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**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

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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](#)



**ASPECT****Let's fortify our universities now**

*By thoroughly revamping our existing universities, we can meet the human development goals that the nation requires.*

The expansion of the higher education base in the country has witnessed a big surge numerically since 2005. As of now, there are 650 universities and 33,000 colleges in the country. Massive budgetary allocation followed by the direct intervention by the Prime Minister triggered this surge in numbers. Apparently it is perceived that sustaining the accelerated growth of Gross Domestic Productivity (GDP) since the late 1990s depends on the national General Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 17-22 age groups. The current National GER is perhaps the lowest among the nations. The Prime Minister himself announced the establishment of several hundred new institutions including 40 or more Central Universities, 350 colleges and a large number of IITs, NITs, IITs, and IIITs besides approving a large number of private institutions through the government and its agencies.

All these are being done with the assumptions that GER is an essential element for GDP growth and that there are not enough institutions to ensure higher GER comparable to the advanced countries.

Not much effort in this regard is visible from the State governments except for a few States establishing their own State institutions, both public and private, as part of their routine. It is likely that this trend will be continued during the 12th Plan which is on.

Unfortunately, both the assumptions are based on wrong premises. First, there is no shortage of universities and colleges in the country to improve the GER. The government(s) apparently is not aware of this or has ignored this aspect. There are far more universities and colleges than needed to support even 50 per cent or more of GER. For a population of about 1.2 billion, there are 33,650 institutions accounting one for every 35,000 individuals.

In a country such as Germany, with a population of 82 million, there are only 350 institutions. Japan with a population of 127 million has 627 universities and colleges. Even in a large country like USA with a population of 276 million, there are only 2,466 institutions as compared to 33,650 in India. The population served by an institution in Germany, Japan, UK, and USA are 2,34,285, 2,02,551, 3,79,746, and 11,19,220, respectively, whereas in India there is one institution for every

34,375 citizens as mentioned earlier, yet catering only to 12 per cent of the age group as against 50-70 per cent or more in the countries mentioned. Even if one discounts 50 per cent of the existing institutions as not viable for various reasons, the rest will still be far more than needed to achieve the desired GER.

The second flaw lies in our belief that high GER is an essential element for economic growth. Most of the rich countries had not only a low GER, but also low literacy when they advanced economically. Even in the case of India and China, their GER was less than 10 per cent when the economy picked up and sustained the 8-10 per cent of GDP growth since the 1990s. During the same period the economic growth of developed countries like, USA, Japan, Germany and UK was only 3-4 per cent, in spite of their very high GER. It looks as though Growth in GDP fuelled the growth of GER and not vice-versa.

Understandably, relative affluence always promotes formal learning and the poor populations cannot possibly afford higher education. The idea that GER as a catalyst for GDP growth was ingratiated recently while promoting international trade in higher education by a set of 'provider' countries and endorsed by international agencies like the UNESCO and the World Bank. By then the trade in services became part of the WTO mandate.

**THE PRESENT SCENARIO**

At no point in time, since Independence, there was a dearth of institutions for providing access to tertiary education but their growth was regulated mostly by the national policy and by the job market. Even now thousands of 'seats' go vacant for want of takers every year. In the past, the employment exchanges (job market) provided the feedback unobtrusively and regulated the access though there were enough institutions. No serious attempt has been made to estimate the number and types of institutions needed for the country at any time. The local politicians would promise that a college or a university will be 'brought' to the constituency and it will be established in due course and not based on the need. However, during the last decade or so nearly 50 per cent of 33,500 institutions were established and/or approved by the government(s) leading to the current glut. When privatisation was ushered in, greed for pelf all around resulted in the sudden growth.

**Inadequate infrastructure**

Another reason for the institutional abundance is that Indian universities and colleges are designed and run with a sub-viable strength of about 500-1,000 students. This is in contrast to many thousands seen in other countries. There may be

some exceptions but the bulk of our institutions are small and not diversified. All the existing institutions are already globalised on the academic side in terms of qualification framework, curriculum and their diversity, but the other factors like good infrastructure, teaching and training facilities, adequacy of qualified faculty and so on, remain in the pre-Independence status. Many colleges, mostly the government ones in the rural parts, are nothing more than run-down barracks with nothing to attract the present-day students.

### *Resource utilisation*

Additional resources now available should be used to build the basic infrastructure rather than establishing new institutions. One should not overlook that our GDP in absolute terms is much small and has to cater to large population. It may not be possible to expand and sustain the quality for another 12-14 million students to double the GER through public funds alone. Outsourcing is needed but importing education in one or other forms may not be an answer. We have to induct private participation which seems to be happening now. The tangible reform in this sector is to learn to treat both private and public institutions equally and enable them to function on a level-playing ground. As perceived by many, most of the maladies of private education are correctable with enabling directives rather than punitive actions and strangulating regulations.

Unfilled 'seats' every year even in the professional subjects are the results of the economic constraints of the takers. Enabling meritorious but economically/socially backward students with adequate number of fellowships and loans is the only effective way of improving GER. We should not overlook the fact that in spite of all recent GDP growth and aspiration to become the second largest economic power in Asia, the per capita income is only one seventieth (1/70) the American averages which will mirror naturally on the affordability of higher education to the average Indian. ([www.ashnet.org/library](http://www.ashnet.org/library)).

As far as equity and quality are concerned, providing real-time autonomy to the universities and colleges through the abolition of the affiliation system and the dissolution of national regulating bodies like UGC, AICTE as suggested by the National Knowledge Commission, need to be considered. Any unit that had outlived its purpose needs to be dispensed like what they did in the UK in the case of their UGC in the past and, in Australia in the case of the University Quality Assurance (AUQA) body recently. In short, we don't need more institutions.

Revamping the existing ones with attractive and modern infrastructure, state-of-the-art classrooms and other adjunct facilities and enabling students with financial aids are the needs, and not more clones of the existing ones to meet human development goals.

Renovations should be real time if not of the same magnitude of what we see in the metropolitan Air ports, National highways and other ICT-related corporate outfits. Revamped institutions are needed to meet human development goals.

**Source:** 06 August, 2012/[The Hindu](http://TheHindu)

## NEWS

### **Planning Commission says 'NO' to New Universities in 12th Five Year Plan**

The Planning Commission has decided not to set up any new college and university in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan period leaving aside the exceptional circumstances. The commission has advised for consolidation rather expansion in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan period as there is already a huge liability expansion in the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan period. With that decision, ministry's plans to set-up a central university in Uttar Pradesh, and in Maharashtra (Amravati), an IIT in Palakkad and another centrally-funded technical institute in Kerala have come to a halt.

As per the senior official in the planning commission, the 11th Plan had planned for large scale expansion of the higher education sector-30 central universities, 8 IITs, 8 IIMs, 10 National institutes of Technology, 20 Indian Institutes of Information Technology, 3 Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research, 74 degree colleges in backward areas. The ministry needs to think through its proposals for setting up new central institutions. There is a serious resource crunch; the fact is that there are no funds for new institutions.

The ministry is now trying to come out with the criteria that would define the so called exceptional circumstances. Once it does so, it will re-submit the proposals. For the time being, the exceptional circumstances criterion appears to be a convenient way of putting proposals on the back burner. However, unwritten factors like pressure, or political contingency would clearly be explained away as exceptional circumstances.

**Source:** 01 August, 2012/

### **Consultative Committee Meeting of Ministry of HRD Held: UGC Proposes Setting up of Four Regional Centres of Educational Management**

The meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Human Resource Development was held here last evening on the

subject, "Proposed National Mission on Teachers and Teaching" . At the outset a presentation was made in this regard in which it was elaborated that UGC has made two specific proposals with regard to teacher training. The first one is regarding Setting up of Regional Centres of Educational Management in the Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Bangalore and in the National University of Educational Planning and Administration. The second one is regarding Establishment of Centres of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education in leading national level institutions, namely Indian Institute of Science, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research etc. for development of specialized cadre of academy of teaching and teacher educators.

In the presentation it was also highlighted that Technology Enabled Learning can also play an important role in enhancing the capacity of teachers. Presently, under the National Mission on Education through ICT, up to March, 2012, Virtual Private Network and internet connections have been provided to 392 universities and 18189 colleges/polytechnics across the country. A number of projects have been sanctioned under the NMEICT scheme to various institutions of the country. For UG course, Consortium of Educational Communication (CEC) has been tasked for e-content generation.

The presentation pointed out that as regards training of teachers for polytechnics, the four National Institutes of Technical Teachers' Training & Research (NITTTRs) located as Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai and Kolkata have been directed to organize 'Summer Schools' during the forthcoming summer for training 1,000 technical teachers of polytechnics by each NITTTR. They have further been advised to take action in this regard after consultation with the concerned State Governments so that they may nominate their participants in the programme.

Addressing the meeting Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri Kapil Sibal said that the final contours of the proposed National Mission and its operational features are under discussion. The Mission, however, would address, on the one hand, current and urgent issues such as supply of qualified teachers, attracting talent into teaching profession and raising the quality of teaching in schools and colleges. On the other, it is also envisaged that the Teacher Mission would pursue the long term goal of building a strong professional cadre of teachers by setting performance standards and creating top class institutional facilities for

innovative teaching and professional development of teachers.

Speaking on the occasion, Members of Parliament underlined the requirement of a Mission on Teachers, as the shortage of teachers is very marked in the country. Members of Parliament also expressed concern regarding inadequate quality of education in the country. Some MPs stated the need for greater use of ICT in imparting teacher education. MPs also underlined the need for adequate infrastructure to be in place in teacher training institution and also that while releasing funds, UGC could address manpower requirements ahead of infrastructure requirements.

Also present in the meeting were: Dr. D. Purandeswari, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Secretary Department of School Education Smt. Anshu Vaish, and Secretary Department of Higher Education, Shri Ashok Thakur besides other senior officers. The Members of Parliament who attended the meeting include: Shri Jose K. Mani, Shri Jagda Nand Singh, Shri Ganeshrao Nagorao Dudhgaonkar, Shri Prem Das Rai, Smt. Rama Devi, Dr. Ram Prakash, Shri Ishwar Singh, Smt. Vasanthi Stanley, Shri Mohammed Shafi, Shri G.N. Ratanpuri, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and Shri Avinash Pande.

**Source:** 01 August, 2012/[PIB](#)

### **US teachers in India to study culture**

A group of 10 school educators from the United States is currently visiting Kolkata as part of a month-long program to learn about Indian life, society, the education systems and resources available.

The participants, drawn from various educational institutions across the US, are traveling to Kolkata under the aegis of "The India Summer Teacher Program." The program will be hosted and administered by the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF).

The India Summer Teacher Program is a short-term, exchange opportunity for US high school teachers of English, Mathematics and Science to collaborate and teach with an Indian counterpart. The program is fully funded by the Bureau of Educational Affairs (ECA), US Department of State and administered by American Councils and the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF). Grantees are assigned to schools where the medium of instruction is English. They pair with an Indian counterpart to create and implement curriculum projects and team-teach in their subject area. The program provides a professional development opportunity for US and Indian educators to work

together on issues of mutual interest to their communities, schools and students.

The host institutions in Kolkata include Loreto Day (Sealdah), St. James School, St. Johns Diocesan School, Ballygunge Shiksha Sadan, Shri Shikshayatan and A.K. Ghosh Memorial School.

USIEF organizes programs for groups of U.S. teachers as part of its mission to promote mutual understanding between the citizens of the U.S. and India through educational exchange. The purpose of each program is to give the U.S. educators an exposure to different aspects of Indian society including cultural heritage, religion and economic development.

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

### **17 technical institutions in Haryana running courses without AICTE approval**

17 [technical institutions](#) in [Haryana](#) have been found conducting programmes without approval of [AICTE](#), a statutory body established for proper planning and co-ordinated development of technical education.

The Directorate of Technical Education, Haryana, has issued a revised list of technical institutions conducting technical programmes without approval of [All India Council for Technical Education](#), an official release said here today.

The department cautioned and advised the students, their parents and general public not to take admission in the unapproved or [bogus institutions](#), as some [bogus universities](#), colleges and institutions were duping the students by charging hefty fees and issuing bogus degrees or certificates, it said.

It said students seeking admission in any of the technical institutions must first check the status of approval of the institutions on the websites [www.aicte-india.org](#) and [www.techeduhry.nic.in](#).

As per the revised list issued on July 17, 2012, as many as 17 institutions were conducting technical programmes without AICTE's approval.

These included Algol School of Management and Technology, Gurgaon, Ansal Institute of Technology, Sector-55, Gurgaon, College of Hospitality and Tourism, and ICAII Institute of Management and Technology, Mohali Campus, Phase-7, among others, according to the release.

**Source:** 02 August, 2012/[Economic Times](#)

### **UGC proposes regional centres for education management**

The University Grants Commission has proposed regional centres of education management in prestigious IIMs to strengthen and improve

teachers' education and develop specialised cadre of academy of teaching and teacher educators.

It has suggested the regional centres of education management in IIMs at Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Bangalore and National University of Educational Planning and Administration, the Consultative Committee of Parliament on HRD was informed on Tuesday.

To develop specialised cadre of academy of teachers, the panel was also informed that UGC has proposed a centre of excellence in science and mathematics in centres such as Indian Institute of Science and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research.

The meeting took stock of the proposed National Mission on Teachers and Teaching with HRD Minister Kapil Sibal stating the final contour of the proposed national mission and its operational features was under discussion.

MPs underlined that the mission was necessary as the shortage of teachers is "very marked in the country", said a HRD Ministry statement on Wednesday.

Towards this end, the Ministry has set up a committee of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) on national mission on teachers and teaching under the chairmanship of Minister of State for HRD D Purandeswari.

The committee would recommend to CABE about formulation of a suitable framework with reference to enhancing availability of teachers to meet the demands of the education systems and ensuring that all existing set of teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities.

**Source:** 02 August, 2012/PTI/[Times of India](#)

### **Open book system evokes mixed reactions**

Vineet Joshi, chairman of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has announced plans to introduce the open book examination system in class 10 and 12 from the coming academic year. While many academicians and parents consider this a welcome move, others look upon it with apprehensions.

The new system which will be called Pre Announced Test (PAT) is meant to test the analytical skills of students rather than merely rote learning skills. This is viewed with mixed reactions by schools and parents.

M Poovanam, the principal of Suguna PIP CBSE School says that its effectiveness may be doubtful as students will have to understand the concepts thoroughly. "How much this system will help students remains to be seen," he says.

Similarly, there are others too who express doubts stating various reasons. R Manimohan, the chairman of Students Welfare Association of Parents (SWAP) doubts whether the new system will be beneficial to students. "Will it be possible for schools to have elaborate libraries for students to do reference work?," he asks. He wonders if this will be similar to research based learning.

Some teachers say the new system will revolutionise the education sector. "Students will no longer depend on rote learning. They will have to develop analytical skills," points out Geetha Laxman, the principal of [the National Model CBSE School](#). At the same time, she says that students will have to work harder. This will not be as easy for students as many feel it is, she says. "They will not only have to be familiar but thorough with the topics to finish the examinations in time," she says.

Some educationalists say that this system should be adopted by the state board. R Vishalakshi, president of Private School Associations says that this could eliminate rote learning. "The one complaint raised against the Indian education system is that we rely on rote learning. This will change with the new system," she says. She says that for this to be a success, they need highly qualified teachers. "If there are 100 books suggested, the teacher should have read them all. In the present situation there are those who may not even know the titles of the books," she says.

The new examination system should be introduced gradually, says Manimohan. "Introducing this in class 10 and 12 may cause panic among students. It may be more advisable to introduce it to them earlier," he says.

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

### **Indian state has resources needed to make school edn more inclusive'**

Chennai, Aug 3 (PTI) The Indian state has the resources needed to make school education more inclusive, noted educationist Anil Sadgopal said here today. "Indian state has the necessary resources to provide facilities in all schools for an education that is inclusive across the country," he said, while delivering a lecture organised by Kuruvila Jacob Initiative for Promoting Excellence in School Education. It should be employed in all schools across the length and breadth of the country, he said. "We should use available Information Technology expertise to bridge the gap that exists between the mainstream and the differently-abled," he said. Noting that there is always a financial crunch for education in the country, since the time of Lord Maucalay, he said "the allocation for education in each state only

shows the political will of that state." "The problem in our state is that flawed policies are being implemented efficiently," he said.

**Source:** 03 August, 2012/[ibnlive](#)

### **Ragging: Higher education department warns of cracking a whip**

With the start of the new academic session, the higher education department has issued fresh guidelines to curb ragging in educational institutions. The department has made it clear that strict actions would be taken if anyone found guilty.

Issuing fresh guidelines on its official website, the department says ragging, in all forms, is completely banned in the educational institutions including its departments, constituent units, all its premises whether located within the campus or outside and in all means of transportation of students.

Regarding the punishment the department stated that depending upon the nature and gravity of the offence, the guilty students would attract rustication from institution for a period ranging from 1 to 3 years, suspension from attending classes, withholding or withdrawing scholarships, forfeiting campus placement opportunities.

