT-Joint Entrance Exam (JEE), state-level JEEs, and a central-level all-India entrance examination conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education for 30 National Institutes of Technology and some architecture institutes in the country.

The council also approved a new campus for IIT Delhi in Haryana

Source: 14-September, 2011/[Live Mint](#)

IIT Council Meets: Arrives at Important Conclusions on Ramasami Committee Report and Kakodkar Committee Report

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have to emerge as institutions of global excellence to take India forward to the next generation of technology leadership of the world. This was stated by Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister of HRD, Communications and IT, while addressing the meeting of the IIT Council today in the precincts of IIT Delhi. The meeting was attended by Members of Parliament, Ms Vasanthi Stanley, Shri Janardhana Swamy and Shri Dependar Hooda, Chairpersons and Directors of all IITs besides other scientists and technologists of eminence nominated on the Council.

A presentation was made by Dr Anil Kakodkar and Prof Jhunjunwala on the recommendations of the Committee to prepare a roadmap for taking IITs to global excellence. After detailed deliberations on the recommendations in which various opinions were expressed, the Council decided to constitute an Empowered Task Force for implementation of the recommendations for enhancing the autonomy of the IIT system with the intention of expanding the research output of IITs to produce 10,000 Ph.D graduates annually from around 1000 presently and increase faculty strength from around 4000 presently to 16000 by 2020. This would enable a large pool of researchers in technology to be fostered along with developing advanced technology manpower needs for promoting economic growth. The Council felt that a national benefit has to be derived from the investment through public funds on each IIT student. Therefore, every student at the time of obtaining employment after graduation could enter into an agreement with the IIT for agreeing to pay back part of the expenditure made on him or her over a suitable period. Students who do not obtain any employment or who proceed for a career in research shall not be expected to arrive at such

agreement. In so far as modifications to the governance structure are concerned, the Council felt that the issue would be revisited in the next meeting. Each IIT was requested to prepare an accountability mechanism for regulating the exercise of administrative autonomy.

The Council deliberated on the report of Dr Ramasami for a country-wide common examination for admission to undergraduate programmes in sciences and engineering. The Council noted that the burden of multiplicity of competitive examinations was causing immense stress, both financial and otherwise, on parents and students at the time of admission at the UG level. The basis for reform in the examination process that reduces dependency on coaching, aligning the testing process to Class XII syllabus, reducing the multiplicity of tests to one was considered. Weightage would be given to the marks obtained by a student in Class XII Board examinations would be given after scientific statistical normalization of the performance vis-à-vis the average performance of other students appearing in the respective Board examinations, whether CBSE or State Boards. There could be a single national examination to test for aptitude and advanced domain knowledge or for aptitude alone to supplement the weightage given to performance in Class XII. Six options were placed before the Council for consideration and views of the members were sought. Based on the views expressed, the report would be finalised by Dr Ramasami in a month. The report would also be placed before CABE and State Education Ministers for a final decision so that the new system could be put in place by academic session 2013-14.

The Council took note of the incidents of suicides for varying reasons in IITs. While appreciative of the action being taken by IITs, the Council felt that the issue needs to be studied in all its dimensions. The Council decided to constitute a Task Force to suggest remedial measures after studying the causes of such occurrences. The Task Force shall be headed by an eminent person and include representatives of parents, teachers, alumni, professional counselors and submit its report in four months.

The Council ratified the proposal of IIT Delhi to establish an extension centre in the NCR region of Haryana on land offered by the State Government. This would help IIT Delhi in expansion of research facilities considering the limitation of space at its present location. The Council was also of the view that IITs need to extend their outreach through collaboration with industry, society and academia going beyond present geographical boundaries. The

IITs should also serve the technological needs of the local area as well as assist engineering institutions in the area through faculty development.

A presentation was made by Director IIT Kanpur, Prof Sanjay Dhande, on a common web-portal (www.iitsystem.ac.in) for all IITs which could serve as a one-stop information source on all IITs necessitated due to the rapid expansion of the IIT system growing to 15 institutions in the Eleventh Plan. Information on admission guidelines, faculty availability and vacancies and other details would be provided through the web portal. It was suggested by the Council that the web portal could emerge as a window for engagement with industry and academia within the country and abroad with the entire IIT system.

Source: 08-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

CiOs to guide students in research

Chairman of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) Prof SS Mantha has regretted that current research scenario in India lacks innovation as students are following copy-paste methods.

Delivering key note address at the Chief Innovation Officer (CiO) BootCamp 2011 organised by eHealth TBI, a technology-based incubator, held here on Thursday, to harness innovation in all Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) affiliated colleges, Prof Matha said, "Research has to be multi-disciplinary and focused to deliver a cutting edge refined research."

CiO BootCamp 2011 was organised with the aim to further the process of innovation among students by designating a staff member to a particular student who would provide the student with the necessary guidance and information required for research. It was advised that each affiliated institution should identify such research person who would be the Chief Innovation Officer and the point of contact.

Mantha further said AICTE has identified 100 engineering colleges across India and the institutions would have to allocate a 2,500 to 3,000 sq feet work space where industries are invited to outsource their research and development work to the colleges.

"We are starting this project and trying to see what sources of funding can be identified," Mantha said.

Dr M K Sridhar, member secretary, Karnataka State Innovation Council, laid emphasis on setting up

micro centres of innovation in each college under the leadership of an innovative officer.

Rama Subramaniam, Director of eHealth TBI, said, "BootCamp is part of a larger vision where workshops will be conducted in all VTU affiliated colleges to further encourage entrepreneurs among the students."

Senior professors and principals of VTU colleges attended the programme.

Source: 16-September, 2011/[Ibn Live](#)

Maharashtra, Delhi lead number of fake institutes in India

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has published a report on the rising number of fake educational institutions in the country. The report pointed that with 72 out of the total 348 colleges being from Maharashtra and Delhi, the two states lead the number of fake institutions in the country. Read on.

Beware of taking admissions in business management and other technical institutions, particularly in Maharashtra and Delhi that have the highest such fake institutes having no recognition and flaunting bogus affiliation with distant universities to hoodwink the gullible.

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the government body that grants recognition to the courses in management studies, engineering, information technology, pharmacy, architecture, hotel management and catering etc., has warned that the degrees and diplomas awarded by the unrecognised institutes are of no worth, specially if the candidates seek government jobs.

Maharashtra and Delhi have 75 fake institutes each as the students can check from the AICTE's website that has tabulated 348 such institutes enrolling students in large number and playing with their future.

Andhra Pradesh comes next with 52 such institutes having no recognition, followed by West Bengal (34), Uttar Pradesh (30), Karnataka (26), Haryana (17) and Tamil Nadu (14).

According to the AICTE officials, this kind of institutes lure students with glossy brochures claiming to offer degrees through a tie-up with some central or state university recognised by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and boasting in-campus recruitment by the big companies even before they complete their courses.

The officials say students should know that a university approved by UGC or AICTE can offer technical programmes only to its students and cannot extend them to other private institutes. They say the AICTE is, however, helpless in curbing the mushroom growth of such institutes as it can only notify which institutes are recognised and authorised and which are not recognised and hence illegal.

The AICTE has been forwarding the list of the bogus institutions to the state governments, advising them from time to time to ask the district administration and police to take action against them. The last such advisory was issued at its instance by the Human Resources Development Ministry on May 2.

Source: 20-September, 2011/Rediff.com/news

New website launched to explore and compare colleges in India

Campus Explorer India has launched a new website that helps prospective students and parents to explore and compare all colleges in India.

CampusExplorer.in assists a typical prospective student who is trying to identify a college that would best suit his personal and educational needs. It is important for a student to make an informative decision while choosing a college to pursue his higher education. With the number of colleges in India rising almost exponentially, it is necessary to compare the shortlisted colleges side by side to identify the pros and cons of each college," according to the Campus Explorer India team.

CampusExplorer.in provides a user-friendly interface which allows students to explore all colleges in India that are categorized state wise and major wise. For example, students can explore through all colleges in Tamilnadu (state wise) or all engineering colleges in Tamilnadu (major wise). It also provides an interface through which students can compare all colleges' state wise and major wise side by side. There is an agile interface through which students can find any college interactively.

However, it's no longer necessary for students to visit the individual college website and search for information. The Campus Explorer India team has set up micro sites for around 12000 colleges India which acts as a student friendly website for each college. These micro sites contain only the information and data that a prospective student would be looking for. Students can instantly apply to any college in India by visiting the

CampusExplorer.in customized website of each college.

"A lot of prospective students and parents of students would utilize our website to explore, compare and analyze any college in India. Our portal serves as a repository and knowledge base for students and parents. This free service would be of great help for the community." According to the Campus Explorer India team,"This website would help students to take a guided decision in their lives."

To find out more about CampusExplorer.in visit <http://www.campusexplorer.in>

Source: 20-September, 2011/online PR News

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

President calls on Govt., varsities to work together

President Pratibha Devisingh Patil on Wednesday called on the Government and universities to work closely on socially relevant issues and to reach out to a broad segment of society.

Laying the foundation stone for the Southern Regional Campus of Indira Gandhi National Open University here, the President said the country should cater to the educational requirements of its predominantly young population. After universalisation of primary education, it was time to work towards universalisation of secondary education as well. "However, our ultimate aim is to increase the enrollment ratio of people receiving higher education. We need to expand our education infrastructure. This, undoubtedly, will include the formal education system, but we would even need to reach out to those who wish to seek higher education but are unable, due to a variety of reasons, to avail of options in the formal education sector," she said.

This category consisted of a wide range of people from rural and tribal areas, disability groups, jails and rehabilitation centres, Government and non-Governmental Organisations, parents, home-makers and also employers and employees. All want to better their avenues for growth and to do it in a manner that is suitable to their specific circumstances, the President said.

Complimenting the IGNOU for flexibility in its approach in catering to wide sections of the population, the President wanted universities to promote skill development in addition to providing educational facilities. "The link between learning and livelihood is important. Distance learning,

therefore, must give weightage to enhancing knowledge that gives practical and necessary know-how for livelihood opportunities," she said.

She said distance education offered a great opportunity to those already in employment to upgrade their knowledge base so that they could effectively contribute to increasing the production levels of their respective organisations. Studying while in employment also offered opportunities to enhance their career. Pointing out that only 5 per cent of India's workforce had some kind of certification, the President called for a system that would address the problem. "This is important for creating proper skilled workforce in the country and to help them get better remuneration," she added.

The President highlighted the close links between distance education and technology and how universities, including IGNOU, were leveraging the advances in communication technology by providing access to education through online programmes. "Online connectivity is a convenient means to provide education materials to students in a timely manner. Distance Education can even serve the national development agenda by reaching out to farmers and health workers to provide them information that is relevant for them. There is need for Government and Universities to act in concert to work on socially relevant issues and to reach out to a broad segment of society," she observed.

The President said that regional centres of IGNOU, by coming close to the community they served, can now structure courses that take into account local requirements. Kerala's tourism, IT and biotechnology, plantation, agriculture and other traditional industrial sectors can benefit greatly from such centres that would bring in the technology and knowledge inputs.

Ms. Patil called for an education system that should look at the holistic development of the youth. "Education is about knowledge. It pushes the frontiers of knowledge. It should be the aim of the youth to become intellectually competent and technically skilled. Knowledge without value is however incomplete. Education without values is like a flower without fragrance. Education should impart values to the youth that makes them sensitive to fellow human beings and the environs around them.

"It is a value system that can prepare the younger generation to become responsible citizens. Values provide an anchor in life, as well as the ability to take decisions, however difficult. They make one

strong and capable of withstanding the trials and tribulations of life. Also, if students were equipped with the right value base, along with the capabilities created by science and technology, they will serve society with devotion and commitment, creating prosperity and happiness," she said.

The Southern Regional Campus is coming up in a 25 acre plot at Vithura, some 20 km from the State Capital and would cover the four southern States. The new building is expected to be ready in 24 months. Steps to set up the campus was initiated during the previous LDF Government's tenure, but the pace quickened with Chief Minister Oommen Chandy taking a personal interest coming up with a quick cabinet decision to allot the required land.

