



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

NOBEL LAUREATES' VIEWS ON HIGHER VIEWS ON HIGHER

Prof. Werner Arber, Nobel Laureate in Medicine

Until a few centuries ago, traditional universities educated their students to become generalists possessing wide fields of knowledge on cultural values and on their relevance for society, but with the gradual increase in the knowledge base and the increasing sophistication of research, specialization has led to a splitting into increasingly separate disciplines. However, the problems to be tackled in research are often of quite a complex nature. This requires the contribution of knowledge from a number of different disciplines. A return to the education of generalists is no solution. The solution is interdisciplinary cooperation between different specific disciplines. Therefore, higher education should

focus on three goals to be reached by the students: (1) excellence in one or a very few scientific disciplines; (2) transdisciplinary competence through having a general knowledge on other scientific disciplines that enables them to carry out interdisciplinary cooperation; and (3) interdisciplinary experience through involvement in cooperative studies.

The principle source of innovation resides in the acquisition of new scientific knowledge. Bursts of new scientific knowledge are often generated by novel research strategies of cross-disciplinary relevance. Scientific knowledge represents cultural values that may be with regard to useful technological applications and/or with regard to our world view. Updating the world view of the civil society is an important interdisciplinary task, since the accepted world view provides the knowledge that acts as a guideline for taking social responsibility both for technological applications and for political guidelines to be introduced. We must be aware that technological applications of available knowledge and political decisions often lead to a specific shaping of the future. In democratic societies this should not solely remain in the hands of a few promoters of a sometimes irreversible development. Rather, the civil society should take co-responsibility in the shaping of its own future and that of the environment, taking into account the justified request for sustainability.

This tremendous task of society requires an ever more intensive interdisciplinary scientific cooperation. The author illustrates the validity of this general scheme by referring to novel knowledge in life sciences and its biotechnological applications.

Prof. José Saramago, Nobel Laureate in Literature

I believe that this is a good opportunity to clarify the meaning of two concepts that are often mixed up: education and instruction. As I understand it, schools are

in no position to educate; at most, and in the best of cases, they can instruct. I believe that one of the biggest misapprehensions of our times – which is largely a consequence of the severe crisis the family is currently undergoing – is to think that schools, from nursery and primary to more advanced levels in education, are under the obligation to give students grounding in civic matters. It seems obvious to me that in order to do so, besides the lack of time there is also a lack of training. A final analysis would suggest that it is society as a whole that should be reformed, although that raises the inevitable question: how?

I suppose that the first and inevitable step would be to objectively analyse the basis of modern-day democracies and the way they are run. This would show – and I firmly believe this – that a perverse system is to be found at the root of all evil, which with each passing day refuses to accept itself as it is and that has become the perfect breeding ground for indifference and apathy, for selfishness in all of its manifestations, whether individual or collective.

The next step, which transforms aggressive behaviour into the social norm, has already been taken. Unfortunately, this is what we are now experiencing. We can always repair the roof over our heads to stop the rain from getting in, but if we do not look after the foundations, sooner or later the house will cave in – with us in it.

Prof. Vernon L. Smith, Nobel Laureate in Economics

The reduction and ultimate elimination of world poverty is the pre-eminent socioeconomic priority. This truth must be part of the university's commitment to the development and dissemination of human knowledge. Educational institutions must emphasize the distinction between 'knowing that' and 'knowing how', recognizing that the world's work is done by people who 'know how'. The great secret of wealth creation, the origin of all human betterment and poverty reduction, is through economic specialisation and the personal and impersonal exchange systems that enable specialisation to occur.

Education must support policies that promote free trade and migration of all peoples toward the end of maximizing individual opportunities for self development and learning. Regulations that interfere with the free movement of goods and people can only make all peoples poorer. Just as capitalist welfare systems have failed to deliver programmes that help the poor to help themselves escape the cycle of subsidization and dependence to become self-sustaining; so has socialist rhetoric, while championing the poor, failed to create the substance of economic growth and human betterment.

With these ends in mind how should we finance the public university? The first and most important source is tuition,



which should be set at levels that reflect the full cost of education, with scholarships that assure that no qualified student is denied entrance because he/she is too poor to pay. Any approach based on low tuition across the board simply subsidizes the rich. Neither should the public university rely only on the public funding of research and creativity in literature and the arts. The formation of niche foundations should be encouraged to support specialized research and education programmes that accommodate donor intent and faculty whose creativity attracts niche supporters.

Also, in my area of research there are many commercial and industrial sources of funds interested in the kind of new market management systems that we create. Our requirement is that if a company seeks to assist in the funding of a project, the information we generate cannot be proprietary only for that company. We will expect to publish our research results, and make the data available to students, others in the university, and the public.

Prof. Wole Soyinka, Nobel Laureate in Literature

I suspect that we all share, in various degrees of course, the age-old dream of the alchemist. So for that alchemical concentrate – also known sometimes as the philosopher's stone – let us simply substitute this invisible, magical, lonely herb, hiding somewhere in Barcelona or in Abeokuta, my own hometown, simply awaiting discovery.

The functions are the same. And how may it be discovered? Only by the inculcation of the constantly receptive mind and opportunities of contact with new environments. That inculcation, that exposure is a function of both scientists and the humanities. This is the zone where education impinges on daily experience and the opportunity for such experiences. In essence, it is an expansion of that striking phrase from the rector's communication – which was sent to some of us – in which he argues for a principle that demonstrates, and I quote, 'the efficacy of a more conceptual and formative, less memory-based secondary education'.

I translate that ambition as one that includes, indeed necessitates, exposure, inclusivity, physical wherever possible, but at the very least textual and conjectural – this, after all, is the function of libraries, including today's virtual libraries, another actualization of what was once pure science fiction. What happens, however, if the opportunity is foreclosed, if exposure to knowledge between, shall we, say my brother's backyard and that of the rector of this university shuts off, and one remains inaccessible to the other.

Source: [upccommens](#)

NEWS

Kalam bats for women, seeks 30% representation

Former President of India APJ Abdul Kalam has said women should get at least 30 per cent representation in Parliament. Addressing a meeting after inaugurating 'Sidhi-2020', vocational training programme of National Service Scheme (NSS), in Kochi on Saturday, Kalam said women were performing well in almost all sectors.

In the education sector, and various work places, women have been performing as well as men, he said. "I have visited various school-level competition venues. And in most places, girls have bagged eight of the ten gold medals. In panchayat and municipal governing bodies, women have 30% representation, why not in Parliament too," Kalam asked.

Source: December 18, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Teachers' body resents panel on higher education

Taking strong exception to the proposed creation of an authority on higher education under the direct control of the state government, the Federation of University Teachers' Associations of Bihar (Futab) has urged the authorities concerned to reconsider the issue in the larger interest of higher education.

Futab working president Kanhaiya Bahadur Sinha and general secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh described the proposed legislation as an attempt to curtail the autonomy of universities. They recalled that the superseded Inter University Board (IUB) was working well as a link between the chancellor, universities and the state government. All the three stakeholders used to refer academic, administrative and statutory issues to the IUB for seeking its advice, framing of drafts etc, with the final order being passed by the chancellor on the advice of the government.

Source: December 18, 2011/[Times of India](#)

UC Berkeley Brings Continuing Education to India via Partnership with Seer Akademi

Last week I was privileged to attend a special event on continuing education hosted by Indian Semiconductor Association (ISA). The presenters included the Vice-Chancellor of UC Berkeley (Frank Yeary), Dean of Continuing and Distance Education (Dr. Diana Wu), Gujarat Technological University's (GTU's) Vice Chancellor (Dr. Akshai Aggarwal), Seer Akademi's Srikanth Jadcherla, and Stanford University's Asia Pacific Research Center head (Dr. Rafiq Dossani) who was presenting remotely from California.

Every year, India enrolls about 1.5 million people in engineering. Very soon, we will have 15 million people accumulated in the technical work force. 90% of this workforce will have only a bachelor's degree, unable to rise up the career ladder and unable to exit laterally due to the current regulatory regime of higher education. We have nothing short of a demographic time bomb in the white-collar segment ahead of us. In United States, continuing education is what enables people move up the value chain, helping them make lateral entries into related fields and to keep up with recent trends and technologies.

Stanford's Dossani seemed the most educated about the trends and state of Indian education. He presented some depressing insights that set the context for why the Indian higher education system needed a serious upgrade. The biggest difference between the American and Indian education systems is the teaching style. On average, Indian engineering students spend 30 hours/week compared to 25 for American students. 58% of Indian students' time is spent listening to lectures – the corresponding percentage for American students is 15%. American students spend 40% of the time (and Indian students spend a mere 3%) working on group projects. The duration of self-directed work by American students is also much higher than that for Indian students. Dossani believes that these differences are the main reason why Indian students score Low and American students score High on the key measure of Application of Technical Concepts.

Against this backdrop, it was exciting to hear that UC Berkeley, a public American university with 125 academic departments and 48 out of its 52 graduate departments in the Top 10, is bringing its continuing education programs to India. UC Berkeley's continuing education program got its start in 1891 (that's right! 120 years ago) through a public lecture in San Francisco. Today, Berkeley Continuing Education offers 80 professional certificates and 1600+ instructors make up their faculty. In India, education policy is predominantly a "state subject" on the "concurrent list" which means that both the central government have a role and no state has been visionary enough to permit foreign university brands to establish a presence in India. Partly to work around India's policy restrictions and, perhaps more importantly, riding an early trend in higher education, Berkeley has partnered with Seer Akademi, a platform leader that brings any world-class instructor to any classroom in India.

Alignment of Visions

While UC Berkeley's continuing education curriculum spans the entire gamut of their 125 departments, GTU's and Seer Akademi's immediate interests lie in engineering education, specifically electronics education. In our previous coverage of Seer Akademi, Creating a Nation of Electronic Geeks, we wrote about their vision to make India self-sufficient in electronics through education, research, and enterprises. GTU's vision is to make GTU a hub of research, technology, and entrepreneurship. Yeary talked about Berkeley's mission to empower human capital at scale and noted that its commitment to access and excellence provides a strong cultural foundation for collaboration with India.

Course Delivery and Flexible Enrollment

The three-way relationship between Seer Akademi, GTU and UC Berkeley sets a path-breaking template for online-offline delivery of higher education content. UC Berkeley Continuing Education instructors would use the Seer Akademi Webex-based platform for lecture delivery and interactions with students, combined with Seer's local faculty. GTU plans to create flexible programs for working professionals to mix and match these courses and certificates and obtain degrees – what you are about to see is an unprecedented flexibility for the Indian techie – degree/non degree objectives multiplied by technical vs. interdisciplinary vs. management course mixtures. The aim is to provide upward and lateral mobility to the tech-hungry to go further in his or her career. Berkeley's continuing education program (in US) is very flexible in that a student can enroll for a course or a multi-course certificate program, and the student drives the pace of enrolling for courses. The Berkeley-Seer-GTU program plans to retain that flexibility.

Key UC Berkeley Stats (Courtesy: Frank Yeary)

25,500 undergraduates

10,300 pursuing graduate degrees

Most Top 10 Departments in the US (48 out of the 52 graduate programs)

Educating more students from low-income families than all eight Ivy-league universities and Stanford combined

7,500 courses in 354 degree programs

Produces more Ph.D's annually than any other American university

Key Seer Akademi Stats (Courtesy: Srikanth Jadcherla)

Patent-pending Global Classroom model which allows top instructors from the US to teach up to 200 locations simultaneously with local ground support for students

India's first PPP program, India's first Washington Accord compatible program, India's only enterprise grade IC design Lab, India's largest collection of IC design software

India's first program to use a ratio of 1:2 for lectures vs. practicals by regulation

Successful incubation model – two ventures about to hit revenue and spin-off; three more in the pipeline.

Source: December 18, 2011/[Tech Sangam](#)

India Set to Alter Key Provisions in Bill to Allow Campuses Owned by Foreign Universities

To attract more top-quality institutions, India's education ministry is set to change provisions in its proposed bill to allow foreign universities to set up campuses in India, reports the *Indian Express*. A parliamentary committee reviewing the legislation recommended the changes, which include a provision that would create a committee of academic experts that would invite elite universities to India, allowing them to bypass some bureaucratic hurdles.

The revisions also would make sure new campuses aren't only established in cities and to smooth the entry of certificate providers. For example, the bill in its current form requires all foreign higher-education providers to invest at least \$10-million to establish operations in India. Under the revisions, that amount would be lowered to \$4-million for institutions offering certificates or similar qualifications.

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

Tata Interactive not averse to enter higher education

Tata Interactive Systems (TIS), engaged in e-learning and simulations, is focussing on delivering solutions in various aspects of school functioning, including efficiency and audit, on the lines of corporate world.

TIS, which entered the school education segment through the launch of Classedge, a comprehensive educational solution for schools, is not averse to entering the higher education segment. It has already examined vocational training segment involving high schools and colleges. Launched with an initial investment of Rs. 100 crore from the Tata Group, the TIS will not have any fund constraint for expansion, as and when it is taken up.

"We don't want to remain as just content supplier. We are looking at what will be the better sequence in the longer term for expanding our footprint in developing the initiative as a model of excellence,"

TIS Chief Executive Sanjaya Sharma said. Serious exercise was under way about the course of action to be adopted in the next decade.

Mr. Sharma told *The Hindu* that TIS would continue to focus on content development for schools. The institution was roping in at least 40 new schools, predominantly those in the private sector, every week with a dedicated sales team of 200 people spread over 150 cities. "Why shouldn't the government schools leverage technology? The demand will come from every school in a couple of years," he averred.

TIS had plans to enhance its headcount to 600 to establish leadership position in the supplemental education which registered double-digit growth annually in the last five years and reportedly had a potential market of \$15 billion.

TIS planned to utilise its expertise and resources for making school education more interactive and lively.

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

India's Minister for Foreign Affairs University Campus

Higher Education, the same rules vary in different colleges, universities, and kept open. Of all the Indian universities are a good choice because of financial support for international students is the enemy.

Most universities offer higher education programs related to different disciplines. If you are looking for overseas training, you'll want to check the programs, financial aid and tariff structure. It is not deemed universities continue to use it as a separate subject in North America. Computer Engineering and Computer Science deals with one topic. The terms "school" clubs together with universities and secondary schools alike. On the contrary, some overseas universities consider teaching basic courses such as Bachelor's degree, while the courses dealt with Masters levels.

University entrance examinations to higher education in India, and requests for approval of foreign university entrance exams.

same rules vary in different colleges, universities are open to the university. Requirements also vary depending on courses that the student is interested in, and the school where the student applies. Some of the common exams are TOEFL, SAT, ACT and undergraduate programs, while the Joint Admission Test and the GMAT for further studies in North America. The most common tests include all India Engineering entrance exam in India and so on.

Whether you want to study in India, or through the Open University in foreign universities, financial aid is one of the most important conditions to check.

there is no government-funded facilities to support higher education in foreign universities. The cost of education and international universities are high compared to India, where the government is pushing for schools to set a heavy cost. Although the privately-run schools to cut the different fees, costs remain high. The foreign training requires careful selection of colleges are looking for a solid financial support for international students to offer. In addition, some countries such as Canada does not allow students to work, exacerbating the financial provision. U.S. to give international students on campus and off campus, which will help the training and funding.

Student visas are not working, so make sure you go through the provisions of the land which you are looking for. In addition, your visa expires after the training is not only abroad, so that you can apply for a work permit to continue working in the country.

Consider the most viable alternatives that fit your case, when all of higher education is important for a better career opportunity.

Source: December 20, 2011/Armadillolearningzone.com

Mexus Education bags E-India 2011 award In Best Content Category

Over last seven years, E-India Awards have been acknowledging the best ICT practices and the practitioners integrating communication technology with education, health and governance.

Mexus Education, an education innovations company, has been announced as the winner of the Best Digital Content category for its comprehensive, engaging content – ‘Iken Library’ at the E-India Awards 2011 held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Iken Library and its content have been acknowledged as the Best ICT enabled digital content for K-12 Education. Conceptualized and developed by Mexus Education, Iken Library offers to teachers the choice to teach a lesson through movies, mind maps, animations and many more formats that best suit their teaching style.

Over last seven years, E-India Awards have been acknowledging the best ICT practices and the practitioners integrating communication technology with education, health and governance. E-India conference has served a platform to discuss to share knowledge, ideas and concepts among the stakeholders of ICT driven governance, health and education with Hon’ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, as the chief guest at the conference. E-India 2011 garnered interest and active participation from all the leaders of digital education space as well as the cadre of ministry of Gujarat.

Mexus Education has won this award based on a rigorous selection and due diligence process evaluated by a panel of eminent academicians and Indian Education experts. Distinguished jury from across the education, health and ministry reviewed the nominations on the basis of the how the concept has created innovation benchmarks in Indian Education, its replication to connect with children across the nation, mitigating inception roadblocks and adaptability with current practices and teacher’s capabilities. The panel of jury included Shakila Shamsu – Former Joint Advisor – Education, Planning Commission, Prof Arun Nigavekar – Raja Ramanna Fellow and Former Director, Rita Wilson – Former Deputy Secretary, Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations and Prof Ajoy Kumar Ray – Vice Chancellor, Bengal University.

The Best Digital Content award category received nominations from the noteworthy players of the industry including Educomp Solutions Pvt. Ltd., HCL Learning Systems, NIIT Limited, Next Education Pvt. Ltd. and Pearson Education services.

Speaking at the event, Anil Goyal, Director – Strategy and Business Development, Mexus Education said, “Mexus is striving constantly to help schools in connecting better with students with initiatives and products like Iken Library. We work with an objective of engaging students in the lessons through stories around every-day situation of children and through the comic characters. Children relate to these characters and learn better the concept, enhancing the active participation in classrooms and the recall of the concepts.”

E- India awards thus, have reinstated the need to consider the learning techniques that involve and engage children in ensuring that children learn without having to go through the stress of studying. It is necessary to have global orientation and be prepared to evolve with changing trends and patterns. To cope with changing times; an Indian education must instill in students the capacity of shifting and changing to constantly develop new skills and attitudes which in essence is capability of learning.

Source: December 20, 2011/Live Mint

PCI soon to release new education regulation with focus on science-centric curriculum in D Pharm

The Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) will soon come out with a new education regulation 2011 to update the syllabus of Diploma in Pharmacy (D Pharm) which is to be implemented from next academic year. The Council has completed the preparation of the syllabus and will now submit the same for

clearance from the ministry of health and family welfare by the month end.

The last regulation was implemented in 1991. Going by the changes in the pharma sector, we need to upgrade the education standards of D Pharm as the industry is looking for candidates from this specialization, PCI president Dr B Suresh told Pharmabiz.

Although PCI has mandated the need for B Pharm as the basic qualification for entry into the industry, there is considerable demand for diploma holders not just by the pharmacy trade but by the industry too. The current pharmacy education regulation is almost two-decades-old and the practises are out-dated. This called for a need to revise the existing pharmacy's education standards with the inclusion of the latest industrial and hospital pharmacy practices, he added.

In order to address the challenges of international quality by 2020, there is an urgent need to restructure the pharmacy education and scope of pharmacist and reengineer pharmacy education. This is where the revised pharmacy new regulation 2011 will give a fillip to the standard of syllabus and course curricula, said Dr. Suresh.

In this regard, PCI is looking into devising a competency framework to ensure a quality assurance system, and building academic and institution capacity, among others, he informed.

“Pharmacy educational systems and pharmacy institutions which are designed for a by-gone age have to realize the need to reshaping into learning organizations, where conversations on how actionable change is brought about in a global perspective, that benefits the learner and teacher, customer and expert, have become more important,” said Dr. Suresh.

India has experienced an expansion of its pharmacy educational centres but an uneven distribution has left poorer states with proportionally fewer colleges and the quality of the education is variable. Presently pharmacy education in the area of D Pharm has 660 colleges with an effort to increase to 72 additional colleges taking the student strength from the current 39,147 to an additional 4,280 taking the total number of candidates to 43,427. In B Pharm, there are 837 colleges with an additional 423 coming in which would take the total from 36,238 to 61,573 candidates. There is considerable interest evinced by the industry to hire D Pharm and B Pharm candidates.

As clinical services provided by pharmacists are fairly new to India, which has traditionally been industry-focused in its pharmacy degree

programmes, there is also a shortage of clinical pharmacy trainers. There are approximately 50 pharmacists per 100,000 people at present, with a large urban-rural disparity.

Therefore we need to expand the D Pharm candidates who are currently manning pharmacy stores. Moreover, keeping in sync with the Pharmacy New Education Regulation 2011, we need to fit in community pharmacy not just for drug dispensing but also with focus on community and industrial pharmacy. The curriculum will move from patient-centric to science-centric touching up need for drug safety. In fact, the 2011 regulations will arm the D Pharm candidate with confidence of authority to create an indispensable role in the healthcare space, said Dr Suresh who is also chairman, scientific body, Indian Pharmacopoeia and Vice Chancellor, JSS University, Mysore.

Source: December 20, 2011/Pharmabiz.com

CMAT 2012 Not Mandatory For MBA / PGDM Admissions

Earlier announcement from AICTE on [CMAT 2012](#) was either misinterpreted or wrongly quoted; the apex body of technical and management education (AICTE) has clarified (to PaGalGuY.com) that CMAT 2012 is not a compulsory test for business school admissions commencing from next academic year.

CMAT (The Common Management Aptitude Test) proposed by AICTE will only be one among the several other management entrance exams such as [MAT](#), [XAT](#), [GMAT](#) etc. The clarification will make business schools breathe easy as they don't have to do away with their preplanned activities for selecting students.

For business school aspirants it is a choice!

Source: December 20, 2011/Blog Carrer Mitra

IBM teams up with universities in India and globally

In India, IBM is working with faculty members from 500 universities to help more than 30,000 students develop skills in predictive analytics.

IBM Teams with 500 Universities in India in First-of-a-Kind Faculty Development Program to Build Skills for a Smarter Planet; Students in China, Ireland and Scotland to also Gain by Studying How Analytics Applies to Industries

To address a growing market demand for analytics savvy graduates, IBM is working with universities around the world to bring advanced analytics training directly into the classroom. The company is expanding its Academic Initiative for business analytics with new programs in India, China, Ireland and Scotland, helping students keep pace with

today's competitive job market by gaining skills in this fast-growing field of technology.

In India, IBM is working with faculty members from 500 universities to help more than 30,000 students develop skills in predictive analytics. As part of the program, IBM will conduct a series of training programs with business school faculty concentrating on predictive and business analytics, in 15 major cities throughout the country of India. The faculty members will complete a certification process in analytics at the end of the program.

Once certified they will begin to teach students about how analytics can be applied to their topic of study. The learning will involve access to predictive analytics technology and will focus on how to act on the results the analytics technology uncovers.

I have been using IBM predictive analytics technology in a number of programs at Indian Institute of Management Calcutta," said Sahadeb Sarkar, Professor, Operations Management Group, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM). "I hope this initiative will help teachers in universities to learn and include analytics in existing courses and design new curriculum that will help students gain a top-notch education to meet the demands of today's businesses and government organizations."

Everyday people create the equivalent of 2.5 quintillion bytes of data from sensors, mobile devices, online transactions, and social networks; so much that 90 percent of the world's data has been generated in the past two years. This amounts to more data than organizations can effectively use without applying analytics. The new programs are providing students and faculty members, regardless of their course of study, with access to the latest software capabilities and thinking on how advanced analytics can be applied to tackle complex business and societal challenges.

According to the 2010 IBM Institute for Business Value and MIT Sloan Management Review study of nearly 3,000 executives worldwide, the biggest challenge is the lack of understanding in how to use analytics to gain insights that can improve business outcomes. In response to market demand, universities are incorporating analytics curricula and courseware into a variety of degree programs to educate college students in this growing field.

The University of West Scotland is introducing several new courses to its School of Computing curriculum including data mining, business intelligence and knowledge management. Plans to expand the analytics course offerings to non-IT and non-finance students are underway.

"Beyond teaching business and IT skills, we are preparing students for future job opportunities with new analytics courses," said Professor Malcolm Crowe, University of West Scotland. "The University of West Scotland is adding new courses in direct response to the recommendations of regional employers. They have specifically advised the School of Computing that important computing skills such as business analytics are in demand and will help graduates secure jobs."

Xi'an Jiao Tong University in China, together in cooperation with IBM's China Development Lab in Xi'an, has developed business analytics oriented curriculum, project training materials, and planned a series of technical salon and master speech focus on analytics. These activities cover Cognos, SPSS and many best practices and tips integrated and tailored by the China Development Lab, and this analytics curriculum is planned to be replicated to six other Chinese universities in the future. This promotion of business analytics techniques and tools will enable a new generation of students, helping the Xi'an Lab with a pipeline of students with necessary skills, and will help to build up the business analytics ecosystem in China.

At the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland's largest university, students are using analytics software in a variety of application areas allowing them to collect hidden data and applying knowledge that seemed impossible to find before that can now be uncovered.

These universities join schools around the world including Northwestern University, Yale School of Management, Fordham University, DePaul University, University of Southern California and University of Ottawa Telfer School of Management that are working with IBM to develop and implement undergraduate and graduate curriculum and training on business analytics.

Some of the early analytics projects underway at the university level were inspired by IBM's Watson technology – the most advanced analytics technology currently available. Through the development of Watson, IBM sparked the interest of many students in the areas of math and computer science. IBM has teamed with universities to work on the sophisticated technology associated with Watson's deep-Question and Answer capabilities, giving more than 10,000 students exposure to analytics technology.

"Through IBM's Academic Initiative, universities are adding analytics to their course offerings, establishing new degree programs and now we are seeing acceleration in global demand for training in analytics," said Himanshu Goyal, Country Manager

Academic & Developer Relations, Career Education & Localization, IBM India/SA. "By combining IBM's leadership in analytics with its global reach, we will begin to bridge the gap between to better-equip students for new job opportunities."

Through its Academic Initiative, IBM is making its software, courseware and curricula available to nearly 6,000 universities and more than 30,000 faculty to advance technology skills.

Source: December 21, 2011/India Info line.com

Super education regulator gets cabinet approval

A single over-arching independent body in place of multiple higher education regulators to promote academic excellence and research was approved by Union Cabinet on Tuesday almost three years after the idea was born.

The National Council for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), which will subsume existing regulators such as University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), will cover all streams of higher education except medical and agriculture.

Agriculture being a state subject cannot be covered under a Central law and Health Ministry opposed inclusion of medical in NCHER. The Cabinet recently approved a similar body for medical education.

The council will be 70 member body have representation from states and for professional bodies to decide on policy issues. The NCHER Bill proposes to have an 11 member executive committee to execute the decisions of the council.

The draft bill provide mandate to the council to bring reforms in higher education for setting up quality institutions across India with an aim to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio to 30 % by 2020 from 20 % in 2010.

There are over 11 million students pursuing higher education in more than 600 universities and 24,000 colleges. In the next five years, government expects new 700 universities and 10,000 colleges mostly by the private sector.

To achieve this, the council is expected to shift from multiple approval based approach to self-regulation based on accreditation. The new council would also prescribe academic and research quality norms from a university to a college for accreditation purpose

The council will also disburse the budget for higher education to institutions based on based on performance, in place of the existing demand driven practice. It will have powers to decide the

curriculum of different streams of higher education and research.

NCHER will, however, not be a Constitutional status as recommended by Professor Yash Pal in his report in 2009 but would be an independent statutory body outside the purview of the HRD ministry. "It will be a body of academics for academics," a government official commented.

Source: December 21, 2011/Hindustan Times

Less policing for higher education centres from 2012

Higher education will soon move from inspector raj to self-regulation with heavy penalty for telling a lie.

