



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

Tips of Steve Jobs on education India should learn

The late Steve Jobs, one of the greatest inventor-entrepreneurs in history, took knowledge and content to the masses. He said quality education was the key to equality of opportunity, and felt this would best be achieved by governments giving educational vouchers to parents, to be used in any accredited school of their choice. India should learn from him.

"I'm a very big believer in equal opportunity as opposed to equal outcome. Equal opportunity to me, more than anything, means a great education. Maybe even more important than a great family life. We could make sure that every young child in this country got a great education. We fall far short of that. I know from my own education that if I hadn't encountered two or three individuals that spent extra time with me, I'm sure I would have been in jail."

Clearly, good teachers are vital. But why are they so rare? "The problem there, of course, is the teachers' unions. The unions are the worst thing that ever happened to education because it's not a meritocracy. It turns into a bureaucracy, which is exactly what has happened. Nobody can be fired. It's terrible."

Can the problem be sidestepped by using computers and electronic teaching aids? No, says Jobs. "I've helped with more computers in more schools than anybody else in the world, and I am absolutely convinced that is by no means the most important thing. The most important thing is a person. Computers are very reactive but they're not proactive; they are not agents."

How do we create a system with good, motivated teachers? Jobs has a clear answer: we need competition between schools in attracting students and teachers, not unaccountable government schools with a lockhold on government funding.

Jobs says, "What we need in education is to go to the full voucher system. The customers (in education) are the parents, and the customers went away. Mothers started working and they didn't have time to spend at PTA meetings and watching their kids' school. Schools became much more institutionalised and parents spent less and less and less time involved in their kids' education.

What happens when a customer goes away and a monopoly gets control, which is what happened in our country, is that the service level almost always goes down. I remember seeing a bumper sticker when the telephone company was all one. I

remember seeing a bumper sticker with the Bell Logo on it and it said, "We don't care. We don't have to." And that's what a monopoly is. And that's certainly what the government school system is. They don't have to care."

The economics of state education is crazy, says Jobs. The US government spends lots on education: around \$4,400 per child per year. This is double the cost of buying a small car in instalments. But such educational spending is done by the government, and is not within the power of the household.

"When you go to buy a car, you have a lot of information available to make a choice. Everybody knows about all these cars, and they keep getting better and better because there's a lot of competition. And there's a warranty.

"But in government schools, people don't feel that they're spending their own money. If you want to put your kid in a private school, you can't take the \$4,400 a year (spent per child by the government school system) and use it. If you gave each parent a voucher for \$4,400 that they could only spend at any accredited school, several things would happen. Number one, schools would start marketing themselves like crazy to get students.

Secondly, I think you'd see a lot of new schools starting. You could have 25-year-old students out of college, very idealistic, full of energy. Instead of starting a Silicon Valley company, they'd start a school. I believe that they would do far better than any of our government schools would. Third, the quality of government schools, just as in any competitive marketplace, would start to rise."

These conclusions apply to India too. Our educational policies remain with leftist ideologues and cynical politicians who think the state must, to the extent possible, deliver all educational services. The leftists hate private schools and colleges. Politicians dare not take on teachers' unions.

Teacher absenteeism is horrific, and many students cannot do simple maths or read complete paragraphs after years of schooling. Desperate poor parents are switching their kids from free government schools to private schools with fees. But chief ministers seeking to discipline teachers' unions have invariably been foiled.

If challenged, teachers unions will threaten to strike before the annual exams, imperilling the future of millions of students. So, chief ministers invariably surrender. Instead, they try to recruit teachers as their own political agents.

Besides, teachers man election booths on polling days. Politicians fear antagonising teachers, who

might collude with the Opposition in fiddling election results.

So, our situation is worse than anything Jobs complains about in the US. Yet, the solutions are similar. We must use vouchers to give parents the power of choice, and encourage private competition in the educational marketplace. Enthusiastic young entrepreneurs will rush into education, just as they once rushed into information technology. All it needs is the political will to combat the unions.

Source: [Economic Times](#)

NEWS

India, China providing high-quality education

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/[Zee News](#)

India to Set up Chair on Cyber Security in Tallinn University

Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development and Communication, Information and Technology, visited Estonia on 19th September where he met the Prime Minister Mr. Andrus Ansip as also Minister of Education, Mr. Jaak Aaviksoo and the Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications, Mr. Juhan Parts. During the visit, Shri Kapil Sibal signed the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement with Estonia. On behalf of Estonia, it was signed by Minister of Finance, Mr. Jurgen Ligi.

India will establish a Chair on Cyber Security in Tallinn University and a Chair on Indian languages, literature and history in one of the universities in Estonia.

The Estonian government has announced 20 scholarships for Indian students who wish to enroll for an accredited doctoral programme leading to a PhD degree in Estonian universities in:

- Information and Communication Technology
- Material Technology
- Environment Technology
- Biotechnology
- Power Engineering
- Health

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

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan Signs MoU with Goethe-Institute for Teaching of German

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) (represented by Mr. Avinash Dikshit Commissioner) and Goethe-Institute/Max Mueller Bhavan (represented by Mr. Heiko Sievers, Regional Director) here today. It was signed in the presence of Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State, Human Resource Development and Ms. Cornelia Pieper, Minister of State, German Federal Foreign Office.

The MoU aims at

- imparting communicative German language training to students of Kendriya Vidyalayas.
- Training and supporting teachers of KVs in implementing the German project involving teaching German language in Kendriya Vidyalayas.
- Equipping schools with materials to support the teaching of German language.
- To gradually enable KVS staff to independently take over German language education, with the MMB playing an advisory role.

The KVS has taken a decision to offer German as a third language in its schools. A large number of the Kendriya Vidyalayas have shown an interest in introducing German into their school network and have already started teaching German as a part of the curriculum. The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan is a premier organization in India administering over a 1000 schools.

The Goethe-Institute Max Mueller Bhavan (MMB) is an organization that supports the teaching of German. It offers organizational and academic support to partner institutions in the host country that choose to offer German as a Foreign Language as a part of their curriculum.

Source: 23-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

Girls outshine boys in student union elections

Indore: Election of a large number of girls to the post of class representatives is the main highlight of this year's student body election in the DAVV and affiliate colleges elections to which were held on September 23.

Student council members were sworn-in in their respective colleges while the Higher Education department compiled their list and sent to Devi Ahilya Vishwa Vidyalaya (DAVV) where the elected representatives will choose from amongst them the university president on September 26.

Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) won in most of the colleges. ABVP senior functionary Manaswi Patidar claimed victory in all University Teaching Departments (UTD) and 48 colleges in the district.

National Student Union of India (NSUI) won in Christian Eminent, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and a few other colleges. Independents too recorded wins at some colleges. Where the ABVP could not win, unions were dominated by independent candidates or panels made by students.

Senior BJP leaders Industry Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, Member of Parliament (MP) Sumitra Mahajan, Mayor Krishna Murari Moghe, city president Shankar Lalwani and others came out to extend congratulations to young leaders and ABVP for their resounding victory.

Higher Education additional director Dr Narendra Dhakad took complaints from the female ABVP activists led by Shreshtha Joshi and by day scholars at Old Girls Degree College (GDC) in writing and assured them of forwarding them to Bhopal for appropriate action.

"Only three out of 22 hostellers were allowed to contest elections," Joshi alleged. However, college election officer Kirti Tiwari rubbished the allegation, saying that applications of late comer candidates could not be entertained.' Dhakad assured of looking into complaint by Prestige College students where five candidates were not allowed to vote as they did not have ID cards and fee receipts although only one was required as proof.

Source: 25-September, 2011/[Daily Bhaskar](#)

India's grand university plans falter

A grand pan-Asian plan to revive India's historic Nalanda University has run into troubles, with allegations of favoritism and a lack of transparency putting pressure on the project chief.

In its heyday between the fifth and 12th century AD, the university hosted over 10,000 resident students and 2,000 teachers - particularly from China, Korea, Japan and even Greece.

India is rebuilding it as the Nalanda International University, 10 kilometers near the stately ruins of the original site in the eastern Indian state of Bihar. It's a joint effort also involving China, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Singapore and some Southeast Asian countries.

While the Indian government is funding the project, other countries have not specified their roles apart from hosting annual meetings of the Interim Governing Board of Nalanda. The next conference is in Beijing this October.

Nalanda and Taxila, now in the Rawalpindi district of Pakistan, were the world's earliest residential centers of learning.

Nalanda graduates included the well-known Chinese travelers and historians Hiuen Tsang (Xuan Zang in Chinese) and I-Tsing. The monk Xuan Zang (602-664 AD), from Chen He village in northern China, spent five years studying the Buddha's teachings there.

Chinese historians say Nalanda was the only university outside China that attracted its noted academics.

Nalanda is said to have been destroyed by the Turkish raider Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1193. Khilji is accused of killing resident monks, and burning the nine-storey library and its millions of books to the ground. The book collection was so vast, it is said, that the library burned over three months.

Talk of reviving Nalanda had been in the air for over two decades. More concrete plans came with the Indian parliament passing the Nalanda University Act in August 2010.

Indian Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, the Thomas Lamont Professor of Economics and Philosophy at Harvard University, heads the revival as chairman of the Interim Governing Board of Nalanda University.

Sen gave a sold-out talk at the Asia Society in New York on September 22 on the new Nalanda. Delivering the inaugural Phillips Talbot Lecture at the Asia Society premises in Park Avenue, Sen said the project would honor India's long history for higher education, and would be important not just for India, but for Asia and the rest of the world.

But the new Nalanda is having trouble taking off. A significant setback came with former Indian president Abul Kalam quitting the project in September, apparently over differences with Sen's blueprint.

It was Kalam's vision during his presidential days to revive Nalanda. He has a varied background of being both a leading scientist and a constitutional head.

Critics accuse the Nalanda governing board of lacking transparency, such as in its appointment of a little-known professor of sociology, Dr Gopa Sabharwa, as vice chancellor of the new university.

The original Nalanda University taught subjects such as astronomy, medicine and mathematics. But its central purpose, and for which it received patronage of great Indian emperors such as Harsha Vardhan (606-647 AD), was a deeper study of the Buddha's universal, scientific, practical teachings.

This appears to have been pushed to the background in Sen's plans for Nalanda.

The new Nalanda, expected to start circa 2013, will have a school of historical sciences and a school of environment and ecology.

Sen's plans to include information technology as part of the curricula, for instance, might not exactly be great unique selling point for Nalanda - given that the world has expressed no serious shortage of IT training centers.

Significantly, the host state of Bihar appears unimpressed with Sen's vision of Nalanda. "What Bihar is going to have perhaps is 'Amartya Sen International University' instead of Nalanda University," wrote a scathing critique of Sen in the Bihar Times, published in the state capital Patna.

"All we want is the end of arbitrary decision-making and more transparency in the functioning of the Nalanda project," says Ajay Kumar, editor of the Bihar Times, which has been reporting closely on the Nalanda project the past five years.

"We are not against Prof Amartya Sen or the project, but only against the ad hoc way it is being executed." Kumar told Asia Times Online. "The feedback we are getting from a cross-section of people here is discontent with the way the Nalanda project is unraveling. Nalanda University is closely linked to the history and culture of Bihar."

Bihar was the epicenter of what is called India's "golden age". Patna, which lies about 55 kilometers from the Nalanda ruins, was formerly Pataliputra, the celebrated capital of Magadha.

Magadha was the seat of two of India's greatest empires, Emperor Asoka and the Mauryan dynasty (321 to 185 BC) and the Gupta empire (320-520).

The site of Bodh Gaya, where Prince Siddhatha of the Gotama clan became a Sammasambuddha (a fully enlightened being and the most compassionate teacher of men and gods) is also about 103 kilometers from Nalanda. The area includes the famous ancient cities of Vaishali and Rajgir, which are closely associated with the Buddha's life.