Mr. Chandy, in his address, hoped that the work on the institute would be completed with the same speed with which the decision to allot land was made. He expressed the hope that Vithura would soon become the hub of higher education with the IGNOU centre, the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research being located here. He wanted the three institutes to come together in setting up an international convention centre and promised the State Government's support in this regard.

Assembly Speaker G. Karthikeyan, who represents the Assembly constituency Aruvikkara, where the new campus is coming up and A. Sampath, who represents the area in Parliament, offered felicitations. IGNOU Vice-chancellor V.N. Rajasekhara Pillai welcomed the gathering and Pro Vice-Chancellor Latha Pillai proposed a vote of thanks.

Source: 31-August, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

Academic Leadership beyond Bottom Line

Promoter-leaders may be the new norm in academia today, but with increased focus on research and global recognition, academic leaders will soon take centre stage. The success of an institution cannot be measured by its bottom line alone; and the head of an institution is characterised by competencies and credibility that are very different from those possessed by the leaders of other enterprises.

Someone recently in an editorial observed: 'Can Non Academics Lead', "...the leadership of academic institutions is no different from that of other enterprises." While it is true today in the context of Indian institutions, it will not be so in the future. Majority of Indian institutions today are not

focused on research and have failed to provide quality teaching. However, as institutions mature, professionalise and seek global recognition, academic leadership will be characterised by competencies and credibility which will be very different from other enterprises.

I believe that the nature of academic leadership in the higher education setting is different from business leadership in at least three interrelated ways. First is the role of institutional mission which defines its purpose and shapes the leadership style. The second is the success of an educational institution, which unlike a business enterprise, cannot be measured by the bottom line alone. And, the third is the role of governance, which is a shared responsibility and entails domain expertise for leading an educational institution.

Different Leanings

Bolman and Gallosac in their recent book, *Reframing Academic Leadership*, note that higher education is different from business organisations for several reasons including "...educational mission — a complex and variable mix of teaching, research, service, and outreach. Higher education's mission requires that many of its key employees be teachers and scholars whose contributions depend on their unique expertise, dedication, and capacity for professional judgment."

To paraphrase, the core mission of a comprehensive institution of higher education relates to teaching, research and community. Unfortunately, in India there are only a handful of institutions which have a clearly defined mission. Most of the institutions here are places for teaching with no focus on research or community service. In the private sector, majority of the institutions are driven by a singular focus on profits or surpluses, which means that they have corporate style leadership with focus on the bottom line. Such an approach may work well for this segment of profit-oriented schools, but will fail miserably for institutions that seek excellence and quality.

Clash of Principles

One challenge that an institution with a mission statement seeking excellence faces is the clash between its academic and business motives. The emphasis for such an institution is on quality, research and global recognition, and this shifts the measures of success from profits made for promoters, to more nebulous ones like peer recognition, rankings, and prestige. The success of such a hall of learning is then not measured by the number of students enrolled, but rather by how it

is perceived by the stakeholders. It is the head of the school who builds its credibility.

Amanda Goodall in her book, *Socrates in the Boardroom: Why Research Universities Should Be Led by Top Scholars*, argues that scholars are in the best position to lead a research university because of their expertise and credibility, which signal confidence among the stakeholders about the values and mission of the institution. She notes, "...in settings where expert knowledge is the key factor that characterises an organisation's core business, it is likely that expert knowledge is the key in the selection of its leader."

The chances of an academic leader earning the trust and confidence of faculty members, are much higher when the person has grown within the educational system and is perceived as an expert by them. This trust becomes even more important in the shared governance model where faculty is intensively engaged with institutional vision and strategy. Bolman and Gallosac have noted that in such an institutional environment the faculty attains "...levels of individual autonomy and collective power beyond most employees in other sectors."

Ajit Rangnekar, Dean, Indian School of Business, in an EDU interview claims, "[t]here is a lot more collaboration happening in the academic world and it is necessary to spend more time in building consensus with the faculty." In 2006, President of Harvard University, Larry Summers, was forced to resign after a stormy battle with the faculty to establish himself as a change agent. Warren Bennis in his analysis of the event noted that Summers never quite got "...that leaders — especially those who are change agents — can only succeed when they have a reservoir of goodwill that allows them to convince followers that their fates are correlated."

India Needs Academic Leaders

In India, majority of private sector institutions are not professional and are headed by promoters as leaders. This means that the faculty has almost no say in the governance of these schools. In public institutions, the challenge is at the other extreme as the faculty lacks business acumen and perceives administration as clerical work. The need is to strike a fine balance between academic perspicacity and business efficiency.

According to a World Bank report, while US had attained a gross enrolment ratio of 56 per cent 30 years ago, India is still struggling to raise it from 13 per cent. For various reasons which have been discussed in EDU from time to time, at this nascent stage of education system, talented academic

leadership is in short supply and professional practices are underdeveloped. Thus, borrowing talent from the corporate world is sometimes a necessity and there are instances where institutions have excelled with leaders from outside the academia.

Yet, for instituting and nourishing schools of excellence, there is an immediate need for a cadre of leaders who understand the unique characteristics of academia and its best practices. The future of higher education rests with leaders who make good choices, adapt global best practices and instill values of excellence and success which look beyond the bottom line.

Source: 31-August, 2011/[EDU Tech](#)

The failing health of India's higher education

Troubling reports about the failing higher education system in India are pouring in from every direction.

The Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are finding it difficult to get an adequate number of quality students to fill the 3,000-odd seats for their flagship two-year full-time programme, even though nearly 200,000 aspirants take the Common Admission Test.

Engineering colleges across the country report that only 10 per cent of the total number of students they admit every year have achieved a passing grade in the mathematics section of the entrance exams held to select candidates.

Spokespersons for the IT industry say consistently that less than one in 20 Indian college graduates who apply for jobs in that sector are employable.

I have sat in on interviews to select graduates from the country's premier computer science institutions and found that less than one in 100 have even the barest notion of what computer science is about.

Concerned people have listed many possible causes.

High on their list is the booming coaching class industry in India which now offers to coach at every stage of life: from infants aspiring to seek admission in nursery school all the way up to IIM aspirants.

But I am sceptical of the view that coaching classes are the cause of the problem about quality of education.

I suspect they are the Band-Aid that desperate parents apply to tackle the problem of quality of education.

I know of one family in which the mother works as a domestic help and the father as a salesperson in a shop selling saris.

They spend Rs 600 every month on private tuition fees for their son who has just entered college; the college fee itself is only a fraction of that amount.

Students seem to trip up when it comes to applying what they have learnt in one context to solve a similar problem in another context.

Robert Haskell, professor of psychology at the University of New England, terms such a problem-solving skill "transfer of learning".

His book *Transfer of Learning: Cognition, Instruction and Reasoning* defines "transfer of learning" as the skill to detect that a problem "is like" or "is equivalent to" or "is the same as" or "resembles" or "is comparable to" some other problem that the student has encountered before.

This kind of reasoning is evidence of the skills of mental abstraction, generalisation, induction and logical inference. These skills make up true education.

Most innovation activity takes place using such skills. Take, for example, eminent computer scientist Peter Chen's account of how he came to think of the entity-relationship model, a seminal concept in computer science.

He says that in his native Chinese culture, the pictographs for the sun and for the moon are placed next to each other to create the Chinese character for "brightness".

Both the sun and the moon have the ability to reflect light, so combining both to mean "brightness" seems perfectly natural.

Similarly, the entity-relationship model in computer science combines properties of individual entities to create new ones.

Professor Chen had transferred his learning of how Chinese pictographs are combined to the completely new realm of computer science.

Unfortunately, attempts to teach such transfer-of-learning skills by using the classic structured drills in the basics don't seem to do the job, nor do the efforts to do it by giving students unstructured free rein for self-discovery.

While searching for a solution to this pedagogic problem, Clayton Christensen of Harvard in his book *Disrupting Class* says that the answer may lie in delivering student-centric learning.

In this scheme, students learn each subject in a manner consistent with their type of intelligence and learning style.

Unfortunately, the current education system in every country is organised into value chains, much like manufacturing and mass retail.

In such industries material (in this case students) is inputted, some of the material is transformed by subjecting it to standardised processes (standard textbooks and teaching methods) and outputted to the next stage (a higher class) if students perform adequately in standardised tests.

In the current business design of education, each part of this process - standard curricula, standard textbooks and standardised tests - has scale economics and is, therefore, difficult to customise.

What is needed, says Professor Christensen, is a business design for education that acknowledges that students learn in different ways and, since they have different mixes of linguistic, mathematical and visual "intelligences", their pace of learning varies.

How this can be done on a large scale in India is mind boggling; there are four million schools and 20,000 colleges in the country and in the next 15 years 345 million Indians will attain the age of 18 and be ready for the job market.

Source: 30-August, 2011/Rediff.com

HEC – why India felt threatened

On July 23, 2006, an article was published in the leading daily Indian newspaper Hindustan Times, titled "Pak threat to Indian science." It was reported that Prof C N R Rao (chairman of the Indian prime minister's Scientific Advisory Council), had made a detailed presentation to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh about the rapid strides that Pakistan was making in the higher education sector after the establishment of the Higher Education Commission in October 2002 and my appointment as its first chairman. The article began with the sentence "Pakistan may soon join China in giving India serious competition in science."

Serious apprehensions were expressed before the Indian prime minister at the rapid progress being made by Pakistan in the higher education and science sectors, first under the ministry of science and technology after my appointment as the federal minister of science and technology of Pakistan in 2000, and later under the Higher Education Commission. It was stressed during the

presentation to the Indian prime minister that if India did not take urgent measures to upgrade its own higher education sector, Pakistan would soon take the lead in key areas of higher education, science and technology.

Something remarkable happened in Pakistan during the short period from 2000 to 2008 that rang alarm bells in India. It also drew unmitigated praise from neutral international experts. Three independent and authoritative reports, praising the outstanding performance of the HEC, were published by the World Bank, Usaid and the British Council. Pakistan won several international awards for the revolutionary changes in the higher education sector brought about under the leadership of the writer. The Austrian government conferred its high civil award "Grosse Goldene Ehrenzeichen am Bande" (2007) on the writer for transforming the Higher Education sector in Pakistan. The TWAS (Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, Italy) Award for Institutional Development was conferred on the writer at the academy's 11th general conference in October 2009.

Prof Michael Rode, the chairman of the United Nations Commission on Science, Technology and Development and presently heading a Network of European and Asian Universities (ASIA-UNINET), wrote: "The progress made was breathtaking and has put Pakistan ahead of comparable countries in numerous aspects. The United Nations Commission on Science and Technology has closely monitored the development in Pakistan in the past years, coming to the unanimous conclusion that (the) policy and programme is a 'best-practice' example for developing countries aiming at building their human resources and establishing an innovative, technology-based economy."

Prof Wolfgang Voelter of Tübingen University, who had been conferred two civil awards by the government of Pakistan for his contributions to the development of science in this country, paid glowing tributes in an article published in November 2008: "A miracle happened. The scenario of education, science and technology in Pakistan changed dramatically as never before in the history of Pakistan. The chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Education recently announced it as 'Pakistan's golden period in higher education.' "

A senior US educational expert, Prof Fred Hayward, independently analysed this sector on behalf of Usaid and wrote: "The Higher Education Commission instituted major upgrades for laboratories and information and communications technology, rehabilitation of facilities, expansion of research support, and development of one of the

best digital libraries in the region. Its successes have been remarkable – quality had increased significantly, and several institutions were on their way to becoming world-class institutions. About 95 percent of people sent abroad for training returned, an unusually high result for a developing country in response to improved salaries and working conditions at universities.”

The tremendous changes that occurred in Pakistan after the year 2003, compared to the previous 55 years (1947-2002) are illustrated by the following statistics:

1. There were only 59 universities and degree awarding institutes in Pakistan in the year 2001. These grew to 127 such institutions by 2008.