Besides, the guilty students of ragging can be debarred from appearing in any test or withholding the results. In the sever cases, expulsion from institutions and consequent debarring from admission to any other institution for a specified period.

The authorities can impose monetary punishment where a student has to pay Rs 25,000.

In the case of persons committing or abetting the crime of ragging are not identified, the authorities can resort to collective punishment. In case of every single incident of ragging, an FIR will be filed with the local police station.

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

### **Sibal won't push foreign edu Bill**

In a move that could put the Foreign Education Providers Bill on the back-burner, Kapil Sibal-led HRD Ministry has decided not to take forward the controversial Bill in the monsoon session.

Weary of a possible run-in with the Opposition over the Bill and the strong likelihood of this affecting the prospect of the other pending Bills, the HRD Ministry has chosen to drop this legislation and instead push forward five other Bills, three of which are critical to Sibal's reform agenda for higher education, in the monsoon session of Parliament.

The Foreign Education Providers Bill, which has for years now held out the promise of ushering in Ivy League institutes in India, dates back to UPA I and

was stalled even during Arjun Singh's tenure after facing stiff opposition from the Left parties. Sibal, however, was quick to revive it when he took over in May 2009. Sibal held meetings with presidents and heads of top league varsities abroad to convince them to set up centres in India. Three years later, he is acutely aware that it is unlikely for the Bill to sail through Parliament.

This perhaps explains why the HRD Ministry has already got the University Grants Commission to devise ways to allow collaborations with foreign educational institutes through non-legislative routes.

The Ministry is currently focusing on legislations aiming at reforming the higher education sector to check malpractices like capitation in higher educational institutes, bring in quality through accreditation and set up a grievance redressal mechanism through tribunals. These Bills are: the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2010; the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010; and the Educational Tribunals Bill. Among these, the last two Bills have been passed by the Lok Sabha but are yet to be considered by the Rajya Sabha.

To ensure that this time his Bills sail through, Sibal over the last few days has met leaders from different parties for collective support for his legislation and to address the possible areas of concern.

The minister is learnt to have held talks with BJP leaders Sushma Swaraj and Arun Jaitley among others, and with MPs from the BJD, the Trinamool Congress, the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samajwadi Party and the Left parties ahead of the monsoon session.

After consultations with stakeholders and MPs, Sibal had managed to get five of his 14 pending Bills through, in the last session. By dropping the Foreign Universities Bill, the minister is perhaps only paving way for the remaining nine legislations.

**Source:** 04 August, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

### Strategic Partnership

A range of opportunities for Indian students applying to Australian Universities were showcased in the Capital on August 1. Focussing on building a strategic partnership between India and Australia through education, Peter Varghese, Australian High Commissioner, said, "We have made a long-term investment of 12.5 billion dollars in the universities sector. We would like to bring in more collaborative education and collaborate on building vocational

skills. India has set a target of skilling 500 million people and we want to help it achieve that."

Students going to Australia can not just focus on getting quality education but can also hope to be safe and enjoy their university life. Tom Calden, trade commissioner, Australian Trade Commission, said, "There has been more awareness in the community regarding international students and their safety. International students in Australia are briefed about the places they should not visit after dark by the college. Even the police have been briefed and utmost care is taken to make students feel safe." The fair was organised by the Association of Australian Education Representatives in India and supported by The Australian Trade Commission and Australian Education International.

**Source:** 06 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

### HRD ministry not to push for Foreign Educational Institutions Bill in the Monsoon Session of Parliament

The human resource development ministry has decided not to push the legislation allowing foreign education institutions to set up base in India in the [Monsoon Session](#) of Parliament. Instead, the ministry is focusing on the troika of [higher education](#) reform bills--prevention of malpractices, setting up education tribunals and mandatory accreditation for institutions—which form the core of Kapil Sibal's higher education reform agenda.

The human resource development minister Kapil Sibal's decision to put the [Foreign Educational Institutions Bill](#) on the back burner is in line with the strategy adopted in the Budget session—move ahead with the less contentious bills to create a momentum. In the past, Sibal has pushed the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill as central to increasing opportunities and improving quality of the higher education sector. However, the minister is well aware that a bill as contentious as one, which allows foreign education institutions to set up campuses in India, could well derail his entire legislative agenda. There are seven Bills that are pending in Parliament. The ministry proposes to introduce two more-- the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Bill and the Central Board of Secondary Education—in the Monsoon Session.

After nearly two years of legislative setbacks, Sibal managed to break the logjam in the Budget session of [parliament](#) and ensured passage of six Bills. While most of these Bills were non-controversial amendments, it did include the contentious Copyright Amendment Bill. Sibal is keen not to upset the hard won equilibrium.

The Foreign Educational Institutions Bill predates Sibal's tenure in Shastri Bhavan. It was first cleared by Cabinet in 2008 during the late Arjun Singh's tenure in the UPA I government. The proposed legislation could not be introduced given the opposition by the Left, which was then supporting the UPA I government. Following his appointment as human resource development minister, Sibal went ahead with the legislation reaching out to stakeholders, and meeting with top administrators of top ranking universities in the US and UK.

But it is not just the Left or the BJP that has issues with the Bill. Even political parties that are supporting the UPA, such as the [Samajwadi Party](#) and RJD, are uncomfortable with the idea of allowing foreign education institutions to set up campuses in India. Given that the legislation is viewed as permitting foreign direct investment in higher education, it is unlikely that allies like Trinamool and DMK will lend their support to such legislation. Clearly aware that the legislative route was difficult, the government gave the University Grants Commission the go ahead through the executive route. The University Grants Commission has already issued guidelines to regulate collaborations between Indian and foreign institutions.

The focus is on the three legislations that form the bedrock of Sibal's higher education reforms-- Higher Educational Institutions Bill (earlier known as the Prohibition of Unfair Practices Bill), Educational Tribunal Bill and [the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill](#).

These legislations form a higher education reform triad, and were conceived of as linked legislations. However, with the Rajya Sabha not passing the educational tribunal bill, the remaining two legislations could not be taken up. The ministry has decided to delink these legislations. This will mean removing cross-references.

Changes have been made to the bills on the basis of inputs from MPs during the discussions Sibal held with them to garner support. Some of the changes are on the basis of recommendations of the Standing Committee. A clear measure of Sibal's keenness to push through his pending Bills is evident from the fact that many these changes are clearly trivial or routine, and as such make no material difference to the legislation. Similarly other efforts have also been made to reach out to MPs. The minister has recently approved increasing the MP's quota in Kendriya Vidyalayas from two seats to six. Sibal had earned the displeasure of

MPs when he abolished the quota early on in his tenure.

Sibal has also been meeting with leaders of the opposition, allies and UPA supporters to ensure safe passage for his Bills. These meetings have been with individual leaders as well as small groups of MPs who are seen as vocal on education related issues. Sources close to the developments said that the minister and officials sought to address each of the issues, through [careful](#) reading and threadbare discussion on the bills, in an effort to allay apprehensions of the political parties. Legislations to curb malpractices and mandatory accreditation are likely to be passed without much trouble. The minister is expected to hold additional meetings with allies and party members on the tribunal bill, which had been opposed by Congress members in the Rajya Sabha.

**Source:** 08 August, 2012/Economic Times

### India ranks No. 2 for education queries

India has raced to the number 2 spot globally when it comes to absolute volume of search queries related to education on Google search. In 2008, India was ranked 8th and is now only behind the US.

The findings are part of a study titled "students on the web" compiled by Google India. The study was compiled by combining Google search query patterns and an offline research conducted by TNS Australia on behalf of Google India.

Over half of the Indian internet populations is in the age bracket of 18-35. The study revealed that over 60% Indian students, who have access to Internet, use it as their first source to research for information related to educational courses and institutes.

Education related queries on Google in India are growing at over 46% year on year - highlighting the strong demand for information on institutes and courses that are available in the country. Out of all education related search queries on Google, over 40% of queries were for [higher education](#) courses and institutes. Search queries coming from mobile phones have also grown considerably showing a growth of over 135% year-on-year and amounting to over 22% of all education related search queries.

IT/vocational (44%) courses were the most searched courses, followed by a strong demand for engineering courses (40%) and institutes, followed by post graduate courses with MBA (16%) being the most searched.

Rajan Anandan, VP and managing director, Google India said, With over 60 million Internet user population in India being in age group of 18-35,

educational related search queries are exploding on Google. Our core objective behind compiling this study was to understand the impact Internet is having on this young population with regard to education related decision making by the students. With more and more users getting online everyday, Internet today is the biggest catchment area for youth and we hope this study will help advertisers realize the potential of the digital medium."

**Source:** 08 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

### Setting up of Educational Institutions

Education, being in the Concurrent List, creation of new institutions is the responsibility both of Central and State Governments. Central Government is creating new institutions, wherever required, depending on resources. Several programmes and schemes initiated by the Government have led to creation of fresh intake capacity in higher education.

These include Scheme of Model Degree Colleges in 374 identified Educationally Backward Districts, 16 new Central Universities, 08 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), 07 Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), 10 National Institute of Technology (NITs) etc.

Consequent to passing of the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006, the Central Government has increased the intake capacity in all Central Educational Institutions (CEI) to an extent of 54%.

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education has increased from 12.4% in 2007-08 to 15% in 2009-10. The Government aims to achieve a GER of 30% in higher education by 2020.

**Source:** 08 August, 2012/PIB

### Indian students set to benefit from Harvard varsity's free online course

As part of a new collaboration between Harvard University and MIT called EdX, a new introductory course, Quantitative Methods in Clinical and Public Health Research, will be offered online by the Harvard School of Public Health to students in India and around the world beginning in October 2012.

The course is an online adaptation of material from the Harvard School of Public Health's classes in epidemiology and biostatistics and will be taught by two well-known faculty members of the School of Public Health.

Swati Piramal, Vice-Chairman, Piramal Enterprises, an alumna of the School of Public Health, said such a course would be a great opportunity for physicians in India.

Such courses offered by the new Harvard-MIT EdX initiative will be available to anyone in the world with an Internet connection, and in general, there will not be an admissions process, she added.

Going beyond the standard model of online education that relies on watching video content, this course would offer students an interactive experience.

"The lack of research curriculum in our medical training is a major shortcoming of India science. The country has over 9 lakh doctors but few are trained to be physician scientists. This is a glaring gap in our country," she said.

Swati Piramal, who is a member of the Board of Dean's Advisors at the Harvard School of Public Health and a member of the Board of Overseers for Harvard University added, "Providing medical doctors an introduction to the science of quantitative methods can be the first step to get more of our physicians to become top professionals in clinical research and become investigators for clinical trials."

Though, clearly, more than a single course is needed to create highly qualified clinical investigators, an online course can be an initial step toward raising the standards of medical research, she said

**Source:** 10 August, 2012/[The Hindu Business Line](#)

### Indians to get education funding from India

Malaysian In-dians pursuing tertiary education in universities, colleges and polytechnics here can apply for financial assistance from the Indian Scholarship & Trust Fund (ISTF), managed by the Indian High Commission.

A statement said the financial assistance was supplementary and would not cover the full cost of studies.

The application form can be downloaded from [www.indianhighcommission.com.my/istf.php](http://www.indianhighcommission.com.my/istf.php) or obtained from the High Commission office (Education section). The last date for submissions of the application forms by hand or post is Sept 3.

Shortlisted first-time applicants called for an interview will be eligible to receive the financial assistance.

The statement said previous recipients of ISTF, who are still pursuing their courses, could re-apply for the assistance by submitting the form together with their latest mark sheets and proof of study. They are exempted from the interview process.

**Source:** 11 August, 2012/[The Star](#)

### Indian students give first priority to higher education

Higher education is still the top priority for Indian students. A study, conducted by Google India, highlights that the country ranks second in terms of the number of education-related searches on Google, just after the US with 40% searches related to higher education. "40% students have a priority in finding out more about a course, a college and higher education in general.

The trend that we have noticed is that 44% of the searches are on IT and vocational courses, 40% queries are related to finding about more about the Bachelor's degree, preferably engineering, which is followed by medicine and 16% queries related to finding out about Master's programmes with MBA topping the list," says Rajan Anandan, vice-president and managing director of Google India.

The 'Students on the Web' report, compiled by combining Google search query patterns and offline research conducted among 2,229 respondents in the age group of 18-35 years in seven metro cities by TNS Australia, found that online sources affect the final educational decisions taken by five out of six students.

According to the report, placements are the top priority for students in selecting a college to study in, which is followed by faculty and course content.

"Through the study, we found that students take a minimum of six months to decide on the course and college while they are in class XII. The search queries coming from mobile phones have also grown considerably, showing a growth of over 135% year-on-year and amounting to over 22% of all education related search queries," says Anandan.

Also, over 66% said that they use their mobile phones to access internet in India.

Though not many colleges have worked on developing videos that can attract students, 46% of students want to watch videos when it comes to doing their research. The report further pointed out that students, in terms of type of video content, also wanted to watch videos on career options/placements (46%), videos of the faculty (44%), videos of existing students and alumni (29%) and videos of classroom sessions (27%) to help them take more informed decisions.

**Source:** 13 August, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

### Govt. to reach out to oppn over key education reform bills

The Government would reach out to different political parties on Thursday to seek the passage of

three key higher education reform bills in the current session of Parliament.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pawar Kumar Bansal said talks will be held with the parties on the three important legislations on that day.

He did not name the parties, but they may include the BJP and the Left parties, as they have earlier been critical of some of the initiatives of HRD Minister Kapil Sibal.

The measures which form the bedrock of Sibal's higher education reforms are-- Higher Education and Research Bill, Educational Tribunal Bill and the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill.

Government's reaching out to the political parties is significant as Sibal had managed to break the logjam in the Budget session after nearly two years of legislative setbacks. The Budget session had ensured passage of six Bills and Sibal wants to keep up the pace in this session too.

The HRD Ministry has decided not to push the legislation allowing foreign education institutions to set up base in India in the current Session of Parliament.

Reports had it that Sibal's decision to put the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill on the back burner is in line with the strategy adopted in the Budget session of moving ahead with the less contentious bills to create a momentum.

This was done as the minister is well aware that a bill as contentious as the one, which allows foreign education institutions to set up campuses in India, could well derail his entire legislative agenda.

There are seven Bills that are pending in Parliament. The ministry proposes to introduce two more -- the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Bill and the Central Board of Secondary Education—in the current Session.

**Source:** 13 August, 2012/ [Business Standard](#)

### Bill will not curtail powers of BCI: Kapil Sibal

Dismissing concerns of the apex lawyers' body, Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal on Monday said that he was not curtailing the powers of Bar Council of India (BCI) over legal education by introducing the Higher Education and Research (HER) Bill.

The Human Resource Development Minister said he was not touching the powers of the BCI and the right to give degrees to practicing lawyers will remain with it.

Sibal was speaking at a function here organised by the BCI to felicitate him and Union Minister of Law and Justice Salman Khurshid.

"Education in law does not deal only with practicing as a lawyer. How can I do anything with the rights of Bar as I am also a member of the Bar. The BCI's work is to prepare young lawyers who want to practice LLB in accordance with the law and nobody is here to touch that.

"Whatever rights and obligations you have under the Advocates Act and the Accountants Act related to practicing lawyers will remain with you and nobody is going to touch them," he said.

The bill has been facing strong opposition from the apex lawyers' body which has alleged that it is aimed at usurping the BCI's control over legal education.

Sibal that there are other steps needed to be taken in the legal field, adding that several ministers in the government are from legal fraternity and this is a "great opportunity" to do something for the profession.

"But nobody comes to us with their demands. There are so many issues including, housing and insurance facility, for lawyers but nobody is ready to change here," he said.

Khurshid, speaking at the programme, said that it was a mistaken view of lawyers that Sibal wanted to cause any harm to them and he was just testing them and their response to the bill.

Khurshid said there was no question of compromising with the powers of the advocates.

"A clear distinction had been made between practicing degree and the powers given to the BCI under the Advocates Act," he said.

Khurshid also said that now the lawyers should move ahead of agitation as change is required in the judicial system and it should be welcomed.

Earlier, BCI Chairman Manan Kumar Mishra claimed that powers of advocates were being curtailed .

Apart from the HER Bill, the BCI is also opposed to the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010, the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and operations) Bill, 2010 and the National Law School Bills, 2011.

The apex lawyers' body is opposing the proposed bills on the ground that entry of foreign institutions would become easier and several of its functions under the Advocates Act, 1961 are likely to be taken away by the government.

**Source:** 13 August, 2012/[DNA India](#)

### **MHRD panel picks 'tainted' professor as IIT Kharagpur's director**

The Human Resource Development Ministry has chosen PP Chakrabarti as its first choice for IIT

Kharagpur director post despite the fact that the CBI had recommended penalty against him in the coalnet scam and even the CAG had pointed out gross violations.