The two higher education regulators - All India Council for Technical Education and University Grants Commission --- will be moving from the regime of conducting inspections to grant approvals to new courses or for up-gradation of facilities to self-disclosure linked with national accreditation.

"We have provided the self-disclosure statements of over 10,000 institutions on our portal from next year for people to find out what the institutions are claiming is correct or not," said AICTE chairman SS Mantha.

It would be the council's first major step moving towards the new approval process.

Mantha said the council will trust the institutions for what they say. "Inspection will be conducted only on basis of a complaint," he said.

The University Grants Commission also aims to move towards a more transparency approval process and fund disbursement mechanism based on accreditation of the institution.

Both the regulators in past have received flak for imposing an inspector raj in the approval process resulting in allegations of corruption. The AICTE, in particular, was in the spot but with online system the instances of alleged corruption have come down.

"Inspection and approval regimes promote corruption and sloth. We need to move away this paradigm to authentication and automatic approvals," said a working group report prepared by the HRD ministry for the 12th five year plan.

The reforms in the approval process have been pending for long but now the government has decided to act as the basic ground work has been done. Data of most of the institutions are now available online with the regulatory bodies.

The ministry also wants to move from demand based grants to institutions of higher education to entitlement based with measurable outcome.

"Central funds cannot be right of an institution," a senior government official said.

"The institutions should compete for the Central government funds".

The UGC administers over 75 schemes of funding to Central and State Universities.

"The process of approval and sanction is not only time consuming, it also suffers from opaqueness and prolixity. Several schemes are delayed and never achieve intended results," the ministry document for the 12th plan had said, while urging for changing in fund disbursement system.

Under the new regime, the Central Universities will get up to 100% of their entitlement and the state universities not more than 75%. There will be financial incentive for institutions to set up campuses in educationally backward regions.

Source: December 21, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

Quantity prevails at the cost of quality in colleges

The city may be envied for hosting institutions like the Indian Institute of Science, Indian Institute of Management and National Institute of Fashion Technology. Yet quantity rules over quality when it comes to higher education in the city. Although colleges are in abundant number, most of them lack infrastructure and quality teaching staff.

Academics' description that there are more colleges than students in the city is not really an exaggeration. They also point out that there is not much hard sell happening regarding the city's higher educational facilities.

"The atmosphere for higher education is good in Bangalore. Stringent rules and regulations in admission process are still adhered to. There is no flexibility, which does drive students away. On the contrary, there are a large number of institutions in places like New Delhi, Pune and Chennai, which boast of being student friendly. Lackadaisical approach towards spreading awareness about colleges in Bangalore is another area of concern," said M Prakash, secretary, Karnataka Private Post Graduate College Association.

"Although the city has always been recognized for its quality education and research facilities, lack of quality teaching faculty is the major concern. Although old institutions like IISc have maintained standards, the newer institutions fall short of quality. Most of them do not have proper infrastructure in place and lack basic facilities," says M K Panduranga Shetty, vice-president, Karnataka unaided private engineering colleges association.

Experts also lament the absence of interface between industry and educational institutions. This despite the city housing major defence, industrial and IT establishments.

But Bangalore's campuses are melting pots. "Campuses in the city are all multi-cultural. The professional institutions attract students from different parts of the country unlike the institutions offering general higher education. One of the best examples can be the fact that two-thirds of the total students appearing at Comed-K are from outside Karnataka," points out AS Srikanth, chief executive, Comed-K.

Source: December 22, 2011/ [Times of India](#)

Draft on FDI in Higher Education underway: CII

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) National Committee on Higher Education is preparing a draft on foreign direct investment (FDI) in higher education, which will be submitted to the Centre soon, according to chairperson of Education Forum CII southern region Nandini Rangaswamy. She was responding to a query from a delegate on Thursday during the interactive session of 'Innovation in Higher Education - Focus on Tamil Nadu', organised by the CII.

Higher Education Minister P Palaniappan on the occasion, quoted a study by Technopak 'Forecasting the Financial Potential in Education' said that private investment in Indian higher education in 2013 would be in the region of \$70 billion, which would grow to \$115 billion in 2018

Source: December 23, 2011/[Ibn Live](#)

Apeejay Stya University organizes National Education Conclave-2011

Apeejay Stya University, Gurgaon, India's first Liberal Arts University organized the "National Education Conclave 2011 on December 22, 2011. The theme of the conclave was "Liberal Arts Education: Creating Thinkers for the 21st Century". The Conclave witnessed participation of more than 50 school Principals and counselors from across Delhi and NCR region.

The Speaker Panel comprised Mr. Aditya Berlia, Pro-Chancellor & Co-Founder, Apeejay Stya University, Dr. Jitender Nagpal, Child Psychiatrist and Dr. Aruna Broota, Child Psychologist. Delivering his keynote speech at the conclave, Mr. Aditya Berlia, Co-Founder & Pro-Chancellor, Apeejay Stya University said, "A Liberal Arts approach, which forms the very basis of our University, does not restrict individuals by the boundaries of discipline. Here they are both free and encouraged to pursue knowledge according to the dictates of their own

hearts and minds." Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Nagpal, Consultant Psychiatrist and Dr. Broota, Clinical Psychologist, emphasized on the role and importance of a liberal arts approach to education in nurturing the young minds to understand their life and career better. The topic for Dr Nagpal's deliberation was: Towards Well being in Schools-Emerging Challenges and good practices. Dr Broota, on the other hand, laid emphasis on Creativity v/s Programming and the Role of Schools.

This amalgamation of educationists across the national capital region at the conclave provided a thought provoking platform to the attendants and helped them to realize the need and essence of liberal arts in Indian pedagogy.

True to its name, a Liberal Arts education is a process of liberating the minds. No matter what course of study one focuses on, it incorporates a little bit of everything into his or her academic experience be it the social sciences, natural sciences, humanities and the arts. One will see science majors thriving in the arts. A Liberal arts education fosters critical thinking, need for cognition, interest in diversity, leadership, moral reasoning and well-being which is lacking in current Indian education system.

About Apeejay Stya University

The Apeejay Stya University (ASU) has been established by Apeejay Stya Education Foundation in the state of Haryana. It aims to be a seat of global learning that brings about transformation of society through value-based education, man-making and nation-building, by blending together the dual identities of a technology and research based university with a liberal arts institution. ASU intends to provide students not only 'education for living and livelihood' but also 'education for life', and empower learners with a fundamental foundation in leadership and professional skills to face the challenges of the new liberalized global era.

Source: December 23, 2012/openpr.com

Can't be forced to buy foreign journals, say engg colleges

An association of engineering colleges has dragged the apex regulatory body for technical education to court over its new rule making it mandatory for institutions to subscribe to foreign e-journals costing about Rs 13 lakh to Rs 15 lakh per annum.

A petition filed by the Association of Managements of Coimbatore Anna University-affiliated Colleges in the Madras high court said the new approval process for the year 2012-2013 announced by the

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) states that colleges must subscribe to e-journals through a particular foreign company and pay subscription in foreign currency such as dollar, euro and pounds. Noting that each college offering computers, engineering, management and architecture has to shell out anywhere between Rs 13 lakh and Rs 15 lakh per annum, the association said that together the 5,000-odd institutions in the country would end up paying about Rs 1,500 crore to the foreign company every year. When there are more than 700 reputed e-journals, both Indian and foreign, available free of cost for research, the AICTE has arbitrarily been insisting on purchase of selected foreign e-journals at an exorbitant cost, that too through a private agency, the petition said. "Institutions cannot be forced to bear such arbitrary, exorbitant and additional burden," it said.

Till now, technical institutions had the option of subscribing to foreign e-journals through Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology (INDEST)-AICTE consortium, which was the initiative of the Union ministry for human resources development. Now, the petition said, the institutions are required to place subscription for online journals through EBSCO, a US-based subscription agency.

The petition said when managements that run more than one institution sought to know whether they could subscribe to e-journals and share them among their institutions, the AICTE said it could not be allowed. Before finalizing the publisher, private agency and the prices, no technical committee was constituted to analyse the same, the petition said, adding, "no open tender system was followed before finalizing the rates and the private agency."

Counsel for the AICTE, noting that the last date for payment of the subscription and affixing the receipts in approval applications was December 31, 2011, said the council was prepared to extend it up to January 15, 2012.

Recording the undertaking, Justice N Paul Vasanthakumar, before whom the matter came up for admission, adjourned it to January 3 for further hearing.

Source: December 24, 2012/Times of India

Four skills development themes that dominated 2011

Never before in the history of any country has [human capital development](#) been such a key focus area as 2011 was for India, marking the beginning of exciting times. Determined to leverage the demographic dividend and reach the goal of skilling 500 million, India created many ripples in 2011.

Four themes dominated the year in the context of skills development:

Private Industry participation in skills development

Skills development in India got a fillip when Prime Minister [Manmohan Sing](#) constituted the National Council on Skills Development in 2008 and the [National Skills Development Corporation](#) (NSDC) thereafter. For NSDC, this year has been one of the best -- a-one-of-its-kind public-private partnership formed to contribute significantly to the charter of skilling Indians.

The corporation forged many new partnerships to train people, including joint ventures with the Bharti Group for 11.5 million, with Everonn for 15 million, with Future Group for seven million and with [NIIT](#) for another seven million. As of its last month's report, they have approved 34 training projects and eight sector skills councils, covered 177 districts, set up 2,427 centres, touched 20 sectors and have already set up the foundation required to train 58.6 million people in 10 years.

In addition, under a special scheme, industry showed interest in joining hands with NSDC to induct youth from Jammu and Kashmir to train them in special skills at their facilities across India. Appointment of an industry veteran, former Tata Consultancy chief executive S. Ramadorai as an advisor to the prime minister in NSDC with the rank of a cabinet minister, is yet another path-breaking achievement this year.

Private participation extended beyond NSDC and many companies came forward. Fiat India Automobiles launched "Diksha" to provide educational avenues and technical training for youth. Axis Bank and Bandhan jointly launched a Rs.100-crore initiative on providing skills training and assets to the marginalised in West Bengal.

Higher secondary education reform

The Ministry of Human Resource Development launched the revised centrally-sponsored scheme of vocationalisation of higher secondary education. To promote vocational training in schools, the government established a vocational education cell within Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The scheme also helps create a bridge between academia and industry. The National Occupational Standards (NOS) developed by the sector skills councils formed by NSDC will govern the activities in vocational education.

In the area of higher education, Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal advocated the need for mobility of students from one university to the other. The number of engineering seats went up to 1.3 million in 2010-11 and the country

initiated talks on how to make the selection process for Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and other engineering colleges more stress-free for the students.

Job creation remained a key challenge

The government could create only one million jobs against the target of 50 million jobs during the 11th Plan period that ends March 31, 2012. It has now set a daring target of creating 60 million jobs during the 12th Five Year Plan.

As a step towards this, the government unveiled a new Manufacturing Policy that promises 100 million new jobs. India is also on the path to dusting off the Apprentices Act to create an industry-driven apprenticeship regime.

Changing the social perception of skills

This was the first year when the WorldSkills Competition got significant coverage in the media in India. A 16-member India contingent participated in the competition in London. While Indians did not win any medals, they surely showed the determination to become the skills reservoir of the world by participating in the event.

Path forward

As we move to the next year, we appear to be in the right direction, even though we know we have a long way to go. Skills do not form the social fabric of India as yet. To have social currency in India, the acceptable tags are generally of an engineer, a doctor, a master of business administration. Skills, such as plumbing, electrician and masonry have little social currency, and this is evident even in our matrimonial advertisements. Changing the social perception about skills, therefore, is our big challenge for 2012. Creating a social epidemic called 'Get Skilled' should be one of our key focus areas.

We should also look at launching events such as 'Indian Skills Idol' and have popular brand ambassadors to endorse pride in skills. Then we will not be apologetic about our 1.2 billion population. We can be an enviable reservoir of 1.2 billion skilled people. Let's declare 2012 as: "The Year of 'Proud to be a Skilled' Indian."

Source: December 24, 2012/[Economic Times](#)

Singapore's education plans in the years ahead

Minister of State for Education Lawrence Wong has given the assurance that publicly-funded universities will continue to play a core role in Singapore's higher-education sector.

That means most university places will be publicly funded even as the government looks into

expanding the number of university places for Singaporeans.

The issue of too many university places going to foreign students resulting in insufficient spots for local students was hotly debated.

Concerns were raised even as the government said an additional 2,000 university places will open up for Singaporeans by 2015.

The quota for foreign students will also be capped at 15 per cent for the next four years.

In August, a Committee on University Education Pathways was formed.

Its role includes looking into ways for even more Singaporeans to attain a university education in the long term, and ensuring a robust university sector with high standards.

One option has been the prospect of a fifth, publicly-funded university.

Mr Wong said: "We haven't decided whether the expansion should be done through a new institution or through an expansion of an existing institution, so that's something we will deliberate (on), and discuss with different stakeholders.

"We will have the recommendations out in due course. But if we want to expand our university sector, our focus should be on teaching, on providing young people with the relevant competencies and skills that will prepare them for the workplace.

"And so, the concept of the teaching university was mentioned. It doesn't mean that we will definitely create a fifth university, because we can expand our existing universities."

Mr Wong noted Singapore already has two well-established research-focused universities in the Nanyang Technological University and the National University of Singapore.

"I think if you look around at examples of research universities, you really need critical mass, you need economies of scale to do research well," he said. "You need to bring in people together. You don't want research efforts to be fragmented and dispersed.

"In fact, that's what's happening in France, where they are trying to pool together some of their research universities to create that critical mass because they had developed in a more diverse and disparate manner.

"When you look at our sector in Singapore, I think you have research-intensive universities like NUS and NTU that are doing well. I don't think we need to develop even more research-intensive universities for a small country like Singapore."

The committee will also consider expanding other university pathway options, through private institutions, part-time degrees, and Continuing Education and Training (CET).

But Mr Wong stressed that publicly-funded universities will continue to be at the heart of Singapore's higher education function.

"When you have a publicly-funded institution, you are able to think through the programmes you are offering, you are able to ensure a certain quality in the programmes you are offering, you are able to make sure that the mix of offerings that you have is closely tied to the industry," he said.

"So there is that much more linkage with the outcomes you want to achieve when you have publicly-funded institutions."

Besides higher education, the Ministry of Education is also reviewing the teaching and learning methods to raise the quality and consistency within the pre-school education sector.

The government has said it wants to ensure pre-schools here provide a holistic education for children, through play, arts, creativity and innovation.

It also wants to see an easier transition for children going from kindergarten to primary school.

The Singapore Pre-school Accreditation Framework (SPARK), a voluntary quality assurance programme, was implemented early this year.

It is open to kindergartens, as well as childcare centres, which fall under the directive of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

MCYS does not rule out making SPARK mandatory for all pre-schools.

Character development may also be introduced into the childcare education sector.

That is in line with a similar initiative for primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

"We also want to ensure that we start instilling values in children at a very young age, not necessarily in a very class-roomy way, but in a fun way, where they learn about important things, about honesty, sincerity, hard work, caring for each other," said Minister of State for MCYS Halimah Yacob.

"I don't think it will be so structured, like in terms of a specific lesson, but there's a lot of things we can do through play, through teaching.

"For example, for physical education, we have a new framework which was launched together with the sports council, where you sort of integrate that

into the children's curriculum, instead of saying, 'let's have a specific class on physical education'.

"But even when you're reading, playing with them, you could structure some part of physical activities.

"I think it's the same with (teaching) values...Children learn a lot by interacting with adults, and through play, and through a different way, instead of a more didactic way of teaching values."

As far as curriculum is concerned, the focus will be on the recently-launched "Early Years Development Framework" for children up to the age of three.

Over the years, there have been calls for kindergarten and the childcare industry to come under the regulation of one ministry, but Madam Halimah said this would not be easy.

She said: "There are issues which both ministries -- whether you feel that everything should go under the Ministry of Education or everything should go under my ministry -- need to iron out.

"Because, if you look at childcare centres, a significant part of the operations provides custodial care, and that may not necessarily be up the alley of the Ministry of Education.

"So we do feel that so long as you have a method, a vehicle where both ministries can work together, and we could see that consistency and quality, that is more important." The special needs education sector will also expand in the coming years.

By 2013, the government will add a total of 450 places to two special education (SPED) schools -- 150 for Metta School and 300 for Pathlight School. It is also pumping S\$30 million to refurbish these schools.

To raise the quality of education in the sector, the ministry is rolling out a SPED Outcomes and Curriculum Framework, which Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education Sim Ann said will help the diverse SPED schools share a common language with the ministry.

The framework sets out the vision for SPED as well as desired outcomes the students should achieve. MOE aims to release the final framework by the end of 2012.

Source: December 26, 2012/[Channel news Asia](#)

Education council may become one-man show

At a time when the schedule for Eamcet as well as other Common Entrance Tests for admissions to professional courses in the state is about to be issued, the AP State Council of Higher Education, which supervises all the CETs, finds itself without crucial office-bearers. Both posts of vice-chairman

have been lying vacant for over a year. The crucial post of secretary is held by an "in-charge" officer for the last eight months and this post will also fall vacant on December 31, leaving only the chairman, Prof. Jayaprakash Rao, to handle all the activities pertaining to CETs and higher education.

With no crucial officials remaining in APSCH to assist the chairman after December 31, there is apprehension among officials and students about how the tests will be conducted. A worried chairman has written to Deputy Chief Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha, who also holds the higher education portfolio, to immediately address the issue.

Since the possibility of selecting a new secretary in five days is remote, APSCH is urging the government to extend the term of the in-charge secretary, Dr N. Rajasekhar Reddy, at least till the CET process is completed. Dr Reddy is the only official remaining at APSCH, who has experience in conducting CETs.

He has been joint director at APSCH since 2006, and was given additional charge in March this year after Mr M.D. Christopher, nephew of the former chief minister Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, was ousted from the post following allegations that he committed financial irregularities.

Source: December 26, 2012/[Deccan Chronicle](#)

The Year That Was...

FEBRUARY: HIKE IN ALLOCATION

In the Union Budget 2011, an allocation of Rs 52,057 crore - an increase of 24% over the previous year - was proposed with a focus on universalising access to secondary education, increasing scholars in higher education and providing skills training.

JUNE: CREATING GENDER SENSITIVITY

IGNOU's School of Gender and Development Studies (SOGDS) launched postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma courses in gender and development studies to sensitise people towards gender and gender-related issues.

JULY: CAT PATTERN

The Common Admission Test (CAT), which is the gateway to the IIMs and a number of top management institutions in the country, underwent a change in format. From 2011, the CAT featured two sections instead of three - the first focusing on quantitative ability and data interpretation and the second on verbal ability and logical reasoning with an additional five minutes in the total duration of the test.

GRE IN NEW AVATAR

Educational Testing Service (ETS) announced changes to the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) to enable the test to represent what students encounter in academic life in graduate and business schools. It also changed the scoring pattern from a 10 point score to one-point increments.

SEMESTER SYSTEM IN DU

Delhi University introduced the semester system across all undergraduate courses from July 21, amidst reservations and protests from a section of students and staff including the Delhi University Teacher's Association (DUTA).

AUGUST: YOUTH POWER

The anti-graft movement started by social activist Anna Hazare saw active participation and mobilisation of youth in large numbers to support the cause of a strong Lokpal Bill towards the eradication of corruption.

SEPTEMBER: JNU IN WORLD RANKINGS

Jawaharlal Nehru University's (JNU) Centre for English Studies was ranked amongst the top 100 English departments in the world in the QS World University Rankings (subject-wise), 2011. Also, JNU's departments of geography and area studies, and politics and international studies found a place in the top 100 QS subject-wise rankings in 2011.

OCTOBER: GERMAN HOUSE OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

The German Research Foundation (DFG) announced that it will set up the 'German House of Science and Innovation' in Delhi to bring all German academic and scientific organisations and funding bodies under one roof and present a concerted front to the Indian public and research fraternity.

DECEMBER: SPECIAL EDUCATION

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities, celebrated on December 3, focussed on the lack of facilities for differently-abled children in educational institutions across the country. From the need to create basic infrastructure and facilities in schools to providing help in admissions, there was a call to make educational institutions more special needs-friendly.

Source: December 26, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Top Stories of 2011 in International Higher Education

The year 2011 was a tumultuous year for the world of international higher education which is increasingly getting influenced by the phenomenon of [globalization](#). As Jane Knight notes "...internationalization is changing the world of

education and globalization is changing the world of internationalization." This year also reaffirmed deep interconnection of higher education with sociopolitical and economic environment. Following three stories further emphasize these trends:

Increasing reliance on China:

Chinese students constitute 15% of 3.3 million globally mobile students (~510,000 students) according to UNESCO. The second largest source of globally mobile students is India which constitutes nearly 6 per cent (~195,000 students). Some campuses like University of Iowa are already heavily reliant on Chinese students which constituted half of all international students in fall 2011 (1648/3271). Already, there are concerns about the campus diversity, language issues and role of agents in misrepresentation and recruitment of Chinese students.

Restructuring of UK higher education:

The UK announced major policy reforms which are influencing the stakeholders at a number of levels. The system is moving towards increasing role of private higher education by allowing students to borrow more money to study at private institutions. The policy directions also aim at re-balancing the research and learning emphasis at universities which is already receiving a lot of resistance.

New wave of branch campuses:

Branch campuses described as "...a modern version of the quest for 'gold, God and glory'" were in news again in 2011 with some optimistic and others with pessimistic tone. This time destination for branch campuses are beyond Gulf and included some of the major brand names venturing abroad. This included plans of Duke for China, Yale for Singapore, Carnegie Mellon for Rwanda and York University's Schulich for India. Winter 2012 issue of [IHE](#) has more articles on this theme.

Source: December 26, 2012/[Dr. Education.com](#)

Sibal seeks overhaul of Indian Education System

The Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal sought a change in India's education system which according to him is "socially stratified" with graduates of elite universities becoming the managerial class. He was speaking at the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan.

"Thus far we have had an education system that is socially stratified. Graduates of a few elite universities such as the IITs and IIMs become the managerial class that runs the Indian state and the industry. This is changing and must change," he

said while mentioning that large sections of the society continue to remain marginalised and disempowered mainly due to lack of education.

Talking about the declining popularity of humanities and social science he said "This is accentuated by the basic changes taking place in the balance in power in India with the unprecedented rise of the corporate sector. Jobs in state sector have stagnated while those in corporate and informal sectors have grown exponentially."

He blamed that the global economy has led to the migration of best brains in the country that has created drastic reduction of elite in areas of maths, humanities and social sciences, leading to shrinking or closure of the departments.

While speaking of government's endeavours to emphasize skill development in Indian education space, the minister said, "We are endeavouring to reform this with emphasis on skill development and unlocking the creative talent within the child. The paradigm shift is on the anvil. Learning and education will be child-centric instead of the present exam-centric education system," he said.

The Government also aims at increasing the gross enrolment ratio, an indicator of number of persons taking to higher education, from 15 per cent to 30 per cent in this decade, he added.

Source: December 26, 2012/[India Education Review](#)

UGC approves new norms for release of funds to Universities

Getting funds for Indian Universities without getting clearance from the institution's executive council and mandatory accreditation would become difficult from the next financial year. India's higher education regulator, the University Grants Commission, has altered the funding scheme for universities from April 2012, which is also mean commencement of the 12th five year plan.

Instead of mandatory inspections, which often lead to delay in release of funds, the UGC will decide allocations for the entire plan period as soon as it receives the proposal cleared by the university's highest decision making body, the executive council.

If Physics department of Delhi University want money to upgrade its laboratory in the 12th plan, it will submit a proposal to the university, which will, then get it cleared first from board of studies, then academic council, followed by finance committee and finally, the executive council.

Once that is done, the UGC will allocate funds to the Physics Delhi University as per its total money allocation for the 12th plan. No one from the UGC will visit the department to evaluate the proposal.

"Discontinuation of sending expert committee to assess financial requirements will help the universities to prepare perspective plans in a more democratic manner," UGC chairperson Ved Prakash said.

As per the existing practice of more than four decades, the university used to submit a finance proposal to UGC, which then deputed a team of experts to conduct an inspection. Depending on remarks of the inspection report, decision on release of money was taken.

In cases of adverse reports the UGC used to get the inspection conducted again, resulting in delay in release of funds. There were also allegations of corruption in the entire system.

The UGC, as per the decision last week, stipulated new norms to monitor of utilization of the money given through self disclosures and participation of students and faculty.

Another related decision with disbursement of funds was mandatory accreditation. No funds will be released without accreditation from a recognized agency such as National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). "Accreditation has been made must," Prakash said.

Source: December 27, 2012/Hindustan Times

Learning curve

While the current school education system focuses on bringing a child into the classroom, does it ensure quality education? Education Times finds out.

In the last few years, the Indian government has been focusing on several initiatives to ensure that every child has access to school education. In fact, the Right to Education (RTE) Act, which came into effect on April 1, 2010, made India one of the 135 countries to make education a fundamental right for every child between six and 14 years.

Further, the current annual elementary education budget, which is Rs 21,000 crore, has seen an increase over the last few years. According to the ASER Report 2011, basic school infrastructure has been put in place across the country: classrooms and toilets have been built and most villages now have a school within one kilometre. This push towards universal coverage has led to more than 96% of all children being enrolled in school.

QUALITY CONCERN

However, while access to education has been emphasised, quality in education is still a cause for concern. Experts in this field feel that the current school education system shouldn't just focus on

bringing a child into the classroom but also focus on giving them quality education.

As former President APJ [Abdul Kalam](#) pointed out, it's not fancy buildings or world-class facilities that a school is all about. Instead, it is about exceptional teachers. Primary education, he feels, should be disseminated and promoted in such a manner that there is a synergy between the stakeholders - students, teachers and parents. Kalam was speaking at the 'Schoolonomics 2011' conference organised by The Times of India, in association with The Millennium School & Orris Infrastructure, on December 19. The conference offered a platform to educators, academicians and decision-makers to discuss a way forward to help students find a foothold in a global marketplace. Kalam further added that good teachers and a good education make all the difference. The school in which he studied may not have had a great building, but it had exceptional teachers. "The teachers ensured there was quality in what was taught in class, paid attention to individual growth and made learning not just an informative experience, but also a pleasurable experience," he said.

As Shyama Chona, educationist and recipient of Padma Bhushan, pointed out, the need is to go beyond the urban-rural divide to give quality education and make sure that it is a blend of both old and new.

Stressing on the need to change, Shantanu Prakash, CMD Educomp Solutions, said, "Schools must focus on content credibility and creativity. This is the only way schools can aid innovative learning methods and meet global education standards." Also, Manjeet Singh, president legal, Orris Infrastructure, mentioned, "Real estate has come with investment options for the education segment by providing infrastructure, thus eliminating a major cost factor.

CHILD-CENTRIC CURRICULUM

Amarjit Singh, joint secretary (EE-I), ministry of HRD, department of secondary education and literacy, said that the government has been focusing on enrolment, forgetting about quality teachers. It is now working on the capacity building of teachers who can provide quality education.

"We are revising the curriculum that is being taught in teacher-training courses to make the new curriculum child-centric. Also, we are looking for an active proposal for a public-private partnership," Singh informed.

Also, Abhinav Mittal, Sr Principal Emerging Markets and Education practice, The Parthenon Group, added, "Today, parents feel that private schools

have better facilities to offer, thus as investors it is important to know whether schools are providing value added features to parents or not."

CLASSROOM LEARNING

Besides, what happens inside the classroom plays an important role in the overall development of a child. Three areas - expansion, equity and excellence - are the need of the hour. According to Lata Vaidyanathan, principal, Modern School, Barakhamba Road, a child in a classroom is no more an isolated individual but a global citizen.

