



## 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 2012. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

### Apeejay Stya University announces admission for the session 2012

Apeejay Stya University is offering diverse catalogue of technical, scientific, management and liberal arts courses for the Fall Admission 2012-13. 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**

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](#)

## CONTENT

### Aspect

On entry of Foreign Universities in India

### News

1. It is in contempt of Parliament: CPI(M)
2. New guidelines to check discrimination of SC/ST students
3. Manipal University mulls first Indian campus in China
4. UGC defers plan to allow entry of foreign varsities
5. Dual Degrees with Foreign Universities Get Nod from UGC
6. US to help India build community college system
7. CABE to form panel to develop framework
8. Govt. plans credit guarantee fund for education loans
9. Vocational UG degrees on offer soon
10. Studying abroad to burn bigger hole in the pocket
11. Common entrance, the road ahead
12. Bar councils to oppose higher education bill
13. Sibal, Pitroda pitch for Indian education and growth
14. India, US announce eight educational partnerships
15. Microsoft nets seven million students in Office 365 education deal

### Analysis/Opinion/Innovative Practice

1. Higher education must adapt to changes
2. High costs are justified
3. Education - Charity or business?
4. Management education in crisis?
5. India has not lived up to its research potential: Narayana Murthy
6. In India, Path to Partnerships
7. Chance to provide better education to young India: U.S
8. An Entrepreneurial Approach to Reforming Higher Education
9. Integrated courses: A trend with benefits
10. What happened to India?
11. Education: U.S.-India Collaboration
12. No alternative to regulation
13. Single admission test formula hangs in balance over dissent
14. IIT faculty drill holes in one-test logic
15. Indian varsities and the foreign hand

### Resources

1. Crime goes hand in hand with lack of education: Study
2. Class size and teacher effects in higher education
3. The growing industry of Higher Education Big Data
4. India Today ranks the best colleges of India



**ASPECT****On entry of Foreign Universities in India**

Foreign Higher Education Institutes coming to India with their own set up and infrastructure should certainly be welcome. They should have sufficient of their core staff if not full in each of the faculties they wish to start a course. The facilities should in no case be lower than the standards set up in India. They should be physically running the facility in India.

A foreign institute running a shadow institute, in proxy with half hearted facilities and infrastructure should not be allowed. Indian students should not be allowed to be cheated in any case. There are cases that some flimsy foreign institute started courses outside their own countries, in a single room facility and duped the students. This need be checked at any cost.

We need to safe guard our students financially as well as academically. Fee structure should be comparable to the Indian Universities. A foreign institute should only be allowed operations in India after government is fully satisfied about the credentials of the institute. A regular monitoring of the facilities and standards shall be necessary too.

The main aim of the foreign universities to establish their institutes in India is for revenue or profit making. These institutes will be concentrated in the metro cities of India, due to demand and accessibility, thus not available where these are most needed. Their presence in India will certainly create competition for enhanced quality and professionalism, which is good for the education and the students. Since higher education in India is highly regulated, the main concern of the Foreign Universities will be, as to how they protect their brand ethos, reputation and quality of education. The drafted foreign educational institutions bill, forbids foreign universities from repatriation of profits. It may be much better for India to explore the possibility of collaborating, cooperating and exchanging programs with institutions abroad, rather than having the foreign universities set up campus in India.

The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education in our country is below 20% even though we have a large number of institutions. However, the quality of education in many institution is not so good. In this background, the entry of foreign higher education institutions in India may bring in competition among our own intuitions, both in public as well as private sectors, to improve the standard of education with a view to survival for the fittest. However, the entry of foreign

institutions would not be a panacea in improving the GER and quality of education. Those institutions entering India have to work in a 'controlled regime' complying with the national policies only then it would prove to be a 'boon' for India.

*Make India a hub for Innovation*

Long-term prosperity will be guaranteed only by investing in higher education and research centres

IN THE long term, the economic prosperity of any country is linked to the way its human capital is developed in order to encourage innovation and progress. As wages go up, productivity can only be increased through innovation. At this time, we are a nation of order-takers, importers of ideas and inventions. We are not the primary producers of new knowledge. While we can and will achieve substantial growth by exploiting our current low-wage environment, this process cannot go on indefinitely. Even as we follow this strategy, we need to be simultaneously investing in higher education, research and development, and in the overall rubric of idea-generation and the creation of cutting-edge knowledge.

A few years after the 1857 uprising, the British established the universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. From the outset, the rulers were clear as to what should be the role played by Indian universities. They were required to perform only three functions: to set the syllabus, conduct examinations and award degrees. Please note that there was no emphasis at all on research or creation of new knowledge. Clearly, as far as the British were concerned, Indian universities would remain factories churning out degreeholders. New knowledge, including about India, would be created at Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh, not in India. In one sense, Indian universities have lived up to Lord Dalhousie's vision well. We must have the most efficient examination assembly lines in the world, and we have produced and continue to produce the best candidates as far as cracking examinations go. But research, and extending the boundaries of knowledge, has not been the forte of our universities.

Unfortunately, Independence did not change the situation. We created the University Grants Commission (UGC), which specifies how many years' experience is needed before an assistant professor can be promoted to an associate professor, how much salary and travelling allowance was due to professors at different hierarchical levels, and so on. Flexibility and autonomy, which are pre-requisites for running successful institutions, were undermined. Ironically, Calcutta University vice-chancellor Ashutosh Mukherjee's

decision to offer the Palit Chair in Physics to CV Raman in the pre-UGC days would not have met with UGC approval. The history of physics might have been poorer if the UGC had been around in the 1930s. Prior to Independence, several efforts were made by Indians to build research-oriented institutions despite active British discouragement and hostility. JN Tata and the Maharaja of Mysore founded the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, which still remains a world-class university. Madan Mohan Malaviya and Annie Besant founded the Banaras Hindu University, which tried to evolve a universal multi-disciplinary approach to learning. After a hiatus of decline, this varsity is trying to regain its past glory. One can only wish it well. Mukherjee took steps to create an ambience that favoured cutting-edge research in Calcutta University. During his short span as Andhra University vice-chancellor, S Radhakrishnan pioneered some innovative efforts. But all these efforts remained insufficient.

We produce the best candidates as far as cracking examinations go... R&D has never been the forte of Indian varsities

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU understood the importance of research and new knowledge creation. Hence the importance he attached to the creation of IITs and the CSIR laboratory network. At a time when India was considerably poorer, Nehru made sure that we found the resources and more importantly, bestowed attention on building an institutional infrastructure for higher education and research. Unfortunately for the country, Nehru decided that the older universities could not be reformed (many were under the control of the politicians in charge of state governments) and decided to "solve" the problem by setting up new IITs. The IITs have done an admirable job of training outstanding talent. IIT alumni have been responsible for considerable innovation and economic growth both in the US, and along the Indo-US corridor. While in recent years, research has picked up at these institutions, they still have a considerable way to go before being classified as truly world-class research institutions. Nehru was also instrumental in starting a series of research laboratories under the aegis of CSIR. Unfortunately, these labs were divorced from teaching institutions. Everyone knows that good research requires a large number of undergraduate and graduate students, if nothing else, to do the grunt work supporting senior researchers. The flaw in the CSIR structure has been the absence of students. Some corrections have been made as now several CSIR labs do have PhD students. Another flaw in the structure of IITs,

IITs, CSIR labs has been that they are "academic silos" and not inter-disciplinary universities.

New knowledge is usually created at the intersection of disciplines. My friend Padmakar Kulkarni, a BARC-trained scientist, works in Dallas. His research group is trying to develop an organic molecule that will cross the blood-brain barrier, and stick to brain proteins that cause Alzheimer's disease. The molecule has to have a radioactive isotope in order to be seen on the next-generation PET scanner. His team requires the services of an organic chemist, a nuclear chemist, an electronics engineer, a neurologist and a neurosurgeon. To set up such a team in Chennai or Mumbai would be both physically and organisationally difficult to the point of being impossible. The medical, engineering and science colleges are each several kilometres away from each other and are distinct organisations with heavy doses of bureaucracy. The idea that they could possibly co-operate is simply not on the cards. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has gained distinction by exploring issues at the intersection of economics and philosophy. At Harvard, he holds two appointments — one as a professor of economics and another as a professor of philosophy.

The Delhi University philosophy department, given that they follow UGC rules, will not find it proper to offer Sen a position. The new field of behavioural economics requires work in economics and in experimental psychology. Again, in India, the silo rule would apply and the faculties of these two departments probably don't even talk to each other, let alone work together. The silo effect is also seen in the situation where economics professors at IITs are frustrated because not enough economics PhD students turn up at what is primarily a business school. We have taken the silo principle to extremes.

We have a Film and television Institute. To think of a world-class film teaching and research institution without top-notch departments in sociology, history and computer animation makes little sense. The lack of a multi-disciplinary university umbrella makes these specialist institutes not the best place to create new knowledge. We have an Institute of foreign Trade — does that mean they will not teach anything about domestic trade? We have an Institute of rural management, one of Infrastructure management and one of Infrastructure finance management. Such narrow silos can lead to creating 'trade schools' where skills can be acquired but not environments where research in new cross-disciplinary areas can be pursued.

The other curse of our educational institutions is that they are denied autonomy. The argument made by the HRD ministry is that since the government

has provided the land and funding, it has a right to impose its rules and views on universities and institutes of higher learning. The choice of the executive head of the institution is also retained by the government. This argument is a fallacious one. In medieval Europe, universities were granted autonomy usually by royal charter and were run by groups of academics.

If the king gave an endowment, then they named the institution King's college. But in all other respects, the institution was autonomous. This is why the European universities became powerhouses creating new knowledge. In America, in the Dartmouth College case, the judiciary ruled in favour of university autonomy and against State control. The case of John Rockefeller and the University of Chicago is more interesting. Having endowed the university with money, Rockefeller refused to get involved in anything more.

He did not visit the university and did not tell the president, the fellows and the professors how they should run it, who they should admit, what they should teach, how professors should be promoted and so on. The denial of autonomy to our universities is in keeping with the traditions of the British Raj. Our erstwhile rulers were scared that universities would emerge as hotbeds of sedition, and in any event they were not keen that much productive research should be done in India. Hence "controlling" the universities suited them. Unfortunately, the central and state governments in free India have continued with this tradition. Giving land or money should not become the excuse to convert a university into a government department.

Giving land or money should not become the excuse to convert a university into a government department.

It is fashionable these days to argue that private universities can be the answer to our problems. While private varsities should be encouraged, we shouldn't forget that no country has progressed economically without having a good publicly funded university system. Even in the US, Land Grant Colleges, the University of California System, SUNY and the University of Texas System have been key catalysts in the pursuit of knowledge. Private entry should not become the reason for public universities abdicating their important role. I use the term "public universities" advisedly. They can be State-funded, but need not and shouldn't be State-controlled. They should be autonomous. Only in a free atmosphere can genuine research thrive; then and only then will new knowledge emerge.

WE ALREADY have an infrastructure of IITs, IIMs, ISIs, IIFTs and a large number of CSIR labs. All of them have plenty of land. And let's not forget that land is emerging as a major constraint these days. All have decent brands. Why not grant them "complete autonomy", give them guaranteed grants over a 10-year period, rather than hold them to ransom each year, and ask them to become fullfledged multi-disciplinary universities over time? After all, MIT and Carnegie Mellon started as engineering colleges and went on to become broad institutions of learning. The same should be possible in India. If we do this, I would wager that in the next 15 years, we would have a few Nobel laureates who would be professors in our universities. We would finally be creating new knowledge rather than being importers of ideas, concepts, innovations and inventions. The crucial thing is that autonomy will have to be real. The HRD ministry shouldn't try to get back powers by a sleight of hand. And this effort will have to be in addition to encouragement provided to private and foreign universities who are welcome, but who cannot be expected to play the same role as a well-funded, autonomous public university system can and will.

Economic issues are usually discussed in the media primarily in terms of taxes, monetary policy, interest rates, stock market returns and so on. These are important in the short and medium term. But in the long run, no society can become rich and prosperous if its human capital levels are not of a high quality. Sustaining economic growth on the basis of imitation and low wages is an excellent short-term strategy. But after that phase ends, we need to be generating ideas and innovations of our own. Then and only then can the hard-won prosperity be retained and the next round of economic growth kicked off. Consider the case of South Korea, which imports iron from India and coal from Australia — but makes the best and the cheapest steel in the world. The achievement is a tribute not to minerals in the ground, but to Korean human capital. We would do well to pay homage to Korea, as we refashion our university system.

Source: June 02, 2012/[Tehelka](#)

### NEWS

#### **It is in contempt of Parliament: CPI(M)**

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has criticised the Union government's move to draft guidelines for regulation of foreign educational institutions, arguing that since a Bill was pending in Parliament, this was a clear case of bypassing, and contempt of, Parliament.

