



Announcements

We are commemorating the 93rd Birth Anniversary of our Founder Chairman late Dr. Stya Paul on 23rd November 2012 at Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi, from 6 pm to 8 pm. The highlight of the evening would be a special presentation on Sant Kabir by noted artist Shekhar Sen.

we cordially invite you to grace the occasion with your presence

ASERF has instituted **Dr Stya Paul Young Educationist Award** for honouring Young Educationists who have demonstrated their potential by making an impact on Indian education. Applications from the eligible scholars are invited for the Award of the year 2012. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

Apeejay Stya University announces admission for the session 2012

Apeejay Stya University is offering diverse catalogue of technical, scientific, management and liberal arts courses for the Fall Admission 2012-13. Applicants for admission accepted on the basis of comprehensive merit, judged by their academic excellence, their extracurricular achievements, and their utilization of the resources they have had available. As part of the application, the University recognize a number of examination scores to establish academic excellence, including AIEEE, GMAT, SAT, SAT-II. **For more,** [click here](#)

Apeejay Stya University announces Founder's Scholarship

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

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

Get Involved

Fellowship opportunities

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

Workshops/Guest Lectures

Regular workshops and lectures on a variety of subjects.

Scholarships

Need-based financial aid to deserving student

Faculty Sponsorships

By seeding a named faculty seat or fellowship

Internships/Mentoring

Internships can be in diverse areas from services, government and nonprofit.

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

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

Partnership

Dear Partners,

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

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

Editor

[Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Singh](#)

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ASPECT

What Will Higher Education Look Like in 25 Years?

While most industries have changed significantly over the years, higher education has remained relatively the same. Students listen to professors lecture in century-old universities and tackle tough philosophical questions the way their ancestors did.

But higher education is at a breaking point. Tuition is skyrocketing. State funding is dropping. And online course providers are on the rise.

Cost is a major barrier for accessing higher education. A 2011 Pew Research Center survey on the cost and value of higher education found that 75 percent of respondents said college is too expensive for most Americans to afford. And 57 percent said the U.S. higher education system does not provide students a good return on their investment.

"Technology has to be a big part of the solution to access and affordability," said Ben Wildavsky, senior scholar at the Kauffman Foundation, guest scholar at the Brookings Institution and co-editor of *Reinventing Higher Education: The Promise of Innovation*. "The key is to do it in a smart way."

Futurists surveyed for *The Future of Higher Education* report by the Pew Internet and American Life Project pontificated on what higher education would look like in 2020. Thirty-nine percent said higher education wouldn't look much different than it does today. But 60 percent said higher education would be different, complete with mass adoption of teleconferencing and distance learning. In their written responses, however, many of them painted scenarios that incorporated elements of both.

The stage is set for a shift in how higher education operates — the question is, how exactly will it evolve? Futurists view the coming decades as an opportunity for teacher/student relationships to occur almost purely through technology — an approach known as technology-mediated education. But faculty members look to maintain the university model that's been in place for centuries, with a sprinkle of technology integration.

These mindsets offer somewhat competing visions for what higher education could look like in the coming years, with each claiming to make college education better, more accessible and more affordable for students.

Two Roads

Lillian Taiz — a history professor at California State University, Los Angeles, and president of the California Faculty Association, which launched the Campaign for the Future of Higher Education — said eliminating the traditional university experience would be a mistake.

To Taiz, technology-mediated education means no student engagement, no physical campus and no credibility. Universities will be on par with 19th-century correspondence schools, which had little standing because they accepted student work by mail.

Integrating technology into the existing higher education model is a better option, she said. Technology will become a tool in professors' toolboxes. Universities will still exist and do much of the same things they do today.

"I love technology, but it isn't a replacement for the kind of learning that goes on where you're interacting," Taiz said. "It's an enhancement."

But others aren't so sure. Professor Richard DeMillo is director of the Center for 21st Century Universities at the Georgia Institute of Technology and author of *Abelard to Apple: The Fate of American Colleges and Universities*. He argues that traditional universities will have little place in a new world, at least as they appear and function today. The technology-mediated education road is the way to go.

Disruptive Ideas

Most of the disruptive ideas that could reshape college education over the next 25 years are in the early research stage now or only being used in a few segments of the population, said Cameron Evans, CTO of U.S. education at Microsoft. But over the next five to 25 years, machine learning will have to increase to keep up with the large amounts of data that people produce, Evans said. Machines will learn about students' behavior, actions, preferences and associations. Then they will figure out how to use this knowledge to create a richer and more dynamic learning context.

Learning also will have to adapt more to students' needs and preferences, he added. While growth in personalized learning is a given, it needs to step up to the next level so that data is fashioned for individual students and the faculty members who prepare courses for those individuals.

Universities as we know them will not exist 100 years from now," DeMillo said. "There may be a couple recognizable names, maybe Harvard or Oxford. But higher education will be universally accessible, mediated by technology, probably



offered through a variety of commercial platforms and very, very inexpensive.”

Knowledge will become a commodity and in fact, is already headed in that direction, adds Cameron Evans, CTO of U.S. education at Microsoft.

That’s why higher education will have to figure out how to make the college experience more about applying knowledge rather than capturing knowledge.

“If there’s anything that will be significantly different 25 years from today, it’s that people won’t go to school for knowledge,” Evans said. “They will go to school for an experience that they couldn’t otherwise have gotten online.”

Students’ school experience will focus on higher-order activities, with professors acting as facilitators of project-based learning or independent tutors of higher-level understanding, said Michael Staton, co-founder of Inigral, a private Facebook community for colleges and universities. High-quality content creation, delivery and assessment will move online.

“If you can learn the same content online at the same pace or even at a more rapid pace, what is the point of going to school?” Staton asked.

A New Divide?

One danger of the pure technology model, Taiz said, is that students who don’t have much money will attend technology-mediated schools. And students with more resources will go to prestigious university campuses such as Harvard, Yale and Stanford.

But others argue that the divide has little to do with technology. “We have big socioeconomic gaps in who goes to what kind of college,” said Kauffman’s Wildavsky. “So it’s not that this advent of technology is going to create something that didn’t exist already.”

Nor are all technology-mediated models necessarily bad. Older working students especially benefit from the opportunities of online classes. And some students may choose a technology-mediated education because the experience is good enough, Wildavsky said.

For example, former Stanford professor Sebastian Thrun taught an Introduction to Artificial Intelligence course on campus in 2011 with Peter Norvig, Google’s director of research. But they also opened up the course online at no charge to anyone in the world who wanted to participate. As a result, many of the students from the face-to-face class opted to participate online.

As more and more students apply, top universities are becoming more selective, adds DeMillo. They’re selecting students by the quality of their high school education, which means they’re selecting by ZIP code and economic status.

“We’re going through that now, and it has nothing to do with online education,” DeMillo said.

Online Courses, Supersized

Massively open online courses have been around in some form for at least four years. But their popularity exploded in 2012 after Stanford’s experiments — and these efforts will continue to reshape higher education.

Thrun left Stanford to co-found Udacity, which launched to offer high-quality, low-cost classes. More than 160,000 students from more than 190 countries signed up for Udacity’s first artificial intelligence course.

Two other Stanford professors, Andrew Ng and Daphne Koller, spun off a company called Coursera. And, in 2012, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology teamed up to start the not-for-profit edX. These organizations — along with Udemy and other academics — all offer massively open online courses that are available to anyone, with unlimited space and no charge.

“I think not only are they sustainable, as you look at the economics of the cloud,” Evans said, “[but also] they’ve become the norm.”

The question isn’t so much whether they can be sustained technologically or economically, he said, but whether people can stay engaged in the course. And that’s one of the challenges these course providers will have to face.

Currently the courses are not as engaging because students don’t build an affinity for the university or make friendships like they do on campus, Evans said. As 3-D technology and 4K resolution displays and video improve, they will help students make deeper emotional and social connections.

However, these courses are only for certain types of students; they won’t meet everyone’s needs, Taiz said. “I worry if we think that this is the way of the future.”

They also have a high dropout rate, she said. Before MIT joined its online course efforts with Harvard in edX, it offered “Circuits and Electronics” under the name MITx. Nearly 155,000 people signed up, according to MIT. Of these students, less than 15 percent tried the first problem set — and fewer than 5 percent passed the course.



The dropout rate is really not exceptionally high in context, DeMillo said. A 20 percent retention rate in these courses is good. In other businesses, an online conversion rate of 1 to 2 percent is considered a win.

Since January, top research universities have banded together to offer courses featuring their rock star professors. Georgia Tech started offering classes through Coursera in July and had 90,000 students registered in two months.

"The high-quality portion of this story is really important," DeMillo said. "The reason people are flocking to these courses is that the quality of the courses is so high, and it's such a compelling experience for students that they're drawn to it."

Alternative Paths

Online classes like these will be just one of the alternative paths that students can take down the road, Wildavsky said. Students will choose from multiple options, including online classes, traditional course credits and competency-based learning.

Traditional course credits measure time spent learning, while competency-based learning measures mastery of skills and knowledge. Western Governors University — an accredited online university founded by 19 state governors — follows the competency-based learning path. A start-up called StraighterLine offers online classes a la carte for \$99 a month, which is part of a trend called unbundling, Wildavsky said.

Unbundling disassembles higher education into pieces and parcels them off to whoever can provide them at the highest quality for the lowest price. Think of it as contracting out teaching, curriculum, advising and other services. Once companies like StraighterLine can get universities to recognize their classes for credit, this will be yet another option for students to access higher education.

"We're going to move to a world where academic results matter much more than how you get there," he added.

No matter how students get there, they need to earn a recognized credential that gets them into the workplace in larger numbers, Evans said. According to a 2011 Pathways to Prosperity project from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, 56 percent of students at four-year colleges earn a bachelor's degree within six years. And less than 30 percent earn an associate's degree in three years.

Students will not complete all of their learning at one institution. But students who currently transfer to multiple institutions end up with more credits than they need to finish a degree. States will need to think about ways to have credits and academic experience transfer to any public institution across their state system. That way, students can finish their degrees without worrying about credits transferring or retaking courses elsewhere.

"As students become far more mobile, their academic experience has to be as portable as the mobility they represent in their own lives," Evans said. "And that's where technology can enable that portability to happen in a far greater way than what we have today."

Because academic results will matter more than how students get there, accreditors will change the way they evaluate institutions. Currently institutions are evaluated by inputs like the size of the university library or the amount universities spend. In the future, accreditors will evaluate universities by outputs, which include student learning, student success in the labor market and graduation rates.

Along with multiple pathways and different accreditation measurements, credentials will change. Over the next five to 10 years, people will get a job solely by earning micro-credentials, demonstrating competency and showcasing their knowledge and skills on the Internet, Staton said.

By placing more value on what people can do, everyone will focus on the actual work of potential employees rather than being hung up on credentials, he said. But that doesn't mean that a bachelor's degree has no place. Society may decide that a degree is important because of other signals it conveys about the individual, such as being highly socialized, capable of doing long-term projects or having a supportive family. Either way, this focus on the work rather than the diploma will undercut the skyrocketing prices of undergraduate education and potentially some types of graduate education.

Depending on who casts the vision, higher education could be headed down a road that leads to technology-mediated or technology integrated learning. Students could travel multiple paths to get to academic results. And technology could play an increasing role in making higher education accessible and affordable. "It shouldn't be [about] funding monolithic technology platforms; there will be no monolithic technology platforms," Staton said. "It will be about interoperability, not about one solution for the entire system."

Source: 01 November, 2012/Govtech.com



NEWS**Leading Woman Entrepreneur & Industrialist Sushma Berlia Felicitated by CII**

The Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) today felicitated Sushma Berlia, a leading woman entrepreneur, President of the Apeejay Stya & Svrán Group and Chancellor of Apeejay Stya University for her outstanding contribution to academia and industry at the AICTE-CII University-Industry Congress 2012 & 4th Global Higher Education Summit.

Mr. Sunil Kant Munjal, Past President, CII & Chairman, CII National Committee on Economic Policy and, Hero Corporate Service Ltd, presented the honor to Mrs. Sushma Berlia and appreciated her contribution towards development of education sector in the country.

Acknowledging the honor presented to her by CII and emphasizing on the need of structural reforms in the higher education system of the country, Mrs. Berlia said, "Despite the tremendous growth in the number of universities and colleges, the gross enrolment ratio, or GER, still remains at an abysmal 16%, which is much below the world average of 27%. The higher education sector in India is still not producing enough skilled, educated, trained and employable graduates. Being in industry gave me insights into the acute disconnect between the graduates being produced by our universities and the challenges of employability in terms of their industry-readiness, ability to think and analyze critically, to learn for life, and to work collaboratively in teams. As Nobel Laureate playwright and one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century, William Butler Yeats, said – Education is not the filling of the bucket, but the lighting of a fire. I would like to congratulate CII for taking this initiative of reforms on a sustainable basis, and keeping that flame of education alive."

She attributed her achievements to her father and mentor Dr. Stya Paul, eminent industrialist, educationist and philanthropist, who established Apeejay Education Society over four and half decades back as a way of giving back to society. Contributing to society, particularly through education, is something that has now become an engrained passion in her life.

Speaking about need to reform the regulations in education, Mrs. Berlia said, "Admissions, courses, programs or geographical jurisdictions should not be the criteria for regulation. Instead, the need of the day is to regulate the adequacy of infrastructure, faculty, quality of teaching facilities,

and governance. Instead of one monolithic body, there should be three separate groups to manage regulation, accreditation and financing respectively. Independent testing agencies that do not require a coaching format should also be encouraged to create a level-playing field for the students."

It is for the first time that CII has felicitated and recognized the contribution of an industrialist to the development of education services in India. A well known Educationist and Industrialist, Mrs. Sushma Berlia has been working towards the cause of education, skill development and women empowerment and has played a leading role in helping formulate policies for educational reforms and industry. Many of her recommendations on issues of access, equity & inclusive education, industry-academia linkages, skill development and implementable solutions for funding of higher education have been well-appreciated and accepted by the government and regulatory bodies. She was the first-ever woman to head a multi-state apex chamber in India. Mrs. Berlia is a Governing Body Member of the National Board of Accreditation. She has also served as the Chairperson, Board of Governors of the NIT, Jalandhar, and as Member of the Board of Governors of IIT-Roorkee.

Sushma Berlia was awarded the PHD Chamber Outstanding Businesswomen Award 2008 at the PHD Chamber Annual Awards for Excellence for her achievements as a leading woman entrepreneur and industrialist. She has also been conferred the 'International Lifetime Achievement Award' by International Congress of Women 2009 in Collaboration with the Govt. of India and the UN Information Centre for India and Bhutan.

Source: 08 November, 2012/[India Education Diary](#)

Apeejay Schools win eIndia Best Education Initiative in Schools Award 2012

New Delhi, November 16: Apeejay Schools have been conferred the Best Education Initiative in Schools Award at the eIndia Awards 2012. The Awards ceremony, India's largest ICT event, was held on 15-16th November 2012 in Hyderabad. The event was supported by Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, NSDI, NIC, Union Ministry of Commerce, Union Ministry of Urban Development, Department of IT & Communication, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, among others.

The citation of the award reads: "Apeejay School has launched many innovations in education with the aim of transforming from 'Enriching School' to 'Empowering School'. The project is focused on enabling teachers and students to become reflective



practitioners through experiential & enquiry based learning, decision-making and interpersonal trust. The objective is to encourage independent thinking, nurture curiosity, promote research based approach to culture and maximise learning effectiveness."

The Apeejay Schools, under the aegis of Apeejay Education Society (AES), are pioneers in providing quality education of global dimensions along with inculcation of values and an appreciation of Indian culture, arts and heritage. The AES now encompasses 13 schools, 16 institutions of higher learning and Apeejay Stya University – India's First liberal Arts & Meta University, which have flowered to become symbols of excellence in their various disciplines, moulding the lives and careers of future generations of the country, under the dynamic leadership of Mrs. Sushma Berlia, President, Apeejay Education Society & Chancellor, Apeejay Stya University.

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Shri N. Kiran Kumar Reddy graced the awards function as the chief guest and Shri Ponnala Lakshmaiah, Minister-IT, Government of Andhra Pradesh; Shri K Partha Sarathy, Minister of Secondary Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh; Shri P K Kunhalikutty, Minister of Industries and Information Technology, Government of Kerala; Smt. Kruparani Killi, State Minister of Communication & IT, Government of India were present in the event as guests of honour.

Source: [Apeejay](#)

Raju focus on skill-based education, moral science

New HRD Minister Pallam Raju, who took charge Wednesday, marked out a four-point agenda: integrating moral science in our education system, enhancing employability by focussing on skill-based education, building on the success of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and consolidating the expansion made in the higher education sector.

Stating that he would take forward his predecessor Kapil Sibal's reform agenda, Raju said every effort would be made to ensure smooth passage of HRD Bills pending in Parliament. He said he and his ministers of state would reach out to all parties to ensure passage of the Bills in the coming winter session.

"We will tell them that the credit belongs to all of us and not the government alone...it is a collective credit to leadership across party lines," he said.

On the contentious Foreign Education Providers Bill, Raju said if collaboration with foreign institutes

can bring value to higher education, it will be looked at with an open mind.

Source: 01 November, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

Four new Scotland-India education projects announced

The cabinet minister for Culture and External Affairs unveiled four Scottish-India education initiatives on Wednesday, which include a partnership between Robert Gordon University and an Indian technology school, an Indian work-placement programme for UK graduates from Dundee University, collaboration between Scottish academics from Queen Margaret University in developing sustainable tourism businesses in rural India and a new diploma launched by Scottish Investment Operations.

The announcements were made at the 'Innovation in Education' round-table in New Delhi which was organised by Scottish Development International, in partnership with India's Planning Commission and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. At the round-table, which was also attended by senior representatives of four Scottish education institutes, Hyslop led the discussion on the importance of innovation in education for India to achieve its economic goals, along with the critical need to increase the employability levels of students.

Hyslop said: "With the world's fourth largest economy and second highest growing economy, India is an important trade and investment partner for Scotland with 13 Indian companies investing up to £700 million in the past five years. In turn, India is looking to secure its future growth through innovation and Scotland offers a wealth of technological innovation expertise and cutting edge research and development which are helping India achieve its goals. In particular, our expertise in education, financial and business services, energy and healthcare present significant opportunities for Scottish businesses trading in India. Increasing business links in these areas forms a key component of my visit."

India Country Manager of Scottish Development International, Mark Dolan said: "The Scottish education sector has a long standing relationship with Indian universities and companies - seven universities and higher education institutes already have a highly successful presence in India. Today's announcements reinforce the Scottish Government and Scottish Development International's continued commitment to support education and human resource initiatives in India as part of our strategic engagement with the country's government and business community."



Announcements made during the round-table included - Robert Gordon University (RGU) signed an agreement with the Maharashtra Institute Of Technology School Of Telecom Management (MITSOT) affiliated to the Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT), Pune University which will see MITSOT students, as part of their two-year Postgraduate Diploma in Management, spend two semesters at RGU undertaking its MSc International Business, followed by a third semester dissertation project under RGU supervision at MITSOT; Scottish Investment Operations (SIO), an Edinburgh-based body launched the Investment Accounting Diploma, which is an industry made professional qualification backed by the world's largest financial institutions and designed to raise the quality of human resource in the financial services industry globally.

The significant growth in asset management in India (47% between 2003 and 2009) and the success of a pilot programme in India earlier this year has prompted the launch of this global qualification in the Indian market; Dundee University has been chosen to run a UK wide work placement programme as part of the UK-India Education and Research Initiative, which will help UK graduates enter the Indian workplace and experience living and working in India, in order to gain a strong understanding of one of the world's fastest emerging economies; Queen Margaret University (QMU) is running a joint project with the Indian YES Bank and the Scottish Government which uses the expertise of Scottish academics to develop sustainable tourism businesses in rural India led by the local communities.

In November, the partnership will launch the "Edge of India", a co-operative tourism network of rural villages, to the global tourism sector at the World Travel Market in London. Pawan Agarwal, higher education and culture adviser from the Planning Commission of India, who jointly ran the event with Scottish Development International and [FICCI](#), said: "We are delighted to partner with the Scottish Government and Scottish Development International in organising this workshop on 'Innovation in Education'.

The Indian Prime Minister has declared this as the decade of innovation and the key to promoting innovation is cross-learning from each-others' experiences. We at the Planning Commission are engaged in strategic thinking about education and fostering innovation by cross-learning and as a result, partnership with Scotland is at the heart of our work."

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

FICCI summit to strive for making India an education hub

The summit will focus on the critical role of higher education to drive India's aspirations to become a major player in global knowledge economy.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), in partnership with the ministry of human resource development and the Planning Commission, is organizing the 8th FICCI Higher Education Summit 2012, a two-day global conference, on November 5 and 6 in New Delhi.

The summit will focus on the critical role of higher education to drive India's aspirations to become a major player in the world's knowledge economy. Policy makers from the public and the private sectors, who's who of the corporate sector and thought leaders from noted Indian and foreign higher education institutes will address the event.

Some of the key speakers will be Dr Philip G. Altbach, Monan Professor of higher education, & director of Center for International Higher Education Boston College; and Prof Paul Griffin, head of the department of industrial and manufacturing engineering, Pennsylvania State University.

The inaugural session will be attended by Mr Nadar, Mr Venkataramanan and Dr Altbach. It will be followed by a plenary session on 'emergence of education hubs: global experience & Indian reality', panel discussions on 'new private sector in higher education in India' and 'corporate engagement in higher education'.

The second day will witness absorbing discussions on 'building education excellence through industry-academia collaboration & mobility'; 'half a century of Indian higher education: on the cusp of a change'; 'mainstreaming skills in higher education'; 'collaborative research in higher education'; and 'powering the higher education system through information and analytics'.

This annual higher education summit has become one of the prime converging points of policy makers, industry captains and education leaders working towards the betterment of the higher education in the country.

Source: November, 2012/[MBA Universe](#)

Indian-American joins US Leadership Council

An eminent Indian-American from Texas who played a key role in the India-US Civilian Nuclear deal has joined the Leadership Council of the prestigious Texas Health Research and Education Institution.