2. University enrolment grew threefold, rising from only 276,000 in 2002 to a remarkable 803,000 by 2010.

3. During the 55-year period between 1947 and 2002, only 1,500 PhD scholarships had been awarded by UGC. During 2003 and 2010, over 8,000 such scholarships were awarded by the HEC through a highly competitive selection process, about 5,000 of these to top universities in the USA, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

4. The PhD output from our universities between 1947 and 2002 was only 3,321 (an average of only 60 per year). In the subsequent eight-year period, 2003-2010, another 3,651 PhD degrees were granted (an average of 450 per year) after international assessment by eminent experts from technologically advanced countries. Presently it stands at about 700 per year, representing a 1,200 percent increase over the average in the 55-year period.

5. The rapid progress made by Pakistan in the IT and telecom sector from 2000 and 2002 under my charge as federal minister led to the spread of the internet from 29 cities in 2000 to 1,000 cities, towns and villages by 2002, and the spread of fibre from 40 cities to 400 cities in this two-year period. Internet prices were reduced sharply from \$87,000 per month for a 2 MB line to only \$3,000 per month. The mobile telephony boom began by the drastic lowering of prices, bringing in competition and changing the system, so that the person receiving a call was no longer required to pay any charges. A satellite was placed in space (Paksat 1) at a cost of only \$4 million. These changes in the IT infrastructure brought about during the time I was federal minister of science responsible for IT and telecom later proved invaluable for the higher education sector. The Pakistan Educational Research Network was set up in 2004, through

which one of the finest digital libraries was established in universities. In 2002, a few university libraries could subscribe to a handful of journals. Today every student in every public sector university has free access to over 20,000 international journals with back volumes and over 60,000 books from 250 international publishers. A silent revolution had occurred.

6. From 1947 to 2002, not a single university could be ranked among the top 600 of the world in international university rankings. By 2008, however, several Pakistani universities achieved this distinction, with NUST (Islamabad) at 273rd in the world, UET (Lahore) at 281 in the world and Karachi University (in natural sciences) at 223 in the world. Others included Quaid-e-Azam University (Islamabad) and Mehran Engineering University (Hyderabad).

7. Pakistan was poised to make a major breakthrough in transitioning from a low value-added agricultural economy to a knowledge economy. Alas, corrupt politicians with forged degrees plotted to destroy this wonderful institution where all decisions were merit-based, a trait unacceptable to many in power. A government notification was issued on Nov 30, 2010, to fragment the HEC and distribute the pieces. At this point I intervened. It was on my appeal to it that the Supreme Court declared the fragmentation of the HEC to be unconstitutional. The development budget of the HEC has, however, been slashed by 50 percent and most development programmes in universities have come to a grinding halt.

The Indian government need not have worried. We Pakistanis, alas, know how to destroy our own institutions.

Source: 03-September, 2011/[The News](#), pak

We never wanted FDI in education: Prakash Karat

When it comes to its own, CPM has a different take on WikiLeaks - take them with a pinch of salt. CPM general secretary Prakash Karat on Sunday emphasised that its leaders go by the programmes of the party, contrary to what wikileaks suggested. As the party's approach to foreign direct investment (FDI) is debated in wikileaks, Karat said the party's stand on FDI rests on three factors - help raise production capacity, acquire new technology and generate employment. He iterated opposition to FDI in retail trade, higher education and mining.

Opposing the government to allow business houses to run commercial banks, Karat said the reports of

former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee supporting FDI in higher education was before the party came out with its stand on the issue.

Karat said subsequent to what Bhattacharjee told the American official, the party discussed the issue of FDI in higher education and took a stand to oppose the opening of foreign university centres in India.

He said the CPM opposition to Foreign Education Providers Bill is the reason why the legislation could not be passed by Parliament.

He also said that at one point, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had asked the head of US retail trade giant WalMart to meet Bhattacharjee and convince him on FDI in the sector. But the former CM conveyed the party's opposition to opening up of the sector.

"Whether it is Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee or VS Achuthananandan or Prakash Karat, we go by our understanding of party programme," Karat said, adding that the CPM took a position on FDI as the situation evolved just as it strongly opposed the Indo-US nuclear deal.

Source: 04-September, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

'Teach students India's history'

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former party president Dr [Murli Manohar Joshi](#) stressed that students should be taught India's history to make familiar with the country's culture.

Joshi criticized people who level allegations of saffronisation of education against his party and BJP-ruled governments.

At a programme on education in Bhopal hosted by the BJP's educational wing, the former [BJP](#) president said India's history was not 200-250 years old as taught in institutions, but it goes back to thousands of years.

Referring to the Ramayana, he said these days students may not be know about the great epic "but they definitely know about English bestsellers and when we teach them such good things, there are allegations of saffronisation of education".

Saffronisation of education or 'shiksha ka bhagwakaran' has become a much-talked about issue during the BJP government's rule in MP and when Dr Joshi was talking about the issue, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was seated on the dais showing keen interest.

His government drew flak as it dropped nursery rhymes like 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' and introduced the chanting of the bhojan mantra before mid-day meals in government-run schools. Joshi suggested that students up to standard V should be exempted from examinations.

He criticized the Centre for starting educational institutions despite the lack of teaching staff. He said students can learn under trees, but there should be enough teachers to attend to them.

Source: 05-September, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Higher education and expectations

There has been a significant increase in enrolment in higher education in developing countries (especially Asia) in the past decade. This edition of MacroScan examines recent trends and considers the challenge of generating employment to meet the expectations of the growing number of new graduates.

Things seem to be improving in education in developing countries, at least as far as enrolment is concerned. Across the world, literacy rates have gone up, school enrolment rates are rising and dropout rates are falling. Much of the improvement has taken place in the regions that most needed it, in relatively low-income countries that previously had very low enrolment ratios. Improvements in educational outcomes have been particularly marked for girls and young women, so gender gaps are falling.

In some regions, gender gaps have even been reversed, even in tertiary education which was traditionally the hardest gap to bridge.

This is clearly good news, even if critics can point out that in several parts of the world these improvements are still nowhere near fast enough. And of course, the bare fact of enrolment tells us very little about the quality of education and its relevance for both those being educated and for the society. Even so, increasing enrolment is an important first step.

What is particularly interesting in several developing regions, including the most populous parts of the world, is that there has also been significant increase in tertiary education. Once again, this is good news. But it does have implications for the future that are still inadequately analysed.

Regional differences

UNESCO data on enrolment in education provide some relevant indicators. Chart 1 shows the enrolments in tertiary education by region. The first

point to note is that while globally tertiary enrolment rates have been rising, regional differences still remain dramatic.

These spatial variations are possibly even more marked within the developing world than globally. Thus, tertiary enrolment rates have been rising fairly rapidly in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as East Asia and the Pacific, but much more slowly in the Arab States and in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Despite the recent increases in such enrolment in east Asia (and to a lesser extent South Asia), higher education enrolment in these regions still remains at less than half the rates achieved in Europe and North America, and also still well below other developing regions such as Latin America. What that in turn suggests is that – especially in the more rapidly growing regions – higher education enrolment rates will increase even more sharply in the near future.

This is significant simply because these are the regions with very large populations and especially with large (and mostly growing) numbers of youth. This in turn will affect the regional distribution of those in higher education quite significantly. This has already happened to some extent over the last decade, as Charts 2a and 2b indicate. In 1999, North America and Western Europe accounted for nearly one-third of the numbers of those engaged in tertiary education; by 2009 the proportion had fallen to just above one-fifth. Meanwhile the share of East Asia increased from one quarter to nearly one-third.

This tendency is confirmed by looking at the increases in enrolment numbers in Chart 3. In the decade until 2009, the total number of those enrolled in tertiary education across the world increased by more than 70 million, of whom nearly 60 per cent came from Asia. 42 per cent of the increase came only from East Asia and the Pacific (driven by significant increases in China). The other regions with demographic structures tilted towards the young are South Asia and West Asia – together they accounted for only 16 per cent of the increased enrolment in the past decade, but this is likely to be greater in the coming period, given increases in secondary education in these regions.

Since Asia and sub-Saharan Africa continue to have much lower average tertiary enrolment rates (averaging 10 to 20 per cent compared to more than 60 per cent in the advanced countries), this proportion is likely to increase even further in the near future. So the bulk of new entrants into

higher education will come from these regions in the coming decade.

Progress of women

It is noteworthy that the number of women in tertiary education has increased at a much faster rate than for men, as shown in Chart 4. Globally, women now outnumber men in tertiary education! In some regions (like North America, Western Europe, Latin America and Eastern Europe), the ratio is significantly above half. This too is a process of great significance, because it is likely to bring in its wake all sorts of social and economic changes and hopefully a much greater degree of gender equality in other spheres of life as well.

The increase in tertiary education in the developing world is clearly a positive sign and obviously there is much scope for substantially more such increase in the coming years. But, like all positive changes, it also brings forth challenges, and many of these are still not recognized in full. The most obvious challenge is that of ensuring enough productive employment to meet the expectations of these new graduates.

This issue of ensuring jobs for the young are going through more levels of education than the previous generation has several inter-related aspects.

The first is that of sheer quantity of available jobs. Even during the phase of global boom, the most dynamic economies in the world were simply not creating enough paid employment to meet the needs of those willing to supply their labour. In some countries this reflected in rising rates of open unemployment, especially among the youth; in other countries with poorly developed social protection and unemployment benefits, disguised unemployment was more the norm. But this was during the boom – obviously the Great Recession and subsequent continuing uncertainty in global markets have made things a lot worse. So in most economies, there are simply not enough jobs being created, even for those who have received higher levels of education.

The second aspect is that of quality, of matching education and skills with the available jobs, or what is often described as the “employability” of the labour force. This problem of skills mismatch is a problem even in growing economies, which face severe labour shortages for some kinds of workers and massive oversupply in others. Often this is not in spite of, but because of, market forces, because markets and higher educational institutions tend to respond with lags to the demands of employers for particular skills, and then to oversupply certain skills.

Social implications

This can have troubling social implications. Simply because of the shortage of higher level jobs, many young people are forced to take jobs that require less skills and training than they have actually received, and are of lower grade than their own expectations of their employability. This in turn can create resentment and other forms of alienation that get expressed in all sorts of ways.

The third aspect – and one that we all ignore at our peril – is related to the second, but reflects a slightly different process. The recent increase in tertiary enrolment across the world is certainly to be welcomed, but it should be noted that a significant part of that has been in private institutions with much higher user fees. As public investment in education has simply not kept pace with the growing demand for it, there has been in many societies, a mushrooming of private institutions many of whom are designed to cater to the demand for supposedly more “marketable” skills such as in technology, IT and management.

This is especially true in developing countries where private institutions charging very high fees have in some cases come to dominate higher education. In India, for example, around two-thirds of such enrolment is now estimated to be in private colleges and universities and similar institutes.

Even in countries where public education still dominates, there are moves to increase fees. This creates another complication around the issue of employability.

Many students, including those coming from relatively poor families, have invested a great deal of their own and their families' resources in order to acquire an education that comes with the promise of a better life.

In the developing world, this hunger for education is strongly associated with the hope of upward mobility, leading families to sell assets such as land and go into debt in the hope of recouping these investments when the student graduates and gets a well-paying job.

But such jobs, as noted earlier, are increasingly scarce. And so these many millions of young people who will emerge with higher degrees, often achieved not just with a lot of effort but a lot of financial resources, are likely to find it even harder to find the jobs that they were led to expect.

This does not augur well for social and political stability. Policy makers across the world, and particularly in developing countries with a demographically youthful society, need to be much

more conscious of this challenge than they seem to be at present.