The Left parties are opposed to the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010, maintaining that these universities would subvert the Indian system, skew salaries, take away faculty members from domestic universities and increase elitism in education, besides commercialising higher education.

In a statement here on Friday, the CPI(M) warned Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal against any such step. "On the contrary, those foreign-owned institutions operating in India, in violation of the law, must be proceeded against, and steps taken to prevent any further violation."

On the eve of his visit to the U.S. to attend the Indo-US CEO Forum, the party said, Mr. Sibal was keen on finding a way of meeting U.S. educational institutions' demand for easy entry to India through liberalised UGC rules that did not require Parliament's assent.

**Source:** June 02, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### **New guidelines to check discrimination of SC/ST students**

*UGC moots equal opportunity cells and anti-discrimination officers*

In response to the alleged profiling of North-Eastern and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes students in various higher educational institutions, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has recommended creating equal opportunity cells and appointing anti-discrimination officers in institutions across the country.

The UGC's new guidelines defines ragging, derogatory remarks and calling their names in a derogatory manner and other forms of "unfavourable" treatments to SC/ST students as acts of discrimination.

Demanding fees from SC/ST students in excess of the amount mentioned in their declared admission policy or denial/limiting of access to benefits arising from enrolment in the institution will also be considered discrimination.

The higher educational institution –universities, colleges and deemed universities—must ensure that SC/ST or North-Eastern students are not segregated in common facilities or subjected to discriminatory treatment in academic or sports infrastructure. The regulation also underlines the need to prevent the breach of reservation policy during admission and discrimination of accepting, processing or handling of the SC/ST students.

Following a suggestion from the HRD Ministry, the UGC has also proposed to create an ombudsman position in each higher educational institution to

look into the grievances of students including those belonging to SC and ST.

The education watchdog will be established in every central university and higher educational institution including the elite Indian Institutes of Management and Indian Institutes of Technology, HRD Minister Kapil Sibal had said in January referring to a decision.

The ombudsman will either be a judge not below the rank of a district judge or a retired professor who has at least 10 years experience in student grievance redressal.

Setting up of the ombudsman would ensure transparency in admissions and to prevent unfair practices in higher educational institutions, while also serving as a redressal mechanism.

An ombudsman will be the appellate authority in the case of discrimination against SC and ST students. It will also be an appellate authority in the case of grievances of other students, which will first be examined by a grievance redressal committee, to be set up in each higher educational institution under the proposed UGC (Establishment of Mechanism for Grievance Redressal) Regulations, 2012. The committee will comprise three senior teachers and a student representative based on academic merit. Among various grievances, It will look into complaints on delay in holding examinations or declaration of results beyond the time specified in academic calendar and also denial of quality education promised during admission or required to be provided.

The new regulations and guidelines for checking discrimination against SC and ST students will be presented to the State Education Ministers at a meeting here on June 5.

**Source:** June 02, 2012/[Deccan Herald](#)

### **Manipal University mulls first Indian campus in China**

Manipal University is in talks with Chinese officials to open the first campus of an Indian university in China.

The Karnataka-based private university is exploring a tie-up with two Chinese universities, Tianjin University and Shanghai's Tongji University, to set up what would be China's first all-English educational institution that will provide training in Information Technology (IT) and in the sciences.

Manipal University Vice-Chancellor K. Ramnarayan, who along with other officials from the university met Chinese university heads and government officials in Beijing and Tianjin this week, told The Hindu in an interview that Manipal had also offered to host the first ever Confucius Institute in India,

pending government approval, which will offer Chinese language courses to Indian students.

“We would like to provide academic support and set up an all-English campus in China, where we will provide training in both technology and health sciences, wherever there is a requirement,” Dr. Ramnarayan said.

Two potential partners are Tianjin University and Tongji University in Shanghai, which is known for its strong programmes in architecture and technology. “We could collaborate at different levels, whether at the student level, the faculty level through exchanges, or programmes that could be jointly run,” Dr. Ramnarayan said.

Manipal already operates overseas campuses in Dubai, Nepal, Antigua and Malaysia. “We always felt that China is one country where we could make our presence felt if there is an opportunity,” the Vice-Chancellor said. “We in India have always been looking west. But I think the potential for India and China to work together is tremendous. We have just not tapped the potential. Education could be a good bond to bring India and China together.”

Dr. Ramnarayan last week also met with the head of China's National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, or Hanban, which runs the global programme of Confucius Institutes. He said he had invited the Hanban to open a Confucius Institute at Manipal.

The Chinese government has set up more than three hundred Confucius Institutes in 100 countries as part of a new push to boost its soft power. The centres are usually set up as a joint initiative among a host foreign university, a Chinese partner university and the Hanban, which runs the programme.

India has so far not allowed the setting up of Confucius Institutes citing rules restricting the operation of autonomous educational institutions by foreign governments. There are as many as 70 such institutes in the United States alone, 13 in Britain and several dozen in Asia, located in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and other countries.

An earlier initiative to set up a Confucius Institute at Jawaharlal Nehru University fell through over procedural differences, including over the selection of teachers. Talks stalled after several rounds of discussions, which also saw an initial memorandum being signed coinciding with the visit of Premier Wen Jiabao in 2005. “There has been serious willingness at both ends, but due to certain matters of procedural difference it has not been worked out so far,” said Sabaree Mitra, a professor

at the Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies . Vellore Institute of Technology, near Chennai, set up a smaller Chinese Language Centre after it faced barriers to setting up a full-fledged Confucius Institute and over securing visas for Chinese teachers.

Manipal University officials said they wanted to work together with the Indian government to set up what would be the country's first such institute, which would offer courses in Chinese language and on Chinese culture.

**Source:** June 02, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### **UGC defers plan to allow entry of foreign varsities**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) on Saturday deferred a controversial proposal to allow the entry of foreign educational institutions within the existing legal framework. However, it gave 'in principle approval' to regulations on collaborative and joint courses.

‘The Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill 2010,’ is pending in Parliament as several parties are opposed to some of the provisions which would allow foreign universities to operate in India. The Parliamentary Standing Committee has made several recommendations to the Bill and they were being considered by the government.

The move by the UGC was seen by some of the academic experts, who do not wish to be identified, as allowing the foreign universities to come in without a legislative framework. They are also of the view that such a move would be in violation of the provisions of the UGC Act, 1956.

The UGC approved 'in principle' regulations on allowing twinning and joint degree programmes between the “top ranking foreign educational institutions and the best Indian universities.” Only the best universities of the country would be allowed to have tie-up with the internationally accredited 500 foreign universities and the courses would have to be completed in both universities.

As per the guidelines, foreign universities entering into tie-ups with Indian partners should be among the top 500 ranked by the Times Higher Education World University Ranking or by Shanghai Jiaotong University. The degrees will be granted by the Indian universities.

The Hindu had on Friday reported that the Human Resource Development Ministry was trying to identify possibilities of allowing the foreign educational institutions into the country as it was finding it hard to push through the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and

Operations) Bill, 2010 in Parliament due to lack of numbers in Rajya Sabha.

The UGC called a special meeting and the only two items on the agenda had the possibility of allowing foreign educational institutions to enter as 'deemed universities' under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956, or as private universities under the State laws, and drafting regulations on twinning programmes and joint degree programmes.

According to informed sources, some members of the UGC strongly opposed the proposal to allow the foreign universities when a Bill was already pending in Parliament. Also the UGC Act, 1956 would not be applicable to foreign universities without amendments. "The UGC chairperson and the Higher Education Secretary concurred with the objections and agreed to defer the item," UGC sources told The Hindu.

The panel members approved the regulations on joint programmes as it was felt it was necessary to curb the 'fly-by-night' operators in the country. Once the regulations come into effect, such operators will have to wind up.

As of now, only technical and management courses of foreign institutions are allowed in India as they are regulated by the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) Act. However, a large number of courses across the board are being conducted in an unregulated manner.

The UGC in 2003 mooted a proposal on regulation of entry and operation of foreign universities but did not pursue it after it was brought to the notice of the UGC by its legal experts that the UGC Act does not permit regulation of foreign universities.

S. Vaidhyasubramaniam, Dean of Sastra University, said the decision to allow only top 500 foreign universities in collaborative mode was a good first step in the interest of the existing faculty crisis and poor research productivity in Indian higher education.

Such collaboration should begin with Post Graduate and Ph.D. programmes only, he said.

**Source:** June 03, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### **Dual Degrees with Foreign Universities Get Nod from University Grants Commission (UGC)**

Now, Indian students can pursue courses from top global universities while being in India, says UGC

World's top 500 universities to start dual degree or twinning courses in India. Indian Universities can tie-up with any of the world's top 500 foreign

education. These institutes should be listed in the Time Higher Education Supplement

Doing a course from global top universities such as Harvard, Peking or Oxford, while being in India, will soon be a reality.

Country's higher education regulator, the University Grants Commission, on 2nd June, 2012 opened doors for world top 500 universities to start dual degree or twinning courses with Indian Higher education institutions.

The commission approved regulations also gave six months to higher education institutions in India running courses of foreign universities to meet the new regulatory framework.

According to Ved Prakash, UGC's Acting Chairperson, "The institutions failing to meet the regulations will face action."

The new rules stipulate de-recognition of private institutions and stopping of government funds to the public sector institutions, which fail to meet the regulatory provisions. Many educational institutions such as Delhi University offer courses where part of the syllabus is taught in India and remaining in the foreign university.

In a bid to ensure excellence, the commission has decided that only those Indian educational institutions, who receive highest accreditation rating from National Board for Accreditation or National Assessment and Accreditation Council, will be allowed to start a dual degree courses.

They would be able to tie-up with any of the world's top 500 foreign education providers listed in the Time Higher Education Supplement or Shanghai Ranking Consultancy. He also said, "The Indian education providers will be free to choose their foreign partners."

The decision comes a few weeks before HRD Minister Kapil Sibal is expected to participate in Indo-US Higher Education Summit, where heads of top Indian and Foreign universities are expected to participate.

The Indian government has promised a regulatory framework to allow quality foreign education to offer courses to Indian students. As the foreign education providers bill is still pending, the new UGC regulations will help the well known foreign universities to offer courses locally.

Prakash said before approving the tie-up the UGC will check the academic standards of the institutions signing an agreement. He added, "Only the best to ensure academic excellence will be allowed."

The new regulations do not stipulate fee or course structure which would be domain of the two collaborating universities.

The UGC, however, deferred decision on allowing foreign education providers to set campuses in India as it required consultation with other stakeholders such as health and law ministries.

**Source:** June 06, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

### US to help India build community college system

The US has offered to help India build a system of community colleges, saying a world-class education would be good for both nations.

"I think the challenges India faces dwarf -- make ours look relatively simple," US Education Secretary Arne Duncan told reporters at a White House news conference Tuesday, ahead of next week's India-US education dialogue.

"But I think there's a chance to provide a much better education for hundreds and hundreds and thousands of young people in India," he said.

"Whatever we can do to help as they build the next system of community colleges, as they scale up what's working, as American institutions start to set up campuses in India, we want to be a great partner," Duncan said.

"I just absolutely believe that a rising tide lifts all boats. And the more young people across India are getting a world-class education, that's a great thing (for India and the US as well)," he said in response to a question.

Next week's India-US education dialogue co-chaired by Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will focus on two key areas -- advanced research and innovation and workforce development, specifically, community colleges.

During the dialogue, Washington will announce the first eight partnership projects to be funded jointly by the US and India through the Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative, according to Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Robert Blake.

These three-year joint projects between American and Indian universities in the areas of food security, energy, climate change and public health will be funded by about a quarter million dollar in grants.

**Source:** June 06, 2012/[Daily News](#)

### CABE to form panel to develop framework

The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) on Wednesday decided to constitute a committee to develop the framework and processes of the National Mission on Teachers and Teaching.

Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal, who chaired the 59th meeting of the CABE, underlined the need to get the best minds in the teaching profession to educate children.

"We propose to have a National Mission mainly to address the quality-related issues. Teacher is no longer the sole repository of knowledge, and inputs of information flow from different sources. We should have a national mission to address issues relating to teacher education in a holistic manner," he said.

The CABE Committee headed by Minister of State for HRD Purandeshwari will give special focus on teacher educators and develop teachers for inclusive education for children with special needs. The CABE also decided to constitute a committee for assessment and implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) in the context of the no detention provision in the RTE Act.

The committee, headed by Haryana Minister Geeta Bhukkal, will submit its report in three months after consulting State Governments and other stakeholders. The report of the CABE Committee on ICT in school education and the draft National Policy on ICT were unanimously adopted.