"Ashok Kumar Mago joins Leadership Council of Texas Health Research & Education Institute," a media release said yesterday.



As an independent, not-for-profit organisation within Texas Health Resources, THREI advances health through research and education and it conducts research that contributes to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease, the statement said.

Chairman and CEO of Mago and Associates, a Dallas-based business and investment consulting company, Mago in 2010 received the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award from President of India for his exceptional and meritorious service to the community.

Source: 01 November, 2012/[The Hindu Business line](#)

Australian states push for more trade with India

With an announcement of 10-year strategy, South Australia has become the latest Australian state to focus on increasing commercial engagement with India. South Australia plans to focus primarily on the energy, education and environmental services as a part of the ambitious plan.

"States need to more effectively engage with this emerging economic powerhouse and this strategy sets out how we will do that," Premier Jay Weatherill said while unveiling the South Australia - India Engagement strategy at Adelaide University's Centre for Asian Studies Wednesday.

The announcement has come close on the heels of the Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard unveiling a much-awaited Asian Century White Paper. The paper aims to take advantage of the burgeoning Asian economic powers and make Australia as one of the top 10 richest countries in the world in the next few decades.

"As the Prime Minister's Australia in the Asian Century white paper outlines, states need to more effectively engage with this emerging economic powerhouse and this strategy sets out how we will do that," Premier Weatherill said.

South Australian announcement could be seen as an extension of the trend where Australian political bigwigs are discovering the potential of trading with India which has a middle-class running into hundreds of millions.

While Jay Weatherill was unveiling 10-year strategy, his counterpart from the most populous Australian state New South Wales, Premier of NSW Barry O'Farrell is in New Delhi these days inking business pacts with various Indian trade and government agencies.

South Australian Premier also intends to position his state in the best place to take advantage of India's rapid economic development. Besides other plans, a South Australia-India Business Council

would be established to pilot the state's trade initiatives in the second most populous country in the world. The government funded body would have the leading business experts to chart the strategy.

The South Australian Premier would also be leading a business delegation to India in the near future.

South Australia's Economic Development Board chairman Raymond Spencer said ongoing consultation with Indian state and local governments, businesses and chambers of commerce would ensure the state's relations with the country would be based on present-day conditions.

"The upcoming visit provides a prime opportunity to engage with Indian state and local governments and business people who can offer insight to help strengthen our economic partnership," South Australia's Economic Development Board chairman Raymond Spencer told reporters Wednesday.

"The significance of India for Australia's future is widely recognised in the community, in the schools system and by government," Professor Purnendra Jain, president of the Centre for Asian Studies has been quoted as saying by the Australian media.

"But we want to ensure it is also recognised by our students and we are committed to providing a greater understanding of culture and society," Professor Jain added.

Besides NSW and South Australia, other Australian states are also gearing up to benefit from the trade with India. Premier of the second largest Australian state Victoria was in India few months back with the "largest ever" trade delegation from this southern state.

Source: 02 November, 2012/[Twocircles.net](#)

Australia's ACPET signed MoU with India's National Skill Development Corporation

In a move to formalise a key relationship with India's lead skills agency, the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) today announced that it had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell attended an official reception in New Delhi today to mark the event. Mr O'Farrell is leading a high level trade and investment delegation from NSW that is visiting Mumbai, Hyderabad and Delhi. The delegation also includes ACPET CEO Claire Field.

The MoU, which was signed by ACPET CEO Claire Field and NSDC CEO & MD DilipChenoy, includes a commitment to fostering the establishment of partnerships between Australian and Indian education and training providers, as well as



exchanging information and perspectives on education, training and skills development. The partnership also aims at contributing in up skilling of 500 million people in India by 2022.

Source: 02 November, 2012/[IndiaEducation Diary](#)

Can you take education loan? Bankers don't know

The question of who is eligible to take an education loan has bankers in a bind.

The confusion began with Union finance minister P Chidambaram's statement earlier this month that loans should also be extended to students taking admissions through management quota, irrespective of their academic background or achievement. Simply put, loans could be given to even non-meritorious students who may have fewer chances of employment.

Management quota students are typically charged higher fees compared with students who have got their seats on merit.

"Till now, banks were offering education loans on the basis of employability and earning potential of the borrower. But going forward, it will become mandatory for all banks to extend loans to non-meritorious students, too. No intimation has been made officially other than a statement by the finance minister," said an official from a public sector bank.

Most bankers are unhappy with the proposed change in rules. According to them, loans sanctioned to such candidates are risky and could easily slip into the bad loan category if they are unable to repay.

"It will be difficult for non-meritorious, management-quota students to repay the loans as the possibility of them landing good jobs may be less. Also, there can be cases where a borrower doesn't complete the course itself," said Varghese KI, additional general manager, Federal Bank.

The only positives bankers see are the promised credit guarantee fund and interest rate subsidies on these loans.

The credit guarantee fund, through which the government will provide guarantee in case of a default by borrowers, may increase the confidence of banks to lend to this category of customers.

Under this arrangement, the government may pay 60-70% of the loan in case of a default. It may charge a certain guarantee fee every year, which banks are likely to pass on to the customers, said an official from a public sector bank.

Chidambaram's suggestion of granting education loans to non-meritorious students came after the

Indian Banks' Association (IBA) tweaked the loan norms in June. Under the revised IBA norms, banks can't deny education loans to meritorious management quota students. They are to take into account the fees approved by the state government or an approved regulatory body for payment seats, subject to viability of repayment.

Source: 02 November, 2012/[DNA India](#)

In CBSE's Value Education handbook, 47 must-watch films

Some might think of Bollywood — and films in general — as a distraction for school children. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), however, thinks films can be excellent resource material in the curriculum, and for a rather interesting subject — Value Education.

In a handbook on Value Education launched today, CBSE has listed 47 classroom-worthy movies that "highlight social and moral values".

So, the 1954 *Boot Polish*, produced by Raj Kapoor, promotes dignity of labour, and Nagesh Kukunoor's *Dor* shows the compassion and friendship that can exist between people. The Sanjay Dutt starrer *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* takes a "new look at Gandhian philosophy", and *No One Killed Jessica* showcases the fight for justice.

A slice of colonial history can be seen in Aamir Khan's *Lagaan*, and love and respect for parents in the Amitabh Bachchan starrer *Baghban*. All these films are suggested as worthy tools of "media literacy" in schools.

The handbook points out that "often intentionally or unintentionally cinema does provide avenues for challenging rigid beliefs and exploring solutions for intractable conflict". While cinema often constructs and perpetuates stereotypes, it can also be used to initiate public discussion and questioning of these very stereotypes, it says.

Paan Singh Tomar is included for showcasing determination and hard work — even though the film released with an U/A rating, and some censoring might be required. Same with *No one killed Jessica*, which had an A rating.

The list is dominated by Bollywood blockbusters, and covers a wide range. There are the children's films *Bumm Bumm Bole*,

Chillar Party and *The Blue Umbrella* based on a Ruskin Bond novel; *Taare Zameen Par*, and *Parichay*. A clutch of patriotic films — *Haqeeqat*, *LOC: Kargil*, *Kranti*, *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero*, *Shaheed*, *The Rising: Ballad of Mangal Pandey*, *Sardar*, *The Legend of Bhagat Singh*, *Upkar* — have made the list. There are also the classics — *Purab Aur Pachhim*, *Naya Daur*, *Manthan*, *Mother*



India, Do Bigha Zamin, Jagriti, Do Ankhen Barah Haath, and so on.

The only Hollywood films in the list of 47 are Sidney Poitier's *To Sir, with Love* — for its underlining message of morality, respect and integrity — and the Tom Hanks starrer *Cast Away*, which depicts the fight for survival against difficult odds through sheer grit.

HRD Minister Pallam Raju unveiled the Value Education kit on Thursday, including the Value Education handbook for teachers. Besides the films, the Handbook gives a number of examples of how moral lessons can be weaved into the teaching of various subjects.

Source: 02 November, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

The Second Global Innovation Roundtable sets the agenda for global cooperation in Innovation

The National Innovation Council (NInC), chaired by Mr Sam Pitroda, Adviser to the Prime Minister, hosted the second Global Innovation Roundtable (GIR) on 1st and 2nd November 2012 in New Delhi, India.

At the concluding session on 'Collaboration on Innovation', chaired by Mr Pitroda, numerous experiences, insights and ideas shared by the participants were galvanised and distilled and the collaboration opportunities in the following areas were discussed:

Open Government: The Platform already developed for this could be adopted by other countries, and India could help implement.

Crowdsourcing Innovation Platform: The Open Source Drug Discovery Platform developed by India for tuberculosis drug discovery could be used as a template for crowd sourcing in new areas of drug discovery.

Innovation for Education: Existing educational content could be aggregated, filtered and indexed, under the guidance of global domain experts and made available on mobile devices like "Aakash"

Innovation for Health: Health content could also be aggregated and made available, just like educational content. Further, India's initiative for an Open Source Electronic health records system and tele-medicine could be adopted by other countries.

The National Innovation Council will now work with interested participants to take these ideas forward in an institutionalised manner to foster and develop collaborative projects.

For more details please see www.globalinnovationroundtable.gov.in The

Roundtable saw participation from heads of Innovation policy from 20 Governments across the world as well as leading global Innovation experts and aimed to create a global platform for sharing experiences, best practices and enabling collaborations. The key objective of the Roundtable was to explore the relatively less charted road of broad-basing innovations to meet key development challenges and develop a paradigm for inclusive innovation. The Roundtable also saw the presentation of the National Innovation Council's annual 'Report to the People' 2012 to the Hon'ble President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The Report outlined the initiatives and activities of the Council in the past year.

This GIR was a follow-on effort of the first Global Innovation Roundtable hosted by the National Innovation Council in 2011 which was very well received among the participating countries as a global platform for discussion and knowledge sharing.

Participants at the Roundtable included Ministerial level representatives from participating countries in Europe, the United States, United Kingdom, Africa; innovation experts from organisations such as Nesta, Innovation Norway, United Nations, the World Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation etc; private enterprises working for solutions aimed at the bottom of the economic pyramid; Ministers and policy makers from the Indian Government and members of the National Innovation Council.

Over the two days, the discussions in the Global Innovation Roundtable 2012 focused on a range of issues related to nurturing the innovation eco system and outlining deeper collaboration on innovation among nations. The work of the National Innovation Council in realising the 'Decade of Innovation' agenda of the Government was also shared with the participants. Mr Pitroda especially highlighted the Council's commitment to inclusive development through its initiatives such as the India Inclusive Innovation Fund to finance enterprises at the Bottom of the economic pyramid; seeding innovation in regional SME clusters; efforts in nurturing innovation in the education system; and the Open Government Platform for placing Government data in the public domain. He also focused on the role of ICT in enhancing the innovation and development agenda and outlined the plans of the Government of India towards this end. The Government has created the National Knowledge Network, a high bandwidth network to connect all the educational and research institutions in India to drive multidisciplinary research and collaboration. This network has already connected



877 institutions. Plans are also underway to connect all 250,000 Panchayats in the country to optic fibre based broadband to improve delivery of public services and provide locally relevant applications to empower rural citizens. Mr Pitroda highlighted that these ambitious projects provide an unprecedented platform for leveraging ICT to launch innovation in diverse sectors such as health, education, energy, agriculture and skill development. It also provides an opportunity for India to take the lead in shaping innovative collaborations and providing solutions for collective global challenges.

The Roundtable also focused on innovations focused on meeting the needs of inclusion, access and equity; and leveraging new tools and technology in the 21st Century to scale and sustain innovative solutions. In this context, the sessions covered topics such as 'Crowdsourcing Innovations'; 'Financing Inclusive Innovation'; 'Learning from Global Good Practices'; 'Towards an Innovation Eco system'; 'Innovations for the Bottom of the Economic Pyramid'; 'Enhancing Productivity through Innovation in Clusters'; 'Industry-Academia Interface for Driving Innovation'; 'IPR and Innovation'; and 'Innovations in Government'.

Source: 03 November, 2012/[IndiaEeducation Diary](#)

Presidency students can now switch streams

Academic rigidity, the bane of [higher education](#) in India, will not constrict students of Presidency University that aspires to be a world-class institution. Ushering in what is commonplace abroad, Presidency will give students who have completed graduation the option to switch from arts to science or vice versa for their masters degree.

"It was the students who first proposed this shift. We were mere agents in implementing it," said Presidency vice-chancellor Malabika Sarkar.

Presidency authorities plan to implement the policy from this session. The logic is simple. If one is good in history or any other arts subject, he or she can as well be good in mathematics. A student who has graduated in humanities may choose to study science in post-graduation and vice-versa. The decision comes as a revolutionary step for any institution in the country that till now did not offer such flexibility in higher education.

"Students often buckle under peer pressure and choose a particular stream while taking admission in undergraduate courses. Later, as they mature, their choices may change. Keeping this in mind, we considered a change in policy," the VC said.

Referring to [Cambridge University](#), Sarkar said: "There, a student is allowed mobility even between Part I and Part II. They award 'bachelors degrees' and not degrees in any particular subject. For a young student, choices cannot be limited. A [resolution](#) was passed by Presidency University which was later ratified by the council, its highest decision-making body."

The students will only have to secure a passing grade in the post-graduation admission test conducted by the university. "The answer scripts are coded. Hence, the examiners have no way to determine if the student has majored in any other stream. If they secure a passing grade in the admission test, they will be considered fit to study the subject in post-graduation," explained Sarkar.

Debojeet Thakur is the only student who has chosen to switch streams. "My first preference was history but due to peer pressure, I had opted for economics. I had secured the first rank in the history graduation admission test. Hence, after completing graduation in economics, I felt an urge to satisfy my dream and thus pursue history in post-graduation. I appeared in the post-graduation admission test and secured a rank to study history," he said.

"Initially my teachers, who have now shifted out of Presidency, had discouraged me to switch streams. Even now, the University Grants Commission does not offer such flexibility. Hence, after my post-graduation I would like to do a doctorate or maybe move out of the country," he added.

In Calcutta University, students are allowed to shift between subjects in the same stream provided there is a similarity in content. "A student who has graduated in history can opt for sociology in post-graduation or vice versa. Similarly, a student who has studied history can opt for mass communication in post-graduation. But a complete switch in the stream is never allowed," said a CU official.

Suranjan Das, the VC of the university, said: "Foreign varsities offer such flexibility. But it is unprecedented in the Indian higher education system. In CU, we do not have adequate man power or infrastructure to put such a system in place. Presidency is attempting to break away from the norm and offer flexibility. It is however unlikely that a student will succeed in the post-graduation admission test while switching disciplines. Only in rare and extreme cases, some students may become successful."

In Jadavpur University, too, such a switch is not permitted. "In subjects like comparative literature or film studies, students from other humanities streams are allowed to pursue post-graduation.



However, such a massive switch in streams is not allowed. We also do not see any such change in the near future," a JU authority added.

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

Post-Kapil Sibal HRD stint, Shashi Tharoor slams students' standards

The university system was not producing "well-educated" graduates to meet needs of Indian companies, giving an opportunity to firms to enter the sector in the "guise" of training, Minister of State for Higher Education Shashi Tharoor today said.

Kapil Sibal was Minister of Human Resource Development from 22 May 2009 – 28 October 2012.

He also said that the national education policy in the past has been out of step with the times.

"The major problem remains that our national education policy in the past has remained out of step with the time. Whereas countries in the Middle-East and China are going out of their way to woo foreign universities to set up campuses in their countries, India turned away many academic suiters who have come calling in recent years," he said.

Speaking at a two-day Higher Education Summit, Tharoor said, "Companies are entering the higher education space in the guise of training. Our University system simply is not producing well educated graduates to meet the needs of Indian companies today."

The HRD Minister said there will be no need for many Indian students to go abroad to study if good higher education institutes were set up in the country. "We will also work towards putting our reform agenda back on track," he said.

Tharoor said there is a proposal to establish 50 centres for research in frontier areas of science, design innovation centres, innovation centres in different universities and also research parts of the IITs and other technical institutions.

"If finally established, it would transform the research environment in our country," he said.

Tharoor favoured expediting setting up of National Mission for teachers and recommendations of the Narayana Murthy Committee and the Kakodkar Committee besides increasing the spending of 2 per cent on research.

The minister said with the ranks of educated unemployed in the country swelling in the absence of adequate employment opportunities, there is possibility of their falling prey to the activities of terrorists and Maoists.

"We must give them a better chance of employment through more and improved educational possibilities. My message is it is time to let a thousand educational flowers bloom," he said.

He said even though India with 621 universities and 33,500 colleges has one of the largest network of higher education institutes across the world and second in terms of student enrolment, our gross enrolment ratio of 18.8 per cent in 2011 is still less than the world average of 26 per cent.

He said there was need to develop higher levels of education and skill development and an environment must be created in which not only the economy grows rapidly but also enhances good quality employment.

Tharoor said as India aims to grow at 8.2 to 8.5 per cent GDP, the country needs to invest in education and help improve the quality of education.

Referring to a few world-class institutes like IIT's and IIMs and some colleges, the Minister said, "These are still islands in a sea of mediocrity".

Citing a UGC survey of 1,471 colleges and 111 universities, he said 73 per cent of the colleges and 68 per cent of the universities are found to be of medium or low quality.

He also said that a FICCI survey has revealed in 2009 that 64 per cent employers are "somewhat satisfied" with the quality of new graduates coming out of engineering institutes.

The minister lamented that spending on education is only 1.22 per cent of GDP, against USA's 3.1 per cent or South Korea's 2.4 per cent. He also said that the student-teacher ratio in India was 26:1 against the global average of 15:1.

He said the rapid expansion of higher education sector has also led to shortage of faculty.

Source: 05 November, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

Window to America

If you want information on the political, economic, cultural, educational and social facets of the United States (US), then the American Centre is the right place for you.

Attached to the US Embassy, the centre was founded in 1930 to stimulate dialogue between Indian students and America. "Our basic motto is to promote intellectual exchange of ideas between the two countries and give people an opportunity to expand their horizons," says David Mees, cultural attaché, US Embassy.

Opened in 1951, the American library was established to promote mutual understanding between the people of India and the US. The library has books on international relations, economic



development, socio-political processes, global issues and other topics.

From the erstwhile reading room at Queensway (now Janpath) with a collection of around 3000 books, 2000 pamphlets, 80 periodicals and a seating capacity of 24, to the current building on Kasturba Gandhi Marg, the library has expanded with more than 10,000 books and over 3000 periodicals. Similar libraries have also been built in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata.

Though the general public has free access to the library, membership allows patrons a wider selection of privileges such as invitations to EducationUSA sessions, poetry evenings, book clubs, concerts, exhibitions and film screenings. One can also borrow books, and access eLibraryUSA, computers with internet facility and Microsoft Office. The library provides reference and information service by professional staff via telephone, email, fax or in person. Members can use multimedia facilities and study material to prepare for standardised tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language, Graduate Record Examination, and Graduate Management Admission Test. Apart from this a separate section in the library has been assigned to children. The library is open from Monday to Saturday, from 11am to 6pm. It is closed on Indian and American holidays.

To become a library member, one must be a resident of India and be 16 years of age or above. The membership can be availed at Rs. 400 for one year and Rs. 700 for two. The library offers local and postal membership to individuals and institutions in north India (includes Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, and Jammu and Kashmir). People living in remote areas can become members by filling an online application form.

The library has a collaboration with the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) which offers educational advisory services, fellowship support and facilitates academic dialogue between the US and India.

USIEF's EducationUSA advising services (EAS) provide information to Indians interested in pursuing higher education in the US and for American students who wish to study in India. USIEF also serves as a link between higher education institutions in the US and India through its US-India Higher Education Cooperation (USIHEC) office. USIEF organises special seminars and workshops on application procedures and strategies, education fairs and pre-departure

programmes all the year round for US education aspirants in India.

The Delhi centre of USIEF also administers tests like SAT (originally Scholastic Aptitude Test) I, SAT II, ACT (originally American College Testing), Preliminary SAT and Advanced Placement. It provides information regarding standardised tests like GMAT, GRE and TOEFL. The foundation offers fee-based membership plans to individual students and they can access the resources at the American Centre library.

Apart from New Delhi, USIEF advising centres are located at Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai. All these centres are affiliated with the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The American Centre also organises events like theatre workshops and discussions with diplomats on a regular basis. The popular ones are Friday Flicks, where it screens a Hollywood movie for the public and members of library, and the Startup Saturday, which provides a platform to start-ups in the National Capital Region, and entrepreneurs from the US and India to showcase their products to peers and the media and learn about building a business.

"The idea is to broaden the US-India relationship by building up global perspective," says Stephanie F Morimura, cultural attaché for education and exchanges, US Embassy.

Talking about the future plans, Mees says, "We will continue to attract Indians from all walks of life and discuss all sorts of issues related to politics, economy and many more."

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

100 annual PM's Fellowship Scheme for doctoral research launched

Union minister for science and technology, S Jaipal Reddy, launched the Prime Minister's Fellowship Scheme for doctoral research jointly promoted by Science and Engineering Research Board, department of science and technology, Government of India and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Delhi during the Global [Higher Education](#) Summit on Thursday.

The number of fellowships awarded under the scheme would be 100 annually and the duration of fellowships would be four years. The areas of research would be science, technology, engineering, agriculture and medicine. The scholarship, co-sponsored by the government and industry will be given to PhD scholars for doing projects having practical relevance and industrial applications.



Reddy called up on the private sector to invest more in research and development (R&D) to shore up the competitive edge of the Indian industry. The engagement of the private sector into R&D would not match the global standards of twice of the public funded R&D when expressed in terms of spending as percentage of GDP, he added.

Reddy underscored the need for conversion of knowledge into products of commercial value to the industrial users. "Our industries need reliable source of modern technologies which could offer them intellectual properties with commercialisation potentials. While our public funded R&D systems are busy publishing papers, the industries are searching for technologies for commercialization," he said, hinting at the lack of co-ordination between the academia and industry.

Laying considerable importance for developing an eco-system that promote R&D and innovation, Reddy observed that educational institutions should attach equal emphasis on both understanding and applications of knowledge. Industries and enterprises, he said, dare to invest into breakthrough innovations and explore new markets in global economy.