Ajay Kumar pointed out that, Pranab Mukherjee, India's then external affairs minister and current finance minister, says he specifically stated in a June 2007 letter to Professor Sen that Nalanda was being revived as a center for studying the Buddha's universal teachings. This was the focus of the original Nalanda University. "But the Buddha's teachings does not seem the focus of Sen's Nalanda University," says Kumar.

The 77-year old Amartya Sen, who won the 1998 Nobel Prize for economics for his work on causes of famine, is known for his work on poverty and some

call him the "Mother Teresa of economics". However, he continues to receive less than charitable appraisals over his handling of Nalanda's second coming.

Source: 27-September, 2011/[Asia Times](#)

Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting of HRD Ministry held

Discussions held on Legislative Reforms in Higher Education

The meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Human Resource Development was held here last evening. The subject of discussion for the meeting was "Legislative Reforms in Higher Education". A presentation was made to the Members of Parliament by the Department of Higher Education on the vision and contours of these legislative initiatives. The Union Minister of HRD, Shri Kapil Sibal underlined the need for reforms. He pointed out that with the Right to Education having been enacted, a much larger number of children will reach the higher education stage. For that, capacity needs to be created and systems and regulations also need to be put in place.

The Members of Parliament expressed their appreciation for these envisaged reforms particularly praising the Prohibition of Unfair Practices' Bill. A number of concerns were also raised by the Members of Parliament. One area of concern common to many Members of Parliament was that the envisaged expansion of higher education should not result in a heightened rural/urban and rich/poor divide as also a divide among those who can speak English and those who cannot. A concern was also raised that till the secondary and higher secondary education sector, especially in government schools is not improved the poorer sections will not be adequately prepared for good quality higher education.

Another concern was on the poor teacher-student ratio in colleges and declining standards of college education. A suggestion was made by some Members of Parliaments that the Centre should set up a centrally run college in every district of the country in the manner of Kendriya Vidyalayas or Navodaya Vidyalayas. A few Members of Parliament also expressed unhappiness on the NAAC being located in one place (Bangalore) and having no other branches, which inconveniences people. A concern was also raised regarding a number of engineering seats being left vacant as in some parts of the country there appear to be more engineering colleges than required.

Regarding the Tribunal Bill and other Bills which envisages committees, it was suggested by an MP that these committees must have at least one SC/ST/OBC member and also ladies as members. A concern common among a number of MPs was regarding the advertisements put out by educational institutions which at many times are patently false and dupe students.

The Minister addressing the concerns stated that the Ministry has asked the AICTE to write to those State Governments where there is a surplus of vacant seats as to whether recognition should be given to more engineering colleges from these states. This would help address the issue of excess engineering capacity observed in some regions. The Minister also pointed out that the Government is already funding secondary education to the amount of 75 percent through the RMSA which is an intervention to improve the quality of secondary education so that the rich-poor and urban-rural divide in education is bridged. He said that a common entrance test for engineering institutions is being envisaged which seeks to give greater and more equitable access to all through a formulation which is being worked out. Regarding the Tribunals Bill, the Minister explained that the Bill envisages one third lady member/members in the state as well as National Tribunal. He also said that in the last session of Parliament, an amendment was introduced to the Bill which makes a provision for SC/ST representation in the selection committees for the Tribunal members.

The Members present from the Lok Sabha, and the Rajya Sabha include: Shri Jose K. Mani, Shri Jagdanand Singh, Dr. Nirmal Khatri, Shri G.M. Dudhgaonkar, Dr. M Thambi Dorai, Smt. Rama Devi, Shri Lalji Tandon, Shri Anant Geete, Dr. Ranjan Prasad Yadav, Shri Ishwar Singh, Shri Mohammad Shafi, Shri G.N. Ratanpuri, Shri Javed Akhtar, Shri D. Raja, Shri Avinash Pande and Dr. Tarun Mandal.. Also present were Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Smt. Vibha Puri Das and Secretary Department of School Education and Literacy Smt. Anshu Vaish, besides other senior officials of the HRD Ministry.

Source: 29-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

10366 Primary Schools Sanctioned for Uttar Pradesh

Pursuant to the notification of the State Right to Education Rules in July, 2011, the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development has sanctioned 10,366 new primary schools and 1052 new upper primary schools under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to the Government of Uttar Pradesh., last evening. These

schools have been sanctioned in accordance with the neighbourhood norms prescribed in the State and are intended to provide access to elementary school children residing in hitherto unserved habitations.

The new primary schools will be provided two teachers each and the upper primary schools three subject teachers for Language, Math & Science and Social Science. A total of 23888 teachers have been sanctioned for these schools. The Central Government has also sanctioned 121 composite schools for urban deprived children.

In addition, sanctions have been accorded for providing two sets of school uniforms to 1.75 crore children belonging to disadvantaged groups and weaker sections, studying at the primary and upper primary stage of education.

These steps are expected to significantly improve the pace of universalizing elementary education in Uttar Pradesh.

Source: 30-September, 2011/[PIB](#)

Shri Kapil Sibal Launches 'Aakash', Low Cost Access Device

Shri Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resourced Development launched 'Aakash', a low cost access cum computing device, here today. This device was also distributed among 500 children on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion the Minister underlined that Aakash will help in eliminating digital illiteracy. For this he also emphasized the need for having high quality study content to be made accessible to students. He also called for support and partnership from all so that the device could cost further less, while praising the team which had worked towards the creation and production of this device.

Background on the Device

To ensure complete transparency and a level playing-field, the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT) decided to task one of the IITs (IIT Rajasthan at Jodhpur) with the job of procuring and testing these devices based on the design and specifications that the Mission's team had finalized.

IIT Rajasthan followed an open tender process. A three-step process was followed to evaluate the bids that were received. First, a committee scanned all bids to check their eligibility based on the conditions specified in the tender. Eligible bids were then evaluated by a technical evaluation committee comprising of eminent academics and industry experts. Bids that were found technically suitable were then evaluated by a financial

evaluation committee which then declared the lowest bidder. Following set government norms, a further negotiation was then held with the lowest bidder and a further discount obtained from them

On 22nd July, 2010 Shri Kapil Sibal, had unveiled a device that was expected to cost "around US\$ 35". The lowest bidder quoted an ex-factory price of US\$ 37.98 which was close to the cost mentioned by HRM. This cost that comprised of cost of components and material as well as manufacturing expenses. The final landed price of \$49.98/unit (which translated to INR 2276 at the exchange rate at the time of the order) included taxes, levies, and charges like freight and insurance, servicing and documentation etc. The landed price also includes one-year free replacement warranty from the manufacturer

It needs to be mentioned that this price does **not** include any subsidy from the Government and is a price that has been arrived at following a commercial tender process. The Government will also be providing price subsidy to the students on the price indicated in the earlier paragraph. The device will be distributed to students through the institutions at which they are studying.

The development of this device has been done in India in a plant at Hyderabad. This unique device is meant for students across India. Using this device, and the connectivity also provided under this Mission, learners will be able to access all the thousands of items of content available on the Sakshat portal and other educational web-sites

Roadmap

This current phase was a pilot to procure 100,000 devices. This pilot helped in sorting out the production related issues. These devices are now being distributed to students all over the country so that they can be extensively tested in various climatic and usage conditions. The feedback obtained from the testing will form an input into the design of the next version of the device. This is important, as the numbers that the Mission needs to procure are very large.

To achieve this, the team of experts working on this project would be broad-based. The production capacities of Indian manufacturers would also have to be substantially expanded to meet production requirements of a few million devices within a six-month time frame

Broadly speaking, future efforts will move in two directions – to achieve the same functionality at a lower cost and to achieve added capabilities at the same cost

MHRD invites collaboration, ideas and inventions from the community of academics and experts and inventors to achieve the cherished goals.

Connectivity:

It is expected that 416 Universities and 20,000 colleges all over India will be connected under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT). The Mission pays for fiber connectivity for each University to connect to the nearest NKN node. The Mission has placed a consolidated order for connecting all Universities and Colleges to BSNL and about 80% of the Universities and Colleges have been connected already

Content Creation

The National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT) has proposed 18 different line items for content creation. All content that is created under this Mission needs to meet the following criteria:

- It should be related to education delivery.
- It should involve faculty from different institutions
- All IP (Intellectual Property) created under projects funded by this Mission will vest with MHRD
- All content should be created using open-source software.
- All content created under this Mission is for open access by all and cannot be charged for in any way

The National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT) was launched by the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development, in February 2009 with a budget of Rs 4612 crore. The National Mission on Education comprises of 48 different components structured broadly around building CONTENT, enabling ACCESS and developing LOW COST ACCESS cum COMPUTING DEVICES.

Aakash UbiSlate 7 Specifications

- Hardware:
 - Processor: 366 Mhz with Graphics accelerator and HD Video processor
 - Memory (RAM): 256MB RAM / Storage (Internal): 2GB Flash
 - Storage (External): 2GB to 32GB Supported
 - Peripherals (USB2.0 ports, number): 1 Standard USB port
 - Audio out: 3.5mm jack / Audio in: 3.5mm jack
 - Display and Resolution: 7" display with 800x480 pixel resolution

- Input Devices: Resistive touch screen
- Connectivity and Networking: WiFi IEEE 802.11 a/b/g
- Power and Battery: Up to 180 minutes on battery. AC adapter 200-240 volt range.
- Software:
 - OS: Android 2.2
 - Document Rendering
- Supported Document formats: DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX, XLS, XLSX, ODT, ODP
- PDF viewer, Text editor
 - Multimedia and Image Display
- Image viewer supported formats: PNG, JPG, BMP and GIF
- Supported audio formats: MP3, AAC, AC3, WAV, WMA
- Supported video formats: MPEG2, MPEG4, AVI, FLV
 - Communication and Internet
- Web browser - Standards Compliance: xHTML 1.1 compliant, JavaScript 1.8 compliant
- Separate application for online YouTube video
- Safety and other standards compliance
 - CE certification / RoHS certification

Other: Additional Web Browser: UbiSurfer-Browser with compression/acceleration and IE8 rendering.

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

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

GLOBAL: Internationalisation moves into a new phase

The current state of international higher education is under discussion. What are the perils and pitfalls for international education in the present and near future? Do we have to change or at least update our mindset with respect to the values and rationales for internationalisation? Is internationalisation as we know it coming to an end?

Over the past 40 years the internationalisation of higher education has taken several forms. In the 1970s and early 1980s, internationalisation in many countries primarily focused on development and aid. In the second half of the 1980s, internationalisation took a different direction. In most of continental Europe, thanks to the development of scholarship programmes and mobility schemes, and in particular the well-known ERASMUS programme, the emphasis shifted from internationalisation as aid to the exchange of students and teachers as well as curriculum development.

In countries like the United Kingdom and Australia, the direction shifted from aid to trade. Instead of scholarships, universities were forced by their governments to charge full-cost fees to international students using the argument "why should our taxpayers have to foot the bill for the education of foreign students".

It was surprising to see that this did not result in a decrease of international students but a substantial increase, following the principle of "what you have to pay much for must be of good value". The UK is now the second-ranked and Australia the fifth-ranked destination country for international students who want to pursue a full degree abroad, behind the United States and, in Australia's case, Germany and France too.

In the 1990s, influenced among other issues by the Asian economic crisis - since a large majority of international students come from these countries - Australia and the Britain took internationalisation in a new direction, referred to as transnational education, cross-border delivery of education or offshore education.

The underlying assumption of this was "if they do not come to us, why do we not go to them?" Universities developed branch campuses and franchise operations in countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and South Africa. This approach was about switching the emphasis on the movement of students to the movement of programmes and universities.

Together with the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom are now the leading nations in international higher education due to their inflow of international students and their offshore activities.