In a country where only 17 million complete senior secondary school, sharing ICT infrastructures with schools, focusing on quality teachers at the primary level, training teachers to understand technology, innovation through a dynamic syllabus could be some of the ways to add quality to the learning process, suggested Kalam.

Some of the other speakers at the conference included Abha Sehgal, principal, Sanskriti School; Partho Dasgupta, president, Educomp Schools and Shabnam Sinha, senior education specialist, [The World Bank](#), among others.

As to a future roadmap, a range of issues discussed at the conference included weaving the way to a future-ready education system, redefining the school system and reshaping the education business, to mention a few.

Source: December 27, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Foreign funds fight shy of Indian classrooms

Over a decade after it was opened to foreign direct investment (FDI), barely R2,000 crore has entered the education sector, thanks to its not-for-profit status and stalled legislation to let foreign universities open local campuses. About three-quarters of this investment amounting to R1,600 crore has come from entities in Mauritius, a tax haven.

With India's rules mandating that core education cannot be a commercial enterprise, companies involved in businesses related to education have attracted all the foreign investment. These include entities specialising in training, technology and research services like TutorVista, Educomp Solutions, Career Launcher, Manipal Universal Learning and Triumphant Institute of Management.

"FDI has stayed away because formal schooling and higher education, which form the largest part of India's education sector, are mandated as not-for-profit. Otherwise the \$40-billion industry would have attracted a lot more investment. In all other aspects, including percentage of spend of earnings on education, India is among the best in the world,"

said Srikanth B Iyer, chief operating officer of Pearson Education Services, which owns TutorVista. Though the sector is ready for FDI, enabling legislation isn't. The Parliament is yet to clear the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill, which would allow overseas universities to set up campuses here. Almost two years after the ministry of human resource development drafted the Bill, Parliament's standing committee has not given its nod.

A ministry official agreed: "Foreign investment peaked in 2008-09 and has been falling since. The main reason is the sector's not-for-profit status. There is no enabling legislation either. How can a foreign university wishing to set up a campus here get approvals without the legislation in place?"

The last Union Budget allocated just Rs 8,675 crore (\$2 billion) to universities. As a result, large universities like Delhi, Mumbai and Osmania with huge student populations are running short of funds.

Education services companies too have pegged hopes on the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill and expect greater FDI once foreign entities start setting up campuses. "India trails BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) countries in foreign investment. The government must take steps to attract capital," said Shantanu Prakash, chairman and managing director of Educomp, which attracted FDI worth Rs 93 crore in its education, scientific and research services.

"The regulatory environment is uncertain. Most of the investment will come only into a campus set-up. So far, the investment has been in training and technology, but both have not been explored completely. Besides, investments are minimal due to lack of clarity," said Shobha Mishra Ghosh, director of Ficci's education committee.

However, Manipal Education, the biggest recipient of FDI in education at almost Rs 11,110 crore, is sceptical on betting big on the Foreign Education Bill. Said CEO Anand Sudarshan: "Even if the Bill is in place, we will need institutes of good standing to invest in the country. Besides, where will all the investment go? Training, technology services and coaching are peripheral services. Until the education structure is changed to for-profit, it would be difficult to invite investment."

Source: December 28, 2011/[Financial Express](#)

Higher Education and Research Bill tabled in Rajya Sabha

The government on Wednesday tabled the Higher Education and Research Bill, 2011 in the Rajya Sabha that seeks to establish the National Commission on Higher Education and Research

(NCHER), an overarching regulatory body for university education including vocational, technical, professional and medical education.

The existing regulatory bodies including the University Grants Commission and the All India Council for Technical Education would subsequently be scrapped. While there is no provision for protecting the chairperson or members of the UGC once the Bill is enacted, the services of officers and employees of the existing regulators would be saved. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has already started the process of selection of UGC chairperson but now there appears to be uncertainty over it now as there would not be many takers for the post.

The Bill seeks to promote autonomy of higher education and innovation and to provide for comprehensive and integrated growth of higher education and research keeping in view the global standards of educational and research practices, for which it will establish the National Commission for Higher Education and Research.

The NCHER will facilitate determination, coordination, maintenance and continued enhancement of standards of higher education and research other than agricultural education and matters pertaining to minimum standard of medical education as are the subject of proposed National Commission on Human Resources in Health (NCHRH).

The NCHRH Bill, 2011 piloted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare was tabled in the Rajya Sabha last week. The Commission will consist of a chairperson and six members, one of whom will be the chairperson of the National Commission for Human Resources for Health, who will be appointed by the President on the recommendations of a search-cum-selection committee headed by the Prime Minister with the Lok Sabha Speaker, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Ministers in charge of medical education and higher education.

The Commission will have powers to take all measures necessary to spearhead the transformative changes in higher education. It will frame regulations and promote autonomy for institutional accountability, promote joint and cross-disciplinary programmes between and among institutions of higher education, to promote development of a curriculum framework with specific reference to new or emerging or inter-disciplinary fields of knowledge and to promote synergy of research in universities and higher educational institutions and with other research agencies.

The legislative proposal provides for the establishment of a General Council, which is proposed to be a representative body with advisory and recommendatory functions, in addition to the powers to approve the regulations framed by the Commission. The Council will have, in addition to chairperson and members of the Commission, the heads of professional bodies, research councils and experts in all sectoral areas of higher education.

Participation of States is being ensured through representation in the General Council. The existing regulators had no representation from the States and the NCHER draft was revised to accommodate States in the General Council. States have also been exempted from seeking prior approval of the NCHER before establishing new universities.

The Board for Research promotion and Innovation will formulate research and innovation policy for sustained global competitiveness, promote transformative and multi-disciplinary research in higher educational institutions, and facilitate the modernisation of research infrastructure in higher educational institutions. The powers and functions of the Board have been synergised with functions of the proposed NCHRH by including two members nominated by the NCHRH in the Board.

The proposed law also has provisions for the establishment of a Higher Education Financial Services Corporation that will disburse grants to universities and higher educational institutions.

Source: December 28, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

IIT to run course to train engineering college faculty

Thousands of untrained faculty in engineering colleges in India would soon get a chance to obtain a degree in engineering and education from Indian Institutes of Technology without joining the premier technical education institute or leaving his or her job.

Shortage of faculty had forced large number of engineering colleges to hire fresh engineering graduates as faculty. But, these graduates are not trained to educate and found to lack in skill in orienting students towards research, leading to poor quality of engineers.

For this endearing problem, the government has found solution – a new part-time Masters' degree in Engineering Education to be conducted by the IITs. The course is aimed to focus more on research aspects of engineering than just clearing the examination.

“The degree, designed for faculty from engineering colleges will be conducted online, through live

video lectures the National Knowledge Network, thus eliminating the need for participants to be relieved of normal teaching duties,” says a planning committee headed by Department of Higher Education secretary Vibha Puri Das.

The ministry estimates to train six to seven thousand young faculty members each year. Training so many will require skills of 1,500 faculty of IITs and other institutions. The teaching for the course will be carried out in the evening and during weekends.

In addition to getting a dual degree, the government believes that the IIT faculty will be able to identify and motivate many of these young candidates to pursue a

Part-time Ph.D programme. On its own, the IITs are also expected to produce a Ph.D scholar for every department in the next five years.

In all, the government estimate is that about 30,000 faculty members will be trained in the 12th five-year plan period starting from April 2012.

The government also plans to start a new three year programme leading to a dual Masters Degree – a M.Tech and a Masters degree in educational skills and pedagogy. The course will help the post graduate students from IITs to take up teaching in engineering colleges, where the demand for faculty is expected to rise by 70 % by 2020.

The number of students in technical education in India has increased to over two million from less than a million in 2007-08. To make the future students employable, the government wants the industry to run a pilot project to train engineering faculty in colleges.

Source: December 30, 2011/[Hindustan Times](#)

Now, classroom content of IITs can be accessed by MIT students

The Indian Institutes of Technology have agreed to a proposal by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to join their Open Course Ware community. This move will enable [MIT students](#) to access classroom content of the IITs online at a click of the mouse.

However, this is not the only way by which the IITs are opening their doors to the world; lectures from IIT classrooms will soon be available on Apple's multi-media platform iTunes. [YouTube](#) already has a separate channel for IIT courses, which, as of December 2011, had 63.64 lakh viewers.

When MIT had first invited the IITs to join the OpenCourseWare community in 2007, the IITs felt their initiatives were too young to join the world of open source learning. But four years on, the IITs

feel that they have caught up with the other members of the open source community, who had started making their course material public a long time ago.

"We have finally decided to join the Open Education Resource Consortium. This move will help us share open source tools. It's an academic enhancement exercise," said Mangala Sunder Krishnan, NPTEL coordinator from IIT-Madras.

Several other universities like [Yale](#), Peking, [Harvard Law School](#), Notre Dame, Tufts, UC Irvine and Utah State have allowed MIT to host links to their courseware. The Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, is also a member of MIT's OpenCourseWare.

The IITs have their own initiative on similar lines, the National Programme for Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), which seven of the old IITs and the Indian Institute of Science had jointly launched. The NPTEL has over a thousand courses in technology and the humanities. But there is an elementary difference between the efforts put in by the American universities into open courses and the NPTEL. While the former is an enriching exercise, not completely substituting class work, the NPTEL encompasses all topics in every course, from their introduction to the end, allowing students to sit at home and study.

More than 500 Indian engineering colleges have been given the [NPTEL content](#), and students can access it through the college intranet. The number of visitors on the [NPTEL website](#) has also increased from over 9.37 lakh in 2008 to 44.39 lakh in December 2011.

Source: January 02, 2012/[Times of India](#)

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Children below 6 should not be given formal education: Sibal

Noting that he was against putting pressure on students at the kindergarten level, HRD Minister Kapil Sibal today said the Centre could bring a concrete policy on the issue if Parliament passes a resolution.

In reply to several supplementaries in the Lok Sabha during Question Hour, Sibal said a resolution by Parliament would ensure that the state governments do not protest a central policy on the subject.

"You pass the resolution and I will move ahead," Sibal said.

He said he was against small children carrying bulky school bags, learning the alphabets and tables and said at that age, they should be playing.

Sibal favoured that children below six should not be given formal education and pointed that many state governments were allowing admission of students at the age of five.

To a question on shortcomings noticed in 44 deemed universities, he said the matter was before the Supreme Court and the government will move ahead after its directions.

He assured the House that interests of students of these universities will be protected.

On punishing officials responsible for granting these universities deemed status, he said the question was not to punish anyone but to protect the future of the students, leaving several members dissatisfied with the reply.

Answering a question on model schools, Sibal said the centrally sponsored scheme to set up 6,000 model schools at block level was launched in November, 2008. Of these, 3,500 schools are to be set up by states in educationally backward blocks and 2,500 schools were to be set up in the private-public partnership mode in blocks which are not educationally backward. 438 model schools have become functional in seven states so far.

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

Education loan growth slows rupee fall may add to woes

The growth in education loan disbursements has slowed, owing to the high base effect and few students opting for foreign education, said bankers.

According to the Reserve Bank of India, the year-on-year rate of disbursements of education loans grew 17 per cent in October, against 24 per cent in October 2010.

The base effect has played out. Education loans, as products, started picking up only three-four years ago, and taking 2008 as the base, loan growth in education loans looks bloated due to a small base. The base is now growing. Hence, in percentage terms, the numbers have come down," said R K Bansal, executive director (retail banking), IDBI Bank.

The education loan business is in direct correlation with the education sector. How the sector evolves — the potential employability and the courses being launched — has an impact on repayments and risk perception of people who lend to students. As the sector is evolving fast, it makes the domain very challenging for lenders like banks, where research done on the sector is minimal.

“There has been a reduction in the number of students going to Australia for higher education. Also, on the whole, there may be a fall in the number of people seeking loans to study overseas. However, the overall low credit growth scenario has minimal impact on education loans, as more people are seeking education,” said S Govindan, general manager (personal banking), Union Bank of India.

Bankers feel education loans started picking up only after 2008, when the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) relaxed lending norms. These included relaxing collateral clauses. Currently, loans up to Rs 4 lakh do not require any collateral, and loans up to Rs 7 lakh require a third-party guarantee.

Some bankers also said the number of students planning to go abroad for higher education may be declining, which might have led to the reduced growth rate of loan disbursements.

The uncertainty in the global economy has also led to slower growth of education loans. “I think the slow growth is mainly a function of global uncertainty, which has probably played on the minds of risk managers at banks. They may now perceive higher risks for students, as far as job potential is concerned,” said Prashant Bhonsle, country head, Credila Financial Services, an HDFC Ltd venture.

While most bankers said high interest rates may not be a very big reason for the fall in the growth rate of education loans, some said it could be one of the reasons for fewer people opting for the loans. “High interest rates may have led to people using their own savings, rather than taking education loans. With the rupee depreciating, foreign education would become more expensive, which might reduce offtake of education loans further, as people may go for higher education in India,” said M Narendra, chairman and managing director, Indian Overseas Bank.

Also, with the mushrooming of several chapters of foreign universities in India, the demand for education loans for may come down. “The percentage of education loans outstanding has come off, on the back of more foreign educational institutions coming to India. This has resulted in making things easier for people who want a foreign degree,” said Narendra.

Source: December 16, 2011/[Business Standard](#)

Industrialists to help set up polytechnics

The state will soon have polytechnics, set up in public private partnership (PPP) mode involving established and leading industrial partners.

The department of higher and technical education (H&TE) has initiated the process for finalising the

industry partners, who can contribute a minimum of Rs 10 crore for each of such polytechnics.

The new institutions are to be set up as part of the HRD ministry's scheme to set up 300 polytechnics in PPP mode across the country. The ministry has committed Rs 3 crore contribution for each of these polytechnics while the states will provide Rs 2 crore or land for the institution. The scheme aims at spreading technical education among the post-Std X and XII students and bridge the vast demand-supply mismatch for the skilled workforce required by the industry.

Last week, the directorate of technical education (DTE) released an advertisement inviting expression of interest (EoI) from industrial organisations interested to be a part of the scheme. “The move augurs well for students in the rural areas if the proposed new PPP polytechnics are to be established there,” said Shridhar Vaidya, secretary of Teachers' Federation of Non-Aided Polytechnics (TAFNAP).

“It also means that existing polytechnic institutions, whether government-run, aided or unaided, will have to brace up for the competition from the PPP mode institutions as they would be effectively run by the industry partners having a larger share of investment in the project,” said Vaidya.

As of now, the state has over 410 polytechnics, which offer a range of post-Std X and XII diploma studies in engineering and technology, pharmacy and hotel management and catering technology, among others. Of these, 40-odd polytechnics are government-run, while a bulk of the remaining 370 are run by unaided institutions.

According to the conditions listed out in the invitation for EoIs, the industry partner has to be a company of repute with a willingness to actively participate in the establishment and running of the new institution; providing help by way of deputing accomplished persons as adjunct faculty and allowing students to do project works as part of their course at the company.

A DTE official said that the government is also open to the idea of allowing multi-national companies based in India to participate in the scheme.

The proposed institution will be run by a 12-member institution management committee (IMC), which will have representatives of state and central governments, industry experts and representative of industry bodies like the CII. Among other things, the IMC will be responsible for construction and running the new institution, which includes recurring expenses generated from fees and internal resources.

Admissions to these proposed polytechnics will be according to the procedure adopted by the state government while the fees will be determined by the government in consultation with the IMC.

According to the official, "The proposed new polytechnics will be affiliated to the board of technical education and will have teaching faculty as per rules prescribed by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)." In fact, the state government will soon send a proposal to the AICTE, after receiving the EoIs, recommending the number of PPP polytechnics, which are to be set up in Maharashtra.

Source: December 16, 2011/[Times of India](#)

'Govt withdrawal paved way for ethical issues'

Mobilizing funds has been one of the biggest challenges for our universities. With foreign educational institutions at our door steps, the very existence of Indian universities is being threatened. No wonder, resources and fund mobilization were the hot topics of discussion among vice-chancellors at the general body meeting of the Association of Indian Universities in Kochi.

When the Ponnaiah Committee in 1993 suggested that universities themselves should mobilize funds -- at least 15 per cent of the total recurring expenditure at the end of the first five years and 25 per cent at the end of 10 years -- nobody thought it would be such a difficult task. However, that still remains a distant dream for many universities.

"In states like [Gujarat](#), Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, the government has almost moved out of the [higher education](#) sector. But that has given rise to the issue of ethics of financing in this sector," said Dr MS Valiathan, former vice-chancellor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education.

He said there was no proper regulatory mechanism to monitor the fund flow and the financial burden on students. "In most European countries, it is the government which funds the educational sector and hence monitors it too," he said.

Dr Valiathan said [the National Knowledge Commission](#) had proposed that 20 per cent of the fees should be collected from students and [the rest](#) through public-private partnership.

Jadhavpur University vice-chancellor PN Ghosh called for radical changes in the education system, including reducing the graduation period for different disciplines, digital distance education to cut expenses, fee rationalization based on courses,

etc. He also questioned the rationale behind the semester system, and added that it was the rigid system left behind by the British that we were still following.

"We should look into the German system of delinking jobs from education," Ghosh said.

He also said the percentage of [women](#) in gross enrolment ratio (GER) remained poor in the country though it had exceeded the target envisaged in the 11th Five Year Plan.

Cusat vice-chancellor Ramachandran Thekkedath put forth the idea of 'employer tax' or 'graduate user tax', which is a modified version of the graduate tax implemented in many Western countries.

"Graduate user tax is an education-specific tax levied on those who use educated manpower. It helps us resolve the paradoxical situation where the expenditure on education is borne by the government and the produces of the system is used largely by the private sector."

Participating in the discussion, Kannur varsity vice-chancellor Michael Tharakan said a majority of the problems had begun when the government decided to cut down its role in the education sector. "The system of appointing guest lecturers instead of full-timers is one such move which affected the quality of education," he said.

Several vice-chancellors who participated in the interaction which followed after the panel discussion on Resource Mobilization and Financing of Institutions of Higher Learning mentioned the ironies of financial crunch and the issue of fund reaching late, which would, in effect, lead to its non-utilization.

The three-day meet of the Association of Indian Universities and a UGC-sponsored national seminar on Reforms and Innovations in Higher Education is being hosted by the Cochin University of Science and Technology in Kochi from December 15.

Educational system in India has always been a state-funded activity. From the first Five-Year Plan to the 11th Five-Year Plan, the growth of the universities has been several fold. From 27 universities in 1950-51 to 20 central universities, 215 state universities and 100 deemed universities with 16000 colleges functioning under them.

Kochi: Educational system in India has always been a state-funded activity. From the First Five Year Plan to the 11th Five Year Plan, the growth of the universities has been several fold in number. From 27 universities in 1950-51 to 20 central universities, 215 state universities and 100 deemed universities with 16000 colleges functioning under them.

When the Ponnaiah committee in 1993 suggested universities should mobilize funds, at least 15 percent of the total recurring expenditure at the end of the first five years and 25 percent at the end of 10 years, nobody thought it would be such a difficult task. However, it remains a distant dream for several universities. When vice-chancellors from different parts of the country met in Kochi at the annual meet of the Association of Indian Universities, they discussed the problems of resource mobilization and fund crunch. "In states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, the government has almost moved out of the higher education sector. But that has given rise to the issue of ethics of financing in this sector," said Dr M S Valiathan, former vice-chancellor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education.

Source: December 16, 2011/[Times of India](#)

BE students in 'optional' crisis

Engineering students in the city do not have much choice when it comes to selecting elective or optional subjects. While All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) has instructed colleges across the country to allow students to opt for courses outside their departments, technical colleges in the city have just a handful of options to offer to students. All this, thanks to faculty shortage.

Most of the colleges have just about six courses from which students are to choose their electives subjects although they are supposed to be given about 12 to 15 options. The AICTE had introduced elective papers in engineering colleges to widen the scope of B.Tech courses. However, with 25% of faculty posts remaining vacant in the city's engineering colleges, the council's plan remains a dead letter.

Students said that instead of allowing them to choose themselves, college authorities were assigning elective subjects to them. "The management does not have faculty members to teach most of the interesting courses and, hence, they have been assigning students to the few courses available as electives.

"Most of the courses on offer deal with IT and mechanical engineering," said a student of Srinidhi Institute of Science and Technology. Students said that most of them are not allowed to choose courses in biotechnology, chemical and civil engineering as there is a severe faculty crunch.

In some colleges just about three to four electives are available for students to choose from.

"In principle, electives are supposed to help us widen our scope for job hunting. If a mechanical

engineering student has taken a civil engineering optional, it will help him apply for jobs in both industries. When the college managements restrict the number of elective options they are also restricting our ambition to bag a good job," said a student of Shadan College of Engineering.

Students in some colleges said that they were being forced to make do with courses from their own department. "We end up studying subjects which are already part of our core curriculum. This means that we end up reading the same texts for both the examinations," said a student.

College managements said that it was AICTE's insistence that students can only be taught by M.Tech graduates that has led to the staff shortage in technical colleges increasing by 15%. "There are colleges which do not have even 50 per cent of the required number of faculty members. It is impossible to grant students electives of their choice," a management representative said.

Source: December 16, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Buying the Professor a BMW

In a casual conversation between an upper-middle-class parent and a senior faculty member at a four-year institution of higher education, the parent bemoaned the steep increase in the cost of sending his youngest daughter to college, compared to that of her eldest sibling. Clearly intimating that the substantial monetary difference went into the faculty member's pocket, the parent quipped, "I hope you are enjoying the car that I bought for you."

This parent's conclusion raises two questions -- one about rising costs and the other about faculty salaries. Addressing these questions must take into consideration various factors. First, for example, institutions of higher education vary widely. The answers here are limited to four-year public and private, nonprofit colleges and universities. Second, the sources of data vary in their objectivity and in their time periods. These answers identify the sources, which are reputable as not particularly skewed. Similarly, although not uniformly available for the same long-term period, the cited data cover at least 8-10 years so as not to rely on short-term changes.

Have college prices to parents really risen steeply, when inflation, institutional financial aid grants, and other sources of "tuition discounting" are taken into account?

Answer: Yes, parents' costs of college have risen, after adjusting for inflation, rather dramatically on a sticker price basis and much more moderately on a discounted basis. For example, the College Board

reported the following average published (i.e., non-discounted) totals for tuition and room/board in constant 2011 dollars for full-time students during the 15-year period that ended in the most recent academic year:

	1996-97	2011-12	Increase
Public four years college & University	\$10,280.00	\$17,130.00	67.00%
Private four years college & University	\$26,420.00	\$38,590.00	46.00%

However, the real cost to the parent or student is the net price after various forms of what the College Board explained as "tuition discounting," including institutional grant aid, tuition waivers, such as military personnel or employees' children based on state law or institutional policy, and athletic scholarships. As a result, accounting for all sources of grant aid and federal tax benefits, here are the corresponding net price totals for full-time students during the same period, with the impact being in the tuition portion of these totals.

	1996-97	2011-12	Increase
Public four years college & University	\$7,910.00	\$11,380.00	44.00%
Private four years college & University	\$18,350.00	\$23,060.00	26.00%

Thus, the increase, which is higher for the public colleges and universities, is clearly less pronounced for this 15-year period, but still -- as a matter of constant dollars -- notable rather than negligible.

Various other studies have found that college prices, whether viewed in terms of tuition alone or with room and board included, have outpaced inflation for the past several decades, but most of them have examined only the published, not net, prices. Moreover, the news media across the country have fueled the exaggerated public perception with recurrent stories reinforcing the theme of "Runaway Tuition."

Relevant to the parent in the opening scenario, this tuition discounting also includes "cross subsidization," or cost shifting from the full-paying

students to those with financial need or who meet other institutional priorities, such as those with outstanding athletic or academic abilities. Similarly pertinent is that various studies have found that the biggest burden for these rising costs falls on the poorest parents. For example, according to the same College Board report, from 1979 to 2009 average family income in constant dollars declined 7 percent for the bottom quintile of families while it rose 11 percent for the middle quintile and 73 percent for the top 20th of families.

Is the increase attributable to the compensation of full-time faculty members?

In limited part, but not primarily. Faculty compensation has increased in constant dollars, but it is only one of several factors that contribute to the complex story of increased parental outlays. First, despite the common perception in academia, the salary of full-time faculty *has* outpaced inflation during recent decades. For example, the U.S. Education Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that the average salary of full-time (i.e., 9-10 month) faculty at four-year colleges and universities for the period 1993-2003 increased 10.7 percent in constant dollars.

However, the corresponding increase was higher, 17.7 percent, for the executive/ administrative/ managerial category, for example. Similarly, the Higher Education Price Index, which is an inflation metric customized to institutions of higher education, showed a significantly higher increase for administrative salaries than for faculty salaries from 2002 to 2010.

For the parent, the compensation cost is a longitudinal matter of not only average salary but also the total size of full-time faculty. According to the NCES, the size of the full-time faculty has increased, but at a lesser rate than the student body. Specifically, the number of full-time faculty at four-year private and public institutions of higher education rose 16 percent from 1993 to 2003, while the colleges' student enrollments increased 19 percent.

In comparison, during this same period the corresponding growth rate for part-time faculty was 54.8 percent, and for the executive/dministrative/anagerial category, it was 29.8 percent. Thus, part of what the parent paid went into the pockets of college and university personnel other than those of us full-timers on the faculty.

Multiplying the growth rate in the number of administrators by the growth rate in their salaries shows that "administrative bloat" is another contributing factor to rising college prices.

Moreover, because, on average, administrators' salaries are higher than those of faculty members and because connected fringe benefits, including health care costs, and "perks," such as travel and entertainment discretionary accounts, tend to be higher for administrators, their combined percentage increases have added impact. Yet, because the slice of the expenditures pie for full-time faculty members' salaries is approximately three times larger than that for administrators' salaries, the faculty factor is undeniable.

However, the college cost drivers are multiple and complex, extending well beyond faculty and administrator salaries and benefits. On the other side of the ledger, as detailed in the Delta Project on Postsecondary Education Costs, Productivity, and Accountability, the various sources of college revenue extend well beyond tuition, including private gifts, investment returns, and endowment income; state and local appropriations; federal grants and contracts, and auxiliary enterprises. The expenditure side includes, for example, salary and benefits of the disproportionately increased segments of part-time faculty and support specialists and the similarly fast-growing expenses for high-tech facilities and equipment.

Moreover, as part of the "keeping up with the Joneses" competition for students, college expenditures go well beyond direct instruction, including, for example, campus beautification projects; the latest in fitness centers; increasingly diverse extracurricular activities; campus security in the post-Virginia Tech era; and regulatory compliance costs.

Thus, the relationship between parental costs and faculty compensation is far from direct or one-for-one. In analyzing the complex picture, most experts have concluded that the biggest driver of spiraling tuition costs for public colleges and universities has been the decline in state appropriations. Of course, there is a wide variation of higher ed institutions within and among the Carnegie classifications, which include cost-related differences not only in state support but also institutional region, size, scope, and clientele.

In general, the parental costs of college are spiraling upward, but the increases are largely not going into the pocket of the full-time faculty member. We drive a Honda Accord and a VW Jetta, respectively, and most of my colleagues drive similar cars.

The BMWs, the Lexuses, the Infinitis, and the sports cars belong to the students, at least those whose high-end parents most typically bemoan the costs of sending their students to us.

Source: December 16, 2011/[Inside Higher Education](#)

New Bills for Higher Education violate Constitution - Former Chief Justices

The UPA Government is trying hard to get the new Bills for Higher Education in India approved in this winter session of Parliament. Minister for Human Resource Development (HRD) is leaving no stone unturned to convince the UPA allies and Party MPS on these Bills.