**Source:** June 07, 2012/[New Indian Express](#)

### Govt. plans credit guarantee fund for education loans

India is setting up a Rs.5,000 crore credit guarantee fund to facilitate easy education loans to needy students by providing protection against defaults to banks.

The move was endorsed at a meeting of the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE), the highest education advisory body to the government that comprises academicians, industry experts and state education ministers, human resource development (HRD) minister Kapil Sibal told reporters Wednesday.

"CABE members endorsed the initiative to create the fund to ensure better flow of credit to deserving students. It will be worth Rs.5,000 crore," Sibal said.

The move comes after finance minister Pranab Mukherjee mentioned such an initiative in his March budget speech. Both HRD and finance ministries have discussed the measure once and further talks are going to take place soon to finalize "structural issues and final modalities".

According to the HRD ministry, banks will give 1% of the loan amount to the fund and if a student defaults, the fund will ensure that 75% of the loan amount is returned. "Besides, once this is in place,

we need not require any collateral security for availing loans up to Rs.750,000." Currently, it's Rs.4 lakh for students whose family income is less than Rs.4.5 lakh per year.

A finance ministry official said that given the fiscal constraints, a 1% contribution from banks to build up the corpus may not be sufficient. "It will mean more sponsorship from central government," said a finance ministry official requesting anonymity. "During the finalization of the modalities, we hope to solve these issues."

In 2011-12, India had a fiscal deficit of 5.76% of gross domestic product (GDP) and aims to reduce this to 5.1% in the current fiscal.

Several banks under the umbrella of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) started education loan schemes in 2001. The risky nature of educational loans has made banks wary of approving such loans though.

R.P. Sisodia, joint secretary with the HRD ministry, told CABE that banks are worried about non-performing assets (NPAs) rising. Hence, only 3% of Indian students pursuing higher education have availed education loans in the country. The HRD ministry did not give any specific time limit for implementing the scheme.

An IBA official who is part of the discussion said the Rs.5,000 crore corpus will be built over a period of time.

"The government will start with an initial corpus of Rs.1,000 crore, which will guarantee loans five times that amount. So, for the first year, around Rs.5,000 crore of education loans will get a credit guarantee," he said, requesting anonymity. The government will subsequently release Rs.1,000 crore every year to build the corpus, he said.

"However, a cabinet note has not been finalized. It is possible that banks may be expected to contribute to the corpus of the fund along with the central government since the 1% fee will only cover the administrative expenses of the fund," he added.

Bankers questioned the benefits of such a fund if banks have to contribute towards the corpus. "Where is the question of risk mitigation then," said a banker with a Delhi-based public sector bank, who declined to be named.

While Sibal said banks need to provide education loans at lower rates of interest than those prevailing as education is a priority sector, some authorities don't feel this will necessarily act as a roadblock during discussions.

The HRD ministry believes the interest subvention scheme of the central government takes care of

the interest on such loans for poor students and banks should feel secured over this.

**Source:** June 07, 2012/[Live Mint](#)

### Vocational UG degrees on offer soon

Besides undergraduate degrees in arts, science and commerce, bachelor's degrees in vocational education will be available in colleges across the country from this August. AICTE chairman SS Mantha said he has received applications from 300 colleges to introduce vocational education.

#### AICTE PLAN

- For now, 10 sectors – including tourism, construction, printing, telecom, information technology and communication – have been chosen
- Each sector can have a maximum of 100 students
- Students who did not opt for vocational education in school can do extra hours to catch up.

"Around 100 trainers have also applied for this stream. This year, we plan to have 4-5 such colleges in each state. After monitoring it for a year, we can increase the number of such colleges from next year."

Stating that these courses would boost skill development, he said: "It will bolster employment opportunities for college graduates. The

student will have to choose a sector and a specific specialisation from each sector. For now, 10 sectors have been chosen – including tourism, construction, printing, telecom, information technology, mobile and communication."

To begin with, five sectors have been proposed for each college, Mantha said.

Each sector can have a maximum of 100 students, which means that a college can initially admit 500 students under the programme.

Under the entertainment sector, a student could opt for specialisation in theatre/stage craft, western classical dancing or even acting. All the other sectors have related specialisations.

Students who did not opt for vocational education at the school level can simultaneously do extra hours to make up for lessons they have missed under a specific trainer.

Union human resource development minister Kapil Sibal had launched the National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) for implementation in polytechnic as well as engineering colleges, besides other colleges in the university system, from 2012-13.

**Source:** June 07, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

### Studying abroad to burn bigger hole in the pocket

The depreciating rupee has started a cascading effect on the economy, but the worst-hit are Indian students studying abroad or those planning for higher studies in foreign universities.

They have to shell out more money compared to what it was required a year ago. As the rupee has fallen by 20 per cent against the dollar since January this year, overseas education cost has also gone up.

“This condition has turned foreign education a luxury affair, not something for the middle class to have as parents need to pay more to send their children to good universities,” says Neha Racch, senior counsellor at Apex Consultants.

The sliding rupee, coupled with a slowing global economy, strict visa norms and stringent immigration policies, have made prospects of overseas education gloomy, she says. “The impact is visible as there has been a 20 per cent decline in the number of students applying for higher courses in the US, the UK and other countries,” says Rachh.

Steep rupee depreciation has also made the rupee a much weaker currency against some major currencies. It has fallen by 18 per cent against the Singapore dollar, 17 per cent against the Canadian dollar, 16 per cent against the British pound and 13 per cent against the Australian dollar.

These conditions are more detrimental for middle class families as most of them take education loans to pay fees.

“Interest on loans puts further burden on students and their families,” says Anis Chakravarty, senior director of Deloitte. Now, a lot of planning, saving and investment will be required from families to bear expenses of their children’s foreign education, says Suchitra Surve, director of Growth Centre India, a counselling centre.

“Applying for loans and scholarships will be essential. Identifying the right university and course is crucial for better savings,” says Surve.

Education expert Sumit Vohra confirms that the cost of foreign education has gone up by 30 per cent because of the fall in the rupee’s value.

However, some students planning to go abroad say they can supplement rising education cost by working part-time in the countries they choose to pursue their courses.

“If I get some part-time job abroad, it will help supplement my living cost,” says Ankit Bharadwaj.

**Source:** June 10, 2012/[Deccan Herald](#)

### Common entrance, the road ahead

*For IITs, the Class XII Board/equivalent marks normalised on percentile basis through an appropriate formula plus the marks obtained in JEE-Main, with equal weightage, would be used for purpose of gating/screening.*

*A joint meeting of councils of IITs, NITs and IIITs has come up with two different patterns of admission to undergraduate engineering programmes, even while emphasising weightage for performance in Class XII board exams.*

Nearly two-and-half years after being first considered, the proposed national common entrance exam for admission to undergraduate engineering programmes in the country continues to be a contentious issue.

The Joint Meeting of Councils of IITs, NITs and IIITs held under the chairmanship of Union Minister for Human Resource Development Kapil Sibal has come up with two different patterns of admissions — one for IITs and the other for all other Centrally-funded institutions.

A strong body of opinion amongst the members of the council was that the importance of the schooling system has to be revived in larger public interest by giving due weightage to the performance of students in Class XII Board examinations and at the same time maintain the credibility and integrity of admissions to higher institutes of technical education.

As per the present proposal, a Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for admission to undergraduate programmes in engineering would be conducted in two parts — JEE-Main and JEE-Advanced.

For IITs, the Class XII Board/equivalent marks normalised on percentile basis through an appropriate formula plus the marks obtained in JEE-Main, with equal weightage, would be used for purpose of gating/screening.

Only a fixed number of candidates (five times the number of the seats for admission in the IIT system or a pre-fixed cut-off) screened on the basis of cumulative score of normalised school board marks and JEE-Main exam would be eligible to be considered for admission.

The ranking for admission to undergraduate programmes in IITs would be based entirely on the performance in JEE-Advanced exam from amongst the candidates screened through this process. (JEE-Main tests will have multiple choice objective type paper whereas the nature and modalities of the JEE-Advanced will be determined by the joint admission board of IITs).

For all other Centrally-funded institutions, there would be 40 per cent weightage performance in school board marks normalised on percentile basis through an appropriate formula, 30 per cent weightage for performance in JEE-Main and 30 per cent weightage in JEE-Advanced and a combined merit accordingly.

The proposed changes are expected to be effective from the year 2013.

However, the views of the IIT Senates clearly indicate that majority of the IITs are for the current practice to continue in 2013, with five out of seven voting for the present system of admission for the next academic year also. While IIT-Madras had nothing to comment, the views of IIT-Roorkee were not made clear.

Six out of seven IITs agreed to use National Common Exam as a screening test from 2014. Similarly, six out of seven IITs have decided to conduct their own test to select candidates from the screened list from the national test. They are not for adding board performance in final JEE rankings of IITs. The consensus was that the mechanism of overall inclusion of board performance could be considered only for the cut-off or for the screening. IITs are likely to carry out a detailed analysis of the board data to decide on whether to use board marks as cut-off or as part of the initial screening process.

According to the minutes of the Meeting of Council of IITs, it is clear that IIT-Bombay wants to retain the present system with minor modifications and IIT-Kanpur seeking substantial modification to the proposal. (Now, IIT-Kanpur Senate has resolved to go it alone.) Other IITs gave a qualified support to the proposal. All India IIT Faculty Federation has also asked the MHRD to uphold the collective majority views of various IIT Senates.

### AUTONOMY TO STATES

After the Joint Meeting of Councils of IITs, NITs and IIITs, the MHRD has decided that the States would have the freedom to join in the process and have the autonomy to determine their own relative weightages to normalised Class XII Board marks, performance in JEE-Main and JEE-Advanced.

This has given a breather to States like Tamil Nadu where no entrance test is being conducted for admission to professional courses, including engineering, to ensure rural students gain more access to higher education. "Now, the States have three options. Join the MHRD's national entrance exam or conduct their own tests or like in Tamil Nadu, no tests," says T.S. Sridhar, Secretary, Higher Education.

Students have the option, as before, to appear in JEE for admission to IITs.

**Source:** June 10, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### Bar councils to oppose higher education bill

The Bar Council of India (BCI) and all state bar councils have decided to intensify their agitation against the proposed Higher Education & Research Bill, 2011. The new bill, which intends to put an end to the prerogative of the BCI for the inspection of educational institutions in the country imparting law education, has been drafted by the government and is all set to be presented in the parliament during the monsoon session.

"In a recent joint meeting, the BCI and the representatives of all state bar councils have resolved to oppose the bill terming it an infringement of Sections 6 & 7 of Advocates Act, which enshrine the powers of functioning of the BCI and state bars respectively", said I R Saini, chairman of the Bar Council of Rajasthan, on Sunday.

The joint meeting of all the bars has chalked out an extensive protest program with a view to exert pressure on the HRD ministry, which will continue until the ministry excludes the legal education and Advocates Act, 1961 from its purview. "We will be meeting the MPs and hand over memorandum from June 18 to 30. This will be followed by a nationwide protest on July 11 and 12 under which, we will abstain from the courts throughout the country and set the copies of the bill ablaze," said Saini.

On the first day of the monsoon session of the parliament, a massive "sit-in" will be carried out at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, which will culminate into a march towards the parliament.

Besides the Higher Education & Research Bill, the BCI and state bars have also been opposing the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill-2010, the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Act-2010, the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Higher Educational Institution Bill-2010, the Educational Tribunals Bill-2012 and the National Law Schools Bill-2012.

Saini said that the manner in which these bills have been drafted and are proposed to be introduced, the HRD ministry is clandestinely trying to marginalize the advocate fraternity of the country and their elected statutory body with respect to the legal education and profession.

The Bar Council of Rajasthan's member critically observed that this is vicious and arbitrary design of the government to wrest the right of the BCI to hand it over to a few of its nominees. "Apart from

that, the said bill is totally impractical and attempts to spoil the tested and well established traditional norms of the legal education system of the country," said a member.

**Source:** June 11, 2012/[Times of India](#)

### **Sibal, Pitroda pitch for Indian education and growth**

*Seek more investment into India's higher education space*

During his last tour of Washington it was all about community colleges and vocational education but on the eve of the first-ever India-U.S. Higher Education Dialogue on Tuesday the buzzword of choice for Kapil Sibal, the Minister for Human Resource Development and Communications and IT, was "meta-universities."

The Minister made a fervent pitch for more investment into India's higher education space even as he attended a blitz of events organised by some of the top institutions here in the India-U.S. space, including a lecture organised by the Carnegie Endowment and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and a luncheon hosted by the U.S. India Business Council (USIBC) and the Confederation of Indian Industry.

A constant theme that Mr. Sibal and his colleague, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Adviser Sam Pitroda, alluded to was the need for "frugal innovation" that could provide low-cost solutions to benefit those at the bottom of the pyramid in India. High on the list of such innovations was the option to develop universities based in cyberspace, Mr. Sibal argued, as it was not feasible to develop U.S.-style graduate colleges that charged \$120,000 or more per year.