The search-cum-selection committee is headed by HRD minister Kapil Sibal and consists of chairpersons of UGC; AICTE; Shiv Nadar, chairperson of IIT Kharagpur, and Kris Gopalakrishnan of Infosys as members.

As per the sources, choosing Chakrabarti's name is irrelevant as the ministry's vigilance department would not give its clearance to him in the light of CBI's recommendation. Without vigilance clearance his name cannot go to the President for the approval.

Earlier, the appointment of AK Bhowmick, another IIT Kharagpur professor indicted by the CBI in the coalnet scam, as director of IIT Patna without vigilance clearance has caused embarrassment to the ministry.

**Source:** 14 August, 2012/[India Education News](#)

### **A single door entry for MBA**

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) initiated a new selection procedure for entry into MBA courses, the Common Management Admission Test (CMAT), in 2011. The first CMAT was held over nine days in 61 cities across the country from February 20 to 28, 2012. More than 40,000 students wrote the first test.

CMAT will substitute the state-level entrance tests in seven states and the respective governments have already accepted CMAT for MBA admissions. These states are:

- Uttar Pradesh (UPSEE)
- Kerala
- Maharashtra (M-CET)
- Rajasthan
- Chhattisgarh (CSVU)
- Nagaland (Nagaland University)
- Goa

AICTE announced that the new test will be conducted twice a year and the second one this year will be conducted from September 27 to October 1. Online registration is on till September 2. The test will be conducted in 64 cities.

A list of b-schools that will use CMAT is available on the website:[www.aicte-cmat.in](#). Since AICTE is responsible for approving b-schools, CMAT will be used by a large number of institutes. It should be one of the tests that a large number of MBA aspirants will take.

*About the test*

CMAT is a computer-based test like the Indian Institutes of Management's Common Admission Test and Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies' Management Aptitude Test (NMAT).

*The test will have four sections:*

- Logical reasoning
- Verbal ability/language comprehension
- Numerical ability + data interpretation
- General awareness

Each section will have 25 questions. There will be no break during the 180-minute test. So, students can move back and forth between the sections, unlike CAT and NMAT this year.

This also means that the sections will not be timed individually, and the onus is on the students to manage timing between the sections, while ensuring that they show their competency in all the sections. While the right answer will get four marks, there is negative marking of 1 mark for every wrong answer.

A trial test will be available on the CMAT website from August 10 onwards for students to get a flavour of this test.

Going by the feedback received from the test takers of the last test held in February 2012, the difficulty level of the exam was more or less consistent across slots during the nine-day test window.

Since CMAT will also be conducted again in February 2013, students should decide whether they wish to write it now or later. Quite a few students may write CMAT as a practice test as a part of their preparation for CAT and other management entrance Exams like NMAT, SNAP, IIFT etc.

**Source:** 15 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

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

#### **We see huge growth in alternative education**

Timothy B. Loomer - President & CEO, Campus Management, told InformationWeek about the challenges and trends in the US Higher Education sector, and how colleges are using IT solutions like CRM, ERP, cloud services, and BI for competitive advantage. By [Brian Pereira](#), InformationWeek, August 02, 2012

With 15.5 million students enrolled in higher education, India has the third largest student enrolment in the world, behind only the US and China. Annual enrolment in higher education has grown steadily at 6.3 percent over the last decade; the GER (Gross Enrollment Ratio) is 12.4 percent,

compared to the global average of 26 percent. India also has 550 universities and around 31,000 colleges.

The Indian government has set a target of achieving a GER of 30 percent by 2020. That means the number of student enrolments in higher education will double. In other words, India will need at least 500 more universities and 50,000 more colleges in the next 7 - 8 years.

While it may not be possible to set up infrastructure for 50,000 colleges, what's more likely to emerge is a blended model, as is prevalent in the US. Students go to campuses for education and also take virtual courses to complement that education.

As the competition among universities increases, they will increasingly turn to technology like ERP and CRM solutions for the cutting edge.

*Timothy B. Loomer* - President & CEO, Campus Management, told *Information Week* about the challenges and trends in the US Higher Education sector, and how colleges are using IT solutions like CRM, ERP, cloud services, and BI for competitive advantage.

Incidentally, Campus Management acquired Talisma CRM in 2008, and is selling this as a standalone solution -- or as an integrated one with its Campus View product, to over 400 US institutions.

*Q. What are the trends and challenges in the US higher education market?*

Higher education in the US has a set of challenges. The state institutions are cutting back on funding, so the institutions depend on government subsidies, and those too are being slashed. There's a lot of budgetary pressure.

The other trend is we see strong growth in the alternative education sector. The US population that is between 18 - 23 years old is going through undergraduate education. But there is a segment in the US called the alternate set, between 32 - 45 years old. And they are re-skilling for a number of reasons. One could be that there is a major change in their lives, like unemployment, or they want to pursue something different. We do not have enough infrastructure to take care of that demand, and so the schools are now starting to get more competitive.

Schools are putting programs in place, to attract these students. That's the awakening in the US right now. The higher education institutions now see that they must compete. In the past they did not have a reason to compete to the extent that they do now. And to effectively compete, you need a technological footprint, which many of them lack.

That's why tools like CRM are red hot in the US education market. Historically, they did not need it. Use of CRM starts in the admissions area. You want to be able to track high school students, or online applications, interview schedules etc. And the ability to send text messages to prospects.

*Q. How are educational institutions in the US using Business Intelligence?*

The US higher education sector uses BI mainly for proactive retention activities. It costs a university a certain amount to onboard the student (paying for leads etc). But once that student joins, they make money as long the student is with that university. The moment he/she leaves, they stop making money. So if I am looking at this as a business it is important that I retain you as a student. And there are certain signs that tell if a student is going to defect: poor grades, missing classes etc.

With BI you can predict this and you know that a certain student needs a tutor or counseling.

Analytics is key to that because the system tracks courses, attendance, grades, background etc. The more progressive schools in the US are using analytics. Analytics is also used for gainful employment (job placement) in the US. This is used to ensure that students get jobs in the field they study, and are able to pay back their student loans. You can use analytics to track the gainful employment stats.

In the US there are companies that generate lists of prospective students. And they sell these lists to colleges. But this is expensive. So the more astute schools use analytics, and are able to track the percentage of students enrolled from each database vendor and the cost per enrollment. So it lets the schools decide who they want to deal with.

*Q. When and why did Campus Management acquire Talisma CRM? How does it fit into your product mix?*

We are a privately held organization with 750 employees and 450 clients. We serve 26 countries and the seed company was founded in 1988. In chronological order, Campus Management Corp. was acquired by Leeds Equity Partners (the seed company) in February 2008. We acquired Talisma in December 2008. Before that Talisma was part of a larger organization called nGenera. And nGenera was interested in selling off just the CRM piece, and retaining Talisma CIM (Customer Interaction Management) and the Knowledge Base. We sell a Student Information System called Campus View, which is like an ERP for higher education. And we acquired Talisma CRM because it is a natural and logical extension for our Student Information System into CRM.

CRM handles admissions, retentions, career services (job assistance), and alumni communication. Talisma CRM is sold as a standalone offering or as an integrated piece of our product ecosystem.

We've been in the higher education or post secondary market (colleges and universities) for the past 20 years. But we are not in the K-12 sector.

*Q. How does Talisma CRM compare with Siebel CRM and Microsoft Dynamics?*

We see Microsoft Dynamics CRM as a competitor, not Siebel. Our CRM product for higher education was built from the ground up. Microsoft Dynamics CRM is a good product, but it isn't ready for education (out-of-the-box); (Microsoft) Dynamics is a horizontal CRM, which means it isn't designed for any specific vertical. Their partners take their solution and verticalize it. So Dynamics is a platform and there are various flavors of it. For the user, that means a lot of maintenance and integration -- so the associated TCO is high.

We offer an out-of-the-box verticalized solution for higher education. The terminologies in our system are designed into the system; our product incorporates the workflow for the education segment. And this is our competitive differentiator.

Another competitor is Hobsons Education (UK).

The 'C' in Education CRM stands for 'Constituent' -- that means most of the educational institutions have a home grown solution (which could be an Excel sheet). But once they start expanding and add branches, they go for industry solutions.

*Q. What are your plans for selling Talisma CRM and other solutions in the Indian Education market?*

Private education is a strong market for us here. We already have 7 - 8 institutions in India using our solution. These are Educomp Raffles, Bangalore University, Manipal University, IIMT (to name a few). The education sector in India is still in its nascent stage, and the IT spends are niche. So we will go direct and not through channels in India. While we have no channel, we do engage with opportunity-based SIs.

**Source:** 02 August, 2012/[Information week](#)

### **Who's afraid of mathematics?**

For good or bad, competition is here to stay in Indian Higher Education. The admission cut offs in colleges are seeing new highs every year. And the examination patterns of both Board exams as well as entrance tests are changing constantly to take into account the increasing gap between number of seats in premier colleges and the number of applicants vying for them.

A very big change in marking system when a student shifts from board exams to entrance tests is there is no fixed concept of "good marks". While in school exams there are fixed parameters like 80% or A grades which can be treated as good, in entrance exam the selection process is based on Ranks and percentiles and not really percentage scores. Thus the only principle that works is doing as much as you can. However most of the entrance exam has negative marking for wrong answers and thus accuracy also plays a vital role in the selection process.

Quantitative Aptitude being almost an integral part of almost all major entrance exams now, importance of calculating fast and correct has increased hugely. However with no emphasis on that in the board exams, most of the students try to ignore this part and concentrate more on only accuracy albeit using long traditional text book methods. However the moment they reach the entrance exam stage they find themselves in deep trouble. In most of the entrance exams like that of BBA/BBE in prestigious universities like Delhi University or Symbiosis, students have to attempt around 30-40 questions of Maths in approximately 45 minutes and that is not an easy job.

Unlike the popular perception that fast calculations require lot of hard work and practice, using some basic concepts of Maths, we can actually make calculations faster with just a week's practice or so.

For example if we need to find the square of a number let's say 75, we can use simple observations from maths and do it in a flash.

For those numbers where the unit's digit is 5, the square of those numbers always end with 25. Thus the last two digits of 752 will be 25. For finding the first two digits we just have to multiply 7 (the digits in the ten's place) with its consecutive number i.e. in this case 8. So the first two digits will be  $(7 \times 8) = 56$

Thus my total result comes out to be 5625.

This property holds true for any number with unit's digit 5. Thus

$$35^2 = (3 \times 4) 25 = 1225$$

$$95^2 = (9 \times 10) 25 = 9025$$

$$105^2 = (10 \times 11) 25 = 11025$$

Easy isn't it? And there are more such interesting and easy methods which can save calculation time by more than 50% from your regular method.

In this series we will give some very easily adoptable methods through which you can make your calculations faster without compromising on accuracy. These methods were developed by famous mathematicians over many many years

and are very useful not only for exams but for your daily life as well.

Next week we will teach you how do squaring and multiplication of various numbers without using any pen and paper. Watch out this space for more!

**Source:** 02 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](http://Hindustan Times)

### The week in higher education

Regent's College received glowing praise after it became the latest private institution to secure degree-awarding powers. A leader in *The Times* on 27 July declared that the award "introduces a welcome bit of extra competition into a sector where there is far too little". It also argued against bringing private providers under the same fair access regime and student number caps as the state-funded sector, a move the government is proposing. Even a spokesman for the University and College Union, sworn enemy of the for-profit sector, raised no objection, pointing out in a BBC online story that the charitable Regent's College is "not geared to making profits for shareholders". Aldwyn Cooper, principal of Regent's, described this as "the first nice thing the UCU has ever said about us" - and planned a thank-you letter in return.

Unless you count an appearance by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web, the frantic medley of Britain's greatest cultural exports in the Olympic opening ceremony on 27 July contained no mention of universities, effectively ranking the sector below *Tiger Feet*, by Seventies glam rockers Mud, in terms of national significance. While no one was expecting the words "£9,000 fees" to appear in lights around the stadium, it would have been nice to get a mention. On the subject of the ceremony's politics, academic analysis was forthcoming from Rodney Atkinson, a former lecturer at the University of Mainz and brother of actor Rowan, who featured prominently in the ceremony. Rodney told *The Daily Telegraph* that the ceremony "had strong strands of the parochial Left", adding that he was annoyed by its "assumption that the Industrial Revolution was oppressive". It remains unclear why David Starkey was not consulted for his view on the opening ceremony.

The killer of an Indian postgraduate student has been sentenced to a minimum of 30 years in jail after being found guilty of murder. Anuj Bidve, 23, who was studying microelectronics at Lancaster University, was shot dead at point-blank range on Boxing Day 2011 on a Salford street. Kieran Stapleton, 21, attacked him "with no warning or motive", *The Times* reported on 27 July. *The Daily Mail* quoted Mr Bidve's father, Subhash, as saying: "Initially he wanted to go to the US and Australia

but we had heard cases of racist attacks on foreign students in both countries and we thought it was not completely safe. The UK is a multi-cultured society with a long and rich history with India so we were confident he would be both safe and happy in the UK."

The *Daily Mail* has hunted down former students who feature alongside chancellor George Osborne in a newly discovered photograph of the Bullingdon Club, the exclusive University of Oxford dining society. In a story published on 28 July, the newspaper described the young men in the picture as "oozing entitlement" as they laid claim "to their place at the top of the social elite". But a few of the alumni pictured in the photograph taken in 1993 have disappointed by ending up in positions that might be derided as wet by the typical Buller member. One now runs a mail-order food business, another is director of a renewable energy company and a third is married to a *Guardian* journalist. The last is Jo Johnson - the Conservative MP and younger brother of Boris Johnson - who married Amelia Gentleman, a *Guardian* writer on social affairs. The *Mail* noted that the younger Mr Johnson "declined to comment on the Bullingdon photograph - or why he is the only member of the club wearing grey trousers".

For-profit universities were lambasted in one of the US' biggest newspapers. A *USA Today* editorial put the boot in after a damning Senate committee report into the industry found that such companies spent just 17.7 per cent of their income - the majority of which comes from federal grants and loans - on teaching, yet took 19.4 per cent for profit distribution. *USA Today* said on 31 July: "Taxpayer money going into for-profit colleges would be better spent on community colleges ... All they (community colleges) lack is a powerful lobby that throws its weight around in Washington to sustain business models that are too often based on picking taxpayers' pockets."

**Source:** 03 August, 2012/[Times Higher Education UK](#)

### **They are not world beaters**

The Indian Institutes of Technology and the Joint Entrance Examination (IIT-JEE) have been in the news recently over the Centre's proposal to replace the multiple engineering entrance tests with a common entrance test (CET). While it goes without saying that the IIT brand name attracts only the best, one question arises: why is it that the faculty associations and alumni of the IITs are so agitated over the question of institutional autonomy, the brand and the JEE?

Under the 1987 National Policy on Education, the government was committed to set up a National

Testing Service for conducting a CET for admissions to higher education institutions. The purpose was to have an all-India criterion for admissions, minimise the stress level of students (who are forced to appear in the various admission tests) and to integrate curricula and teaching. It is important to have a globally-acceptable accreditation standard so that it becomes easier for Indian scientists and engineers to explore opportunities abroad. So a CET is desirable and essential.

The IIT-JEE is one of the toughest tests globally. The JEE is a test of elimination, rather than selection, and certainly not of aptitude. If a student wants to succeed in the JEE, she will require learning a drill that only coaching centres can provide. Consequently, the JEE continues to favour the urban and rich. Endowed with the best students, the best faculty, excellent infrastructure and enormous funds, the IITs provide good, basic education. However without practical and technology skills that students acquire in post-graduate (PG) training in institutions in the West, the IIT alumni would not have achieved their remarkable professional success. In fact, students from the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and other engineering institutions have also done well in life thanks to their PG studies abroad.

No global university conducts admission tests, even the best ones like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology accept the Scholastic Aptitude Test scores.

Some years ago, the Centre had succeeded in introducing a 'common' entrance test, the All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE). This credible test is used by the NITs and most technical universities. But the IITs and state institutions have stayed out of it. Why should the IITs not consider it a national responsibility to mentor a periodically conducted AIEEE-like CET covering a range of grade 12 competence levels? Any cut-off formula based on board results is not a practical solution since it will be difficult to synchronise the results of the different boards. But why should a nation deprive any aspiring student the level-playing field experience of a CET?

Going forward, the IITs should concentrate on PG education. The IITs produce only about 1% of India's undergraduate engineers, but contribute 90% of India's MTechs and 95% of the PhDs. Since privileged IIT BTechs do not prefer to pursue PG studies in the IITs, national interest demands that the IITs should consider making it mandatory for the entrants to commit to dual degrees when they take admission.

The brand name and academic autonomy of the IITs have already been diluted through mandatory, increased intake and admission of 49% students under a quota.