As per the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on HRD, the Union Cabinet has approved the amendments to the 'Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2010'.

While The Educational Tribunals Bill, 2010 was postponed in the Rajya Sabha over a year ago, another controversy regarding the New Bills for Higher Education proposed by MHRD has evoked.

Legal luminaries have pointed out that the move of the UPA Government to control and regulate the Universities is "Unconstitutional". They informed that according to the exclusion contained in Entry 44 of List I, Parliament does not have legislative competence to legislate in issues of universities.

The State legislatures have a right to alone forming the regulatory regime for universities in their respective state.

Former Chief Justices of India analyzed the Bills named as 'The Prohibition of Unfair Practices in technical educational institutions, medical educational institution and Universities Bill, 2010', 'The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010', 'The Educational Tribunals Bill, 2010', and 'Higher Education and Research Bill 2010' on the Constitutional Anvil.

Astonishingly, provisions contained in these above mentioned Bills, proposed by UPA to include universities oppose to the provisions of the Constitution and the Federal Structure of the country.

Justice Madan Mohan Punchhi, former Chief Justice of India & former Chairman, Commission on Centre State Relations, Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India commented on 'The Educational Tribunals Bill, 2010' that the State Legislatures can only draft an enactment for establishment of Educational Tribunals for final judgment of universities matters.

Therefore, the clauses mentioned in the new bill to include universities violates the constitution and the concept of separation of powers. The bill lacks legislative competency and if it is enacted as a law, it will be beyond the powers of constitution.

Justice Punchhi expressed the same opinion in case of other bills as well.

Justice A S Anand, former Chief Justice of India & former Chairperson, NHRC, said that the Parliament does not have power to legislate in matters of

universities to establish any regulatory regime according to the exclusion mentioned in Entry 44 of List I and the State Legislatures alone have the power to constitute the regulatory regime regarding universities in the respective states.

Thus, the proposed Bill if enacted by the parliament would lack legislative competence and in that case would be ultra-vires the Constitution.

Justice K N Singh, former Chief Justice of India and former Chairman Law Commission of India analyzed 'The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010' and expressed that the legislative power under Entry 25 of List III cannot override provisions contained in Entry 32 of List II and Entry 44 of List I which do not provide power to the Parliament to enact law to control or regulate Universities.

Therefore, the New Educational Bill is Unconstitutional and the proposed law will be highly controversial to the extent that court may strike it down.

According to R.C.Lahoti, former Chief Justice of India, the creation of tribunals by the Centre has dual impact. Firstly, The Centre envisages taking over the administration of universities including the ones which are enacted by State Legislature. Secondly, the final judgment of any disputes regarding universities will be transferred in hands of the Tribunals set up the Centre.

Overall, several clauses contained in the New Education Bill are against constitutional Provisions as stated time to time by the Supreme Court of India.

Failing to get through the test of constitutional validity and encroaching upon the State's right, these bills might be the next big issue to be raised by the opposition in parliament.

Source: December 16, 2011/[India edu News](#)

Bureaucratisation comes to JNU

JNU is set to introduce the points-based system of evaluation for faculty recruitment and promotions dictated by the University Grants Commission. This will mean confusing standardisation with standards.

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), one of the few Indian institutions of higher education that have been resisting bureaucratisation, is about to give up. Its Academic Council recently approved the implementation of the University Grants Commission-dictated points-based system of evaluation for faculty recruitment and promotions. Why is the UGC imposing such a system on universities?

There is talk of reaping the demographic dividend of India's young population, given that the developed world has a rapidly aging population. Trade in Education under the World Trade

Organisation is seen to give a natural advantage to India with its young English-speaking population. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and the UGC obviously believe that in order to realise the goals, the changes they are imposing on universities are necessary.

Another strand of this strategy is to encourage foreign institutions and the Indian private sector to set up educational institutions to improve educational standards. It is argued that the prevailing standards in most institutions (largely in the public sector) are poor and that they lack the resources to rectify the problem. In this context, financing of higher education is crucial.

Globalisation today involves a race for knowledge-generation. Whether it is software, nano-technology, manufacturing technologies, climate change, trade negotiations or financial institutions, the one who generates better ideas will dominate. Higher education, which is expected to generate ideas, then becomes crucial. Perhaps this is more important than reaping the demographic dividend.

While enrolment in higher education has increased, quality is a concern. Only a handful of institutions produce world-class talent. At the cutting edge, we have a shortage of manpower because we produce little of it, and most of it is lost through brain drain. Many bright students leave the country, unable to get admission to good institutions.

The need for high-quality institutions is obvious. The MHRD is trying to replicate the success of elite institutions such as the Central universities, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institutes of Management, by setting up more of them. In addition, new private institutions in the professional disciplines have emerged in medicine, engineering, management and so on. But can buildings turn into institutions of excellence so mechanically?

Premier institutions face a 30 per cent shortage of faculty. With more of them coming up, the shortage has only spread, threatening standards in the existing institutions. In many private institutions and open universities, the quality of the faculty recruited is indifferent, resulting in poor-quality teaching. Institutions that would hardly be accepted as universities in any country have come up as deemed universities.

There are reports of corruption in setting up private institutions. They not only charge high fees but also extort capitation fees. At times these are set up to buy real estate at concessional prices and make a quick buck. To get recognition, apparently officials from the regulatory authorities (the UGC or the All India Council for Technical Education) are bribed.

Some of the heads of these bodies have been accused of corruption.

Higher education passes knowledge from one generation to the next, and can help society advance by generating new knowledge. The former enables routine tasks to be carried out, while the latter equips society to move beyond its present stage and meet emerging challenges. Copying ideas from the developed world is often inappropriate since they may not be relevant to this country's stage of development. The two roles require imparting high-quality training to students, which in turn necessitates high-quality faculty. Union Minister Jairam Ramesh suggested that the IITs, India's most elite institutions, lack world-class faculty — and he was attacked. Not that he was wrong, but he hurt the sense of false national pride of many people.

Quantity is important, but by itself it cannot ensure quality: that requires special efforts. A hundred indifferent lectures can only kill a student's interest, while one inspired lecture can ignite a spark, make learning fun. It is that, and not bureaucratic fiat, which motivates academics to become good teachers and researchers.

Unfortunately, many of the academics produced by the present system have hardly understood their subjects. They dictate notes in class, killing the student's interest. Often, education is less about learning and more a burden that has to be endured to obtain a degree to get a job. Examinations largely test a student's capacity to reproduce mugged-up notes and not the knowledge acquired. The emergence of 'Kota schools' and coaching institutes that train students mechanically, is a natural corollary. No wonder, book shops around the universities largely stock 'mug books' for competitive examinations.

The authorities are aware of these deficiencies, but lack an understanding of what higher education needs. The UGC has introduced one scheme after another, often at the instance of the Pay Commissions. The Mehrotra Committee in 1986 suggested the creation of Academic Staff Colleges to train teachers and upgrade skills. Since then, promotion of Assistant Professors under the Career Advancement Scheme has been contingent on their attending these colleges. In order to promote research, academics with M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees are given increments in pay. To make faculty-members work harder, the hierarchy levels in academia have been increased, so that academics would face a selection committee more often. The NET examination was introduced to ensure minimum standards among teachers in higher education.

These schemes involving huge expenditure have hardly helped improve quality. Rather than understand that failure is in-built in these schemes since they are divorced from the needs of higher education, the bureaucrats governing higher education have gone for more of the same. Disinterested 'academics' have found ways to beat the system. Today there is a flood of M.Phil. and Ph.D. and NET-qualified students without significant improvement in quality. Academics go through Academic Staff Colleges but with little impact on skills. The reason is that none of these measures ignite the desire to learn.

Now, the UGC, in an attempt to improve the quality of faculty, is enforcing a bureaucratized system of evaluation of faculty under the 'UGC 2010 Regulations,' based on a numerical system of indexing merit, called API. It would lead to 'paper chase.' How many papers or books written, conferences attended, projects completed, and so on. All these can be churned out in large numbers with little original thinking, to help indifferent academics accumulate points. Already there is a mushrooming of 'refereed journals,' national seminars and publishers who charge to print books. High-quality research requires years to produce, and in the new system this would get few points. Producing critiques that challenge authority and open new vistas are not easy to publish, and hence would be considered worthless under the new rules. The quantum of work done by an academic is important only to the extent of its quality.

Education is not like any normal homogenised product, such as soaps or uniform-size shiny red tomatoes. An institution of higher education is not like a factory or an office where time and motion study can be used to measure productivity. In fact, there is a need to let a hundred flowers bloom and celebrate dissent as the essence of higher education. Unfortunately, to the education bureaucracy (often including academics), this is anathema.

The short-sightedness that the UGC is displaying, and to which the academic leadership is succumbing, is the result of poverty of thought and insecurity. Army generals, civil servants and clever networkers are often appointed to top positions in educational institutions, not because of their academic quality but due to their closeness either to those in power or to the moneyed. Their objective function is to serve the interest of their benefactors rather than that of the academic body, or society in general. Hence their focus becomes smooth management rather than cultivation of an environment to encourage knowledge-generation. With the decision of the Academic Council, JNU is

sliding down this path and caving in to adopt bureaucratised standards of performance. Its academics are failing to stand up to the bureaucratisation that is being imposed by the UGC. A university, expected to give the lead to other institutions, is letting down both itself and the nation.

The bureaucratised UGC, while ostensibly promoting excellence, has been systematically undermining it for long. It thinks standards can be achieved through standardisation — little realising that often the latter is the antithesis of the former.

Source: December 17, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

The educational system has to abandon its babu culture: Prakash Wani

With over 33 years of teaching experience, professor Prakash Wani has co-authored five engineering books and published over 20 papers at national and international level. He has been incharge joint director, technical education, Maharashtra, and member of management council, University of Pune.

He was also the chairman of board of studies for electronics and telecommunication department, UoP. He spoke to Rajesh Rao on the changes required in our traditional method of education.

Why is it hard for leading educationists to change from conventional to unconventional methods to better our education system?

Traditional educationists following conventional wisdom can go wrong while exercising their responsibilities. What we need is simple changes to improve the present education system.

If you are in the chair and barely making ends meet, the only chance to become successful is to win over the stakeholders or your colleagues. It is frustrating to hear from others that you are unable to immediately change from conventional to unconventional and pragmatic curriculum.

Anyone who has modest intelligence, social awareness and positive outlook can internally develop a robust curriculum within a given time frame. With the growing population, policy-makers have started applying serious thoughts on how to fulfill their needs within the available resources.

We have to accept our challenges and develop leadership without mimicking any particular system adopted by others. We need to ensure that our system caters to our requirements.

Is the government doing enough to bring in sustainable and quality education? How is the faculty participating?

The government has realised the present challenges and is providing alternatives to bring sustainable and quality education.

As a result, many from the teaching faculty are getting opportunities to participate in the academic improvement programmes, but freedom always comes with responsibility. Our revision and reform can broadly be divided into academic development and academic administration. Due to government's flexible approach, many faculty members are getting the scope to share such responsibilities.

For academic developments, we are following the university affiliation concept to design and develop academic curriculum for its effective implementation and evaluation process. This method is less practiced in developed countries, probably due to less student strength.

Shouldn't the education system and faculty get acquainted with modern skill requirements?

It is said that advent of technology renders people with primitive skills jobless and creates new jobs that require new skills. On the other hand, technocrats believe that smart engineering and technology are key drivers for development.

The board of studies and concerned faculty members need to acquaint themselves with technological and modern skill requirements. They should see a problem in holistic manner rather than offer solutions in bits and pieces. It is necessary to create newer alternatives rather than follow traditional procedures. The educational system has to abandon its babu culture and focus on meeting objectives rather than internal paperwork.

What steps are we taking to improve our evaluation and assessment process?

The emphasis must be on conceiving online-based examination system to benefit students and be at par with international standards. In view of this, as a first step towards our vision, a compact disc(CD) based examination for one of the computer related subjects under engineering faculty was initiated as a pilot project for all the UoP affiliated colleges in the academic year 2008-2009.

The faculty of engineering being a technical faculty at UoP, have extended its scope for the other subjects of engineering in consecutive semesters and also increased its automation by way of incorporating online examination approach. This has helped to curtail time required for assessment work and definitely helped the university authorities to declare results within time, in spite of increase in number of students and colleges.

Use of information and communications technologies (ICT) to deliver education and training

must also have a broader role of delivering learning at lower cost with higher quality.

Source: December 19, 2011/[DNA India](#)

India and Higher Education

India Set to Alter Key Provisions in Bill to Allow Campuses Owned by Foreign Universities

To attract more top-quality institutions, India's education ministry is set to change provisions in its proposed bill to allow foreign universities to set up campuses in India, reports the *Indian Express*. A parliamentary committee reviewing the legislation recommended the changes, which include a provision that would create a committee of academic experts that would invite elite universities to India, allowing them to bypass some bureaucratic hurdles. The revisions also would make sure new campuses aren't only established in cities and to smooth the entry of certificate providers. For example, the bill in its current form requires all foreign higher-education providers to invest at least \$10-million to establish operations in India. Under the revisions, that amount would be lowered to \$4-million for institutions offering certificates or similar qualifications.

*Earlier reported [Parliamentary Panel in India Proposes 'Invitation Only' Model for Foreign Universities](#) (November 14, 2011) As India debates what role, if any, foreign universities should play in its higher-education system, a parliamentary committee has proposed that such universities be allowed into the country on an invitation-only basis, reports the *Indian Express*. The lawmakers said such a move—which is how China and Malaysia approach international-education partnerships, the newspaper says—would help prevent an influx of poor-quality institutions.*

An education-ministry official rejected the idea, saying that all institutions that wanted to set up facilities in India would be vetted before being allowed entry. The committee also suggested that 50 percent of the faculty members working on any potential campus established by an overseas university must be from outside India for at least the first 10 years. The ministry also disagreed with that idea.

Source: December 19, 2011/[Chronicle.com](#)

School Vouchers to empower children to select a school of their choice

School Vouchers, which empower children to select a school of their choice, can be an effective instrument for providing quality education to students belonging to economically and socially disadvantaged groups, experts hold.

Section 12 of the Right to Education Act provides 25 per cent reservations in entry-level admissions in all schools – government, private and unaided –

for poor children. The School Voucher system, which advocates that the government fund students and not schools, can be an effective method of providing admissions against reservations in private schools.

The issue will come up for deliberations during the day-long conference on the RTE Act, being organized by Centre for Civil Society (CCS)'s School Choice campaign at India Habitat Centre here on December 21. CCS had launched India's first School Voucher Project in Delhi in 2007 as part of its flagship project, School Choice Campaign. To demonstrate the power of school choice, it awarded school vouchers worth up to Rs 3600 per year to 408 students in 68 wards of Delhi.

An evaluation of the Delhi Voucher Project reveals that overall, the voucher children performed better than the children studying in private schools and the children studying in government schools in English, Mathematics and Hindi in all grades. CCS president Dr Parth J Shah says, "While the government has a constitutional mandate to educate every child, it cannot accomplish this task by building more government schools. It has to remain a sponsor and facilitator, and let edupreneurs execute the task of delivering the service. This will bring choice of schools even to the poor while improving the quality of education delivered through competition."

Driven by the motto 'Fund Students, Not Schools', the School Choice idea has caught the fancy of several state governments, which are devising innovative solutions to specific problems in their states. Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are among the states which have introduced this idea in various forms.

Voucher schemes are also prevalent in a number of countries, including Chile, Denmark, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden, Holland and the US. Experts point out that School Choice and its school voucher idea can be customized to benefit underserved groups such as migrant children, out of school children, street children, girls, ST/SC/OBC, children of refugees and prisoners, and children living in resettlement colonies.

Dr Shah says vouchers can change the way governments fund education. "The RTE Act talks about universalizing primary education and it seek to accomplish this by looking at all the things that go into education - school buildings, curriculum, textbooks, teachers and their salaries and uniform education to all children."But education is really all about outcomes. Parents want their children to learn and be able to do maths, read and write, speak English, understand basic science and have

some sense of history. We should worry less about inputs and more about outcomes."

This is where vouchers could play an extremely helpful role. In India, the problem is not of availability of good schools but of access to them. For the wealthy, there is no shortage of choice. For poorer families, however, choice is more limited, he points out. Although the central idea of the voucher system is to provide quality education of choice, it also brings with it accountability, transparency, financial prudence and infrastructure development which ultimately culminates in the establishment of an effective and equitable education system.

Experts point out that the benefits of school vouchers can be enormous. It can be used to reward performance of government schools. When a government school attracts voucher students, who could also go to a private school, a part of the voucher amount could be given to the school/teachers as incentive.

Further, voucher is a powerful instrument for Public Private Partnership (PPP) as it allows the government to capitalize on interested private companies, NGOs and individuals to set up new schools for which the government could assure support by guaranteeing 50-75% students in such schools through vouchers.

The advantage of this system is that schools will become more focused on children and parents. Since it is now parents, rather than the government, who are controlling schools' funding, schools have to concern themselves with what parents want.

"The government should free up teachers to teach, schools to determine the specifics of curriculum and resources, and parents to choose the education that is best for their children. This is the best way to improve education for all: Not just the right to education but the right to education of choice," Dr Shah argues.

Source: December 20, 2011/[India Education Diary](#)

FDI low in education, finger at bar on profit

Foreign direct investment in education has been stuttering in India more than a decade after it was allowed, apparently because education is a not-for-profit sector where surplus revenue has to be ploughed back into expanding the institution.

India's education sector has witnessed significant expansion since the government approved FDI in April 2000, thus providing a huge opportunity for investment. Yet FDI remained zero in the first three years, increased till 2008-09 and then kept falling again. (See chart)

In the past 11 years, the total FDI in education has stood at Rs 2,051 crore, the yearly average of Rs 186 crore being one-tenth of one per cent of what the Centre and state governments annually spend in this sector.

The main reason is the curb on profit-making, said Anand Sudarshan, MD and CEO of Manipal Universal Learning Pvt Ltd, which has received more than half the total FDI in education that has come to the country.

"I am not arguing whether this policy is right or wrong, but this is the main reason why FDI has remained low. Whatever FDI is coming, it is in the area of education services, such as technology or education software development, vocational training or assessment services," he said.

Education services, which also include preparation of course material or working out a better exam system, are an area where profit is allowed. However, if a foreign institution or company wants to provide education — and not just services to existing Indian institutions — they are barred from making profit.

So far, only seven foreign institutions have invested in education itself (which they now have to do in collaboration with Indian institutions; setting up their own campuses will be possible only after Parliament passes a revised Foreign Educational Institutions Bill).

Sudarshan added that many countries, including the United Arab Emirates, allow profit from education.

(Private engineering and medical colleges in India earn profits by charging capitation fees but not showing them, says a report by former University Grants Commission chairman Yashpal.)

A Union human resource development ministry official said the low FDI in education should be attributed to the absence of a specific policy for the sector. He suggested the matter would be rectified once the revised Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation and Entry and Operations) Bill, soon to be sent for cabinet clearance, is enacted.

"There is now no law in the country to regulate the entry and operations of foreign education providers. That is why FDI inflow is not happening for setting up institutions or offering courses," he said. "The proposed law provides for a proper mechanism for investment in this sector."

Sudarshan was less confident, citing how the bill retains the not-for-profit mantra. This newspaper has reported how the bill requires foreign universities to compulsorily deposit between Rs 25 crore and Rs 100 crore as a sort of security, and prods them to open campuses in backward regions.

Under current rules, 100 per cent FDI is allowed in education through the “automatic route”. This means a foreign company can directly invest in an Indian firm without prior approval from the government or the RBI. However, within 30 days of the receipt of the FDI, the Indian company is required to report to the RBI’s regional office.

Over 75 per cent of the FDI in the past 11 years has come from Mauritius, a tax haven — most of it to Manipal Universal Learning from the Mauritius-based MEMG International Ltd. Educomp Solutions Ltd, too, has received Rs 93 crore in FDI, mostly from various Mauritius-based companies.

“Mauritius is a haven for money-laundering. It is said that the black money of the Indian business class is routed to India via Mauritius,” alleged Birendra Nayak, a retired Utkal University professor who opposes FDI in education on ideological grounds.

Sudarshan ruled out black money coming from tax havens to education. “These transactions are done in a transparent manner. MEMG is the investment arm of the same group (to which Manipal Universal Learning belongs),” he said.

The department of industrial policy and promotion, a commerce ministry arm from which The Telegraph obtained the data, says it has no information about black money being invested as FDI in education.

While the total FDI in education since 2000 has been about Rs 2,051 crore, the outflow of money from India through the expenditure incurred overseas on education by Indian students is \$5.5 billion (about Rs 30,000 crore) a year, according to human resource development ministry estimates. Over 2.64 lakh Indian students are studying abroad.

Source: December 20, 2011/[The Telegraph](#)

A taste of India

The number of *American students studying in India* grew by a whopping 44.4% from 2,690 last year to 3,884 according to *Open Doors 2011*, the annual report on international academic mobility published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) with support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State.

International campus and student mobility are the current buzzwords in higher education globally. When quizzed about their choice of institution, majority of Indians studying overseas will say they used the world rankings as a guide and also they chose institutions which had diverse classrooms. We work in close groups, comprising different

nationalities. It helps you to be tolerant of other peoples views, and accept differences, says Delna Prakashan, IE Business School, Madrid.

World university rankings, though controversial, facilitate student mobility as they are the first point of reference for international students when they decide to go abroad to study. However, Indian institutions are conspicuous by their absence in the world university rankings. So how do foreign students coming to India select an institution?

I chose India because of its *tremendous potential for growth*. At first, I did rely on *word-of-mouth* to determine the best Indian undergraduate institutions and was going to originally attend St Stephens College in Delhi. Unfortunately, the programme in collaboration with Brown University, US, was cancelled at the last minute. I could not find any world university rankings that ranked Indian universities/colleges and, hence, eventually made a blind decision to study at an Indian institute, says Michael Cameron, former student of Welingkar Institute of Management and current student at Swarthmore College, US.

Lagging Behind

Most global university rankings consider factors such as the *number of international faculty and students at the institute, campus facilities, overall student satisfaction, research output, etc.* Indian universities generally fair poorly on these factors and, hence, either do not make it to the rankings or are placed low.

One of the key reasons why India is lagging behind is *the lack of diversity in terms of faculty or students*; also most colleges *lack the infrastructure and campus facilities* that foreign students expect.

When you compare Indian colleges to their global counterparts, its like comparing apples and oranges. Indian universities train students to work hard, and to memorise books. There is no holistic education, says Nitish Shah, director of Youth Incorporated Magazine.

According to Jonathon James, another student from US, who studied in Pune University, Since I could not find much information on studying in India through world rankings or even online, I visited a local university in my area in New York and met some Indian students. They guided me as to which colleges I should choose in India and also helped me understand what it means to study in India.

Foreign Entry

There are a few institutions like *Fergusson College, Pune*, which are popular with foreign students, even though they are not ranked globally. Established in 1885 by the Deccan Education Society (DEC),

Fergusson attracts students from countries like US, UK, Europe, Ireland and Norway, among others. At present, around 400 foreign students from 34 countries are studying in the college.

Ravindrasingh G Pardeshi, principal, Fergusson College, Pune, says, Our college is known for its *well-equipped labs, infrastructure and strong faculty*, and that is probably why we attract a high number of foreign students. Some of the popular courses among foreign students are computer science, electronic science, biotechnology, physics, psychology and English literature.

On the other hand, *Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi, which made it to the top 100 in the QS World University Rankings (subject-wise) this year*, has 300 foreign students at present, studying at the university. Linguistics, social sciences, economics and international economics are some of the popular courses among the foreign students in JNU.

SK Sopory, vice-chancellor, JNU, feels that to become a world-class university that attracts students from all countries, a lot needs to be done by Indian institutions. There is tremendous scope for improvement in our infrastructure, hostels, gymnasiums, etc. But even this won't help to improve our position in the world rankings. We need to match global parameters, which will take us to the top and this requires a lot of research.

For Lukas Steinmetz from Germany, who is currently studying in India, it has been an incredible experience. Steinmetz decided to study in India because it is one of the *fastest growing economies in the world and he wanted to experience a new culture*. I did not find any information on Indian institutions in world rankings but I was lucky that my university has an exchange programme with Welinkar and I thought I would never have this chance to explore such an exciting country, he says, adding, The class size is smaller and more interactive than in Germany. I am happy both about the variety of subjects being taught as well as the faculty.

Education reforms on backburner

It is never easy to gauge the acceptance of the change process and the mood of a nation in a country like India, which is almost a sub-continent with several intricacies at the social and political level. The year that is coming to an end, in particular, has been a difficult year for the country. Issues like corruption are at centre stage and next-generation reforms, on matters that are vital for social, educational, industrial and economic transformation, have completely lost the momentum. This certainly is not a good sign for an

economy that is under pressure. The State needs cogent action to ensure accountability and transparency for fighting the evils that spread through corruption and corrosion of value systems. Both these aspects are linked with social and political reforms but they are more linked with change in the education system — right from primary to higher education level.

It is in this domain that governments at the centre and in the states have failed to keep up the tempo of reforms. The minister for HRD claims that they have taken several decisions in the education sector, the kinds of which have not been taken in the past sixty years. They, for the past two and half years, are making the claim that revamping of the entire education system is on the anvil. The ministry claims that as many as 13 bills are pending in Parliament. The minister almost shows helplessness in accelerating the process of getting bills through the Parliament.

However, this does not reflect the complete picture. Recently the four reports of HRD standing committee on the bills related to the national accreditation regulatory authority for higher educational institutions, the entry of foreign educational institutions, the educational tribunal and the prohibition of unfair practices in technical educational institutions, medical educational institutions and universities have been submitted to the HRD ministry. These recommendations reflect the broad cross-party consensus and even though it is the prerogative of the ministry either to accept them or to modify or reject them, it is yet not clear what is the stand of the ministry on these reports.

It is now quite evident that these bills may not come to discussion in the present session of Parliament. There are many other important bills on reforms in education that are still at a preliminary level. The concept of creation of an umbrella structure for all the important legal entities that deal with higher and technical education, namely bodies like UGC, AICTE and 11 other such bodies connected with medical, legal, and other professional disciplines, is not getting past the ministerial level itself and hence this important bill that would bring a broader uniformity in professional and educational system is put on the back burner.

These delays create completely non-functioning agencies; this is what is happening at both UGC and AICTE. They have gone so much into their shell that no new initiatives are taken and funds are not being used. Internal information indicates that UGC has just used 30 per cent of plan allocations. The entire system has lost its focus. Bodies like UGC and AICTE should have members that truly reflect the

best in the domain, they should come from different parts of the country and should reflect every layer of the educational system — state universities, central universities, national institutions and so on.

If one looks at the membership of the Commission today one can see that state universities, that carry the maximum burden of educating the youths — they constitute 80 per cent of the total number of professional and higher educational institutes — are not on the radar of the HRD ministry. They prefer persons from cities like Delhi, Mumbai and other metros than many other places where meaningful changes are happening at the delivery and quality level. Indeed, the larger part of India is outside the metros. Educational institutions in rural areas and small towns are facing the challenges and aspirations of the youth and are more eager for enabling policies and clear operating strategies that would bring them into the mainframe of economic change. They want technology, they want connectivity and they desire to be a part of the skill development revolution.