This shift in internationalisation in the 1990s, which has further evolved in the past decade, is referred to as a shift in paradigm from cooperation to competition and represents a more commercial approach to international higher education.

In continental Europe, this more commercial approach was originally looked on with rather negative eyes. Free or low tuition fees for higher education was and still is more common, and that applied until recently also to students from outside the European Union.

However, in the past few years in continental Europe too (Denmark, Sweden and The Netherlands in particular) there has been a move to charge full cost fees for international students from outside of the EU, and there is increasing pressure on national tuition fees.

Also the free mobility of degree-seeking students within the EU, in particular from Germany and

more recently from the UK due to the increase in tuition fees there, is being questioned.

This is an increasing problem for small countries like The Netherlands, Austria and Belgium and has become most problematic in Scotland. There is a growing pressure in these countries to either stem the unlimited inflow of students from within the EU or charge higher fees for them.

Recently, though, there has also been a reaction to the commercial focus of international education. The higher education sector has understood that too much of a commercial approach will jeopardise the quality of education, the reputation of institutions and, as a result, the future inflow of national and international students.

This has led to greater selection of international students, accreditation and quality control of offshore operations, the transfer of revenues to better facilitate, council and guide international students, and more emphasis on the internationalisation of the curriculum and on study abroad opportunities for home students.

Last but not least, we also see a shift in the geography of internationalisation. The traditional divide between North and South and East and West of the past century can no longer be taken for granted.

The increasing importance of Asia, and developments in the Middle East, Latin America and Africa have also changed the higher education landscape and, by that, its international dimension. They bring in new values, new approaches and new relationships.

In this context it is not surprising to see a call for a change in thinking about internationalisation, a move to mainstreaming it within overall higher education quality issues and a shift to a more comprehensive approach and one that is less revenue-based.

Several indications of this emerging debate have been seen recently. A polemic essay entitled "The End of Internationalisation", which Uwe Brandenburg and I wrote in a recent edition of *International Higher Education*, might have functioned as a wake-up call. But other initiatives developed at the same time.

One worth mentioning in particular is the initiative of the International Association of Universities (IAU) to start a discussion about the need to re-examine the concept of internationalisation.

An ad hoc expert group has been established to initiate this debate, which came out of the 4th IAU Global Meeting of Associations in Delhi, India, in April. For more information click [[url=www.iau-](http://www.iau-)

aiu.net style=bluelink]here[url]. It will be interesting to see what comes out of all this, but the debate is as important as its outcomes.

Source: 18-September, 2011/[University World News](#)

India: fight to preserve dying languages

A new survey of India's hundreds of languages could have far-reaching political implications.

This fall, a plucky Indian professor of English will fire the first shot in a battle to revolutionize how this large, diverse country perceives itself.

The key to his project: an army of some 2,000 volunteer linguists, translators and typists.

For the first time since the British Raj, Ganesh Devy's People's Linguistic Survey of India will catalog the nation's myriad tongues. The enormous exercise will call into question colonial definitions of civilization and ethnicity that have persisted through the 60-year history of independent India.

"This is one of our heritage treasures that we have not been overtly aware of," said Anvita Abbi, a professor of linguistics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. "It's very important to conduct these surveys and catalog [these languages], because it will help us formulate the appropriate language policy. We do not have an appropriate language policy [in India] because we don't have an idea of the breadth and length of linguistic diversity."

Reminiscent of Sir James Murray's Oxford English Dictionary project — which drew on the knowledge of hundreds of volunteers, including a prolific murderer, for information about the origins of English words — the People's Linguistic Survey promises to be a remarkable resource for academic researchers and a vital aid in the struggle to preserve dying tongues.

But the growing stack of tomes may have broader implications, too, for India's education system, and even the political organization of its 28 states and seven union territories.

"This will provide good material for fresh thinking about cognitive categories in every walk of life," said Devy, who is a professor at the the Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology in Gujarat.

"If I may say so, in all modesty, perhaps this will come to be seen as one of the more important linguistic projects during the last 100 years in India," he said. It is indeed a huge endeavor.

The original British language survey took some 30 years to complete. More recently, India's registrar general, which conducts the census, has taken 15 years to survey just four states.

But Devy's army of volunteers have already finished work in nine states. Progress is underway in seven more. The first results are slated, from Jharkhand, to be published in November — with Gujarat and Maharashtra ready for the World Languages Meeting in Gujarat in January.

Devy expects the entire project — including a series of books in English — to be finished by the end of 2014. "I have been working with the languages of the tribal communities of India for the last 20 years, working with the tribal communities, so I have been able to set up quite a large network of individuals interested in looking at language identity, language loss, language empowerment, and issues like that," said Devy.

It was through that network that the professor recruited an army of volunteers whose efforts have already put the government to shame. "These volunteers include professional linguists, teachers, cultural activists, farmers and villagers. It is a cross-section of Indian society," Devy said. "Of course, my list is deficient: I don't have any criminals or black marketeers."

To aid researchers, each language will be detailed with a 1,000-word history, a brief glossary and some examples of poems and stories. And based on preliminary findings, the official number of Indian languages will likely rise from the Raj-era figure of 179 — of which a paltry 22 are officially recognized by the constitution — to nearly 900.

However, it's the main reason for the expected increase that makes the project revolutionary.

When British linguist George Abraham Grierson conducted his Linguistic Survey of India in 1894, he ignored the languages of many nomadic tribes. He classified as dialects many other tongues that local people used to define their ethnicities. And he neglected a large part of South India because the Nizam of Hyderabad in what is today the state of Andhra Pradesh refused to cooperate.

At least partly as a result, when first the British and then Indian authorities divided the country into language-based states, many sizable groups found themselves split by separate administrations and robbed of political influence in keeping with their numbers. For instance, planners deemed the Gond tribe insignificant because the Gond language had no written literature or written script (until 1928) — so the group was scattered across five different states.

"These states were formed irrespective of the number of speakers of languages," said Devy. "To give you an example, the Munda group, the Santhal group, the Bhil group — they did not get their states."

These linguistic boundaries have already proven controversial. Since 1960, when language-based agitations forced the Bombay State into today's Gujarat and Maharashtra states, nearly a dozen new states have been carved out on linguistic or ethnic grounds, and the troubles aren't over.

Ethnic rebellions still simmer across the country, demanding separate states, or even nationhood, for the speakers of Nepali, Bodo and other languages that borders — and, too often, government budgets — have ignored.

At the same time, Grierson's language survey, and independent India's subsequent propagation of its inherent prejudices, has had a disastrous impact on India's many indigenous tribes.

"The marginalized people are speaking marginalized languages," said the University of London's Abbi.

In the most dramatic instances, languages — and sometimes the people who speak them — have simply ceased to exist. Last year, for example, when an 85-year-old Andaman islander named Boa Sr gasped her final breath, the Bo tribe and the Bo language were irrevocably lost.

"With the death of Boa Sr and the extinction of the Bo language, a unique part of human society is now just a memory," Survival International's Stephen Corry remarked at the time. "Boa's loss is a bleak reminder that we must not allow this to happen to the other tribes of the Andaman Islands."

But even where tribal communities remain robust in numbers, the low status afforded to their languages has helped to keep them isolated and excluded from India's snowballing economic development.

"Only around 15,000 people in India speak Sanskrit, while some 80 million speak various tribal languages in central India alone," said Shubhranshu Choudhary, founder of CG Net Swara, a mobile-phone based news platform for Indian tribal peoples. "Yet All India Radio, the only source of news for many rural Indians, broadcasts frequent bulletins in Sanskrit and none in these tribal languages."

Though various studies have shown that children learn better when taught basic concepts in their mother tongue before attempting to master a second language, India prioritizes just 22 out of the 900-odd languages that Devy seeks to catalog, and the state's promised free and compulsory education is most often available in fewer still.

"In the Constitution of India, there is a special schedule of languages, which alone receive official

support," said Devy. "When the schedule was created after independence, it had 14 languages. Now it has 22. All the funds for primary, secondary and higher education can go only to these languages."

Not surprisingly, perhaps, tribal literacy rates lag behind those of the general population, and only about one-fifth of the so-called "Scheduled Tribes" noted by the Indian constitution as historically underprivileged are attending school, according to the latest census.

"If we don't include these languages in our education policy, obviously we are discriminating against them," said Abbi. "We have a reservation policy [that mandates quotas in jobs and higher education] for the [historically underprivileged] Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. But the reservations are for the tribe, not the language. This is the reason why tribals want to forget their languages."

Meanwhile, the proportion of tribal peoples living below the poverty line, at nearly 50 percent, is also "substantially higher than the national average," according to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.

"My aim is not to find which is the language that is spoken by fewer than 5 percent, and how will I revive that language," said Devy, who founded a university for tribal peoples known as the Adivasi Academy in 1999.

"My aim is to see where a sizeable number of people exist, have a speech tradition, a language of their own, but because of the denial of the language in legitimate educational spaces this community is suffering on the developmental scale." Making sure the world knows that these languages exist is the first step.

Source: 18-September, 2011/[Global Post](#)

Vision for a new Nalanda

Ever since I saw Nalanda for the first time as a child, I was completely bowled over by the vision it offered to humanity. I dreamt of bringing the great institution back to life, some day,' says Prof. Amartya Sen. The Nobel Laureate at Nalanda in February 2009.

Nalanda University, the world's oldest centre of higher learning, is being re-established through an Asian initiative, involving India, China, Singapore, Japan and Thailand. Amartya Sen, Professor of Economics and Philosophy at Harvard University, is chairman of the Interim Governing Board of Nalanda University. Professor Sen, the recipient of the 1998 Nobel Prize in Economics, believes that

Nalanda stands for the passion of propagating knowledge and understanding. It was a residential university, and at its peak had 10,000 students from many countries, especially China, Korea, Japan, and Turkey, studying various subjects. Professor Sen responds to Shreeya Sinha's questions about the project ahead of a lecture he will give at the Asia Society in New York on September 22. Excerpts:

What was the original ethos behind Nalanda University?

Old Nalanda as an educational institution was fully dedicated to the pursuit of learning. It was committed to educational excellence. Indeed, because it was largely successful in achieving and maintaining excellence that Nalanda attracted foreign students — from China, Japan, Korea and elsewhere. The institution was Buddhist in terms of its foundation, but Nalanda's teaching and research were not confined to Buddhist studies. Indeed it was well-known also for what it offered in secular subjects such as health care, linguistics, and astronomy. Nalanda received patronage from Hindu kings (such as the Guptas) as well as from Buddhist kings (such as the Palas of Bengal). It was not, in any sense, a specifically Buddhist institution, but it was in the general Buddhist tradition of focussing on knowledge and understanding as ways of solving problems that pester humanity. It was also a “modern” institution — modern in relation to its time — in offering education that went well beyond religion, and included science (such as astronomy) and the pursuit of practically useful arts (such as public health care).

What is your vision for its future?

Ever since I saw Nalanda for the first time as a child, I was completely bowled over by the vision it offered to humanity. I dreamt of bringing the great institution back to life, some day. As I continued to visit Nalanda through my teenage years, the idea of an outstanding centre for higher education at the great centre of ancient Indian civilisation, in Bihar, gripped me more and more. When Chief Minister Nitish Kumar approached me about helping them build a new institution near the old site, I was impressed to see how close his own vision was to what I had hoped would happen one day. I hope to see that dream being realised — at least the initial stages of it — before long. The fact that Bihar also has a lot of economic problems, including persistent poverty, makes it even more necessary for the new Nalanda to offer educational opportunities for the useful arts (such as information technology, environmental studies and

management), without undermining the more abstract investigations.

How was the Vice-Chancellor chosen? What qualifications were the Nalanda Mentor Group looking for?