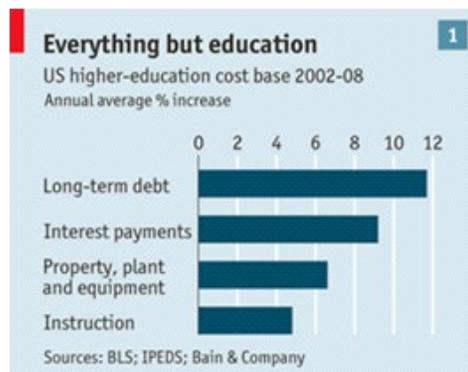
A country is known by its institutions of higher learning. The IITs may be the best in India, but not in the world. The generously funded IITs need to concentrate on quality higher education and creating translational and transformational knowledge for the Indian economy. This calls for tectonic changes in the governance and management of the IITs to make Nehru's vision of "IITs as India's urges and India's future in the making" a reality after all.

**Source:** 03 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

**The college-cost calamity**

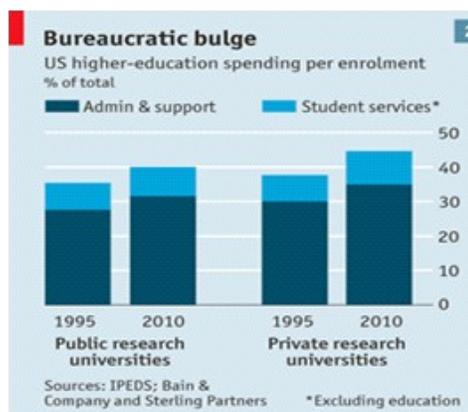
*Many American universities are in financial trouble*

WITH its leafy avenues and Gothic buildings, the University of Chicago seems a sober, solid sort of place. John D. Rockefeller, whose money built it, said it was the "best investment I ever made". Yet Chicago and other not-for-profit American universities have been piling on the debt as if they were high-tech start-ups.



1 Long-term debt at not-for-profit universities in America has been growing at 12% a year, estimate Bain & Company, a consultancy, and Sterling Partners, a private-equity

firm (see chart 1). A new report looked at the balance-sheets and cashflow statements of 1,692 universities and colleges between 2006 and 2010, and found that one-third were significantly weaker than they had been several years previously.



2 A crisis in higher education has been brewing for years. Universities have been spending like students in a bar who think a Rockefeller will pick up the tab. In the

past two years the University of Chicago has built a spiffy new library (where the books are cleverly retrieved by robots), a new arts centre and a ten-storey hospital building. It has also opened a new campus in Beijing.

And it is not alone. Universities hope that vast investments will help them attract the best staff and students, draw in research grants and donations, and ultimately boost their ranking in league tables, drawing in yet more talent and money. They have also increased the proportion of outlays gobbled up by administrators (see chart 2).

To pay for all this, universities have been enrolling more students and jacking up their fees. The average cost of college per student has risen by three times the rate of inflation since 1983. The cost of tuition alone has soared from 23% of median annual earnings in 2001 to 38% in 2010. Such increases plainly cannot continue.

Student debt has reportedly reached a record \$1 trillion. Before the financial crisis, some private lenders stoked the frenzy by securitising risky student loans—rather like subprime mortgages. This practice has been stopped but at its peak in 2008, private lenders disbursed \$20 billion. Last year they shelled out only \$6 billion.

Federal support for higher education remains at historically high levels, but states have cut back. To make matters worse, endowments (and their returns) have shrunk, money from philanthropy has dried up and those universities that provide need-based aid have suddenly found their students are needier.

All this suggests that colleges have good cause to worry about their debts. Unlike grades, they cannot be inflated away. Even Harvard, Yale, Cornell and Georgetown have been on an unsustainable path in recent years, says Bain, though all have big endowments to cushion themselves.

Glenn Reynolds, the author of "The Higher Education Bubble", predicts that the bubble will burst "messily". People have long believed that "whatever the cost, a college education is a necessary ticket to future prosperity." Easy credit has allowed them to pay ever more, and colleges have raised fees to absorb the extra cash. However, this cannot go on forever, says Mr Reynolds, especially when people start asking whether a degree in religious and women's studies is worth the \$100,000 debt incurred to pay for it.

Jeff Denneen, a Bain consultant, puts it more cautiously. Higher education has not delivered extra value to match the extra costs, he says. Indeed, the average student is studying for fewer hours and learning less than in the past. Grade inflation only



partially masks these trends. Mr Denneen agrees that the bubble will burst, though he does not say "messily".

Some universities are addressing their financial problems. Cornell began in 2009: Kent Fuchs, the provost, offered to cut the costs of administration by \$70m, if the faculty would concentrate on excelling at a limited number of important things, rather than trying to do everything. Mr Fuchs says that a university can become too broad; a financial squeeze is an opportunity to become more focused.

Since 2010, many endowments have recovered their value, and data from 823 institutions show a return of 19% for 2011.

The University of Chicago is one of many whose finances have improved since 2010. Brand-name institutions are unlikely to go bust, says Mr Denneen, but they may have to curb needs-blind admission, or hire fewer star professors.

Lesser-known colleges, which lack big endowments, will have to cut deeper. Timidly trimming a bit from every department each year, in the hope that good times return, will not work. Departments and courses must be shed and whole campuses merged or shuttered.

Public universities, with more centralised leadership, find it easier to consolidate. New Jersey is merging its medical college into Rutgers University, and there are four sets of mergers in Georgia alone.

One will combine Augusta State and Georgia Health Sciences universities, and will strip administrative costs and overheads.

For-profit universities have proved to be the exception to the rule: most are in good financial health. However, they face pressure from lawmakers who think they fail to deliver value for the \$32 billion in subsidies they receive. A new report from Senator Tom Harkin decries the for-profit sector's aggressive recruiting, poor academic results and excessive fees.

College-boosters have several retorts to all this doom-mongering. Surely, they say, as technology advances, the demand for education will continue to grow? Cynics add that Bain's recommendations should be taken warily, since it stands to win fat consulting contracts if lots of American universities decide to restructure.

Still, the doomsayers may be onto something. Four-year residential colleges cannot keep on forever raising their fees faster than the public's capacity to pay them, especially when online degrees are so much cheaper. Universities that fail

to prepare for the hurricane ahead are likely to be flattened by it.

**Source:** 04 August, 2012/[The Economist](#)

### **Indian Education In A State Of Emergency: Amartya Sen**

The state of education and other human development indices in India is in a state of emergency, says Prof. Amartya Sen, the Noble laureate.

Asian countries like Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong and Thailand have overtaken India in providing quality education to their people, said the noble laureate. "While these countries took lead, we were left behind and we have paid a huge price for it," added Amartya Sen. Indians generally do well in high skills related jobs like IT, but the middle segment jobs are the most affected ones. This shows how the various sectors of the economy are not widely shared, reports The Financial Express.

In a recent deliberation, Sen along with Prof. Sugata Bose of Harvard University shared their vision on the Nalanda University. Sen was appointed as the first chancellor of Nalanda University and also the chairman of the University governing body.

Sen said "The University came into existence in Bihar eight hundred years ago and there were challenges in reviving it.

**Source:** 04 August, 2012/ [The Link Paper](#)

### **Use of technology for value education urged**

Technology should be used meaningfully for value education, without misusing it in any way," said Archbishop Fr William D'Souza (SJ) while addressing the 25th regional conference of the Association of Schools for the Indian School Certificate (ASISC), Bihar and Jharkhand, which kicked off on Friday with the theme "Technology in education and value system".

The programme was inaugurated by Amarjeet Sinha, principal secretary, education, who was the chief guest. Fr D'Souza graced the occasion as the guest of honour.

Amarjeet Sinha greeted the gathering of school administrators and shared anecdotes from his school life. "School is an institution to maximize human potential." Elucidating on the theme of the meeting, he added, "No technology can bridge the human gap" and assured all government support to ensure development of children.

Fr D'Souza congratulated the association on its silver jubilee and said, "Principals should always be ready for any eventuality." He said, "The topic of discussion is very pertinent as there has always been a debate regarding the system of education,"

adding "The prime role of education is to pave way for demanding and highly specialized careers, but it also aims to broaden the students' perspectives."

Mary Alphonsa, zonal coordinator, ASISC, and principal, Don Bosco Academy, Patna, welcomed the guests, saying, "It is a privilege to host the event in its 25th year. The association was founded in April 1987 and has grown from strength to strength. The future of our children will depend on our vision."

Earlier, the day started with a prayer song by the students of Don Bosco Academy, invoking the Almighty's blessings for a fruitful day. It was followed by a welcome dance by the girls of Mount Carmel High School, Patna.

Other distinguished guests on the first day of the two-day event were chairman, Indian Schools Certificate Examination, New Delhi, Rev Jose Aikara, founder-secretary of the association A G de Rozario, founder member Fr Hilary Lobo, ASISC secretary Christopher Francis and principals of various ICSE/ISC schools of Bihar and Jharkhand.

**Source:** 04 August, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

### **Translate texts in all languages**

"Why did we have to fight for independence if we cannot study in our mother tongue," said Anil Sadgopal, eminent educationist and presidium member, All India Forum for Right to Education, at the third memorial oration of the Kuruvila Jacob initiative for promoting excellence in school education.

His lecture was dotted with several anecdotes from his days working with children of schools in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh. He pioneered the Hoshangabad Science Teaching Programme in government schools to impart science education through hands-on experiments.

"In one such school, the teacher had collected water from different sources in the village such as ponds, and spring water and after discussing in groups, the children had to identify and record through a simple experiment, the difference between hard and soft water. There was absolute silence when the time came to record the observations," he recalled.

Finally, one child stood up and asked, in what language the findings had to be recorded. The teacher at the Hindi-medium school was sensitive, and allowed them to record their findings in any language of their choice. And, they recorded their observations prolifically in Bundelkhandi, he said.

He stressed on the need for an empowered national translation commission that would

translate texts, documents, literature, and research papers of every discipline, from the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule to all other Indian languages.

He spoke extensively on the government's policy on 'inclusion', and about how over the past 25 years, the government's expenditure on education was declining. "In September 2007, the Prime Minister while heading a meeting of the Planning Commission said that every child must be 'included' in the education policy, and in the same breath went on to say that could be done through public-private partnership model," he said.

When the word 'inclusion' is used, who is to be included, and who is to be excluded, on what criteria and who has the power to decide, he asked. Presenting slide-based government statistics, he said that only 10 per cent OBCs, nine per cent muslims, eight per cent dalits, and six per cent tribals who enter class-I cross class-XII. "This means that 90 per cent OBCs, 92 per cent dalits, for instance, are not eligible for reservation in institutes of higher education," he said. He criticised the neo-liberal policies of the government, and discussed the impact of the global capital on the education system in the country, and raised questions about the gap between social reality and a curriculum based on official knowledge.

Earlier in the day, he along with other educationists released the Chennai Declaration formulated by the Forum in partnership with State Platform for Common School System that aims to build a state-funded common school system based on neighbourhood schools from pre-primary level to class-XII.

The 17-page declaration, which has been drafted with the help of a seven-member committee, analyses the field of education in India from a historical, politico-economic and policy perspective, consolidates the discourse on education pre-and-post independence, highlights the importance of issues faced by minorities, disabled, and OBCs and Dalits perspectives and prescribes the future course of action.

"Under the provisions of the current Act, of the nearly 2.5 crore children in need for admission to class-I, only 18 lakh will benefit even if the 25 per cent reservation in private schools is practiced to full effect throughout the country. "The focus suddenly shifts from the 2.5 crore to the 18 lakh children," he said.

The Kuruvila Jacob Initiative for promoting excellence in school education began in August 2004 when students and alumni of the Madras Christian College High School of which the eminent

educationist Kuruvila Jacob was the headmaster got together to help schools adopt innovative techniques in learning, encourage the use of 'best practices' in participating schools and train schools to learn and use Total Quality Management methodologies among other objectives. At the event, certificates were distributed to those who had graduated from their various programmes.

**Source:** 04 August, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

### **A sustainable model for IITs**

*The IITs can be given the freedom to determine their fees as do the IIMs, and the additional funds generated through higher fees can be used to build research infrastructure.....To ensure that higher fees do not pose an undue burden on any student, a loan to cover the fees may automatically be sanctioned to each student.*

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) occupy an important and special position in the country, playing a crucial part in the career aspirations of lakhs of students. At the same time, policymakers are grappling with two questions on their real contribution to the nation in order to justify providing funds for maintaining the premium nature of these institutes and source these funds. Since it is market dynamics that have created this rather ironic situation, I propose using the same market forces to address this issue.

Let's first understand the market forces. The return on the investment for the parents, if not to the students, is the first market force that has created the enormous demand for the IITs. The brand value that almost guarantees admission with financial aid to a U.S. university for higher studies leading to a job, permanent residency and eventual citizenship or the near certainty of being placed with a higher than average salary on graduation is the primary market force that makes parents push their children into aspiring for entry into the IIT, often at as early an age as 15. The fact that most of these high paying jobs have nothing to do with engineering is neither discussed nor considered.

While assuring a higher return, the cost — fees at the IIT — is much lower than what is charged by the ubiquitous self-financing engineering colleges that do not assure students a career after graduation. Granted, parents do invest in one or more of the various coaching institutes without which none can get into the IITs nowadays, but even with that cost, the IITs make the best financial sense in terms of risk vs. reward.

This intense preparation to pass the entrance examination burns out quite a few of the successful students who have no interest in the education

they are pursuing and have no incentive to excel in the studies since they are aware that the IIT brand will assure them a well-paying job if they just clear the examinations.

The second market force that leads to questions on the contribution or lack of it on the part of these bright students to national development is the skewed salary structure prevalent in today's world where the marketers of cosmetics and financial analysts earn twice or thrice as much as an engineer gets even at the entry level. While these professions' contribution to nation building may be debated, there is no question that education at a premium engineering institution deserves a better return in the form of its graduates exercising their intellect and education to address the numerous challenges facing the nation.

This, in turn, leads to the question of return on the money the nation spends on the IITs. Whether it is due to a lack of universal acceptance that investment in the IITs has yielded sufficient dividends or otherwise, the fact remains that the original five IITs have not seen increases in their funding in the last two decades commensurate with their requirement to replace their increasingly obsolete infrastructure. Whatever infrastructure development that has been funded in the recent past is mainly to cater for the increased student size that has been thrust upon the IITs to implement the social justice agenda. Both sets of the original five IITs and the newer nine ones require a large infusion of capital funds in order to renew or build infrastructure that will help them retain the premium nature of education in these institutions.

We can address all the three issues through a substantial increase in the fees paid by the undergraduate students. The IITs can be given the freedom to determine their fees as do the IIMs and the additional funds generated from higher fees can be used to build the research infrastructure. To ensure that these higher fees do not pose an undue burden on any student, a loan to cover the fees may automatically be sanctioned to each student. This loan will have no additional requirements such as collateral security, or the financial status of the parents, etc. This should not pose a problem since it's recognised that an IIT graduate will not have any issues finding a job. Increasing the fees addresses two of the three issues raised — namely the extremely attractive return on investment that encourages parents to exert undue pressure on their children to enter the IIT and the issue of funds for the IITs. By devising a scheme to convert the loan into a grant based on the nature of employment taken up by the graduates, we can

address the issue of their contribution to nation building as well.

We can categorise DRDO, CSIR laboratories and other national institutions, the IITs and the NITs as the priority sector, employment in which for a specified minimum period will convert the entire loan into a grant.

Organisations that are public-funded and commercial in nature but play a vital role in building national self-sustenance may be classified as core sector, employment in which for a specified period will convert 50% of the loan into a grant. The grant can be provided by the employer itself and its financial impact can be mitigated through suitable tax concessions. This will also be an avenue for the employers to discharge their corporate social responsibility.

Private sector organisations but involved in core engineering activities may be classified as the allied sector, employment in which for a specified period will convert 25% of the loan into a grant. Teaching in AICTE-approved engineering institutions may also be classified as the allied sector.

If the student opts to join organisations not belonging to these sectors, such as those in management consulting, banking and finance, and insurance, then he/she will need to repay the full loan at market rates within a reasonable period. Since salaries in these sectors are high, loan repayment should not be a major burden.

In case the graduate opts for higher education in India or abroad, a moratorium on repayment of the loan can be given and recovery may be initiated on completion of studies, depending on the nature of employment taken up.

The students can further be incentivised by linking the interest rate payable on the loan to their performance in the IIT. The rate of interest could be something like PLR-CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) on a 10-point scale. Thus, the top performers will be required to pay only an interest rate of 0-3%, while even average performance will attract a rate of 5-7%. For students coming from socially disadvantaged sections, further concessions or a total waiver could be given to account for the differences in their performance due to social conditions.

Thus creating this market force of higher fees with the necessary infrastructure around it to manage its adverse effects can ensure adequate and timely funding for the IITs without burdening the government. The higher cost may discourage those who are not interested in nation building from enjoying the benefits of government subsidy and

hindering imparting quality education. The performance-linked interest rate may motivate students to perform and finally the repayment options may encourage them to work in sectors that badly need them.