Kapil Sibal, in a recent debate held at Mumbai, gave an impressive speech, but said that the opposition, even though they agree with reforms and also the bills when discussed on phone, change the approach when the matter comes before the business committee. The common man does not know what is truly happening, but one thing is certain that in the past 12 months things have gone from bad to worse, at a grass root level. Children from 220 million families in this country are suffering and are slowly losing faith in the system. This is a bad sign. The true power of democracy comes alive when state, business, academicians and society engage in challenging each other, not to create chaos but to create harmony. Education is too precious a commodity to become a political battleground. We hope 2012 brings greater sense in the minds of those who make the policies and those who implement them.

Source: December 20, 2011/[My Digital fc](#)

Privatization of Education in India

While India can boast of having the third largest higher education system in the world, reality is that India is facing a severe shortage of skilled human resources. The reason for such a contrasting situation is the [extremely low](#) quality of primary, secondary, and college-level education in India. A possible way-out from this situation is privatization of the education system, which is predominantly public at present. Privatization of education has the potential to improve the quality of education as well as to reduce the cost.

However, to ensure access to education for all, the government must design an effective transfer-payment system.

Although India's national literacy rate currently exceeds 75%, a [study by Pratham](#), a voluntary organization, finds that only 53.4% children in Standard V can read a Standard II level text, and that nationally there has been a decline in the children's ability to do basic math! Another [study by NASSCOM](#) finds that 75% of technical graduates and more than 85% of general graduates are unemployable! The problem with the present Indian education system is that it is delivering a huge quantity of output, in the name of educated populace, with poor quality.

This alarming situation is due to the unavailability of skilled teachers, the lack of determination among the existing teachers to teach effectively, the poor physical infrastructure, and a low level of parental input toward their wards' education. The deteriorating trend in the educational system continues largely because of the lethargy and mismanagement of the public schooling system which accounts for nearly [80% of all schools](#).

Despite many efforts from the government to revitalize the public education system, the quality of public education is dwindling. Consequently, enrollment in private schools, colleges, and universities, is on the rise. For instance, a [recent study](#) finds that in the city of Hyderabad, 73% of families in slum areas send their children to private school. A general realization is that the return on investment in the private schools/colleges is much higher as compared to the government schools and colleges, with some notable exceptions.

The reason this is possible is the difference in approach between the two. The public education system — following a top-down approach — is accountable only to the government machinery. So even if the teachers in public schools don't deliver a good quality education, they don't suffer themselves because their jobs are secure. However, in the case of private schools — run through a bottom-up approach — the management and the teachers are directly accountable to the respective parents. If they fail to deliver an expected quality of education, the parents would react. They might even pull out their wards from the school. This implies that the teachers' performance would affect the schools' income and reputation. Consequently, the teachers would lose their jobs. So a private school has to deliver a good quality education. In fact, they do it better than majority of the public schools.

Another issue is the cost of education. Most of the public schools are richer than their private counterparts in terms of total expenditure (on record, at least) and incur a much higher expenditure on the teaching and administrative staffs' salary. The private schools, on the other hand, are thrifty about infrastructure and, in general, pay much lower salaries to their staffs. Thus, on average, at a [fraction of the expenditure](#) of a government school or college, a private institution can provide a better quality of education than the public institutions.

Thus, private schools can provide a better education at a lower cost. So privatization of the primary and secondary educational systems can help ameliorate the situation by improving the quality of education while reducing the cost. But given India's poverty status (roughly [80% of the population](#) lives below the national poverty line), only a few parents will be able to afford the cost of private education. Hence, one can't advocate for a blanket privatization of the entire educational system without taking care of the cost. However, given the present scenario, an alternative system which provides a better education, without overburdening the poor parents, needs to be put in place. Now the question is: What this system should look like?

The best solution, of course, is to fix the public education system. But with the track-record of the bureaucratic administration in India, it does not seem realistic to hope for such a positive change. One realistic way, I think, is to gradually privatize the schools and maybe the colleges, too. The government should take care of the educational expenditure by disbursing to the parents/guardians the cost of their wards' attending schools through transfer payments rather than funding the schools and colleges directly. This way, private agencies will run the institutions, and the parents will be able to afford the cost. Since the parents will have a control over the money, they can decide whether or not to send their wards to a certain school or college. This keeps the benefit of the public education system – affordability – intact while bringing in the efficiency – high quality and low cost – of the private system.

The challenges of introducing such a system will be manifold. First, the government needs to make sure that schools exist in every locality. Left to the entrepreneurs themselves, they may fight to open too many schools in high-income localities where the students will be better compared to the low income localities. So the policy makers must ensure that low income localities also get a due

share of the schools. The government must direct and incentivize the program so that marginalized areas are not left out.

The second challenge is to ensure quality. Although the private schools, in general, are better than their public counterparts, but relying too much on them can also be costly. The quality of the private schools also varies significantly. While some of them may provide a good quality education at a reasonable cost, others may end up becoming money-making machines without caring for the quality of education. So the government should come up with an effective mechanism to determine, monitor, and control the quality of education in the private system.

Another challenge to implement this mechanism is to come up with an effective transfer-payment system. This has to take into account the cost of education in a given locality, the frequency of transfer-payments, and a proper utilization of funds disbursed. The policy-makers should make sure to issue the payment checks on a regular basis to families that have school-going children. If the checks or vouchers are not regular or enough to cover the costs, then again, the poor will suffer more. The government must develop a policy framework so that a higher efficiency can be achieved without losing the poorer section of the population.

Thus, privatization of the country's education system, coupled with a well-tailored transfer-payment system, can help improve the quality of education in India and reduce costs for parents.

Source: December 20, 2011/[Un Mid](#)

India needs non-profit Educational institutions

“India is the place to be”, says Kurt Inderbitzin emphatically. After more than a decade of directing and producing feature films and television movies in the United States, Kurt turned his eyes to India. Then, he headed the Asia's largest film and television school Whistling Woods in Mumbai. However, now Kurt's focus is on his new venture, the International School of Film and Media sprawling across 22-acre campus, in Hyderabad. It is run on a non-profit model.

Pointing to his hair Kurt said, “As I turned older, wider and greyer, I felt the best kind of education is run on non-profit basis. Take the best schools across the world, they are all non-profit institutions. What India needs today is a world class institution of higher education. When it comes to media, according to the figure released by FICCI, India needs as many as three million new employees in

the next decade. However, how many reputed film schools does India have?" he asked.

"The opportunity here is huge. The vibrancy is all around you. When you go to United States or Europe, the whole atmosphere is damp. Here people are positive about a bright future. More and more people from the poor section are being pushed to the middle class and this is a great thing for the media industry. When people move to the richer sections, what they first look for is information, for media. If you look at the Indian villages, expansion of the media is one thing that is evident. Today, the initial costs for setting up communication has come down. So it is possible for even villages to access media at low costs," he said.

Kurt is well aware of the challenges lying ahead. "One of the greatest problems faced by the media industry is the absence of students who can communicate well. Be it journalists or script writers, the problem is that we have students who cannot communicate well. Even though the number of English speaking students in India is higher than USA and UK, the number of students who have read good literature is less. Students in other countries learn a language by reading and appreciating good texts from the language. This seems to be absent in the school curriculum here. So to develop it at the graduate level becomes difficult," he added. "However, things are improving. For example, if you look at films like Delhi Belly or Ra.One, what you see is a cleverly crafted script," he said.

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

Young minds not pursuing maths, says PM

Chennai, Dec 26 (IANS) Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Monday expressed concern that young minds with a natural ability for mathematics were not pursuing the discipline at an advanced level, resulting in a 'decline in the quality of maths teachers at the school and college level'.

In his inaugural speech at a function to mark the 125th birth anniversary of eminent mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, the prime minister said there was a 'general perception that pursuit of maths does not lead to attractive career possibilities'.

'This perception may have been valid some years ago but today there are many new career opportunities available to mathematicians and the teaching profession itself has become much more attractive in recent years,' he said.

He declared 2012 as the National Mathematics Year and Dec 22, the day Ramanujan was born, as Mathematics Day.

'The mathematical community has the duty to find ways and means to address the shortage of top quality mathematicians in the country. It must reach out to the public, especially in the modern context where mathematics has tremendous influence on every kind of human endeavour,' he said.

Stating that mathematics can be regarded as the mother science, Manmohan Singh said natural sciences have had a symbiotic relationship with mathematics.

'Life Sciences did not seem to have much use for mathematics till about a hundred years ago, but lately mathematical interventions have had tremendous impact on biology,' he said.

A noted economist himself, Manmohan Singh said: 'The work of many of the Nobel laureates in Economics is highly mathematical.'

'Aryabhata in the fifth century, followed by Brahmagupta in the next are recorded to be among the all-time great mathematicians. And we taught the world to think of zero as a number and the modern way of representing all numbers with 10 symbols,' the prime minister remarked.

He said Indian mathematics continued to remain in the forefront after Aryabhata almost for a thousand years and cited Madhava to have discovered the essentials of Calculus.

After a long gap, it was during the second decade of 20th century that the country could once again stake claim to producing world class mathematics and that was because of Ramanujan, he said.

Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal, also present at the occasion, said Ramanujan's life shows that it is not necessary to have a regular university degree.

Union Ministers G.K. Vasan, Jayanthi Natarajan, V.Narayanansamy were also present at the function.

Source: December 21, 2011/[Indiacurrentaffairs](#)

Indicus Analytics: Hard lessons in education

Though free and compulsory education for all children aged six to 14 years is now a constitutional commitment, apart from providing access to school facilities, it is an uphill task to ensure that children stay in school. The dropout rate at primary level is calculated as the ratio of enrolment in Class V to enrolment in Class I. Though official enrolment statistics can be unreliable and lead to negative dropout rates in some cases, the dropout rate has always been used as a standard indicator for retention. Government statistics show that the problem continues to be serious; 24.93 per cent of children dropped out of primary school in 2008-09.

An encouraging trend has been that dropout rates in primary education came down from 65 per cent in 1960-61 to 25 per cent in 2008-09. More importantly, this decline shows up more sharply for girls: in 1960-61, the dropout rate for girls at primary level was around nine percentage points higher than that of boys, while in 2008-09 the dropout rate for boys exceeded that for girls by around four percentage points. The significant change in the dropout rate for girls has occurred over the period 2000-01 to 2004-05 — in just four years, there was almost 40 percentage point reduction in girl dropout rates. However, despite this positive trend, dropout rates in India remain too high for the country to attain the status of universal retention at the primary level of education.

In many states, dropout rates at primary level are seen to be alarmingly high. The north-eastern states fare poorly in terms of retention of children in school. Meghalaya records the highest dropout rate in the country, with about 59 per cent of children dropping out of school at an early age. Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim have recorded dropout rates of more than 40 per cent — higher than the all-India average by 12 to 17 percentage points. Rajasthan, Bihar, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Orissa, too, have performed poorly: more than a third of children in these states have dropped out of primary school. ([Click here for chart](#))

The best performing states are Assam, Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Chandigarh, Daman and Diu, and Puducherry — they have registered almost no dropouts. These are followed by Delhi and Tamil Nadu, where the dropout rate is in the range of 0.5-2 per cent. Similarly, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Haryana are better performers, with their dropout rates at the primary level being far below the all-India average.

A bright aspect is that for most of the states, the dropout rates are higher among boys than that for girls, the exceptions being Manipur, Punjab, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh.

According to surveys by the National Sample Survey Organisation, the most common reason given by girls for dropping out is to look after housework, while boys stay home to supplement household income. Keeping children in schools to complete basic education is, therefore, a challenge that goes beyond the schooling system.

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

Vocational training 'is often better than academic qualifications'

Online courses could help adults and those looking for work to build on their skills suitable to a particular job.

One expert has suggested that vocational training could better prepare a person looking to get into employment than the previously favoured academic qualifications.

A representative from Quest Professional, which offers a variety of professional training programmes, said skills that prepare a jobseeker for a specific field of work could make their chances of landing a job more promising.

Jo Barnard, director at the company, which aims to help those who have recently left education, said: "We have a responsibility to ensure that we give young people practical training and are honest with them, in terms of what employers are looking for."

She added that currently, ideas surrounding education are mainly focused on gaining academic training in subjects such as history and English, whereas vocational, hands-on qualifications would make an individual more ready to start a position in the relevant field of work without the need for intensive initial training.

"I think for employers, really looking for young people to have the right attitude [is important]. [They should] have a good appreciation of being able to take responsibility, work independently if necessary [and] contribute [to the workplace]," Ms Barnard added.

Students leaving higher education and those who have been out of a job for a while do often find work, according to the expert, but this is often backed up by work experience and internships, further highlighting the need for practical experience.

The government recently released its Review of Vocational Education - The Wolf Report, which showed that there are currently around 2.5 million young people aged 14 to 19 in full or part-time education.

Jonathan Swan, research and policy manager at Working Families, the UK's leading work-life balance organisation, also commented that flexible online training programmes in the workplace will allow companies to attract the best staff.

He said that those looking for a job will often favour employers who provide on-site training at the beginning of a job and that such opportunities will continue throughout the role.

Source: December 23, 2012/[Virtual-college.co.uk](#)

Kalam evolves three-point recipe for graft-free India

Even as the ongoing debate about the Lokpal Bill reaches a crescendo, one man believes he has the answer to the malady of corruption that India suffers from. A three-point movement stressing on education, values and the parent-child equation should provide the magic formula, believes former president A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

"The Lokpal Bill is definitely going to shape a new law to punish or take action against people who indulge in corruption. But the issue is how fast can you take action?" asked India's "missile man".

"How accurately can the law fix the crime? There has to be a mechanism for very fast action. The law is like this: catch them and punish them. Ideally, we need good citizens. My mission is: How to 'overcome the greed and corruption.' I visualise the nation as corruption-free, prosperous and peaceful with three simultaneous movements," Kalam told IANS in an interview.

"The three movements are 'education with value system', 'youth persuading their parents to let go of corruption' and 'What can I give to replace the greed of what I can take'.

"So a+b+c (the three arms of the movement) along with the strong Lokpal laws with action orientation will evolve a great nation," Kalam said.

The belief towards an ideal nation also finds reflection in Kalam's new book, "Target 3 Billion: Innovative Solutions towards Sustainable Development", which he has co-authored with his young co-researcher Srijan Pal Singh. It explores the possibilities of empowering India's 600,000 villages with a sustainable development model by providing urban amenities in rural areas.

The model - PURA or Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas - is a combination of technology, people, traditions, skills and entrepreneurial spirit. The book illustrates the viability of the model with examples of successful development enterprise from the villages.

An estimate by Kalam and co-writer Singh says "the country will need 7,000 PURA clusters to address the development needs of at least 750 million people living in the villages".

One of the ground-breaking theories of Kalam's grassroots development is "eco-preneurialship - generating sustainable and inclusive livelihoods from environment".

"This is a new idea for sustainable development profile of the 21st century world which faces tremendous ecological stress. Innovation needs to find a three-way support of investment, knowledge power and market linkages to create a PURA Corporation which brings forth a unique idea of

'Social Stock'. It can be used as a tool to support eco-preneurs and innovators," he said.

The former president said he had discussed some waste-to-wealth examples in the book like fly ash for building material and jatropha and algae for fuel generation as successful green enterprises.

"During my visit to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, I realised that the whole archipelago is powered by diesel-fuelled generators. An eco-preneur can use solar power for daytime and jatropha oil for generation of power at night," Kalam said, suggesting a model.

Kalam said the success of his "model of sustainable development depends on mobilising the youth of the country to become a part of the PURA mission".

"The youth need to be enabled to become job generators from job seekers. Students can be a part of the mission through research and awareness. For this, we need to create enterprise environment for promoting vertical linkages," he said.

"I have suggested that students of Class 8, Class 10 and Class 12 be given skill importance (skill-based) training. And they will be awarded another certificate with their CBSE certificate that will validate their employable status. I have been pushing the idea to the government for the last few years," he said.

"India should walk on her own shadow - we must have our own development model," he said.

Kalam, who has been honoured with the Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan and Bharat Ratna, has authored 15 books on a variety of topics, including "Igniting Minds", "Wings of Fire" and "India 2020: A Vision for the New Millennium".

The 80-year-old former president lectures on social development, works on social projects and guides research fellows.

Source: December 24, 2012/SmeTimes.in

A taste of India

Karan Gupta, study abroad consultant, analyses the reverse trend of foreign students coming to India to study

The number of American students studying in India grew by a whopping 44.4% from 2,690 last year to 3,884 according to Open Doors 2011, the annual report on international academic mobility published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) with support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State.

International campus and student mobility are the current buzzwords in higher education globally. When quizzed about their choice of institution, majority of Indians studying overseas will say they

used the world rankings as a guide and also they chose institutions which had diverse classrooms. "We work in close groups, comprising different nationalities. It helps you to be tolerant of other people's views, and accept differences," says Delna Prakashan, IE Business School, Madrid.

World university rankings, though controversial, facilitate student mobility as they are the first point of reference for international students when they decide to go abroad to study. However, Indian institutions are conspicuous by their absence in the world university rankings. So how do foreign students coming to India select an institution?

"I chose India because of its tremendous potential for growth. At first, I did rely on word-of-mouth to determine the best Indian undergraduate institutions and was going to originally attend St Stephen's College in Delhi. Unfortunately, the programme in collaboration with Brown University, US, was cancelled at the last minute. I could not find any world university rankings that ranked Indian universities/colleges and, hence, eventually made a blind decision to study at an Indian institute," says Michael Cameron, former student of Welingkar Institute of Management and current student at Swarthmore College, US.

Lagging Behind

Most global university rankings consider factors such as the number of international faculty and students at the institute, campus facilities, overall student satisfaction, research output, etc. Indian universities generally fair poorly on these factors and, hence, either do not make it to the rankings or are placed low.

One of the key reasons why India is lagging behind is the lack of diversity in terms of faculty or students; also most colleges lack the infrastructure and campus facilities that foreign students expect.

"When you compare Indian colleges to their global counterparts, it's like comparing apples and oranges. Indian universities train students to work hard, and to memorise books. There is no holistic education," says Nitish Shah, director of Youth Incorporated Magazine.

According to Jonathon James, another student from US, who studied in Pune University, "Since I could not find much information on studying in India through world rankings or even online, I visited a local university in my area in New York and met some Indian students. They guided me as to which colleges I should choose in India and also helped me understand what it means to study in India."

Foreign Entry

There are a few institutions like Fergusson College, Pune, which are popular with foreign students, even though they are not ranked globally. Established in 1885 by the Deccan Education Society (DEC), Fergusson attracts students from countries like US, UK, Europe, Ireland and Norway, among others. At present, around 400 foreign students from 34 countries are studying in the college.

Ravindrasingh G Pardeshi, principal, Fergusson College, Pune, says, "Our college is known for its well-equipped labs, infrastructure and strong faculty, and that is probably why we attract a high number of foreign students. Some of the popular courses among foreign students are computer science, electronic science, biotechnology, physics, psychology and English literature."

On the other hand, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi, which made it to the top 100 in the QS World University Rankings (subject-wise) this year, has 300 foreign students at present, studying at the university. Linguistics, social sciences, economics and international economics are some of the popular courses among the foreign students in JNU. SK Sopory, vice-chancellor, JNU, feels that to become a world-class university that attracts students from all countries, a lot needs to be done by Indian institutions. "There is tremendous scope for improvement in our infrastructure, hostels, gymnasiums, etc. But even this won't help to improve our position in the world rankings. We need to match global parameters, which will take us to the top and this requires a lot of research."

For Lukas Steinmetz from Germany, who is currently studying in India, "It has been an incredible experience." Steinmetz decided to study in India because it is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and he wanted to experience a new culture. "I did not find any information on Indian institutions in world rankings but I was lucky that my university has an exchange programme with Welingkar and I thought I would never have this chance to explore such an exciting country," he says, adding, "The class size is smaller and more interactive than in Germany. I am happy both about the variety of subjects being taught as well as the faculty."

Source: December 24, 2012/[Education Times](#)

Mandatory accreditation will improve quality of education: HA Ranganath

The director of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), HA Ranganath has said that if government passes the impending 'Accreditation Bill' and makes the process mandatory for each and every institution, the state of country's higher education will improve.

"The bill, if it becomes a law, will make accreditation mandatory for all universities and colleges in the country. The institutions will be able to maintain a minimum standard of quality education if this happens," he said. Currently, the bill is under government's consideration.

Comparing accreditation to routine health checks, Ranganath said, "The accreditation helps an institution to identify its strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities. It is a facilitating mechanism and helps filling in gaps."

Ranganath remarks that that accreditation is not a one-time process and education institutions should carry out accreditation on a regular basis.

Replying to why accreditation is necessary, he said, "Today, we hardly have Indian universities in top positions. We have quantity but we are failing on quality. The accreditation will help us in rating the institutions so that students can make a right choice."

Explaining how a NAAC accredited institute is eligible for grants and funds, Ranganath said, "An accredited institute attracts extra grants that help in better infrastructure, and fulfilling other requirements. However, NAAC is not an inspection. Hence, if a university does not renew its ratings, it is not penalised. In such a case, the university fails to get extra funds. So, it's a monetary loss for it," he said.

The colleges having accreditation can get funds for developing as centres with potential for excellence. It also helps in getting autonomous status, he added. At present, there are 5,000 colleges out of over 22,000, and 116 universities out of nearly 600 that are accredited.

Source: December 24, 2012/[India education review](#)

Increase Your Occupation with Indian Education

The Education and learning plays a key role to development of human and also considered as strongest equipment for reduce the poverty price, gender high quality, improving wellness, peace and balance. It is also stepping stone for soaring career. For augmenting the group mobility, the India education is the most vital techniques. In this modern era, the framework of education in India characterizes a great contradiction in phrases. From ancient instances, the education system has been regularly changed as excellence education in India. These days, India has much educational development and it also proud to say that India has 1 of world course institutions. There are numerous best colleges, schools, universities, engineering schools and medical schools and also

prime business colleges. There are also applying the policies and applications during the region that assist to trying to increase the educational conditions. The educational system separated into various level as primary level, higher level, and elementary, secondary education, undergraduate and postgraduate level.

The education in Rajasthan has obtained very valued and people have also great regards for education. The govt also encourages people and sends their words to colleges and schools to move on good teaching. The Rajasthan education has great kinds and schemes for supplying education. There is some anxiousness regards feminine education to great extent. There are tons regularly modifications displaying relating to the education. The numerous institutions and governmental education middle are providing best education. There are also modifications in educational services as enrollment of students, advancing education and ranges of processes are also carried out. In the current time, the Rajasthan has nine universities and approximately two hundred and fifty schools and fifty thousand primary and seventy 5 hundreds secondary colleges.

At presents, the state of Rajasthan is swank with numerous personal and public education organizations current specialist and vocational courses in the fields of technical, medical and industrial. When you speak about high quality education, the Rajasthan education gives you platform to build your long term vibrant with the several specialist during the world. Understanding in Rajasthan gets to be straightforward with the newest amenities and outstanding instructors. The educational system not only make target on academic matter also give concentration on proper values of learners. The govt also made the decision to supply pc buses in all the districts of state for boosting pc literacy. They are also offering concentration on grownup education with [private pilots licence](#).

Singhania University, believed as most reputable educational middle of Rajasthan that situate in Pacheri Bari, district of Jhunjhunu. The college offers great infrastructure, significantly competent and focused faculties and also provides dazzling atmosphere for educational and intellectual development. The students can pursue several applications for communications skills and personality development with more sorts of diploma applications. There are various educational centers underneath the Singhania University situated in several metropolitan areas of India. Student from various region can pursue education and can get relevant info. The college also assures you to supply

dazzling career and long term potential customers. It also gives world rank placement and recruitment software at international level.

With MBA diploma, a particular person can become business executive, HR executive, marketing executive and also sit on prime managerial positions. Pursuing mba education opens the opportunities for everyone to make career in administration fields. It gives you an knowledge and logical skills that will assist you will in your steering to become business executive of a number of form. You have numerous options for business colleges and schools for pursuing your desired diploma. The Singhanian University is also offer administration education in great extent. Right here we mentioned tons of Indian educational system, if you require a lot more relevant info should go to our world wide web portal.

Source: December 24, 2012/law.naera.tortool.com

India needs high GDP growth, not Lokpal

What does 2012 hold for us — rather, what do we want it to hold for us? To answer that, Indians need to ask themselves why 2011 was such a sullen year. In one phrase, it was the year we lost hope. Hope, aspiration, ambition, optimism: all of these come down to the same sentiment, the belief things can and will get better.

The prime reason India lost hope was its economy began to slip dangerously. The Congress came to power in 2004 disparaging the 'India Shining' slogan. It left us in 2011 contemplating the 'India Tanking' dirge. As investment in new capacities dried up, jobs prospects did too. Angry and frustrated, Indian companies began putting their money abroad — building capacities and creating jobs in other countries that must be sending the UPA and the NAC 'thank you' cards.

For middle-class families, the news was worse. As the rupee fell, the cost of sending your child abroad for a good education rose. There was and is likely to be no alternative. The government has resolutely refused to open up the higher education sector to quality international institutions; HRD minister Kapil Sibal's Bills are being opposed by Congress MPs themselves, not to speak of an opportunistic opposition.

With the stock indices declining sharply, millions found themselves poorer than at the beginning of the year. The low-interest regime of the early 2000s made first-generation home-owners of many, many Indians. What of those in the queue? In 2004, a fixed-interest home loan was available at 7.25%. Today a floating-rate loan is all you'll get at 12%.

Seven years of talking down the economy, bullying and pressurising private enterprise, discounting India's innate entrepreneurship and replacing it with a culture of profligate, top-down populism, and refusing to deregulate and liberalise sectors crying out for change have left the country feeling miserable. The set of factors that caused the 2002-2009 boom is exhausted. The NDA sowed, the UPA reaped. What has the UPA sowed?

To become a major, high-growth economy, India cannot run away from one compelling element: robust manufacturing. It needs infrastructure — power and roads — labour reforms, the incubation of new cities. However, it has a leadership that talks of the Indian village as if it were some idyll and of the Indian city as an evil siren rural folk must be protected from. That aside, power stations are out of coal; and the UPA has deprioritised the highway development project.

As for labour law reform, it has been rendered so politically incorrect even op-ed writers have stopped discussing it. Instead, potential industrial workers in rural India are told to stay home, promised both a cash dole (under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme) and free or subsidised food-grains (under the proposed Food Security Act).

Social engineering is about creating incentives for multitudes of people to take risks and better their lives, in the process benefiting society. Only in India has social engineering been reduced to a measure to keep people where they are, perpetuate poverty and want and purposely not encourage more rewarding options (like better-paying industrial jobs.)

India's GDP is still growing at 7%. Given high inflation and population rise, in real terms that is much closer to the low-level growth rates of old than is realised. So what happens when an economy starts stuttering? People begin to worry about dividing and sub-dividing the existing pie rather than expanding the pie. The mode of division and sub-division is inevitably identity-based and this gives a boost to caste and religious politics. Insecurity leads to a demeaning race for state symbols and government jobs.

Symptoms are around us. The Lokpal Bill will create public-funded sinecures for a few thousand people, complete with chaprasis and peons, lal batti cars and that infuriating towel on the swivel chair. The reservation fever is starting to rage. If there are caste and religious quotas in the nine-member Lokpal, how soon before similar quotas in the Union Public Service Commission (a constitutional body that actually recruits government servants)?

None of this — not the perversity of the government, not the 4.5% minority OBC (for all practical purposes, Muslim OBC) quota — would matter if the economy were galloping along and if hope remained alive. For that India needs 20 years of unstinted, rapid-fire GDP growth. Without it, we may as well buy our children one-way tickets.

Source: December 24, 2012/[DNA India](#)

Educationists dismayed at 12th Five-Year Plan

The approach paper of the 12th Five Year Plan seems to have failed to [impress](#) the educationists. That it is modest, lacking focus, targeting macro-level reforms and not based on [empirical](#) evidence is worrying experts in the field.