This initiative could lead to multiple universities coming together in cyberspace to grant a single degree, saving students enormous costs by substituting physical attendance on college premises with distance learning via the Internet.

With a strong focus on leveraging India's untapped potential for rapid infrastructure development in the IT space Mr. Sibal also touted a plan to set up data centres throughout the nation, the premises for which the government would provide to entrepreneurs free of cost. It would however then be up to these entrepreneurs to hire software engineers and other physical infrastructure, he added, thus setting up data "hubs" that could be accessed by the "spokes," including local universities or technical education institutes.

Mr. Sibal will doubtless bring his enthusiasm for innovative approaches in the Indian higher education space to the India-U.S. Higher Education

Summit on Tuesday, where he and other Indian officials will confer with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Their meeting will come on the sidelines of the broader India-U.S. Strategic Dialogue which is being headed by External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna, on the Indian side.

In this context, Mr. Pitroda, who spoke alongside Mr. Sibal at various events, sought to paint India's prospects for continued economic reform and growth in a positive light. At events sponsored by the USIBC, Mr. Pitroda said that a growth rate of "8-10% for the next 20-25 years" was on the cards for India.

Alluding to the growing disenchantment of India's "miracle growth" story in certain circles in Washington, Mr. Pitroda made a plea for "a little patience" as his government grappled with the imperatives of coalition politics in a bid to get India back to a higher growth path.

**Source:** June 11, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### **India, US announce eight educational partnerships**

In a milestone in the educational partnership between India and the United States, eight institutional partnership projects, four each led by either country, were announced for the first Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative awards.

The goal of the initiative is to further strengthen, through faculty exchanges, joint research, and other collaboration, partnerships between American and Indian institutions of higher education in priority fields, including food security, climate change, sustainable energy, and public health, the US State Department announced Tuesday.

Each project will receive an award of approximately \$250,000 that can be utilised over the three-year grant period to encourage mutual understanding, educational reform, and economic growth, as well as the development of junior faculty.

#### *Indian-led Partnerships:*

**Mahatma Gandhi University:** An Interdisciplinary and Community Oriented Approach toward Sustainable Development in partnership with Brown University, Duke University and Plymouth State University.

**Banaras Hindu University:** Paradigm Shift in Energy Scenario for the 21st Century toward Renewable Energy Sources required for both India and the US in partnership with University of Pittsburgh.

**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur:** International Programme for Sustainable Infrastructure Development in partnership with Virginia Tech University.

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi: Resource Building for Ecosystem and Human Health Risk Assessment with Special reference to Microbial Contamination in partnership with Drexel University.

### *US-led partnerships:*

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey: Capitalising on the Demographic Dividend: Enhancing Talent Development Capacity for India and the US in the 21st Century in partnership with Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

University of Montana: Impacts of Climate Change and Changes in Socio-Economic Structure on Traditional Agriculture and the Development of Sustainable Communities among Indigenous Populations in partnership with Bangalore University.

Cornell University: Implementing Reformed Curriculum in Emerging areas of Agriculture and Food Security in Two State Agricultural Universities of India in partnership with University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad and Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel University of Agriculture and Technology, Meerut.

University of Michigan: The Joint Development of a Master's Degree in Education for Health Professions Faculty in the United States and India in partnership with Maharashtra University of the Health Sciences.

The next request for proposals for grants from the Obama-Singh Initiative announced by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Barack Obama in November 2009 will be announced in July 2012.

**Source:** June 12, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

### **Microsoft nets seven million students in Office 365 education deal**

In April 2012 Microsoft Corporation announced an agreement with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to deploy Office 365 for education in more than 10,000 technical colleges and institutes throughout India. The deal means that the AICTE will become Microsoft's largest cloud customer to date, and will enable more than seven million students and almost 500,000 teaching and administrative staff to access the service.

Sanket Akerkar, Managing Director of Microsoft Corporation India Private Limited, expressed delight at the confidence shown by the AICTE in the Corporation. "Microsoft has always seen education as a priority area and believes that technology offers possibilities that can help

empower not just teachers and students but collectively, India as a nation," he said.

Live@edu, Microsoft's current service for the education sector, is being deployed to the Indian education institutions this summer, and students and staff will join more than 22 million users in schools worldwide. It will then be transitioned to Office 365 for education when the update becomes available later in the year. Live@edu provides a suite which includes hosted email, Office Web Apps, instant messaging and SkyDrive storage, while the upgraded Office 365 for education will give access to Exchange Online email and scheduling, SharePoint Online and Lync Online.

The updated education service is essentially the same as Office 365 for enterprise but, like Live@edu, will be provided free to educational institutions. However, institutions may choose to upgrade from the free Plan 2, to the paid-for services available with Plan 3, such as Office Pro Plus, home use rights for up to five PCs, voicemail and advanced archive capability, or choose Plan 4 that comes with voice capability in addition to all the Plan 3 features. The agreement represents a significant coup for Microsoft, which has for some years been competing with Google to provide cloud suites to the education sector. However, given that the basic services are free, there will be little financial gain from the deployment.

Anthony Salcito, Microsoft's Vice President of worldwide education, has been quoted as saying: "Even though it is provided for free, we see it as a value for Microsoft and for the school system. This is allowing the governing body and school leaders to have a communication pipeline to a broad set of students and not only improve collaboration across the system but provide a rich set of tools for students in the cloud. That would be difficult using traditional models [software]."

The bigger issue here is the growth of its customer base where students are Microsoft's major target group. It is likely that familiarity with the Microsoft service from school and university days will make them more likely to deploy it when they are in position to choose Office 365 in the workplace. With its fast-growing economy India seems set to prove a fertile ground for Microsoft business development in the future.

There are a number of factors that are likely to have influenced the AICTE's decision to deploy the Microsoft service. The technology sector is one of the fastest growing of the burgeoning Indian economy and high quality technical education is seen as being vital to maintain this growth. "Microsoft's cloud platform will make for a truly

progressive ecosystem and contribute to the country's technical education by providing a better communication and collaboration platform for institutes and students," said Dr. S. S. Mantha, Chairman of AICTE. Another factor is the system's ease of interoperation with Microsoft's other products,

The size of the country and the fact that colleges can be situated in very remote locations makes the communication and collaboration that feeds good practice particularly challenging. The enhanced capabilities offered by Office 365 will aid not only individual learning through increased opportunities for video conferencing and document collaboration, but also teaching and administration. The AICTE is part of the government's Ministry of Human Resource Development and its role in overseeing institutions offering technical education requires a system of fast and efficient communication that will facilitate the delivery of planned educational reforms. It will also simplify IT management and thus reduce costs.

Developing the skills of India's youth is an important part of the plan for continued growth and is the subject of a National Policy in which the public-private partnership plays an essential role, said Kapil Sibbal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development. He went on to congratulate both Microsoft and the AICTE on what he called a significant milestone.

**Source:** June 14, 2012/ [IT portal](#)

### ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

#### Higher education must adapt to changes

Former vice chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences Prof S Bisalaiah warned of dire consequences, if India's higher education system did not adapt to changes. Delivering a lecture on 'Higher Education at Crossroads- Concerns and Needed Reforms' organised by Samvaada Trust on Sunday, Prof Bisalaiah stressed the need to review curriculum, teaching-learning, recruitment and reward systems and university-industry linkages, which according to him were the search areas for higher education.

"It is sad that we do not have a vision map for higher education. We do not know where it is going. It is an island of excellence, but a sea of substandard higher education institutions," said Prof Bisalaiah, adding that 'micro success stories were obscuring macro realities.'

The former VC and economist said that India's higher education system needed introspection. "If IISc does not figure in the list of the world's top 200 institutions, then where are we heading? We must move from teaching towards learning.

Right now, we are treating students like animals, by dictating terms. This is bad for the country in the long run," he said. He called for changes in reward systems for faculty members "Our reward system is based on experience alone and less on quality. A teacher can become a professor in 15 years, without considering if that person is qualitatively good."

He said universities here were suffering from intellectual stagnation due to academic inbreeding.

Prof Bisalaiah, while stating that he was against privatisation of education, welcomed foreign universities to start branches in India.

"Why are we not thinking of globalising higher education? Let foreign universities come here.

When we are okay with having imported cars, what is wrong with getting imported education?" he said.

**Source:** June, 2012/ [Ibn Live](#)

#### High costs are justified

The amplified voices on the volume of tuition fees collected by private engineering colleges must be heard and analysed seriously by discerning people and the general public. That college managements in AP are a ruthless and fleecing lot is what some of the hasty observers want society to believe. The truth, however, is otherwise. The issue needs to be put in the right perspective and examined after considering ground realities.

The quality of education in these colleges has always been a point of discussion and the government seems to be highly apprehensive about it. Interestingly, the AICTE monitors every aspect including infrastructure, faculty and even the campus environment. Over the years the managements have realised that focusing on quality is vital for their survival in the increasingly competitive higher technical education. There is no logic in the criticism that these colleges only want to make money and that quality is not on their agenda.

Contrary to the misplaced opinion among a large section of people, the managements of private engineering colleges and other technical institutions have been responsible for the creation of a formidable force of skilled engineers. In fact, all this was accomplished by dedicated private managements with the help of an equally committed class of efficient teachers.

There is precious little both the Central and the state governments did to help these colleges. The role of AICTE, UGC and Universities was limited to issuing licenses and granting affiliations. There was absolutely no financial assistance from the governments.

Most of the privileged class, educated at premier technical institutions like IITs/NITs/ Central Universities, established and completely funded by the Government of India with the money from taxpayers, flew to the US and Europe at will to make lucrative careers.

So, where are the hundreds of thousands of engineers and technocrats working in Indian industries, construction projects and the information technology sector coming from? It is clear that the country is now on an upswing due to the efforts of the private engineering colleges.

The maligning campaign by some self-appointed saviours of society is, thus, ridiculous and harmful to the interests of the student community.

It is only after the state government's policy of reimbursement of tuition fees was introduced, that the gates of engineering colleges were thrown wide open to the deprived classes. The talk of "fleecing", "greedy" private managements is creating doubts in the minds of the public.

If the government is spending money, it is to fulfil its commitment to the people and to prove its political will and by doing so it has raised the expectations of a large section of the people subjected to social injustice over centuries. If the state government fails, it is certainly not because of the managements of the colleges.

The managements are put under tremendous pressure due to the inabilities of the government. Far from what the government believes, most of the managements are struggling and barely managing a hand-to-mouth survival.

It is high time that they have the freedom to think and formulate a reasonable fee structure.

The panoramic picture of about 700 private engineering colleges spread across AP with an estimated worth of Rs 20,000 crore may look rosy, but it has already started collapsing from within. The bells are tolling loud enough.

The present fee structure is not enough for them to survive and many of them may not be able to stay afloat.

P. Rajeshwar Reddy is secretary, Consortium of Engineering Colleges Managements Associations of AP (CECMA) and Anurag Group of Institutions and

**Source:** June 04, 2012/[Deccan Chronicle](#)

### Education - Charity or business?

Discussion: Supreme Court had made an observation that colleges should view education as 'charity', not 'business' - Profiteering prohibited

The awareness that higher education is the essential requirement for improving the quality of life has increasingly spread over all sections of society irrespective of geographical, social or economic backgrounds.

As a result, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education in our country has been increasing rapidly in recent years. However, the current GER of nearly 18 per cent is clearly inadequate and is less than the global average of about 24 per cent.

The Twelfth Plan period proposes to increase the GER to 25 per cent by 2016-17 and to about 30 per cent by 2020. We, therefore, require a holistic expansion of the higher education sector that maintains a balance between quality and equity.

Huge investments are required to achieve the objectives and government spending of about 0.7 per cent of the GDP on higher education today is inadequate. The government proposes to increase this figure to 1 per cent of the GDP during the Twelfth Plan.

While the government has its own limitations in allocating more funds to higher education, promoting private participation is unavoidable to meet the growing demand. In fact, private higher education in our country accounts for about 80 per cent of enrolment in professional courses and about one-third overall. Currently, the growth is restricted to some specific areas like engineering, medical and management education.

Unfortunately, most of the private institutions have become 'for-profit type', commercialising the higher education sector. There are concerns about quality and unfair practices by them. In countries like the USA, there are several higher education institutions that are labelled 'for-profit' along with 'not-for-profit' institutions. But the situation here is different, profiteering in higher education is clearly prohibited and the private higher education providers are expected to have a social responsibility to provide inclusive and quality education.

They may have to realise that no one expects them to run their institutions incurring losses, but they are not expected to make profits out of them.