The post of Vice-Chancellor is meant to be open to any of the member-countries of the East Asia Summit, even though for the first Vice-Chancellor, the Nalanda Mentor Group had a preference for an Indian academic, with the practical ability to do things, to get the project moving. The four primary considerations that the selection committee had, on the basis of the deliberations of the Mentor Group, were: (1) academic excellence, (2) administrative ability, (3) interest in — and commitment to — the Nalanda university project, and (4) willingness to be based on the new campus in Nalanda to build an intellectual community there from scratch, and be fully involved with Bihar's problems and concerns.

Members of the selection committee talked with at least 20 people, sought their advice and also checked their own interest in being considered for the position, including living in Nalanda, as and when it becomes a functioning reality. From time to time, reports on these consultations somehow got leaked in Indian newspapers (even though the consultations and ascertaining of interest in being a resident Vice-Chancellor have sometimes been confused, in these reports, as “offers” having been made to this person or that). On the basis of all the information it had, the selection committee decided that the best feasible appointment would be Dr. Gopa Sabharwal, but it was willing to accept the possibility of appointing some other person from a list of three it gave to the Government of India. Dr. Sabharwal's academic qualifications are excellent (one of our advisers on the academic side was Professor Andre Beteille, a world-renowned sociologist); her administrative ability is well established; she is totally committed to the Nalanda project; and her involvement with Bihar and willingness to be based in Nalanda contrasted sharply with some others who could have been considered for the position. The Nalanda Mentor Group, which was authorised to make the selection, listed three names, including that of Dr. Sabharwal, but the government could have appointed any one of the three. The government offered Dr. Sabharwal the position of being Vice-Chancellor Designate, to be followed by being Vice-Chancellor as the legal formalities of the university are sorted out. The Mentor Group was very happy that she agreed to take on this job when she was approached.

I understand that in some parts of the media questions have been raised about whether someone who was not a “full professor” should have been

chosen to be the Vice-Chancellor. I suppose an obsession with rank and status in our stratified society makes some people inclined to judge a person not by his or her qualities — and particular qualifications for a very specific job — but by the person's position in the social hierarchy.

Has the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Gopa Sabharwal, started functioning, and what steps is she taking to get this big project off the ground?

Dr. Sabharwal has made an excellent beginning in setting up the campus, with the help of the Bihar government (which has been impeccably cooperative), and also in planning the legal, administrative and academic arrangements. The first two faculties to be started will be environmental studies and historical studies, to be followed by others such as information technology and international relations. The work on setting up these faculties is very much on the way. Nalanda University, under Dr. Sabharwal's leadership, has also established reciprocal relations with the Nalanda-Srivijaya Centre in Singapore and the Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, and, at an informal level, with the Peking University in China, through Professor Wang Bangwei of that University who, as an active member of the Mentor Group, has been involved in the planning of Nalanda. There will be a partnership with Korean and Japanese universities as also with leading American universities. These possibilities are now being explored. The making of the architectural plans for the campus and the buildings is in high gear right now, along with securing and looking after the land that the Bihar government has given to the university.

Unfortunately, Dr. Sabharwal still remains "Vice-Chancellor Designate" rather than being the actual Vice-Chancellor, because of administrative delays at the level of the Government of India, and this does hamper Dr. Sabharwal's ability to discharge her duties even more efficiently. The Board of the Nalanda University very much hopes that these delays would soon come to an end, which would help her do her job with even greater speed. The Nalanda University Act was passed in Parliament last November (in line with the recommendations of the Mentor Group), and it is anticipated that the administrative delays at the governmental level would soon cease.

How will the university be financially viable?

At the moment the bulk of the expenses are being met by the Government of India, through the Planning Commission, which is also helping in sorting out the administrative hurdles. There have been promises of contributions from abroad, both

from governmental and non-governmental sources (from China, Singapore, Australia, Laos and elsewhere). But there is a long way to go in firming up the financial base of the university.

Source: 19-September, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

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 the quality of faculty for offering integrated education.

He also said that the government should develop hitech 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](#)

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, Kadapah, 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: 21-September, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

Weak rupee to cost Indian students dear

Those who have delayed paying their fees to US universities, may end up paying Rs 50,000 to Rs 1,00,00 more, as the Indian currency hits a 2-year low.

If the rising cost of education was not bad enough, the rupee hitting a two-year low against the US dollar will leave Indian students poorer by anywhere between Rs 50,000 and Rs 1,00,000, especially for those who have delayed paying their fees to foreign universities this July.

It is estimated that around 8-10 per cent of Indian students going to the US end up paying their fees late. Students planning for next year's admission will also have to pay more for TOEFL, GRE and GMAT application forms, apart from the admission forms of foreign universities that range anywhere between \$50 and \$500, varying from institute to institute.

The Indian rupee weakened to a two-year low to touch Rs 48.23 per US dollar yesterday, and experts fear it will fall further. While most universities and institutes in the US begin the admission processes in July and August, foreign education consultants say students will have to pay more to institutes which start their admission process in September.

“On an average, Indian students have to pay fees of \$12,000-20,000 per semester at US universities. With the rupee weakening against the US dollar, students will now have to pay Rs 30,000 to Rs 50,000 more as overall expenses will rise,” says Dinesh Gehlot, assistant vice president, Credila Financial Services. An HDFC Ltd. company, Credila provides loans for students for overseas education.

Of about 130,000 students that go abroad for studies from India every year, about 100,000 go to the US, followed by Britain, Australia and South East Asia, among other countries. According to industry estimates, the quantum of currency that goes abroad is about Rs 1,800 crore.

“By this logic, per student expenditure is pegged at Rs 18 lakh a year. Most students deal with this based on loans and scholarships. At current rates, doing a simple mathematical valuation on the rate of rupee devaluation, the expenses will go up by about Rs 1,00,000. The best way to avoid this in the long term, suggest academics, is the

introduction of forward contracts in the loan agreements which functions as an insurance," says Arup Datta, associate director, PricewaterhouseCoopers.

For a student going abroad for studies, the financial institutions pay the fees directly to universities as part of the former's education loan. "We also deposit certain amount every six months for the students' living expenses while their pocket expenses are borne by them. The weakening of the rupee will impact payment of fees as well as living expenses which we will replenish for students seeking admissions now," says Gehlot.

According to overseas education consultants, even the Great Britain Pound (GBP) has appreciated against the Indian rupee, thereby impacting students seeking admissions in universities in the UK. "Since the rupee has weakened in September it is now too late for students to have second thoughts about going abroad. Instead, students will have to fight it out and pay an extra Rs 50,000 to Rs 1,00,000 for fees that average around Rs 13,00,000 to Rs 15,00,000," says Mansoor Amin, director of Chennai-based Linking Overseas, a foreign education consulting firm.

However, some say this is a short-term effect. "Most students tend to make payments of fees on a term basis. Hence, they will be able to deflect a major impact. Though, it will cost them more to buy foreign exchange and expenses will go up automatically. But minor fluctuations like these are a norm, and they will not have a major impact," says Anup Sinha, professor, economics department, IIM Calcutta (IIM-C). "Also, at the undergraduate level, students going abroad come from family backgrounds where this would make no impact at all," says Gautam Puri, managing director, Career Launcher.

Source: 22-September, 2011/[Business-Standard](#)

Anand Sharma Pushes for Making India HUB for Manufacturing Advanced Electronics Components

The Commerce, Industry and Textile Minister of India, Sri Anand Sharma interacted with CEOs of top business firms and heads of Universities in Dallas, Texas on 21st September 2011. The business roundtable, hosted by the CEO of Texas Instruments, Mr Rich Templeton, included CEOs of companies engaged in Banking, Automation and Information Technologies, Oil and Gas Industry, Airports, Security Systems, Global Management Consulting Firms and Technology Solutions, Oil and Gas, apart from heads of institutions of higher

learning engaged in Medicine, Public Research and a Community College.

In the roundtable, Mr Sharma spoke about India's push to become a hub for manufacture of advanced electronics components and products through a slew of new initiatives. He emphasized the need for India and the US to collaborate in the field of education and appreciated the strengths of the United States in developing institutions of excellence in education and research. He pointed out that the two countries are ideally situated to collaborate in the manufacture of high-end products in view of their inherent capabilities. He underlined the importance of strengthening institutional linkages between India and the USA to promote innovation and research.

Earlier, on 20th September, the Commerce, Industry and Textiles Minister addressed a large gathering of the Indian diaspora and prominent citizens of the city of Dallas organised by the Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber. He was presented the Key of the city of Dallas by the city administration. In his address, Minister Sharma highlighted the strategic partnership between India and the United States, which is based on shared values of democracy, plurality and the rule of law. He spoke about the new dynamics of the global economy with the shift in equilibrium from the developed nations towards the emerging and developing economies.

Mr Sharma also presented Awards to exceptional achievers of the Indian American Community in Dallas in the Annual Awards Ceremony of the Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber. He lauded the contributions of the Indian American community to the American economy and stated that during these difficult times, the United States needs to look outwards as any attempt at protectionism would be counter-productive. The US should not erect barriers to trade or movement of professionals.

Source: 22-September, 2011/[Invest India.com](#)

Adopt priorities in higher education sector

President of Mysore Canada Commonwealth of Learning, John Daniel, on Wednesday felt that India should adopt strategic priorities declared at Global Education Summit-2009 to achieve the target of providing higher education to 44 millions by 2020.

Speaking at the inaugural session of three-day international conference on 'Distance Learning in Global Environment: Issues and Challenges', organized by Karnataka State Open University (KSOU), Daniel said, "Today 165 million are undergoing higher studies in the world and by 2025 it should be 263 millions. Hence, India should

increase its capacity by adopting some of the priorities in the higher education sector."

The focus should be on innovating new ways to learn, access to quality education, training the teachers and demand-based education," Daniel felt.

Governor Hansraj Bhardwaj who inaugurated the conference, said, "Distance learning should be strengthened and institutes such as IGNOU should facilitate varsities on this score. The governor felt there should be uniform distance learning system between central and state distance learning varsities."

IGNOU V-C V N Rajasekharan Pillai, who was the chief guest, said, "There is need to give importance to unconventional system of learning." KSOU vice-chancellor K S Rangappa said the number of students has increased to 2 lakh.

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

Women On Top

Enlightenment, empowerment and emancipation-these are the logical outcomes of a process that is initiated by the most important of all-education. The final selection interviews of the short-listed candidates from eastern India for the Fair & Lovely Scholarships 2011 at The Park were a demonstration of this fact. The scholarships are aimed at supporting girls from economically challenged rural backgrounds from all over India in the field of higher education.

The distinguished panelists for the Kolkata round on September 21 included Barun Chanda, actor, Abhijit Das Gupta, documentary filmmaker, Nilanjana Chakraborty, jewellery designer, Dr G B Nair, director, National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases and Gopinath Ghosh, educationist. "Some of them have a crying need, there are students who are very needy and these stipends may be a game changer for them," commented Chanda.

In its ninth year, the Fair & Lovely Scholarships are awarded to women on the basis of their financial need, academic brilliance and the ambition to make a difference, not only in their own lives but to society as well. Scholarships of up to one lakh are awarded to the deserving candidates. The short-listed applicants from the seven zones across India are interviewed by panelists, drawn from different walks of life, in order to gauge their aptitude and ability. Based on their recommendations, the Foundation takes the final call.

Speaking on the experience, G B Nair said, "It was a big eye-opener for me. The foundation is doing

an outstanding job to perpetuate education." Das Gupta commented, "It was heartening to meet these some of the girls who had such steely determination. All they need is proper guidance." Nilanjana concurred, "Rural Bengal needs a boost to its educational system. As for the girls, communication skills need improvement, knowledge of English has to be augmented and proper career counselling made available to them. Education of the girl child is a must."