As India is getting ready to take off with its 12th Five Year Plan, discussions are on about the draft. [Educationists](#) raised their concerns about the same at a colloquium on [higher education](#) in the 12th Plan, conducted by the Karnataka State Higher Education Council and the Centre for Educational and Social Studies on Friday.

"We are trying to beautify a house from outside when it is crumbling inside. There are a lot of talks about introducing more IITs and IIMs. We need to focus on improving the lower level colleges which admit 90% of the student population. There is a lot of enthusiasm for building world class universities. It's good to have a direction, but I feel it's a bit over reach," said [RGovinda](#), vice-chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi. "All the focus is on macro level, at the governance level. This bothers me," he added.

"We are blindly producing engineers and doctors, without realising how short we actually are. It is bad that students study something, and end up in a totally different field. They need right guidance in their field," he said. "Our syllabus for conventional courses was prepared by the British to mould clerical staff. We have not moved away from that. Is the syllabus practical now? There should be choice-based curriculum, vocational education and polytechnic education should be linked to universities. Loans with special rates should be given to universities to build infrastructure," said Lata Krishna Rao, Principal Secretary for Higher Education.

Speaking on similar lines, Arkalgud Ramaprasad, head of the department of information and decision sciences, [University of Illinois, Chicago](#), said: "It is a very modest aspiration when we compare to the global competition. The conclusion of the plan looks more like a statement than an aspiration.

There is no clear vision stated for the system in the context of global economy and no objectives against which progress can be measured. The approach is tactical, not strategic. It is not systemic and is based on experience of experts which can be biased or selective instead of empirical evidence. The approach should be to architect a new system, and not just modify the existing system."

"The approach paper is made top down instead of bottom up. The silver lining is that they plan to strengthen the state universities," said M K Shreedhar, secretary, Karnataka Knowledge Commission. There was a lot of emphasis on teachers' training and involvement of vocational education.

"H A Ranganath, director of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), said that the approach paper had missed important points, such as issue of grants to universities and affiliation processes. "There are 611 universities in the country, with 41 in Karnataka. About 150 universities are not receiving grants. How can we talk of growth in such circumstances? Also, the concept of affiliation has become a mundane matter of the richness of a University. More affiliations, more funds. This is wrong," he said.

QUOTE HANGERS:

When the 11th Five Year Plan was announced, there was a lot of talk on how the budget for higher education was increased five times. But, only 45% of it has been used. No plan will be useful unless we reflect on what we have done before. -- R Govinda

Our teachers speak of covering syllabus. What syllabus are we trying to cover? We have to uncover syllabus. The job of a teacher is to uncover the veil of darkness. -- R Venkat Rao, VC, NLSIU

There is no political will in the field of education. Why did our government take six years to pass the Right to Education bill? Because they knew it would cost them Rs 65,000 crore per year and nobody wanted to take the responsibility. Which political leader has promised a list of things they will do in education before elections. There is no accountability in bureaucracy also. When they get transferred from one department to another every year, how can you expect it from them? --[Dileep Ranjerkar](#), CEO, [Azim Premji Foundation](#)

Our syllabus for the conventional courses was prepared by British to mould clerical staff. We have yet not moved away from that. How practical and relevant are our syllabi now? There should be choice-based curriculum, vocational education should come into main stream and polytechnic education should be linked to universities. Loans with special rates should be given to universities to

build infrastructure. -- Lata Krishna Rao, principal secretary, higher education

What does the 12th five year plan say on higher education?

- Shift of focus to quality
- More resources and better utilization
- Enhancing employability
- Encouraging private participation
- Research participation and faculty issues
- Other initiatives including harnessing ICT, accreditation, etc

Source: December 24, 2011 / [Ibn Live/Times of India](#)

Where motive is profit, education takes a back seat

Formally allowing 'for-profit' institutions to operate schools will deepen the systemic inequity along economic fault lines.

Section 12 of the Right to Education Act, 2009, which enforces a private-public partnership by reserving 25 per cent seats for the economically backward living in the vicinity of a private school, is a major source of anxiety for these institutions. Private trusts and managements fret about eroding autonomy, while parents in elite schools question the high fees in institutions that have lost the right to exclude. This opposition, driven by the middle class, seeks to defend its privileged and rarefied education system from encroachments, which were the initial trigger for the private school movement in India.

Modelled on the British public schools, the early private schools of the pre-independence era, such as Bishop Cotton School and the Lawrence Schools, educated children of English officers and scions of the most privileged Indian families. Schools aided by the government were intended to produce lettered civil servants. In the decades preceding independence, prominent Indian institutions such as the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the Delhi Public School Society focussed on developing leaders with an Indian ethos. Over the decades, these schools provided free India with its first bureaucrats and administrators.

Post-independence, democracy universalised education, which until then had been a privilege, signalled by increased enrolments across all demographic profiles. The exodus of the middle class from government to private schools that flourished through the 1960s and 1970s was an acknowledgement of a middle class elitism that was clearly discomfited by the blurring class and caste lines in the classroom. Largely controlled by the upper castes, these private schools were

avowedly secular but reinforced caste divisions. Established by non-profit organisations mostly in metropolitan areas, they further distanced the rural-urban educational experience. The mushrooming of lower-end "budget" schools in the last two decades, accounting for 60 per cent of urban enrolment growth in primary education between 1986 and 1993, was a market response to the rising clamour for English education from an aspiring, upwardly mobile lower middle class which did not have the means to send its children to more exclusive private schools.

By default, government schools became synonymous with mass education and were increasingly apportioned to the lower castes and Dalits who aspired to be educated. By the 1980s, because of defunding and slackening civic pressure, the system had collapsed and was marked by low teacher morale, high dropout rates, and rampant absenteeism among both students and teachers.

Over the past 30 years, this deep divide between the two systems has fostered two distinctive streams of education and thereby two exclusive educational and life experiences. The alternative private schooling system has contributed to a social transformation by creating an educated middle class that values economic growth but not social cohesion; that acknowledges education as a critical resource but endorses the marginalisation of groups based on financial status; and that has a sense of entitlement but does not actively advocate universalisation of education.

While the continued existence of private schools is an indictment of the government, in that it has failed to respond to the educational needs of its children, it has also legitimated an attitude that allows the privileged to dissociate themselves from the educational needs of the larger society. With all its shortcomings, which have been extensively documented, the RtE should be commended for trying to bridge the chasm by building on the bedrock of inclusion.

The push by the RtE to re-engage with private schools and re-integrate them into the Indian educational mainstream is an acknowledgement that the market cannot be trusted to deliver education with any degree of equity. To bring in additional resources, the 2010-11 Mid-Year Plan Review advocates deletion of the crucial stipulation that only non-profit educational trusts and charities may operate private schools. More recently, some educational trusts are alleged to be fronts for 'for-profit' organisations that siphon off the profits, ploughing back little into improving infrastructure and teacher expertise. Formally allowing 'for-profit' institutions to operate schools, even as they enjoy

land, tax and infrastructure concessions, will merely legitimise this profiteering and deepen the systemic inequity along economic fault lines. If taken to its logical end, this could well kill the spirit of the RtE and the Directive Principles enshrined in our Constitution. Experience, national and international, tells us that private players in elementary education foster neither inclusiveness nor equity.

Education is a legal, collective and moral entitlement. When the middle class undertakes to share in this responsibility and ends its apathy to mass education, it may have earned the privilege of a private schooling system. In the process, government schools, responding to a more demanding constituency, are more likely to effectively meet the needs of not just the poor and the marginalised but of society at large.

(Hema Ramanathan is Fulbright-Nehru Senior Research Scholar, 2011-12, and Associate Professor, University of West Georgia. Her email ID is: hramanat@gmail.com and Parvathy's ID is: parvathy_pb@hotmail.com)

Source: December 25, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

A Perspective on Students in India Using Their English Language Skills to Get Top Jobs

English is the language of business, of science. The worldwide use of English has been the consequence of the British domination of the days gone by and the influence of the USA in the modern world. The deep roots of English in India, of course, were put forth by the 200 or so years of British rule in India.

In India, its popularity and usage has increased exponentially even after independence. In this diverse country of around 18 official languages, English also plays the role of lingua franca alongside the national language Hindi. The growth of English in India has been fueled by the better [employment](#) opportunities available if one is proficient in English. For those with an English medium school education the advantage begins in college, where the medium of instruction is English.

Students from a vernacular educational background find that overcoming the disadvantage of language is time-consuming and affects their scores, if not throughout, at least in their initial college years. There have even been cases of multitudes of students from not-so-affluent homes dropping out from college, unable to overcome the hurdles of studying in a language completely alien to them. This also throws light on the standard of English being taught as a second language in

vernacular schools in India. The teaching just equips them with, at the best, basic reading skills.

There have been agitations against the growing importance of English and the decline of [Indian languages](#). There have even been suggestions to make vernacular education mandatory in India, but none of these have been anything more than a flash in the pan, as they were merely politically motivated vote-bank shams. What was indeed laughable was that the children of the very leaders who had instigated these movements were being educated in swanky English-medium schools. Today, even the poorer sections send their progeny to private English medium schools; that seem to have mushroomed at every nook and corner, eschewing Government run vernacular schools if they can afford it.

One of the prime reasons for our domination of the IT industry has been the fact that the medium of instruction for graduate studies and professional courses is English. It has enabled us to take advantage of the technological advances of the digital age and become the base for the IT operations of clients across the world. Another new age industry whose birth has totally been based on the availability of large number of English speakers is BPO.

It is not limited to outsourcing because of the cost advantage of transferring operations to India. Multinationals are flocking to Indian Management Institute campuses every year, the compensations being offered surpassing the previous year highs. These professionals have been educated in India but crossing over into the business environment of another country has been relatively painless as there is no deterrent in the form of an unknown foreign language. That is more than half the battle won! It also speaks of why more than 50% of the client base for most IT firms in India is the US and Europe.

One thing that we certainly cannot do is being complacent. We cannot and should not lose our advantage. The competition is catching up; an example being Philippines, which has been declared as the most preferred BPO destination, a crown previously worn by India. In spite of having being instructed in English the language skills of many of the graduates that our education system churns out every year leaves a lot to be desired. A working knowledge is what most aim at and accordingly, that is what they achieve. Easy money at an early age blunts out the competitive edge, the fire in the belly. Communication is the keystone on which one's growth in an organization is balanced.

The higher you go, the more impressive your articulation has to be. Successful expression of one's thoughts begins with a good diction. Cognizance, insight and vision remain untapped potential until communicated to the target audience, assimilated by the target audience and acted upon. Indra Nooyi, Rajat Gupta, [Vikram Pandit](#) are few of the numerous Indian names who have made it to the top echelons of the business world. Undoubtedly, the foremost skill in their kitty has been successful communication in English.

A young and vibrant India has a lot to offer to the globalized world. It behooves us not to rest on our laurels, but to go beyond mediocrity. Our history has been of bondage and of being exploited; but serendipitously, we were also handed the tools of our resurrection, of our flight to the stratum of the leaders. It is up to us to excel in a language which though initially was forced upon us but has turned out to be our stepping stone into the information age - English.

Source: December 25, 2012/[Technorati.com](#)

Pros and cons of reservation in schools for economically backward

With schools having to reserve 25% of their seats for economically backward students from the next academic year, the poor kids will get an opportunity to study in elite schools.

Ten-year-old Rahul Waghmare trudges to a civic school in Andheri every day. He wants to design automobiles when he grows up. But now, he dreams of studying in a posh school.

However, he can't afford to. His mother and sister work as domestic helps and just about manage to make ends meet.

"My school is in a bad shape. The teachers are absent most of the time and lessons are not taken seriously. I have always wanted to study in a big school," he said.

His dream might be a reality next year.

From the next academic year, all schools - even the most elite ones — will have to reserve 25% seats for underprivileged children between the ages of 6 and 14.

This is one of the sections of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education, introduced in 2009, which will be implemented from next year in the state.

"Such a move will mean that even a deprived child from Dharavi will be able to study in an elite school in the city. These students will get free education till class 8. The state government will pay part of their fees while the rest will have to be borne by

the school management," said a senior education official.

The reservation will give underprivileged students access to good education, say educationists who have welcomed the move.

"In a country where literacy levels are low and good quality education is not affordable to many, the move is the need of the hour," said Basanti Roy, former divisional secretary of the state board.

The scheme will help create equal opportunity for students irrespective of their economic backgrounds, she added.

Although Jayant Jain, president Forum for Fairness in Education, welcomes the move, he is worried for the child after the freeship is over.

"The government will pay his/her fees only till class 8. What will happen to the child after that? The child will be left in the lurch as he would not be able to afford studying in that school once the free education is over. The government should cover a child's education till class 10 at least," Jain said.

Schools have their own set of worries after the law is enforced.

They say that such a reservation will change classroom dynamics culturally, socially and economically. They will need to pay extra attention to these students.

"When an underprivileged child studies in a big school with peers who are financially better than them, it might lead to negative feelings and the child might feel let down," said Vandana Lulla, director, principal of Podar International School, Santa Cruz.

"Also, other children will not know how to mingle with them. Schools need to organise sensitisation programmes for students on how to behave so as not to hurt each other's sentiments."

Rohit Bhat, principal of Children's Academy, Malad, agreed that schools will need a mechanism to assess these children. "We need to know whether the underprivileged children will be able to cope with the curriculum. Teachers will need to work hard with such students through remedials. It will be a tough task," he said.

The state government will reimburse the schools an amount equal to either the fees charged by the school or the per child expenditure in state schools, whichever is lower.

But, schools are apprehensive whether the move would be economically viable for them. They, instead, want a public-private partnership that will provide education to the deprived children. "Instead of reserving seats, the government should

strengthen the public-private partnership model by allowing schools to adopt municipal schools, send their own qualified teachers to the civic schools and allow students to use their infrastructure," said Sudeshna Chatterjee, principal of Jamnabai Narsee School, Vile Parle (West).

Parents are worried that the fee burden will fall on the rest of the students.

"Even though the government pays part of the fees of such children, the schools will get an excuse to hike fees saying that they have to cover up for these children. This will make the education system more lopsided and unfair," said Anita Nagwekar, a parent whose son studies in a school at Andheri.

Several states across the country have already started implementing the reservation.

But Maharashtra came out with its rule book for implementing the RTE in 2011 and will make the 25% reservation clause binding on all schools from the next academic year.

"The RTE is delayed in the state because we are waiting for the Supreme Court decision on the reservation. Some private schools had taken the matter to the court. We cannot implement it until we get a judgment from the court. So by next year, it will fall in place," said a senior education official

Source: December 26, 2012/[DNA India](#)

NCHER is good, but its implementation is the key

The recent decision of the Union Cabinet to approve the formation of the National Council for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), which will act as a single over-arching independent body to regulate higher education, has received mixed reactions from academicians and industry-watchers.

NCHER will subsume existing higher education regulators such as University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and Council for Distance Education (CDE) to act as a regulator to oversee universities and institutes providing medical and agricultural courses in various institutions across the state.

"If the NCHER is implemented correctly, it will definitely act as a boon for higher education in the country. As India is approaching the 12th five-year plan, there is need for a holistic body to regulate higher education. It is an attempt at bringing about reforms in higher education," said H A Ranganath, director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

The council will be a 70-member body with representation from states and for professional

bodies to decide on policy issues. The NCHER Bill proposes to have an 11-member executive committee to implement the decisions of the Council.

The question raised here is whether NCHER is the answer to the problems in higher education at a time when decentralisation is the keyword.

"We must understand that NCHER is only a recommendatory body. It will not interfere in policy decisions. I was worried about centralisation too. But NCHER's organisational structure is such that there is no scope for concentration of power," added Ranganath.

One of the many highlights that NCHER proposes is to make the appointment of Vice-Chancellors transparent through a national registry of academicians.

"This is what worries me. Maintaining a registry of such large scale is very difficult. The process of appointment of a V-C now is transparent enough. The registry will lead to candidates getting themselves registered, asking to be appointed, which is wrong," said a Vice-Chancellor of a reputed university.

"NCHER is a good move. But we need to look at how the proposed plans would be inflated. NCHER can bring about a federal structure of functioning into higher education. It will dispel the disrepute that many regulatory bodies have earned," said a senior academician.

Source: December 26, 2012/[IBN Live](#)

Miles to go before it sees light of the day

Will 13 be lucky for HRD Minister Kapil Sibal? With the Minister not successful so far in getting the Parliament's clearance for as many as 12 Bills, which are at different stages, the fate of the ambitious Bill on Higher Education and Research (HER) that is likely to be introduced on Tuesday remains to be seen.

Sources in the Ministry felt even if the HER Bill is introduced; it may have a long way to go before it can see the light of the day. They reminded that the implementation of the HER Bill, expected to revolutionise higher education in the country, will depend on the passage of three preceding Bills.

These include the Bills on Education Tribunals, Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities and National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill "The provisions in these Bills are basically linked to the effective implementation of HER Bill and must be put in place

before the latter can become functional”, the sources pointed out.

However, hopes have been raised since a Bill on the same lines for creation of an over-arching medical authority-- to be placed above all other medical education regulators such as Medical Council of India (MCI), Dental Council of India (DCI), Pharmacy Council of India and Nursing Council of India - was passed by Rajya Sabha, this week

The proposed flagship Commission for Higher Education and Research will subsume University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and National Council for Teacher's Education (NCTE). It was conceptualised on the basis of the report submitted by the Yash Pal Committee in 2009.

The Bill ran in trouble from the beginning when HRD Ministry locked horns with the Health Ministry over bringing medical education under the proposed legislation. The Bill also faced criticism from the States, particularly Tamil Nadu, Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat etc who felt the Centre was all out to monopolise the appointment of vice-chancellors in the States. There was also agitation and pressure from the UGC and AICTE employees, who were uncertain on their future.

Quelling doubts, a section of sources in the Ministry pointed out that extensive deliberations have taken place for the past two years to reach a consensus. They, however, admitted that uncertainty exists on the future of the employees that are proposed to be “subsumed”.

The mechanism on how these authoritative bodies would eventually be absorbed in the proposed commission is yet to be worked out, the sources informed. It goes without saying that the proposed commission “would be a lean body” as the financial power related to giving grants to the universities will be taken over from the UGC by the MHRD.

Source: December 26, 2012/[The Pioneer](#)

FDI in studies creates divide

Confederation of Indian Industry has prepared a document on foreign direct investment (FDI) in higher education and some Tamil Nadu educationists feel it's time foreign universities are allowed to set up campuses in India, but there are sceptics too.

Welcoming the proposal, G. Viswanathan, VIT University chancellor and president of Education Promotion Society for India, said the Centre should allow foreign players and FDI in higher education.

“I have seen several students joining colleges and universities in non-English-speaking countries such as China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to pursue medicine, but not India,” he said.

Ruing absence of FDI in medical education, Dr Viswanathan sought foreign help to enhance the quality of higher education in the country. He said foreign universities offering hefty pay packets were denying Indian Institutes of Technology and top universities such as VIT best faculty.

Thangam Meganathan, chairperson of Rajalakshmi Group of Institutions, said nowadays, 90 per cent of students were funding own education. “Students should be given the freedom to chose the kind of education they want. The government should allow higher education institutions to join hands with foreign universities and attract FDI,” she said.

Dr Meganathan demanded that the government allow colleges to affiliate with more than one university, so that students get a wider choice.

In a market-driven economy there is a need for FDI as it can enhance quality of education by attracting highly competent foreign faculty, she reasoned.

University of Madras vice-chancellor G. Thiruvassagam, however, said: “We already have a good rapport with foreign universities for exchange of faculty, students and research inputs. It is not that these things happen only if you have FDI.”

Prof Thiruvassagam expressed the apprehension that foreign investors might impose conditions that may not be acceptable to the Indian constitution.

Source: December 26, 2012/[Deccan Chronicle](#)

NCHER is good, but its accomplishment is the key

The latest choice of the Partnership Cupboard to accept the development of the National Council for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), which will act as a single over-arching impartial body to manage [higher education](#), has obtained combined tendencies from academicians and industry-watchers.

NCHER will subsume present higher education specialists such as University Grant Commission (UGC), All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) and Council of Distance Education (CDE) to act as a regulator to manage colleges and organizations offering medical and farming courses in various organizations across the condition.

“If the NCHER is integrated properly, it will definitely act as a advantage for higher education in the nation. As Indian is nearing the Twelfth five-year plan, there is need for a natural body to manage higher education. It is an effort at offering

about changes in higher education,” said H A Ranganath, manager, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

The council will be a 70-member body with counsel from declares and for expert systems to choose on insurance plan problems. The NCHER Expenses offers to have an 11-member management panel to put into practice the selections of the Government.

The concern increased here is whether NCHER is the respond to the problems in higher education at a time when decentralisation is the search phrase.

“We must realize that NCHER is only a recommendatory body. It will not intervene in insurance plan selections. I was concerned about centralisation too. But NCHER’s organisational framework is such that there is no opportunity for attention of power,” included Ranganath.

One of the many illustrates that NCHER offers is to make the scheduled appointment of Vice-Chancellors translucent through a country’s computer personal computer operating system of academicians.

“This is what problems me. Keeping a computer personal computer operating system of such large is very challenging. The procedure of scheduled appointment of a V-C now is translucent enough. The computer personal computer operating system will cause to prospects getting themselves authorized, asking to be designated, which is incorrect,” said a Vice-Chancellor of a respected university.

“NCHER is a good switch. But we need to look at how the recommended programs would be filled. NCHER can carry about a government framework of performing into higher education. It will eliminate the disrepute that many regulating systems have gained,” said a mature academician.

Source: December 26, 2012/ Expatriates.com

A university at war

If you want proof that higher education in India is a great big mess, look no further than Bangalore University. It is a university, not a riot site, and yet you can find hordes of policemen stationed there, looking to quell trouble. It is also the university whose vice-chancellor has sought police protection to walk about and function in his own campus. An ongoing power struggle between the vice chancellor and the registrar of the university has made things worse.

Earlier this week, despite the police throwing a protective ring around him, the vice-chancellor, Prabhu Dev, was hit on the head with a stick by a

group of protesting students. The university has seen four protests by different sets of students this month alone. In addition, teachers refused to conduct classes to protest an attack against a colleague, the director of distance education, by a right-wing group.

If the students, teachers and the vice chancellor in one of the country’s large and better-known universities are all stirred up, it heralds the worst of times for the institution. All academic activity has come to a stop.

Mind you, this is the city to which much of India migrates in search of a good education. Its colleges have applicants from the far corners of India and even overseas. Even the Chinese come to Bangalore to learn English and get themselves degrees in areas like engineering and computer applications. Bangalore University is one of India’s oldest, its origins dating back to 1886 when the British government launched it as Central College. It was named Bangalore University in 1964 to consolidate the city’s higher education institutions. In its heyday, the university had illustrious students like Nobel laureate C.V. Raman, who was a researcher at the university, and technocrat Bharat Ratna M. Visweswaraiiah. More recently in 2001, the university was accorded “five star” status by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission.

But today the university is in a state of disarray. Examinations and revaluations are the sticking points for the students. Rural students complain of lack of access to revaluation facilities. Students are yet to receive marks cards years after exams have been held. Some students are still waiting for revaluation results three years after applying. Others complain of discrepancies in their marks cards, including being marked “absent” for examinations and being wrongly awarded marks in single digits.

When students sloganeer, “We want justice,” and the vice-chancellor describes the circumstances as “mafia-like”, the situation is clearly very dire.

Here is one instance of apparently chaotic administration by the university. Some exams held in August this year in certain subjects of the distance learning undergraduate and graduate courses were declared null after wide accounts of malpractice. A new date for re-examination was announced, December 14,. But the exam was not held because some of the centres had not installed closed-circuit TVs to check malpractice as mandated by the university. The students allege that the university is “playing” with their future with such muddled actions.

A television channel exposed the sorry state of the 200 students enrolled for Bangalore University's recently launched four-year integrated science course. These students make do with a guest house instead of proper space on the campus. Their chemistry lab does not have a single piece of equipment, their physics lab has only benches and its library is filled with rows of beds.

In the past years, several complaints of malpractice were received about the process of selection and awarding Ph.Ds. Finally this year, in an attempt to elevate the standards of its 64 Ph.D streams, the university recently held an entrance exam and took it online. Over 1,500 students appeared. Only 19 per cent managed to get through.

The university should have rightfully been a feeder for the proliferation of Indian and multinational corporations based in the city. Instead, it has become an arena for power play between right-wing and other political interests, while administrators with suspect motives further their own agendas.

Source: December 27, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

Union Minister Kapil Sibal's speech at the inaugural ceremony of Ramanujan's 125th birth anniversary celebrations in Chennai on Monday

At the outset, my grateful thanks to the Prime Minister of India for declaring the year 2012 in honour of the 125th birth anniversary year of the genius, Srinivasa Ramanujan, who has no parallel in the history of human thought, as the National Mathematical Year.

Sir, Jawaharlal Nehru in his Discovery of India has written "Ramanujan's brief life and death are symbolic of the conditions in India; of our millions how few get any education at all; how many live on the verge of starvation."

And Professor Robert Kanigel, who is with us here today, in the fascinating biography of Ramanujan has written "Ramanujan's life can be made to serve as parable for almost any lesson you want to draw from it."

Referred to as the man who knew infinity, Ramanujan was a true genius. The 25-year-old-Indian clerk received no formal education. But the genius in him was recognised by G.H.Hardy. Thus began an unusual scientific collaboration between an English don and an impoverished Indian genius.

It all began with a letter in January 1913, when Ramanujan wrote to G.H.Hardy having seen a copy of his book Orders of Infinity in 1910. In his letter he introduced himself [thus] "I have no university

education, but I have undergone the ordinary school course. After leaving school, I have been employing the spare time at my disposal to work at mathematics. I have not trodden through the conventional regular course which is followed in a university course, but I am striking out a new path for myself. I have made a special investigation of divergent series in general and the results I get are termed, by the local mathematicians, as startlinging."

Hardy's response was encouraging and a delighted Ramanujan replied as follows. "I found a friend in you, who views my labour sympathetically. I am already a half-starving man. To preserve my brains I want food and this is my first consideration. Any sympathetic letter from you would be helpful to me here to get a scholarship either from the university or from the government."

I have quoted this correspondence with a distinct purpose. This exchange of letters demonstrates the following. First, it is not necessary to follow a regular university course to realise one's genius. Second, there are discoveries to be made beyond the discipline of formal education. Third, students should be encouraged to strike a new path for themselves to conquer new frontiers of knowledge. Fourth, the system must provide for young minds to be heard and appreciated. Lastly, the genius in many of our young minds may never be recognised because of extreme poverty.

Sir, we recognise that there maybe potential Ramanujans in our midst whom the system may not recognise. They may well be sitting in this hall. We are thus endeavouring to build an education system that promotes creativity, freedom, joy and an awareness of our cultural heritage. It will help our children to retain their sense of wonder, to develop a spirit of enquiry and to nurture the joys of learning. I am thus determined to do away with rote learning and an archaic exam-oriented system.

We are endeavouring to reform this with emphasis on skill development and unlocking the creative talent within the child. A paradigm shift in the way our children are taught is on the anvil. Learning and education, henceforth, will be child-centric instead of the current exam-centric education system.

In a bid to de-stress children we have done away with examinations at the end of the year, replacing them with a Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation (CCE) system.

Sir, the degree of inequality in access to higher education hitherto has been exceptionally high. The Gross Enrolment Ratio of young people between age of 18 and 24 [years] is just about 15 per cent. In contrast, most developed economies have a Gross Enrolment Ratio of above 50 per cent. We are

seeking to enhance the Gross Enrolment Ratio to 30 per cent within the decade.