One will appreciate if private higher education providers enter this field with a service motto, not making the education sector a 'regular' business.

Since the number of private providers these days are becoming increasingly large, it is a great

challenge for the regulatory authorities to formulate policies to effectively monitor them so that they do not involve in exploitation. Society expects attitudinal changes in them and they should strive to supplement their legitimate financial requirements for quality improvement through endowments from alumni, philanthropists and others.

**Source:** June 04, 2012/[Deccan Chronicle](#)

### Management education in crisis?

Crucial deficit: There is a shortage of faculty members with industrial experience in many management institutions in the country

It has grown quantitatively, but not qualitatively, and contributed too little to the labour-rich but skill-poor economy, feel experts

Is 'management education' in India in crisis? Will the mushrooming of management institutions help the stream tide over the crisis? And, how sensitive are these institutions and authorities concerned to the problems and challenges that have already started bothering it?

The challenges before management education, or rather managing management education vis-a-vis the demands posed by the industry and other socio-economic and cultural factors, need to be properly analysed and understood from an altogether fresh approach, opine experts.

With the concept with which management education was introduced in the country more than 25 years old, experts have opined that it is time to respond to the changes that have not only brought developments and progress in various fields, but also changed old notions.

Management education is passing through a critical phase. There is a crisis of identity, character and quality. This is the apt time to discuss and deliberate the matter by taking stock of the situation.

Management education has grown quantitatively, but not qualitatively, and contributed too little to the labour-rich but skill-poor economy. Too many attractive, lucrative and competent jobs are chasing very few individuals, who are highly talented, skilled and dynamic. An average student finds it difficult to sail through the acid tests of the corporate sector. The element of professionalism, an important ingredient towards building managers, is not taught by institutions imparting management education. Communications skill for students from rural areas is like climbing the Himalayas, he opined.

Saleable product

Like professional education, management education to has become a saleable product. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Amritsar to Singur, more than 4,000 institutions have emerged in the management education landscape.

The origin of management education dates back to ancient times. It is a unique art developed by mankind along its evolution journey. Greeks, Chinese and Indian thinkers contributed to this art of getting things done by others. Strategic decisions and art of administration were adopted during the times of Koutilya. Management education is an offshoot of the industrial revolution which created the factory system, thereby providing a ledge to the art of management. In the Indian subcontinent, management education has come over a period of past 50 years, whereas Europeans are teaching this education since the last 400 years.

Due to the slow rate of economic growth after independence till 1990 the opportunities created by industry were too few. Globalisation gave a big boost to the economy while the service sector came to dominate other sectors. This has necessitated the demand for management education. The Indian landscape of management education is composed of the following:

The IIMs (Indian Institutes of Management) top the list which pick the very best. . Management institutes affiliated to universities, autonomous institutions approved by the All India Council for Technical Education, institutions without the approval of AICTE, and foreign universities are also offering degree and postgraduate degrees in India.

#### Role of AICTE

The Union Government, during its winter session of 1987, accorded permission to establish the AICTE, which is a body for professional education in this subcontinent. According to AICTE data (see table) the number of institutions imparting management education mushroomed in just five years. The intriguing question confronting all the stakeholders is: "Why was permission given to so many institutions?"

In the last five years, the AICTE, by granting permission to more institutions, also allowed increase in the intake of students by more than 300 per cent, which has also been indicated in the hand book (see table). Thus, these figures reveal that the AICTE adopted a quantitative expansion strategy but paid inadequate attention to quality of management education.

Further, among 4,000 plus institutions sanctioned by AICTE, Andhra Pradesh has 945, Uttar Pradesh 459, Maharashtra 419, Tamil Nadu 389, Madhya Pradesh 215 and Karnataka 209.

Experts feel that AICTE's policy is liberal in according permission to start institutions and increase intake.

Secondly, institutions enter the management education scenario with the intention of making quick profits as against contributing their bit to the field with some genuine concern. Thirdly, institutions imparting management education negated quality and concentrated on quantity.

Lapses

Fourthly, lapses in curriculum upgradation and banking on some core subjects and niche electives added to the problems.

The element of 'skill quotient' is not appropriately addressed to add value to the education. Faculty members with industrial experience are less in numbers to share their expertise.

Interestingly, the former Chairman of the University Grant Commission, Arun Nigavekar, who addressed the delegates at the seminar, observed that under the changed circumstances it become inevitable to shun the old curriculum in management education and prepare CEOs by directing them to set goals and develop necessary skills to pursue them.

Citing the results of a survey conducted by the University of Michigan based on the interview with 1,500 executives, he said it was found that the subject to be learnt changed on priority. But the same subject became redundant.

He also quoted from the survey to say that three per cent of the sample population who set goals had more net worth after 25 years than those who did not.

**Source:** June 04, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### **India has not lived up to its research potential: N R Narayana Murthy**

As if the battered rupee, sinking industrial productivity and dipping exports were not enough, Murthy said he often heard experts from around the world lamenting that India had not been able to step up to the expectations of the world.

Murthy was in the city to deliver the 4th foundation day lecture on 'Role of research in national development' at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research on Monday. "Over the next several decades and centuries, when history judges the Indian civilization, what will we be seen as? Will we be seen as a society that translated its potential to reality and made the lives of Indians better? Or will we be seen as a nation that failed on its promise?"

He felt the key lied in building institutes dedicated to research, towards work that could uplift lives

and empower populations. "Global experts tell me that India has not lived up to the expectations of the world in research... I believe the need of the hour is a Sheldonian plan for higher education, one that will create a grand future without which we will face a continued period of irrelevance and ignominy."

Murthy thought that most of the country's current infrastructure isn't a breeding ground for fresh ideas, for creating new knowledge or for ground-breaking research. "Doing a fair job in just transmission of knowledge, as our IITs and many other prestigious higher education institutions have done, is not sufficient for our national development. Nor does it suffice to create professional schools that train students in management or law."

Speaking about the country's research institutes, he said he had often heard tales of them being "mired in bureaucracy and hatched with far too many objectives". Sharing his metric for an Indian research university, he said, at its core must lie the desire to earn respect and step one should be its ability to attract the smartest people from around the world. "These people will - by being a part of an ecosystem of academic freedom, meritocracy, reward, respect and competition - be motivated to produce ideas that will improve the destiny of India."

**Source:** June 05, 2012/[Times of India](#)

### **In India, Path to Partnerships**

India's University Grants Commission has approved new regulations governing foreign university partnerships, barring entry to all but the top 500 globally-ranked universities.

The regulations set a high barrier to collaboration, both for prospective foreign partners and Indian universities. In order to be eligible to offer joint degrees or other twinning programs, foreign universities must be listed among the top 500 in the *Times Higher Education* or Shanghai Jiaotong University world rankings, while Indian universities must have received the highest grade from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council or the National Board of Accreditation, according to The Indian Express and other Indian news media. Universities with existing partnerships will have six months to come into compliance with the new regulations, or face penalties.

While some international educators see the rules as too limiting, they appear to give elite institutions a clear path for setting up joint programs. Many Western university administrators have complained in the past about a lack of such a path, even as

unregulated partnerships of varying quality have proliferated.

Hundreds of twinning arrangements involving foreign universities already exist in India. Rahul Choudaha, director of research and advisory services for World Education Services, a nonprofit organization that specializes in credential evaluation, said he thought it was unlikely that the new rules would force the dissolution of existing, unregulated programs. But he said that college administrators interested in engaging with Indian universities to develop new, high-quality programs should feel "cautiously optimistic." He noted that given the dual requirements regarding accreditation and ranking, "many of the predatory institutions, who are interested in profits at the expense of quality and students, would be filtered out."

Choudaha described the regulations as providing a "low-intensity, high-relevance pathway for institutions who are truly interested in building collaborative academic engagements in India."

However, Daniel Obst, deputy vice president for international partnerships for the Institute of International Education, lamented the lack of opportunity for non-elite colleges. IIE manages the International Academic Partnership Program, which has forged connections between U.S. and Indian institutions.

"We understand the UGC's interest in assuring the high quality of joint and double degree programs between Indian universities and their counterparts abroad," Obst said.

"However, limiting such collaborative degree programs to those institutions that appear in the top 500 listed in the *Times Higher Ed* or Shanghai Jiaotong rankings would restrict students' access to programs offered by a wide range of excellent institutions worldwide." (Phil Baty, editor of the *Times Higher* rankings, recently warned in an essay for *Inside Higher Ed* of the dangers of governments relying solely on rankings in setting higher education policy.)

Obst added: "Institutions representing the full range of US higher education – from community colleges to liberal arts institutions to public and private research universities – have unique strengths and specific degree programs that fit more closely the wide range of Indian institutions seeking partners abroad."

The new regulations do not address the issue of freestanding foreign branch campuses. The Foreign Educational Institutions Bill, which would regulate branch campuses, has been pending in India's Parliament for more than two years. Discussion of

the bill typically centers on bringing the Harvards of the world to India, and keeping low-quality, "fly-by-night" providers out.

**Source:** June 05, 2012/[Inside Higher ED](#)

### **Chance to provide better education to young India: U.S**

Ahead of the next week's India-U.S. education dialogue, the United States Education Secretary Arne Duncan has said there is chance to provide a much better education for thousands of young people in India.

"I think the challenges India faces dwarf — make ours look relatively simple. But I think there's a chance to provide a much better education for hundreds and hundreds and thousands of young people in India," Mr. Duncan told reporters at a White House news conference.

"Whatever we can do to help as they build the next system of community colleges, as they scale up what's working, as American institutions start to set up campuses in India, we want to be a great partner," he said.

"I just absolutely believe that a rising tide lifts all boats. And the more young people across India are getting a world-class education, that's a great thing for your country and for ours as well," Mr. Duncan said in response to a question.

The Education Secretary praised his Indian counterpart, Kapil Sibal, HRD Minister.

"We have a great working relationship with my counterpart in India. He is a man, I think, of tremendous vision and courage," Mr. Duncan said.

Next week, Mr. Sibal and the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton would host the next round of India-U.S. Education Dialogue. The Education Summit will focus on two key areas: advanced research and innovation and workforce development, specifically, community colleges, the Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Robert Blake said on Monday.

"With respect to higher education collaboration, I am delighted that we will announce during the dialogue the first eight partnership projects to be funded jointly by the United States and India through the Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative.

These three-year, approximately quarter-million dollar grants will be used for joint projects between American and Indian universities in the areas of food security, energy, climate change and public health, among others," Mr. Blake said.

**Source:** June 06, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

## An Entrepreneurial Approach to Reforming Higher Education

A paradox of American higher education is the disconnect between our vaunted international reputation and the severe problems we face at home. America's top research institutions consistently dominate the global rankings sponsored by organizations like Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Times Higher Education. The U.S. model of competitive research funding, merit-based hiring and promotion of faculty, and unfettered pursuit of the truth is closely watched and often imitated. From South Korea to Saudi Arabia, countries seeking to create world-class research universities in an increasingly competitive global academic marketplace view U.S. institutions as the gold standard.

But the vast majority of American students don't attend these universities. For most, the story of U.S. higher education is quite different.

Soaring tuition is a problem everywhere, of course, as is growing student debt. Colleges have done far too little to address dismaying dropout rates, focus more effectively on student learning and workforce success, use technology more thoughtfully in order to improve academic productivity, and take successful educational experiments to scale.

There's ample evidence that a more entrepreneurial approach to postsecondary education is overdue. While some pioneering ventures such as edX are under way, numerous barriers continue to slow innovation and thwart experimentation, both in traditional institutions and in startup ventures that aspire to disrupt the existing marketplace.

Against this backdrop, the Kauffman Foundation convened a diverse group of leading education entrepreneurs, academics, and policy analysts to examine the challenges facing U.S. higher education. We were fortunate to bring together participants including Shai Reshef, founder of the University of the People; founders of startups 2tor, Inc. and Straighterline; senior leaders of nontraditional universities such as Olin College and Western Governors University; the president and CEO of Kaplan, Inc.; the directors of education policy at the American Enterprise Institute, the Brookings Institution, and the Center for American Progress; and professors who both study and participate in postsecondary reform initiatives.

The results of the group's deliberations can be found in *College 2.0: An Entrepreneurial Approach to Reforming Higher Education*, a just-released Kauffman Foundation report that offers a range of ambitious ideas for reinventing higher education.

Along with short essays by individual authors, which I highly recommend, the report outlines a broad set of actions to improve college access, educational quality, and graduates' success in the work force. These include:

- tackling campus-level obstacles to innovation by giving more funding to institutions with better student outcomes;
- reforming accreditation to place the fewest possible restrictions on new and existing programs;
- improving academic productivity and dramatically driving down tuition by exploring new technology-based pedagogies that have low marginal costs;
- filling information gaps by providing prospective students with far more information about the institutions they attend, including how graduates fare in the job market; and
- making it easier to start "charter colleges," akin to K-12 charter schools, that receive significant flexibility in their operations in exchange for improved student outcomes.