At this critical juncture where India needs to create substantially more capacity and quality in the engineering education sector, the way China is doing, this model may prove worthwhile to follow for the IITs and extend to the NITs as well.

The model can lead to financial and operational freedom for these institutes so that they can compete with foreign universities that are to be allowed to set up colleges in India on an equal footing.

**Source:** 05 August, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### **Anyone worried about what's wrong with our education?**

The debate on the IIT entrance examination refuses to die down. Some IITs claim that the standards will be diluted if the criteria are changed to consider school marks, while the HRD ministry disagrees. Most of the candidates are likely to enter the IIT irrespective of the mode of selection. Alas! JEE has long been defeated by the coaching factories. Those who live in regions that are close to the successful coaching factories have joined the IITs in hundreds. The best-coached students seem to be the most eligible ones to study at IIT. In this situation, an alternative way of selecting students appears relevant.

It's rarely the same individual who scores the highest in school, in JEE, IIT, CAT or IIM, lands the highest paying job and goes on to become the most successful professional. There are not many school toppers among our most successful managers or engineers. JEE ranks do not correlate well with the academic performances at IITs. Rarely has the JEE topper finished first in the BTech programme.

A far more serious question is how the "engineers" are occupied after college? Many seek MBA; a few go to US universities (IITs are not popular for post-graduation). Jobs are sought in the finance sector, "core sector" and IT (the largest recruiter of engineering graduates). Now, the core sector does not actually offer technical jobs. Managing production, procuring materials and chasing people for unfinished work are typical tasks. The engineer does not create products. Indian engineers may have put power plants or created railway infrastructure in African and West Asian countries but, in the sphere of product development, our record is dismal. In the first 35 years we bought, copied (with or without permission) and turned out

the same products, decade after decade. Even after liberalization in the 90s, new products were rarely developed in India.

If the primary occupation of the engineer should be creation, design and development of new products, then the very existence of engineering education in this country looks purposeless. Any general education and training will be enough to manage shop floors and purchasing and to do most of the software jobs. IIMs want a 'heterogeneous' mix of graduates in their classes. Why are we, then, obsessed with engineering education?

There is an even more fundamental issue regarding education. The British system of schooling in India started in the 19th century, probably with the aim of creating clerical manpower for the East India Company. It progressed to create civil servants, too, but the primary purpose of education to serve "people of other countries" seems to continue! Most of the work in IT companies is to develop software for developed countries. Dull and boring jobs are dumped on us in the belief that money is the prime motivator here while essential services fail to attract people since they pay less.

There is no visible concern over shrinking labour and lands for agriculture and vanishing traditional craftsmen. Free lunch is offered to increase enrollment in schools but there is indifference to reports that children cannot read the headlines of a vernacular newspaper and cannot subtract even two-digit numbers. They learn little in the schools and miss out on learning any trade or craft that can fetch them a livelihood. Once I said to some urban college students, "Ninety per cent of the students seem disinterested in the classroom, at any level." They replied that I had underestimated the percentage! Are we then thrusting a whole lot of uninteresting stuff down the throats of millions of youngsters? What for? To receive the education that would fetch employment to serve the aliens?

Shouldn't we seek alternatives? Can we reduce the wage disparity between those who work with their hands and those who do 'mental' work? How do we bring about dignity of labour in this country? A Japanese guru of quality spoke about the "joy of sweating". Our society, too, had that joy. Why did we lose it to the pleasure of air-conditioned offices to do dumb jobs? Can we nurture those who enjoy working with their hands and not force them to learn by rote? How can we enable each individual to pursue an occupation according to one's aptitude?

I do not have answers to the multitude of questions that I have raised but my concerns remain. Will our policy-makers, planners and

educationists take a re-look at the path we have travelled so far, do an honest analysis and re-define the goals of human resource development in this country? Maybe we are late but let us proceed on the assumption "better late than never".

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

### Education system should be child-centric

*Dilip Kumar Bedi, Principal, Apeejay School, Pitampura, talks about what ails the education policy and the need for holistic development of a student*

How would you define complete education?

"Education is that which liberates". It is a lifelong process of learning and developing self-discipline. It is an essential tool of transformation as it inspires a person to become better and better. Education guides the evolution of mankind towards a higher order of civilized society. It is a catalyst for development, an instrument for personal empowerment and a critical means for social transformation.

This can be easily accomplished if one learns to control the mind and body. When we achieve a balance between the mind and body, it helps to develop self-discipline and builds our self-esteem leading to self-actualisation. Even though we are well aware of right and wrong, we often succumb to peer pressure, materialistic temptations, internal weaknesses or circumstances and end up doing wrong things. It is education that provides us an inner strength and a strong conviction to follow the path of righteousness.

Though, there are a number of ways to achieve these goals, I believe that if we are able to inculcate good reading habits, interest in at least one sport and proficiency in fine arts we can become lifelong learners who are spiritually enlightened, emotionally mature and balanced.

What is your view of the present education policies in this country?

In India, education is on the concurrent list i.e., it is controlled by the Centre as well as state governments. The educational structure and scene at both the state and the national levels are such that any prescription is bound to encounter its share of opposition. Moreover, Indian society is not homogeneous. Therefore, it takes a lot of time to formulate sound educational policies while implementation of these policies is extremely slow. It is a complex and vicious situation which has led to an exam centric system of learning, though all our documents and policies promise to promote child centric education. It has to be understood that

societal norms also have a direct influence on the process of education explicitly or implicitly.

I believe that the present scenario in Indian education is a witness to revolutionary changes. I compliment Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal and Vineet Joshi, Chairman and Secretary of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), for bringing a revolution in Indian school education through the novel concept of CCE. If implemented in letter and spirit, it is a paradigm shift, which would steer us away from an exam-centered approach towards child-centric education system. It would also help to reduce the tensions and the anxieties of the students.

How do you see the new IIT admission rules and how realistic are the DU cut-offs?

It is a welcome step that IIT rules are amended; as a result students will now start taking Board exams seriously. As far as DU cut-offs are concerned, I feel that admission process in DU and its affiliated colleges needs to improve. The mad rush of students from one college to another during peak summer days, the long winding queues just to fill an application form, is a cumbersome and tedious. This calls for reformation. This present system of filling of application forms belies the standard and image of DU — as a world-class institution of higher education. Why can't we have centralised common application form which can be submitted online or offline? Students can be given an option to give their preference of colleges and charged for these preferences. A centralised system can then forward these applications to the respective colleges. The cut-off lists should be realistic minimising the need for subsequent lists. India has entered the 21st century and is admired all over the world for its strong IT sector. I am sure by using IT something meaningful and viable can be achieved to save the students and their parents from this agony of harassment.

Do you think cartoons in textbooks are offensive to students?

Primarily, our masses and children are very advanced in their thinking. In this age of Facebook and Twitter, the youth are very open to expressing their opinion freely and voicing their sentiments on a thousand issues daily. I don't think they are bothered by cartoons in some textbook. Even politicians understand this but they still rake up a controversy because they are playing vote-bank politics. A cartoon is a tongue-in-cheek way of commenting on an issue and is not meant to be derisive.

**Source:** 06 August, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

## Born in free India and hence entitled to equal rights and share in governance

I was born in free India. I have no idea of who were responsible for the partition of the country. My ancestors with free will decided to be the part of this nation. And therefore, I refuse to carry the burden of partition.

I have two identities: Indian and a Muslim. Indian Constitution guarantees me rights for both of my identities. I enjoy all the fundamental rights as any other Indian would enjoy. But in addition to these, I have extra rights as the religious minority. The Constitution enshrines that I, as a member of Muslim minority community, have the right to preserve, protect and promote my identity, language, script and culture by establishing and administering educational institutions of my choice.

I thank the wisdom of the framers of the constitution to provide all this. These builders of modern India were perhaps worried about the minorities being excluded from the fruits of freedom. In a way these rights were conferred to strengthen the feeling of security in the nascent stage of a nation marred by communal conflagration during and after partition. The intention was to provide the minorities with full opportunities to participate in the governance and thus contributing in the overall development of the nation.

The picture which emerges out after six decades of freedom is contrary to the supposed intentions of the great visionaries of freedom movement. Constitutional promise for the protection of the interests of the minorities remains more or less a paper promise. As per one estimate of the Home Ministry, Government of India, a total of 13,356 serious anti-Muslim riots have happened between 1954 and 1992. It seems that the only concern for the Muslim minority (MM) is the security of person, dignity and property. And that's what political parties promise them in lieu of their votes as if these parties will do some mercy by providing security. It's their right as the citizen to which they are entitled.

In the last 65 years, MM has seen lots of ups and downs in their social, educational and economic status. To diagnose the causes of such decline in their status Sachar Committee was appointed in 2005, which submitted its report in November, 2006 recommending many measures to uplift the status of MM. As per the findings of the committee, over a period of time the percentage of MM has seen a gradual decline in public sector jobs and educational institutions. Their representation in institutions of higher learning is almost negligible. The report

says, MM were 1.3% in IIMs and 3.3% in IITs in years 2004 to 2005 and 2006. Muslims share in the students who complete graduation is only 3.4%. In civil services it is 3% in IAS, 1.8% in IFS and 4% in IPS. Taken cumulatively, its share is 4.9% in PSUs, Education, Railways, Judiciary, Health, Transport and Home Affairs. Muslims' percentage in bureaucracy is just 2.5 % whereas they constitute about 14% of India's population. Literacy level in the Muslims is just 59.1%, which is much below the national average of 65.1%. Not only this, unemployment rate among Muslim graduates is the highest among other socio-religious groups. This report captures clearly the deprivation when it observes 'Muslim localities are not covered well with pucca roads, bus stops, medical and postal facilities'. People have started saying, if you want to identify a Muslim locality, you can easily do so by noticing the lack of basic civic amenities. Why this total apathy towards one community, when everybody is the equal citizen. We have been living in the ganga-jamuni tehzeeb (composite culture) since centuries, but the lack of concerns for the Muslims points to something fishy in the scheme of things of our policy makers and implementers.

One wonders, why Muslims only become the target of stringent laws. Our experiences with TADA, POTA and UAPA have been of extreme of pain and anguish. The data of number of cases registered under these stringent laws shows majority of Muslims as accused, who after going through trauma and sufferings were let off due to lack of evidence. By 30 June, 1994, the arrests under TADA had exceeded 76,000. About 25 percent of these cases were dropped by the police without even framing charges. Of the 35 percent cases that were brought to trial, 95 percent resulted in acquittals. The conviction rate for these laws was less than 2 percent. TADA and POTA have to go off the legal lexicons because of evidences surfacing with regard to targeting of Muslims and slapping false terror cases on them. The sad part is that, this politics of targeting minority youths still continues unabated.

Even after so many years of these laws going to the gallows, the situation more or less remains the same. The story of injustice remains the same only the characters are changing. A recent study of the Socio-economic Profile and Rehabilitation Needs of Muslim Community in Prisons in Maharashtra, 2011, Dr. Vijay Raghavan and Roshni Nair from the Centre for Criminology and Justice School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) points out that 96 per cent of the prisoners interviewed are not held under preventive

detention charges. This means that they are not potential threat to law and order. The study also indicates that although as per Sachar Committee report Maharashtra has 10.6 per cent Muslim population but they comprise 32.4 per cent of the prison population. All this smells of the institutional bias against the Muslim community. When a Muslim youth is arrested, charges of carrying out terrorist activities at various places are put on him without going through a fair and deeper investigation. For instance in 1998 one Mohammad Aamir Khan aged 18 years was arrested in Delhi and was accused of 20 terror cases. It took 14 years to pronounce him not guilty case after case. In January, 2011 he walked out of jail only to find his mother paralyzed and friends deserting him because of terrorist tag on him. In another glaring instance, 70 Muslim youths were picked up and charged for carrying out Mecca Masjid blasts in 2007 at Hyderabad. After five long years, they were all acquitted and now government is giving them 70 lakhs as compensation. Here a question arises, can this compensation amount return the youthful age that they wasted in the confines of the jail. They had to undergo trauma of being a terrorist for no fault of theirs. This practice of injustice and violation of human rights must end.

To make the situation worse, Housing apartheid in urban India has become a reality. If you are a Muslim, you can find heaven for yourself but not a house on rent in the localities dominated by non-Muslim communities. This has forced Muslims to live in ghettos further alienating them from the mainstream and composite culture mosaic. If in a train or a bus or a government office a man with a beard and skull cap is seen, the reaction on the faces of the co-passengers or the public officers changes dramatically. They look at him as if an alien has descended on their private property. The bearded man's only fault is that he belongs to the Muslim minority community. The alienation of the Muslim youths is not a good sign for a healthy democracy. Today, educated Muslim youths are leaving under fear psychosis. They are under the spell of fear all the time that any day they can be behind the bars under the false charges only to be released after decades, crumbling-down their aspirations and dreams.

Despite all the above-mentioned aberrations, I still see the light at the end of the tunnel. There is still a ray of hope. Everything has not come to an end. Things can be improved. The only thing required is that system should run as per the spirit of the Constitution. Biases and prejudices can only be removed if the bureaucratic and political set-up runs in accordance with the rule of law. Principles of fairness and natural justice must be adhered to in

every situation. It is only then the confidence and trust of the minority community can be restored and strengthened. Inclusiveness should be the mantra. We cannot live in isolation or ghettos. Prosperous and peaceful India can only emerge from the contribution of all its citizens, whether majority or minority. I will feel proud of my Indian identity when my Muslim identity is kept intact and is provided every possible opportunity to develop myself socially, educationally, politically and financially. The gulf between two of my identities is striking. This has to be bridged.

**Source:** 06 August, 2012/[Two circles.net](http://Two.circles.net)

### **On the Research of Raghuram Rajan, India's New Economic Chief**

The next piece in the reshuffle of India's economic leadership is [reportedly Raghuram Rajan](#), a finance professor at the University of Chicago Booth and former chief IMF economist. The Times of India couldn't reach Rajan for comment. But a quick glance through his research can give some indication, albeit an imperfect and incomplete one, of his future advice for the country.

An anti-Keynesian essay he wrote in May on U.S. fiscal policy ([pdf](#)) kicked up [some dust](#), winning the approval of libertarian economist [Tyler Cowen](#) and the scornful dismissal of [Paul Krugman](#). Transposing Rajan's opinions of U.S. growth to how he will stake his positions on India is tricky. The problems the two countries face are vastly different. And a bulk of Rajan's [research](#) has dealt with credit markets in the U.S. and international finance from a decade or two ago, now less relevant.

Yet there are a few hints of the direction Rajan would push the country, if, that is, he holds any sway.

Six years ago, he co-authored an IMF report ([pdf](#)) that accurately predicted the drag of poor industrial and manufacturing output on the country:

*The very fact of skill-based development in the fast growing states may impede labor-intensive development because of the rise in the price of skilled labor. This could induce an Indian variant of Dutch disease (Bangalore Bug so to speak) that would reduce the profitability of labor-intensive and tradable [sic] manufacturing.*

For the states falling behind, the authors offer the usual recommendations—improving infrastructure and business climate—as well as “scrapping archaic labor laws.” But interestingly, they first turn to reform in higher education:

The obvious solution is not to impede the growth of the fast-movers but to enhance the availability of the resource in scarce supply ... The number of high-quality institutions is still very small, witness the extraordinary competition to get into them. In the same way as industry was delicensed, India needs to “delicense” higher education, remove the barriers to starting new institutions, as well as encourage foreign direct investment here.

In a [solo speech](#) this year honoring Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who he currently informally advises, Rajan hit upon the same topics. He claimed the famed License Raj reforms did not go far enough in liberalizing higher education. Neither, he goes on, did it remove the patronage system from the public sector, particularly in its “virtual monopoly” of coal (a timely subject for Rajan's arrival). Wrapping up his speech, Rajan lays out three immediate steps for economic reform:

1) Raise fuel prices to international levels in a set of quick steps, then completely deregulate them. Announce this as soon as politically possible, and do not roll back.

2) Resolve the commodity bottleneck in a way that does not give a windfall or bailout to any party, least of all the private promoters, but that ensures these projects/plants can resume production. If necessary, write down the equity of these promoters before restructuring bank liabilities.

3) Be kinder to foreign investors – they are not the enemy but a necessity – we need their money to fund our spending to the tune of 4% of GDP. No doubt, however badly we treat them today, they may eventually want to be in India, but crisis are always about timing. We need them now, when India looks increasingly tattered compared to alternative investment opportunities, not five years from now when growth recovers.

It will be interesting to watch if, and how much, Rajan pushes for these policies (or, in the third case, crafts something specific) once in office.

And there's another particular crunch in India that will test Rajan's economic philosophy. The recent power outage revealed that, lurking closely in the future, is a [formidable banking crisis](#). Persistently high interest rates, in part, are choking the capital of the nation's banks. If a crisis forms, the government will certainly be prompted to intervene. In [a very recent working paper](#) with Douglas Diamond (of the [bank run theory fame](#)), Rajan

develops a lengthy model of central bank interest rate intervention. Here's part of their conclusion:

In order to prevent an escalating, and ultimately unproductive, sequence of anticipated intervention and response, authorities may want to commit to much more constrained intervention that respects the private sector purpose – for instance, undirected interest rate intervention may dominate more direct recapitalizations or lender-of-last-resort loans to banks.