Thus far we have had an education system that is socially stratified. Graduates of a few elite universities, the IITs and the IIMs, become the managerial classes that run the Indian State and big industry. This is changing and must change. There is a mass of struggling educational institutions across India. Here and there we can see courageous teachers attempting to keep a vibrant intellectual current going, but they are in the minority with the odds heavily loaded against them.

We see a sharp stepping down of rigour and commitment towards reflection and questioning. A decline of the social sciences and humanities at both the elite and the mass sense of the system, is taking place. This is accentuated by basic changes taking place in the balance of power in India with the unprecedented rise of the corporate sector. Jobs in the state sector have stagnated while those in the corporate and informal sectors have grown exponentially.

One consequence of this has been a drastic alteration of priorities in higher education among the upper sections of Indian society. Prestige and financial returns acquired from participation in the global economy far outstrip most of what the Indian economy can offer. The effect has been to pull educated classes, in large numbers, into the global economy, leaving behind a vacuum whose impact we are still trying to cope with. The result has been a drastic reduction of the elite in areas of mathematics, social sciences and humanities, leading to shrinking or closure of these departments. And I am delighted that Raghunathan-ji has mentioned today that in celebrating 2012, we will do a lot of activities to give the necessary impetus to mathematics, which I think is essential to the life of any society.

We are thus endeavouring to bring about a change in this ethos through the setting up of innovation universities. I recognise that despite the triumph of our democracy, large sections of our society still continue to remain marginalised, disempowered, mainly due to the lack of education. We seek to expand and create an egalitarian education system around a clear understanding of our culture, history, needs, endowments and competencies. And all of us, government, academia, business, civil society and citizens need to work together to focus on education as the key enabler of empowerment, social change and inclusive development. But let us not forget that along the way, we need to give space to the uncharted journeys of those who seek to discover, to create

and to conquer, much like Ramanujan's journey. That will be a befitting tribute to a genius whose task remained unfinished. Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!

Source: December 27, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

We must seek to prepare students for high-skill, high-wage and high-demand jobs.

Dale Winkler serves as the new executive director of Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) as well as the director of the Kentucky Department of Education's College and Career Readiness Branch.

Winkler also serves as the lead staff to the Career and Technical Education Steering Committee that will be studying how to best carry out the recommendations from the Governor's Transforming Education in Kentucky Task Force report. Winkler began his new position in June.

Before taking his dual-role job, Winkler earned his bachelor's degree in accounting (1994), Certification in Business Education (1996) and master's degree in education (1999) from Cumberland College. In 2002, he completed a Rank I in Educational Leadership and Administration from Eastern Kentucky University. In May 2010, Winkler graduated from the University of Kentucky with a doctorate in Educational Leadership Studies.

Winkler is a product of career and technical education. He started as a high school student in the business and office program at KY-Tech Madison County. He was involved in Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and eventually became the Phi Beta Lambda state president while attending college. Winkler has served as a classroom teacher in a local high school and area technology center, state academic consultant for business and marketing education, state service coordinator for federal programs, and KY-Tech principal.

How did you benefit as a student from participating in the business and office program at KY-Tech Madison County?

As a student in the business and office program at the area technology center, I obtained the academic, occupational and employability skills needed to succeed in college and my chosen career path. The writing and math skills I obtained in the business classes, especially accounting, prepared me for postsecondary study at Cumberland College. My involvement in Future Business Leaders of America provided me with the employability skills of effective communication and collaboration, critical thinking, and time management. These skills have benefited me as a manager in industry, and as a classroom teacher, academic consultant, principal and executive director.

Who was your favorite teacher and why?

I have two favorite teachers. One was my former high school business teacher. Coretta Combs was an individual who made the curriculum interesting, and she provided students with real-world applications. She encouraged me to study accounting and to pursue it as my college major. My other favorite teacher was a college professor. Harold Hubbard was chair of the business department at Cumberland College and developed a great relationship with all students within the department. He served as my accounting professor, academic advisor and work-study supervisor. He assisted me and other students with class projects and student organization activities. Mr. Hubbard is a good friend, and I still seek his guidance on occasion.

Is there an event or person in your past that helped you decide to become involved in education?

My neighbor throughout my childhood was an elderly woman who was like a third grandmother to me. She was a former teacher, and she used to help me with my homework. I credit Floy Bogie with first sparking my interest in education. Ms. Bogie was a graduate of Cumberland College, and she strongly encouraged me to consider attending Cumberland. I'm so glad that I listened to her. I went to Cumberland College and majored in accounting. During my undergraduate studies, I was provided with many opportunities to work with students at the local middle and high schools. This interaction with students increased my interest in becoming a teacher. After working briefly in industry, I returned to Cumberland to pursue my teacher certification.

Over the course of your career, you have been held a variety of positions in education. What positive changes have you seen in career and technology education since your days as a student?

I believe the perception of CTE as a pathway for students with no intentions of attending college is slowly changing. I never understood this perception as a high school student. I always planned to attend college, and I saw the business courses as a means of preparing for advanced study. Individuals are beginning to realize that CTE is applied academics. CTE courses provide relevance for a student's academic studies, and the relationships built through career and technical student organizations provide students a better understanding for technical skills and advanced training. The rigor of CTE programs has continued to increase in the past two decades.

What are your responsibilities in your new position as executive director of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) and the director of the KDE College and Career Readiness Branch?

My first priority is to act on the recommendations of the report released earlier this year by the Governor's Taskforce on Transforming Education in Kentucky. In addition, I oversee the implementation of the federal Carl D. Perkins Act for Career and Technical Education. Working with program consultants in OCTE and the CCR Branch, I assist in the coordination of career pathways and the delivery of the new College and Career Ready Accountability Model. Another responsibility is to work closely with partnering agencies, such as the Council on Postsecondary Education, Department for Workforce Investment, Department of Labor, National Research Center for CTE and Southern Regional Education Board.

Are the CTE programs in Kentucky broad enough to meet student demand?

We continue to research ways to expand CTE programs to meet student demand; however, we must first identify sectors of industry that are growing in Kentucky. We continuously evaluate the industry sectors to determine job growth and training needs of employers. CTE programs must be created with input from business and industry to adequately prepare students for jobs of the future. We must seek to prepare students for high-skill, high-wage and high-demand jobs.

Where is career and technical education in Kentucky headed, and how does it support college and career readiness?

Career and technical education in Kentucky will be the driving force behind all future high school reform efforts. All students will ultimately seek employment and pursue a career pathway. CTE can provide the rigor and relevance that will assist students in obtaining their career goals. The majority of jobs that provide a sustaining wage require training beyond high school, and CTE will be the means by which most students will acquire the skills needed to succeed in college and a career. Thus, CTE is working closely with numerous agencies to ensure that the programs of study are rigorous and provide transferable skills for 21st-century careers.

What can you and the offices you lead do to better help districts, schools and teachers prepare student to be college and career ready?

The CTE staff is busy preparing a webcast that focuses on the role CTE can play in preparing students to meet the college- and career-ready

measures. We are also working on a curriculum alignment project that aligns CTE competencies with industry standards and the new academic common core. The staff continues to work with the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education and the Association for Career and Technical Education to gather best practices that can be shared with CTE teachers during technical upgrade trainings, technical assistance visits and the annual CTE Summer Program.

How will you measure how successful you are in your new role?

I will determine the success of our efforts in career and technical education when the colleges and universities no longer have to provide Kentucky high school graduates with remediation, and the businesses in the commonwealth no longer seek to hire employees from across the state line. My goal is for every student to find success in a career that provides them with a sustaining wage and contributes to the fiscal well-being of Kentucky.

Source: December 27, 2012/[Kentucky Teacher](#)

Will A \$35 Product Change Multi-billion-dollar Indian Education System?

Education has always been a high priority for the Indian government. Although the percentage of GDP (gross domestic product) spent by India on education lags behind the developed countries, it has increased over the past years. The Right to Education Act was a big step by the government to ensure a policy-based approach to inclusive education across the country. And the government seems to have scored another major victory recently by demonstrating a \$35 education Tablet, appropriately named Aakash, to symbolise India's limitless aspiration. But is this really a victory? What impact, if any, will this much-publicised Tablet have on the Indian education system? Does this also open a new world of opportunities for entrepreneurs?

Let us start with some stark facts about the Indian education system, which includes both urban and rural schools. A 2010 report of the District Information System of Education said that 29 per cent of elementary schools operated without school buildings in 2009-10 and only 59 per cent of schools had a separate toilet for girls. Pratham, an NGO that has been regularly testing students' progress in rural areas, revealed in its 2010 report that only 53 per cent of fifth-grade students could read basic text and only 36 per cent of children could do simple division. The report also stated that the net enrolment ratio dropped from about 98 per cent in fifth grade to 58 per cent in eighth grade.

In spite of such huge challenges, the government has relentlessly pursued the idea of a low-cost Tablet to help improve the level of education in India. While technology obviously can't address the infrastructure issues of physical buildings and toilets, it can definitely help improve the skills of students, if implemented correctly. Now that a \$35 Tablet is closer to reality, although with huge government subsidies, this is a good time to start thinking about usage models of low-cost, content-consumption devices.

Is the desired usage model just to surf the Internet or is the goal to help improve the level of education? Interestingly, the school my seven-year-old twins attend announced that starting this month children could carry a Tablet to school one day a week. The first question my daughters asked me was, "What are we going to do with a Tablet in school – play Angry Birds?" It's clear that an entire ecosystem of content, services and software needs to exist before a low-cost consumption device can be effective in improving education levels.

An important opportunity exists for technology entrepreneurs to create new businesses devoted to developing a strong ecosystem to support the use of Tablets in both public and private education systems. Assuming that a plethora of Tablets will be deployed across public and private schools in India over the next few years, here are some of the areas that I believe are ripe for innovation and for building large-scale businesses in India:

Content tailored for the Tablet platform: The most exciting features of a Tablet, from an education perspective, include the built-in accelerometer, GPS and gesture recognition. Children can grasp concepts faster and with full clarity if they interact with content using the features of a Tablet. While content companies traditionally have had a tough time scaling, the Tablet platform presents an opportunity to build a new type of content company which combines interactive core content, supplemental content and gaming.

Improving teacher-student, teacher-parent and parent-student communications: Given that a Tablet is a personal device like a phone, a lot of the data about how students use educational software and services on a Tablet can be mined. I believe there is an opportunity to drive analytics that can help improve communications between all stakeholders, with the goal of improving education levels of students. Clearly, privacy issues need to be addressed, but the data and analytics can really improve the level and quality of education in India.

Edutainment: While this category has failed to live up to the hype created around it, I believe a Tablet

platform provides some of the key features required to make this category successful. Again, features such as accelerometers, GPS, 3G connectivity, etc., can deliver edutainment in a much more compelling manner than has been possible with laptops and desktop PCs.

Mobile education applications: Some of the mobile education attempts that we see today (language learning, etc.) on smartphones are probably going to do much better on a Tablet platform due to the form factor.

Will Tablets provide the inflection point for effective use of technology in the Indian education system? If there ever was an opportunity to test the thesis, it is now. If the government's low-cost Tablet initiative only enables kids to surf the Internet without actually improving their education levels, we would be losing the opportunity to make a significant change in the Indian education system. We need entrepreneurs and investors to take on this challenge.

Source: December 28, 2011/[Tech Circle](#)

Cloud over state's education scholarship plan

After the controversy over bogus enrolment of students in schools, the state government may now catch flak over its scholarship scheme for college students.

State officials said nearly Rs 500 crore was distributed to colleges in 2010-11 as post-matriculate scholarship money for backward class students, in violation of the prescribed norms.

The money was distributed to colleges even as the state had adopted a system whereby the money was to be deposited into the students bank account. No transaction in this regard was to be carried out with colleges.

It has now come to light that instructions issued by the authorities in this regard were overlooked in a number of cases; and payments were issued in the name of colleges. Officials said the amount disbursed in this manner during the year was around Rs 500 crore. The state social justice and social assistance department provides education scholarships for students belonging to the scheduled castes, other backward classes, nomadic tribes and others. Lakhs of students benefit from the drive each year. Taking a serious view of the discrepancy, social justice minister Shivaji Moghe has asked the commissioner of the social justice department to submit a report in the matter. Officials, however, said that the commissioner's office is yet to undertake the task and is not keen on conducting the probe.

The ministers office has advocated action against all those guilty for the lapse. Following the introduction of the e-scholarship system, the scholarship amount paid is said to have come down by close to 50%. Officials said that a large number of claims filed under the earlier system were bogus.

Source: December 29, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Science of learning through experience

Science exists not just in textbooks but is in fact all around us, a group of 90 children discovered during their visit to the Nehru Science Centre. The personalised tour was organised as part of the Times of India's Mumbai for Kids initiative.

It is nice to see that children get to do something constructive during their holidays. My son is very interested in science and was more than happy to participate in this event, said [Pooja Bathija](#), who came to drop her 11-year-old son Sahil. Several parents also accompanied their children to the various science exhibitions.

The day started with a tour of the various galleries at the centre, including Prehistoric Life, Hall of Aerospace, Human and Machine and the crowd's favourite Light Sound gallery. There were so many activities at the various galleries that we fell short of time. I loved experimenting with the various installations at the Sound and Music centre, said [Akriti Bose](#) (13), one of the participants.

A 3-D show was also organised for these children, which shed light on the evolution of the galaxy and the presence of dinosaurs on our planet. The 15-minute long movie also explained the slow process that led to the extinction of many animals millions of years ago. A couple of times, it felt like the dinosaur was going to eat our heads off, added Bose. This show turned out to be one of the most liked programmes of the event.

After a brief look at the various galleries, these children were then taken for the final show of the day's demo in physics theories. Several experiments on the pressure of air were explained during the 30-minute long session and participants were more than happy to volunteer in all the activities. The conductor showed us such simple theories but we still couldn't solve the puzzle. I will try the same experiments with my cousins and [friends](#) now, said 11-year-old Ameya Parikh.

By the end of the session, students were looking forward to some more experiments and many were ready to take another round of the entire centre. We taught them concepts that they are currently learning in school, said Manjula Yadav, education officer, Nehru Science Centre. She added that the

purpose behind the session was to make science entertaining as well as enjoyable for the children.

Source: December 29, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Teaching is just another way to pay the bills

For months, R N Podar School in [Santa Cruz](#) could not find the replacement for a chemistry teacher who took a transfer to Chennai. The school was then forced to go for a rather unconventional solution. It started virtual classrooms for the subject.

The teacher took lessons from Chennai through a social networking website, said principal Avnita Bir. Though we have found a replacement, the teacher in Chennai continues to be on our rolls. She takes lessons on an ad-hoc basis and the students prefer it that way.

Ask any principal about his primary concern and most likely the answer will be a dearth of good teachers. Principals say that in recent years they have noticed a steady deterioration in the quality of candidates applying for teachers posts in schools. They are concerned that the profession, rather a calling, is losing its lustre.

Teaching was considered a noble pursuit. But now attitudes have changed towards this field. Teaching is the last option for the youth. Most of those who come to it do so after losing out in the race to the threshold of other careers, said Fr Francis Swamy, principal, Holy Family School, Andheri (East).

His counterpart from Bombay Cambridge School, Andheri (East), said the options available to principals were narrower than ever. A mathematician will prefer to join industry, rather than a school. We have started allowing teachers who are willing to continue to teach even after retirement. We rehire them as consultants or call them part-timers, said Savita, who goes by one name.

Sixty per cent of teachers in Savitas school are seniors in the profession, many nearing retirement. We have devised a strategy to fill the gaps. When a teacher nears retirement, we start grooming a junior teacher to promote him or her, she said. Timely promotions are also a way to retain teachers.

Fr Francis Swamy feels teachers are still the most prized possessions of schools. But people are losing the passion for teaching. Many heads of BEd and DEd courses are complaining about the poor quality of those they train, he said.

Some principals say teacher training programmes are also to blame for the quality of teaching going down over the years. Most training courses have not been upgraded for a long time. Teachers still

use the same old methods of instruction because that is what they are taught, said [Rekha](#) Shahani, principal, Kamla High School, Khar. Children today are smart. Just to keep pace with them, teachers need to retrain themselves.

Nevertheless, there are exceptions to the rule. Fed up with the rat race, some are abandoning corporate careers for the peace of the classroom. We have an MBA who teaches our children and he brings a lot of professionalism to his work. His teaching techniques too are interesting, said [Natasha Mehta](#), principal, Euro School, Navi Mumbai. Students like the difference professionals like him make.

Source: December 29, 2011/[Times of India](#)

More students opting for higher education

The increase in gross enrolment ratio (GER) could mean a rise in the supply of skilled personnel in India

Student enrolment in higher education has seen a sharp increase, a development that's expected to hearten policymakers, educationists and industry in a country where companies have for long complained about the lack of a sufficiently deep talent pool.

The national gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education, or the proportion of school graduates aged between 18 and 23 years entering college-level courses, rose from 12.5% in 2007-08 to 17.27% in 2009-10. At the start of the decade, only one in 10 students was opting for higher education after school. In 1980, India's GER was 5%.

GER is computed by the University Grants Commission (UGC), which oversees the functioning of universities and is tasked with maintaining standards in institutes of higher learning in the country.

The increase in GER could mean a rise in the supply of skilled personnel in India, where companies ranging from computer service providers to retailers have been confronting a shortage of skilled and "employable" personnel. Of the total workforce in the country, around 15% is skilled. For private educational institutes, the increased enrolment points to a higher revenue-earning opportunity.

"As per our fresh calculation, the GER of the country is 17.27%. This means access to higher education is improving significantly," said [Ved Prakash](#), chairman of UGC.

The number is also significant because the government had been targeting a GER of 16% only by the end of the 11th Plan (March 2012), a fact the

All India Council for Technical Education, another government body, underlines on its official website.

However, the progress may be testing the limitations of a country that has also been struggling to fill teacher vacancies, at present estimated as high as 30-33%. Consequently, the institutes may not be able to absorb the growing number of students opting for higher education.

Prakash said that the fresh calculation is based on the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data published in 2011, which is again two years old.

"If we have the latest data, then the GER, we feel, could be close to 20% now," the UGC chairman said, forecasting that the enrolment ratio will be 25% by the end of 12th Plan (2012-17).

Though the national number is impressive, the state-level picture is likely to be uneven. While the calculation is yet to be made, a study by Ernst and Young and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) earlier this year showed Delhi leading the table of best-performing states with a GER of 31.9% in 2009-10, followed by Maharashtra, where the enrolment ratio was 25.9%.

At the bottom were Tripura at 6.6% and Assam at 6.7%; Bihar had a GER of 8.5%, and West Bengal, 7.8%.

Industry executives are cautious about the latest data. Quantity without adequate quality will not serve the purpose, they said, because increased enrolment doesn't necessarily translate into higher proficiency of the emerging workforce.

"When the economy grows, attrition increases to the tune of 16-20%. It means, there is a shortage of human resources. Increasing the number is important, but unless there is quality, this shortfall will not be taken care of," said R.C. Bhargava, chairman of Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, the country's largest car maker. "The problem will not be solved unless quality goes up. Other than enrolment figures, it is also important to look at the quality of education."

Prakash of UGC said that the main challenge is to "make education available to all".

As per UGC data, India has some 31,324 higher educational institutes, of which 611 are degree-awarding ones. Of this, 42 are central universities, 284 state universities, 129 deemed universities and 48 are so-called institutes of national importance. In 1950-51, India had 27 universities and just 578 colleges.

Sharda Prasad, director general of employment and training at the Union labour ministry, said the NSSO data shows that many students preferred to

pursue higher education instead of entering the job market in 2004-2009.

"Some who dropped out of school wanted to finish schooling, some others pursued higher education. This has certainly helped the GER grow," Prasad said.

M. Damodaran, a former chief of the market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India, said: "Quantity is important, but just talking about quantity without looking at quality is not comforting."

"I keep listening from companies that they don't get quality human resources...many engineers are not employable. While numbers are important, I would like to see what is its quality," said Damodaran, who is chairman of the board of governors at the Indian Institute of Management, Tiruchirappalli.

Still, the numbers show that access to higher education has increased, said Manish Sabharwal, chief executive officer at TeamLease Services Pvt. Ltd, a training and staffing firm.

"Once we take care of the access and quantity, the quality will be taken care of," he said. "Access will create demand for quality institutes and those not providing it will face closure. We have started seeing this as several institutes are now struggling to fill their entire seat capacity."

Source: December 29, 2011/[Live Mint](#)

Will higher education see a sea change?

11 Bills related to education sector are pending in Parliament. The Foreign Universities Bill is expected to improve quality of education.

From news about abolishment of the Indian Institute of Technology Joint Entrance Exam (IIT-JEE) to the pending Foreign Education Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2011 was touted to be the year of reforms in the education sector. So, when the sector ushers itself into 2012, the stakeholders see the new year as one requiring consolidation in several areas. Partly because most of the proposed reforms in 2011 fell by the wayside even as the Lokpal-Anna Hazare storm racked the Parliament paralysing the houses and postponing business in the monsoon and the winter sessions.

Business Standard tells you how the new year would look like for the higher education sector in India:

Bill please!

A total of 11 Bills were pending in Parliament, including the Foreign Educational Institutions (regulation of entry and operations) Bill, the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutional, Medical Educational

Institutions and Universities Bill, the Education Tribunals Bill and the Institutes of Technology Amendment Bill. These Bills have been pending for the past year-and-a-half. According to experts, one of the impact that the Foreign Universities Bill will have once it is passed, would be on the quality of education in the country in 2012.

"Even the lower end institutes in the US, for example, are better than the mid-level institutes in India. As and when foreign universities are allowed to set up campuses in the country, it will improve quality because of competition and give students more options," said Gautam Puri, MD, CareerLauncher.

Just because the reforms have not come through does not, however, mean that business has stopped, say industry insiders. "Many private universities are now engaging more actively with foreign partners for content creation, for getting faculty and for joint degree programmes, which foreign partners also find more lucrative than setting up independent campuses," said Sandeep Aneja of Kaizen Private Equity.

Many windows, one door!

Many are of the opinion that the problem with the current system is that there are too many authorities with too much overlap. The Medical Council of India, the All India Council of Technical Education and the University Grants Commission are always getting into turf tussles.

According to Gautam Puri, the regulation of the segment is fragmented and the focus is largely on the development of physical infrastructure in regulation rather than ensuring overall quality. This, say analysts, is where the need for an overall authority comes into the picture.

"Reforms and an overarching authority are essential because as of now the educational authorities have become licensing bodies. This needs to change, and a regulatory body should be put in place," said Narayanan Ramaswamy, head, education practice, KPMG. Ramaswamy also opined that even when these Bills were passed, the effect would not be immediate. The positive would be that the intent would become clear and things would be seen as moving in the right direction.

IIMs: Overseas bound?

Just when it seemed that faculty crunch had cut their wings, the IIMs Ahmedabad, Calcutta and Bangalore hinted at coming together in creating an international campus. On the sidelines of a joint IIM-A and IIM-C conference in October 2011, Samir Barua, director of IIM-A, said that the IIMs were awaiting operational autonomy, which he expects should come through within a year, after

adding that overseas campus in Singapore and Dubai could be considered. So if things fructify, the three premier IIMs may as well begin work on their overseas campus in 2012. The HRD ministry had in October 2009 given an in-principle approval for IIMs to set up campuses abroad.

AICTE's maiden management test

Come February, country's technical education regulator, AICTE, will launch its Common Management Admission Test or CMAT. The test, a point of discussion in the academic circle, has made B-schools unhappy much before its launch. Education Promotion Society of India (EPSI), an association of B-schools, is mulling legal action against AICTE.

Source: December 29, 2011/[Business Standard](#)

Higher education Bills unconstitutional

Under Tribunals Bill, institutions, teachers and students can't go to High Court for immediate relief'

Three proposed Bills pertaining to higher education are unconstitutional, as Parliament lacks the legislative competence to enact them, according to the Association of Self-Financing Universities, New Delhi.

The body has appealed to the Union government to put on hold these legislation and hold talks with higher education institutions and other stakeholders on how to deal with the issues they seek to address.

"We consulted three former Chief Justices of India, and their opinion is that these Bills will go against the provisions of the Constitution and the [doctrine of] separation of powers. They will take away the powers of the State government," Association president G. Viswanathan said in an interview to The Hindu.

The Bills are the Educational Tribunals Bill, 2010 that was passed in the Lok Sabha and is pending in the Rajya Sabha, the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2010, and the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010.

The former Chief Justices, A.S. Anand, M.M. Punchhi and K.N. Singh, who were approached by the Association for their opinion on the validity of these Bills, especially in the light of appropriate entries in the Union and State Lists in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, reckoned that "Parliament does not have the legislative competence for matters of universities in view of clear exclusion of universities from Entry 44 in List I (the Union List) and express inclusion in Entry 32 of List II (the State List)."

While Entry 44 in the Union List deals with "Incorporation, regulation and winding up of corporations, whether trading or not, with objects not confined to one State, but not including universities," Entry 32 in the State List refers to "Incorporation, regulation and winding up of corporations, other than those specified in List I, and universities, unincorporated trading, literacy, scientific, religious and other societies and associations, cooperative societies."

Mr. Viswanathan, who is also the founder-chancellor of VIT University, said the Educational Tribunals Bill, if enacted, would mean that aggrieved institutions, teachers and students could not go to the High Court for immediate relief, but only to the tribunal. "The State tribunal has no powers to pass interim orders, so we will have to wait till the judgment is pronounced. And even after that, one can go only to the national tribunal, which also has no powers for granting interim orders."

Noting that prohibiting capitation fees was the original intention of the law, Mr. Viswanathan held corruption as the main reason for institutions collecting capitation fees. "We, as an association, will support the government in abolishing capitation [fees], but unless corruption is eradicated, it cannot be curtailed."

Asked to elaborate on corruption, he said: "There is corruption at various levels — it begins at the panchayat level, and [is there at] the district level, the State level and the national level. Either departments of the government or the regulatory authorities of the State and Central governments — all of them have to be paid now. And it has to be paid in cash." If controls were increased, corruption would also increase, resulting in an increase in capitation fees.

Encourage competition

According to him, the solution lay in encouraging competition among institutions and creating enough seats for students. Harassment of those running institutions was a major impediment to the expansion of higher education. "Asking the government to fix the fees of institutions will inhibit competition. Only if there is competition, quality will go up and the cost of education will come down."

Mr. Viswanathan said accreditation should not be made mandatory, as envisaged in the proposed law, but only voluntary. It should also be done by professionals and not solely by government agencies. "We want the Prime Minister's liberalisation policy in business and industry to be extended to education."

He also favoured serious steps to attract talent to the teaching profession. And if at all foreign universities should be allowed to set up campuses in the country, they should be allowed to function with a local partner. They could be asked to bring at least 50 per cent of teachers from their own countries, and only reputed universities should be allowed to operate.

Source: December 29, 2011/[The Hindu](#)

Controversy, scams bent the learning curve

NEW DELHI: [Delhi University](#) saw a new high in June 2011 - [Shri Ram College of Commerce](#) declared a 100% cutoff for non-commerce students seeking admission to BCom (H). The cut-off for commerce students was 96%, and at the end of the first day, only 25 of 314 seats remained in the general category. The college never issued a second list for BCom (H).

DU also experimented with its admission procedure in 2011 by doing away with the registration process. There was no need to fill up centralized pre-admission forms or even the college forms and anybody meeting the cut-off and the eligibility criteria could claim admission. As a result, the class size increased two- or three-fold in colleges like [Ramjas](#) and Hindu.