Source: 06-September, 2011/[The Business Line](#)

It's a no-brainer

Shortly after he ended his fast at Delhi's Ramlila Grounds, Anna Hazare announced his future plans. He was going to demand electoral reforms — including the right to recall an elected representative and the right to reject all candidates. He was going to fight for farmers and industrial labour. Finally, he was going to push for changes in the education system. “Many people have commercialised education,” Hazare said, “they have opened shops. Children of poor people also should get education. This sector also needs reforms.”

The education sector in India indeed needs reforms. Yet its problem is not that it has been commercialised, but that it has not been commercialised enough. Education — whether a primary school in a big city or medical and engineering colleges anywhere — remains the final frontier of India's shortage economy. If any reform is needed, it is in the unshackling of education as an enterprise and its liberation from a predatory, rent-seeking regulatory system.

True, some people have converted education into a profiteering business. Politicians in Karnataka and in Hazare's own state of Maharashtra have exploited loopholes, land scarcity and governmental influence to set up private engineering and medical colleges of questionable quality. These charge fees that are often not commensurate with the services they offer.

Even so, they continue to attract students. The politicians who promote them ensure the supply-side bottleneck remains as it is, and that other and better colleges cannot easily be opened.

It would be a pity if Hazare were to universalise his experience of some politicians-cum-education entrepreneurs in Maharashtra and decide that he must superimpose his hostility to them upon the entire country. National policy cannot be decided in such a manner. Here like elsewhere, Hazare's belief that the methods and mechanisms he used in his village community in Ralegan Siddhi can simply be scaled up to the rest of India is charming but unrealistic. In the final reckoning, this represents a serious shortcoming in his programme.

Many in Hazare's inner circle have painted their anti-corruption crusade as a narrative of 'liberalisation and its discontents'. Whether the urban middle class throngs that have rallied around

Hazare — and shared his disgust with a series of high-profile corruption scandals in the UPA years as well as been angered by his arrest on August 16 — actually buy into this narrative is questionable. Education is a contentious, dynamite-laden area where the practicability and sustainable appeal of the Hazare phenomenon will be tested.

Why is this so? Hazare has focused on a solution — perhaps a magic-bullet solution — to corruption and has pushed for stern and expeditious punishment for the corrupt. What about preventing corruption? While punishing the wrongdoer is necessary, true reform lies in creating conditions where he finds it difficult to commit that wrong.

Hazare says “children of poor people also should get education.” Nobody can disagree with that. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2010 — better known as the Right to Education (RTE) Act — has just the same goal. The point is: how does this work in practice?

Take school education. In India, 93% of school-going children go to government or government-aided institutions. In Hazare’s state of Maharashtra 90% of the state’s 67,885 primary schools are run by zila parishads and municipal bodies and charge no fees (2005 figures).

How good are these schools? Who regulates teacher performance? Why is it that the moment they can, parents — even socially and economically underprivileged parents — withdraw their children from government schools and seek private schools, never mind if they have to pay?

In 2003, James Tooley, a professor from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, published the findings of a year-long survey of private schools for children of low-income families in Hyderabad. In Hyderabad district, he said, 61% of all pupils were enrolled in private, unaided schools. In a detailed study of 15 arbitrarily selected private schools in slum areas, Tooley found teacher attendance and responsiveness to parents’ concerns was better than in government schools.

If every Indian child deserves an education, Hazare and his civil society colleagues should set up local groups to monitor every government school in every neighbourhood in every district of India. Railing against a handful of privately-run schools will serve no purpose. In fact, to resort to criticism of private educational institutions will play into the hands of the bureaucracy. In state after state, education departments have used RTE provisions to frame rules that enhance government control over private schools. Some of these go well beyond

existing draconian laws such as the Delhi School Education Act, 1973.

It is no better in higher education. A plethora of regulatory bodies and corrupt bureaucrats have made it impossible to set up modern and viable institutions of higher learning in India. It is telling that some of the better privately-run engineering and management schools have preferred to build new campuses abroad, in places such as Dubai, rather than explore the limitless market in India.

Far from shutting down what it has, India needs thousands more of such so-called education ‘shops’, of course with transparent regulation. Can Hazare and his friends run away from that reality?

Source: 07-September, 2011/[Hindustan times](#)

Battle for German Brains

German was once the global language of science, a role long since captured by English. But this weekend at the University of California at San Francisco, German was the language of an unusual gathering of academic leaders and rising scientific talent.

About 300 postdocs at top North American universities -- the Ivies, MIT, Chicago, Stanford, Madison, most University of California campuses, as well as Canadian institutions such as the Universities of British Columbia and Toronto -- were gathered here by the German government’s top research organizations. The postdocs are German and are among the most promising of the 5,000-plus German scholars with doctorates currently working in the United States.

Among those traveling here to woo them back home, and to get ideas on how to make German universities better, were 10 university presidents, members of the German parliament, senior government and foundation officials, and representatives of 40-plus academic institutions. Their message was that German higher education is in the midst of a reformation, and that now is the time for young talent to push for more change.

Currently, about 85 percent of German postdocs who work in the United States come home, although only about 50 percent of those who earn their Ph.D.s in the United States do so. Educators organize this gathering every year -- known as [GAIN](#) (for German Academic International Network) -- to push those numbers higher, and to prevent any erosion of talent. High-level German interest in this effort is so strong that the weekend saw presidents and vice presidents working booths in the exhibit area, pitching their quite-renowned

universities to postdocs. And the university leaders said that their commitment to the effort is such that they were open to quite frank (and sometimes quite critical) discussions of how the country's universities need to change.

"Germany has no gold, no oil, no gas, so we need brains," said Isolde von Bülow, director of the Graduate Center of Ludwig-Maximilians Universität.

Discussions of brain drain in the United States tend to focus on the academic talent from developing nations – scholars who come to the United States and many times feel they can't find universities of the caliber they would like in their home countries. This gathering shows a different kind of focus on brain drain (or gain). Some of Germany's universities of course predate the entire United States, and there is a sophisticated research infrastructure in the country. Officials involved in this program say this effort shows how even educationally and technologically advanced nations need to pay attention to the global flow of talent. And in Germany's case, the discussions here reflect a great willingness to learn from the best of American higher education -- not only through the connections the postdocs from Germany pick up in the U.S., but from their ideas about how to challenge the university hierarchy.

The Draw of the American Postdoc

While some countries are trying to persuade more of their most talented students to stay home for graduate education, or postdoctoral fellowships, that's not the case with Germany. The postdocs here said that they were all encouraged -- harangued even -- to look abroad for a postdoc, and to focus on the United States.

"I tell my students that doing a postdoc in Germany would doom their academic careers," said Jürgen Rühle, vice rector of the University of Freiburg. "It is impossible to get a top university career without an international postdoc. People would look at it as a big minus."

Science today depends on international networks, said Rühle, a polymer scientist who has taught at the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of California at Santa Barbara. The postdoc is where those ties can be created. German graduate students wouldn't face a problem with language, given that English is already the language of German laboratories, where German professors are instructing, among others, graduate students and postdocs from China and India, in English.

Germany backs up its guidance with money for those who are deemed at the top of their doctoral classes. Benjamin Schäffner, who is finishing up a postdoc in organic chemistry at Stanford University, said that he was supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and his wife was on a postdoc supported by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (known as DFG, it is the equivalent of the National Science Foundation). They found that their postdoc stipends exceeded those of their Stanford colleagues, that Germany didn't tax any of their stipends (unlike the U.S. with regard to Americans), and that extra funds were automatically provided (unlike at most American institutions) to attend scholarly conferences or to pay for child care when Schäffner and his wife had a son while in the United States. (GAIN is sponsored by those two organizations, plus the German Academic Exchange Service, known as DAAD for its German acronym. All of the postdocs invited here have their travel expenses paid as well.)

But even as Germany pushes its young talent to cross the Atlantic, it wants round-trip tickets. Rühle, for example, said that he is not pleased with the American trend of encouraging postdocs to apply for subsequent postdocs. Rühle said that the perspective gained in years three or four of postdocs in the United States is less than in the first two years, so he wants his grad students to plan for one -- and only one -- American postdoc.

Again Germany backs this desire up with money -- with special grants being offered for those researchers who are "re-engaging" with Germany, enough money to outfit laboratories and hire assistants. (One goal of GAIN is to be sure that these postdocs, as they build up their international networks, also keep up with their German networking.)

Many of these postdocs are of course drawn home for personal reasons. They mention missing family members. Those who -- like Schäffner -- have young children want them in German schools.

But many report that the lure of the North American institutions is the opportunity to create a research agenda as an assistant professor. The German model -- currently undergoing reform, but, officials here acknowledged, not yet transformed -- gives great power to full professors. But there are relatively few full professor positions, and the academic positions available to those who are done with postdoctoral training but aren't yet in contention for full professorships don't provide the clout or job security that an associate professor in the United States would have. In fact, most of the postdocs here said that a tenure-track professor

without tenure in the United States probably has more autonomy and job security than many German academics who are not full professors.

Alexander Fuhmann, on a postdoc in cell biology at the University of California at San Diego, said he wants a career in which he might go back and forth between academe and industry -- and he sees the United States as more receptive. In San Diego, he sees numerous biotech companies with close ties to area research institutions -- and people who move back and forth. "That's a huge advantage," he said.

Fabian Pfrengle, who is on a postdoc in chemistry and biology at the Scripps Research Institute, said that "everything is more flexible in the United States."

Can Germany Become Flexible?

Pfrengle's comment (mirrored by others here) raises the question of whether German universities can become more flexible. Those who are hopeful see the [Excellence Initiative](#) of Germany's government as the key to reform. The program involves a series of designations -- either of entire universities or of programs -- as "excellent," based on detailed applications and peer reviews (including panels of non-German reviewers). Those designated as excellent are eligible for additional funds, and the universities in the elite group (currently nine of them) are treated in some ways like institutions in the Association of American Universities. Several here said that the funds may be less important than the introspection forced on the universities by the process -- and the way the program has forced comparisons with the best practices around the world.

Many of the excellence institutions have used funds from the program to create new positions for junior faculty members. These positions are typically five-year renewable positions, designed to create better job options and more job security for those who haven't yet obtained full professor status.

Ulrike Beisiegel, president of Göttingen University, one of the excellence institutions, said that she is currently applying for funds through the program to create tenure-track options before the full professor level -- a potentially revolutionary change for German higher education.

"We have to flatten the hierarchy, and make it possible for people to have independence" without being totally reliant on one of the full professors, she said. "It can't just be like 'I come to you Herr Dr. Professor,' " she said, bowing her head

repeatedly in mock deference to an imaginary full professor.

Beisiegel said that by giving tenure to people who are not full professors -- and giving them such previously off-limits rights such as sitting on dissertation committees -- she wants to create new career paths. Many young scholars, she said, don't aspire to the administrative duties that go with the power of the full professors, and would prefer a different track, with more time to focus on their research. The tradition has been "either you become a professor or a loser," she said.

In most ways, Beisiegel followed the norms of German universities: a postdoc in molecular genetics at the University of Texas (working with a team that eventually won a Nobel), rising through the ranks to a professorship at the University of Hamburg, and then becoming a university president. But whereas once that path would have been the only one, she said, she was struck by talented researchers who told her in Hamburg, "I wouldn't want your job."

"There are too many Germans going out" because of these frustrations, she said. "We need the brains and we need to make more changes." And she stressed that she sees change coming.

Jutta Allmendinger, president of the Social Science Research Center, in Berlin, created a lot of (favorable) buzz here with a speech calling not only for new career paths, but for rethinking how the full professor position is viewed. Currently, she said, "we try to have huge jobs" for professors. "The bigger your research group is, the higher your reputation is, so you apply for more and more outside money, and then your group gets even bigger and bigger and you don't do research, but you manage research."

She added that "we have to get rid of the 'more is better' principle."

At her research center, Allmendinger said, she tells faculty members that no more than 23 percent of their budgets should come from outside funding. She wants them to focus on a few grants -- and support from the federal and Berlin governments allows her to adopt such a policy.

"The young people who I talk to who are staying in the U.S. or in Sweden are able to work in smaller groups," she said, "and these are the young people I want."