However, even with undirected interest rate intervention, competitive banks may have an incentive to make excessive promises of liquidity – either by promising depositors too much or by lending to excessively illiquid projects – because they do not internalize the costs of the intervention to taxpayers. Ex ante regulation to prevent such promises may not be effective. This is why central banks may want to offset the incentive effects of their inevitable and politically irresistible need to reduce rates when the banking system is in trouble [by] raising rates more quickly when they have the economic and political space to do so in normal times.

They hint briefly that their model, agreeable to Austrians, could fit into the low interest rate explanation of the U.S. subprime bubble. Easy money is not an issue in today's India. On Monday, markets [lifted a bit](#) after the new finance minister suggested the nation would cut its high interest rates. With persistent inflation, it's unlikely that the rate cuts will be large or sustained. The question for Rajan will be whether the current situation in his homeland constitutes "normal times."

**Source:** 08 August, 2012/[Forbes.com](http://Forbes.com)

### **Govt needs to encourage PPP model for increasing enrolment ratio in higher education**

Despite the slowdown in every sector of the economy, higher education sector has witnessed high growth as it is linked with the aspirations of people.

The number of engineering and management colleges has increased in the past couple of decades because of high demand from students and parents.

The Government of India has committed to increase gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education to 30% by 2020. At present the government has achieved GER of 20%. Considering gross enrolment ratio of 50-60 % in higher

education in developed countries, India's record is very poor.

The government has always encouraged private sector to enhance investment in higher education sector but fact is that private sector has made investment in 85 to 90% professional educational institutes in the country. As far as public-private partnerships in higher education is concerned, there is no advancement. The central universities are generally funded by the union government while the universities run by state governments are facing a severe financial crisis. Private sector can make investment in these universities to ensure their smooth operation.

In a bid to achieve GER of 30%, the government needs to address shortage of quality teachers. The shortage of teachers can be sorted out by relaxing qualification for recruitment of teachers in professional colleges. As per the National Knowledge Commission's recommendation, BTech students should be hired for teaching instead of MTech students. But these BTech students have to complete MTech in three to four years of their joining.

Industries do not require [research](#) candidates for production, operations, monitoring. A graduate candidate can manage these jobs. Research candidates have good scope in automobile and pharma sectors.

Nowadays, there is a discussion that why graduates are not getting jobs as per their qualifications. The reason is that they do not have good communication skills which are required for effective performance in corporate sector. Students from rural areas do not speak good English as local language is used as medium of instruction in schools. These students face language problem while pursuing higher education. To sort out this, communication skill training should be imparted to students at the school level.

The higher education institutes need to keep in mind the requirement of industries while formulating curriculum, it will help students to find jobs after finishing their graduation. [E-learning](#) has to be promoted as it will reduce the cost of higher education.

More autonomy, use of technology, simplification of regulations, permitting colleges to compete, coordinate, greater allurements for private sector participation in higher education and liberal conditions for entering into public private partnerships are some measures to increase enrolment in higher education.

**Source:** 09 August, 2012/[Edunet media](http://Edunet media)

### 3 Reasons why India will lead Ed.Tech in the 21st Century

Anyone who works in educational technology (or edtech for short) is blessed with one of the world's greatest jobs. We spend our days working at the intersection of education and technology. These are two exciting places to be if you get excited about disrupting the status quo and participating in creating the future.

I count myself amongst the luckiest of the edtech tribe, as I work for an institution of higher learning that is committed to exhibit world leadership in the goal of leveraging technology to improve learning.

So what could possibly be troubling me as I contemplate my edtech career and the larger profession in which I work? One word: India.

As I write these words I am acutely aware that I am about 7,579 miles away from where all the excitement in the edtech world is most likely to occur.

*I am convinced of two things:*

The education will be the most important growth business of the 21st century.

That whatever comes next in education will emerge from India.

While it is true that the large software, hardware and publishing companies have a large presence in India (think Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Apple, Pearson etc.), the education teams for these firms are based in the U.S. If I were running one of these education units the first thing I'd do is move the team to Mumbai.

*Why is India the future of edtech?:*

1. *Culture:*The reason that the next technology revolution will occur in India is the degree to which the culture prizes learning and scholarship. Indian families will save and spend to educate their children. India students of all ages understand that the only way to achieve their dreams of economic improvement are individual investments in learning, and societal investments in the human capital of the population. This pro-education cultural orientation will translate into education platforms and apps being products and services that people (at every income level) will pay for. It is no accident that gaming and entertainment seem to be gaining the attention and funding in the U.S., as I worry that my fellow U.S. citizens do not experience the drive for learning that I see in the people of India. The global diaspora of Indian tech entrepreneurs will prove a magnificent resource in the creation of 21st century educational technology companies.

2. *Demand:*According to Homi Kharas of the Brookings Institution, between now and 2039 India could add over 1 billion people to the global middle class. To get there India will need to greatly improve its productivity, and the route to higher productivity is education. Even if India is able to follow through on plans to create 1000 new universities between now and 2020 the supply of higher education spots will dramatically lag demand. India's young age structure (with nearly one-in-three Indians below currently below age 14) will drive huge demand for post-secondary education opportunities. A campus-placed based model for 21st century higher education will never suffice to meet the demand. Higher education will inevitably move towards online and blended learning. The coming waves of Indian college students may not have the resources to pay tuition at today's high-end residential institutions, but the huge numbers of potential students combined with the scale economics of the web will result in profitable opportunities for education providers.

3. *Mobile:*Just as India leapfrogged landlines and jumped directly to mobile phones, the country is set to leapfrog campus-placed based higher education and jump right to online learning. The first trend, mobile phone adoption, will catalyze the second (online learning). India has over 850 million mobile phone subscribers; with a rate of increase over 10 million a month these mobile devices will be the classrooms of tomorrow. Big technology and publishing companies have so far failed to understand the potential of educational services delivered via mobile devices. Once the potential for mobile learning is understood, with revenue models from advertising to micro payments, there will be a gold rush into the Indian mobile education market.

**Source:** 10 August, 2012/[Forbes India](#)

### **B-schools not catering to recruiters, says Maruti chairman**

Management education in India is facing a crisis with an increasing number of industry participants complaining of an employability gap.

“The quality of management education offered by Indian B-schools is out of sync with the times and is not addressing the needs of industry,” R.C Bhargava, Chairman of Maruti Suzuki India, who also heads the Board of Governors of Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ranchi, said. He was unveiling the Third Indian Management Conclave 2012 here on Thursday

He blamed the declining quality of graduates on unhindered expansion of B-schools as well as low industry-academia interaction.

A report by testing and assessment company MeritTrac and MBAUniverse released recently said employability of MBAs had taken a dip to touch 21 per cent in 2011-12.

He said there was urgent need to fill this gap and called upon B-schools to change in order to cater to the evolving needs of their ultimate customers – the recruiters.

The report also found that the number of MBA seats had registered a 272.28 per cent increase in five years to touch 3,52,571 in 2011-12, from 94,704 in 2006-07.

“B-Schools must relook at their curriculum to suit the economic, social and developmental needs of the economy,” he said, adding that the colleges need to include hands-on work experience as part of the curriculum.

Bala Balachandran, Kellogg professor of management and founder of Great Lakes Institute of Management in Chennai, stressed on the need to improve the delivery system.

Amit Agnihotri, Convenor of the Indian Management Conclave, said, “Majority of the over 3,500 B-schools are facing challenges both on admissions and placement front. They need to realise that the era of sub-standard academic delivery is over.”

H Chaturvedi, Alternate President, Educational Promotion Society for India, called for setting up of a Government body to set standards exclusively for management schools along the lines of the All India Council for Technical Education.

**Source:** 10 August, 2012/[The Hindu Business Line](#)

### India's Olympic problem

I frequently complain about the broadcasting of sports in the US, about the focus on American football, basketball & baseball and events that are played between different cities or colleges. I make fun of how America christens its important events the World Series even though only one country in the world participates in it. I get quite frustrated about having to pay extra for Tennis Channel and not having access to soccer and other global sports. Many Indians routinely make fun of America for its apparently self-absorbed sporting culture. Recently, when the US TV network NBC decided to telecast the opening ceremony of the Olympics not live but delayed which meant all of America watched the event hours after the rest of the world, it seemed like another instance of simply not tuning in - quite literally - to the rest of the world.

Four years ago, when I watched the Beijing Games on my TV in Houston, I was disappointed at being unable to watch most of the events where Indians competed or won medals. No shooting or wrestling where India acquired a bronze medal each, no badminton or archery or table tennis or any of the sports where Asians traditionally shine. The first ones to pounce on this "weakness" in American media are Indians who never fail to remind me of how dumb, ignorant, and self absorbed Americans can be.

But then the Olympics begin and the nation that doesn't really care about international sport wins medals in so many international events that all jokes about America start to fall flat. All the jokes are on us.

With a population of 1.22 billion, India has won a total of 24 medals in the 23 Summer Games they've taken part in (9 Gold, 5 Silver, 10 Bronze). These have come in 8 sports: field hockey, shooting, athletics, wrestling, weightlifting, boxing, tennis and badminton. An article published last week in The Atlantic reminds us: "At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, India had the lowest ratio of medals-won to population of any competing country: one medal per 383 million Indians. And that year was their best Olympic performance ever. If you rank countries by the total number of Olympic medals they've ever won, India places 55th in the world, tied with Morocco and Thailand though India has participated in twice as many Olympic Games as either country."

These are some stats that Indians are well aware of. Sport, outside cricket, is not a field where India's newly found bravado is easy to sustain. Compare this to our northeastern neighbour and the only nation with more people than us. They've already won 80 medals (37 Gold) at these Games at this point of time that I'm writing this, with three days to go.

I've been wondering why we criticise other countries for showing only their athletes on TV. The truth is that the TV networks in India also show all the Indian athletes' events. But because there are so few of them who qualify for the later rounds, ESPN, Star Sports, and DD Sports run out of South Asian athletes very quickly. The rest of the time is devoted to watching other things. Whereas in the case of America, they never run out of athletes to root for and so we watch endless contests where there's an American medal contender. What people like me have essentially been complaining about, then, is the sheer number of excellent athletes America sends to the Olympics. How inconvenient!

India's drought of medals has unfortunate consequences. We tend to overreact to the slightest sign that one of our athletes is not finishing last in a contest! When tennis players Leander Paes and Vishnu Vardhan lost their second round match, they were interviewed on Doordarshan. The analysts in the studio used superlatives like brilliant and wonderful to describe their losing performance. While it's true that the modestly-ranked Vardhan played better than what most had expected, the fact is that this pair lost in the second round. How quick the media was to forget the drama surrounding the tennis pairs just a few weeks ago, a drama that effectively put nails in our tennis coffin.

When Saina Nehwal managed to wrest the bronze in badminton from an injured opponent who was leading by a game when she fell, her father made one of the most shocking remarks I've ever heard from someone belonging to a professional athletes' camp. He said, "Upar wale ki meherbani se woh gir gayee! (Due to God's grace, her opponent fell down)." Mr Nehwal clearly needs some help in the PR department. But this is a country where we are so starved for sporting glory that we take what we can and are grateful for it.

Instead of being quick to gush about mediocre performances and being even quicker to attack individual athletes when they fail to rise to out blown up expectations, it's time Indians took stock of their sporting failures. When the world's number one archer fails to make it to the quarterfinals and smiles happily throughout the contest, there's no use in condemning her. Because our concern isn't with a Deepika Kumar. It's with the entire sports system in this country. The question is not small and specific such as why did x or y fail today? The questions are much larger with consequences for the long term - such as what is wrong with our sporting machinery and how can this be remedied?

The aforementioned essay in The Atlantic tries to examine just why India fares so miserably at the Olympics when poorer countries in Africa have managed to carve long distance running niches for themselves, when much smaller nations like Kazakhstan and Jamaica have made some events their very own. [You can read the entire article here.](#)

It points out an interesting fact. Since the surface of field hockey contests in the Olympics was changed from natural to synthetic turf, India has only managed to win a single medal in the sport it once dominated. For people of my generation who're always hearing of India's great hockey tradition, it's beginning to sound a bit like a myth. There's obviously a cash crunch which prevents us from building synthetic fields where our hockey

players can practice. The priorities in a developing country as big as ours is on providing basic necessities to our citizens rather than developing sporting infrastructure.

But it's not simply about cash or the poorer nations wouldn't win more medals than we do. All arguments about lack of finances begin to unravel when we consider that Indian obsession - cricket. How much corporate sponsorship is poured into that sport? How much do our cricketers get paid in prize money and endorsements? One of the most baffling things is this discrepancy between our cricketing success and the mediocrity (to be kind) in all other team sports.

While mothers of little boys can be sighted escorting their sons to cricket practice and investing much time, energy and money in their training in wild hopes that they will grow up to be the next cricketing star, such enthusiasm is rarely seen in other sports.

Traditionally Indians have prioritised formal education over other occupations, particularly sport. The other day, on ESPN, Vijay Amritraj tried to explain why our tennis players are not as successful as others by saying: "Indians mature late physically and early mentally while people in the West mature early physically and late mentally." I thought at first that he was messing around with his British fellow analyst but he repeated himself and sounded quite serious. Not sure if there's any scientific evidence for this kind of racial distinction. If there was, it might pave the way for a new wave of colonialism. I thought it rather unfortunate that Amritraj, a man of high intelligence, would choose to make an excuse like this for our dismal sporting record.

But genes apart, it's undeniable that Indian parents typically emphasise the importance of studying. The more ambitious parents in particular would rather see their children go to medical or engineering school or complete some other form of higher education. Education is seen as the only way to secure a good job, a steady income, a decent quality of life. In order to become a world-class athlete, education must be sacrificed or at least highly compromised. The risk, to Indian minds, is simply too great. In India, people don't go back to high school or college in their thirties or later. You do everything in the set linear way or not at all. There no second chances. There's no social security for the unemployed. There are few safety nets for those who fail. And most fail. Like with anyone trying to be a painter or a musician or an actor, the ratio of failure to success is massive. Neglecting one's studies in favour of sport is perceived therefore as potentially suicidal.

But even when individual families do decide to take the plunge, how much support do they really get from the government? A couple of months the Indian media discovered that two Indian walkers, Basant Bahadur Rana and Irfan KT, did not have proper shoes for the Olympics. Sponsors reportedly stepped in at the last minute but how could they have been in this appalling situation in the first place? Given Indians' breezy self-confidence in recent years about the country's growing GDP and how India is all set to become one of the world's greatest economies soon, such poor support of our athletes is unforgivable.

It must be pointed out amidst all this doom and gloom that the state of Haryana is setting a strong example for the rest of the country. It has sent 18 athletes to London, including all the top boxers and wrestlers. The state offers cash reward programmes and has recently made participation in at least one sport mandatory for school children. Such initiatives are bound to bear fruit in the years to come but much more aggressive change has to happen at a systemic level if we are to see real change, i.e. more than 4 medals (and no gold) in a single Olympics.

What's most tragic about our sporting failure is how we love sport. How passionate Indians are about football for instance, a sport in which we've never had a global presence. Indians love to watch sport and the several sporting networks in this part of the world, between them, end up broadcasting a wide variety of sport. Without a doubt our exposure to world sport and knowledge of it is greater than the average American's.

And yet, watching the Olympics in India this summer has led me to a newfound respect for America as a sporting nation. Indians should ask themselves: "What would you rather do? Watch a wide variety of sports from all over the world? Or win them?"

**Source:** 11 August, 2012/[ibn live](#)

### Shutting down schools for scandal

Global higher education must recommit to traditional academic values to root out corruption within

A spectre of corruption is haunting the global campaign toward higher education internationalisation. An overseas degree is increasingly valuable, so it is not surprising that commercial ventures have found opportunities on the internationalisation landscape. New private actors have entered the sector, with the sole goal of making money. Some of them are less than honourable. Some universities look at

internationalisation as a contribution to the financial "bottom line," in an era of financial cutbacks. The rapidly expanding private higher education sector globally is largely for-profit. In a few cases, such as Australia and increasingly the United Kingdom, national policies concerning higher education internationalisation tilt toward earning income for the system.

### WIDESPREAD

Countries whose academic systems suffer from elements of corruption are increasingly involved in international higher education — sending large numbers of students abroad, establishing relationships with overseas universities, and other activities. Corruption is not limited to countries that may have a reputation for less than fully circumspect academic practices, but that problem occurs globally. Several scandals have recently been widely reported in the United States, including the private unaccredited "Tri-Valley University," a sham institution that admitted and collected tuition from foreign students. That institution did not require them to attend class, but rather funnelled them into the labour market, under the noses of U.S. immigration authorities. In addition, several public universities have been caught admitting students, with substandard academic qualifications. Quality-assurance agencies in the U.K. have uncovered problems with "franchised" British-degree programmes, and similar scandals have occurred in Australia. A prominent example is the University of Wales, which was the second-largest university in the U.K., with 70,000 students enrolled in 130 colleges around the world. It had to close its highly profitable degree validation programme, which accounted for nearly two-thirds of institutional revenue.