This is just a taste of what can be found in the College 2.0 report. The hope it holds out is that removing barriers to innovation, enhancing competition, and providing clear and accessible information about student outcomes, will lay the groundwork for entrepreneurs to pioneer new models and take the most successful ones to scale. If that happens, mass-access education in the United States may one day enjoy the same successes that our most celebrated institutions do today.

**Source:** June 07, 2012/[The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

### Integrated courses: A trend with benefits

Aiming to make higher education more industry-centric, several universities across the state and country have begun offering flexible dual degree and integrated courses in management and human resources to go with engineering programmes. Some of the country's premier institutions have taken the lead in introducing integrated programmes, thus setting a trend for others to follow. "The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) offer a five-year MTech dual degree course in several engineering branches. The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research also offers a dual BS-MS programme where students study mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and humanities initially and then specialise in a combination of subjects," says Sidhartha Rastogi, professor of Economics at IIT Indore.

Rastogi continues, "One thing you need to consider and realise is that integrating your degree adds two

whole years to your experience. Generally, a double degree is a five-year programme. However, there are exceptions where they last for just four years while other programmes have an even longer duration. Students who complete an integrated course have the advantage of opting to pursue a PhD. The other advantage is that you don't have to take an entrance exam twice. If you are sure of the course you are pursuing, it definitely works well for you. It (the course) helps you gain exposure to various disciplines and focus on what you want to do."

An integrated study programme has a curriculum that comprises of content jointly designed by two or more higher education disciplines, and regulated by a specific set of guidelines. "Students like us who choose the programme, take on defined periods of study in each discipline, in terms of duration and content. At the end of the course, after relevant examinations, we are awarded both qualifications by the institution," says Nishant Rajakumaran, of SRM University who is pursuing an integrated BTech programme. "We study two years of our integrated course here and are even sent to a foreign university to complete the same," he says, "These programmes are also designed in such a way that we can exit from the programme at a predefined stage and earn one degree."

Management education integrated with engineering, architecture and pharmacy, offers immense opportunities for students. Interestingly, integrated dual degree programs are not new to Indian education system, with some of these programmes being in vogue for the last decade. However, it is only recently that universities have begun scaling-up programmes on offer, adding a modern edge to them. "A student can enroll in an integrated BE-MBA course after class XII. On completion of three years the university confers a Bachelor's degree in Management. After four years, they (students) get applied management degrees and are industry-ready," says Dr P Mannar Jawahar, vice chancellor, Anna University, "After a few years of relevant work experience; students can obtain a Master's degree in Management."

Integrated courses and dual degrees come in various disciplines, from engineering to humanities. "It is important to draw the line between dual degrees and integrated programmes, although these terms are often used interchangeably," says Dr Ponnaivaiko, vice chancellor of SRM University, "A joint degree program is an outcome to an integrated course of study. An integrated study programme comprises of a curriculum that is jointly designed by two or more higher education institutions - sometimes from different countries or

disciplines - and is regulated by a specific set of guidelines. Students who choose the programme undertake defined periods of study in each institution or discipline in terms of duration and content. At the end of the courses and after relevant examinations, students are awarded a single qualification jointly signed by the academic authorities of both institutions and/or disciplines."

#### DOUBLE BENEFIT

A joint degree programme is an outcome to an integrated course of study. An integrated study program comprises of a curriculum that is jointly designed by two or more higher education institutions - sometimes from different countries or disciplines - and is regulated by a specific set of guidelines

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) offer a five-year MTech dual degree course in several engineering branches. The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research also offers a dual BS-MS programme where students study mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and humanities.

**Source:** June 09, 2012/[Times of India](#)

#### What happened to India?

*For a nation as poor as India, growth should be a no-brainer. Then why is it underperforming relative to its potential?*

Emerging markets around the world—Brazil, China, India, and Russia, to name the largest—are slowing. One reason is that they continue to be dependent, directly or indirectly, on exports to advanced industrial countries. Slow growth there, especially in Europe, is economically depressing.

But a second reason is that they each have important weaknesses, which they have not overcome in good times. For China, it is excessive reliance on fixed-asset investment for growth. In Brazil, low savings and various institutional impediments keep interest rates high and investments low, while the educational system does not serve significant parts of the population well. And Russia, despite a very well educated population, continues to be reliant on commodity industries for economic growth.

Hardest to understand, though, is why India is underperforming so much relative to its potential. Indeed, annual GDP growth has fallen by five percentage points since 2010.

For a country as poor as India, growth should be what Americans call a "no-brainer". It is largely a matter of providing public goods: basic infrastructure such as roads, bridges, ports and power, as well as access to education and basic

healthcare. And, unlike many equally poor countries, India already has a very strong entrepreneurial class, a reasonably large and well-educated middle class and a number of world-class corporations that can be enlisted in the effort to provide these public goods.

Satisfying the demand for such goods is itself a source of growth. But, also, a reliable road creates tremendous additional activity, as trade increases between connected areas, and myriad businesses, restaurants, and hotels spring up along the way.

As India did away with the stultifying licence raj in the 1990s, successive governments understood the imperative of economic growth, so much so that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) contested the 2004 election on a pro-development platform, encapsulated in the slogan, "India Shining". But the BJP-led coalition lost that election. Whether the debacle reflected the BJP's unfortunate choice of coalition partners or its emphasis on growth when too many Indians had not benefited from it, the lesson for politicians was that growth did not provide electoral rewards.

In any event, that election suggested a need to spread the benefits of growth to rural areas and the poor. There are two ways of going about that. The first, which is harder and takes time, is to increase income-generating capabilities in rural areas, and among the poor, by improving access to education, healthcare, finance, water and power. The second is to increase voters' spending power through populist subsidies and transfers, which typically tend to be directed towards the politically influential rather than the truly needy.

In the years after the BJP's loss, with a few notable exceptions, India's political class decided that traditional populism was a surer route to re-election. This perception also accorded well with the median (typically poor) voter's low expectation of government in India—seeing it as a source of sporadic handouts rather than of reliable public services.

For a few years, the momentum created by previous reforms, together with strong global growth, carried India forward. Politicians saw little need to vote for further reforms, especially those that would upset powerful vested interests.

The lurch towards populism was strengthened when the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance concluded that a rural employment-guarantee scheme and a populist farm loan waiver aided its victory in the 2009 election.

But, while politicians spent the growth dividend on poorly targeted giveaways such as subsidized petrol and cooking gas, the need for further reform

only increased. For example, industrialization requires a transparent system for acquiring land from farmers and tribal people, which in turn presupposes much better land-ownership records than India has.

As demand for land and land prices increased, corruption became rampant, with some politicians, industrialists and bureaucrats using the lack of transparency in land ownership and zoning to misappropriate assets. India's corrupt elites had moved from controlling licences to cornering newly valuable resources such as land. The resource raj rose from the ashes of the licenceraj.

India's citizenry eventually reacted. An eclectic mix of idealistic and opportunistic politicians and NGOs mobilized people against land acquisitions. With investigative journalists getting into the act, land acquisition became a political land mine.

Moreover, key institutions, such as the Comptroller and Auditor General and the judiciary, staffed by an increasingly angry middle class, also launched investigations. As evidence emerged of widespread corruption in contracts and resource allocation, ministers, bureaucrats and high-level corporate officers were arrested and some have spent long periods in jail.

The collateral effect, however, is that even honest officials are now too frightened to help corporations to navigate India's maze of bureaucracy. As a result, industrial, mining and infrastructure projects have ground to a halt.

Populist government spending and the inability of the supply side of the economy to keep pace has, in turn, led to elevated inflation, while Indian households, worried that no asset looks safe, have taken to investing in gold. Because India does not produce much gold itself, these purchases have contributed to an abnormally wide current-account deficit. Not much more was required to dampen foreign investors' enthusiasm for the India story, with the rupee falling significantly in recent weeks.

As with the other major emerging markets, India's fate is in its own hands.

Hard times tend to concentrate minds. If its politicians can take a few steps to show that they can overcome narrow partisan interests to establish the more transparent and efficient government that a middle-income country needs, they could quickly re-energize India's enormous engines of potential growth.

Otherwise, India's youth, their hopes and ambitions frustrated, could decide to take matters into their own hands.

**Source:** June 10, 2012/[Live Mint](#)

### Education: U.S.-India Collaboration

The United States and India are two of the largest economies and home to some of the world's most innovative individuals. While a cornerstone of the U.S.-India partnership is mutually beneficial global economic development, both countries face a significant challenge in improving education and enabling their vast human capital to succeed.

What are India's challenges and successes in the development of human capital, and what are the bilateral opportunities for collaboration in skill development and education? Indian Minister of Human Resource Development Kapil Sibal addressed this question in his remarks. Arbind Prasad, director general of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, provided comments. Carnegie's Jessica T. Mathews moderated.

#### Great Challenges

*The Indian People:* India's greatest strength is its people, Mathews said. The country has some of the finest science and technology institutions in the world, and it has made great strides in literacy and education. But she warned that major challenges remain, and that India must develop an effective set of policies in order to realize the opportunities at hand.

*Indian Economic Growth:* Sibal echoed Mathews' analysis, noting that India has made enormous progress in the last twenty years and maintained an unflagging rate of economic growth that stands in sharp relief to the global slowdown. Nevertheless, great challenges remain for Indian education, and they are compounded by the fact that democracy has its own rate of progress, especially when it is as vibrant as India.

*The Major Challenge:* Sibal stated that the greatest challenge for India is how to educate the Indian population enough to reach the critical mass that allows India to finally reach double-digit growth. He noted that entry-level education is relatively strong in India, but that the country desperately needs to increase university enrollment. Today, the gross enrollment ratio is 17 percent. India must increase it to 30 percent by 2020, Sibal asserted.

#### Investing in Higher Education

Sibal and Prasad outlined several ways in which India could re-vamp its higher education system:

*A Multipronged Approach:* India must enact a multipronged strategy in order to adequately meet its challenges, Sibal said. India must rely on private investment, private sector innovation, and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) revolution in order to bridge the gap between

the demand for higher education and its supply. India is in the process of building a national knowledge network that connects all its institutions of higher education, with the final goal of creating a national highway of knowledge that is accessible to everyone, Sibal added.

*The Importance of the Private Sector:* Prasad emphasized the importance of the private sector in meeting the challenge of capacity enhancement and quality. The role of industry needs to be expanded, he argued, suggesting that India could move towards a "knowledge hub-and-spoke model." In such a model, premium industries and institutions in a region form a hub that then connects with other institutions in the region to share best practices and to design an education that has practical value for its students.

#### Skill Development

Sibal asserted that the second challenge India must meet is that of adequately teaching skills to Indian students who choose not to pursue higher education. India has an enormous demand for skilled workers, but it lacks the supply.

*Integrating Students, Industry, and Society:* Sibal argued that industry should help with curriculum design, and that India must start including vocational skill education in high school. He noted that it was important to maintain flexibility, however, between academics and skills, so students felt free to pursue whichever they preferred instead of being locked onto one single path. Prasad agreed, noting that currently, there is a lack of flexibility between the skill and academic paths. India must also change its mindset to reflect that skilled workers are as important to civil society as those who pursue higher education, Sibal said.

*Certification:* Prasad agreed that the focus on skill development is the right model. India must create a globally recognized certification mechanism for its skilled workers. Otherwise, Indians who choose to work outside of their hometowns may find it difficult to secure employment despite their qualifications.

Sibal concluded by arguing that other countries also needed to change their mindset to reflect that the world has become a global community, and that education is no longer limited by borders. He pointed to the United States as an example: today, the American educational system is too expensive, as is American manufacturing and services. Over the last decade, American manufacturing moved to China, and American services moved to India, because economically, it was the only sustainable way to proceed. Sibal argued that education will increasingly be outsourced as well – so long as quality remains the same, if the costs of education

are cheaper abroad, education will become more international in character. Sibal asserted that in the future, the world is likely to see more "meta-universities" located in cyberspace rather than brick-and-mortar institutions, as well as an increase in collaborative research across schools and countries.

**Source:** June 11, 2012/ [Carnegie Endowment](#)

### No alternative to regulation

The decision of the University Grants Commission to defer a move to accommodate foreign higher educational institutions as deemed universities is sensible, considering that starting universities generally requires Parliamentary sanction. Using the UGC to help entities from abroad make a covert entry would be grossly improper when the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010 has stalled in the Rajya Sabha. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development has raised several issues relating to the legislation and called for a centralised policy and regulatory regime. What needs to be done immediately is to curb the operation of many unauthorised entrants that are exploiting the prevailing policy vacuum.