Reddy observed that there were huge opportunities waiting to be tapped and converted into value for the country by bridging the disconnect between the knowledge and wealth creation sector. Pointing out that the current models of interactions between the knowledge institutions and industry are based on transactions, where exchange of money for knowledge was expected. But transactional interactions were not built on strong ties in India. "What we need is a relationship model built on sustainable relationships between our researchers and those practice technologies in manufacturing, agriculture and services sectors. This relationship should be built on the principle of trust and mutual respect for each other," he added.

Laying emphasis on grooming up a cadre of solution designers and discoverers, Reddy said that would help in finding solutions to problems, which have practical relevance. The new brand of R&D personnel with high morale and a desire should write a new history of research and innovations in industrial research, he added.

Calling for new schemes and R&D investments for shaping the future of India, the minister said that the theme for celebration of 100 th Indian Science Congress was Science for Shaping the Future of India. He hoped that during the centenary year of the congress newer ideations to align academia with industry and for developing scientific temper among the people would be ferreted out.

Dr T Ramasami, secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India said that higher education in India deserves more focused attention. Comparing achievements of India and China in higher education, he said that while China is awarding, 20,000 PhDs every year, the tally in India is only 8,900. "The huge disparity should be addressed and corrective measures taken. Complimenting CII for launching PM's fellowship Program for Doctoral Research, he hoped it would be a beginning and a lot of ground has to be covered in promoting industry - academia connect in higher education."

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

IIT panel calls for 80% increase in tuition fees

The recommendation made by the standing committee of the IIT council, to increase the annual tuition fee for the undergraduate course, is welcome. If anything, it errs on the side of caution, as it is still too meagre to have any significant impact on the functioning of these premier institutions. Even the hiked amount, Rs 90,000, is substantially lower than the Rs 4 lakh annual cost IITs incur per student, or for that matter fees charged by less reputed private institutions. In fact, the Anil Kakodkar committee appointed by the government to look at the functioning of the IITs had recommended that annual fees be raised to Rs 2-2.5 lakh, which is very reasonable given the expected salary of the IIT graduates.

Lopsided educational policies, which dole out excessively large subsidies on higher education, have ensured that fees charged by government-funded institutes remain incredibly low. In fact, the current tuition fee rates meet only 7% of operating revenues of the IITs. This makes IITs excessively dependent on the government. This has serious negative consequences, like government interference in their functioning which limits their autonomy and prevents them from moving up the ranks of top global institutions. Today, only three IITs figure in the list of the top 400 in world university rankings.

Affordability of the fee is not an issue, as current policies allow merit scholarships to almost a third of its students whose annual income is less than Rs 4.5 lakh. Others can opt for educational loans from banks at affordable rates, which are freely available. Higher fees would reduce the subsidy burden of the government, while allowing greater autonomy to the IITs to evolve into institutions of global excellence. What's not to like?

COUNTERVIEW

It's an elitist move



When the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961, laid the foundations of the 16 IITs as they exist today, it named them "institutions of national importance". That specific wording is important; it gets to the core of what the IITs are and what they represent. For half-a-century, they have stood at the pinnacle of the Indian [higher education](#) system. It has been a signal achievement in a country where there is a massive dearth of quality providers of education at every level. And they have been beacons to youth with high aspirations across India - places where they could hope to gain entrance by dint of hard work and merit, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. The IITs are, in short, meritocracies. But the move to bump up their undergraduate tuition fees by a whopping 80% threatens to destroy that.

Yes, the fee structure cannot remain entirely static. Some upward adjustment is more than inevitable, it is desirable. But a jump from Rs 50,000 to Rs 90,000 is simply too drastic. To the elite, it might seem a piddling amount. But to the vast majority of Indians, it is a great deal of money. The standing committee of the IIT council - the body that suggested the hike - has also recommended that students from the weaker sections not have to pay the higher fees, but this is a weak measure at best. It describes the weaker sections as scheduled castes and tribes and OBCs. But what of large segments of the population that don't fall into those categories but are still economically downtrodden? Are they to be simply accounted as collateral damage and left to perish by the wayside?

Anyone passing through the IIT entrance exam, among the toughest of their kind anywhere in the world, undoubtedly possesses scholastic aptitude and talent. If the country cannot take care of them then the loss is not just theirs - it's the country's and meritocracy's as well.

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

Germany woos students with cheap and quality education

The German Academic Exchange Service (known as DAAD), an autonomous body working under the auspices of the German government, organized a seminar on the possibilities of higher studies for Indian students in Germany at the Goethe-Zentrum in the city on Wednesday.

Currently, there are around three lakh international students studying or doing research in Germany.

"After the United States, Germany is ranked as the most-preferred destination by Indian students and research fellows," said Goethe-Zentrum, Thiruvananthapuram, director Syed Ibrahim.

Since German universities do not organize commercial admission drives, students were given handbooks that give more information on the different varsities in Germany. More than 150 students from different colleges and other educational institutions in the city attended the seminar.

"The universities prefer to admit students who are either pursuing their bachelors, MS or doctorate studies. The education is free and the students can live with just 450-600 euros for their other expenses and food," said Ibrahim.

Shilpa Pandeswhar, information officer of DAAD from Bangalore, who conducted the seminar, explained in detail the educational system at the German universities, with particular thrust on the highly-respected technical universities in nine major cities.

German universities do not take any fees for the courses, except for the two federal states where the students have to pay a semester fee of 500 euros, approximately Rs 35,000. With the introduction of the 'blue card', Germany now permits non-EU students to seek employment in Germany and settle down there.

After completing studies or research, students are now allowed to stay in Germany for 18 months to find a suitable job. This has made Germany an attractive destination for study and work, said Pandeshwar.

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

China, Pakistan to Attend Two-Day E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting, Dr Shashi Tharoor to Deliver inaugural Address on "Inclusive, Relevant, Quality Education for All"

India in cooperation with UNESCO will host the ninth E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting in New Delhi from 9- 10 November, 2012.

This year's theme of the meeting, on 'Inclusive, Relevant and Quality Education for All', looks at similar challenges that the E-9 countries are facing, country-specific developments in education since the last E-9 meeting in 2010 with ongoing monitoring till 2015.

The E-9 Initiative was launched in 1993 in New Delhi at the Education For All Summit of the Nine High-Population Countries. The "E" stands for education and the "9" represents the nine highly populated countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. Given that these countries are home not only to more than 60 per cent of the world's population, but also to more than 70 percent of the world's adult illiterates, about two-thirds of whom



are women and girls, and more than half of it out-of-school children, any significant progress made in these countries immediately would have positive impact on EFA (Education For All). Therefore, it was decided to prioritize a group of highly populated countries for the attainment of EFA. The E-9 countries also face common challenges such as decentralization and quality assurance. Hence, the heads of E-9 countries signed the Delhi Declaration and showed their commitment to achieving EFA. Since then, the E-9 Initiative has become a forum for these nine countries to discuss their experiences related to education, exchange best practices and monitor EFA-related progress. It has also become a powerful driver for EFA and South-South Cooperation.

Based on the discussions, the E9 countries will chalk out a plan of action to further relevant quality education in the respective countries which will be followed up over the next two years.

Dr Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State, Ministry of Human Resource Development, and the Director-General of UNESCO, will open the meeting. The education ministers of Pakistan, India, China (Vice-Minister) and Nigeria, as well as senior officials from Egypt and Indonesia will then review the challenges facing their countries with a view to increasing bilateral and collective cooperation.

India will assume the chair of the E-9 Secretariat from 2012-2014.

At the close of the meeting, the ministers will adopt a joint Outcome Document.

Source: 08 November, 2012/[PIB](#)

Given below is the Speech Delivered by DR. M. M. Pallam Raju, Minister for Human Resource Development at the 60th Meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) held on 8th November, 2012 at New Delhi

"I have immense pleasure in welcoming you all to the 60th Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE). Let me also introduce my colleague in the Ministry and Vice Chairperson of the Committee Dr. Shashi Tharoor. I also take this opportunity to thank my predecessor Chairman Shri Kapil Sibal ji and also Vice Chairpersons E. Ahamed and Dr. D. Purandeswari. I thank the Hon'ble Ministers and distinguished members of CABE for coming to the meeting at such a short notice.

As you are aware, the meeting was earlier scheduled on 1st November, which had to be postponed due to unavoidable reasons. I thought that prolonged postponement of CABE may not be proper and have therefore called this meeting before the winter session of Parliament.

In a country as diverse and as large as ours, the task of developing national policies while at the same time respecting and incorporating regional aspirations and an inclusive agenda of growth is indeed really challenging. It is in this context that I have always emphasized on a participatory approach in which all of us, be it Central Government of State Governments, academics, autonomous institutions, private sector and all other stakeholders, work together towards a common goal which is empowering the children and youth of India through education and knowledge.

As all of us are aware, CABE is the highest advisory body to advise Central Government and State Governments in the field of Education. I would like to continue the tradition of having regular meetings of CABE which has served as a forum of wide ranging consultations and has helped in developing consensus on various issues within all the sub-sectors of education ranging from elementary, adult, secondary, higher, technical, vocational and open and distance education. I would also like to mention that Planning Commission in its Approach Paper to the XII Five Year Plan has recognised Education as the single most important instrument for social and economic transformation. The Approach Paper mentions that a well educated population, adequately equipped with knowledge and skill is not only essential to support economic growth, but is also a precondition for growth to be inclusive since it is the educated and skilled person who can stand to benefit most from the employment opportunities which growth will provide. Thus, collectively we have to decide policies and programmes for realizing India's human resource potential to its fullest in the education sector, with equity and excellence.

I am also glad to inform that the Committees which we were formed during the 58th Meeting of CABE have submitted their reports which are before us for consideration. The Report of the CABE Committee on curbing unfair practices in school education sector along with draft legislation is before us today. The proposed legislation defines the various practices in the school education sector which will be treated as 'unfair' including charging excessive fee, lack of transparency in conducting the admission test for the standard XI, recruiting teachers without qualification, giving teachers and other administrative staff lesser salary than shown in the school records, recruiting teachers with low salary, exploitation of teachers through various means, not admitting special children, and discrimination of students, especially those belonging to SC/ST/OBC and weaker sections of society. The draft provides for mechanism of redress



of complaints while prescribing the quantum of punishments for acts that violate the provisions of the proposed legislation.

Another CABE Committee on University Reforms has also submitted its report which emphasizes on the launch of a Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan which would have a special focus on incentivising state governments and state institutions.

The Committee on "Extension of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 to Pre-school Education and Secondary Education" has also submitted its status report. The major issues that were identified by the Committee for further discussion are: (1) the entry age for pre-school under the extended framework; (2) qualifications and capacity building of teachers for preschool; (3) ensuring focus on child-centered pedagogy, play-way method and holistic development as critical elements of pre-school education: and (4) need for effective coordination with ICDS. As regards extending RtE to secondary levels, assessment of existing infrastructure, (i) age of children in the secondary education (15-16 or 15-18 years) and duration of secondary education (IX-X or IX-XII). (ii) appointment of additional teachers as per new PTR norm which would be fixed if RTE is extended, (iii) consultation with all partners like state governments (on various issues like the norms of opening school, school infrastructure, teacher recruitment etc.), NCERT on curriculum and NCTE for qualification of teacher appointment, Teacher eligibility test, Teacher training institute, role and regulatory mechanism of the private sector (iv) sharing of financial responsibility between the Center and the states, are some of the key issues. As you would all appreciate, these issues need to be discussed comprehensively before we decide to extend RtE to pre-school and secondary level.

Since the coming into effect of Right to Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, all States/UTs have notified RTE Rules and 24 States/UTs have constituted SCPCR/REPA. However, we need to take a number of measures for filling up the vacancies of teachers as also provision of infrastructure. In this context, some of the State Education Ministers have also been requesting extending the time period prescribed for implementation of the Act. We would consider the same along with review of the progress of RtE.

As regards Teachers' Education, Justice J. S. Verma Committee has given its report which was sent to all the State Governments. We will be having a detailed presentation on the measures to be taken by Central and State Governments in this regard.

Skill Development and vocational education has been a key intervention in the education sector. In this context, we would be discussing reform measures in polytechnic sector. There are four strands of reform that have been identified in the process of consultations relating to:

- § Content and curriculum reform.
- § Faculty development and enrichment.
- § Reforms in assessment and certification methods.
- § Reforms in regulatory measures and institutional incentives.

As regards higher education, I feel the Consolidation of the Initiatives undertaken during XI Plan period, strengthening of the State Institutions, Faculty Development, Strengthening Research and Innovation in Basic Sciences and Social Sciences, Skill Building, Vocational Education and strengthening academia - industry linkages should be the critical focus areas.

Before I conclude, I would also like to mention that education should lead to building of an inclusive, just and fair society and it is in this context that I have been emphasizing on value education. Education in my view should lead to character building of our youth and also inspire them to work towards the task of nation building in addition to their work for employment or self-employment.

I would like meaningful exchange of views on all the agenda items and each one of you must contribute to making this a fruitful deliberation. I would request each one of you to express your views and pro-actively engage in the deliberations. These issues concern the future of the children and youth of our country and we should work together to improve access to education with equity and quality. With these words, I wish the proceedings all success and eagerly look forward to having a very engaging discussion."

Source: 08 November, 2012/[PIB](#)

RTE Act may cover preschoolers too

Millions of parents and their children may soon no longer have to bear the risks associated with unregulated playschools with dubious teaching methods and crumbling infrastructure that often charge high fees but fail to deliver on promises. The human resource development (HRD) ministry, headed by newly appointed MM Pallam Raju, on Thursday got state governments to agree to expand the Right to Education Act (RTE) to cover preschools. Under the plan, children between three and six years of age will be guaranteed preschool facilities.

Winning the support of states at the meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (Cabe) —



where every state is represented — will help the HRD ministry push for expansion of the law. But the ministry, educators and education experts caution it would not be an easy task due to shortage of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure and a financial crunch.

The government has identified the RTE Act as a key accomplishment to highlight before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

The law currently covers children between six and 14 years old and may be also offered to 16-year-old students. But, this is unlikely to influence urban, middle-class voters - the constituency where the government has lost face due to scam allegations.

"That's where expanding the law to cover preschools could prove to be a game-changer," a senior government official said.

Although India has 159 million under-six children, who either are in or can soon join preschool, this massive segment under the Indian education system is almost completely unregulated.

Lack of regulations has allowed several substandard playschools and preschools to flourish across the country's cities, feeding on the anxiety of working parents to ensure that their children start learning early in an increasingly competitive environment. Many parents suffer bitter experiences with preschools that sometimes fall short even on safety issues.

Rahul Prasad had to pull his three-year-old son, Aayush, out of a Delhi playschool in August after he found that it was using dirty utensils and metal toys with rusted and sharp edges frequently without supervisors, while charging Rs. 10,000 a month.

Apart from free preschooling for every child, the extended RTE Act plans to ensure a safe environment, minimum teaching and infrastructure standards and a ban on homework for toddlers.

"I wish the act could already help Aayush," Prasad said. "But it'll help a lot of people like me. It's about time."

Source: 09 November, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

Summary Record of Discussion of the 60th Meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education, Under Ministry of Human Resource Development, Held on 8th November, 2012

The Sixtieth Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) was held on 8th November, 2012 at New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Dr. M. M. Pallam Raju, Minister of Human Resource Development. Shri Rahman Khan, Minister of

Minority Affairs, Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State of HRD along with 18 Ministers-in-charge of Education from various States/UTs, Ms Shantha Sinha, Chairperson of NCPCR, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy, Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development and other members of CABE attended the meeting.

The CABE is the highest advisory body to advise the Central and State Governments in the field of education. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th June, 2012 were confirmed today along with the Action Taken Note on them.

In his opening remarks, Hon'ble HRM Dr M. M. Pallam Raju mentioned that the purpose of education should be to build an inclusive, fair and just society. In a country as diverse and as large as India, the task of developing national policies while at the same time respecting and incorporating regional aspirations and an inclusive agenda of growth is indeed a real challenge. In this context, Hon'ble HRM emphasized on a participatory approach in which Central Government and State Governments, academics, autonomous institutions, private sector and all other stakeholders, should work together, Hon'ble HRM also expressed the view that education should lead to character building of our youth and also inspire them to work towards the task of nation building in addition to their work for employment or self-employment.

Hon'ble HRM emphasised the importance of Teachers' education as also the need to prohibit unfair practices in schools. He also emphasised the need for close cooperation in implementation of the RtE Act.

As regards higher education, Hon'ble HRM said that the consolidation of the initiatives undertaken during XI Plan period, strengthening of the State Institutions, Faculty Development, strengthening Research and Innovation in Basic Sciences and Social Sciences, Skill Building and Vocational Education should be the critical focus areas.

Hon'ble Minister of Minority Affairs, Shri Rahman Khan in his address, urged the State Education Ministers and the CABE members to ensure that the provisions of the Constitution relating to establishment of educational institutions by Minorities should be respected in letter and spirit so as to ensure the educational development of minorities. He also suggested constitution of a Sub Committee of CABE for monitoring the protection of child's rights and minority educational institutions.

Presentations were made by the officials and academics on the following issues relating to school education.



- Recommendations of Justice Verma Committee on Teacher Education
- CABE Committee on prevention of unfair practices adopted by schools
- Review of implementation of RtE Act
- CABE Committee on expanding RtE upto Class X and to include pre-school education

The above presentations were followed by discussions in which state education ministers and CABE members actively participated.

Thereafter, the presentations were made on the following issues relating to higher and technical education.

- CABE Committee on University Reforms
- National Framework in Higher Education
- Role of States in Mandatory Accreditation
- All India Higher Education Survey
- Reforms in polytechnic sector

After detailed discussions, the following resolutions were adopted:

(i) CABE discussed the recommendations of the Justice Verma Commission and endorsed the recommendations of the Commission. CABE also approved the suggested Action Plan for implementation of the recommendations of the Commission.

(ii) CABE noted the progress under the roll out of the RTE Act, 2009 which shows substantive efforts by the States and UTs to implement its various provisions. CABE took note of the support extended by the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in augmentation of school infrastructure in order to meet the gaps in the opening of neighbourhood schools, recruitment of teachers and in improving quality of schooling. Bihar Education Minister pointed out to the need for extending the RTE deadline for completion of school infrastructure by March end 2013. While some other members of CABE did not support such an extension. CABE took the view that redoubled efforts should be made by State/UTs to achieve RTE standards for school infrastructure in 2012-13 as over 12,000 new schools remain to be opened, over 2,50,000 additional class rooms and large number of toilets, drinking water facilities, and ramps are under construction under SSA as also by other national programmes for sanitation and drinking water supply. The CABE would review the progress again in its next meeting.

(iii) CABE reiterated the need for the initiative to curb prevalent unfair practices in the school education sector including charging of capitation fees, misleading and non-transparent processes

adopted by schools for admission of students in higher classes, appointment of ineligible and unqualified teachers and unanimously endorsed the proposed legislation.

(iv) The report of the Committee on extension of RTE to preschool and secondary school was discussed and the issues identified by the subcommittees and the recommendation of the Subcommittees for further and wider deliberation with stakeholders, was endorsed by the CABE.

(v) The report of the CABE Committee on University Reforms was discussed. CABE accepted the recommendation to incentivise the state universities & institutions and endorsed in-principle the proposed Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan. CABE decided the other issues such as National Higher Education Framework, role of States in mandatory accreditation, and reform in polytechnic sector be discussed in the next meeting.

CABE also noted the proposals put forward by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports on the need for awarding credits under National Service Scheme and the note of Ministry of Women & Child Development relating to gender issues and protection of children.

Source: 09 November, 2012/[PIB](#)

Two Indians among Forbes' top 15 education innovators list

Indian-origin CEO of Datawind, the maker of India's low-cost tablet Aakash, Suneet Singh Tuli and Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Anant Agarwal have been named by Forbes magazine among the 15 "classroom revolutionaries" who are using innovative technologies to reinvent education for students and teachers globally.

The Forbes list names 15 education innovators who are "harnessing a slew of disruptive technologies to change everything from the way we teach grade school math to how we train the next generation of teachers."

The publication said Tuli(44) is the "mastermind" behind the world's cheapest tablet computer Aakash, "which has the potential to revolutionise educational access in the developing world."

Datawind has a backlog of "millions" of orders for the 35 dollar Aakash tablet. The publication quoted Tuli as saying that "I don't care about creating the iPad killer. I care about the 3 billion people who can afford this device."

Agarwal, 53, a professor of computer science at MIT is also the President of edX, the new combined online offerings of Harvard, MIT, the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Texas.



Over 400,000 are currently enrolled in the education programme. "We've created dramatic access to learning for students worldwide. By reinventing online learning, we can dramatically improve what we do on campus," Agarwal, who took over as head of edX in May this year, said.

"EdX continues to up the ante by increasing partners, classes (seven to dozens for spring 2013) and innovations, such as virtual laboratories," Forbes added.

Datawind had won the tender in 2010 to supply one lakh Aakash tablets for a price of around 49 dollars per unit. A new version of the tablet PC, featuring one Ghz processor, four-hour battery time, capacitive screen and Android 4.0 operating system, is expected to be launched in India on November 11.

Among the other education innovators on the list is Salman Khan, the Bangladeshi-American founder of Khan Academy, the revolutionary online education platform.

The 36 year old MIT and Harvard alumnus has so far created 3,400 videos, mostly science and math tutorials, that have been watched by more than 200 million people. Khan Academy's YouTube channel has more than 400,000 subscribers.

Source: 10 November, 2012/[Hindustan Times](#)

Student housing sector worth \$ 200 billion

Housing for students has emerged as a new real estate asset class and is estimated currently at more than USD 200 billion globally with large number of Asians opting to study outside their home country, according to a report by global property consultant Jones Lang LaSalle.

"The increasing number of students from Asia choosing to study outside of their home country has played a key role in developing the student housing sector into a global real estate asset class," JLL said in a statement.

The number of students studying outside their home country is expected to rise to 263 million by 2025 against 165 million currently, it said, adding that "globally, the student housing market as a whole is estimated to be worth in excess of USD 200 billion".