With international higher education now a multibillion dollar industry around the world, individuals, countries, and institutions depending on income, prestige, and access — it is not surprising that corruption is a growing problem. If something is not done to ensure probity in international relationships in higher education, an entire structure — built on trust, a commitment to mutual understanding, and benefits for students and researchers — a commitment built informally over decades will collapse. There are signs that it is already in deep trouble.

A serious and unsolved problem is the prevalence of unscrupulous agents and recruiters funneling unqualified students to universities worldwide. A recent example was featured in Britain's Daily Telegraph (June 26, 2012) of an agent in China caught on video, offering to write admission essays and to present other questionable help in admission

to prominent British universities. No one knows the extent of the problem, although consistent news reports indicate that it is widespread, particularly in countries that send large numbers of students abroad, including China and India. Without question, agents now receive millions of dollars in commissions paid by the universities and, in some egregious cases, money from the clients as well. In Nottingham's case the percentage of students recruited through agents has increased from 19 per cent of the intake in 2005 to 25 per cent in 2011, with more than £1 million going to the agents.

Altered and fake documents have long been a problem in international admissions. Computer design and technology exacerbate it. Fraudulent documents have become a minor industry in some parts of the world, and many universities are reluctant to accept documents from institutions that have been tainted with incidents of counterfeit records. For example, a number of American universities no longer accept applications from some Russian students — because of widespread perceptions of fraud, document tampering, and other problems. Document fraud gained momentum due to commission-based agents who have an incentive to ensure that students are "packaged" with impressive credentials, as their commissions depend on successful student placement. Those responsible for checking the accuracy of transcripts, recommendations, and degree certificates face an increasingly difficult task. Students who submit valid documentation are placed at a disadvantage since they are subjected to extra scrutiny.

Examples of tampering with and falsifying results of the Graduate Record Examination and other commonly required international examinations used for admissions have resulted in the nullifying of scores, and even cancelling examinations in some countries and regions, as well as rethinking whether online testing is practical. This situation has made it more difficult for students to apply to foreign universities and has made the task of evaluating students for admission more difficult.

Several countries, including Russia and India, have announced that they will be using the Times Higher Education and Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai rankings), as a way of determining the legitimacy of foreign universities for recognising foreign degrees, determining eligibility for academic collaborations, and other aspects of international higher education relations. This is unfortunate, since many excellent academic institutions are not included in these rankings, which mostly measure research productivity. No

doubt, Russia and India are concerned about the quality of foreign partners and find the rankings convenient.

Several "host" countries have tightened up rules and oversight of cross-border student flows in response to irregularities and corruption. The U.S. Department of State announced in June 2012 that visa applicants from India would be subjected to additional scrutiny as a response to the "Tri-Valley scandal." Earlier both Australia and Britain changed rules and policy. Corruption is making internationalisation more difficult for the entire higher education sector. It is perhaps significant that continental Europe seems to have been less affected by shady practices — perhaps in part because international higher education is less commercialised and profit driven.

The Internet has become the "Wild West" of academic misrepresentation and chicanery. It is easy to set up an impressive Web site and exaggerate the quality or lie about an institution. Some institutions claim accreditation that does not exist. There are even "accreditation mills" to accredit universities that pay a fee. A few include pictures of impressive campuses that are simply photo-shopped from other universities.

#### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

With international higher education now big business and with commercial gain an ever-increasing motivation for international initiatives, the problems mentioned are likely to persist. However, a range of initiatives can ameliorate the situation. The higher education community can recommit to the traditional "public good" values of internationalisation, although current funding challenges may make this difficult in some countries. The International Association of Universities' recent report, "Affirming Academic Values in Internationalization of Higher Education," is a good start. The essential values of the European Union's Bologna Initiatives are also consistent with the best values of internationalisation. The University of Nottingham, mentioned earlier, provides transparency concerning its use of agents, supervises those it hires, and in general adheres to best practice — as do some other universities in the U.K. and elsewhere.

Accreditation and quality assurance are essential for ensuring that basic quality is recognised. Agencies and the international higher education community must ensure that universities were carefully evaluated and that the results of assessment are easily available to the public and the international stakeholders.

Governmental, regional, and international agencies must coordinate their efforts and become involved in maintaining standards and protecting the image of the higher education sector. Contradictions abound. For example, the U.S. Department of State's Education USA seeks to protect the sector, while the Department of Commerce sees higher education just as an export commodity. Government agencies in the U.K. and Australia seem also to be mainly pursuing commercial interests.

Consciousness-raising about ethics and good practice in international higher education and awareness of emerging problems and continuing challenges deserve continuing attention. Prospective students and their families, institutional partners considering exchanges and research, and other stakeholders must be more sophisticated and vigilant concerning decision-making. The Boston College Center for International Higher Education's Corruption Monitor is the only clearinghouse for information, relating directly to corrupt practices; additional sources of information and analysis will be helpful.

The first step in solving a major challenge to higher education internationalisation is recognition of the problem itself. The higher education community itself is by no means united; and growing commercialisation makes some people reluctant to act in ways that may threaten profits. There are individuals within the academic community who lobby aggressively to legitimise dubious practices. Yet, if nothing is done, the higher education sector worldwide will suffer and the impressive strides taken toward internationalisation will be threatened.

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

### **Financial literacy: Planning & effort required to include it in school curriculum**

The debate on [financial literacy](#) is back on the table. The Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) has formulated a draft national strategy for financial education.

It envisages setting up a National Institute for Financial Education (NIFE) and recommends several channels to educate investors and reach a large audience, including students and adults. Those interested in contributing to this debate should send their suggestions to FSDC. You can go through [it at sebi.gov.in/cms/sebi\\_data/attachdocs/1342416428845.pdf](http://sebi.gov.in/cms/sebi_data/attachdocs/1342416428845.pdf). Why is this initiative important? What can it do differently?

First, finance is a technical area of study. It involves understanding concepts and principles. If the intention is to develop a curriculum for schools, the need is to treat finance as one would treat language, maths, art and science. If one goes through the curricula that have been developed and used in India, especially in finance, one finds very limited understanding of design.

There are laundry lists of tedious topics created without investing time and energy on learning objectives and outcomes. Most courses are descriptive, filled with jargon, and lack simple conceptual frameworks that can help develop a fundamental understanding. We learn language and grammar so we can independently read, comprehend and write. Finance needs such treatment in the curriculum.

Designing and implementing such content needs serious investment in time, resources and effort. Rather than trying to do it themselves, [FSDC](#) and [NIFE](#) should use their clout to get the best minds to deliver good quality curricula, content, training and execution.

Second, financial literacy needs organised content. Manufacturers of financial products have turned into de-facto educators and devote significant resources to creating literature, research, communication and training initiatives.

We have also seen a surge in personal finance content in the media, both editorial and promotional. While these have been useful in educating customers about financial products, they are very tactical in nature. Producers tend to align their content to their immediate business objectives, and media has to function in the realm of 'now' to produce stories that engage their audience.

These efforts have been undoubtedly useful, but to the investor they represent disjointed learning. If one wants to make a financial decision, one has to search and sift through material with varying degrees of vested interest, and varying levels of accuracy and clarity. Educative content needs to be brought together meaningfully.

This is best done without the bias of a product to sell or a story to complete. FSDC should enable a well-organised and categorised library of content, using multiple media, from print to digital, that is unbiased, updated and freely available to learn, refer, and keep. Third, the objective of financial literacy is not making money from the market. Several like to learn how to trade in the stock market, choose a good fund, select an IPO, know when to sell what has been bought, or review their portfolio.

The broader objective, if the target audience is the household, should be personal financial management. Households have to learn how to manage their personal balance sheets. This involves a gamut of decisions—managing income, expenses, assets, loans, insuring against losses, and range of processes, laws and rules, and operational issues. In the interest of audience engagement, the media runs stories on households and their finances. The danger of oversimplification is stereotyping in the name of education.

Investors engage with these initiatives, but without a framework of understanding, they learn in bits and pieces over a long period, making mistakes along the way. Financial literacy should focus on the household and its decisions. Financial products, planning and markets are only tools to implement the financial objectives.

Fourth, education needs to be devoid of sensationalism. The urgency about financial literacy comes from several instances of fraud, misrepresentation and mis-selling. Investors have been shortchanged by sharp practices and empowering them to protect themselves is important. However, a lot of content is alarmist, cynical and righteous. It makes for a good copy and great story and miscreants in the financial sector need watchdogs. Several influential writers have redirected policy action through concerted focus on sharp practices.

Their success and popularity has spawned a large number of cynics and sensationalists, who sow seeds of mistrust. Several households that are otherwise modern in their lifestyle and thinking remain cautious and conservative when it comes to financial decisions. Optimistic communication from producers and advisers is viewed with suspicion. In the interest of financial literacy we need more balance in educational content.

**Source:** 13 August, 2012/[Economic Times](#)

### Time to focus on quality

*Government should take a serious view of the expert committee report so that students benefit*

Engineering fee hike issue has inadvertently brought to focus again the quality of education extended in the state. That it is much below the expectations of the industry and the Government itself was substantiated with facts and figures by the three member high level committee consisting of K. Lakshminarayana, the then Commissioner of Technical Education; D.N. Reddy, the then JNTUH Vice-Chancellor and N. Prakasa Rao, Academic Auditor and Mentor in the Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQUIP).

The recent National Employability Report too revealed the pathetic picture of technical education in the country and more so in the State. The results of different JNTUs too gave similar indications with huge number of failures in core engineering subjects and poor performance of students in Physics and Mathematics, which are vital in engineering education. However, the Government conveniently ignored the suggestions made by its own committee for improving quality.

The High Level Committee in fact made some interesting observations and also provided solutions to put academics back on track in the colleges. "One of its several recommendations was to grade the colleges and had it been done the fee hike issue would not have turned into a problem affecting the admission schedule itself," reminds a senior officer of the Higher Education Department. "Now the same suggestions are being used to threaten colleges with action in the name of ordinance," agrees a key member of the Engineering Colleges Managements Association.

The report suggested several parameters to grade the colleges, which still can be done, in the interest of future batches. The report recommended that each college be evaluated on a 1,000 point scale with maximum points allocated for infrastructure (150), faculty (150) and teaching-learning modes (150). Giving due importance to publication of research papers by the faculty and students, and admission of meritorious students in that particular college were key points suggested for placing a college in the group.

Colleges that are alleged to be surviving just on fee reimbursement scheme would have at least made some effort to encourage their faculty towards research, which is almost nil in majority colleges. In fact, colleges were engaging B.Techs as lecturers and the report revealed that three-fourth of the faculty in 150 colleges did not had any teaching experience. It was not limited to new colleges alone but also established colleges.

Similarly, teachers with M.Tech qualification too were every less. In 10 colleges, not a single teacher with a PG exists, while in 17 colleges the number ranges from just one to 20. Only 32 colleges have PG teachers ranging from 100 to 200 on their rolls, the report revealed. The percentage of professors is more appalling. In 136 colleges professors constituted just one to five percent of faculty and six to 10 per cent in another 60 colleges.

Other prominent observations were judging the college related to the admissions of meritorious students. It said students' performance in annual exams and GATE scores achieved by those students

should also be counted. In such a scenario, colleges would have made an effort to improve the passes and instituted mechanisms for students to focus on exams like GATE.

Majority of these are not hard to implement, but majority colleges lacked the interest, an official involved in the process said. Since the issue is now in focus, the Government should take a serious view of the report so that students benefit.

**Source:** 14 August, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

### Technology in education

I often wonder what the difference between an Indian and an American is. On one hand the Americans come up with innovations like Google, Facebook, Microsoft and so much more whereas we Indians merely end up doing their back office work or working for them and at the most excelling at that.

We, the Indians, have the perfect DNA for an innovative mind. Ours has all the stuff that should theoretically make us frontrunners in technological advancements. The world has been a witness to the technological leaders of ancient India. It was we, who invented the first flying technology fueled by mercury, cosmetic surgery, the backbone of mathematics - The Number System, many of the modern mathematical formulae, Yoga and the saga continues. Some of these inventions may even be debated on by some; after all what we know of the world is what the British wanted us to learn. History's victors and villains were decided by the British, and an open mind, given its ability to question, could've been a nail in the British Empire's coffin.

#### *A closed mind*

To close that openness of the questioning mind, they came up with a brilliant solution. Why not introduce a memory rote based system? One that clogs an individual's intellect and releases it only during examinations directing him to the sole aim of obtaining marks which would ultimately reward him/her a good career and prevent him/her from thinking out of the box. What else? Label him/her a failure if they didn't. And if your memory absorption power didn't live up to their expectations, they can always get away with corporal punishment. The outcome being, in a class of 60 students there are just 3 toppers and 57 losers. This is what education was, for Indians back in the days until the 90's.

#### Education to create excellence

The basic principle of education is intra and interactivity which means both the teacher and the student are on equal grounds, learners if I may

say. The teacher imparting knowledge through a skill set, honing his own knowledge and skills in the process, learning from the student as a result of the intra-activity and inter-activity between them.

The other important aspect in education is the process of bringing out excellence and polishing the talents of a child. Education is neither a process of elimination nor a process of branding a couple of winners, and tagging the rest of them as losers. Nor is education a 100m sprint or a deciding factor of whether or not a child is a success or a failure (Don't you think an incompetent student is the result of an incompetent teacher, or or probably an unworthy education system?)

#### Tools for education

Tools are important. Consider the grand old blackboard that most of us grew with and anchors like teacher throwing the duster or the chalk to gain attention of the child. From a neuro-linguistic point of view, the way our brain deciphers information, it may just need the rawest form of anchor to hamper its development. From a psychological point of view, such methods not only lead to louder anchors for gaining future attention but also make the child scout for internal safety and there goes the once innovative brain in slumber and all he strives is survival i.e. jobs or making ends meet. In other words, it's putting a person on a survival mindset rather than a mindset that creates excellence. Another important aspect is the way knowledge, data or information is presented to the child. The right information delivery to the child can make all the difference in terms of not just the absorption but also the processing of this information in the child's brain. Remember, this absorption and processing of information presented by the teacher makes all the difference between the child who excels and the one who is labeled as a laggard.

#### Technology in education:

##### *Interactive White Boards*

Take for instance the case of interactive whiteboards. An interactive whiteboard equips an ordinary whiteboard with the power of computer, opening up immense possibilities for the teachers as well as for students for the proper flow of knowledge and information. According to Smart Tech, creators of world's 1st interactive white board called Smart Boards "Research has established that learners are better able to retain concepts when all their senses are engaged. Integrating sounds and visuals like graphs, maps, videos and images bring the course content alive for students - making it easier for them to grasp concepts." Over the past 15 years, numerous studies have been conducted in the United States, Canada, UK, Australia, Mexico,

Asia and the Middle East resulting in documented evidence confirming that the use of interactive whiteboards, combined with appropriate pedagogy, can increase a student's engagement, motivation and participation.

### *E-learning*

In the book *E-Learning in the 21st Century: A Framework for Research and Practice*, Terry Anderson presents an extensive research from technological, pedagogical and organizational perspectives in order to create practical models and release the full potential of e-learning. NCERT's initiative in getting course material available in electronic format is in the right direction that can aid e-learning.

### *A tablet for every child*

The government is already spending on incentives to attract children to classrooms, especially the girl child. Initiatives like mid-day meal and an incentive paid to the girl child every month deposited in the child's bank account are steps to a better future, a better India. India has the highest youth population in the world that "needs to be educated". Would it be asking a lot if instead of just educating them, they are educated in an environment where their potential to excel is realized?

### *Cloud learning*

Engage the child, inspire him and give him tools to collaborate. Much of education is about the collaboration dynamics between students, between students and teachers and more. Cloud Learning could perhaps be one of the most interesting ways in which students get access to Create, Share and Collaborate knowledge, information, data and content and create excellence.

### *India and spending on technology*

Surprisingly, in a country like India where education is yet to reach the masses, one may argue how wise it is to spend on technology. Paradoxically, it is technology that bridges the gap between schools; the underprivileged and the elite ones. The installation of interactive Smart Boards in schools like Rajkiya Pratibha Vikas Vidyalayas, Delhi and the Kendriya Vidyalayas has shown a considerable impact on the learning outcomes of the students.

### *The results of technology*

A study conducted by Milken Exchange on impact of educational technology on student achievement brought forth conclusive evidence on the dramatic impact of technology on student's learning outcomes. It was observed that students who used computer based instruction scored at 64th

percentile on tests of achievement compared to students in the controlled conditions without computers who scored at the 50th percentile. Those students were also found to take lesser time to grasp concepts in comparison with students in control group. It was also observed that the eighth grade students who used simulation and higher order thinking software showed gains in math scores up to 15 weeks above grade level.