The girls were assessed on the basis of their socio-economic state of affairs, financial conditions, determination to get ahead and concrete future plans. Bulbul Mohanto, student of Physic Honours from Bankura said, "The scholarship will be highly beneficial for me, I want to do my masters and then doctoral studies in Physics, then pursue research if possible." Bulbul's father is a small-time farmer with a meagre family income.

Source: 23-September, 2011/ [education times / Times of India](#)

Destination Australia

The Australian government has recently announced significant changes to student visa requirements. The changes are in response to the report by the Michael Knight AO on the Strategic Review of the Student Visa Programme 2011, which was released on September 22, 2011.

Since 2009, following safety issues that concerned Indian students, Australia had lost its position as a desired overseas destination. But, research by the Australian government in 2010 showed that a high percentage of international students in Australia are satisfied with their academic and living experience. For higher education, students' satisfaction with living and studying was 86% and 84% respectively.

Says Michael Gallagher, CEO, Group of Eight (Go8), "Importantly, not one of the research students from India who participated in the survey had experienced any form of racial discrimination or intolerance while in Australia." In fact, responding to the concerns, Universities Australia has adopted a 10-point action plan for student safety from recommendations developed by the deputy and pro-vice-chancellors (international) from Australian universities. The plan emphasises strong law enforcement, plus necessary complementary actions and affirms the crucial importance of international integration through education, among others.

However, according to education consultants, overseas counsellors, and prospective students, the changes are going to make a difference. As Paul Greenfield, chair, Go8, points out, "The review has

recognised that Australia's universities are high quality, low risk providers, and changes to the risk framework send a clear message that Australian education providers are responsible for ensuring that they uphold quality."

The reforms will ensure that students from India are treated on a par with students applying from the US, UK, [Canada](#) and [Singapore](#). Also, the student visa procedures will be less onerous in terms of financial requirements.

Explaining how the changes will be financially less taxing, Fred Hilmer, vice-chancellor and Jennie Lang, pro-vice-chancellor (international), University of New South Wales (UNSW), say, "Indian students will now be graded at the highest assessment level, hence the amount of up-front funds required will be significantly reduced by up to AUD \$36,000."

DIVERSE OPTIONS

Over 10,000 courses are available at Australian universities including professional degrees, double degrees and postgraduate programmes. Many undergraduate students have the unique ability to undertake an exchange programme of one to two semesters at a partner university in another country.

Currently, over 4,500 Indian students study undergraduate degrees in Australia in many areas including popular disciplines such as business, engineering, science, technology and humanities.

Also, Australian tertiary institutions are diverse. So at one end there are the small, private institutes and state funded TAFE colleges which are basically for vocational training - for chefs, hairdressers, computer technicians, etc; at the other end of the spectrum, says Krishna Sen, Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (FAHA), dean, Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Western Australia, you have the Go8 research universities - ANU, Monash, [Melbourne](#), [Sydney](#), New South Wales, Adelaide, Queensland and Western Australia - teaching the range of degrees that you would find in any of the reputed universities of UK or US.

Several of the Go8s have programmes in Asian and European languages and cultures, anthropology and archaeology, while some other Go8s as well as the Australian Technology Network Universities (ATN, includes Curtin, University of South Australia, UTS, QUT, RMIT) offer programmes in media/communication studies, mostly at the undergraduate level but increasingly also at the postgraduate levels.

As far as the academic experience goes, Abhishek Awasthi, pursuing a Master's in biotechnology and bioinformatics from La Trobe University, enjoys

attending seminars and interacting with lecturers and mentors from the industry. "My personal aim as the president of the Biochemistry Society is to narrow the gap between students and senior staff, researchers, experts from the sector, creating more opportunities for students to get employed," he says.

ADMISSION CYCLE

Contrary to the Indian academic year, the Australian academic year runs from February each year until approximately November. Divided into a semester pattern, the Australian academic year allows students to enrol in either semester one (from February/March) or semester two (from July/August) depending on course preference.

Australia does not have an affiliated college system, but like India, it follows the Commonwealth system of education, which usually provides the same duration for undergraduate courses. Ideally, applications can be submitted for up to three to five universities, which are the closest match to students' requirements. Students who don't qualify for direct admission may study a university pathway programme, which enables them to strengthen their academic foundation and meet strict entry standards prior to commencing university studies.

According to Rajat Ganguly, Academic Chair, Security Studies Programme, School of Social Sciences & Humanities, [Murdoch University](#), "The strength of the Australian undergraduate system is that most courses are of three-year duration. For engineering and medicine, the duration is slightly longer (four to five years), but one can go straight into these courses after high school."

WORK RULES

With the new changes to be implemented from late 2011 --- with the full complement of changes expected to be finalised in the first half of 2012 --- the visa processing time will have significantly improved, thus, allowing students more time to apply, arrange enrolment and accommodation.

Not only will students be eligible to undertake a full degree but they will have the opportunity to remain in Australia to gain international work experience. Graduates with a Bachelor's degree will be able to work up to two years.

Those with a postgraduate degree will have the opportunity to work for three years and those with a PhD for four years.

The changes will also allow for a two to four year post-study work visa for university graduates depending on the level of study completed.

Source: 26-September, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Ways to power up India's future

For emerging economies, or for that matter even for the stable and rich economies, progress is linked with enough supply of power. Today, hydropower, thermal power and nuclear power, in a mixed manner, are the major sources of energy globally. India has a power generation capacity of 135,006 mw at present, which is not sufficient for the second fastest growing economy in the world. Power shortages have been identified as a key infrastructure bottleneck.

Consider hydropower generation. India is a peninsula containing so many rivers and water bodies. But, hydropower is mostly generated in south India because the Indo-Gangetic plain is a flat terrain, not very conducive for setting up the hydropower plants. In south India, it's possible but rainfall in that region is seasonal and also rivers are non-perennial. The monsoons between June and September account for nearly 80 per cent of annual rainfall over the country and are vital for the economy, being the main source of water for agriculture and hydropower generation across the country.

Nuclear power plants, said to be "the future of power" are good in some ways. But, there are various problems like non-availability of uranium, topography selection and environmental hazards, among others. If our plans for growth of nuclear power translate into action quickly because of the nation's recent deals with nuclear energy rich nations like the US, UK, France and Russia, it would boost our power generation capacity.

Then, if we move our attention towards wind power, it is costly and seasonal winds also affect the performance in a huge manner. Solar power is a less developed option and has huge apparatus cost as well as cost of erection; also the success rate is very low. As of today, it is hydropower that is the major source of power generation. Hydropower projects based in south India account for 30 per cent or 11,400 mw of the country's installed capacity of 38,000 mw of this power source. To make matters worse, of the country's total installed capacity of 147,000 mw, only around 85,000 mw is operational at any given point of time. India's track record in adding power generating capacity is poor: in the past five years the country has added 20,950 MW of capacity, against a target of 41,110 mw. The limited addition of new power producing capacity, fall in hydropower generation in south India and higher demand for electricity in summer have already resulted in a severe power shortage across the country. India plans to add 78,577 mw by 2012, but according to government's own sources, it

could miss this target by up to 60 per cent because of shortage of equipment and contractors, delays in technology alliances, lack of funds and natural calamities such as floods, among others.

The Indian electricity sector faces many other problems in trying to meet the ever-increasing demand-supply gap. Energy losses in India's transmission and distribution sector exceed 30 per cent, which is one of the highest in the world. India's power ministry estimates that about half of the electricity in the country is billed. The financial impact of technical and commercial losses has been estimated at 1.5 per cent of GDP. Upgrading out-of-date transmission and distribution systems coupled with the need to reduce electricity losses and theft is driving the deployment of smart grid technologies in India. The methods to address these concerns demand substantial investments in advanced metering to reduce AT&C (aggregate technical and commercial) losses, in automation to measure and control the flow of power to/from consumers on a near real-time basis and in improvement of the system reliability and moving to a smart grid to manage loads, congestion and shortfall in an intelligent manner.

The other concern is about getting trained manpower for operating the smart grid technologies, systems and related software. Our electrical engineering programmes do not cover these new facets of power management. The power industry in India is expected to undergo a paradigm change, fuelled by legislative and regulatory activities. It would require power instrumentation engineers that would design and produce these new equipments.

The real challenge in the power sector in India lies in managing the upgrading of the transmission, distribution and metering sector efficiently and creating manpower to handle these challenges. In response to these challenges, it is heartening to note that the ministry of power has set up the India Smart Grid Forum as a public-private partnership, bringing in utilities, industry and academia.

Indeed in future, distribution and managing of power is going to be a big business; a real challenge for the private sector, which desires to be in power industry and academic institutions to completely overhaul the curriculum and delivery of education in electrical and instrumentation engineering.

It is estimated that the global market potential for smart grid equipment manufacturers and solution providers will be between \$15 billion and \$31 billion annually by 2014, with the value split among three main business segments — customer applications;

advanced metering infrastructure/smart meters and grid applications. India can certainly take a lead in this domain as it would enrich the economy and create new job opportunities.

Source: 27-September, 2011/[My Digital fc](#)

Higher education subsidy plan misses target

The interest subsidy is valid for the length of the course the student is enrolled for as well as a moratorium of either one year or six months after employment, whichever is earlier

An ambitious scheme to make higher-education loans more attractive to poor students has failed to achieve its target because of inadequate marketing and the lack of coordination between various agencies.

The scheme was launched in 2010 by the human resource development (HRD) ministry and gives full interest subsidy (a student will not have to pay the interest for the loan he or she avails) to students from families earning less than Rs. 4.5 lakh a year.

The interest subsidy is valid for the length of the course the student is enrolled for as well as a moratorium of either one year or six months after employment, whichever is earlier.

An HRD ministry document says that only 40% of the budgeted amount was used in FY2011. "In the previous financial year, a total of claim of sum of Rs. 203.28 crore was reimbursed to Canara Bank out of the total budget of Rs. 500 crore," says the document, a copy of which has been reviewed by Mint.

Canara Bank is the nodal agency for the subsidy scheme, following a decision by the Indian Banks' Association. Other banks lending to students under the scheme can claim the subsidy from Canara Bank, which in turn gets reimbursed by the HRD ministry.

The HRD ministry has allocated a budget of Rs. 640 crore this fiscal for the subsidy scheme.

"Proper utilization of the fund requires coordination among banks, state governments and the HRD ministry," the ministry note added. A HRD ministry official said the scheme has not received enough attention because of poor awareness and lack of support from banks and state governments. "Till recently less than 15 states have notified a designated authority who can give students an income certificate," the official said, requesting anonymity. He refused to name the states.

The official added that though interest rates on education loan are higher than those for vehicle and home loans, some banks hesitate to sanction

education loans, branding them "risky". Another official in the HRD ministry said the ministry has informed the finance ministry and IBA about this and "hopes to see a better result by the end of this year".

India wants to increase its higher education enrolment by nearly 30 million in a decade. Currently around 15 million studying for college degrees in India, around 12.4% of those eligible. Of these, less than one-tenth take student loans, according to official data.

Geeta Bhukal, education minister of Haryana, said the scheme is good but it needs wider publicity. "Many don't know how to avail (of the loans). The publicity has to be much more prominent," she said. However, the minister said that she is not sure whether her state has notified any designated authority for the scheme or not. "I need to check it."

An official with Central Bank of India said that many states are yet to notify a designate authority for issuing the income certificate, which is posing problem. "It's a cumbersome process to lodge claims as all the data has to be collated from all the branches by the central office and then passed to Canara Bank," he said, requesting not to be named as he is not authorised to speak to media.

A Canara bank official, who too did not want to be named, said the figures are provisional as they had given banks' time till 31 August to claim the subsidy. "We are providing sufficient publicity but the main issue is that many of the states are yet to notify the authority who can issue the income certificate to the eligible candidates", he said. "We are still collating the data and the final amount could be more than Rs. 200 crore", he added.