JLL said in recent years, Asia has increased its market share as a source market for international students from 48 per cent in 2004 to 52 per cent in 2009.

The top five source markets globally are China, India and South Korea, followed by Germany and France in fourth and fifth. The most popular destinations for these students are the US, the UK, Australia, Germany and France.

"Strong economic growth in the key Asian markets has fuelled higher education enrolments globally. Over the past decade, countries like China, India and Vietnam have experienced rapid growth in the wealthier middle class, which has spurred demand for higher education and better housing options in destination countries," Jones Lang LaSalle Lead Director Student Housing and Higher Education Philip Hillman said.

While ownership of student housing has traditionally been dominated by developer-operators, increasingly, equity funds, sovereign wealth funds, pension funds, investment managers and REITs are entering the market.

Commenting on the report 'Student Housing- a new global asset class', JLL India Chairman and Country Head Anuj Puri said the student housing is one of the most vibrant Indian real estate markets in the foreseeable future.

"Dense student populations that exist around prominent colleges positively affect the demand for residential spaces as well as restaurants and small retail spaces. As such, educational institution lend value to a location," he added.

Puri said the country's top 10-15 corporate schools have plans to develop a total of 8001000 schools over the next decade, aiming to deliver quality education to far-flung parts of the country.

"The corporate higher education industry is expected to build close to 10 million square feet of educational institution space over the next few years – and this does not include the rapid expansion plans that are underway to build new IITs, IIMs, SPAs and other reputed educational institutions. The demand for the right kind of student housing that such a scenario presents can well be imagined," Puri said.

Source: 10 November, 2012/PTI/[Indiapost](#)

E9 Ministerial Review Meeting Ends with Adoption of New Delhi Commitment

Decides to Expand Co-Operation in Inclusive, Relevant Quality Education for All

The review meeting of Ministers of Education and heads of delegation of the E-9 countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan) ended in New Delhi today with the adoption of the New Delhi Commitment.

The 3-day meeting took stock of the progress towards the Education for All (EFA) goals and to renew cooperation in consolidating the gains and addressing remaining challenges. The member-states reaffirmed the central role of education in all



development endeavours and in promoting peace and social cohesion.

They decided to work together on the following issues:

- a. curriculum reform and development of teaching and learning materials;
- b. strategies for making schools inclusive;
- c. professional development of teachers to impact learning for all;
- d. use of ICTs for enhanced access and learning; and
- e. develop institutional capacities for assessing learning outcomes

They affirmed the changing political and economic balance in the world, where the E-9 countries are in a position to play a pivotal role in global debates about the future development and education agendas. In this context, they recognised the importance of the E-9 group being a full member of the new global EFA Steering Committee.

They decided to expand their cooperation in the area of Inclusive, Relevant Quality Education for All. They recognised relevance and equity as key dimensions of quality in their future efforts and resolved to address the same by making their education systems more flexible and responsive.

They further decided to adopt a systemic approach to addressing the challenges of education quality, relevance and learning effectiveness. In this context, they welcomed UNESCO's efforts in developing an instrument for diagnosis and analysis of education systems.

After detailed discussions, they decided to:

- make education more relevant to the social and cultural context and to people's lives
- engage with local communities to ensure that all children, youth and adults, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, language, differential ability, economic background and location, receive quality education
- focus on capacity building of teachers to adapt learning and teaching processes to the diverse needs, capabilities and contexts of learners
- to improve the work conditions of teachers. The issue of attracting, retaining, supporting and developing a high quality education workforce should be central in the E-9 cooperation agenda
- Strengthen assessment systems for measuring learning outcomes in a contextual and culturally sensitive manner
- Design participatory educational management systems involving learners, teachers, families and local communities

Later, addressing the media, Dr M M Pallam Raju, Union Minister for Human Resource Development said some of the most notable outcomes of education have been drop in population growth and higher enrollment especially for girls. Referring to China's spectacular success in opening educational avenue for migrant workers, the Minister said platforms like E9 are a forum to share best practices in the field of education. The Minister of State for HRD Dr Shashi Tharoor informed that during the deliberations Nigeria was appreciative of India's success at getting children into school. He said there's a direct correlation between increase in education and decline in population.

The next E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting will be hosted in late 2014 by Pakistan.

Source: 10 November, 2012/[PIB](#)

ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

Unfinished tasks at HRD

The new team at the Human Resource Development Ministry led by M. M. Pallam Raju has a challenging set of tasks ahead — the Right to Education Act must be supported to achieve good outcomes, significant resources mobilised for school, vocational and higher education, and important regulatory legislation passed.

The new team at the Human Resource Development Ministry led by M. M. Pallam Raju has a challenging set of tasks ahead — the Right to Education Act must be supported to achieve good outcomes, significant resources mobilised for school, vocational and higher education, and important regulatory legislation passed. The mettle of Mr. Raju and his junior colleagues in the Ministry, Jitin Prasada and Shashi Tharoor, will be quickly tested as the Twelfth Plan is crucial to realising the so-called demographic dividend available to India by 2020: that is, a population with an average age of 29 compared with 37 and 38 for China and the United States respectively. But then, if young Indians are to meaningfully participate in the economy and contribute to growth, they need a reformed system. At present, millions of gullible students are paying huge amounts to colleges with weak academic credentials; the distance education system is in a mess, and vocational education needs massive investments. The Ministry must therefore vigorously pursue changes to the regulatory framework. Several Bills introduced during Kapil Sibal's tenure as Minister have faced stiff political opposition, including a major measure on accreditation of higher education institutions.



The pending HRD Bills aim to eliminate the multiplicity of agencies governing higher education. They also seek to prohibit unfair practices such as capitation fee collection. One Bill pertains to creation of tribunals for settlement of disputes involving teachers, students and institutions. On all these, wider consultation is necessary. Other important areas too call for action. One is the low esteem that vocational education enjoys in India. If the Centre is indeed committed to creating many more skilled jobs, as Mr. Prasada has promised, the Ministry must strengthen basic schooling and invest substantially in the National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework. This scheme allows the graduate the flexibility of pursuing higher studies at a later date. It is imperative to improve the quality of teaching in schools. The Justice Verma Committee has identified many inadequacies in teacher training institutions in Maharashtra — and its recommendations are relevant for other States. On the broader question of equitable access to education, it is pertinent to point out that a for-profit model is bound to act as a barrier. Universal education does not require huge outlays. That is the way to go.

Source: 01 November, 2012/[The Hindu](#)

New education minister unlikely to change tertiary policy

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh overhauled leadership of the Education Ministry in a sweeping cabinet reshuffle this week. But with just 18 months to go before national elections, experts said the new leadership was likely to stick to existing higher education policies.

Analysts said that all political parties would avoid controversial decisions so close to national elections in 2014.

MM Pallam Raju (50) replaces Kapil Sibal as minister for human resources development (HRD), which includes education, and there are two new junior ministers of state. Raju said he would carry forward the “good work” of his predecessor, hinting at staying the course rather than big changes.

The ministry overhaul comes at a crucial time for India’s education policy, with a slew of [bills stuck in parliament](#) due to opposition from various quarters.

Among them is the controversial Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill 2010, that would allow foreign universities to operate in India.

Addressing local media on Wednesday, Raju said he would reach out to “everybody” to build a consensus on the passage of pending higher education bills in parliament.

An engineering graduate with an MBA from Temple University in Philadelphia, Raju was previously minister of state for defence and is a member of parliament from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh.

He is one of almost half a dozen legislators from that state to be promoted in the cabinet reshuffle in preparation for the 2014 elections, as Andhra Pradesh is seen as a key state for Manmohan Singh’s Congress Party.

Low key compared to predecessor

Raju’s elevation from junior minister to cabinet minister is being credited to his good relations with Congress Party General Secretary Rahul Gandhi, son of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, who has focused on bringing younger leaders into the government.

Raju is one of India’s youngest education ministers in recent years.

“Raju also got a good report card from Defence Minister AK Antony. He [Raju] is quiet and lets his work speak for him. As such he is in contrast to Kapil Sibal’s aggressive ways of working,” said a the senior Congress Party leader who chose to remain anonymous.

Raju is seen as low key compared to Sibal, who often adopted a combative style. But after Sibal was given additional charge of the Telecom Ministry just over a year ago, he has been unable to give the education portfolio the attention it demanded. The high-profile telecoms sector is facing allegations of corruption, which threatens to taint the ruling coalition.

“Sibal initiated a lot of reforms and legislation. But it requires dedicated effort and perusal to see these through [parliament]. After he was given additional charge of telecom a lot of his time went there,” said Narayanan Ramaswamy, head of education at consulting firm KPMG.

Raju said he would work towards creating consensus on the pending higher education bills, suggesting that there was still everything to play for with the bill: “There is no cut and dried yes and no vote,” he admitted.

“In higher education there is a dearth of capacity, and efforts have to be made towards expanding the capacity of universities and the scope of the subjects. Towards that end foreign universities become relevant,” Raju told local media.

“We have to see how we can accommodate foreign universities. I think it is something that needs a little more debate,” he added, referring to the overall landscape for allowing foreign players to operate in India, not just the bills.



Linking education to jobs would be a major priority, Raju said on Wednesday, echoing a theme that Rahul Gandhi has identified as key ahead of national elections.

Junior ministers

Two new junior ministers of state for HRD, Jitin Prasada – a former minister of state for petroleum – and the high-profile MP from Kerala and former UN under-secretary general Shashi Tharoor, have also been appointed in the reshuffle.

Both appointments took policy analysts by surprise.

“Pallam Raju's elevation from minister of state for defence to human resource development minister in cabinet rank can be explained in terms of Congress' anxiety to recoup the ground it has lost in Andhra [Pradesh],” said Vinod Sharma, political editor at the Hindustan Times.

“But Shashi Tharoor's appointment as his junior is an incongruity, given the Kerala MP's international profile and undisputed talent.”

Tharoor, who quit as minister of state for external affairs in April 2010 in the wake of allegations of wrongdoing in buying stakes in a cricket team, studied at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in the United States.

His international affairs experience is regarded as an asset for the rapidly internationalising education sector, and his appointment to the ministry has attracted a great deal of attention. But Tharoor has made no statements on education policy so far, providing little indication of his exact role.

“There are many younger faces in the cabinet. But do we get something new and fresh? That's not clear,” said analyst Yogendra Yadav, speaking to University World News.

“[The reshuffle] is clearly meant to be business-friendly and market-friendly. But a year and a half before the election you want to be people-friendly,” said Yadav.

Source: 01 November, 2012/[University World News](#)

Fresh graduates are not industry ready to meet demands of IT sector: Pallam Raju

Newly appointed Union Minister for Human Resource and Development (MHRD) M Pallam Raju said on Wednesday that a majority of India's fresh graduates lack professional skills, and added that they are not industry ready, specifically for the information technology sector.

Talking to reporters about the new challenges ahead for his ministry, Raju said, "I have got feedback from engineering and IT related industry

that only 17 percent graduates are industry ready and another thirty percent are trainable."

"This is what we have to work on. So, I think the important thing ahead is to strengthen teacher-training programmes," Raju added.

Admiring the initiatives taken by former HRD Minister Kapil Sibal toward encouraging primary and higher education, Raju said, "Whatever initiatives have been taken is unprecedented, the important thing is to get the quality faculty and the necessary facilities that are needed for strengthening these initiatives."

Raju, a three time Member of Parliament, represents the Kakinada constituency of Andhra Pradesh, and was Minister of State for Defense earlier, and takes charge of the HRD ministry at a time when several legislations related to higher education reform are pending before Parliament.

India's higher education system, considered to be the second largest in the world, after the United States, is mainly governed by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

At present about 42 central universities, 275 state universities, 130 deemed universities and 90 private universities are functioning across the country in which the main emphasis lies on science and technology.

Institutions like Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), and National Institute of Technology (NITs) have been globally acclaimed for their standard of education

In September, Biocon Chairman and Managing Director Kiran Mazumdar Shaw joined several biotechnology experts in saying that students undergoing biotechnology courses in various colleges were not industry ready and hence the demand for these courses and employment opportunities has fallen.

Mazumdar-Shaw spoke about problems being faced by the industry and measures to tackle it.

Mazumdar-Shaw had then said, "The biggest problem we are facing is that most colleges churn out students who were not ready to work in the industry. A lot of the training and the course curriculum in these colleges are not suited for industry. Which is why finishing schools started by the Vision Group will address those challenges."

Prof G Padmanabhan of the Department of Biochemistry, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, said steps like establishing finishing schools for students to upgrade themselves and make them fit for jobs was one of the initiatives being taken.



Industry internship, he said, was an absolute must for students, he added.

The Indian Merchants' Chamber is organizing interactive sessions between technocrat entrepreneurs and students in Maharashtra, and hopes to extend such sessions across the country soon, as it says it is shocked by the lack of facilities and opportunities for students in Tier 2 and 3 towns.

It has been working with the National Knowledge Commission, leading universities and educational institutes to organise interactive sessions between technocrat entrepreneurs and students.

A recent blog has said that India is a major exporter of intellectual capital. In fact, IT-ITES exports comprise of 25 percent of the total export income that India generates in a year.

With the advent of IT, BPO, KPO, LPO industries in India, its growth rate has reached new heights and is expected to become a major IT hub of the world. In a country like India which relies heavily on this industry for jobs, the future situation doesn't look so simple. There is expected to be 100 percent increase in the number of engineering graduates that will pass out of Indian universities and colleges, but the growth of IT industry is not expected to follow similar trends. In fact, as per a recent NASSCOM report the growth of the IT companies is expected to fall down from 20 percent to somewhere in between 11 to 14 percent.

Source: November, 2012/ANI/[Newstrack India](#)

Does Indian higher education system need an Ombudsman?

In the beginning of 2012 the former Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Kapil Sibal had initiated a debate by mooted the idea for appointment of Ombudsman for higher education institutions under the grievance redressal system. The Ministry passed executive order for the centrally funded institutions which includes central universities, IITs, IIMs and NITs, and deemed universities. As per the order every institution is required to have an ombudsman – a person with judicial or legal experience.

The Ombudsman will have the power to instruct the institution to take corrective measures on complaints of students regarding denial of admission, non-observance of declared merit in admission, with-holding of documents and non-refund of fees in case of withdrawal of admission. Few months back former Minister of state for HRD, D. Purandeswari in Rajya Sabha answering to the question of appointment of Ombudsman has stated that, "University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and National

Council for Teacher Education have been requested to establish a grievance redressal mechanism for students and applicants for admission in higher educational institutions under their regulatory control. This mechanism includes appointment of Ombudsman also for redressal of students' grievances."

Though, the order was passed by the Ministry it is still to get Parliament approval and thus has not been implemented on ground. India Education Review discussed the issue with some of the heads of institutions on the need for an Ombudsman and his role.

Need for an Ombudsman:

The need for an Ombudsman is being felt for the higher education system in India is because of its tremendous growth in terms of number of institutions just to increase the gross enrolment ratio. In doing this we forgot about quality, relevance and excellence and this lead to massive commercialisation of education which has lead to a scenario in which anybody with money can buy degrees while those with talent and qualification have to run from one institution to other to get admission.

Prof. PB Sharma, Vice Chancellor, Delhi Technological University talking to India Education Review said, "The purpose of education is not merely to award the degrees but to create an army of capable men and women who shall possess besides capabilities, human values for development of the society. This noble objective requires that the institutions and universities should be established and managed by people of letters and of high moral and ethical wisdom. It is expected of them to desist from any deviation from ethical and moral foundation of education, no matter how compelling the circumstances or situations may be, but we find the just opposite in most cases."

"Institutions and universities especially under the disguise of public-private partnership or under private ownership have been allowed to be set-up by those who could muster financial and political support. This has created the present unhealthy and unfair environment in higher education in the country. We all know very well that once we allow the rot to set in, it creates an environment for mediocrity to flourish. We can have an Ombudsman provided we are able to specify the domains and duties to the Ombudsman for his exercise of controls, even preventive measures to stop the growth of mediocrity and establishment of sub-standard institutions," added Prof. Sharma.

There are many government run institutions that are against the idea of appointment of Ombudsman



over themselves as they feel that they have very transparent system and they feel that it is needed in case of private institutions. They also feel that central government of any of its agencies will not be able to frame rules and guidelines for it as different institutions have their own issues, history and serving different segment of society.

Dr. MM Salunkhe, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Rajasthan is of the view that, "the topic has not been debated properly and there is need to debate upon it in detail as it is a very wide topic. As far as government run universities are concerned, particularly the central universities we follow a very transparent system at each and every step. Ombudsman is required for private institutions as they flout and twist the norms. The other problem is who will make the rules and define the role of Ombudsman because every university is different and unique in itself and what rule will be good mine will not be good for some other universities. Thus, I am not very much in favour of this post for the universities until the role of Ombudsman is clearly defined."

Whom to appoint

There is also huge debate on the topic that who should appointed to this post as a section of educationist feel that the person to be appointed for the post should be from education fraternity as any outsider will not have the understanding of the huge education system that India has. While the other section feels that the person should be from judicial background as he would be less biased with least vested interest. The concern of both the section is genuine and but the ministry has chosen the second option to appoint a person with judicial or legal background. The institute would have to appoint him from a panel suggested by the affiliating university in case of technical and management institutions and the Central Government in case of deemed universities.

According to Prof. PB Sharma "The man of iron will with the highest credentials of scholarship, administrative capabilities, a vision and commitment to build quality higher education for his motherland. He should also understand that it has not mere teaching or coaching that makes higher education, rather an environment in which education, creative and innovative abilities and opportunities to recognize the value and worth of knowledge and capabilities, technology and knowledge incubation, innovations and new-product development are nurtured is that what should make higher education of today and surely of tomorrow."

"The tenure of an Ombudsman should be of five years to give him a reasonable time frame to implement the reforms or changes as envisaged. Such an Ombudsman be invariably be appointed by a coliseum comprising of a former Chief Justice of India, an Outstanding present or former Vice Chancellor, an outstanding Civil Servant and an outstanding industrialist," Prof. Sharma added further.

Prof. R. Lalthanluanga, Vice Chancellor, Mizoram University, is of the view that, "as far as ombudsman is concerned, I do not think that there is any need for government run higher educational institutions like central universities etc. which are self regulated through its ordinances/regulations as per the guidelines of UGC (University Grants Commission) or MHRD. It may be required for private institutions as they do not have very clearly defined regulation. UGC may appoint Ombudsman for such institutions for a period of three years."

It seems that the Ombudsman is the need of the hour for the vast education system that India has and with arrival of foreign institutions it is even more required. It will only make the Indian institutions rise up to the occasion. The checks and balances and fine tuning can be done by the institutions at their own level along with following the guidelines of MHRD. Ombudsman is seen as a system for grievance redressal of the students while there are provisions in the already existing system it can be further strengthened to make it more transparent. People against this move also feel that one redressal system will lead to another making it a vicious cycle.

Source: 01 November, 2012/[India Education Review](#)

Reboot affirmative action

Affirmative action in the form of reservation, to address issues of inclusion and equity in higher education, has been in place in India for a long time. Evidence suggests that these policies have not been an unqualified success. What's more, policies that were to be temporary have not only persisted but expanded. Meanwhile, the social conditions that called for affirmative action have not been stable either. The implementation of reservation policies has faced a variety of challenges, from identifying beneficiary groups to the legal interpretation of constitutional provisions.

One of the premises for the reservation policies is that participation in higher education by marginalised groups is very low. Recent studies have highlighted that the measure of participation in higher education is critical to the analysis of differentials across social groups. If the share of a particular socio-religious category (SRC) in the total



population is higher than its share studying at the graduation level, the group suffers from a deficit in participation.

While measuring deficits, it is useful to consider the candidates' eligibility for higher education. Those eligible for undergraduate courses need to have completed their higher secondary education. Instead of focusing on the entire population in the relevant age group, measures of participation should focus on the segment that has completed higher secondary education. This explicitly brings the links between secondary and tertiary education into the analysis.

Among the groups eligible for reservation, only Hindu OBC share in the studying population (33.8 per cent) is higher than their quota (27 per cent for all OBCs). Interestingly, the deficits for the marginalised groups and differences between SRCs decline dramatically when one compares the share in the population currently studying at the graduation level with the share in the population that is eligible to go to college. Apart from socio-religious affiliations, participation in higher education can be affected by factors like the household's economic status, gender, region and parental education. Deficits for underprivileged groups are significantly lower among the eligible population, even after we account for a variety of other factors. Thus, once persons from underprivileged groups finish school, their chances of going to college are quite high. Chances of higher education also increase significantly with parental education and are the highest for those whose parents have studied at the graduation level.

Should reservation be linked to the deficits of respective groups? Deficits change over time but it is not possible to revise reservation policies frequently. Besides, since many factors, other than socio-religious affiliation, have a significant influence, focusing exclusively on such affiliation for affirmative action seems inappropriate. The effects of economic background as well as location highlight the role of supply-side factors. In fact, once other factors are accounted for, parental education, rather than socio-religious identity, seems to determine participation in higher education. Within SRCs, the deficits seem to be higher for Muslims than for Hindu OBCs, where these are at best marginal.

Given the high information requirements for caste- or even income-based reservation, and other factors that make implementing the current reservation policies difficult, parental education can potentially be a good criterion for affirmative action as it is easy to measure and does not have any

problems associated with designation and re-designation (as is the case with caste categories). Such a criterion makes sense given the changing role of caste in social stratification, and is self-limiting. Children with illiterate parents can potentially form the most backward category followed by those having parents with secondary or less education. Children with parents having graduate education may be outside the purview of affirmative action. If Aadhaar becomes a reality and everybody has a unique identity with requisite information, implementing a programme on this basis may not suffer from information failures.

But more than reservation, it may be appropriate for policy to focus on ensuring eligibility for higher education. Deficits for the under-privileged were found to be significantly lower among the eligible population, even after we control for a variety of other factors. Higher education policy needs to focus on ensuring that the threshold is crossed. Arguably, reservation in higher education is an incentive to cross the threshold. One can also argue that job reservation can enhance the incentives to participate in higher education. Empirical work supports the argument that the efficacy of reservation policies depends on other complementary instruments that ensure better academic preparation and financial support. There is evidence to suggest that the supply side factors positively affect the participation of various groups in higher education presumably through the process of enhancing eligibility. Given the shrinking of the government sector in higher education, non-quota based policy instruments to incentivise diversity of student population on private campuses seems desirable.