It is true that a large number of Indian students leave for foreign campuses every year to secure a degree. There is much to be gained, therefore, if the best universities abroad open campuses in India, and offer courses that live up to their reputation for academic rigour. For the student, such an option can mean much lower costs.

Evidently, the passing of a robust law is essential to make sure that exploitation of students by foreign institutions does not take place. What has happened so far in the area of technical education and management courses offered by foreign entities, under the rules of the All India Council for Technical Education, is far from encouraging. The Standing Committee says the AICTE rules have failed to regulate the activities of such institutions, and only a handful of unapproved entities have been proceeded against.

A large number of foreign institutions operating twinning programmes partnered unaffiliated and unapproved domestic organisations. As a result of such carpet bagging, the UGC has now initiated a clean-up by laying down that twinning or joint ventures can be undertaken only with the top 500 names in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, and a similar list of the Shanghai Jiao Tong University. This is a welcome advance over the present situation but no substitute for hard decisions on issues such as registration, transparent accreditation, socially-

relevant medical education, faculty training, mutual recognition of degrees by the respective countries, and crucially, a check on profiteering.

It must be emphasised that while an international education can expose some of India's youth to global excellence, equitable access to higher education will depend on a rapidly expanding public university system.

**Source:** June 11, 2012/ [The Hindu](#)

### Single admission test formula hangs in balance over dissent

If this dissent cascades - a section of the IIT Kharagpur faculty is the latest group to express reservations - the plan for the common entrance test for all engineering and technology schools may come undone.

Differences have surfaced within the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, whose senate on Friday opposed a country-wide common entrance examination for technical colleges.

If this dissent cascades—a section of the IIT Kharagpur faculty is the latest group to express reservations—the plan for the common entrance test for all engineering and technology schools may come undone.

"One nation, one test, is a desirable objective. While IIT Kanpur senate has passed a resolution, we have to look at its implications," M. Anandakrishnan, chairman of the board of governors (BoG) at IIT Kanpur, said on Sunday. "One IIT cannot run the IIT exam. We have to think whether all the IITs will go along. IITs are a close group and decisions need to reflect the view of all."

But for the exception of two states, India is poised to move to a single entrance test for admission to engineering colleges across the country, possibly as early as next year, Mintreported on 6 June. This was decided at the state education ministers' conference convened by the human resource development (HRD) ministry in the capital on Tuesday. The country has around 4,000 engineering colleges and at least 1.5 million students enter them every year.

After the senate resolution on Friday, IIT Kanpur's director has already formed an admissions committee, and the first task of this panel will be to coordinate with other willing IITs to conduct a separate admission test in 2013, a senate member said on condition of anonymity.

A section of the IIT Khargapur faculty on Sunday also expressed dissent over the proposed common entrance exam, said A.K. Mittal, secretary of the All India IIT Faculty Federation.

In the worst-case scenario, there could be two different tests for the 15 IITs; those who support the common admission examination devised by the IIT council can go for the single test and those with IIT Kanpur can have their own admission process, the Kanpur senate member said.

Anandkrishnan said the government, the BoG and the senate cannot behave like “different political parties”, and it is possible to have a “harmonious relationship”.

The BoG of an IIT is its highest decision-making body.

Meanwhile, IIT Delhi is set to hold a senate meeting on 21 June after its director returns from a vacation. Some of its faculty said it is “possible to have a similar resolution like Kanpur”, but others said a clear picture will emerge only within a week. The teachers declined to be named.

Both IIT Delhi and IIT Kanpur have expressed their dissatisfaction over the IIT council’s 28 May decision to hold a common entrance exam. The council is headed by HRD minister Kapil Sibal and comprises of all the directors, the chairpersons of the board of governors of IITs, industry experts, a few ministry bureaucrats and officials from the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India council for Technical Education (AICTE).

The council decided that applicants will be selected on the basis of three tests—the class XII board exam, the joint entrance examination (JEE) main test and the JEE advanced exam. All the centrally funded technical institutes except the IITs will give weightage to these three sets of examinations in the proportion of 40:30:30.

The ministry says a uniform national test will reduce the demand for capitation fees that many engineering colleges demand, just as it will reduce stress on aspirants, who now write multiple entrance tests. It will also diminish the influence of coaching centres on entrance preparation and re-emphasize the importance of class XII board exams across India.

At least two officials of the HRD ministry said they were yet to receive any formal communication from IIT Kanpur.

“Despite all the noise, we expect to find a common ground. At the maximum, we will sit down for another round of dialogue with the IITs and things will move on from next academic year,” said one of the officials. “When he (Sibal) is back in action (on 18 June), we expect things to settle down and a clearer picture to emerge,” the second official said. Both officials requested anonymity.

Somnath Bharti, president of IIT Delhi Alumni Association and a Supreme Court advocate, said IIT Kanpur can hold its own entrance examination.

“The IIT council’s decision is not binding on individual IITs,” he said. “It (the common admission test) looks like a populist decision by the minister.”

The IIT Delhi Alumni Association is set to meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh this week and is weighing legal options to “protect the autonomy of the IITs”, Bharti said.

**Source:** June 11, 2012/[I Mint](#)

### **IIT faculty drill holes in one-test logic**

India’s higher education czars have relied on flawed assumptions and misleading rhetoric to propose the new exam pattern for entrance into the Indian Institutes of Technology and other engineering colleges, senior IIT faculty members have said.

The faculty members from IIT Bombay, Kanpur and Delhi have also warned that the proposed exam pattern will intensify stress among students and expand the market for coaching, thus accentuating the very problems it is intended to curb.

The IIT Council, chaired by the Union human resource development minister Kapil Sibal, decided last month to introduce a two-step exam — main and advanced, both to be held on the same day — and factor in the Class XII board scores for entrance into the IITs and other central engineering colleges. The Council, whose members include IIT directors, said the new pattern in which board scores will get 50 per cent weightage with the main exam, should begin from 2013, replacing the existing IIT Joint Entrance Exam.

“The proposal may be well-intentioned, but it appears thoughtlessly prepared,” said Dheeraj Sanghi, professor of computer science and dean of academic affairs at IIT Kanpur, whose senate — a body of senior faculty — has rejected the idea and said it will conduct its own entrance exam in 2013 .

Sanghi and others believe the manner in which the new screening pattern plans to factor in Class XII scores is scientifically untenable. They say it will hurt students from some boards for no fault of theirs, while providing an unfair advantage to students of other boards.

The IIT Council has proposed a mathematical trick for “normalisation” which, in principle, would allow students from India’s diverse school boards and examination systems to be assigned an all-India rank and score, to be used for the 50 per cent weightage.

But the normalisation trick is based on two key assumptions — that merit distribution is the same in

all boards, and that aggregate scores increase from less meritorious to the more meritorious students.

“Merit distribution is something difficult to measure — what is measured is academic preparedness, and there is ample evidence that academic preparedness varies across different boards,” said Somenath Biswas, a computer science professor at IIT Kanpur. “The first assumption is thus incorrect, and variability in grading of exam papers within and across boards may invalidate the second assumption,” Biswas told The Telegraph.

“It will encourage the proliferation of coaching classes that claim to help students learn to crack the two exams as well as score high marks in boards,” said Deepak Gupta, professor of materials science and engineering at IIT Kanpur.

While the plan’s proponents say it will encourage greater focus on school board exams, critics point out that there is no evidence for this. On the contrary, they say, the two-step exam pattern will compel hundreds of thousands of students across the country to take a gruelling, tough exam they

## FLAWED PITCH FOR NEW EXAM

### What proponents of the one-nation one-exam plan claim

- It will reduce stress and pressure of multiple examinations
- It will reduce influence of coaching classes
- It will minimise the urban-rural bias in the entrance exam
- It is possible to normalise scores from India’s diverse board exams for all-India ranking
- It will make students concentrate more on board studies instead of engineering exam

### What senior IIT faculty believe

- The single make-or-break exam will intensify stress among students
- Coaching industry will have an even bigger market
- The new exam will make little difference to the urban-rural or socio-economic divide
- The normalisation claim is based on two key assumptions — one relating to merit distribution is incorrect, there is no evidence for the second relating to aggregate scores
- There is no evidence for this. On the contrary, nearly 700,000 will find themselves compelled to take a JEE-level high-band filter exam

The proposal's proponents have said the new screening pattern, recommended by a panel chaired by science and technology secretary T. Ramasami, will reduce the stress of multiple exams on students and curb the emphasis on coaching classes.

The proponents also believe factoring in the normalised board marks will emphasise the importance of doing well in boards, particularly to good students, who might otherwise be tempted to settle for lower rank in boards in quest of their IIT aspirations.

Many IIT faculty members believe the single make-or-break exam will intensify stress.

“Multiple exams reduce stress by providing multiple opportunities,” said Anurag Mehra, professor of chemical engineering at IIT Bombay. “Many students feel multiple exams actually provide them the safety of revisiting their performance and the possibility of getting something,” he has said in a commentary to appear shortly in the journal Current Science, a publication of the Indian Academy of Science.

Mehra and others say the new pattern will stimulate the demand for coaching classes.

would otherwise have not.

Under the plan, the first step —the main exam — will be roughly equivalent to the current All India Engineering Entrance Exam, while the second step — advanced exam — is intended to resemble the much tougher IIT Joint Entrance Exam.

About 1.2 million students took the AIEEE this year and 500,000 took the IIT-JEE. “Given these numbers, the new pattern will force the 700,000 students who would not have taken the JEE to sit for the advanced exam,” Gupta said.

“Imagine the enormous burden on students — to take an AIEEE-type exam in the morning and an IIT-JEE type exam in the afternoon,” said a senior faculty member at the IIT Bombay. “I’ve taken these exams myself — I can’t imagine the stress of doing this same day.”

Several IIT faculty members say proponents of the new exam plan have used misleading rhetoric to draw support. “There is a wrong impression created that the IIT-JEE is primarily responsible for pushing students towards coaching,” said an IIT Bombay faculty member.

A study published in the Journal of Indian Education two years ago revealed that three out of four students in a set of Delhi schools enrolled in

science streams were taking private tuitions or attending coaching classes. A non-government organisation pointed out earlier this year that even primary school students in many states seek coaching or private tuitions.

A note circulated by one of the IIT directors justifying the need for incorporating board scores claimed that the emphasis on JEE and coaching has led to "the ridiculous situation where students are entering the IIT system without learning, say calculus."

Calculus, a topic in mathematics, is taught in Class XI and Class XII, and, one IIT Bombay faculty member said, it is "utter rubbish" to suggest that a student could enter the IITs without learning calculus.

"I was trying to use rhetoric," the director who circulated the note told The Telegraph. "What I meant to say was that students could ignore calculus, and concentrate on other topics and subjects and get through the examination."

The Delhi-based IIT Faculty Federation today said it was "shocked" to learn that IIT Kharagpur director Damodar Acharya had issued misleading public statements that his institution's senate backed the proposal for the new exam pattern.

"The resolutions of the IIT Kharagpur senate did not recommend the inclusion of the board marks," the federation said, adding that the senate had categorically stated that no change should be introduced until 2014.

**Source:** June 11, 2012/[The Telegraph](#)

### Indian varsities and the foreign hand

TUNNEL VISION: Our obsession with universities rankings is futile because the most popular global league tables consider the world's top universities only and are limited in scope and fail to integrate with our educational structure.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) seems to be in a hurry and in an adventurous mood. These temperaments are seen from its clearance of regulations for establishing links with foreign universities by Indian universities. The base for these regulations have been drawn from a report from the Professor P Rama Rao Committee, which was formed in March 2012, and subsequent scrutiny of the same report by another committee under the chairmanship of professor Ramamurthy Naidu, a member of the UGC. One can understand the concerns of UGC, and also, of the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) about operations of many foreign education institutions, many of which have doubtful academic credentials. At present, the AICTE Regulations of 2003 cover

only technical and management education, but, do not cover the other areas of higher education. This issue has also been emphasised by various reports from experts and committees, which include the report of the CNR Rao Committee, the 'Study Report' on foreign educational institutions (2005) by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) and the report prepared by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) in 2012. Thus, even though, one appreciates the sudden urgency on the part of UGC to come out with regulations to establish healthy and credible environment for linkages with foreign universities, what worries academics is the fact that UGC has got carried away by blind perception that only 500 hundred-odd universities as identified by Academic Rankings of World Universities (ARWU), Shanghai Rankings Consultancy and Times Higher Education (THE) Higher Education World Reputation Rankings and Thomson Reuters World University Rankings are the best resources. UGC is of the opinion that Indian universities, which have NAAC and NBA endorsements, should establish ties for joint-degree programmes only with these ranked universities.