While restructuring university hierarchies is part of the change going on in Germany, so is adapting to the changing demographics and family needs of

researchers -- who are no longer assumed to be Herr Dr.

One of the tables in the exhibit hall was focused on dual career issues and featured handouts from many leading universities about how they could help academic couples. Officials here said that German universities were behind their American counterparts just a few years ago, but are catching up quickly.

Kerstin Dübner-Gee, director of [the dual career office](#) at Technische Universität München, said that when her unit was created in 2008, it was viewed as an entirely new idea. But she said leading universities all have such offices now, and view it as part of recruitment to help spouses find jobs. Since her office was created, it has consulted with 240 couples, and 125 of them have at least one partner of the couple (and some have both partners) now employed at her university.

Just a Touch of Schadenfreude

Many here argued that their best bet for attracting more young talent rests with the reforms taking off in German universities. And even some of the more skeptical postdocs here said that they knew this was a period of positive change in Germany (they are skeptical more about the pervasiveness of the change than that it is happening). But what many here said may persuade young German talent to return is the evaporation of the United States as a land of opportunity for young researchers.

Among postdocs here who said that they loved their time in the United States (and those tempted by California weather), a significant part of the equation is a sense that the job market in the United States -- even for scientists -- is getting much tougher. People talked about watching universities shrink labs, eliminate support staff and so forth.

One postdoc here talked about meeting people who said "my lab didn't get the grant, so it's time to go back to Germany." Several -- asking that they not be named -- said that they were stunned by the way the job market was treating talented Americans looking for tenure-track jobs at research universities in the United States, and by the increasing difficulty that stellar researchers have in landing funds from the NSF or the National Institutes of Health. People said that the sense of job security for assistant professors in the United States, once seen as more secure than what is available at comparable stages of a career in Germany, may be disappearing.

Dirk Brenner, a postdoc at the Ontario Cancer Institute of the University of Toronto, said that with the German grants for returning scientists, "there is not a single American program that can compete."

Heide Naderer, director of the international office of Rheinisch Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen, is an enthusiastic backer of the reform movement in German universities -- seeing it as overdue and significant. But she said that right now, Germany is benefiting from the American economy. "If there would be more tenure-track positions still around here, I don't know if we would get as many to go back," she said. The decision-making process for young talent is "a lot about what's going on on the U.S. side."

Source: 07-September, 2011/[Inside Higher ed](#)

The making of a rote nation

Our examinations reflect our notion of learning. We tend to equate mechanical procedural skills and memorization to learning.

What we want from our children is better "marks" in exams. That's the wish of an overwhelming majority in this country. In reality we have an examination, not an education, system. In Hindi, the resonance of the two words makes this reality more emphatic, we have a pareeksha tantra, not a shiksha tantra.

The objects of our national obsession — examinations—primarily assess memory and procedural skills. This is true across grades, schools and boards in varying degree. It's equally true for our higher education system.

Our examinations reflect our notion of learning. We tend to equate mechanical procedural skills and memorization to learning. Rote practice, rigorous rote and more-of-the-same becomes the path to learning, "cracking" exams and, therefore, marks.

While most don't give it a second thought, some teachers, principals or parents readily agree in a conversation that this examination obsession is not education. Even if they don't articulate it lucidly, they want children to gain conceptual understanding, to learn to think critically and to analyse, to develop the ability to learn and to learn to apply knowledge; to actually "learn". But even this minority forgets or ignores this real "learning", in real life.

In part, that is because even this minority is acutely conscious of the "social function" of marks and exams. That of "sorting out": selecting or rejecting for further education, for jobs and social status. The majority is anyhow fixated with this social function.

This fixation with the social function completely eliminates the real purpose of examinations, which actually is to assess in order to help further (real) learning.

Many of those involved in education are acutely conscious of this deep flaw in our system. Parts of the government system and many private schools have been continually trying to work on this—with only very slow effect. The effect is slow because real improvement is possible only with sustained synergistic work on the fundamentals, i.e., when all the intertwined complex elements of education build towards facilitating genuine learning and not rote. This includes: capacity of teachers and school leaders, curriculum, books, classroom environment, pedagogical methods, among others.

As work continues on all this, what's surprising is the inadequate attention paid to improving and changing examinations themselves. Examinations are in a sense a significant point-of-leverage in the education system. The changes in examinations have multiplier effect, going well beyond individual-by-individual or school-by-school effect. This is because examinations are in large measure designed and governed "centrally", for example, by a board or by a district authority. Therefore, changes at the "central" level can impact a very large number of schools—giving that change a substantial leverage.

Improving examinations does not require magic. It's about changing what the exams assess: moving them from assessing mere memorization and procedural knowledge to assessing understanding, thinking and application.

In collaboration with the Karnataka government the Azim Premji Foundation did this across 9,000 of (largely) rural government schools for three years — 2003-06. While that three-year experience emphasized to us how only changing examinations will not improve education, it also equally emphasized that changing examinations gets the schools to start focusing on what they should focus on instead of rote memorization. There was indeed a substantial leverage effect.

This leverage effect would be even higher, if we were to change the key high stake exams, for example, the class X and XII exams and various "entrance" tests.

The Right to Education Act has got it directionally right: focusing on "comprehensive continuous assessment" (CCA), appropriate assessment for development and the elimination of "high stakes" from assessment. This is a better approach to assessment compared with "examinations" only.

However, it will take years, if not decades, before we will be able to implement CCA across the nation. It requires a level of skill and ability on the part of the teachers and schools something that even our most privileged schools struggle with, let alone the large majority of our ordinary (both government and private) schools among the 1.6 million.

In the meanwhile, we can certainly change examinations to reflect real learning. Given the social function of exams, it is one area where industry and general population can play a clear role and don't. Instead we look at the marks of our children and feel happy or sad, and also look at the marks of potential employees for hiring. We mouth a homily once in a while, but go back to the comfortable, simplifying tyranny of "marks" in our real lives.

We, the "demand" side, are silently accepting this hollow education, in many ways, and visibly through the acceptance of the current examination system. We also think of a dynamic and innovative India. We think of economic prosperity of our country through high skill and value added jobs. We dream of India returning to its rightful place in the world order. These are all castles in the sand: The sand of rote. We are actually building a rote nation.

Source: 07-September, 2011/Live.mint.com

The consequences of increasing access to education

More people than ever are entering higher education. But where are the jobs for our upskilled, but increasingly disaffected youth?

Globally, there has been some good news on the education front over the past decade. Across the world, literacy rates have gone up, school enrolment rates have risen and dropout rates have fallen. Much of the improvement has taken place in the regions that most needed it, relatively low-income countries that previously had very poor enrolment ratios. And the improvements in educational outcomes have been particularly marked for girls and young women; gender gaps have fallen, and in some regions have even reversed.

We can point out that such improvements are still nowhere near adequate, but that does not take away from the clear positives. Yet there are implications for the future that remain inadequately analysed. Particularly striking in the medium term is not just the increase in education in general, but the significant increase in higher education.

Consider the facts. According to UNESCO, in the decade until 2009 the total number of those enrolled in higher education across the world increased by more than 70 million, of whom nearly 60% came from Asia. Since Asia and sub-Saharan Africa continue to have much lower average higher education enrolment rates (averaging 10-20% compared to more than 60% in more advanced countries), this proportion is likely to increase even further in the near future. So the bulk of new entrants into higher education will come from these regions in the decade ahead.

Significantly, the number of women in higher education has increased at a much faster rate. Globally, women now outnumber men in higher education. In some regions (such as North America, west and eastern Europe and Latin America) the ratio is significantly above half. This is a process of great significance, because it is likely to bring in its wake all sorts of social and economic changes, and hopefully a much greater degree of gender equality in other spheres of life as well.

This is good news, but it also brings challenges that are still not fully recognised. The most obvious is ensuring enough productive employment to meet the expectations of new graduates.

There are several interrelated issues, the first of which is sheer quantity. Even during the phase of global boom, the most dynamic economies in the world were not creating enough paid employment to meet the needs of those willing to supply labour. In some countries this led to rising rates of open unemployment, especially among young people. In other countries, particularly those with poorly developed social protection and unemployment benefits, disguised unemployment was more the norm. But this was during the boom; the global recession, and the lingering uncertainty in world markets, have since made things a lot worse. In most economies, [there are simply not enough jobs being created](#), even for those who have received higher levels of education.

The second issue is quality; that is, matching education and skills with the available jobs. The problem of skills mismatch arises even in growing economies. There are severe labour shortages for some kinds of workers and a massive oversupply of others. Often this is in spite of market forces rather than because of them, since markets and higher educational institutions tend to lag behind employers' skill demands before oversupplying them.

There is another aspect to this, which also has troubling social implications. The shortage of

higher-level jobs has forced many young people to take roles for which they are overqualified. This in turn can create resentment and other forms of alienation. Some attempts to explain the recent UK riots have mentioned this aspect of youth frustration.

The third issue – and one that we all ignore at our peril – is related to the second, but reflects a slightly different process. The recent global increase in higher education enrolment is certainly welcome, but it should be noted that a significant proportion has been in private institutions with much higher user fees. This is especially true in developing countries, where costly private institutions often dominate higher education. In India, for example, around two-thirds of enrolment is now estimated to be in private colleges and universities and similar institutes. Even in countries where public education still dominates, there are moves to increase fees.

This creates another complication around the issue of employability. Many students, including those coming from relatively poor families, have invested a great deal of their own and their families' resources to acquire an education that comes with the promise of a better life. In the developing world, this hunger for education is strongly associated with the hope of upward mobility, leading families to sell assets like land and go into debt in the hope of recouping these investments when the student graduates and gets a well-paying job.

As we have seen, however, such jobs are increasingly scarce. It cannot be a recipe for social stability. Am I alone in thinking we are sitting on a time bomb?

Source: 07-September, 2011/Guardian.co.uk

Why Journalism Education In India Isn't Creating Journalists

Every year April and May, we make rounds of the country's top post-graduate journalism schools to hire two to three greenhorn scribes for our Editorial team.

Having a slightly different approach towards journalism ([more here](#)), we don't skip straight to a written test or interviews like the newspapers/TV news channels do. We first put forward our pitch in the form of an informal 15-minute talk and then throw the house open for questions (popularly known as the pre-placement talk – PPT – in campuses). The objective of this dialogue is not to maximize the number of applications to our job opening, but to help as many people self-select themselves out the process as possible. The reason

— we don't want to waste time interviewing people who don't 'get it'. We'd rather invest more time interviewing those who do.

Usually, about 80% of those present in the PPT apply (the rest are either not interested or have already gotten a job elsewhere but been forced by the college to sit for the PPT so that the 'college-recruiter relationship' remains positive). Those who apply are then sent a test over email and given a day to complete it and send it back. I won't go into a detailed description of the test, but it suffices to say that it seeks to test the candidates' news sense and writing skills and discover how well-thought their decision to be a journalist has been. The test is bloody tough.

About one-third of those who apply answer the test. I have always wondered why the rest 2/3rd abstain from the test-over-email despite their giving me their resumes after the PPT, and shrugged it off as probably being beaten by a big newspaper or TV channel at the campus hiring game.

Those shortlisted based on the test are interviewed once, twice, often thrice by more than one person.

The process is tough and we rarely find people we can see ourselves working with. Between 2008 and 2010, only one received a final job offer and she worked with us for over a year.

(In 2011, we decided to lower our bar and compensate for it by investing in more training than we'd usually provide and hired four kids. Of these, three have already been asked to leave. A high level of involvement, intelligence and initiative — no unfair expectations for a startup news/techno media company writing for an intelligent audience — are essential to survive and be respected at PaGaLGuY. Lowering our bar clearly didn't help.)

Then, starting September every year, something very curious starts to happen. We start getting direct job applications from many of the same people who had applied to us at J-school earlier that year or in the previous year but had abstained from answering the test-over-email.