Source: 01 November, 2012/[Indian Express](#)

FDI must to boost higher education

The Indian education space is evolving, which has led to the emergence of new niche sectors like [vocational training](#), [finishing schools](#), [child-skill](#) enhancement and e-learning, among others.

A report released by [Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India](#) titled 'Indian [Higher Education](#) Sector: Opportunities aplenty, growth unlimited!' — stated that success in leveraging knowledge and innovation that could contribute to hi-tech manufacturing and high value-added services is only possible with a sound infrastructure of higher education. According to projections, the sector is expected to register a [CAGR](#) of 12% from 2008 to reach a size of \$31.47 billion.

The government has set an ambitious target of doubling the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education from 15% at present to 30% by 2020.



According to estimates, to meet such a target huge investment will be required in terms of capital and operating expenditure which, based on past experience, the government would not be able to provide by itself, the report said. "The role of private sector in higher education has significantly increased in the last decade. However, due to various impediments the amount of [FDI](#) attracted by this sector since 2000 is dismally low at just \$ 400 million. It is very important for foreign investment and experience to flow in this sector in order to transform our higher education institutions into the world's top league," it added.

The report highlights the attractiveness of the higher education sector and the opportunities it provides for Indian private and foreign investment even within the existing framework.

India has the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of enrolments, after China and the US.

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

Relearning to teach

The QS higher education rankings of our universities and colleges tell us exactly what years of Assessment Survey Evaluation Research (ASER) reports and now the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report says of our schooling system.

School level teaching is unable to inspire a satisfactory learning environment and while children move up from one grade to another, they learn little and comprehend even less.

Waking up to the gaping quality deficit weighing down the gains India may have achieved through programmes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Right To Education Act in terms of high enrollment, the government proposes a fresh approach during the 12th five year plan.

Access, equity and quality have been the bywords for our education policy for years now. The 12th plan will add a fourth dimension: improving learning outcomes. Finally acknowledging that all is not well with our education system, the government concedes that it must be assessed just why a fifth grade student is unable to comprehend a grade 1-level numerical lesson.

While it is refreshing to see the government accept the larger point made by independent rankings, a systemic overhaul will be required to mark the big shift from 'schooling' to 'learning'. Investment of time, funds, resources and expertise will have to be directed in mission mode to enhance learning levels with due focus on curriculum, teachers and teaching methods. It will also be worthwhile to

observe the pedagogy and classroom environment in countries that lead the Programme for International Student Assessment tally. The 12th plan cites the highly successful Scandinavian model of inclusive classrooms.

The 12th plan document suggests that literacy and numeracy should not just be 'traditional' but also keep in mind Programme for International Student Assessment requirements and deploy the best teachers in primary grades to ensure strong basic foundations for children. It also suggests setting up 'national learning standards' and 'meaningful learning goals' besides the equally necessary national performance standards for teachers.

"Every child must be in school and learning well," the 12th plan says. It will require a big leap to translate this simple philosophy into reality and the new dispensation in the HRD ministry will need to rise to the occasion.

Source: 02 November, 2012/ [Indian Express](#)

Higher education: Heading for upheaval?

Universities are facing tough questions in an age when students anywhere can access an ever-growing catalogue of courses from top-flight professors online at no charge.

Today, George Mason takes its turn wrestling with the future of higher ed. I'm writing this from a forum Friday at the Fairfax campus where some provocative ideas are being tossed around. Kaplan, the for-profit higher education unit of the Washington Post Co., is a co-sponsor of the forum.

Jeff Selingo, editor at large at the Chronicle of Higher Education, identified five disruptive forces in higher ed: the sea of red ink that is enveloping institutions; the public disinvestment in universities, especially at the state level; market pressures from so-called massive open online courses, aka MOOCs, as well as other innovations; "student swirl," referring to high mobility of students from school to school, and out of school altogether; and the "value gap," referring, in part, to increasingly urgent questions about what a degree is really worth.

The public, Selingo noted, is less sanguine about what it is getting for its tuition and tax dollars than college presidents, who Selingo said are often "tone deaf." "We tend to overestimate the speed of change, but underestimate its depth," said Selingo, who is working on a book called "College (Un)bound." Tectonic shifts are happening, he said, in ways that will transform the higher ed landscape over 10 to 15 years.

He also offered a frame for thinking about online innovation that caught my eye.



The first phase of online higher ed, he said, was driven by individual institutions and inherently institution-focused. The second, which we're seeing now in the form of joint ventures such as edX and Coursera, involves federations of institutions. So Coursera has 33 prominent universities offering hundreds of MOOCs. EdX encompasses three elite schools and a major state university system. And there are other emerging groups.

The third phase, which will probably gain prominence, features the free agents. These are professors who are offering up MOOCs on their own, or with only slight ties to universities. Professors, Selingo noted, "who have individual brands are able to leverage those brands."

The implication: Who needs a school? One answer: It took a school to organize this very gathering.

Source: 02 November, 2012/ [Washington Post](#)

What India can learn from China's Higher Education?

China and India are the two largest higher education systems in the world with a total enrollment of 2.91 crore and 2.67 crore students, respectively. While both Indian and Chinese higher education systems are evolving in the context of developing economies, they have taken different paths and this has also shaped their social and economic make-up.

Indian higher education system is highly concentrated at the undergraduate (bachelor's) degree level. In fact, with 1.98 crore students, it is the largest system in the world in terms of undergraduate enrollment as compared to 1.27 crore in China and 1.04 crore in the U.S. As a proportion of the total student enrollment in higher education, India has nearly 75% of all its students pursuing a bachelor's degree as compared to 43% for China and half for the U.S.

This concentration at the undergraduate level is quite unique to India not only due to three-year degree in Arts, Science and Commerce, which form more than 85% of all undergraduate enrollment, but also due to its sociocultural environment which has positions bachelor's degree as a more successful pathway for upward mobility.

The undergraduate concentration has implications on all other key levels of education--vocational, postgraduate (master's) and doctoral--by expanding the master's level enrollments but stunting the vocational and doctoral level enrollments.

However, availability of too many bachelor's degree holders for a smaller economy as compared to China or the U.S., has created a situation of credential inflation, which simply means,

devaluation of a degree with time due to oversupply of graduates. This is evident from many unemployed and underemployed college graduates. It also reflects poor quality of education and skills imparted at many institutions.

Due to employability challenges, many continue to aspire for master's education in a hope for finally getting their dream jobs and career mobility resulting in over-representation at the postgraduate level. Despite smaller population and size of higher education system as compared to China, India has more than double the number of students at postgraduate level (27 lakhs vs. 12 lakhs).

At the vocational education level, India with young and ambitious population is missing the opportunity of engaging them as a part of the mainstream economic growth through manufacturing. This is where China leaped forward and engaged the masses through low-cost, volume-based manufacturing. However, China did not achieve this by chance, instead it expanded vocational education system to develop a skilled manpower base for manufacturing related activities. China enrolls nearly 96 Lakhs students in vocational education as compared to 40 Lakhs in India.

Likewise, at the other extreme, while overall Indian higher education continues to grow, it is seriously lacking faculty to teach at academic institutions. Granted, not all institutions need to have faculty with research orientation but research is important to build the foundations of critique and problem-solving for any field. Unfortunately, momentum for getting advanced degrees suddenly stops at the doctoral level where India (~72,000) has one-third the number of students enrolled in China (~236,000).

While China's higher education has its own limitations, it highlights how India is losing opportunities of maximizing societal and economic impact through higher education. An informed and radical change in higher education is needed to address qualitative and quantitative challenges at all levels of education and providing diverse pathways of educating and engaging talent.

Source: 02 November, 2012/ [Economic Times/Blog](#)

It's raining tablets in India

Aakash-II will be officially launched next week, but over a dozen tablets priced in the sub-US\$100 range are already available in the market. And India's education sector seems ready to lap them up.

Sometimes, it's worth going over your spam folder. Like today, I was a millisecond away from deleting an e-mail from an online shopping portal, when I



noticed its subject--an "ultraslim, 3G-enabled, 7-inch tablet for INR 2999 (US\$56)".

I visited the Web site and, to my surprise, there were over a dozen tablets in the same price range (and this particular model wasn't the cheapest one) from brands such as Zync, Sylvania, Vox, Ubislate, and Xelectron. There were plenty more in the sub-US\$100 price range (I counted 31 in all).

From news reports, it seems Datawind is officially going to launch [Aakash-II](#) sometime next week (reportedly Nov. 11). Although its [predecessor failed to click](#), Aakash-II got some good reviews this time around. An IIT professor is apparently making a pitch to teacher from 250 engineering colleges to have this INR 2263 (US\$42) tablet replace notebooks and blackboards in classrooms.

A recent study undertaken by Manufacturers Association of Information Technology (MAIT) said tablet sales in India were expected to cross 1.6 million units this year, a growth of 40 percent over last year, and way above the 16 percent growth registered by PCs and 26 percent by notebooks. Desktop sales grew by only 11 percent.

MAIT estimated [tablet market](#) would grow to 7.3 million units by 2015 to 2016.

According to the industry body comprising IT hardware manufacturers, tablets are emerging as the preferred device for entertainment and content consumption. The study noted the average price for a tablet sold in India is about INR 24,000 (US\$447) and Apple's iOS, Google's Android and RIM Blackberry lead the way in platforms.

According to a recent study by CMR India Research, Micromax's Funbook led the Indian tablet market last quarter with an 18 percent market share, followed by Samsung's Galaxy Tab at 13 percent, and Apple's iPad at 12 percent. These are priced upward of INR 6500 (US\$121).

Several schools and colleges are planning to introduce tablets in their curriculum. All these factors only indicate tablet market in India is all set boom in the coming year. One only hopes that India's education sector has much to gain from these devices.

Source: 02 November, 2012/ [Zdnet](#)

The Challenges of Opening up Higher Education in India

With legislation to allow foreign universities to come into India still far off in the distance, it remains a difficult environment for Western institutions hoping to secure a lucrative prize. Without this legislation foreign universities are unable to build new campuses or award accredited degrees in India.

A year ago, Strathclyde's Business School, in partnership with the Indian logistics company SKIL Infrastructure, opened a new facility for its staff to teach at. They were some of the very first to deliver British degrees at a UK campus on Indian soil. But their expedition has so far failed, just six students enrolled in 2011-12. Recruitment was so low for this year that in August Strathclyde left the country while it carried out a full review.

Philip Altbach, director of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College, in the US, believes the legislation opening up the Indian HE market, will remain permanently on the shelf. Continuing uncertainty over the bill has led to "a good deal of frustration in the higher education community", he says, and has left some US universities "burnt" by their experiences.

[The bill](#) has been designed to regulate a sector that already exists but lacks a legislative framework. There were 631 foreign providers operating in the country in 2010, according to a study by the Association of Indian Universities. Of these, 440 did so from their home campuses while 186 were involved in twinning agreements or had some other arrangement with local institutions. 5 institutions had set up branch campuses in India in the absence of a law barring it.

Even if it is passed, some think that proposed legislation will be less than inviting to overseas providers. It would not allow foreign universities that set up in India to repatriate profits. Each university would need a "corpus fund" of about £6 million to stop them bailing out of the country and leaving students in the lurch. The bill also insists that branch campuses have an Indian advisory board of three national research professors per foreign institution. Kavita Sharma, director of the India International Centre, questions where the country will find so many distinguished national professors as many academics have left the country in search of higher salaries and better career progression.

Lancaster Goenka, one of the 5 universities with a branch campus, opened in 2009. With high fees (£3,000 per year for its engineering programme) versus local courses that charge a nominal fee, students at Lancaster Goenka are mostly from very wealthy families. The main issue is that the institute, which has applied to become a university, is not recognised by the national accreditation bodies. The degrees awarded by Lancaster, are invalid in India, making it impossible for graduates to get jobs in the public sector or to study at postgraduate level at India's public institutions. In response, Lancaster says that it is in the process of acquiring university status for G.D. Goenka World



Institute so that "the partnership will be in full compliance of all local regulations".

In 1999, [Virginia Tech](#) was the first US institution to offer a degree programme in India, in partnership with S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research. The university now has plans for a campus in Tamil Nadu. However, while waiting for the foreign universities bill, Virginia Tech is concentrating on research initiatives and supporting its Indian partner MARG Swarnabhoomi. India's University Grants Commission is also planning non-legislative routes to allow foreign universities to operate in a regulated manner. It intends to allow only institutions that appear in the top 500 of either the [Times Higher Education World University Rankings](#) or the Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings to come into the country in collaboration with Indian universities rated "A" by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. But this policy raises problems about the number of foreign institutions already operating in the country that would fail this requirement.

India remains a complex place to 'do business' in the higher education market, but there is no doubt, the demand is there if the authorities can find a way of managing the expansion in a practical way.

Source: 02 November, 2012/ [Kiosk](#)

A stupid decision

Moral Science was, at some stage, replaced by something called 'Value Education.'

In the beginning, there was Moral Science. Most of us had it as a subject in school. We didn't take it seriously because the subject was 'not added', i.e. how you fared in this paper didn't make a jot of difference to your report card.

It was never on a par with maths, English and the sciences. In effect, the education system was telling us- look, we'll teach you how to be good but please don't take it as gospel. Moral Science was, at some stage, replaced by something called 'Value Education.' The difference was imperceptible.

The emphasis again was on good habits, respect for elders, and other such succulent nonsense. We were expected at all times to behave like the Adarsh Balak (the Ideal Child) in the ubiquitous poster.

Misconception

It scarred an entire generation. Amit Chaudhuri sang about it recently, "When you are waking up/ You must first wash face at tap/ And do all necessary ablutions./ Then after you are having shower/ You must sit for half an hour/ Preparing for the day's tuition./ Always be meek and mild/ Never be loud and wild/ Once a morning bow your

head and pray./ Eat your breakfast happily/ To your grandparents say 'haanji'/ To your parents do 'namastey'./ Your destiny is our concern/ And cause for trepidation/ But hear this song/ You can't go wrong/ With a moral education."

It seems that the destiny of India's next generation remains a matter of concern. The CBSE has revamped the syllabus for Value Education by injecting it with a heavy dose of Bollywood.

Given how the majority of our politicians conduct themselves, I would have thought that most parents would rather that politicians didn't interfere with how we bring up our children. But they have. Let's examine this latest intervention.

The CBSE has listed 47 films, both old and new, which it feels "highlight social and moral values." They include Boot Polish (promotes dignity of labour), Lage Raho Munnabhai (promotes Gandhian philosophy), Lagaan (adds to knowledge of colonial history), and Baghban (problems of old age).

That we've turned to Hindi cinema for moral guidance is perhaps not a matter of surprise. Bollywood plays a primary role in the 'intellectual' life of this country. Bollywood lyricists have been elevated to the stature of public intellectuals.

Aamir Khan goes about changing lives through his show. So why can't Hindi films provide our kids with a moral centre? The reasons are many. For one, it smacks of poverty of the imagination.

Most of the subjects that these films discuss have been written about much more intelligently and entertainingly, and in an equally accessible manner, by our journalists, historians, sociologists, novelists and poets.

I see no reason why some of this extant material is not brought into the curriculum.

Two, all the films listed are in Hindi. CBSE is a national board. We speak in many tongues. I'm not sure if children across the country will be able to follow Hindi dialogue to the extent the CBSE hopes they will.

Three, children have short attention spans; they relate more to contemporary references. It might sound like a good idea to a bureaucrat, but try making a class of 14-year-olds sit still and watch Do Ankhen Barah Haath (one of the listed films).

Chances are they'll be bored stiff, and the hapless teacher will end up with a very restless class on her hands.

Alternative

Four, if Bollywood had to change anything, it would have changed it by now. When Charles Dickens' novel Nicholas Nickleby came out, it led to fundamental reforms in the English education



system. Nothing of the sort has happened with a Hindi film.

These films are not going to be more effective, simply because they have been made part of the school curriculum. Five, cinema's job is to entertain. Why thrust the burden of social responsibility on culture?

A film might slip in the odd message here and there but that's not its primary responsibility. It look role and conveniently passed it on to showbiz.

Six, commercial Hindi cinema is made to a formula. The idea is to get the box office cash registers ringing.

These are simplistic films where good always prevails over evil. As we all know, real life (especially in India) is much more complex.

If you have to show children films, why not show them films that are less idealistic, which have more shades of gray, and which prepare them for the complexities of the real world.

Since the CBSE has lobbed absurdities in our court, surely we can lob some back into theirs. Bollywood can be put to better use. CBSE's list is loaded with patriotic films, from LOC to Mangal Pande. We really don't need so much jingoism in 21st century India.

Why not use Hindi cinema to teach our kids about the evils of plagiarism. Show them a Hollywood film, and then the Indian copy. Show them Dev D-it'll teach them about love in the modern world and the pitfalls of drugs. Many of this generation will grow up and enter into live-in relationships.

Show them Wake Up Sid. For the nexus between the mafia and politicians, there's Company. When these kids enter adulthood, they'll want to buy a house. Let's show them Khosla Ka Ghosla. In the Noughties, I spent a good few years doing public school teaching.

There were these two guys who'd come around every morning and go from class to class teaching 'life skills'. The boys would laugh behind their backs. There might have been a Christian component to the lessons - one of the duo was an ex junkie and a Born-Again.

Personal

I taught Practical Ethics and Moral Philosophy to the senior classes. I used the German philosopher Immanuel Kant to teach the students about altruism and the limits of free will.

I used the Australian philosopher Peter Singer to discuss contentious issues: the concept of equality, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, infanticide, climate change.

Some years later, when I met my former students for a beer, they were still talking about some of these questions, relating them to the world around them.

Any teacher will tell you, there's nothing more heartening than knowing that some of what one taught is permanently embedded in a student's mind. I used philosophy to teach them to think about the relationship between self and society, right and wrong, means and ends.

The method was more Socratic dialectic than talking down. For the first time they asked themselves the question: What does it mean to be moral?

There are ways and ways of adding value to education, of making sure that our children are able to think independently, and without prejudice, about important issues. Making them watch LOC is not going to help in this.

Whoever thought of this fatuous idea needs a cold shower. Our children deserve better.

Source: 03 November, 2012/ [India Today](#)

Affirmative action and Asians

A college education aims to guide students through unfamiliar territory - Arabic, Dante, organic chemistry - so what was once alien comes to feel a lot less so. But sometimes an issue starts so close to home that the educational goal is the inverse: to take what students think of as familiar and place it in a new and surprising light.

It's mostly the latter process that has been taking place every Tuesday and Thursday this semester in Room 303 of the Parlin Building, just below the iconic 300-foot tower of the University of Texas, Austin. On this graceful campus of 50,000 students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, three dozen undergraduates, many of them Asian-American, are examining Asian-American political identity.

Ethnic politics is a touchy topic under any circumstances, but the issue here has a sharper edge as the [United States Supreme Court](#) examines whether the [University of Texas](#) is violating the Constitution by including race and ethnicity in admissions decisions. On Oct 10, it heard oral arguments in Fisher v. University of Texas, in which [Abigail Fisher](#), a white Texan, says she was denied admission to the flagship campus while less qualified Latinos and African-Americans were allowed in.

In his presentation of some of the Supreme Court legal briefs to the political identity class, Khai Pham, a junior who is Vietnamese, said he didn't like the use of race in college admissions - and nobody other than the instructor, Lesley Varghese, disagreed with him. Said one classmate: "You can't



make up for what went wrong in the past by helping people today." Another added: "Maybe affirmative action was necessary at one point in time, but it is outdated today and we need a new formula." And Anna Akhtar, a sophomore who is half Pakistani, said of her high school classmates: "I had white friends who were struggling and minority friends who were doing just fine."

Ms. Varghese, an Indian-American lawyer and activist, said later that she hoped that what seemed obvious to those students now - that using race in admissions caused resentment, was unfair and should be abandoned - would yield to a deeper appreciation of a complex issue.

Asian-Americans, who make up 5 percent of the population, are the fastest growing racial group, with three-quarters of adults born abroad, according to the Pew Research Centre. And they are tangled up in the affirmative action issue in complicated ways.

On the one hand, some ambitious and disciplined students from India, South Korea and China see themselves as victims of race-conscious admissions, their numbers kept artificially low to keep a more demographically balanced campus. A lawsuit pending against Princeton alleges discrimination on grounds that applicants from other ethnic or racial groups were admitted with lesser credentials. The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights also received complaints last year against Princeton and, since withdrawn, Harvard.

On the other hand, Filipinos, Cambodians, Pacific Islanders and other Asian-Americans continue to benefit from policies that take ethnicity into account.

Polls show Asian-Americans divided fairly evenly on the use of affirmative action. But its opponents appear to be growing more vocal, and they have joined the debate in a bigger way than in the past. In briefs sent to the justices, most of the established Asian-American groups, like the Asian American Legal Defense Fund, support diversity as a goal in college admissions. But a number of others take the side of Ms. Fisher and argue that colleges have increased the numbers of blacks and Hispanics in a way that is wrong and unconstitutional.

"As aspiring applicants capable of graduating from these institutions outnumber available seats, the utilisation of race as a 'plus factor' for some inexorably applies race as a 'minus factor' against those on the other side of the equation. Particularly hard hit are Asian-American students, who demonstrate academic excellence at

disproportionately high rates but often find the value of their work discounted on account of either their race, or nebulous criteria alluding to it," says the 80-20 National Asian American Educational Foundation brief.

Ms. Fisher asserts that the policy that led to the rejection of her application to the Austin campus hurts not only white applicants but also Asian-Americans.

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

Can the 'American Dream' be reversed in India?

America's Silicon Valley has always been a hub for some of the brightest and best Indian immigrants to start businesses. Now, in a reversal, more people from the US are moving to the sub-continent with their ideas.

Valerie Wagoner is a smart and articulate woman. Educated at Stanford University, and a former employee at the online auction site Ebay, her credentials could get her work anywhere in the world.

She chose India.