A fake admissions scam shook the faith in DU's admission process. [Ramjas College](#) identified 29 students in the first and second year courses who had taken admission on forged certificates. The consequent probe led to the arrest of a second-year student and a former student of [Ramjas](#), another student from [SRCC](#) and a cyber cafe owner.

DU was also dogged by a controversy over the elimination of [AK Ramanujan's](#) essay on [Ramayana](#) from a concurrent course in history. The issue split the teaching community and took political colour.

At [JNU](#) also, controversy raised its head after the All India Backward Students ' [Forum](#) decided to honour [Mahisasura](#) after a tussle with another section of students who opposed its 'blasphemous' posters on [Durga Puja](#).

The year brought minority institution status for [Jamia Milia Islamia University](#), a first for any central university. [Jamia](#) can now reserve up to 50% seats for Muslims. The university was also in the news for barring hundreds of students from exams for shortage of attendance and submitting fake medical certificates. A section of students approached the [Delhi high court](#) for relief, but the court ordered in favour of the university.

The year marked [IIT Delhi's](#) golden jubilee. The premier institute got a new head - Professor

Raghunath Shevgaonkar, vice-chancellor of Pune University - in September.

At the school level, CCE seems to have fallen in place with no goof-ups reported in the summative assessment held in September. Schools also accommodated 25% students from the economically weaker section without any fee though the Delhi government has kept them waiting for reimbursements. The government finally framed rules for proper implementation of the Right to Education Act which are likely to be notified shortly.

At the close of the year, there was confusion over the right age to start schooling following a PIL in the high court. For now, HC has decided to retain the current age criterion allowing children aged 3+ to go to school.

Source: December 30, 2011/[Times of India](http://timesofindia.com)

Many of India's Poor Turn to Private Schools

India — for more than two decades, M. A. Hakeem has arguably done the job of the Indian government. His private Holy Town High School has educated thousands of poor students, squeezing them into cramped classrooms where, when the electricity goes out, the children simply learn in the dark.

Parents in Holy Town's low-income, predominantly Muslim neighborhood do not mind the bare-bones conditions. They like the modest tuition (as low as \$2 per month), the English-language curriculum and the success rate on standardized tests. Indeed, low-cost schools like Holy Town are part of an ad hoc network that now dominates education in this south Indian city, where an estimated two-thirds of all students attend private institutions.

"The responsibility that the government should shoulder," Mr. Hakeem said with both pride and contempt, "we are shouldering it."

In India, the choice to live outside the faltering grid of government services is usually reserved for the rich or middle class, who can afford private housing compounds, private hospitals and private schools. But as India's economy has expanded during the past two decades, an increasing number of India's poor parents are now scraping together money to send their children to low-cost private schools in hopes of helping them escape poverty.

Nationally, a large majority of students still attend government schools, but the expansion of private institutions has created parallel educational systems — systems that are now colliding. Faced with sharp criticism of the woeful state of government schools, Indian policy makers have enacted a sweeping law intended to reverse their

decline. But skeptics say the litany of new requirements could also wipe out many of the private schools now educating millions of students.

"It's impossible to fulfill all these things," said Mohammed Anwar, who runs a chain of private schools in Hyderabad and is trying to organize a nationwide lobbying campaign to alter the requirements. Referring to the law, he said, "If you follow the Right to Education, nobody can run a school."

Education is one of India's most pressing challenges. Half of India's 1.2 billion people are 25 or younger, and literacy levels, while improving, could cripple the country's long-term prospects. In many states, government education is in severe disarray, with teachers often failing to show up. Rote drilling still predominates. English, considered a prerequisite for most white-collar employment in India, is usually not the medium of instruction.

When it took effect in April 2010, the Right to Education Act enshrined, for the first time, a constitutional right to schooling, promising that every child from 6 to 14 would be provided with it. For a nation that had never properly financed education for the masses, the law was a major milestone.

"If we nurture our children and young people with the right education," said Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, commemorating the act with a televised address, "India's future as a strong and prosperous country is secure."

Few disagree with the law's broad, egalitarian goals or that government schools need a fundamental overhaul. But the law also enacted new regulations on teacher-student ratios, classroom size and parental involvement in school administration that are being applied to government and private schools. The result is a clash between an ideal and the reality on the ground, with a deadline: Any school that fails to comply by 2013 could be closed.

Kapil Sibal, the government minister overseeing Indian education, has scoffed at claims that the law will cause mass closings of private schools. Yet in Hyderabad, education officials are preparing for exactly that outcome. They are constructing new buildings and expanding old ones, partly to comply with the new regulations, partly anticipating that students will be forced to return from closing private institutions.

"Fifty percent will be closed down as per the Right to Education Act," predicted E. Bala Kasaiah, a top education official in Hyderabad.

As a boy, M. A. Hakeem listened as his father bemoaned the slow progress of his fellow Muslims

in India. "Son," he recalls his father's saying, "when you grow up, you should provide education to our community."

A few months after Mr. Hakeem completed the 10th grade, his father died. A year later, in 1986, Mr. Hakeem opened a small preparatory school with nursery classes. He was 15 years old.

Not yet old enough to vote, Mr. Hakeem held classes in his family's home and enlisted his two sisters to handle administrative tasks. By the mid-1990s, Mr. Hakeem had opened Holy Town. The school has since produced students who have gone into engineering, commerce and other fields.

"I'm fulfilling my father's dream," Mr. Hakeem said.

When Holy Town opened, Mr. Hakeem's neighborhood at the edge of the old quarter of Hyderabad had one private school, a Catholic one. Today, there are seven private schools within a half-mile of Holy Town, each charging a few dollars a month and catering to Muslim students with a largely secular education in English.

Their emergence roughly coincided with the economic liberalization that began in 1991. For decades, government officials had blamed rural apathy for India's high illiteracy rates, saying that families preferred sending their children into the fields, not the classroom. But as the economy started taking off, public aspirations changed, especially among low-income families.

"In India today, demand is not really a constraint for education — it's the supply," said Karthik Muralidharan, an assistant professor at the University of California, San Diego, who has studied Indian education. "Parents are seeing education as the passport out of poverty."

The rising demand created a new market for private schools, and entrepreneurs big and small have jumped at the chance to profit from it. Corporate educational chains opened schools tailored to higher-income families, especially in the expanding cities. Low-cost schools like Holy Town proliferated in poorer neighborhoods, a trend evident in most major cities and spreading into rural India.

Estimating the precise enrollment of private schools is tricky. Government officials say more than 90 percent of all primary schools are run by or financed by the government. Yet one government survey found that 30 percent of the 187 million students in grades 1 through 8 now attend private schools. Some academic studies have suggested that more than half of all urban students now attend private academies.

In Mumbai, so many parents have pulled their children out of government schools that officials have started renting empty classrooms to charities and labor unions — and even to private schools. In recent years, Indian officials have increased spending on government education, dedicating far more money for new schools, hiring teachers and providing free lunches to students. Still, more and more parents are choosing to go private.

"What does it say about the quality of your product that you can't even give it away for free?" Mr. Muralidharan said.

Most low-cost private schools also follow rote-teaching methods because their students have to take standardized tests approved by the government. But some studies suggest that teachers in government schools are absent up to 25 percent of the time. Poor children who attended private schools scored higher on reading and math tests, according to a study by Sonalde Desai, a professor of sociology at the University of Maryland, and other scholars.

"There is not much teaching that happens in the government schools," said Raju Bhosla, 32, whose children attend one of Hyderabad's low-cost private schools. "I never even thought about putting my kids in government schools."

Across Hyderabad, work crews in 58 locations are expanding government schools or constructing new ones. To education officials, the building spree signals a rebirth of the government system, part of an \$800 million statewide program to bring government schools into compliance with the new law.

For Mr. Sibal, the national education minister, government schools had atrophied because of a lack of money. Under Right to Education, states can qualify for more than \$2 billion to improve facilities, hire new teachers and improve curriculums, he said.

"All these changes are going to transform the schools system in the next five years," Mr. Sibal predicted. As for the tens of thousands of private schools opened during the past 15 years to satisfy the public's growing hunger for education, Mr. Sibal said, "We've given them three years time," referring to the 2013 compliance deadline. "We hope that is enough."

Skepticism abounds. Elite private schools, already struggling with requirements that they reserve slots for poor and minority students, have filed lawsuits. But the bigger question is what will happen to the tens of thousands of low-cost private schools already serving the poor.

James Tooley, a British scholar who has studied private education in India, said government statistics grossly underestimate private schooling — partly because so many private institutions are not formally registered. In a recent survey of the eastern city of Patna, Mr. Tooley found 1,224 private schools, even though government records listed only about 40.

In Hyderabad, principals at several private schools said inspectors regularly threatened them with closings unless they paid bribes. Now, the principals say, the inspectors are wielding the threat of the Right to Education requirements and seeking even bigger bribes.

Mr. Anwar, the private school entrepreneur trying to organize a lobbying campaign, estimated that roughly 5,000 private schools operated in Hyderabad.

“Can the government close 5,000 schools?” he asked. “If they close, how can the government accommodate all these students?”

Source: December 30, 2011/[The Dispatch](#)

Private school education at \$2 per month for poor in India

India – For more than two decades, M.A. Hakeem has arguably done the job of the government. His private Holy Town High School has educated thousands of poor students, squeezing them into cramped classrooms where, when the electricity goes out, the kids simply learn in the dark.

Parents in Holy Town's low-income neighborhood do not mind the bare-bones conditions. They like the modest tuition (as low as \$2 per month), the English-language curriculum and the success rate on standardized tests. Indeed, low-cost schools like Holy Town are part of an ad hoc network that now dominates education in this south Indian city, where an estimated two-thirds of all students attend private institutions.

"The responsibility that the government should shoulder," Hakeem said with both pride and contempt, "we are shouldering it."

The choice to live outside the faltering grid of government services is usually reserved for the rich or middle class, who can afford private housing compounds, private hospitals and private schools. But as economy has expanded during the last two decades, an increasing number of poor parents are now scraping together money to send their children to low-cost private schools in hopes of helping them escape poverty.

A large majority of students still attend government schools, but the expansion of private

institutions has created parallel educational systems – systems that are now colliding. Faced with sharp criticism of the woeful state of government schools, policymakers have enacted a sweeping law intended to reverse their decline. But skeptics say the litany of new requirements could also wipe out many of the private schools now educating millions of students.

"It's impossible to fulfill all these things," said Mohammed Anwar, who runs a chain of private schools in Hyderabad and is trying to organize a nationwide lobbying campaign to alter the requirements. Referring to the law, he said, "If you follow the Right to Education, nobody can run a school."

Education is one of India's most pressing challenges. Half of 1.2 billion people are 25 or younger, and literacy levels, while improving, could cripple the country's long-term prospects. In many states, government education is in severe disarray, with teachers often failing to show up. Rote drilling still predominates. English, considered a prerequisite for most white-collar employment, is usually not the medium of instruction.

When it took effect in April 2010, the Right to Education Act enshrined, for the first time, a constitutional right to schooling, promising that every child from 6 to 14 would be provided with it. For a nation that had never properly financed education for the masses, the law was a major milestone.

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Few disagree with the law's broad, egalitarian goals or that government schools need a fundamental overhaul. But the law also enacted new regulations on teacher-student ratios, classroom size and parental involvement in school administration that are being applied to government and private schools. The result is a clash between an ideal and the reality on the ground, with a deadline: Any school that fails to comply by 2013 could be closed.

Kapil Sibal, the HRD minister overseeing education, has scoffed at claims that the law will cause mass closings of private schools. Yet in Hyderabad, education officials are preparing for exactly that outcome. They are constructing new buildings and expanding old ones, partly to comply with the new regulations, partly anticipating that students will be forced to return from closing private institutions.

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Education has to be provided at all costs to government by cutting deep into tax payers moneys. Haeem and Anvar are right the government schools are in shambles but allowing private schools at the cost of public schools run by government is indeed irrational for a democratic republic like India where nearly 1.5 bn people are in age ranges from 25 down, that means you need to give most important priority, tax payer gives moneys for this essential as also routine municipal services, It is the job of government to provide education. Now the governments give lands for private educational institutions, it should make mandatory for such private institutions should also run or equal number of ordinary peoples' wards' students with similar facilities as the private educational institutes get land allocations at nominal leases of Re 1/- or Rs100/- per annam or even Rs.1000/- per Annam. So if private schools do not give such adjunct schools facilities for poor un-affordable people, then government shall take from such institutions necessary commensurate value of land at current market prices and put up schools to cater to poor that number is much greater than the rich and affordable class of people after all country belongs to majority of people and all classes. There must be equity natural justice and good conscience. Any way it is good Hashim is running at \$2 pm fee. Govt. shall give grants to such schools forthwith. That is democracy in action in true sense.

Source: December 31, 2011/[Economic Times](#)

Challenges to the internationalization of higher education

During the last few weeks, there has been a controversial debate over the draft of the Higher

Education Act. This draft was planned to be adopted by the parliamentary session by the end of 2011.

However, due to some remaining unresolved issues, the draft adoption had to be postponed to next year's session agenda. According to Djoko Santoso, director general of higher education, one of the controversial issues over the draft was internationalization.

Indeed, this should not be a problem according to Djoko because its modality is so clear. Foreign universities are welcome to establish themselves in Indonesia, but they have to follow our system and collaborate with our national universities, including in terms of curriculum development and management (Kompas, Dec. 6, 2011).

To promote internationalization, as a member and founder of ASEAN, Indonesia has to consistently implement ASEAN mechanisms. As an example, at the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations, which was adopted at the 19th ASEAN Summit in Bali on Nov. 19, 2011, notes in paragraph 5.4.: "... encourage further cooperation of the ASEAN University Network (AUN), in increasing students' mobility and exchanges, creating a network among universities in ASEAN Countries as well as in enhancing people-to-people contact."

Similarly, as a member of the United Nations, Indonesia has to consistently implement adopted international mechanisms. As an example, the 27th UNESCO session in Paris on Nov. 13, 1993, adopted recommendations on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education.

In paragraph 19, it states that member states should encourage the setting up of mechanisms such as evaluation and accrediting bodies for the purpose of assuring the quality of higher education studies and should also encourage international cooperation among such mechanisms and bodies.

After almost two decades of the recommendation, Indonesia is likely still far behind in implementing this mechanism.

Apparently, European countries have successfully implemented it through the Bologna Process.

The Bologna Process aimed to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010, in which students would be able choose from a wide and transparent range of high quality courses and benefit from smooth recognition procedures.

This process was adopted in June 1999, six years after the 27th UNESCO Session. The process has triggered a series of reforms needed to make European higher education more accountable, compatible, more competitive and more attractive

for Europeans and for students and scholars from other continents.

To address both regional and global challenges, as a comparative perspective, Malaysia could be a sound example on how its higher education has been developed in such a way that it could bring its universities, step by step, to an international level. In the past two or three decades, Malaysia invited a few international world-class universities to establish their campuses in Malaysia.

In 1999, for example, Malaysia invited Curtin University, Australia, and the University of Nottingham, the UK, to establish campuses in Malaysia.

Interestingly, the Malaysian government already has a master plan for the development of campus locations for each invitee.

Curtin University, for example, is located in Miri, Sarawak, which in the past was a relatively underdeveloped area.

Through this policy, the area is now greatly developed and is a destination for tertiary education, not only for Malaysian students but also for students from some other 40 countries throughout the world.

The presence of some 70,000 foreign students will act as a great revenue contribution to the Malaysian economy.

Another example is China. As reported by the Chinese Ministry of Education (2010):

During 1978 to 1992, the internationalization of higher education in China was essentially motivated by a desire for realizing "the four modernizations", which were modernizations of industry, agriculture, defense and science and technology, through implementation of economic reform.

Under this policy reform, currently the internationalization of higher education in China takes three major forms: (1) studying abroad, including dispatching Chinese students abroad and members of faculty for advanced studies or research and attracting foreign students; (2) the integration of an international dimension into university teaching and learning, including introducing foreign textbooks, references and the development

of both English programs and bilingual programs (Chinese and English); and (3) the provision of transnational programs in cooperation with foreign institutional partners in Chinese universities.

As an example, since several years ago, a few Chinese universities such as Hunan International Economics University and Sichuan Tianyi

University, have been collaborating with Laureate International University as one of the international leaders in higher education in medical sciences, hospitality management, art, architecture and design.

Through this reform, China is now one of the top 10 largest countries in hosting international students.

For Indonesia, in my view, one of the inherent prerequisites to internationalization of higher education is to accelerate an improvement to its basic parameters, such as 6,000 unaccredited or illegal study programs (Kompas, Feb. 17, 2010), 42 percent of all lecturers unqualified (undergraduate degrees), only 6-7 percent of some 17,000-18,000 study programs accredited excellent and lastly, dual management, such as the ministries of Education and Culture and Religious Affairs.

Also, accessibility to public higher education institutions needs to be urgently increased, and through step-by-step compensation, the phasing out of some 1,000-2,000 under qualified private education institutions needs to take place.

Just a comparison, China with its 1.34 billion population has only some 2,263 higher education institutions (Fact about China Education, 2011), while Indonesia, four to five times smaller than China, has more than 3,000 private institutions.

This is a great challenge to move forward to a better Indonesia through comprehensive reform in higher education, which will meet international standards.

Source: December 31, 2011/ [The Jakarta Post](#)

RESOURCE

India fares poorly in global learning study

Findings seen as a warning that India's long-term competitiveness may be in question

A global study of learning standards in 74 countries has ranked India all but at the bottom, sounding a wake-up call for the country's education system. China came out on top.

It was the first time that India participated in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), coordinated by the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). India's participation was in a pilot project, confined to schools from Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh.

The findings are significant because they come at a time when India is making a big push in education and improving the skills of its workforce. If the results from the two states hold good for the rest of the country, India's long-term competitiveness may be in question.

Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh traditionally rank high on human development parameters and are considered to be among India's more progressive states. The India Human Development Report 2011, prepared by the Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR), categorized them as "median" states, putting them significantly ahead of the national average. IAMR is an autonomous arm of the Planning Commission.

For literacy, Himachal Pradesh ranked 4 and Tamil Nadu 11 in the National Family Health Survey released in 2007.

Yet, in the PISA study, Tamil Nadu ranked 72 and Himachal Pradesh 73, just ahead of Kyrgyzstan in mathematics and overall reading skills. The eastern Chinese metropolis of Shanghai topped the PISA rankings in all three categories—overall reading skills, mathematical and scientific literacy.

PISA is an international study that began in 2000. It aims to assess education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students in participating economies.

To be sure, there are some reservations about the findings of the study. Such comparisons may not be fair as they are not between equals, says Manish Sabharwal, chief executive officer of human resources training and placement firm Teamlease Services Pvt. Ltd.

Yet, he argued, it does serve as a timely warning.

"Industries are already facing a problem because of poor quality (of graduates)," Sabharwal said. "What we need to do is repair and prepare. Repair by imparting skill training and prepare by improving the school system, which is the main gateway."

In Tamil Nadu, only 17% of students were estimated to possess proficiency in reading that is at or above the baseline needed to be effective and productive in life. In Himachal Pradesh, this level is 11%.

"This compares to 81% of students performing at or above the baseline level in reading in the OECD countries, on an average," said the study.

In other words, only a little over one in six students in Tamil Nadu and nearly one in 10 students in Himachal Pradesh are performing at the OECD average.

A similar trend was observed in mathematical and scientific literacy, too.

Anurag Behar, chief executive officer of the Azim Premji Foundation, said the study's findings were alarming.

This is because the PISA study found that only 12% of students in Himachal Pradesh and 15% in Tamil Nadu were proficient in mathematics against an OECD average of 75%; when it came to scientific literacy among students of class X, the proficiency level in Tamil Nadu was 16% and in Himachal, 11%, as against an OECD average proficiency of 82%.

In Malaysia, 56% of students were proficient in reading and 41% in mathematics. Similarly, in the United Arab Emirates, the mathematics proficiency levels was estimated at 49% and for reading, 60%. Like India, both countries participated for the first time.

Behar says there is a need for a complete change of India's teacher education system and a shift from rote learning-driven school education to understanding-driven curricula.

"We also need to reduce the policy-implementation gap," he said.

Tamil Nadu education minister C.V. Shanmugam declined to comment on the study's findings, asserting that the state's education system is good.

"In the last five years, 56,000 teachers were recruited... In which state do they give students laptops?" he said, referring to chief minister J. Jayalalithaa's free laptop scheme for students that was part of her campaign for elections that brought her All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam party back to power in May.

"We give incentives for students attending higher secondary. We give Rs 1,500 (a year) to class X students, Rs 1,500 to class XI and Rs 2,000 to class XII. We give Rs 5,000 if they clear class XII. So steps are being taken to improve the existing system," he claimed.

Himachal Pradesh education minister Ishwar Dass Dhiman defended his state's education system. In elementary schools, the enrolment has reached 99.3%, for instance, he said.

"If they have taken samples from the interior areas of our state, then we cannot say anything. We are now hiring better qualified teachers to improve the teaching of students."

Pramath Sinha, an education entrepreneur and former dean of the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, said he knew about the deficiencies of India's education system but was still shocked to find India so low in the PISA rankings.

"I believe our lack of urgency will take away the demographic dividend that we could have reaped," Sinha said.

Not everyone agrees. The study may not be based on an apple-to-apple comparison, says Vipul

Prakash, managing director of Elixir Consulting, a recruitment process outsourcing firm.

“If you look at the entire people entering the workforce, you may find lack of quality. But if you take the top 10% then they are perhaps the best in the world. This 10% is quite a large number which is giving India a competitive upper hand.”

Source: December 20, 2011/[Live Mint](#)

India will emerge major economy by 2030: Expert

Union science and technology secretary Dr T. Ramasami reiterated that India would emerge as a major economy of the world along with China during 2030 and said that by 2025 India would account for a large proportion of people of 30 years of age.

After conferring an honorary doctorate on R. Bhagwan Singh, consulting editor, Deccan Chronicle, at Vels University on Friday, Ramasami said that India of 2012 was different from the India of 1952.

With more than 30 per cent share of global supply of engineers, India would scale in advanced manufacturing as well.

In 1750, India and China shared nearly half of the global economy. By 2050, China and India might also have the largest share of the economy, he said, adding that unless a critical mass of global population gets educated to understand and adhere to high human values, the India of the future would not be able to lead the social system in 2030.

Ramasami said that the Indian education system should focus more on self-realisation than self-grandeur, adding that revealing the perfection within to oneself is the best way to educate a society that lives by moral codes and social ethics.

He told DC that the Union government had planned to produce 10,000 PhDs at the end of the XIth Five-Year Plan, adding that at present the country had 5,900.

“India produced 4,200 PhDs whereas China produced only 280 during 1996. Then we stayed on but China moved up to produced more PhDs. We have added another 2,000 PhDs in the last five years,” he said.

Source: December 31, 2011/[Deccan Chronicle](#)

80,000 youths to get technical education under SDP'

Punjab Chief Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on Friday said that as many as 80,000

youths would be equipped with technical education under Skill Development Programme (SDP).

He addressed a gathering of University of Agriculture, Faisalabad students on video conferencing.

UAF Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan, deans and directors were also present on the occasion.

The Chief Minister said that the programme costing Rs 4 billion.

17,000 people would get training in its first phase, while 80,000 youths would be made productive in three years.

The initiative is aimed at boosting up the net of technical manpower as well as curb the unemployment, he added.

The chief minister said that the Punjab government had given 30,000 scholarships under the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund for needy students, while the 413 talented students of the UAF got benefit from the fund.

He said that the steps were being taken in order to increase the literacy rate as well as providing quality education, which is prerequisite to achieve the goal of development.

Talking about unemployment, he said that his government has initiated the Yellow Cabs Scheme.

As many as 20,000 people would get the benefit from it.

He maintained that the provincial government had set up a Fund of Rs 1 billion under Akhuwat Foundation to provide interest free loans up to Rs 50,000 for needy person to start their business or continue their studies.

He said that the his government had earmarked Rs 10 billion to Punjab Education Foundation to ensure the quality of education at grass root level, while as many as 0.1 million laptops were also being distributed among the talented students of the province.

As many as 470 students participated in three video conferences, while the technical assistance was provided by Information Technology Resource Centre & Data Bank and Department of Computer Science.

Source: December 31, 2011/[B Recorder](#)

India needs 2 lakh more schools, 1500 varsities

How is the education sector in the country as a business proposition?

India is fast becoming a knowledge economy **superpower**. A whopping 220 million children are

enrolled in schools in the country. But still, 140 million students are left out. The gross enrollment in India at 12% is lower than the Asean countries. According to one estimate, India needs at least 200,000 schools. In [higher education](#) segment, the country needs around additional 1,500 universities and colleges.

At present, the quality of education in the country is not of a high standard. Therefore, there are huge opportunities for private players, not only in creating volume but also in improving the quality of education.

What do you expect from the government?

We hope that the government will get the long standing bills on education passed in Parliament to liberalize the sector so that the role of the private sector in higher education increases. We expect that 2012 will also witness the entry of foreign universities in the country. Opening up of the sector will increase the competition, which will not only lead to improvement in the standard of education but also will bring down the cost.

Will the Eurozone crisis affect the education sector?

The education sector is considered to be recession-free. Macroeconomic environment factors like dollar-rupee exchange rate, crisis in the Eurozone countries, inflation or rise in petrol prices do not impact the sector very much. Children still go to school. In fact, education is the last item on which the middle class will compromise.

What kind of growth do you hope for in the near future?

We expect that Educomp Solutions will continue to grow between 30% to 35%. I don't think the economic slowdown will have any visible impact on the company.

What is your growth strategy?

Educomp Solutions focuses on providing digital content. We own the largest school level content library with over 16,000 modules of rich 3-D multimedia content to reach out to 4.8 million students across 8,100 private schools and 6 million students across 10,900 government schools. Educomp sets up computer labs in government schools and provides multimedia content in regional languages, testing and certification in computer education, full-time assistants as well as teacher training and monitoring and supervision.

Educomp at present serves 27,800 schools and 17.9 million students and educators in India as well as the US, [Canada](#), [Singapore](#) and [Sri Lanka](#). We are also setting up pre-schools, high schools and professional and vocational education institutions.

At present, it is running 1000 pre-schools, 65 high schools, 310 vocational training centers and eight colleges in the country. In 2012, the number of high schools will increase to 101.

Source: January 01, 2011/[Times of India](#)

Panel for 29,000 more medical seats

The standing committee on health for the 12th five year Plan has proposed adding 18,000 additional undergraduate medical seats, and nearly 11,000 post-graduate seats between 2012 and 2017.

In its report to the Union health ministry, exclusively available with TOI, the panel has recommended for the increase of undergraduate medical seats from 41,569 to 66,000 and PG seats from 20,868 to 31,000.

It has proposed setting up of 30 new medical colleges with public financing in states that need them the most. It has recommended setting up of 132 Auxiliary Nursing Midwifery and 137 General Nursing Midwifery schools through public financing with a focus on under-serviced areas and starting paramedical education courses in 149 government medical colleges and paramedical institutions.

India produces 30,000 doctors, 18,000 specialists, 30,000 AYUSH doctors, 54,000 nurses, 15,000 ANMs and 36,000 pharmacists annually. "Yet, geographic and rural-urban imbalance exists in training and availability of human resource. Medical colleges are unevenly spread across the states with disparities in the quality of education. Only 193 districts of the total of 640 districts have a medical college - the remaining 447 districts don't have medical colleges," the report says.

Source: January 02, 2012/[Times of India](#)

Contribute

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

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

Please email your contributions to aserf@apeejay.edu

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

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