There are several flaws in such an approach. In my April column that explored our obsession with universities rankings, we deliberated in detail the futility of too much dependence on world rankings. This is a very shaky proposition because the most popular global league tables consider the world's top universities only. First of all, the league tables include roughly 1 per cent to 3 per cent of universities (200-500 universities) out of approximately 17,000 universities in the world. Secondly, it is important to note that these rankings use methodologies that simply cannot produce stable conclusions for more than 700-1,200 universities in the global league tables, and, just around 300 universities in subject area rankings. Moreover, due to the elitist approach applied in the methodologies of the global league tables, more than 16,000 of the world's universities will never obtain any rank in these rankings. There are two important studies that appeared last year on this very aspect; one from Unesco's Global Forum on "Rankings and Accountability in Higher Education: Uses and Misuses" held in Paris, May 16-17, 2011, and the other from the European University Association (EUA) entitled "Global University Rankings and Their Impact", which, while accepting the fact that global classifications and rankings of universities has galvanised the world of higher education, these reports suggested that the present ranking system is predominately tilted towards research indicators and lack transparency. However, let me emphasise that as visualised by the expert

group on assessment of university-based research that “despite their many shortcomings, biases and flaws, rankings enjoy a high level of acceptance among stakeholders and the wider public because of their simplicity and consumer-type information”. Similar views that “university rankings are not going to disappear; indeed, the number of rankings is expected to increase, although, they will become more specialised” have also been expressed by many academics.

It is at this stage that we must also review one major observation from EUA’s studies that talks of a problem of ‘unwanted consequence’, as rankers sometimes call the negative impacts of rankings, is that both society and policymakers are tempted to judge all higher education in the world by the standards that these rankings use to identify the top research universities, rather than, applying one of the core principles of quality assurance — the ‘fitness for purpose’ principle. In other words, not only research universities deserve consideration, but also, universities that are regionally important or those targeted at widening access to higher education with a view to involve a wider number of young people. Thus, one ‘unwanted consequence’ of global league tables is that higher education institutes with other missions than that of being top research universities may have to reclassify their profiles at a time when mission differentiation is at the top of higher education agendas across Europe.

Thus, India, simply cannot get carried away by pegging all our variety of expectations from the Indian education system by linking with top ‘research’ universities only. We have bigger and much broader tasks; enhancing of access, providing relevant and quality education independent of geography by using technology and internet connectivity innovatively in delivery of education, making linkages between knowledge-based research and conversion of outcomes to generate wealth that further requires cultivation of entrepreneurship and also focus on hardcore fundamental research. We need a skilled work force for strengthening our economy. Hence, we would have layers of higher education institutions doing these tasks in a clubbed approach or even as an independent entity. We have to support such pluralistic educational environment and we need to have linkages with several types of foreign universities that either in totality, or partially, address our expectations. UGC regulations completely miss such core aspects while framing the regulations and they need to revisit them.

**Source:** June 13, 2012/[My Digital fc](#)

## **RESOURCE**

### **Crime goes hand in hand with lack of education: Study**

The tilt towards crime and delinquency is strongly linked to the high percentage of illiteracy among Muslims, states a research study on Muslim prisoners conducted by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in 2009.

The report based on interviews with 3,086 Muslim inmates across 15 jails in Maharashtra, reveals that 31% of the undertrials and convicts could not read or write, while another 61% could barely understand the written word having studied only up to Class IV.

Only a small number of inmates from the minority community had completed their higher secondary education, while few had gone to college or completed their postgraduate degree, states the report by Dr Vijay Raghavan and Roshni Nair from the Centre for Criminology and Justice of TISS.

"If we add the percentage of illiterates to those educated up to the primary level. Only 0.6% had completed their graduation while the number of postgraduates was a marginal four," the 117-page survey report states.

The study was compiled after sessions with offenders, prison authorities, kin of the prisoner and representatives of voluntary groups working with inmates.

Poverty and lack of education among Muslims have surfaced as the key reasons for them taking to crime, the report suggested. The highest number of illiterate inmates was found in Mumbai and Thane.

Of the total 614 undertrials and convicts in Thane jail, 176 were had never been to school while 378 had barely attended primary school. Of the 709 inmates in Mumbai jails, 225 were uneducated and another 475 had studied only up to Class IV.

A majority of the inmates interviewed by the team admitted that lack of education was the main reason for their deprivation.

The report suggests that close to 48% of the Muslim prisoners had no vocational training which in turn resulted in unemployment. "Barely 38% of the inmates from 15 jails in Maharashtra have acquired technical skills. However, they built proficiency through on-job training," the report states qualifying the Sachar Committee report findings, which said that only two among every 1,000 Muslims is a technical graduate. The lack of education has manifested in crime for most youngsters, the plight of Moiz, interviewed by the research panel, is a case in point.

"Moiz wanted to study Hindi, however, his family wanted him to master Urdu and become a maulvi. He ran away from home and lived on pavements in New Delhi and used to beg for a living," a state official said.

"Soon, Moiz became embroiled in illegal activities and after his arrest he was sent to an observation home. He came in contact with a group of chain-snatchers and gradually took to crime," he added.

**Source:** June 03, 2012/[Times of India](#)

### **Class size and teacher effects in higher education**

There is a great deal of research on educational production functions in schools, that is what characteristics of schools give rise to good academic performance by young people. A major focus of this literature is class size and there is much to suggest that the benefits from smaller class sizes are not huge. On the other hand, teacher quality is generally seen to be important.

There is much less research on these effects in higher education. This is understandable as there is much heterogeneity there (across institutions, between subjects etc) so it would be harder to measure the relevant inputs and outputs. The paper below uses student evaluations as an outcome and finds, consistent with the research literature on primary and secondary education, that class sizes are not that important but that teacher quality is.

Using student evaluations as a learning measure, we estimate and compare class size and teacher effects for higher education, with emphasis on determining whether a comprehensive class size reduction policy that draws on the hiring of new teachers is likely to improve educational outcomes. We find that teacher effects far outweigh class size effects, and that young teachers and first time teachers perform significantly worse than their peers. Furthermore, we study whether teacher effects are correlated with observables, and find no significant variables beyond being a full time teacher. Overall, these findings suggest that at the higher education level the optimal strategy is to have large classrooms with highly qualified teachers.

**Source:** June 03, 2012/ [Economia](#)

### **The growing industry of Higher Education Big Data**

Higher education isn't seen as data-driven — but is it time that changed to try and combat drop-out rates?

An Austin-based startup, Civitas Learning, has launched with \$4.1 million in funding from Austin Ventures, First Round Capital and Floodgate to develop a digital platform for educational decision-making — through the concept of Big Data.

As colleges and universities stretch their resources to try and accommodate the diverse and ever-increasing pool of students, it can be difficult for them to maximize the potential of the information they possess to work out what's working and what's not.

From the academic schedule to coursework, funding, scholarships, testing and teaching styles, higher education could benefit through Big Data by collating and analyzing this data — and potentially this could help stem rising drop-out numbers across the United States.

The drop-out rate in the U.S. is abysmal. Once this happens, not only is the chance of continuing education stalled, but students are saddled with debt, high rates of unemployment and less opportunity. If anything can help combat this and detect problems before it's too late, then surely it's worth a shot?

That's where Civitas Learning comes in. Working with four-year universities, community colleges and other higher education institutions, the company wants to develop a platform where analyzing demographics, behavioural patterns and academic data concerning the student population is possible.

The idea is this: by working with past and present data, models can be built based on any patterns that crop up, and so perhaps it will be possible to predict which students might be at 'high risk' of dropping out — and so more assistance can be offered before the situation reaches a desperate point.

Not only this, but these models could be used to advise students on degree course selection, classroom management and schedules may be improved, and studies on student culture could be explored.

Charles Thornburgh, Civitas' founder and CEO said: "Right now, academic decisions are made largely on anecdotes and serendipity.

A minor decision like which class to take can have a major bearing on a student's overall academic success. We can identify classes that have been successful for similar students in the past, and we can warn them about taking class combinations that have been toxic in the past."

Real-time data that these kinds of platforms can offer may become useful tools for higher education practitioners. It's already used to recommend

products and services, links of interest and transforming our consumer behaviour, so why not tap into the technology and transform how we view education?

Civitas is also looking at the possibilities of providing educators with smart learning tools, in order to create their own learning-based applications for mobile devices.

**Source:** June 04, 2012/ [ZD Net](#)

### India Today ranks the best colleges of India

It has been 15 years since India Today first launched its Best Colleges Survey and Rankings in 1997. Much has changed in the higher education sector in India since then. The number of colleges has gone up from around 9,500 to over 30,000. The number of students enrolling for a college education has risen from 5.5 million to 16.9 million.

#### *Special: Best Colleges 2012*

What hasn't changed over 15 years is the discourse on higher education. In 1997, India Today wrote about the crisis in higher education. In 2012, as the ongoing fracas over a new system of entrance exams for engineering colleges including the IITs shows, the crisis clouds loom threateningly over the higher education horizon. While the number of colleges and universities has increased with time, the country still does not have enough quality institutions of the calibre of the IITs, or of standards of St. Stephen's College, Delhi; Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi; Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi; Presidency College, Kolkata; Loyola College, Chennai; and St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, to cater to the aspirations of the youth. These colleges and a handful of others have dominated the rankings over the last 15 years. It's not easy to dislodge the toppers but rankings should spur competition between colleges, so that each one of the 30,000 in India lifts its standards and strives to be among the top 100, if not top 10.

For the Government, it is easiest to create the appearance of level-playing field by diluting quality at the top. That is precisely what the aim of the common entrance exam for all Government-financed engineering colleges, overriding the objections of various IITs, is about. In our view, India's colleges should not be forced into a race to the bottom. Instead, they should be competing in a race to the top.

This year, we have expanded the Best Colleges Survey and Rankings for the first time in a decade. The 2012 survey includes five new streams in addition to the traditional arts, science, commerce, engineering, medicine and law. The addition of

these new streams -Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA), Mass Communication and Journalism, Fine Arts and Fashion Technology-is recognition of the diversification in the higher education space. Two decades after liberalisation, there is a growing demand for newer professional degrees which enable the youth to find lucrative jobs.

The growth in demand for the five new streams is directly correlated with a boom in certain sectors of the Indian economy. The BCA, a unique made-in-India degree, trains undergraduate students to become programmers. A job in the IT sector follows easily. Students who graduate with a BBA supplement the growing demand for managers which is not fully met by MBA students alone. Journalism and the mass media are a rapidly growing space. India is one of the few countries in the world where print media continues to grow strongly, along with electronic and digital media. Indian fashion and Indian art have finally found the global spotlight in the last five years. The domestic market for high-end fashion and art will always be limited at India's current levels of per capita income, but access to a global market has created a boom and prospects for the youth.

The diversification of choices in higher education is an opportunity for new institutions to make a mark. In the late 1990s, the National Law School of India University in Bangalore filled a vacant space by offering a law education to students straight out of school. Many of the colleges in our top 25 rankings in law, including NALSAR, Hyderabad, did not exist in 1997 when India Today conducted its first best colleges survey. Relatively new institutions have made their presence felt in the 2012 rankings for BBA and BCA. Two institutions which feature in the top five in both streams, Christ University, Bangalore and SRM University, Chennai, are private sector deemed universities which have done an excellent job of providing top-class infrastructure. Younger institutions tend to be more nimble than their older counterparts and are quick to adapt to demand for new courses. St. Stephen's College, Delhi, does not offer a B.Com degree more than 125 years after its founding.

In the long run, the education system will be driven by institutions in the private sector without Government aid. The Government must perform the job of regulation, to ensure that fly-by-night institutions do not destroy the edifice of quality. Unfortunately, a Bill to create a new independent regulator for higher education, The National Commission for Higher Education and Research, which will replace the discredited University Grants

Commission and All India Council on Technical Education, is still pending passage in Parliament. The Bill's passage is crucial to provide a modicum of stability to the regulatory apparatus. The Government must also evolve a consensus on the Foreign Universities Bill so that India can host some of the world's best universities. At any rate, the Government must let private institutions flourish and compete. The India Today rankings 15 years on, in 2027, will hopefully reflect that endeavour.

**Source:** June 04, 2012/ [India Today](#)

## 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](mailto: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.



### **Disclaimer:**

**Data included in this newsletter is only for educational purpose and wider dissemination. All liabilities and rights belong to respective writers & authors.**



### **Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation**

**Apeejay Stya House**  
**14 Commercial Complex, Masjid Moth, Greater Kailash, Part - II**  
**New Delhi 110048**

**Tel. No. (91 – 11) 29228296 / 97 / 98**  
**Fax No. (91 – 11) 29223326**

**Email: [aserf@apeejay.edu](mailto:aserf@apeejay.edu)**  
**Website: <http://aserf.org.in>**