Valerie quit Silicon Valley in California for Bangalore five years ago and is now at the helm of her own mobile marketing company, ZipDial.

More than half of the start ups founded in Silicon valley since 2005 were begun by immigrants to America, with as many as 1 in 3 started by an Indian, according to research from the Kauffman Foundation.

But now a small yet significant group of Americans are leaving their homeland for India.

What makes this trend different from the usual flow of expat labour is that these people aren't on the usual fixed-term company transfer, but have moved east to become entrepreneurs, doing things on their own in an often tricky business climate.

'Not for the faint of heart'

"India is definitely not for the faint of heart. Everybody figures out within a month whether they're going home at the end of the month or staying," says Valerie as she shows me round her office.

She chose India above China, because it's an English-speaking market.

"There's such a huge opportunity here to innovate and build businesses which are unique to this market," she explains.

Her business idea was all about tapping into a growing mobile phone market and the culture of the 'missed calls' in India to create a unique marketing platform.



She developed technology which allows people to dial a number to enter a contest or prize draw. They then hang up and get a text from the advertisers - this saves them cost of a call.

To Valerie the opportunity India presents isn't just about an economy which is growing at a faster pace than her home country, but about the type of innovation on offer.

"No market is saturated, everywhere you turn, there's just so much need that there's a lot of room to innovate."

It is still common in Asia for innovation to replicate Western ideas, for example an Indian version of Amazon, but Valerie believes as things evolve, Bangalore could one day rival Silicon Valley when it comes to exporting original ideas around the world.

Over the past few decades the southern city has become a hub for entrepreneurs like Valerie, as India's technology capital. It earned its nickname as 'India's Silicon Valley' for its high penetration of tech companies, and is home to some of the big global software giants such as Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo. "Start Quote

The scale of the problems you're able to solve is bigger here - those opportunities no longer exist in America."

It was even named one of the top 10 places to start a business in the world, by Startup Genome, a research project based in America's Silicon Valley

But what is attracting some of the brightest overseas talent to India?

The high concentration of Indian engineering graduates and a start-up culture are what drew Sean Blagsvedt to the city, from Seattle.

He moved to set up Microsoft Research's offices, some seven years ago. "I believe there's the same potential for intelligence across the globe, so if you have a sixth of the world's population you have a sixth of the world's brainpower here too."

A few years later he left to start his own business, with a fellow American, Vir Kashyap.

Changing India

The country's problems and inefficiencies, poverty and poor infrastructure for example, are challenges for the newly-arrived entrepreneur.

But they can also be opportunities for a foreign start up, if you can find the right business model to help solve them.

For Sean and Vir it was finding a way to match jobs and labour in the country's vast yet predominantly informal workplace. Their website, babajob.com, is a recruitment portal for lower middle class Indians.

Sean says theirs is one example of how the internet and technology are starting to address social problems in India, in a way America already has. Any idea in Silicon Valley, says Sean, might be chased by 20 other people.

"The marginal utility is getting smaller, iPhone 5 versus iPhone 4S, for example, but in India the opportunities are far more fundamental - 'how do you get credit to people? How do you get food to people?'"

"The scale of the problems you're able to solve is bigger here, and those opportunities no longer exist in America right now."

The ideas might be ripe, but coming to India and starting your own venture can be difficult. Being a foreigner means that getting visas approved, bank accounts opened and contracts signed can be doubly difficult.

"America's still an easier place to start a business. It has the best education system in the world and a fair and transparent legal system," he says, stressing that the potential India offers still makes it worthwhile.

India is changing in many ways, and its emerging culture is also throwing up plenty of business ideas. For Adam Sachs, who moved to Mumbai from Manhattan, it was India's burgeoning dating scene.

Adam started a dating website for New Yorkers, but shortly after its launch, realised there was another market which needed his services more.

"We would be hustling in New York, throwing parties at universities and growing moderately - but then we'd go back and look in our Google analytics and see that all these people were using the site in India.

"At first it was so foreign to us. We had never been to India and certainly never anticipated that this would be successful here."

But slowly Adam and his co-founders saw that their biggest customer base was indeed here in India. Traditionally, dating before marriage was uncommon, but now many urban Indians have several partners before tying the knot.

So a few months ago Adam packed up his bags and moved to Mumbai, where he now runs his operations. His website, Stepout.com, has 4.5 million registered users - 95% of them are in India.

"What we've learned about India is that culturally, it's shifting, and that especially in the younger generation, the 20-somethings who are our target audience, the average marriage age is getting older, the rate of arranged marriages is decreasing.



"It's ok for young people to go out and meet that person they want to spend the rest of their lives with. There's this golden opportunity to help them do that."

Adam says what makes him different from many of his fellow Americans who have relocated to India in the past is that he isn't here for cost savings or cheaper labour, but for the potential to make money in an emerging economy.

A changing world means the rise of the American entrepreneur in India is perhaps inevitable.

Source: 05 November, 2012/ [BBC](#)

Reform in education will be back on agenda: Shashi Tharoor

Observing that India's education policy has remained out of synch with the time, minister of state for human resource development [Shashi Tharoor](#) on Monday called for reforms in the sector, critical to the country's growth needs.

"We will work towards putting our reform agenda back on track," Tharoor told a higher education summit here, adding that as India aims to grow at 8.2 to 8.5 per cent, the country needs to invest in education and help improve the quality of education.

The minister said there has been no significant improvement in terms of quality education delivery. The issues of "skill gaps, skill shortages and unemployable graduates still persist".

Referring to IITs and IIMs, he said: "These are still islands in a sea of mediocrity."

Also, even though India with 621 universities and 33,500 colleges has one of the largest network of higher education institutes across the world and second in terms of student enrolment, its gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 18.8 per cent in 2011 is still less than the world average of 26 per cent.

Global experiences indicate a positive correlation between GER and economic growth in the country and point to the need for a minimum of 30 per cent to sustain economic growth.

Tharoor said that while countries in the Middle East and China are wooing foreign universities to set up campuses in their countries, "India turned away many academic suitors who have come calling in recent years".

Bills relating to higher education reforms such as the Higher Education and Research Bill, 2011 and the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010 are awaiting Parliament's nod.

The minister said companies are entering the higher education space in the "guise of training".

"Our University system simply is not producing well educated graduates to meet the needs of Indian companies today."

He said there has to be a sharp improvement in the quality and quantity of institutions of higher education to match global standards.

There is a proposal to establish 50 centres for research in frontier areas of science, design innovation centres, innovation centres in different universities and also research parts of the IITs and other technical institutions.

"If finally established, it would transform the research environment in our country," he added.

Tharoor also stressed the need for public-private partnership to meet the deficiency in public funding.

India spends 1.1 per cent of its gross domestic product, while South Korea spends 2.4 per cent and the US 3.1 per cent.

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

Education must be more goal-oriented

What do Indian parents want? Indian parents want their children to get a 'good' education. Given their resources and their understanding of education, they look for the best school their money can buy. They send their children to tuition or coaching classes and they buy other school materials.

The assumption is that 'more is better' — more years of schooling, more supplemental inputs into schooling and more expenditure. For most parents, whether rural or urban, high income or low income, 'success' means doing well in exams. Exam performance is the only way to get to the next stage, whether it is to further education or into the workplace.

What does the government want? The Right to Education law requires government to ensure that every school in the country has a specified set of inputs and processes.

Here the belief is that once these are in place, 'education' will be guaranteed. Underlying the government's push to provide inputs is the assumption that more is better but appropriate number of qualified teachers, classrooms, days of teaching are needed. Going by what is stated in the RTE document, 'success' means that all schools have all the mandated inputs and processes, all children in India in the age group 6 to 14 are enrolled in school and all children complete eight years of schooling.

What does the evidence say? Data from all sources in India point to enrollment levels that are well above 96%. Putting both centre and state together, expenditures on elementary education in India have



risen from Rs. 62,000 crores in 2006-7 to an estimated figure of Rs. 112,000 crores in 2010-11.

While there are still input gaps, the number of teachers and basic facilities is rising consistently each year.

What is stuck is what children are learning in school. Regardless of what you feel about learning outcome measurements done by Assessment Survey Evaluation Research (ASER) or by Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the evidence points to the fact that the value added for every year spent in school in India, is low and unchanging.

ASER uses basic reading and arithmetic tasks for assessment; the same set of tasks are given to all surveyed children from age 5 to 16. The exercise is carried out in every rural district in India every year.

While there could be discussion on the measures and methods, the fact remains that without basic reading, and arithmetic skills, children will not go far in school or in life. PISA is a more sophisticated international effort which measures what 15 year-olds can do. Again, there can be debate on how or what PISA does but the message from both exercises (as well as from any recent empirical evidence on student outcomes in India) is clear.

There is a crisis. The crisis is about the capabilities that every child in India should have by the time she or he finishes each stage of schooling. This crisis cannot be tackled simply by believing that more is better or proceeding as if it is business as usual. Concrete, clear, new pathways connecting inputs and processes to outcomes have to be built.

These pathways must be understood and must be implementable by schools, parents and teachers.

Clarity is key

Both in policy and in practice, our education system needs at least three fundamental and urgent shifts. First, capabilities and learning goals need to be articulated for each stage of the education system. These goals need to be clearly stated and be understood by ordinary people. Goals need to be such that most children can achieve them at each stage.

Clear articulation of goals will help everyone to understand that simply knowing textbook content or doing well in exams is not the objective of the education system. Parents and communities must understand what the school system is supposed to achieve. This understanding can lead to local accountability and also to support for schools.

Second, all elements in the school system need to be aligned in both design and implementation to maximise the possibility of reaching the goals.

These elements include appropriate allocation of funds, teacher preparation, curriculum, textbooks, methods of teaching, materials, organisation of schools and monitoring. A continuous system of field support and review will allow refinements and changes to be made to figure out what works.

Third, in a country with a weak culture and appetite for measurement, simple methods have to be used on scale to gauge the progress being made every year. Such measurements need to be carried out by both the government and citizens.

The measurements should help school systems internally to refine and review their procedures and enable parents to pressurise schools to do better.

Measurement also means engagement — in understanding the situation and figuring out what to do next.

India has almost reached universal enrollment. This is an impressive achievement. This happened because everyone understood the goal. Policymakers, planners, practitioners and parents all understood what had to be done: get every child in school. To have every child in school and learning well, we need a similar clarity, priority and alignment for a new set of goals and figure out new effective pathways for achieving them soon.

Source: 05 November, 2012/ [Hindustan Times](#)

Tech colleges lag behind in industry collaboration

Industry-academia collaboration, or the lack thereof, has been a topic of debate for long.

Working towards getting a factual position in this regard, the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) conducted a survey of industry-linked engineering institutes.

The study has revealed that the country's technical institutes are not doing very well in terms of joining hands with the industry, with the average score at the national level standing at 30.9, with minimum and maximum scores at 4.4 and 75.7, respectively.

S.S. Mantha, Chairman of AICTE, said that the Council has been trying to improve the quality within the system, which requires stronger linkages with the industry. He added that given that there are 2.2 million seats at the entry level of technical education, the scale already exists, but now the focus has to be on quality.

“We need to ensure that what happens in education is relevant to the industry and vice-versa, said P.



Rajendran, Chairman of CII National Committee on Higher Education and Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of NIIT Ltd.

He added that it is the "selfish need" of the industry to join forces with the academia, so that they can get the best people into the job market.

The voluntary survey was open to accredited engineering institutes, which have been functional for 10 years and offer at least three streams out of six — chemical; civil; computer and IT; electrical; electronics & communication; and mechanical engineering.

However, out of the 1,070 institutes that have completed 10 years only 156 participated in the survey.

The institutes were evaluated on seven parameters — governance, curriculum, faculty, infrastructure, services, placements and entrepreneurship development.

Mantha said that the approval process of AICTE has stringent requirements for industry collaborations. Despite this, Indian institutions appear to be doing poorly in this field.

Almost 18 per cent of the institutions mapped fall in the 'low' category in terms of industry collaborations, while a massive 63 per cent are in the moderate category.

Mantha said that to ensure high-quality education, there is a need to ensure that teachers have some exposure to the industry. He said that it is important to figure out how many teachers are actively involved with the industry in research, have patents, or have filed for intellectual property rights.

Source: 05 November, 2012/ [The Hindu Business Line](#)

Infosys co-founder NRN Murthy: Indian IT has failed to support the growth of its own inventions

Despite making landmark advances, the Indian software industry has failed to support the growth of its own inventions, [Infosys](#) founder Narayana Murthy said today, asking students to reinvent their idea of education to end this anomaly.

Speaking to engineering students at the annual convocation of the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi, Murthy pointed out that the much famed Indian software sector ends up importing every innovation from the West despite the fact that the country produces a large number of software professionals.

He said emphasis solely on passing examination and enormous focus on rote learning rather than

on learning and using fundamentals was partly to blame for this state of affairs.

"Unfortunately, almost all of the advances in the Indian software industry - other than the Global Delivery Model and 24-hour productive day - in software engineering, quality, productivity, security, and user interface design have come from the western nations.

"... every book, we use, has been written by people who work abroad. Every gadget we use and every invention that we see around us have been invented abroad. Why is it so?" asked Murthy, who founded the Indian software major in 1981 along with six friends.

Suggesting a change in the way students' approach their education, he said the idea that education ends with passing the last examination in the college should be done away with, and professionals should continue the learning process all their lives.

"Making education purposeful is a key aspect of gaining recognition for our education system. No wonder then that there is no Indian institution of [higher education](#) in the top 200 in [Shanghai](#) rankings," he said.

Murthy exhorted students to imbibe fundamentals of education as instruments to solve problems around them and continue to evolve with rapidly changing technology.

The convocation function was also attended by former [Nasscom](#) chief Kiran Karnik and IIT-D Director Pankaj Jalote.

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

UP to take a call on public-private partnership model in higher education

Chief secretary Jawed Usmani has called a meeting of higher education officials on Tuesday to know the latest status of the public-private partnership in higher education. Usmani on October 26 wrote a letter to higher education officials directing them to look into the models given by UGC applicable for bringing in private investment in higher education, talk to potential stake holders, and find out what models are being followed by other states in higher education.

According to the higher education officials, three models viz: outsourcing, reverse outsourcing and hybrid have been studied. The outsourcing model is based on 'build, operate and transfer' concept, which is sponsored by a business organisation. The reverse outsourcing model is where the state government is the financial supporter, while a business outfit takes care of the maintenance. In hybrid model, there is participation of both state government and private firm both in terms of



finance and maintenance. Sources in the state government said that it is likely that a committee will be constituted to look in for private investment for higher education on Tuesday.

Apart from PPP model, which will be the prime focus, higher education officers will present the status report on the issue pertaining to revision and updating of 50 courses in the academic session 2012-13. It is to be noted that of the total of 160 courses running in state universities, 67 have already been revised. Of the remaining 93, the government has set a target of updating 50 courses till the end of this academic session.

Chief secretary has also asked the higher education officials to ensure that all universities and colleges undergo NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) evaluation, so as to improve the standard of education. Besides, the higher education secretary was instructed to write to the district magistrates of Gonda, Muzzafarnagar and Moradabad in context of making the land available for opening of colleges.

The state government has decided to open colleges in five minority populated districts, which included these three districts. Higher education officials will have to update the chief secretary on this front.

Education officials are hopeful of a positive development at the meeting which is scheduled at 10 am at Lal Bahadur Shastri Bhawan on Tuesday.

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

The Challenges of Opening up Higher Education in India

With legislation to allow foreign universities to come into India still far off in the distance, it remains a difficult environment for Western institutions hoping to secure a lucrative prize. Without this legislation foreign universities are unable to build new campuses or award accredited degrees in India.

A year ago, Strathclyde's Business School, in partnership with the Indian logistics company SKIL Infrastructure, opened a new facility for its staff to teach at. They were some of the very first to deliver British degrees at a UK campus on Indian soil. But their expedition has so far failed, just six students enrolled in 2011-12. Recruitment was so low for this year that in August Strathclyde left the country while it carried out a full review.

Philip Altbach, director of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College, in the US, believes the legislation opening up the Indian HE market, will remain permanently on the shelf. Continuing uncertainty over the bill has led to "a good deal of frustration in the higher

education community", he says, and has left some US universities "burnt" by their experiences.

[The bill](#) has been designed to regulate a sector that already exists but lacks a legislative framework. There were 631 foreign providers operating in the country in 2010, according to a study by the Association of Indian Universities. Of these, 440 did so from their home campuses while 186 were involved in twinning agreements or had some other arrangement with local institutions. 5 institutions had set up branch campuses in India in the absence of a law barring it.

Even if it is passed, some think that proposed legislation will be less than inviting to overseas providers. It would not allow foreign universities that set up in India to repatriate profits. Each university would need a "corpus fund" of about £6 million to stop them bailing out of the country and leaving students in the lurch. The bill also insists that branch campuses have an Indian advisory board of three national research professors per foreign institution. Kavita Sharma, director of the India International Centre, questions where the country will find so many distinguished national professors as many academics have left the country in search of higher salaries and better career progression.

Lancaster Goenka, one of the 5 universities with a branch campus, opened in 2009. With high fees (£3,000 per year for its engineering programme) versus local courses that charge a nominal fee, students at Lancaster Goenka are mostly from very wealthy families. The main issue is that the institute, which has applied to become a university, is not recognised by the national accreditation bodies. The degrees awarded by Lancaster, are invalid in India, making it impossible for graduates to get jobs in the public sector or to study at postgraduate level at India's public institutions. In response, Lancaster says that it is in the process of acquiring university status for G.D. Goenka World Institute so that "the partnership will be in full compliance of all local regulations".

In 1999, [Virginia Tech](#) was the first US institution to offer a degree programme in India, in partnership with S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research. The university now has plans for a campus in Tamil Nadu. However, while waiting for the foreign universities bill, Virginia Tech is concentrating on research initiatives and supporting its Indian partner MARG Swarnabhoomi.

India's University Grants Commission is also planning non-legislative routes to allow foreign universities to operate in a regulated manner. It intends to allow only institutions that appear in the



top 500 of either the [Times Higher Education World University Rankings](#) or the Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings to come into the country in collaboration with Indian universities rated "A" by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. But this policy raises problems about the number of foreign institutions already operating in the country that would fail this requirement.

India remains a complex place to 'do business' in the higher education market, but there is no doubt, the demand is there if the authorities can find a way of managing the expansion in a practical way.

Source: 06 November, 2012/ [World Press](#)

What Is the Value of Liberal Education?

As a marketing consultant might say, higher education has a problem with its value proposition. With tuitions soaring at many state institutions and at painfully high levels in private ones, the public at large and many government officials want to know the value of education, especially in preparing people for jobs.

Federal authorities and state governments are increasingly using measures like starting salaries by field of study to measure the value of education and of public investments in it. The problem is that starting salaries are an incomplete, anomalous and misleading measure, as a recent report on new graduates salaries in Virginia suggests. Value and values have other meanings, and are commonly used to describe "worth" outside of the measuring sticks used in markets.

This was called to mind a few months ago when I saw an intriguing title on a magazine asking, "What Are You Worth?" I took it to mean something about the purpose of life, but the story was actually about different ways to value your investments. This is a clear example of how the same words convey radically different meanings depending on the circumstances and choices that one has in mind.

The same premise holds true when speaking of the value of a liberal education. Equating educational value with monetary value like starting salaries is taking hold in the public mind, so it is good to sort out the terms. Some years ago, Professor Thomas Green described educational value in this way:

We are born into the world, but we are educated into the possession of our powers for the exercise of intellect, emotion, imagination, judgment, memory, observation and action....

He goes on to say that taking hold of these human powers represents "the defining presence of educational worth."

An education in the arts and sciences plays a powerful part in the shaping of human capabilities and the unfolding of human possibilities. Recent effort to evaluate student learning in higher education has focused attention on what are typically called student "learning outcomes." Attending to learning outcomes allows us to measure the consequences of the engaged study of important ideas, texts, artifacts, problems, and methods that provide the content of knowledge in arts and sciences fields. The key to seeing the enduring power of liberal learning is to trace how knowledge and its processes take up residence in students as they move toward becoming independent thinkers and agents of their own lives. A liberal education provides students with a broad set of capabilities such as critical thinking, effective communication, quantitative reasoning, creative thinking, problem-solving, integrative thinking, and personal and social responsibility. While not monetarily quantifiable at graduation, there is no question of the value of these capabilities for all individuals in the workforce of the future, as citizens and as human beings.

Each of these capabilities serves as an entry point into the more specific ways that the arts and sciences open cognitive and personal doors into the social and natural worlds in which we live. To explore but one example, in learning to communicate effectively, we discover the endless depths and power of language and the ways we can find great pleasure in it; but, we can also learn to use language to touch and influence others, especially as we grasp the narratives that we and others inescapably both live and tell.

All these capabilities have an eminently practical side that translates into skills for success in the marketplace and into dealing effectively with the intricate responsibilities of personal and civic life. The very best views on the value of the liberal arts today are those of the current beneficiaries of this education:

undergraduates who are studying the liberal arts and alumni who have experienced how valuable the liberal arts have been to them in their lives and careers. These fresh voices are the ones that need to be heard, and that is the reason behind a TEDx conference at Brown University October 20th.

Only when we see and hear people who are now in medicine, finance, film making, technology, and public service, who continue to find lasting significance in their liberal arts education, will we come to understand where true value lies.

Source: 06 November, 2012/ [Huffington Post](#)



Strengthen Indian higher education sector: Experts

The statement of Union minister of state for human resource development [Shashi Tharoor](#) regarding the quality of graduates in India and plans of inviting foreign universities to India evoked mixed response from experts in the coastal education hub. Mangalore University vice-chancellor T C Shivashankara Murthy told TOI that strengthening [higher education](#) sector in India is the best solution to improve the quality of graduates produced here. "It is the duty of the government to improve the quality of institutions in India. We have several reputed universities and institutions including IISC, IITs, IIITs, IIMs, IIS and NITs.