A finance ministry official said his ministry has asked "banks to promptly inform loan seekers meeting the income criterion that they are eligible for the subsidy. Most banks are doing it. But there are a few instances where this is not happening."

Source: 28-September, 2011/[Live Mint](#)

ASCI upholds complaints against 27 advertisements

The complaints were mainly against advertisers in the education, FMCG and healthcare sectors. Media and DTH also faced the heat in the April-June quarter of 2011

During the quarter April-June 2011, the Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) of the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) upheld complaints against 27 advertisements from sectors such as FMCG, education, healthcare, DTH and media. The CCC also rejected complaints against 15

advertisements as they did not violate the ASCI Code.

In the education sector, a complaint against IMS Learning Resources' advertisement claiming "8 out of 10 toppers in CBS" and other similar claims was upheld since the claims could not be substantiated with evidence validated by an independent agency. Similarly, the complaint against Roots Education's ad claiming to be the No. 1 CAT coaching centre in Delhi was upheld. The complaint against the Career Launcher ad claiming 303 calls in Delhi University (BBS/ BFIA) without mentioning whether they were final admission calls or just interview calls was also upheld. The complaint against Sri Balaji Society's ad claiming 829 students being placed from the 2009-11 batch without mentioning the total number of students was upheld on the ground that the claim contravened Section 4c of ASCI's guidelines.

ITM Institute of Fashion, Design & Technology in their advertisement stated that their study programmes are approved by PIFT and MS University, but fail to provide details like full name and location. The complaint was upheld. Similarly, ITM Institute of Hotel Management stated that their degree programme was affiliated to Mumbai University but failed to provide a specific institution or college and its location. Also, their claim of being voted 'Top Hotel Management College' of the country by 'Competition and Success Review' was not substantiated.

'High Definition' claims also came under the CCC scanner during the quarter. Dish TV's claim to offer '30 True HD channels' was rejected by CCC citing that the use of the word 'True' to denote "upscaled standard definition" channels as HD was misleading. Their claim of providing maximum number of HD channels was also challenged, stating that Dish TV can provide only a limited number of HD channels and the other "claimed" HD channels were SD channels upscaled to HD. Similarly, complaints against certain claims made by Star India in its 'AsliHD' campaign were upheld.

Advertisement claims by FMCG majors HUL, P&G, Reckitt Benckiser and Paras Pharma amongst others came under the CCC's scanner. HUL faced a complaint regarding their advertisement on a leaflet of 'Pureit Water Purifier' which contains numerous disparaging and false statements about the competitor product Tata Swach. The distribution of anti-Tata Swach danglers on Tata Swach packages by the advertiser was seen as undermining the Tata brand and an unethical trade practice. Another HUL ad that came under the scanner was the 'Axe Effect' campaign, which was

upheld on the grounds that the visual used was overtly sexual and portrayed women in an indecent manner.

The complaint against Paras Pharma's sexually explicit ad of Set Wet Deodorant was upheld on the grounds that it portrayed women as sexual tools.

Some complaints on certain claims made by P&G's Pantene Pro-V Hair Fall Control were upheld on the grounds that the depiction of a stylized golden circular drop misleads consumers into believing that 150 crore and not 15 crore women found Pantene to be effective. Moreover, P&G's claim that 80 per cent of Indian women say that the new Pantene is better than anything else they have tried before, based on a study of just 360 women, was misleading. Following the CCC's decision, P&G removed the stylized golden circular drop in the ad.

Similarly, complaints received against Reckitt Benckiser's advertisement for Dettol Skincare Soap was upheld on the ground that it was misleading consumers by wrongly linking skin condition to germs, where in reality there is no correlation between the two.

The complaint against Sundrop Heart's ad was upheld on the ground that its statement "jeenekadaarnahi, khaaneka oil badaliye" can lead consumers to believe they can neglect the importance of a healthy lifestyle by merely changing the cooking oil they use.

The complaint against an ad of International Tractors for their brand Sonalika Tractors was upheld as they used the creative property 'Mileage ka Master' of Mahindra Tractors.

The complaint against GCMF's ad claiming that Amul Butter tops the food triangle was upheld as it could mislead consumers.

A few healthcare ads also came under the scanner. A complaint was received against the Institute of Indian Therapies for their ad of 'AyuCare Lavana Tailam', which claims that the external application of oil helps reduce the size of one's stomach and lose all fat. CCC considered the report of the clinical trial submitted by the advertiser and concluded that the ad was misleading. AMA Herbal Labs ad mentioning that competitors use PPD (paraphenylenediamine), which can be harmful to the hair, was also pulled up.

The complaint against BusinessWorld magazine claiming to be the No. 1 business magazine in India was upheld as the IRS for the 3rd Quarter of 2010 showed the magazine in third place.

The complaint against Jyothy Labs's Exo Dish Shine Bar ad claiming that it can kill disease-causing germs in just 20 seconds was upheld. The

advertiser made appropriate modifications to the ad post the CCC decision.

The complaints against the Amul Body Warmer ad were upheld on the ground that the depiction of Draupadi in a frivolous manner could hurt religious sentiments, thus causing grave and widespread offence.

The complaints against claims made by Shree Maruti Herbal's D-Diabetes SMART Powder advertisement were upheld as these were not substantiated with clinical trials and technical data.

Complaints against Micromax Mobile's ad showing a student experimenting in a chemistry lab which ends in a blast were upheld as it sends a wrong message to students.

During the same quarter, the CCC did not uphold complaints against 17 advertisements including MakeMyTrip, Mankind Pharma, P&G WellaKolestint, Dabur India, McNroe Consumer Products, Royal Hygiene, Tata Chemicals, HUL's Axe Googly Deo and The Times of India, amongst others, as the concerned ads did not contravene ASCI's Codes.

Source: 29-September, 2011/ [Bestmediainfo](#)

Galvanising Russian language teaching in India

The Russian language teaching in India, which saw its heyday in the 1970s and 80s, has not received the kind of support it deserves. It's time to address the dearth of experts in Russian, says Prof. Vinay Totawar

Russian trader Afanasy Nikitin (1466-1472)'s journey to India is widely seen to be the beginning of the India-Russia ties that are blossoming today. However, the discussions at the March 2006 conference at St Petersburg on "Russia and India: St. Petersburg as a case of mutual influences through cultural interaction", traces the origin of ties to V-IV century BCE.

Russia has always had a special fondness for India. For example, Nikolai Konstantinovich Rerikh was absolutely passionate about Indian culture and loved India so much that he made India his home. On the basis of the archeological evidence collected by Viktor Viktorovich Golubev in 1911 during his scientific expedition to India, Rerikh N.K. arrives at the conclusion that "Now all the intuitions and guesses appear to be acquiring a basis. Customs, burial mounds surrounded by fencing, daily use implements, structures, details of the headgear and clothing, all the wall paintings, and finally the origins of language – all these are so close to our beginnings. In everything one feels the oneness of initial developmental path." The works of two generations of the Rerikhs (Nicholas and Svetoslav

Roerichs) and the translations of Indian epics undertaken by two generations of Barannikovs (Alekssei Petrovich and Pyotr Alekseevich Barannikovs) bear eloquent testimony to Russia's keen interest in India.

Despite such ancient cultural contacts, the history of learning and teaching of Russian in India is fairly recent. The Delhi University took the lead in starting the teaching of the Russian language in India in 1946. It was followed soon after by other departments of Russian in India: Allahabad University (1947), Osmania University (1958), and University of Poona (1964). These were part-time courses for beginners, aimed at acquainting the learner with the country, and providing access to the scientific literature available in Russian. Nevertheless, they played their role in providing India with its first Russists (specialists of Russian Language). On February 12, 1960, with the signing of an agreement on "cultural, scientific and technical cooperation", the cultural exchange between India and Russia started in earnest. Under the cultural exchange programme, in 1961-62, the first Indian students and scholars went to Russia for studies and Russian scholars and experts and teachers of Russian started visiting India. But the courses in Russian still remained part-time and optional.

The real boost to RLT in India came on October 27, 1965 with the signing of the Indo-Russian agreement to set up an Institute of Russian Studies in New Delhi. The status of Russian language courses was upgraded to that of main independent subject, marking the beginning of an era of serious study of Russian language in India. The pact envisaged the teaching of Russian language and literature, the study of life and culture of the Soviet Union, and the conduct of research work. Thus, on November 14, 1965, the Institute of Russian Studies was established by India's Ministry of Education. This institute aimed at preparing philologists, the Russian language experts and translators, thus elevating RLT to a higher level. In 1969, the institute was absorbed into Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and was rechristened as the Centre of Russian Studies, becoming a part of the School of Languages, Literature and Cultural Studies.

In November 1965, the Institute of Russian studies started a "One-Year Intensive Course in Russian" that consisted of 850-900 hours of classroom interaction. On completion of the one-year intensive course, the students were admitted to the B.A. (Hons.) in Russian, a three-year course. The first graduates passed out in 1969. The same year, the Institute of Russian Studies merged with the JNU

which started the five-year M.A. programme in 1971 and these first graduates were admitted to the 4th year of the M.A. programme. Thus, the first batch of students with a master's in Russian graduated in the year 1973. After much rethinking, the Centre of Russian Studies went on to modify their M.A. Russian programme and started a five-year integrated M.A. programme, where students, on completion of 11-12 years of schooling, obtained an M.A. degree, not in 6 years (as in case of the first batch), but in 5 years. The M.A. programme of JNU was considered to be the best in the country in terms of its design and course content.

Consequent on the 1960 agreement, there was an explosion of scientific and technical cooperation between India and Russia in the early 60s. Young India was setting up its heavy industries. The steel plants in Bhilai and Bokaro and the oil refineries in Barauni and Koyali bear testimony to this collaboration. The late 60s saw an upsurge in defence collaboration, which initially started with the purchase of equipment and culminated in the transfer of technology. To cope with the increasing demand for Russian language experts, many university departments in the country started M.A.-level programmes in Russian in the late 60s and early 70s. These included: the University of Poona, Banaras Hindu University, University of Kerala, M.S. University, Karnataka University, and Marathwada University. These M.A. programmes differed from JNU's M.A. programme as they offered an M.A. to those who had done a 2-3 year part-time course in Russian as an optional subject. The late 60s and early 70s mark the period when the first Indian philologists went to Russia for higher studies or pursue research programmes under the cultural exchange programme.

The 70s saw a market acceleration in Indo-Russian collaboration in diverse areas. From 1967 onwards, many bilateral pacts on cooperation in the field of science and technology were signed. The need for Russian language experts increased manifold. Not all students of Russian had access to the five-year M.A programme at JNU. Therefore, in 1975, the Department of Russian at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad, decided to introduce the M.A. programme by correspondence – the first Russian department in the country to do so. This was a three-year programme that followed 2 to 3 years' study of Russian as a part-time course. This correspondence-cum-attendance course consisted of four contact sessions of two months' duration. Each contact session comprised 220-240 hours of classroom interaction. This was a very popular

programme and it played a significant role in the preparation of Indian Russists.

The 70s and the 80s also witnessed a boom in the development of Russian language teaching in India. Research programmes like M.Phil and Ph.D. were started. The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) regularly conducted refresher courses for teachers of Russian. At one time, the University Grants Commission made it compulsory for teachers to attend two refresher courses in order to qualify for career advancement. Students and teachers from India visited Russia under the Cultural Exchange Programme for short- and long-term courses. Russian scientists and experts from different fields also visited India. By the 80s, about 30 universities in India were teaching Russian. By the late 80s, there were more than 400 students with an M.A., about 200 with a B.A., and about 30 Ph.Ds and M.Phils.