### *The last word*

India is high on youth pool in the world. Think about the new possibilities if instead of 1 million workers which education would normally create, India could create a pool of excellence which is trained to excel and deliver excellence. What would it take for Wall Street traders to start the day early because Indian BSE opens 12 hours before their time? What would it take for NASA to take inspiration from ISRO? What would it take for next invention beyond the www to take place in India? Most importantly what would it take for a Tim Johnson in USA or a Mary Cooper from UK, both from very wealthy families, to be sent for their education in India?

The answer is simple, the right education and technology. If India could do it before we can do it now. It is in anyway in our DNA.

**Source:** 14 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

## **UGC lists norms for tie-ups with foreign varsities**

With the foreign educational providers Bill put on hold, University Grants Commission (UGC) has finalized regulations through which foreign institutions would be able to come to India in collaboration, partnership or in twinning arrangement with local educational institutions.

The regulations, to be notified shortly, mandate that only those foreign institutions would be allowed who are among the top 500 institutions in the world as per Times Higher Education's world university ranking or the Academic Ranking of World Universities of Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

Foreign institutions would have to ensure that courses offered by them are in conformity with the standards set by Indian regulatory bodies.

Indian partners of foreign educational institutions are mandated to have accreditation by National Assessment and Accreditation Council with an A or an equivalent grade.

However, Indian educational institutions run by Centre, state or Union Territory administration would be free from mandatory accreditation.

Indian collaborators would require at least five years experience of offering education at post-

graduate level. Again, government educational institutions have been exempted.

In case an Indian educational institution is affiliated to a university it would need its approval before collaborating with foreign institutions.

Also, the new entity borne out of collaboration is barred from teaching anything against national security and territorial integrity.

Institutions would also have to abide by regulations of Indian government and in case where foreign exchange is involved they would have to follow regulations of Reserve Bank of India. UGC's approval would be for five years, but it can review the progress and then extend or withdraw approval or even impose new conditions.

**Source:** 15 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

## **RESOURCE**

### **Indian students' enrolments drop by 24 per cent in Australia**

Australia's international student numbers continue to plummet with Indian students' enrolments dropping by over 24 per cent during January-June 2012 as compared to previous year, according to government figures.

Australian education providers saw a drop of 8.5 per cent in enrolments during January to June 2012 as compared with the same period last year. The significant decline is said to be in contrast to the average yearly growth rates since 2002 of 6.6 per cent.

The decline in enrolments has hit hardest in the vocational education sector which dipped by over 14 per cent during the period.

In terms of Indian students enrolments the figures dropped by over 24 per cent during January-June 2012 as compared to previous corresponding year.

At year-to-date figure, there were 389,356 enrolments by full-fee international students in Australia on a student visa, which represents a 8.5 per cent decline on the same period in 2011 and contrasts with the average YTD June growth rate for enrolments since 2002 of 6.6 per cent per year, the official statement said.

The data noted while the total Indian student enrolments fell down, in Vocational and Education Training (VET) sector Indian student enrolments were still ranked high in numbers at 31,326 as compared to other nationalities and accounted for the largest share of total enrolments in the sector at 29.5 per cent.

It was followed by China which was the next largest source country by enrolments with 10.9 per

cent, followed by Thailand at 6.7 per cent, the data revealed. The total number of enrolments from India stood at 42,049 till June this year as compared to 55,595 last period.

**Source:** 01 August, 2012/[Times of India](#)

### **Massive manpower crunch ails education system**

The Indian education system — from school to higher education, including IITs and IIMs — is plagued by a massive manpower crunch.

The HRD ministry's presentation before the Parliament's Consultative Committee on Tuesday also highlights that in school education poor performance of big states is affecting the national picture.

In case of higher education, 42 Central universities with sanctioned faculty strength of 16,602 have 6,542 vacancies. Fifteen IITs have 1,611 vacancies against the total strength of 5,092 faculty positions. Thirteen IIMs have to fill 111 vacancies out of 638 positions. Four Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) have almost 50% vacancy as 104 out of 224 teaching positions have not been filled. National Institutes of Technology (NITs) across 30 states have 1,487 vacant teaching positions out of the total faculty strength of 4,291. Even less than a decade-old Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISER) with five branches has been afflicted with faculty crunch. Being developed as premier institutes for pure science, they have 131 vacancies out of the total strength of 518.

But it is the school education that is facing the real heat. Throughout the country there is a vacancy for 12.59 lakh teachers in primary and upper primary schools. Uttar Pradesh leads the way with 3.12 lakh vacancies against the sanctioned strength of 8.18 lakh. Bihar has not been able to fill 2.62 lakh teaching positions, whereas West Bengal has 1.8 lakh vacancies. For its size, Chhattisgarh has a staggering 62,466 vacancies. Madhya Pradesh has around 89,000 vacant teaching slots, Gujarat (11,695), Karnataka (18,253), Delhi (10,074), Andhra Pradesh (15,379) and Kerala (3,013).

The consultative committee dealt with the issue of proposed national mission on teachers and teaching. The committee was told about two specific proposals by UGC on teacher training. UGC had recommended setting up of regional centres of educational management in IIM-Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Bangalore and in the National University of Educational Planning and Administration. It had also said centres of excellence in science and mathematics education should come up in Indian Institute of Science

(IISc), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) for developing specialized cadre of academy of teaching and teacher educators.

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

### **Indians second-most curious about education: Study**

Indians ranked second in search queries related to education, a study released here by search engine Google India said Wednesday. The list, topped by the US, says India has risen to second spot from the eighth position over the last four years.

"From eighth rank in 2008, there has been an explosive growth in education related searches in India in last 3-4 years. It is even ahead of China," said Rajan Anandan, vice president and managing director, Google India.

The study was conducted by Google search query patterns along with an offline study by TNS Australia. The study sampled 2,229 students between 18-35 years of age across New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

The study observed a 46 percent year-on-year growth on education related search on Google in India.

"There has been 135 percent year-on-year growth on educational queries coming from mobile. Thus making mobile phone a source of 22 percent of the total educational queries," the study added.

Higher education ruled the roost as nearly 40 percent of the total queries were based on higher education courses and institutes.

"Indian students are making large part of their decision based on the information available on the web," Anandan said.

About 60 percent of Indian students, who have access to internet use it as their first source of research for information related to education courses and institutes, he said.

Interestingly, India's premier institutions such as Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) have been the "most searched institutions" between Jan to June.

"The study shows a list of most searched institutes on Google from Jan 2012 - June 2012 which includes IIT Delhi and IIT Chennai among engineering colleges and IIM Ahmedabad among management institutes," the study noted.

Among private universities, Sikkim Manipal University and Amity University were the most searched.

**Source:** 08 August, 2012/ IANS/ [News Track India](#)

### **Low-income families half as likely to see children reach university**

Teenagers from poor families are half as likely to progress to higher education as those from richer ones, a new report shows.

Data released by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills reveal that just 18 per cent of state school pupils who had been eligible for free school meals at the age of 15 were in education four years later in 2009-10, compared with 36 per cent of children who were not eligible for free meals.

The study also highlights large regional variations in progression to higher education for children from poorer families.

Only three per cent of children claiming free school meals in Swindon went into higher or further education, and just eight per cent progressed in Plymouth and Salford.

But participation was much higher in London boroughs, including Kensington and Chelsea (where 44 per cent of children from poorer families went on to higher education) and Westminster (52 per cent).

The data suggest that other factors beyond family income, such as a family's past educational attainment, ethnicity, proximity of higher education institutions and the quality of schools, played a large part in progression to higher education.

About 13 per cent of 15-year-old state school pupils received free school meals in 2005-06 - 78,215 in total - a rate that remained constant in the ensuing four years, the report says. Pupils from families on income support or earning less than £16,190 are eligible to claim free meals.

However, there was an increase in the number of such students entering higher or further education between 2005-06 and 2009-10, the report found.

In 2009-10, 18 per cent of children eligible for free school meals were still in education aged 19, up from 13 per cent in 2005-06.

The BIS report also found that students from private schools were more than twice as likely to be accepted into highly selective universities.

Sixty-five per cent of privately educated 17-year-olds were accepted at the most selective institutions in 2009-10, an increase of three percentage points on 2008-09.

That compared to 26 per cent of state school pupils who were accepted into highly competitive institutions - the same rate as in 2008-09.

Patrick McGhee, vice-chancellor of the University of East London and chairman of Million+, which

represents post-1992 universities, criticised the study for focusing solely on younger students.

"One in three undergraduates enter university for the first time when they are over 21," said Professor McGhee. "The new measures fail to capture their achievements and those of the modern universities that educate them."

**Source:** 11 August, 2012/ [Times Higher Education UK](#)

### Higher education in India

Higher education in India is poised for an unprecedented expansion, marked by an explosion in student enrolment, a substantial growth in the number of institutions and a quantum leap in the level of investment in education. The challenge of providing equal opportunities for quality higher education, to an ever-growing number of students, is also a historic opportunity for correcting social imbalances, strengthening institutional framework and surpassing international benchmarks of excellence. India, with half its population below the age of 25, is set to either reap the demographic dividend, or plunge to disaster depending on how the youth are educated. This is both a 'challenge and opportunity' that all stakeholders need to address by charting out a path and, most importantly, implementing it with discipline.

Indian higher education system is largest in the world in terms of number of institutes (646 universities and 33,023 colleges) and 3rd largest in terms of enrolment (17 million), just behind China and the USA. Despite this, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education in India is 16 per cent as compared to the global average of 23 per cent. The government has set an aggressive target of achieving a GER of 30 per cent by 2020.

As per our estimates, to achieve this target, 15 million more seats are required, and at a cost per seat of Rs 0.6 million, the total investment required is about USD 180 bn. Indian higher education segment is currently estimated at around USD 11 bn.

The Indian higher education is over-regulated and yet under-governed. There are multiple regulatory bodies with overlapping roles and responsibilities. Further, education comes in the concurrent list of the constitution, which implies that it is under the purview of both the central government as well as respective state governments.

**Source:** 13 August, 2012/[Business Standard](#)

### Why Indian Students Prefer Higher Education?

Recently, Google researched that India is the No 2 in education related searches, just after the US

with 40% searches related to higher education. Indian students give first priority to the higher education.

Rajan Anandan, Vice president and MD of Google India said that, "40% students have a priority on finding out more about a course, a college and higher education in general. The trend that we have noticed that 44% of searches are in IT and vocational courses, 40% searches are related to finding more about Bachelor's degree, in the most searched on Engineering, followed by Medicine and 16% searches related to master's programmes with MBA topping the list".

The 'Students on the web' report, compiled by combining Google search query patterns and offline research conducted among 2,229 respondents in the age group of 18-35 years in seven metro cities by TNS Australia, found that online sources affect the final educational decisions taken by five out of six students.

"Placements are the top priority for students in selecting a college to study in, which is followed by faculty and course content", says report.

Anandan also said, "Through the study, we found that students take a minimum of six months to decide on the course and college while they are in class 12. The search queries coming from mobile phones have also increased considerably, showing a growth of over 135% year by year and amounting to over 22% of all education related search queries".

Around 66% students said that they use their mobile phones to access internet in India. In that 46% of students want to watch videos when it comes to doing their research.

The report further says, "46% students want to watch videos on career options placements, 44% want videos on faculty, 29% for videos of classroom sessions and 27% to help them take more informed decisions.

**Source:** 13 August, 2012/[Education on India](#)

### India Inc' biggest concern is to manage the people-supply chain

According to experts, India has a combined workforce of 145 million and yet, our industry is struggling to meet its demand.

The reason - 85 per cent of the workforce is unskilled and unemployable. The challenge is to provide adequate skills training to those unskilled professionals and turn them into a productive labour pool, which can then be utilised properly.

"Attrition, a lack of employable talent and managing the talent pipeline (deployment/redeployment) are critical problems facing the

Indian corporates. The supply and demand interventions are on parallel tracks; hence, we see increased unemployability.

Our colleges/skill intervention centres are also not churning out enough 'job ready' candidates. There is also a mismatch in terms of student aspirations and capability due to a lack of proper counselling," says Rajesh A.R, head, iRize, MaGE.

On the other hand, professor Dr Uday Salunkhe, group director, WeSchool feels the people supply chain stands weak due to - a) a shrinking number of able and willing recruiting pools and b) poor employability of the available supply pools.

### *Bridge the gap*

In today's fast changing business environment, how best can the supply-demand gap be bridged? "We believe that the only way to bridge this gap is by providing adequate training to the youth and equipping them with the requisite skills.

Some of the major hurdles against achieving this are poverty, zero emphasis on skills in mainstream education, limited capacity of the current vocational education set-up and a poor enabling environment.

Improving India's vocational education and skills training infrastructure can help address the supply demand issue to a large extent.

Vocational skills training can provide candidates with the necessary skill-sets required to supplement their academic studies and make them industry-ready right from day one," explains John Yates, CEO - Manipal City & Guilds.

Commenting on the same, Rajesh feels that there is no quick fix to this problem.

"Educational /training institutes and corporates usually operate in silos. There needs to be synergy between the two in a way wherein they can create an ideal job ecosystem for creating resourceful talent.

The government, from a policy standpoint, needs to engage more with private players through sector-specific skills councils and ensure the delivery of employability services are done through expert players in the respective domains."

### *The skill factory*

"Candidates from rural India are often found lacking in soft skills like communication, personal effectiveness, customer query handling, etc., and sometimes sector-specific harder skills like product knowledge and sales skills," says Yates.

Manipal City & Guilds' training wing IndiaSkills has been working closely with organisations such as OFSDC (Orissa SC/ST Finance Co-operative

Corporation), MSDS (Manipur Skills Development Society), OEM (Orissa Employment Mission) and State Governments of Sikkim, AP, etc to provide training and employment to students in rural areas at easily accessible locations and fees.

"The biggest advantage for a student enrolling under these projects is that they can avail of high-quality training of international standard while being directly funded by the government, leading to reduced or almost nil financial burden," adds Yates.

What additional skills do such candidates need to possess? Professor Snehal Shah, program chair of human resources leadership program at School of Inspired Leadership (SOIL) feels that in the recent past, rural India has awakened to a new dawn.

"As Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises (SMSEs) in various industries such as leather, textile, auto parts, packaging and other ancillary industries set up their operations in rural areas, they are ready to recruit low skilled labour.

Also, if the rural youth develops a skill-set that includes basic proficiency in English coupled with vocational training in semi-skilled jobs across industries, they are not only poised to better their own lives, but also of their future generations," says Shah.

### *The right fit*

So, how can employers overcome the challenge of hiring the right fit in the coming years? "Every job role needs to be broken down to DKSB framework - Data, Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour required for the specified job role.

Corporates also need to work with training/educational institutes for building the right syllabus and curriculum and help the students by giving them internship/apprenticeships to get on-the-job experience," avers Rajesh.

Thus, when employers tighten their recruitment process to find the right candidate, they are more likely to succeed in getting the right talent.

**Source:** 14 August, 2012/[Economic Times](#)

## **25 mn new jobs by 2017, says plan panel**

The UPA government is looking at creating 25 million new jobs and two million additional seats in higher education in the 12th plan (2012-17) to leverage India's demographic dividend. Creating more jobs is key to foster economic growth of 8.5 % to 9 % in 12th plan as India's working population (15-64 age group) is expected to increase from 781 million in 2010 to 916 million in 2020. The 2011 census also stated that India has youngest population among big economies with half of country's people being younger than 25 years in

2010 as compared to 35 years for China and 45 for United States.

Planning Commission deputy chairperson Montek Singh Ahluwalia has set this ambitious target of 25 million new jobs outside agriculture for the 12th plan likely to be finalized by early September at a meeting chaired by PM Singh.

“It (creating 25 million jobs) is not a difficult task,” said Dr TS Papola, former director of Institute for Studies in Industrial Development and member of a plan panel’s working group on employment. For that, he said, the government will have to focus on growth in service and manufacturing sectors as employment in agriculture was falling. “We have ability to create 8-10 million jobs every year”.

The plan panel believes that the key for creating new jobs would be “substantial” improvement and expansion in higher education. “We are looking at addition of two million additional seats in higher education, double of what was achieved in the 11th (2007-12) plan,” a senior panel functionary told HT, adding that there would be financial incentive for colleges and universities meet quality parameters.

The panel also wants to provide different skill training to 80 million youth in the 12th plan under the framework of the proposed National Skill Development Authority. Dilip Chenoy, managing director of National Skill Development Corporation said collaboration with private sector on training to employed and unemployed youth has started in several states including Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. “It is work in progress in five key sectors,” he said.

The 12th plan once approved by PM headed Planning Commission in September would be discussed with chief ministers at the National Development Council meeting slated for this October.

**Source:** 15 August, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

## Contribute

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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)

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