This time, they do a good enough job of the same test-over-email to land up an interview. At the interview, I start casually quizzing them about what just happened here and why are they now interested in a job they weren't in earlier. I learn the following,

Less than half a dozen students from their batch eventually landed up a proper News (-paper or -channel) job during campus placements.

The majority eventually joined one of the various 'content writing' jobs on offer these days with a content outsourcing company, or were writing advertorials for various B2B magazines, or had joined a PR firm, or some such. Realising that the work there was far from journalism, they were now looking for a change.

But working on content-coolie jobs had further eroded their news sense and legwork ability so no news organization would touch them now, us included. On top of that, they were now expecting higher salaries but without any experience of use to us.

Despite being from one of the supposedly best J-schools of the country, they were not journalists.

Getting out of this vicious circle is apparently hard for them because we regularly get resumes of top J-school graduates from 2007 and 2008 who still haven't managed a proper news job and are looking for one.

Based on my information (assimilated from hundreds of job interviews and resumes), the batches suffering the most from this seem to be from XIC Mumbai and IJNM Bangalore. ACJ Chennai and IIMC Delhi too, but to a lesser extent.

Why isn't journalism education in India creating journalists?

I don't have the answers, but I do have a few insights that point out symptoms and the direction we are heading towards, and how J-schools are totally oblivious to it.

J-schools don't seem to care about the changing business of media. In the process, they are creating a crop of journalist-wannabes whose skills will become obsolete with the fading out of prevalent business models. Forget about J-schools, even practising journalists in newspapers don't care about the impending change, and this will hit them hard progressively as the next media shakeouts occur.

Newspapers are declining wherever the Internet penetration is increasing and the Indian newspaper industry's turn [will arrive](#) before the current crop of young journalists are even halfway into their careers.

Newspapers have been hiring fewer journalists over time, just enough to keep the boat running. Reporter and desk teams have been growing leaner and are under constant optimization. Most of the news desk/copy-editing jobs will be the first to go, the moment newspapers adopt well-designed and reliable cross-platform publishing software.

No, news will not die. But the next-generation products that will replace the newspaper as pervasive methods of delivering news will require entirely different journalism skills that the current crop of journalists don't seem to care about much. While the art of reporting and extracting information will not develop much (with more information making its way into the open, new efforts and technological capabilities would in fact need to be built on discovering stories from massive amounts of data), the medium and publishing platforms will evolve rapidly, both in form and function. The competitive advantage therefore will be in how you tell stories, how they are delivered to readers and not as much in what the stories are. I'd like to delve deeper into the 'evolving medium' half of the argument.

If you asked any journalist (even the best) in the country what differentiates online journalism from print journalism, the two answers you are most likely to get are — (1) Online journalism is a speed game and (2) the special thing about Online storytelling is the potential of using text, audio and video together.

Anybody who has observed the worldwide evolution of news on the Internet will of course know that these were beliefs created back in 1995 but have been proved ineffective since because,

(1) *The Speed Game is a zero sum game.* If the news website you slog your ass for can be really, really fast at breaking news on its website, so can its competitors. In the days of newspapers, breaking news had a shelf life of one day. In the age of TV and web, it has reduced to single-digit seconds. Many websites attach a booster accessory to speed using Search Engine Optimization (the technology used to improve visibility on Google) but that too is a commodity skill that everyone can and has developed. Nobody gets a real competitive advantage, the news shelf-life is too short for the website to build a long-term brand, and therefore nobody makes more money BECAUSE OF SPEED. That turns your job as a journalist into that of a commodity and when the Excel sheet of employee salaries is sorted to check for usefulness during a cost-cutting phase, you appear somewhere at the bottom. Think about it — how can a 'creative' profession compete on quantitative measures such as time?

(2) *The ability to consume text, audio and video at a single place is a property of the publishing medium, not of the journalism.* The guy who writes the text works like a print reporter, the guy who shoots the video works like a TV reporter and the

guy who creates the audio capsule works like a radio journalist. One person on the desk then takes their inputs and publishes them on the website. It may be a different way of consuming news, but the journalism remains the same.

In holding on to these pre-millennium beliefs, journalists, journalism leaders and journalism schools are missing other actual insights about the Online medium and how it could change journalism. Graduates of journalism schools started by media houses suffer from the same problem of future-unpreparedness. But because many of them get absorbed by the media house itself, it gives the illusion of a successful education which it still isn't.

Source: 13-September, 2011/medianama

What Journalists Are Losing Out On By Not Taking Ownership of The Internet

The Print medium told stories using text as the core artifact. Photographs introduced still visuals, audio brought sound and video brought moving pictures to news storytelling. What did the Internet give us?

Initially, it was thought that the Online medium brought multimedia and speed of updates to news storytelling. Big and small media harnessed these two artifacts to create online news and have taken us to where we are today. The learning curve, however, has extended a little too long.

The two most powerful artifacts of the Online medium have however remained grossly underused for news storytelling. They are Interactivity and Networkedness — the fact that a computer/cellphone/tablet is a two-way device and is connected live to billions of such live devices across the world.

While news media companies have been phenomenal at harnessing text, photos, audio and video to tell compelling stories and build billion dollar empires, they have until now failed miserably at harnessing Interactivity and Networkedness for storytelling. Sure, they have been used to create better news delivery mechanisms (RSS feeds, Mobile Apps, Washington Post's Trove.com, etc), but they haven't yet been seen in use as an integral part of storytelling.

Look at it this way — when writers were slowed down by pens or keyboards that caused physical inconvenience, the pen and peripheral industries invented pens that wrote smoother and lasted longer or keyboards that were ergonomical. The still camera industry responded (and continues to do so) to the photographers' need for lower production costs, better zoom and light control at a better

resolution and more. Similar things can be said for recording devices and video cameras. Even before 3-D video becomes a mass democratized technology, TV news will perhaps be one of the first to adopt it (imagine watching a real war in 3-D). In each of these media, the journalist or creative professional always had a frontier, a possibility, a 'what if' on his wishlist that the underlying technology could answer with a new product and help him use his craft to express himself or tell more compelling stories in a never-before manner.

But with the Online medium, for the first time, journalists and creative professionals are at a complete loss of ideas, possibilities, a vision, a 'wishlist' that a technocrat can answer to with new technologies or products that utilize Networkedness and Interactivity. A revolutionary new medium is taking shape around them and they have no clue what they would do with it, even if anything were possible.

If journalists don't stand up to take ownership of this exciting new medium and build great things on it, the engineers and the MBAs will. In the news businesses that will emerge, journalists will continue to remain at the bottom of the Excel sheet of layoff-ability.

That is indeed what has been happening, when a lawyer builds the web's most important technology news site (Michael Arrington – Techcrunch) or two engineers build the most exciting magazine App for tablets and phones (Flipboard). A former equity research analyst edits one of the most popular business news websites (Henry Blodget – Businessinsider). Journalists of the traditional mould don't quite dictate things in these companies.

The next generation of media barons and journalists would perhaps be those who discover ways to harness Interactivity and Networkedness to tell news stories, in ways as distinctly unique as print, video, audio and photography have been. And make profitable businesses out of that capability.

Some work on this front is already taking place. Data Journalism —[see it for yourself](#)— is a phenomenally better way of telling trend stories, a staple of business journalists. This is not merely a different way of doing infographics. This changes journalism because instead of looking for processed inferences, data journalists go out hunting for raw data from their sources, often big data. Instead of the selecting three or four top trends from a study and writing it as a text story, they instead plot all the available data in an

interactive visualisation which engages readers to become their own narrators. At PaGaLGuY, we've been doing it too —[example 1](#) and [example 2](#).

[Game journalism](#) — telling news stories using games is another example of using Interactivity and Networkedness as storytelling artifacts. One could look at video games as the next-generation fiction novel, wherein you navigate the story in the skin of the protagonist's character. The news equivalent would be one wherein news stories are well-textured interactive digital environments that one could navigate in the skins of various newsmakers related to that story. Analytical journalism would be all about building these fact-rich interactive environments that "readers" could navigate to understand the events first-hand and form informed opinions.

Perhaps the news stories of tomorrow will be entire cellphone or tablet Apps offering an immersive, visually dazzling and informationally comprehensive experience about a happening. The definition of 'good storytelling' will transform to a reporter's ability to gather facts and get scoops AND creatively design an App that offers the best immersive experience for that story. The Apps would also have built-in ability to make people's lives easier. For example, a news App on the Japan earthquake would, besides delivering news updates, visuals, live statistics 3-D panoramic environments and videos of the affected sites, also allow those who are stranded to ping their location to the world and initiate rescue operations, continuing to allow journalists to do good with their work. All that combined with good journalistic legwork, investigative skills and high editorial standards to put the best stories out there in the most awesome possible manner, journalism would reclaim its status as a truly multi-disciplinary profession and in the process, spawn ideas and technologies that other disciplines would adopt.

Easy-to-use software tools to create such Apps would be available as easily as Microsoft Word is today. The best journalists would of course, even know software coding and design. They would be the ones climbing up editorial leadership positions and setting the vision.

As futuristic as this may sound, it's perhaps all of 5 to 15 years away in India but well within our careers, going by the speed with which media consumption and capture devices and supporting software are evolving. All those who are now becoming journalists because of the "love of writing" would get sidelined (except the very best who would continue to produce very high quality

longform journalism) unless they develop skills to stay meaningful in these platforms. Journalists who tend to take pride over their disdain of technology and mathematics (and there are a lot of them) will find it daunting that these two streams are increasingly contributing to the skillsets required in the new order.

Today, at the very basic, including one's audience into the storytelling process is a hugely effective use of the Interactivity and Networkedness dimensions. Even though journalists didn't invent it (blogging platforms and bloggers did), they have begrudgingly started using it. On Techcrunch, Engadget, PaGaLGuY and many other hugely popular niche news sites, readers are themselves sources and most often, a story is the sum total of what the reporter wrote and what the reader discussions spawned below it. Only after reading both does one fully comprehend the story. As journalists at PaGaLGuY, we measure our success by the amount of discussions our stories were able to spark off. Of course — the emphasis on factual accuracy, responsibility, speed and elegance of language in the reporter's work is an uncompromised work ethic.

This is not merely a matter of adding a 'Comments' feature to your website or the laughably contrived concept of 'citizen journalist' handed out as platitudes. This is about creating a vast, responsible, dedicated and deeply integrated Community around your news website whose members put as much thought into participating in discussions around your story as you did in writing it in the first place. Often, big stories are broken by stakeholder readers in these discussions, the kind that would award promotions to journalists in newspapers. The art of nurturing high quality online communities is all about placing self-moderation at the core of the community's culture. Forming this intimate a connect with readers sometimes allows websites to enter the realm of what has come to be known as '[process journalism](#)', wherein relatively reliable rumours are reported straight off and the story is tracked as it gets further confirmed and loaded with additional facts to reach the stage that the traditional media would consider a full-fledged story. Our own couple of experiments with process journalism at PaGaLGuY have shown that an intelligent and responsible community of stakeholder readers ends up assisting the reporter by giving tipoffs to speed up the news gathering process from the rumour to confirmation stage.

That's broadly where the world of news seems to be going. Even though some of the ideas above

may seem straight out of a sci-fi novel, they are under implementation in sporadic avenues of innovation in international news organizations and renegade startups. They will evolve in the next decade into something that we can see as seamlessly integrating into devices that have and will continue to be pervasive in our lives.

In India, the urban Internet audience is large enough for the big news media to start taking such leaps, or at least begin experiments that could culminate in strong news products in two or three years. Starting early will also give the companies the agility and momentum to compete with disruptive startups in the space.

In contrast, the course content of the 'New Media' elective at India's top journalism schools still comprises tutorials on — drum roll and high hat — Dreamweaver. In 2011! These are skills which were obsolete 7 years ago. The students ought to sue the J-schools for this ghastly under-delivery of service.