However, the real breakthrough came when the Integrated Long Term Programme in Technical Cooperation (ILTP) started in the 80s. This programme achieved many concrete results: 1. Setting up of an Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials in Hyderabad 2. Setting up of Bharat Immunological and Biological Cooperation Ltd. (BIBCOL) at Bulandshahr, where scientists of the two countries developed the polio vaccine 3. Setting up of Indo-Russian Centre for Advanced Computing Research at Moscow 4. Setting up of BrahMos Aerospace Private Ltd. for the production of cruise missiles, with many other similar projects in the pipeline.

Needed: TOEFL-like test in Russian

If the quality of Russian experts in the country is to improve, we should consider establishing an All-India Russian Language Testing Authority (AIRLTA), along the lines of The English and Foreign Languages University's own AIELTA – The All-India English Language Testing Authority, TOEFL, and JLPT. It could then develop and offer a Russian as a Foreign Language Proficiency Test (RAFPT).

This Testing Authority would be a component of a university, working in collaboration with the Russian Centre for Science and Culture which can administer online proficiency tests in Russian language at different levels. The EFL University in Hyderabad, in collaboration with the Russian Centre for Science and Culture, can do this job.

Scientists of both countries were now engaged in cooperative endeavours in the field of science technology and the RLT was flourishing.

And then suddenly in the 90s, RLT in India suffered a slump. The interest in Russian declined. There were several reasons: political as well as economic.

Some of these were: the boom in the field of information technology, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, lack of support from the Russian side in providing teaching materials, non-functioning of the cultural exchange programme between the two countries, adoption of a free market economy by the Russian Federation, the sudden emergence of call centre jobs, availability of jobs in the IT sector after doing courses of very short duration. This lull in RLT continued for about two decades and the quality of RLT continued to decline. Few students chose to study Russian. As a result, when the study of Russian language is picking up in the country and there is a need for specialists, we do not have any. Many universities, MSU Baroda, Kolhapur, Pondicherry University, Madras University, etc., cannot fill the posts of Russian language teachers owing to the non-availability of specialists.

Unfortunately, Russian is generally the last choice for learners. As a result, most of those who choose to study Russian are those who fail to get admission elsewhere. Hence, the dropout rate is higher and the quality of the specialists leaves much to be desired. With the adoption of a free market economy, Russia has become as lucrative and competitive a market as any other in the world. Therefore, the syndrome of choosing Russian as a last resort will certainly have to change.

Owing to politico-economical upheavals in Russia, there has been lack of support for RLT in India from the Russian side, but times are changing. Russia is stabilizing and the Russian authorities have started supporting and encouraging RLT in India. The three festivals of Russian language in the last five years at Mumbai, Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram underscore the commitment to promote the Russian language. The "Russky Mir" Foundation is becoming active. Recently, in the first week of September this year, they organized a four-day Festival of Russian Language, Literature and Science at Thiruvananthapuram, where the Russky Mir Foundation, in collaboration with the Centre for Russian Language Teaching, conferred the Esenin Award on Prof. Vinaychandran for the translation of Sergey Esenin's poems into Malayalam. The Foundation has also instituted some scholarships for the Indian students to go to Russia for studies in Russian. If such encouraging developments continue, the future of RLT in India looks bright.

It's the right time, however, to address the dearth of experts in Russian in India. Russian is as lucrative, competitive, important, necessary, and crucial as any other foreign language. Presently,

there is a dearth of experts in Russian in the country. For example, not many realize that the call centre industry requires youngsters who know Russian; we do not have them right now. The market is growing: the 15 sovereign countries that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union continue to understand and transact business in Russian. There is a formidable mass of scientific and technological information available to us in Russian. But if we are to recognise the potential of Russian, we need to stop looking at Russia through English glasses!

Source: 29 -September, 2011/ [Indurus/Associated Press](#)

India needs to produce more science PhDs to maintain growth rate'

Indian institutions produce some 1,000 basic science PhDs per year but still there is a need for 10 times the present number to maintain the present growth rate, said a report prepared jointly by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), UK, and Chemical Research Society of India in Pune on Friday at the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL).

RSC CEO Robert Parker said, "While in the UK we face budgetary restraint in higher education, in India there have been significant allocations for education and research. So a partnership at this stage is to benefit both."

He said in the next few months high-end equipment will be provided through RSC to NCL and Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune. Career development workshops for postgraduate students and workshops on drug discovery programmes, funded by RSC and the Indian pharmaceutical industry, will be held at IISER early next year.

Another major problem pointed out in the Indian context was that teaching assignments take up a high percentage of staff time because of faculty shortage following difficulties in the appointments of new faculty, thus leaving academic staff very little time for research.

After completion of the first phase of the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) in March 2011, next phase was announced earlier by both the governments. The next phase will be funded by Rs 357 millions per year from both the governments for the next three years. Some students from NCL have already gone to various UK institutions as a part of UKIERI, said NCL, Pune, director Sourav Pal.

IISER, Pune, director N K Ganesh said, "In the report, while we have studied the problems in both countries, issues specific to the Indian context have been closely looked at and analysed as we cannot

extrapolate the UK system in the Indian context. The problem that we have at hand is how to make sure the research done in labs reaches the markets. As both industry and academia in India have grown in isolation, bringing them together needs massive efforts.”

Source: 01-October, 2011/ [Indian Express](#)

Engineering education in national development

Engineering represents the single most important sector vital for national development. Expertise in engineering lies at the heart of all national development strategies as it determines the level of industrial growth as well as self-reliance in defence manufacture. The steel industry, special alloys, engineering goods, manufacture of industrial machinery, automobile manufacture, electronic, household appliances, robotics and computer science, textiles, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, industrial design – indeed every sector of the national economy depends on engineering.

The emphasis on human resource development, with a special emphasis on engineering, has resulted in the growth of a strong middle class in India that today accounts for about 32 percent of its population, which is increasing by about one percent each year. In Pakistan our neglect of education over the decades has meant a much smaller middle class, only about 12 percent of our population, which is shrinking due to increasing inflation, growing poverty, mounting debt that has doubled in the last three years and rampant corruption.

India collaborated with various technologically advanced countries to help establish seven world class engineering institutions, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in different cities of India.

The extremely poor state of our engineering universities in Pakistan in the year 2000 is reflected from the appalling fact that in the 53 years between 1947 to 2000 our nine engineering universities had together produced only about 10 PhDs in all! In comparison IIT Delhi produced 176 PhDs last year while Tsing Hua university in Beijing produces over a thousand PhDs annually. This is truly shameful for Pakistan, a country claiming to be a nuclear state. Indeed in 2003 we did not have a single genuine engineering university. They were, at best, low level colleges labelling themselves as universities.

Realising the importance of engineering education and research we created significant endowments of Rs100-200 million for every engineering university

to promote research. The key to a high quality university is faculty. Good universities are not developed by building beautiful buildings but by training and attracting highly creative and eminent faculty members. Some 11,000 scholarships were awarded, about 5,000 of them to send our brightest students to top universities in the USA, Europe, Australia and China. Almost 2,500 of these were in engineering sciences, including IT and computer sciences.

The availability of liberal research grants and other such measures resulted in a spectacular increase in international research publications from only 500 per year in the year 2000 to about 4600 per year by 2010, about a 900 percent growth. Pakistan was producing only 200 PhDs annually in 2002, but this increased to 700 PhDs per year by 2010. The PhD output of our engineering universities also grew from a total of 10 PhDs in 55 years (an average of 0.2 PhDs per year between 1947-2002) to an average of about 14 per year by 2010, a 150 fold growth.

By the year 2009, two of our engineering universities were ranked among the top 300 of the world (NUST and UET Lahore). While this represents a promising beginning, our international standing is still dismally low. All our nine engineering universities have together produced only 131 PhDs in the last seven years (an average of about two PhDs per year per university), a 70-fold lower productivity than that of IIT Delhi.

Rapid advances being made in Pakistan during 2003-2008 under the Higher Education Commission caused alarm bells to ring in India. A detailed presentation was made by Prof C N R Rao (adviser to the Indian government on Science & Technology) to the Indian prime minister about the rapid progress being made in Pakistan in the higher education sector (article by Neha Mehta “Pak Threat to Indian Science”,

<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P3-1082216661.html>). This resulted in far reaching decisions by the Indian government to accelerate the development of its higher education institutions.

Over the next five years India will establish 29 new universities and 40 new high level institutes. Nine additional IITs will be established so that India will have 16 world class IITs providing state-of-the-art engineering education.

In international rankings of engineering universities, IIT Bombay and IIT Delhi are already ranked at 47 and 52, respectively in the world while IIT Kanpur, IIT Madras and IIT Kharagpur are also ranked in the top 100.

In 2005 we embarked on an a visionary project to establish several world class engineering universities in collaboration with Germany, France, Italy, Sweden, Austria, China and Korea that would provide world-class engineering education in Pakistan with degrees being awarded by top foreign universities.

Each university was to be established in collaboration with a consortium of top foreign universities. Thus nine top German engineering universities formed a consortium of nine top German universities to establish the Pak-German university in Lahore.

Similar consortia were formed with the other countries to establish universities in Karachi, Islamabad, Sialkot, and later when the security situation improved, in Peshawar and Quetta. An attractive feature of each university was an integrated technology park in which foreign companies such as Siemens and Eriksson had agreed to establish their Research & Development Centres.

This would have led to a surge in international patents of new products and processes and a huge increase in high tech exports. Pakistani parents spend about Rs100 billion each year on sending their children to foreign universities.

Besides saving this expenditure, the scheme would have led to significant earnings of foreign exchange due to many foreign students coming to Pakistan for study.

The development schemes to establish four of these foreign engineering universities were approved by ECNEC in February 2008, and classes were scheduled to begin in October 2008. Unfortunately disaster struck.

The HEC budget was slashed in 2008, scholarships frozen and most development projects, including the establishment of the foreign engineering universities in Pakistan, halted.

A wonderful and unique opportunity to provide high quality engineering education from top foreign universities within Pakistan and to make rapid advances in industry and defence was thrown away.

When the scholarships of thousands of Pakistani students studying abroad, many in the engineering sciences, were withheld, causing huge misery in 2008, I resigned in protest in October 2008.

Things did not stop there. A notification was issued by the government on November 30th, 2010 shredding the HEC into pieces.

HEC was almost destroyed. Fortunately the Supreme Court of Pakistan accepted my appeal

and declared the government notification unconstitutional. HEC has fortunately survived this onslaught. It continues to exist and limp along under difficult financial circumstances in a hostile environment.

Source: 01-October, 2011/ [South Asian News Agency](#)

Investments key to improve education

The president of All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Organisations (AIFUCTO), A. James William, was on a visit to Coimbatore. He spoke to The Hindu-EducationPlus on issues relating to higher education.

On quality of teachers

Quality of teachers largely depends on the recruitment process. Merit is not a consideration. It is either monetary or caste-based. Once appointments are made, there is no mechanism to train teachers.

On the flip side, when the government does not appoint teachers, the management employs unqualified teachers for meagre salaries, which again puts quality of education at stake.

The Centre's moves to revitalise higher education

The recent moves of the Centre clearly show that it is increasingly favouring privatisation and centralisation of higher education. The Bills that have been introduced by Union Minister for Human Resource Development Kapil Sabil do not augur well for the economically-deprived student community. The trend is towards not only privatising colleges / universities, but also accrediting agencies.

On the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulations of Entry and Operations) Bill 2010

It will encourage sub-standard foreign institutions to enter India which will further commercialise Indian education.

The logic is that access to education will be furthered and will add to the quality. But the performance of nearly 150 such institutions that are either franchisees or functioning in tie-up with Indian institutions, as seen from a report released by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), is not up to the mark.