However, we produce very few graduates here. Hence, it is the duty of the government to provide sufficient infrastructure to increase the number of graduates here," Murthy said. Even if foreign universities are allowed to open campuses here, how many students can afford to study there, he asked. "One thing is sure that entry of foreign universities will give stiff competition to Indian universities," he added. Association of Mangalore University College Teachers former president Joselyn T Lobo said the all India body of college teachers has already opposed the move inviting foreign universities to India.

"Entry of foreign universities will commercialize the education sector in India. Their main goal will be to earn profit through selling education. Earlier, education was considered as a part of philanthropy. Organizations and institutions were opening schools and colleges with an objective of giving education to all without expecting any profit. However, the scenario has been changed and the arrival of foreign universities will worsen the situation," Joselyn said. ABVP state secretary K Ramesh said the government should think of improving the quality of education in the existing universities in India, instead of thinking of introducing foreign universities.

Source: 07 November, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

Yes minister, but what will you do about it?

When minister Shashi Tharoor said India's university education system is behind the curve, he was stating the obvious. That's why, in an India that's impatient for reforms, the message to him from IT City Bengaluru's educators and employers is: Talk is cheap, get on with reforms

Our education system maybe flawed, but having ministers make public statements condemning it is another matter. A minister must understand the role of the government in shaping the system, he

must realise the impact bad policy-making can have on the state of the education sector.

The underlying cause of all these failures is the fact that higher education in India is hidebound by far too many regulations. The government doesn't give colleges and universities the autonomy they deserve, which they have a right to. No decision can be made without the prior approval of the government, and this applies to every institution, whether private or publicly-owned.

Public institutions are completely reliant on the government even for funding and none of the others have the power to decide anything. That's why the Indian Institute of Science is truly the most remarkable institution in the country, because it has managed to stay clear of the clutches of the government and safeguard itself against its encroaches.

Tharoor is wrong in undermining the teachers in this country. Many institutions have wonderful faculty, who can do a lot in terms of research and pioneering work. However, they aren't paid nearly as well as they ought to be, they lack the opportunity, and moreover, they are completely overburdened with teaching.

That research is scant and not much commendable work is done even at the top institutions in the country is true. But how can you blame them? Funding is so limited, laboratory facilities are so poor and nothing is done to further research. All this is due to government policy.

So, a minister, who took charge only two days ago, shouldn't be making such sweeping statements. Tharoor doesn't have the wisdom of people who have taken years to understand the system. This is not the time for him to pontificate.

Every minister who comes in calls for educational reform. Recommendations are plenty, many reports have been prepared over the years, which the government has never made an effort to implement. What Tharoor needs to do is sit down with the reports made over the last 10 years and come up with a feasible strategy. Condemning the system and the way things are isn't going to take him anywhere.

The reality remains the same no matter what he or anybody else might say. What we do want to hear of is a plan, to understand what the government really wants to do. Now that the Cabinet reshuffle has taken place, we are keener than ever for some positive changes. I have pinned my hopes on the new Council of Ministers, and so has everybody else. There is much potential waiting to be exploited.



T.V. Mohandas Pai is Chairman, Manipal Education. (As told to Darshana Ramdev)

What Tharoor said?

The major problem remains that our national education policy has remained out of step with the times. Countries in the Middle East and even China are going out of their way to woo foreign universities to set up campuses in their countries, while India has turned away many academic suitors who have come calling in recent years.

Companies are entering the higher education space in the guise of training, and our university system is simply not producing well-educated graduates to meet the needs of Indian companies today. We will work toward putting our reform agenda back on track.

There is a need to develop higher levels of education and skill development and an environment must be created which is not just about a rapidly growing economy, but about enhancing good quality employment, too. India aims to grow at 8.2 to 8.5 per cent GDP and should therefore invest in education. IITs, IIMs and a few other colleges are islands in a sea of mediocrity."

What needs to be done?

Bring in qualitative reforms. Shashi Tharoor's address at the two-day FICCI Higher Education Summit seems to have caused a nation-wide outcry for longstanding policy changes. As Mohandas Pai, Chairman, Manipal Education, pointed out, every minister talks about educational reform, but how much reform has been done over the last 10 years?

"De-regularising the education sector is the only way to build world-class institutions," says Dr. Ashwin Mahesh, activist-entrepreneur-teacher.

"The root of the problem is that our politicians are tied up with so many of our institutions, which has resulted in the higher education sector being highly regulated."

He isn't the only one who thinks so. Give our educational institutions the autonomy they need and rightly deserve, say many academicians.

More funding is critical. Institutions in the country are starved for adequate resources, being dependent on the government as far as financial and policy matters are concerned. According to a University Grants Commission survey of 1,471 colleges and 111 universities, 73 per cent of the colleges and 68 per cent of the universities are of medium or low quality.

Allowing foreign universities is a pressing need, Tharoor said. A proposition that has met with a mixed response. "Bringing foreign universities to

India will help create a level playing field," said Harish Bijoor. Then again, Indian universities badly need to pull up their socks, too, for research and innovation is scant, even in the most prestigious institutions.

What is being taught at colleges and universities needs to undergo a drastic change. Corporations and entrepreneurs are in complete agreement with Tharoor that Indian education just isn't in keeping with the times. "Hired graduates need to be put through a fresh round of training to be made industry-ready," said Kiran Mazumdar Shaw.

From the quality of faculty, to research opportunities and autonomy for institutions, the higher education system appears to require reform every step of the way. With the ministers being so vociferous about the flaws, academicians say they have only raised the expectations of reform.

* Dr. Ashwin Mahesh, Visiting faculty at IIM-B, adjunct faculty at IIIT-B

It is true that there aren't too many world-class institutes in our country. The root cause of this problem is that our higher education sector, including our universities, is highly regulated. There is no space for autonomy. One of the reasons for these regulations is that most of our institutes are associated with politicians in one way or another.

That has resulted in a number of problems, including the over-regulation of institutions. Inviting foreign institutes to open their campuses in India will not solve these problems. To build world-class institutions, we must de-regularise the education sector. The need of the hour is pathbreaking reforms and giving more autonomy to our institutions.

* Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, CMD, Biocon

Shashi Tharoor is absolutely right. There is nothing wrong with inviting foreign institutes to open campuses in the country. When it comes to gaining knowledge or imparting education, we must understand that knowledge has no barrier, and in today's world, it is truly global. So I can find no fault with the statements made by the HRD minister. It's time to bring qualitative changes in higher education to ensure that our students get world-class education.

At the same time, we need to develop our institutions and bring them on par with global standards. I also endorse Mr Tharoor's opinion on the quality of teaching in our colleges. The fact remains that the majority of our students just don't meet the demands of industry. Most of them are unemployable and are not provided with any skill training at the campus level. The industry cannot



hire these students directly for work, training them is absolutely vital.

* Harish Bijoor, CEO, Harish Bijoor Consultants

I agree only partially with the statements of Mr. Shashi Tharoor. Firstly, there is no harm in allowing foreign institutions to open their campuses in the country, it is a world-wide trend. We need a level playing field for everybody, and the arrival of foreign institutions may help bring about this equality. On the other hand, however, there is no truth in the statement that none of our Indian institutions are world-class.

For example, Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad is on the list of the world's best institutes. Lakhs of Indians graduating from institutions here are recognised across the globe for their achievements. They are products of Indian institutions. Our institutions nurture and create skilled manpower that is recognised the world over. So it is not right to say we don't have world class institutions and universities.

Source: 07 November, 2012/ [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Vice-chancellors, professors ponder over university system in India

When former HRD minister [Kapil Sibal](#) wanted to introduce a common entrance test for admission to central universities across India, many of the varsities didn't approve it. The Union government could not take it forward and the proposal fell through. "Such rigidity is affecting [higher education](#) sector in India, and we are not able to produce quality graduates," a former VC, who didn't wish to be named, said in response to Union minister of state for HRD Shashi Tharoor's take on the university system. "We are fixated on extending the educational reach, rather than on improving the quality of education," he told TOI. Karnataka State Open University VC K S Rangappa is more vocal. "Political and bureaucratic interferences are affecting the performance of varsities, leading to a decline in the quality of education. Factors like caste and community have crept in the system, and there is hardly any scope for meritocracy and efficiency," the chemistry professor said, adding the lack of academic assessment is affecting performance.

That being the case, how can universities focus on quality of education? How can Indian universities be expected to grow and excel?"K C Belliappa, former vice-chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University, a central university based in Arunachal Pradesh, said he partly agrees with the minister's contention. But he argued that foreign universities setting shop in India is not the answer. The English professor said: "The problem lies with the system, and not with

the students who are talented. We've not been able to tap their potential, given the lacunae in the education system which is suffering largely due to lack of reforms."Having worked with the student community in the science sector and led the University of Mysore's Centre for Development of Science in Schools, former VC P Venkataramaiah is witness to students' prospects.

"It is unfair to Indian education system to tell that we are not producing quality graduates. It is rather a sweeping generalization," the former VC of Kuvempu University said. Speaking on brain drain, he said: "That we've a talented lot which is going abroad to work proves that we are generating quality graduates. Alumni from IITs and IIMs are holding top positions in the US. There is crisis in higher education sector, and efforts are being made to attend to them," he explained. University of Mysore VC V G Talawar too agrees. "We are lagging behind in some areas like applied and basic sciences. But when we factor in the rate of growth and its reach, Indian universities are doing better." He picked infrastructure and investment as the two factors that hold key to success. During the 11th Plan, the UGC has given special focus to infrastructure, which is showing results. There is 30% increase in enrolment, and bulk of it is coming from rural side. There is also a sizable number of girls who are getting into higher education stream, he said, adding that part of the problem was parents' love for professional courses, which is now changing. "There is course correction on their part, and we are netting talents in basic sciences too," he added.

Source: 07 November, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

India Inc needs to play active role in Indian higher education system

India Inc needs to play an active role in the higher education of India with the aim to develop centres of excellence, similar like the developed nations, said Dr Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for Human Resource Development.

He also said that the Universities such as Harvard, MIT, Silicon valley have been established by the prominent business houses. In India, various institutions such as Indian Institute of Science, BITS Pillani, and Xavier Institute of Labour Management have been established by the corporate houses.

In the post-independence days, there has been less stress on research and innovation. From 1991, positive changes and greater collaboration between industry and academia has been witnessed. The industry and Centre has jointly worked to develop a conducive ecosystem for strengthening R&D and innovation.



He applauded the tech giant Infosys for taking steps to establish centres of excellence for training their employees.

Source: 09 November, 2012/ [News India mart](#)

Ivy League not the solution for higher education

America's Ivy League and Britain's Oxbridge cannot solve India's higher education challenges – the country needs a clear direction for higher education expansion, said experts debating the role of foreign universities.

Academics and industry experts at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) summit felt that Indian policy-makers were confused about what role foreign universities could play in strengthening India's higher education landscape.

Identifying needs

While India needs to expand its higher education infrastructure to include research universities, teaching colleges and vocational training, it has to choose wisely to ensure growth across the sector.

“Only about 18% of students can access higher education in India. If we want to provide inclusive education then Ivy League universities and research-intensive institutions may not be the right choice,” said Rachel Davis, dean of the Delhi School of Business.

Research institutions were focused on cutting-edge research. Their priority would be to spend on niche areas and not on teaching undergraduate students, Davis said.

She added that Indian policy-makers were going with the visibility of a foreign institution rather than its mission.

“There are several non-Ivy League institutions in the top 200 in the US or other countries that are good for undergraduate teaching. Others offer good masters programmes and [there are] specialised institutions whose focus is research. India needs to pick the right partners to cater to its most pressing needs,” said Davis.

India is aiming for a higher education enrolment rate of 30% by 2020. According to government data, it needs to increase the number of universities from the current 621 to 1,500.

Affordability of elite institutions

Rafiq Dossani, senior economist with Rand Corporation in the US, questioned the affordability of an Ivy League education for students in India.

MIT and Stanford spend thousands of dollars per student, but Dossani questioned whether Indian students or the government would be able to afford

the cost of tuition at these elite universities if they came to India.

Most Ivy League institutions have a faculty-to-student ratio of 1:6, but it would cost India Rs100,000 (US\$1,830) per student per year to maintain a faculty-to-student ratio of 1:15, thus pushing up the cost of education significantly for students.

Notably, India has a foreign education providers' bill that will allow foreign institutions to set up campus in India after it becomes law.

The bill has faced opposition from political parties, members of the ruling coalition and academics, who have called it an elite move that would serve only those who can afford to pay the fees. The bill has been pending in parliament for more than a year.

Anand Sudarshan, former CEO and MD of Manipal Global Education Service and director of Sylvant Advisors, said India needed to look at cheaper and more innovative models.

He gave the example of the US\$8 billion community college rejuvenation plan in the US, arguing that it would be an eighth of the cost of university education and would prepare students for the market.

Teaching versus research

Research in India has been a neglected area and the entry of reputed international institutions would help improve the research landscape in higher education.

But India needs a large number of undergraduate and graduate teaching institutions, and improving the quality of classroom teaching was a key higher education reform, said Professor Narayana Jayaram of the Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai.

“More than infrastructure and students, we need to focus on teachers who stay in the system for 30 to 35 years. Indian universities have insisted on no training or orientation for teachers,” Jayaram said.

India should focus on partnering with leading teacher training institutions around the world to train its teachers and revive the teacher education curriculum.

Philip Altbach, director of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College in the US, said India was putting all its eggs in the research basket.

“There are lots of very good American institutions that are not Ivy League. India cannot focus only on research when it has millions of students to educate. For instance, India needs to urgently upgrade its vocational education colleges,” Altbach



told University World News on the sidelines of the conference.

Centre versus periphery

The foreign education providers' bill was a classic case of policy being decided at the highest level without taking into consideration grassroots realities, said Professor KB Powar, former secretary general of the Association of Indian Universities.

“One of the reasons for the non-passage of the bill is that we are trying to bring in higher education reforms through legislation and forcing it onto the states, which form a crucial part of India's higher education network,” said Powar.

Challenges faced by universities and colleges in small cities in India are radically different. While the official medium of instruction is English, teachers and students in many regional colleges are not proficient in English and thus find it difficult to teach or comprehend the curriculum.

“The curriculum itself is outdated and needs revision before it can match minimum standards,” Powar told University World News.

“These are local problems that need to be addressed by us. No foreign university can help us.”

Source: 11 November, 2012/ [University world News](#)

India's Higher Education Model Is Close To Collapse – And Needs To Change

Kapil Sibal, India's Human Resource Minister, estimated recently that India needs 1500 universities, almost three times as much as the current 564, to serve its young and aspiring population, and meet expectations for economic growth. This oft-quoted but unofficial observation reflects the scale of ambition of the Indian policy-makers, and the direct connection they make between Higher Education and Economic Growth. Consequently, India is the only major economy in the world where the Government is still spending money on setting up new Higher Education institutions, and building up capacity in the old ones. This effort will get a further boost by the recent appearance of three of the IITs (Kharagpur in 226-250 bracket, Bombay in 251-275 bracket and Roorkee in 351-400 bracket) in the Times Global 400 league table, though none of them has made it to the top 200 yet.

Some effects of this additional investment, as well as the government's enthusiasm on getting the private sector involved in Higher Education, is visible in the rapid expansion of Higher Education provision in India. The number of colleges, mostly within the private sector, has grown by 150%, reaching a total number of 33,000.

The student numbers have expanded too, though this has been at a slower rate than the expansion of school capacity. The most intriguing part of the statistics is that despite the student growth, the Gross Enrolment Ratio, the number of people moving into tertiary education after leaving school, remains stubbornly below 20%. This is partly because of the rapid expansion of literacy, as observed in the current census, and the expansion of school level education. However, it is also observable that some of India's new Higher Education institutions are starting to struggle, if the number of empty seats in the Engineering and MBA colleges is any guide. It seems that while the investment has poured in and seat capacity has been expanded, the students are not interested in what the university have to offer and as a result, overall student numbers in Higher Education, while growing, aren't going up proportionately.

This observation gains further force if we see look at this issue from the perspective of demography. For plain demographic reasons, there would be 5 million more students in college by 2015 than there are now, representing a growth of 25%. Also, the Gross Enrolment Ratio below 20% is significantly lower than that of comparable countries, for example China.

By historical precedent, a country's GER tends to grow alongside its income, levelling off somewhat as it approaches the 40% level: It requires a somewhat bigger leap in income thereafter for the GER to grow again. The Indian model, therefore, represents an anomaly. The student numbers have grown, but this can be solely attributed to demography and growth in income.

Once we have considered the impact of these two factors, there is little to show for all the extra money that the government is spending, and for the huge expansion of capacity in the private sector. In fact, it seems that there is an apparent supply glut in the private sector, and unused infrastructure is common. Colleges are up for sale, and this trend is likely to accelerate in the coming days.

Clearly, the current model of Higher Education expansion is somewhat out of sync with the level of demand from students. And after the next election, Indian politicians are likely to refocus their attention to boosting economic growth and employment. This is a good time, therefore, to reflect where the model is going wrong and what could be improved.

Since countries like India often model their Higher Education systems after the United States, we may come up with valuable insights by looking at the American trajectory.



A parallel can be drawn between India's current situation and the United States in 1940, when high school enrollment jumped to 73% of the school age population, while the college-going population stood at only 16% of those who completed High School – somewhat at the level India is today.

The wartime American government wanted an expansion of the system, as they planned for the returning personnel after the Second World War. After the distasteful treatment of Great War veterans led to a stand-off with American troops in Washington DC in 1932, finding gainful employment for these young men became an imperative. The resultant Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, popularly dubbed as GI Bill, was the biggest act of mass expansion of Higher Education in human history: It enabled 7.8 million returning veterans to attend college by the end of the validity of the act in 1956.

The Indian government should feel similarly besieged, and scared, by the rapidly growing young population of the country, and the fact that a march on Delhi is no longer an unthinkable prospect, but a realistic possibility. If, at this stage, the government is wondering why public investment and private initiatives are not increasing participation in Higher Education, they need to look closely at the American experience of this expansion: Faced with the expansion of the student population, President Truman appointed a Presidential Commission, which came back with the recommendation for an expansion of two year colleges, which they called Community Colleges. This rapidly expanding part of the American Higher Education system absorbed the increased demand, served the growth of the knowledge economy and drove up the Gross Enrolment Ratio; but, indeed, in the glitz and glamour of the American Research universities, few around the world are aware of this part of the story.

New-millennium India isn't similar to post-war America and India's policies are likely to be different. But there is an important lesson to be learned from the American model that can be applied to Indian Higher Education's current malady: The current growth is misdirected and top-heavy, which is neither addressing the issue of quality nor quantity.

Public investment is primarily going to the creation of more High Prestige national institutions, while private investment is directed towards the creation of provisions in Engineering and post-graduate provisions in Business, leaving the large swathes of general education colleges to face disinvestment and neglect.

Despite the success of India's IGNOU, which has grown into the largest open university in the world with more than 3.5 million students, and various other Open University systems across the country, the Indian government has treated these as below par offerings and wasted a great opportunity to expand Higher Education provision. India's expansion of Higher Education has been directed at a sliver of its expanding middle class, and has failed to take into account its rapidly changing nature and composition.

There are a number of things which need to be done to create a Higher Education model that may work for India. As a starting point, the regulatory system should be overhauled to make the sector more appealing to private investors (and even allow For-Profits, which is needed to expand capacity); But regulation at the same time also needs to be made more robust, more focused on the student experience and educational outcomes and less on buildings and infrastructure.

As it stands today, legislation bars educational providers from making a profit – this politically motivated law must be replaced, so that educational provision can be redesigned with a positive student experience taking centre stage.

Public investment should be directed towards both the top and the bottom, thereby supporting excellence in research and teaching in select national institutions, which is already happening, but also to support those colleges which directly serve the new demand. In the last few years, the government has spent millions to create a vocational education system, but the money seems to have been mostly squandered; So far, there is little to show for the vast sums invested, except for the pockets of the foreign advisors and providers it has lined. One may wonder why the government embarked on creating a parallel system when the public institutions, ITIs and local colleges are starved of investment. Besides, the government's quest to create a vocational education system, mostly following the British model, is probably already antiquated – a rapidly rising Middle Class is unlikely to favour a two-tier system of higher and lower education. The government must bring its investment in vocational competence in line with the need to rejuvenate the public institutions and local colleges, as these are the institutions best placed to reach out to the local population in need.

Lastly, the government must support private enterprise. As is common, Indian government has so far limited private sector forays into education and kept For-Profits out altogether – absurd, considering that some of the best educational work in India was carried out by For Profit companies like



NIIT, Aptech and Educomp. Yet at the same time, the government has also handed out subsidies and contracts to a few favoured providers to create a parallel system of vocational education, which has proved to be mostly wasteful.

Market-based solutions work perfectly for an aspiring Middle Class and the government should withdraw its subsidies and allow private For-Profit universities to form in India, which will greatly expand high quality provision and establish a cost-to-outcome link resulting from such market-led institutions. Setting this into practice however, will indeed prove difficult, as vested interests from both the political and business sectors would want to keep the status quo for as long as they can. However, with the pending collapse the Indian Higher Education model seems to be heading for, there may not be much time left.

Source: 11 November, 2012/ [Economic Policy group](#)

President Pranab Mukherjee stresses large scale skill development of youth

Observing that access to elementary [education](#) would be a focus area in the 12th Plan, President [Pranab Mukherjee](#) today said equal attention should be also provided to [skill development](#) of youth in large scale.

"It is equally vital to carry forward the important task of skill development in our youth if we want to fully realise the dividends from the demographic orientation of our country," he said while referring to the recently launched National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF).

The framework provides for horizontal and vertical mobility between vocational and general education.

"The task of skill building should be taken up on a very large scale so as to properly equip and motivate the youth of our country for jobs and the country's economic growth," he said at a function here commemorating the National Education Day.

Access to elementary education is an area of priority focus in the 12th Five Year Plan, he said, adding that at present, the number of schools has increased to 13.04 lakhs.

The National Education Day is observed to celebrate the birth anniversary of freedom fighter Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was also the first education minister of the country.

Mukherjee said the enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009 is a "culmination of Azad's dream" and a promise of the directive principles of the Constitution.