At the least, there should be a full course on 'The Business of News Media' at these J-schools which broadly brings the attention of future journalists to the following,

- (1) Journalism is going to change, and in India too. If you are under 40, it will probably affect you before you retire. Prepare yourself for it and build skills so that you don't end up at the bottom of the list of dispensables during shakeout periods.
- (2) Take an active interest in your employer's business model and if possible, learn how the revenues of your division have changed over the years. If the revenue of the division you work for or the part of revenue that draws from your skills is in danger, it means your skills are on the way to become less needed. Upgrade yourself, actively watch companies which are at the forefront of evolution in news and connect the dots. It will tell you what you need to do to stay relevant.
- (3) "I want to be a journalist because I love writing" will not last you an entire career or help your retirement planning if you are under 35-40. In another 10-15 years, the newspaper industry may transform into or be replaced by a technologically-savvy version of itself that competes based on how well it tells stories using immersive and interactive experiences. Invest in yourself by joining a news company that cares about the Internet so that when the change comes, you are among the early starters, experienced and badly wanted in leadership positions. Else if all you want to do is write all your life, become an author or an analyst in a KPO.

Fourthly, I think that India with its free media culture and a tremendous young human resource in software engineering is pre-equipped to build the next generation of news storytelling on rich interactive devices. If only our big media companies would begin investing in being as much technology companies as they are media houses, then with the right set of people and vision, in ten to fifteen years India could not only be redefining journalism, but also ruling the world in the post-Murdoch era. This will not happen if media houses merely hire a few engineers and then treat them as input-output artistes as they do graphic designers or animators. Nor will outsourcing the software give them the necessary ownership and agility to compete with disruptive startups. Entire technology teams and culture would have to be developed within big media houses, where the software coders take pride in solving problems surrounding an important human need using the best of what the day's technology has to offer.

Source: 15-September, 2011/[medianama](#)

Legal education in doldrums, say experts

Legal education in the country is at the crossroads due to shortage of teachers and decreasing interest of students in studying and practising law, said legal experts at the dedication ceremony of Sikhya O Anusandhan National Institute of Law (SNIL), under the Sikhya O Anusandhan Deemed University on Saturday. The SNIL, which admitted its first batch of students this academic session, will offer a five-year integrated course in law for arts, science and management students.

Speaking on the occasion, former Chief Justice of India G B Pattnaik said, "Urgent steps are needed to repair the cracks in the legal education system of the country keeping in view the changing needs of the society. Legal education should prepare professionals to meet the new challenges and dimension of internationalization, where the nature and organization of law and legal practice. He added institutions imparting legal education have mushroomed all over India with no method of assessing the quality of teaching and relaxation in providing the degree.

Source: 19-September, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Corporates with a cause

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) in India is no longer a cosmetic part of corporates, present just for the sake of it. CSR activities are increasingly being taken seriously and a large focus of such initiatives is the education space in the country.

SY Qureshi, chief election commissioner of India, in a recent public statement said, "CSR is not charity but a question of your very survival," and rightly so.

Corporate initiatives in the field of education are increasing. The effort is not only to understand the issues of the local population, but in the use of education as a tool to address such issues. Such endeavours have provided the neglected sections of society with opportunities to grow.

"There are about 200 million children today between the ages of six and 14 years, who don't even complete the basic eight years of elementary education. It is critical that all our people are educated; since only education will enable us, as a nation, to rise from poverty," says Rajashree Birla, chairperson, Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development. Education of the underprivileged is one of the projects for corporates like the Aditya Birla Group, which has CSR initiatives with 42 schools in rural areas that provide education and other amenities at minimal cost to around 45,000 children, of which about 18,000 receive this at no cost at all.

Major corporate players have also realised that enabling local communities is imperative to collective growth. Companies are increasingly directing their CSR activities towards the betterment of the locals they work with, developing them into competitive human capital. Seemantinee Khot, head, CSR, Suzlon Foundation India, which has a significant rural presence, says, "We support educational initiatives wherever local communities show their readiness to partner, since wind farms do not have the potential to fulfil job expectations of these local communities."

National and multinational organisations have also developed programmes, which focus on empowering women through scientific education and vocational training.

"Research is a driving force for innovation and progress and this is promoted by encouraging young women, to pursue careers in science," says Varshaa Bhiwandkar, CSR manager at L'Oreal .

"There is a lot of potential in India and most of it is hidden in towns and villages that we seldom hear of. One has to explore ways to deepen the engagement with them and enable them to act as catalysts of empowerment and change in their families and villages," opines Govind Rajan, vice-president skincare, Hindustan Unilever.

The company awards scholarships under its various brands towards higher education of girl students from low-income families and rural areas, and

provide help with boarding, transportation and settling into their educational institutes, with the intent of enabling them to work towards a hopeful future.

Corporates are using education as a tool to address social issues

Source: 19-September, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Germany, India deepen cooperation in Skills Development

Vocational training is a key area in the Indo-German bilateral collaboration. With a view to further expand the cooperation in this field; Germany is participating at the 4th Global Skills Summit on 15th and 16th September in New Delhi.

The event is being organized by Federation of Indian chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in collaboration with the Indian Ministry of Labour & Employment. The event serves as a central platform for international dialogue on the modernization of vocational education and training (VET) in India. The theme of this year's summit is 'Vocational Education & Training: Developing Strategic and Implementation Framework'.

In his address at the summit, German Ambassador Thomas Matussek said, "The difficult task of reforming the skill development sector can only be tackled by the joint effort of many players, and the summit provides a great platform to exchange ideas and start initiatives."

Ambassador Matussek added, "The National Skill Development initiative is a massive operation and Germany in a committed, strategic partner. For instance, the Indo-German Working Group on Vocational Education and Training cooperates closely. We are glad to bring in our long tradition and expertise in skill development to the table."

The 4th Global Skill Summit brings the educational institutions, training providers and enterprises under one umbrella and provides an opportunity to establish fruitful Indo-German partnerships and business relations. At the Skill Summit, Germany's International Marketing of Vocational Education (iMOVE) is also organizing the German participation in two panel sessions-on structuring sector Skill Councils and on key initiatives in Germany. Additional training will also be presented. India and Germany have already seen some successes in this field. Some of these examples will also be highlighted by iMOVE.

Ahead of the Summit, on 14th September, iMOVE and FICCI jointly organized a special India-Germany workshop titled German Vocational

Education & Training in specific sectors-lessons for the formation of Sector Skills Councils in India'. With its strong emphasis on employability, 'Training-Made in Germany' can support the ongoing reform process of the Indian training system.

As India moves rapidly towards achieving ambitious economic and social targets, engaging human resources for skills development will be critical for ensuring success as a knowledge economy. The challenge also magnifies for India due to unprecedented issues of scalability and multiple challenges in implementation. It is projected that 500 million people will require training to join India's workforce by 2022. In the past few years, India has seen a surge in the number of initiatives from both government and industry to tackle the massive skills challenge.

In May 2011, Chancellor Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh held the first Indo-German intergovernmental consultations in New Delhi. During her visit, VET featured as a core area of discussion. Germany and India also signed three MoUs in this sector. The first one was signed by German Minister of Education and Research.

Annette Schaven and Indian Minister of Labour and Employment Mallikarjun Kharge, covering a broad range of policy issues. The second one was signed between iMOVE and National Skill Development Corporation to cooperate in setting up Sector Skill Councils and training of trainers. And thirdly, a framework agreement was signed between the Rhine-Main chamber of Crafts and Trades and the Indian partner IL&FS (Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services) to build 100 training establishments on the Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor.

iMOVE is an initiative of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. It promotes international cooperation and supports the initiation of collaborations and business relations in vocational training and continuing education.

Source: 19-September, 2011/[Business Wire India](#)

Borderless education

Going global with borderless education is fast becoming a trend as Indian universities look to expand their international presence with offshore branch campuses.

Business schools lead the trend with inter-country education programmes as students travel to different countries as part of their course.

More universities than ever are willing to expand their international presence as students look for

exposure to a multinational study experience. This trend was clearly evident when a group of 50 vice-chancellors from India's leading universities visited Dubai as part of an international educational conference.

For Dr Arun Jamkar from the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS), the expertise of Indian faculty and students is a value addition for any international university willing to collaborate.

"In India, there is a mass of students, professors and educators willing to make their contribution to education. What we want is collaboration with universities based outside India which, in turn, will provide opportunities to exchange knowledge at an international level," says Dr Jamkar who is the vice-chancellor of the MUHS.

With over 100,000 students receiving medical education at the university, his vision of an international collaboration with universities is not farfetched. He calls for building a knowledge bridge to support student exchange where students from both private and public universities in the UAE can go to India and continue their education.

"There are more than 315 medical colleges affiliated to our university. The combined clinical material in these colleges can provide value to any international student who is willing to travel to India and continue studying there," adds Dr Jamkar.

Similar views were echoed by other educators who were attending the conference. Prof Dr Uday Salunkhe, group director of Welingkar Education, which manages one of India's top 10 business schools, says the nature of education has changed over the last decade.

"Today, we believe in a concept of borderless education where knowledge means knowing about a global culture. Education is no longer about producing graduates or managers. It's about creating global leaders who can use their knowledge to innovate in a global market," says Dr Salunkhe.

Describing Dubai as a regional hub for private education, he adds, "Dubai offers a lot of opportunities but the challenge for Indian universities is to come out of their comfort zone and look at these opportunities. Also, the number of students here are limited offering a limited scope for educators."

For Dr Ayoub Kazim, managing director of TECOM Investments' Education Cluster, the education

conference was an opportunity to interact with the vice-chancellors.

"There is immense potential for sharing best practices between India and the UAE that can be leveraged through initiatives such as the EDUCON conference. At Dubai Knowledge Village and Dubai International Academic City, we aim to provide education with the perspective of enhancing the employability of students within the UAE as well as the global corporate landscape," he says.

Success stories from Indian universities, including Manipal University, BITS Pilani and S.P. Jain Centre of Management, have proven the worth of Indian education. While the growth of these universities is set to pick up with the new academic year, their humble beginnings are a reminder of the opportunities waiting for educators.

Dr B. Ramjee, director of Manipal University Dubai Campus, says, "We started with 95 students in Dubai and since then, the number of students have increased exponentially. Education providers need to consolidate their position in the first three years of operation. Students today can make well-informed decisions as they compare courses and universities."

With the current trend expected to continue, more reputed names from across the globe can be expected to open their international centres in Dubai. The real test remains in sustaining the student numbers over a period of time.

Source: 20-September, 2011/khaleejtimes.com

'India, China providing high-quality education'

Singapore: India and China, whose combined population is over 2.5 billion, provide millions of youths with quality education in fields like engineering and business management that would help the two Asian giants lift their economies, according to a new report.

One of the keys to Asia's economic success to date and its prospects for further progress is the high quality of education that exists -- in terms of both the systems in place and strong emphasis that different Asian cultures place on giving their children the best education possible, said the report released by the Hong Kong-based Political & Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd (PERC).

The report entitled "Asians Enrolled in US Universities" also raised a question as to which country would benefit the most from this talent.

It observed that China and India are training millions of their best and brightest in such

professions as engineering and business management and these countries should have the depth of the talent to lift their economies forward.

Citing Asian student intake by US universities, it said India ranked third biggest source of international students with 15,192 undergraduates, 68,290 graduates and 1,758 non-degree course attendees enrolled in 2009-10.

China topped the list during the same year with 39,921 undergraduates, 66,453 graduates and 10,251 non-degree course attendees, followed by South Korea with 36,234 undergraduates, 23,386 graduates and 6,671 non-degree course students, said the PERC report, quoting data from the Institute of International Education.

Considering various options, including family and peer support, the report pointed out that "Asia is grooming more high-quality human capital than any other region in the world, and countries that can make the best use of this capital could have a strong competitive advantage over other countries in the years ahead."

While the Asians were looking to the West, and particularly to the US, for advanced education, the host countries need to make these students feel welcomed, it said.

The report also pointed out that difficulties for visas and employment opportunities in these countries were increasing, especially in the US, and the anti-immigrant movements were making the Asians uncomfortable.