Their entry will neither ensure access or quality. Mr. William also opined that assessment about the real need was not made before granting permission for new colleges / courses. He said this was the main reason for a vast number of engineering, MBA, and MCA seats, going vacant during counselling to fill up government quota in colleges. The fee structure was another major deterrent.

Source: 03-October, 2011/ [The Hindu](#)

RESOURCE

Governance, corruption worry UK investors in India: Survey

Concerns over corruption and weak governance are hindering investment in India despite the country's attraction as the world's second fastest growing major economy, says a survey of British enterprises and investors operating in India.

About 41% respondents in the KPMG India survey considered India's growth as a primary driver for investment, but a majority said they are frustrated by the time taken to get approvals and clearances, particularly from state and local government departments.

"While there appear to be visible steps to control corruption, it seems to continue unabated, especially among the smaller government offices and departments," said the report, which is yet to be released but has been reviewed by Mint.

The report said that most developing economies have a number of common features, but with varying degrees of incidence, particularly in the context of the quality of infrastructure and skills; ease of investment and doing business; level of bureaucracy and corruption; political and market stability, and competitive level of cost arbitrage, among others.

"The enthusiasm and acceptance among foreign businesses to invest depends on the level of development and maturity in these areas. More often than not, a single drawback can negate the larger attractiveness of a market," the report said.

The ability of a market, particularly an emerging one, to draw an audience is based on a unique set of metrics specific to each business and its risk appetite.

"The objective of our survey was to see how India fared on some important measures, and if there is indeed a way for foreign investors to deal with some of the issues and challenges," the report added.

Steady economic growth coupled with a young population has translated into growing aspirations and consequently a large consuming middle class in India. That in turn is fuelling the demand for different customer-related services, including banking, insurance, retail and education.

Given the natural alignment of these sectors with British businesses, the Indian opportunity is quite attractive from the UK perspective, the report said.

Current statistics, however, show Britain has been relegated outside the top-tier league of India's trading partners, though bilateral investment has

picked up in the last few years. Key international deals include Tata group's acquisition of [Tetley Tea](#), Corus and [Jaguar Land Rover](#), and Vodafone's acquisition of Hutchison in India.

"When we look at the Indian liberalization process in its 20th year, a lot seems to have worked for India and it has done well on most standards of economic development," wrote Roger Pereira, co-chair of British Business Group, and Russell Parera, chief executive of KPMG in India, in the foreword of the report.

British interest in India, which earlier revolved around financial services and retail, is gradually shifting towards roads, ports, defence, innovation, education and healthcare.

The interest is currently strong, but risks waning unless India speedily resolves the issues around restrictions on foreign investments, and the uncertainty and frequency of changes in regulation, they said.

Twenty-eight percent of respondents were quite wary of regulatory uncertainties, particularly tax laws. Some initiatives such as the direct taxes code and the goods and services tax promise to lend the desired transparency and consistency and are welcome, but will have to address industry concerns and be enacted soon, the report added.

The report also suggests that investors would prefer being provided with a clear roadmap of what a particular application or approval process involves rather than having to mindlessly struggle for want of clarity.

Twenty-seven percent of participants in the survey said the weakness in physical infrastructure will be another major deterrent in India's pursuit of sustained growth.

The dearth of quality education and healthcare systems could also prove a serious concern for India and needs to be immediately addressed.

In the world of complex globalization, foreign investments have to be carefully planned so that they are not only regulation-compliant but can also be efficient from a commercial and tax perspective.

While this planning is typically based on prevalent laws and regulations, an arbitrary change in the government stand contrary to the existing law can seriously hamper the entire business case, the report said.

Source: 30 -September, 2011/[Live mint](#)

Gazing Into Higher Ed's Future

College enrollments and degree completion will continue to boom for the rest of this decade, but who enrolls (and finishes) will vary widely and,

without a major change, far too few Americans will complete college to achieve the ambitious goals that President Obama and others have set for the country.

Those are among the conclusions that might be drawn from [a series of projections](#) on educational attainment that the U.S. Education Department released on Wednesday. The report by the National Center for Education Statistics, "Projections of Education Statistics Through 2020," looks out (with full acknowledgment of [the limitations of the crystal-ball gazing](#)) at how everything from first grade enrollments through doctoral awards might look at the end of the current decade.

For colleges and universities, the news is mixed. As widely anticipated, high school enrollments will flatten; after growing 32 percent between 1995-96 and 2007-8, the number of high school graduates will drop by 3 percent from 2007-8 through 2020-21. Twenty-three states will see increases in that time, and 27 and the District of Columbia project declines.

Postsecondary enrollments will increase nonetheless, the department projects, rising 13 percent, to 23 million students, from 2009 through 2020. The dip in the number of high school graduates will be more than offset, the analysis speculates, by sharp jumps in the number of 25- to 29-year-olds. While that age cohort made up 14.6 percent of all enrollments in 2009, 25- to 29-year-olds will make up 15.3 percent of all students by 2020, the department projects. The overall enrollment increase, while sizable, would actually represent a slowing pace, as total enrollments grew by 43 percent in the period from 1995 to 2009, the analysis shows.

The age of who enrolls would not be the only factor to change meaningfully under the federal projection. The number of part-time students would increase more quickly (16 percent) than would the number of full-time students (11 percent) between 2009 and 2020, the analysis finds, and the rate of increase for Hispanic and Latino enrollments (46 percent) would greatly outpace those of other racial groups -- 25 percent for black and Asian/Pacific Islander students, 1 percent for white students, and a drop of 1 percent for American Indian or Alaska Native students.

And the gender gap, already a concern for many in higher education, would widen: with enrollments of women growing by 16 percent and men by just 8 percent, as the department projects, by 2020 women would make up 59 percent of all postsecondary students, up from the current 57.1 percent.

(One piece of potentially interesting information that cannot be gleaned from the current report is whether the government expects the recent growth of for-profit colleges to continue. The report lumps for-profit and private nonprofit colleges together in a "private" category, and projects that those institutions will stay level (at 27.5 percent) in the percentage of all students they enroll. William Hussar, an economist at the statistics center, said via e-mail that its officials did not believe that their statistical models were "adequately capturing the historic trends of the data" on for-profit enrollments, so "we decided not to include these projections.")

The best news in the report for colleges and universities -- and policy makers concerned about increasing postsecondary attainment -- is that it projects the number of degrees conferred to rise sharply. Under the government's analysis, American colleges and universities would award significantly more of all types of degrees, as seen in the table below:

Postsecondary Degrees Conferred, Actual and Projected

	2008-09 (actual)	2020-21 (projected)	% Change
Associate	787325	994,000	26%
Bachelors	1,601,368	1,945,000	21%
Masters	656,784	865,000	32%
Doctoral	67,716	106,100	57%
First- Professional	92,004	119,200	30%

But those increases, while sizable, are almost certainly insufficient to reach the ambitious college completion goals that President Obama, along with several leading foundations and a veritable chorus of nonprofit groups, have embraced as a national higher education strategy. Groups like the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems have said that the attainment rate needs to grow by about 4.5 percent a year to reach the degree attainment rate of roughly 60 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds having a meaningful college credential. The rate projected by the department, of roughly 25 percent over 12 years, does not come close.

Dewayne Matthews, vice president for policy and strategy of the Lumina Foundation for Education, conceded that the numbers as presented suggest a steep hill to climb for the completion goals that his group and others have championed. But he said the data are unlikely to have captured several factors that are likely to push college-credential-attainment numbers higher, including intensified interest in the awarding of work force-relevant certificates, the

boom in college enrollments in the last three years (only some of which, Matthews said, is directly related to the recession), and recent sharp rises in Latino enrollments.

If colleges and universities can capitalize on those rising enrollments by ensuring that a higher proportion of the students they enroll leave with meaningful credentials, the attainment goals may be within reach after all, Matthews said. "You have this benefit of lots of people now going to college, including underrepresented students," he said. "If we could in fact get more degree yield out of those people, by making real progress on completion, we could get double benefit

Source: 30 -September, 2011/[Inside higher education](#)

New Study Reveals Dramatic 20-Year Growth In Certificates, Degrees Awarded By Community Colleges

Minority Students Show Triple-Digit Increases in Credentials Earned

Attainment of credentials -- certificates and degrees -- at community colleges has seen triple-digit increases over the last two decades, especially among minority students, and far outpaces growth in enrollment, according to new policy brief released this week by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

For the first time, the study disaggregates data related to credential attainment at community colleges and in so doing paints a more positive assessment of student success, revealing a 127% increase in total credentials earned at community colleges between 1989-90 and 2009-2010. In 2009-2010 alone, community college students earned more than 1 million credentials.

One of the most compelling findings of The Road Ahead: A Look at Trends in the Educational Attainment of Community College Students is the growing importance of 1- and 2-year certificates, a presumed response to market demand for greater flexibility and shorter training intervals.

The AACC study cites previous research that indicates by 2018, the United States will need to fill 46.8 million jobs. Of those, 30 million will require some form of postsecondary education, and, at current levels of production, the supply of workers with postsecondary credentials will fall short by 7.7 million. As the demographics of the nation's population change, increased educational attainment among all ethnic and racial groups is necessary to meet the demands of the future workforce.

Among the largest increases in earned credentials the AACC study notes are a 440% increase among

Hispanic students and a 283% increase among Black students. Triple-digit increases also exist for Asian/Pacific Islander students and American Indian/Alaska Native students. Credential attainment among White students increased 90% in that same time frame.

Despite large increases in credential attainment for non-White populations, the brief acknowledges historical gaps in attainment still need to be addressed.

The reasons for the dramatic increases aren't easily identifiable, AACC analysts say, though the persistent U.S. economic recession did spark double-digit enrollment increases at community colleges in recent years.

Community college students also are transferring to 4-year institutions at a higher rate than has been previously reported. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) indicated that 15.7% of students in a 2003 cohort transferred to another institution within 3 years of beginning at a community college. However, a study by the National Center for Education Statistics reported that number was at nearly 30%, and it increased to 50% after 6 years.

Difficulty in verifying transfers and in accessing student-level data contribute to the data discrepancy, as well as the fact that community colleges are unable to count transfers if the student earned a credential before transferring for IPEDS reporting.

Perhaps one of the biggest considerations when looking at transfer and completion rates, though, is time. Because 84% of community college students work at least part time and many have children or family responsibilities, the time it takes to meet their educational objectives is lengthened, and their success often cannot be accurately gauged in typical 3-year studies.

The need to increase completion rates has spurred several recent initiatives at community colleges. Colleges are streamlining student choices, altering developmental education instruction, and collaborating among themselves to share knowledge and best practices. They also are relying on data to make informed decisions.

In response to challenges from the Obama administration and leading philanthropists, AACC and other community college-focused organizations committed, in 2010, to take action to increase by 50% the number of certificates and degrees awarded by community colleges by 2020.

The full policy brief is available at www.aacc.nche.edu. The brief was funded in part by



Lumina Foundation for Education
(www.luminafoundation.org).

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the American Association of Community Colleges is the leading advocacy organization representing close to 1,200 community, junior and technical colleges nationwide. Community colleges are the largest sector of higher education, enrolling 13.4 million credit and non-credit students each year. To learn more about the AACC, visit www.aacc.nche.edu

Lumina Foundation, an Indianapolis-based private foundation, is committed to enrolling and graduating more students from college—especially 21st century students: low-income students, students of color, first-generation students and adult learners. Lumina's goal is to increase the proportion of Americans who hold high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina pursues this goal in three ways: by identifying and supporting effective practice, through public policy advocacy, and by using our communications and convening power to build public will for change.

Source: 30 -September, 2011/[PRNewswire-USNewswire/ American Association of Community Colleges](http://PRNewswire-USNewswire/AmericanAssociationofCommunityColleges)

Contribute

If you are an academican, 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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