It noted the US and European universities' "export" of technology by setting up campuses in Asia, namely Singapore and China, where primary and secondary education was already above the US and European standards.

Their western universities' campus relocation to these countries would allow the built up of education systems to match or exceed the highest western standards in education, it said.

Source: 20-September, 2011/PTI/[Zee News](#)

Engineering Education needs to be reformed to create better employment

To create better employability for engineers, experts have emphasized on reforms in engineering education at the 6th National Convention of the Engineering Council of India (ECI) here.

Speaking at the convention organized at Jadavpur University on Monday, S. Ratnavel, Member of Governors of ECI, said that holistic approach of

education is the present need to ensure employability for engineers.

He said holistic education means along with industrial education basic senses and social senses should be imparted to the students to create complete persons.

According to a study conducted by the McKinsey Global Institute on the emerging labour market, India produces large number of engineering graduate every year but multinationals find just 25 percent of them as employable.

It means that a new pattern of education system is necessary to attract foreign students for education in India.

Ratnavel also stressed on the quality of faculty for offering integrated education.

He also said that the government should develop hi-tech information system for communication between the Universities and colleges to impart equal education to everyone without any discrimination.

Along with this, the examination system should also change.

Prof. D.K. Banwet, IIT Delhi, said, "Multiskilling, multitasking education should be introduced rather than disciplined education. We need to move out from present engineering domain-specific engineering education to multidisciplinary engineering education."

He said that "teachers should reinforce education that will combine practical education with theory".

Industries have to work parallelly with educational institutions, so that students can be trained according to market needs, he said.

Prof. Swapan Bhattacharya, Jadavpur University proposed that industries should organize workshop in universities so that students can get better idea about the industrial need.

Ratnavel also slammed the role of coaching institutes on denigration of education system.

He said coaching classes totally spoiled the education system and quality of education is ruined.

Source: 20-September, 2011 ([Calcutta Tube / IBNS](#))

Social diversity key to inclusive education

A good school, according to me, is one that focuses on specific actions and holistic development. The role of a school has to go beyond textbooks and curriculum. A good school will teach its students to

develop critical thinking. It will teach its students to be creative, inculcate the skill of

problem solving, foster entrepreneurship and help them become individuals who lead a life with ethics and values.

Schools should provide inclusive education. A school must have students from various walks of life studying under one roof. The student body of a school should have a mix of children from affluent and modest backgrounds, from different economic and social backgrounds, from different communities and religions. This will help the children learn better.

I think that education in India is evolving. As with anything else, some of the changes are good while much more needs to be done in certain areas.

There are a few changes that I would like to see in schools to make education better. The biggest step that the schools can take is move away from the practice of rote learning. Rote learning does not allow a student to think. Schools must promote learning with understanding. Parents can also play a big role in this by removing the emphasis on marks and recognising their child's other strengths.

The second major change that schools can bring about is allowing better and appropriate amount of technology. Technology can become a big enabler and can complement the teaching done in schools. It can help speed up assessments and help teachers record and analyse the learning levels of students.

Computer-aided adaptive learning softwares are being used in various schools in Noida and elsewhere. Such innovative use of technology helps students learn at their own pace.

An attitude change in schools as well as parents has to happen so that the students study subjects of their own interests and not the usual traditional streams. A child should be allowed to make choices and grown-ups should encourage them to find their true interests. Also the difference between the schools for the rich and schools for the poor is increasing. This growing distinction between schools should be checked.

Source: 20-September, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

Networking universities leads to inclusive growth

The University Grants Commission's (UGC) concept of networking universities for the purpose of pooling of resources and expertise would lead to

inclusive and sustainable growth, said R. Kannan, Principal Secretary, Higher Education.

For instance, the UGC had recognised Madurai Kamaraj University as a UGC-Networking Resource Centre in Biological Sciences because of its potential and competency in that field, he said after inaugurating the first on-site workshop in computational genomics at Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupati on September 19.

The scientists and expert team of MKU's School of Biological Sciences would train young research scholars of Andhra Pradesh through this networking initiative. The Higher Education Department of Tamil Nadu government had been encouraging State universities to establish strong research collaborations with the industry.

MKU was among the nine universities in India to be recognised with the status of University with Potential for Excellence by the UGC. Students who graduated from the university's School of Biological Sciences were competent and occupying prestigious positions.

He also recalled the contribution and services of S. Krishnaswamy in establishing the School of Biological Sciences when MKU was carved out of the University of Madras in 1967.

For biological sciences, the UGC had started two networking resource centres — one at the MKU and the other at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi. For the onsite workshop in Tirupati, 25 research scholars were selected and the MKU team would impart technical skills in 'Computational genomics' for them.

Gives new direction

Dr. Kannan said that genome technology, along with nanotechnology, would provide a new direction for targeted drug delivery toward cancerous cells.

A. R. Reddy, Vice-Chancellor, Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa, delivered the keynote address at the workshop's inaugural function. K. Jayantha Rao, Principal, Sri Venkateswara University College of Sciences, S. Budhudu, Dean (Development), Sri Venkateswara University, and P. Gunasekaran, Coordinator, UGC-Networking Resource Centre for Biological Sciences, MKU, were among those who spoke.

Source: 20-September, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

Raise funds for literacy in India

The Pratham BC Foundation will host its Walk for Words Walkathon and Laughter Club on Saturday, Sept. 24 at Mundy Park in Coquitlam.

All proceeds from Saturday's event will go to the foundation, a registered charity that aims to help eradicate child illiteracy in India, according to a press release.

The walk begins at 11 a.m. in the southwest corner of Mundy Park, off Hillcrest Street.

Registration starts at 10 a.m., and warmup exercises start at 10: 45 a.m.

A laughter club will be held at 12: 30 p.m., and snacks will be provided after the walk.

According to the foundation, 17 million children in India work simply because there is no alternative as they do not have access to good-quality education. Sixty million Indian children under the age of six live below the poverty line.

The foundation says pledges of \$15 could help a needy street child in India read, write and count in three months.

All pledges will be collected at the park on the day of the walkathon. Tax deductible receipts will be issued for total pledges of \$15 or more.

Source: 21-September, 2011/[The Now news](#)

RESOURCE

Rishi Valley ends Doon's legacy as best boarding school

The Shri Ram School in Delhi, Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh Chittoor and the Woodstock School in Mussoorie have been voted India's most respected day, boarding and international schools in the EducationWorld-C Fore Schools Survey 2011.

The survey has also effectively ended the four-year reign of Doon School, Dehradun (TDS) as the country's most respected traditional/legacy boarding school. The school boasts of many eminent students such as Olympic gold medalist Abhinav Bindra, former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and historian Ram Chandra Guha.

The survey conducted by the Delhi-based opinion polling and market research agency C Fore (Centre for forecasting and research) polled a mix of 2,044 fees-paying parents, principals, teachers and educationists in 16 cities across the country asking them to rate 404 of India's most well-known schools on 14 parameters including academic reputation, quality of co-curricular and sports education, infrastructure, leadership/management, quality of alumni and faculty competence, disabled friendliness, teacher welfare and development among other attributes.

The survey ended the 4-year reign of Doon School as the country's most respected traditional boarding school.

Doon topped the list in 2008 and 2009 and in 2010 shared top billing with the alternate-style Rishi Valley School. TDS now shares second rank with the Mayo College Girls, Ajmer.

The third slot is also shared by Welham Girls, Dehradun and Bishop Cotton School, Shimla with Lawrence, Sanawar and Daly College, Indore retaining their No. 4 and 5 ranking of last year.

The surprise entry this year in the top 10 is the Orchid International, Nasik. The Assam Valley School, Balipara has also moved up the league table from No. 7 to 6.

On the other hand Sherwood College, Nainital, Lawrence, Lovedale, St. Paul's, Darjeeling and Welham Boys, Dehradun - highly respected schools of more than a century vintage - have yielded ground to newer entrants with alternative style.

"Although we don't accord much weightage to the ratings and rankings of education institutions, it's encouraging to learn that there is a discernible shift in the mindset of the knowledgeable public in favour of so-called alternate, new age school education," Siddharth Menon, the principal of RVS was quoted as saying by the Education World.

In day schools, Shri Ram School, Delhi with an aggregate score of 1,293 dislodged Cathedral and John Connon School, Mumbai to be ranked first in India and the north zone. It is followed by Cathedral and John Connon School (1,292) and Mallya Aditi International School, Bangalore (1,291) and Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan School, Chennai jointly ranked third all-India and first in the south zone.

Thirty-three new genre international schools were rated and ranked across 15 parameters of education provision. This year, the Woodstock School, Mussoorie has vaulted to the top slot in this category, besting its former affiliate Kodaikanal International School (KIS) to be voted the most admired school in this category. EducationWorld is an education news and analysis magazine.

Source: 21-September, 2011/[Ibn Live](#)

India, China largest market for B-Schools

India continues to contribute the most foreign applicants to two-year full-time MBA programmes, even though the dip in overall application volume (including from India) for full-time programme continues for the third consecutive year. While with 61% of programmes reporting India as their top

source of foreign talent, applicants from Asia-Pacific (APAC) countries (mainly India and China) were the largest source of foreign applications for full-time programmes around the world.

As per the 2011 [Application Trends Survey](#) conducted by the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), a non-profit education organization of leading graduate business schools worldwide, 39% of programmes also reported that India is their fastest growing source of foreign applicants. Meanwhile, the number of applicants from China looking to study abroad has also increased, and the percentage of programmes reporting that China is their largest growing source of foreign applicants increased to 39% of two-year full-time programmes in 2011. This makes India and China single largest market for these B-Schools.

"India and China are the leading Asia Pacific countries contributing to the influx of applications for the full time MBA programmes. The overwhelming response clearly indicates the value placed on quality graduate management education by candidates from this region," said regional director, [South Asia](#), GMAC, Ashish Bhardwaj.

A total of 649 programmes from 331 B-schools and faculties worldwide, representing 45 countries, 42 states in the US and the District of Columbia, participated in the annual study, which is conducted from early June to mid-July this year. The survey has been an annual feature since 2000.

Some of the key findings of the survey has been that More than two-thirds (67%) of participating two-year full-time MBA programs reported a decline in application volume in 2011 compared with 2010, continuing a trend that began in 2009, while more than half (57%) of one-year full-time MBA programs received fewer applications than last year. The decline was most prevalent among non-US programs, where 62% reported a decline compared with 49% of US programs. But specialized master's programs reported increases in application volume over last year. Master of Finance programs led the trend with 83% reporting an increase, followed by Master in Management programs at 69% and Master of Accounting programs at 51%.

Though the majority of MBA programs saw a decline in applications versus increased applications for most specialized master's programs, both program types report that the quality of applicants and their academic credentials are higher in 2011 than for applicants in 2010.

"The caution in this year's survey for full-time [MBA programmes](#) is unsurprising in the current economy as students weigh the financial and time commitments required to pursue a graduate business degree. "Still, the steadiness reflected in executive and part-time MBA programmes, specialized master's programmes and the growth among international applications shows the value people continue to place on graduate management degrees as investments in their career and future," said president and CEO of GMAC, Dave Wilson.

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

Contribute

If you are an academician, a researcher, an investigator or a thinker then, Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation invites you to send your inputs by way of your opinion, information, suggestions and experiences in the field of education.

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

Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation (ASERF) is guided by the vision of eminent educationist, industrialist and philanthropist Dr. Stya Paul's vision of value based holistic education for a responsive and responsible citizenship with a finely ingrained attitude of service before self. It is supported by Apeejay Stya Group, a leading Industrial & Investment House of India with interests in diverse fields. It will attempt to shoulder the efforts in serving the broader issues of Access, Quality, Equity & Relevance of Education and gear up to face the challenges of the new world order using collaborative and multidisciplinary approach. The foundation will become the repository of information on education and conduct research in new educational methodologies while collaborating with premier educational institutions globally.

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