Source: 11 November, 2012/ [Economic times](#)

The elite's classrooms

The government is internationalising Indian higher education in quite the wrong way

The [Indian government](#) recently announced a grant of Rs 25 crore to Oxford University for the [Indira Gandhi Centre](#) for Sustainable Development in Somerville College. As higher education in India continues to struggle, the government's largesse to one of the world's most elite institutions is indicative of its impoverished thinking on internationalising Indian higher education. While India undoubtedly needs to access institutions of elite learning, they are not the solution to the country's higher education crises. The higher education challenge in India is not about the top one or two per cent, but the median institution that is ignored because the remedy is long-term, the effort enormous, and the publicity rewards few and never immediate. And that is even truer of the country's strategy in accessing international higher education.

Most of the attention on internationalising higher education has focused on the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill and whether this would simply result in an influx of high-cost, low-quality institutions that would distort the lofty priorities of domestic institutions, as well as taking away jobs from supposedly dedicated low-paid faculty. These debates are largely sui generis. No outsider can commercialise Indian higher education any more than what those run by India's politicians are brazenly doing. Yes, their fees will be high; but that will simply ensure that foreign providers would at best occupy a small niche for wealthier students, who in any case are being served by foreign institutions outside the country and spending their money there. But, by the same token, many of their purported benefits will also be modest. Indeed, given the politics around the issue, it is unclear whether the Bill should be a policy priority relative to other issues plaguing Indian higher education.

The government (through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations) now supports 92 chairs in universities around the world (according to its 2010-11 annual report) ranging from a chair on the Indian Economy in Denmark (which clearly lacks the resources), Germany (six chairs, including one on corporate governance and corporate responsibility!) and Indian Studies in Lithuania [sic]. It's a pity we cannot spell the name of the country where we want to spread our soft power.

This comes amidst the granting of the projected \$300 million capital costs for the South Asia University, not including a 100-acre plot of land in a prime locality of south Delhi. But the ministry of



external affairs (which clearly knows a lot about higher education in India, since most of their children study abroad), has another brilliant idea – Nalanda University – the non-recurring cost of which is reportedly around Rs 2,500 crore. Yes, this institution does have international stakeholders, but in the end most of the financing (especially recurring costs) will come – where else – from the Government of India.

It is just extraordinary how India's elites have so grossly distorted priorities of Indian higher education by invoking the past or seductive projections of "soft power". Imagine giving the same subsidy to Somerville College, but if the Centre were set up in India. The department of Hindi in Delhi University may not have enough office space, tables and chairs for its faculty, but let us create chairs in Hindi around the world. We will not give visas to Pakistanis, but we will create a South Asian University. Imagine if the 100 acres of land in south Delhi were given as a land grant to Delhi University, which then used the resources from its sale (Rs 1,000 crore) to create an endowment whose annual income would be used to develop facilities and programmes to attract students from South Asia. But why do that, if one can create a plush ghetto for another tiny elite?

If the Bharatiya Janata Party fantasised that the past could be recreated in Ayodhya, our secular elites want to recreate it in Nalanda.

The involvement of iconic figures has ensured that there is no debate on just what justifies spending so much money on a higher education project for so few when so many students in Bihar face such acute deprivations in higher education. One might imagine the possibilities of internationalising higher education in Bihar – and across North India – by rebuilding the veterinary sciences institutions with help from, say, New Zealand, given the importance of livestock for poor rural households.

But that would be too lowbrow an intellectual activity. And, of course, one can be sure that few Indian elites so passionate about this project will be sending their own children to study there.

If India wants to harness the benefits of internationalising higher education, there is lower hanging fruit to be harvested. The University Grants Commission (UGC) currently bars recruitment of foreigners as full-time faculty. US universities, which have far more talent, are constantly looking to recruit foreign talent. India, on the other hand, while desperately short of talent, bars foreigners and even forbids PIOs from doing "research" (as well as "mountaineering"!). A simple administrative change, removing this self-

defeating UGC proscription and allowing universities and institutes to recruit talent globally – with flexibility on contracts and pay – would not bring a deluge of talent, but would make a difference at the margin. This can be augmented by creating National Visiting Professorships – especially in S&T fields – as China has done and leverage them to train faculty and graduate students in India. The main focus should be to bring talent into India, not fritter away scarce resources into grandiose building projects. Even reducing the high transaction costs of holding conferences in India by making it easier for foreign scholars to get visas would be helpful.

India must recognise that it simply cannot recreate the Western experience of brick-and-mortar universities – it does not have the luxury of time – given the sheer demographic influx. It needs to leverage every possible global resource for training and this may now be considerably easier (and much cheaper) because of the arrival of MOOCs – "massive online open courses" built on open-source teaching platforms – which are threatening to overturn the century-plus model of physical campus-bounded instruction.

For the first time – at least in principle – anyone anywhere in the world can access outstandingly taught courses from some of the world's most talented teachers. Already more than a million people around the world have signed up to take them in barely over a couple of years.

For India to harness the potentially huge upside of MOOCs, it needs to subsidise the translation of some of the course material in multiple Indian languages, make broadband cheaply accessible across the country, and ensure that there are no regulatory hurdles. Again, this is not a substitute for domestic knowledge creation efforts. But it can be an excellent complement, exposing students to a broader world of knowledge, especially in S&T-related areas.

The Cabinet reshuffle has brought a new team into the human resources development ministry. Given the legislative travails of the previous regime, in principle at least this change offers a glimmer of hope in an area where challenges are mounting.

The demographic tide inexorably rising in India is bringing ashore tens of millions of young people seeking to join India's workforce with aspirations that their parents couldn't even dream about, many with credentials that they can ill afford, but without either the critical thinking or specific functional skills that matter for labour markets. Managing their expectations will be no mean task. But a failure to do so would be disastrous. Allowing the winds of international education to blow into India, though



by no means a panacea, would be a step in the right direction.

Source: 12 November, 2012/ [Business Standard](#)

International Recruitment Should Explore Emerging Markets

While the steep increase in international student enrollment has advocated diversity on college campuses, it has also been extremely considerate to the financial health of U.S. Institutions. Although, a recent [report](#) released by World Education Services (WES), a nonprofit organization evaluating international credentials, suggests that, if American schools fail to tap into non-traditional countries with regards to international recruitment, the budgets of such schools could be in danger.

With China, India and Korea continuing to bring forth a prominent number of foreign students to U.S. schools, more than \$20 billion from international student enrollment has poured into higher education Institutions, according to Dr. Rahul Choudaha, director of Research and Advisory Services at WES. While these three countries certainly elevated the playing field for international student recruitment, research introduces a few challenges that American colleges could encounter if they neglect other, emerging markets. This leaves schools with the responsibility of tactically choosing whether to infiltrate an existing market or cultivate a new market.

In relying on large markets such as China, India and Korea, the risk is that schools could become overly dependent. There is a growing fear that American schools could revisit some of the same struggles that Australian schools endured in 2010, as they were obligated to reduce the number of Indian students at higher education Institutions in order to abide by immigration policies.

“Imagine if the same situation happens to the US with China or India being the largest market. This can seriously affect the financial situation of some of the institutions, especially coming from an international student recruitment perspective,” Dr. Choudaha remarked.

In addition, the economic stability has played an integral role in evaluating American schools and their reliance on its most efficient markets. Conceivably, the economic shift of these countries could decrease, causing the numbers of international students to also decline. As the economy in both China and India grapples with growth challenges, this inherently presents potential risks in the number of international students able to afford U.S. schools without federal relief.

Choudaha raised concern when he commented, “The point is in the next two to three years, China and the way we have established its market will make the demographic factors and the mobility from China decrease because of the fiscal trends there. What if the number of students coming from China starts to decline?”

Alternatively, countries including Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Vietnam and Turkey have seen significant growth in their economy, especially within their gross domestic product (GDP), which have reached well over \$100 billion this past year. Hence, WES has identified these destinations as emerging markets, exhibiting great potential in regards to international recruitment. Already, U.S. schools have seen an influx of students from both Saudi Arabia and Brazil. With Saudi Arabia bringing in more than 23,000 students and Brazil circulating more than 9,000 students, these markets’ prospectively could generate equivalent streams of revenue like those larger countries tend to produce.

Interestingly, the trends in international student growth from these less concentrated countries have not only impacted the cosmopolitan states like New York, California and Washington, D.C., but those smaller, less populated states have experienced more expansion in their international student population. Among those less populated states, Oregon in particular has seen rapid percent growth in its global student enrollment. Enlarging its international student population in 2011 by 45 percent, they have accrued 5,695 students from various geographic locations outside the U.S. The University of Oregon enrolls several students from Saudi Arabia and Vietnam, as these locations are among the school’s top represented countries.

Robert Hardin, the university’s admissions director of international recruitment, suggests that the university’s large growth in international students is attributed to several factors, including its accessible location, reputable academic programs and the amount of scholarship funding available for its global students. Hardin mentions that, in the socioeconomic makeup of their international student population, “We don’t only have super rich international students; there are only the few of them. We do have some students who come from some well-off families, but we do offer generous scholarships for those international students with financial need.”

Suitably, one of their largest scholarships tailored for global students is their International Cultural Service Program, which awards up to \$27,000 in financial aid, almost equaling the yearly tuition of approximately \$28,000. According to the WES, including scholarships for international students can



build a more diverse "portfolio" of students from overseas, creating a welcoming campus for those foreign students interested in attending American schools. In addition, the idea of a portfolio de-risks American schools by providing alternative options for international recruitment markets.

Dr. Choudaha summarized the value of emerging markets and its potential effect on the pockets of American schools when he wrote, "The portfolio approach argues that targeting multiple emerging markets with a mix of practices diminishes the inherent risk involved with them."

Source: 14 November, 2012/ [Business Standard](#)

Children to Have Courage to Walk the Uncharted path - Pallam Raju

On Children's Day, Union Minister for Human Resource Development Dr M M Pallam Raju gave a simple message to young minds---don't go where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path, and leave a trail. The Minister was addressing thousands of children at Bal Bhavan, on the theme "Universal Brotherhood and Peace", in New Delhi today.

Dr Pallam Raju said the theme of brotherhood and peace was most apt in the modern day context—our world is still not comfortable for children to live in, fragmented as it is into region, religion and nation. He said the more children come together on a common platform and participate in activities, the more they would become compassionate leaders, and harmonious, sensitive adults. Paying rich tributes to Pandit Nehru, the Minister said his life and work has influenced the way we think, and the way we have grown as a nation.

As part of the Children's Day celebrations, for over an hour children presented a variety of spell-binding song and dance programmes.

The Minister took the occasion to launch Delhi Tourism's Ho Ho (Hop-on-hop-off) bus stop right outside the Bal Bhavan premises, putting the 56 year old institution on Delhi's cultural-tourism circuit.

Source: 15 November, 2012/[PIB](#)

Key to change in India: Educated youth

Times Guests Athith Krishna and Akhila Jayaram spoke to TOI on issues like education, politics, environment and corruption, besides their dreams and aspirations. The youngsters differed in their views on tackling the city's garbage problem and taking a plunge into politics to change the system, but agreed on education and corruption, especially anti-graft crusader Arvind Kejriwal's recent exposes.

ON EDUCATION

Today's students are slaves of rote learning with little course flexibility. With very little time for extra-curricular activities, the 16-year education cycle pushes the child to go with peer pressure and obtain that coveted degree.

But both Athith and Akhila have managed to fight time and pursue their interests, including quizzing, football and writing. There are too many students chasing too few seats in IIMs and IITs. The duo has a word of advice for those who rigorously chase the IIT dream and then end up doing something they didn't learn on campus. "Bollywood is growing by the day. There are so many related industries and fields that can be pursued instead of something mundane, like engineering. The other option would be to increase the number of seats," points out Akhila.

On the 25% quota reserved for the underprivileged at schools, Athith felt the RTE Act segregates people and infuses an inferiority complex in poor students. "The government needs to look at providing proper infrastructure in their institutions and train teachers before bringing in a law that picks 25% children and puts them in an environment they are not comfortable in," said Akhila.

Added Athith: "Where is the need to invest so much in the defence sector? Why can't that money be pumped into education and improve the lives of so many children?"

ON POLITICS

Like many from GenNext, the duo has nothing nice to say about Indian politicians. But says Athith: "Indians can't blame their politicians for misgovernance as it is we who bring them to power."

But Akhila is quick to add: "What about the illiterate who vote for something in return? How do you blame them? Education is the answer for electing good politicians. If educated, we would make a judicious decision in voting the right people."

While Athith doesn't mind taking a plunge into politics after completing his education, Akhila seems disinterested in politics but strongly feels that Indians need to elect the right kind of people, and not be swayed by empty promises. Both feel that youth political icon Rahul Gandhi is yet to prove himself. "Though he's been campaigning for his party, he is yet to show his decision-making prowess to the public."

ON CORRUPTION

Both have been exposed to some form of corruption or other. Athith strongly feels that standing up against wrongdoers is the way out, while Akhila



believes in educating the masses to wipe the evil out of the system.

Corruption, they feel, cannot be dealt with in the Kejriwal fashion - that of jumping from one issue to another. "He's just hogging the limelight and should stay outside politics to bring about a change. I wouldn't vote for Kejriwal," says Athith.

Akhila thinks public memory is too short and corruption too deep for one person to take on. "Kejriwal should try to prove to people why he is not like the rest of them. He should show the way on how things can be done differently. I wouldn't vote for Kejriwal because he's too inexperienced. I don't think he'd create such an impact. As citizens of the country, we need to have faith in our systems."

ON ENVIRONMENT

As other children in Bangalore schools, both have done their bit for the environment, from rain water harvesting to plastic-free environs. TOI asked them for a solution to Bangalore's garbage woes and what would they do if they were in the BBMP commissioner's seat.

An aggressive Athith said: "I would pass an order for citizens to compulsorily segregate waste, which would include fines, should people choose to ignore the order. I will use technology to its fullest potential to rid the city of the menace."

A researcher in the making, Akhila thinks penalizing people would backfire. "People should be encouraged to segregate waste at home and kids should be taught the same in school. If I were the BBMP commissioner, I'd use the media to get my point across and show visuals which would scare people and force them to segregate waste."

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

The emerging world's education imperative

Official delegations from the world's nine most populous developing countries just met in New Delhi to discuss a subject vital for their countries' futures: education. The meeting of ministers and others from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan, known as the E-9, is the latest in a series of encounters held every two years to fulfil the pledge of "education for all" by 2015.

The E-9 account for 54 percent of the world's population, 42.3 percent of children not in school, 58 percent of young illiterates (aged 15-24), and 67 percent of adult illiterates (two-thirds of whom are women). So the challenges are enormous: children, from families too poor to think about education, beyond the reach of schooling and too malnourished to study; and too few schools,

classrooms, teaching resources, and adequately trained teachers. Rampant illiteracy underpins other problems, including exploding populations, gender imbalances, and widespread poverty.

India provides a good example of how these problems should be addressed. A decade ago, 30 million Indian children were not in school; today, the figure is three million. A far-reaching [Right to Education Act](#), obliging the state and central governments to provide (as a constitutional right) eight years of free and compulsory education to all children between six and 14, has had a large impact. And free mid-day meals at school are a powerful incentive to children from poor families to attend school and stay there.

This does not mean that all enrolled students will emerge prepared for the information age; but getting children into school is a start. India also needs a relevant curriculum and skilled teachers who can motivate students to learn it — in short, an overdue emphasis on quality, in addition to officials' understandable focus on access and inclusion.

There are 540 million Indians under the age of 25. The labour force is expected to increase by 32 percent over the next 20 years, whereas it will decline by 4 percent in industrialised countries and by nearly 5 percent in China. India's favourable demographic profile can add significantly to its economic-growth potential for the next three decades, provided that its young people are educated and trained properly.

Otherwise, the same young people will swell the ranks of the frustrated and unemployed, with unimaginable consequences in terms of social unrest and the risk of organised violence. Maoist groups already target such people for recruitment. If India is to avoid an apocalyptic fate, it must give them a better chance of gainful employment through more and improved educational opportunities.

India has one of the largest higher-education systems in the world, and ranks second in terms of student enrolment. But, while the country now has 621 universities and 33,500 colleges, only a few are world-class institutions, including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) whose graduates have flourished in America's Silicon Valley. But such institutions are still islands in a sea of mediocrity.

India is entering the global employment marketplace with a self-imposed handicap of which we are just beginning to become aware. For far too long, we were complacent, having produced, since the 1960's, the world's second largest pool of trained scientists and engineers. They were more than our then-protected economy could absorb, so



many tens of thousands of them left to make their fortunes elsewhere, founding companies in Silicon Valley, inventing the Pentium chip, and even winning a couple of Nobel Prizes.

Their success meant that IIT was soon mentioned alongside MIT. But it also masked another reality — that there just are not as many of them as there should be. Senior Indian executives whose businesses require them to recruit competent scientists or engineers complain that demand for such talent vastly exceeds the supply. Once the elite institutions are accounted for, what remains is decidedly uneven in quality.

A [World Bank Survey in 2009](#) highlighted that 64 percent of employers are “only somewhat satisfied,” or worse, with the new engineering graduates they hire. I have spoken to many CEOs who tell me that many, if not most, of their new employees require remedial training before they can begin work, in order to compensate for the shortcomings of their university education. Indeed, companies like Tata and Infosys are hiring people whom they do not consider to be up to par — and spending 6-9 months, sometimes longer, to educate them properly for their jobs.

The need for education reform has never been clearer, and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's government has recognised it. Still, India's spends only 1.2 percent of its GDP on higher education, compared to 3.1 percent in the United States or, closer to home, 2.4 percent in South Korea. The figure should be higher. So, too, is India's 3.3 percent share of [global output of academic research](#) far too low for a country with 17 percent of the world's brains.

Education is now recognised as a national priority. More resources are being committed, the corporate sector is being encouraged to get involved, and there is a welcome emphasis on innovation. International cooperation, exemplified by the mutual learning implicit in the E-9 exercise, is also being tapped.

The next ten years could witness a dramatic transformation of education in India. But it will not happen without a huge national effort. The rest of the E-9, engaged in similar endeavours, will be watching.

Source: 15 November, 2012/ [Reuters](#)

India needs foreign aid for 'islands in sea of mediocrity'

New HE minister aims to unblock channels to openness. Joanna Sugden reports from New Delhi
India must welcome foreign universities to improve the quality of its graduates, the country's new

minister of state for human resource development has said, amid suggestions that the ministerial reshuffle that put him in place could ease the path of much-delayed legislation to open up the nation's academy.

Shashi Tharoor, whose portfolio as minister of state includes higher education, said that India was failing to produce “well-educated” graduates because its system was out of step with other emerging economies in terms of international engagement.

“Whereas the Middle East and China are going out of their way to woo foreign universities to set up campuses in their countries, India has turned away many academic suitors who have come calling in recent years,” Dr Tharoor said.

The Parliament of India has yet to pass a bill, first mooted in 1995, to regulate the operation of foreign universities in India, allowing them to set up full campuses and award their own degrees in the country.

Observers of India's academy were uncertain whether Dr Tharoor's statement and a shake-up of the ministers responsible for higher education would lead to the bill finally being passed.

Kavita Sharma, director of the India International Centre in New Delhi and author of *Internationalization of Higher Education: An Aspect of India's Foreign Relations* (2008), welcomed the appointment. But she warned that it did not mean the bill would become law.

“Passing bills depends on getting the opposition on board,” Dr Sharma said. “In India, very often resistance has nothing to do with the issue at hand: it often has something to do with the larger politics at play.”

The uncertain policy environment has made it difficult for foreign institutions to engage fully in the country or even plan to do so. They are currently restricted to twinning agreements with local bodies and jointly delivered degrees.

Muscular response

Strong political muscle has already been applied to the situation but to no avail: Kapil Sibal, the previous Cabinet minister for human resource development until the reshuffle at the end of October, is also in charge of the Department of Telecommunications and is one of the government's three main spokespeople.

“Mr Sibal is a very able and well-educated man and made a very good contribution, but he had too much on his plate and was trying to do too many different things,” Dr Sharma said. “This new team doesn't have the baggage and isn't at loggerheads



with the opposition over other things, so let's see: this bill could pass."

The desire - and need - for foreign intervention remains strong. Pallam Raju, who replaces Mr Sibal as Cabinet minister for human resource development, said recently that only 53 per cent of India's IT engineering graduates are employable. And a survey by India's University Grants Commission suggests that 68 per cent of domestic universities and 73 per cent of its colleges are of low or middling quality.

Dr Tharoor said it would not be necessary for Indians to go abroad to study if foreign institutions were allowed to set up fully in the country. Speaking at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Higher Education Summit in New Delhi, he said there was elite provision at the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institutes of Management, but these were "islands in a sea of mediocrity".

He promised to kick-start 20 pending bills relating to higher education that have so far been blocked by political opposition. Such momentum is required urgently, since India plans to add 10 million student places in the next five years.

"We will also work towards putting our reform agenda back on track," added Dr Tharoor, who has held senior posts at the United Nations and was minister for external affairs until 2010.

No panacea

Dipankar Gupta, former professor of sociology and social anthropology at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and author of *The Caged Phoenix: Can India Fly?* (2010), said that even if foreign universities were allowed to operate fully in India, they would make little difference to provision.

"What we need is to get our own university infrastructure up to speed. Foreign universities will take care only of a very small fraction of the capacity required," Professor Gupta said.

He added that it was "superficial" to suggest that overseas universities operating in India would solve the nation's higher education problems.

"The most important thing is that we have not paid enough attention to research and development and cutting-edge research, so our universities are just teaching institutions. We need to upgrade our intellectuals," he said.

Source: 15 November, 2012/ [Times higher education UK](#)

Both academics and politicians must cooperate for urgently needed higher education reforms

One has already seen the many signs of resistance and protest as the government braces itself to

bring in bigger reforms in the sphere of [higher education](#) in India. While academic activists keep accusing the protagonists of change of caving in to American or [World Bank](#) pressures, such resistance and dissent is being interpreted simply as an obscurantist mindset on the part of the academia that is caught in a time warp.

One can't help perceiving a sense of *deja vu* here - for in 1991, the early phase of reforms included those carried out in the banking sector. The state-owned [State Bank of India](#) was the first one to resist change, organising strikes. It is hard to recall the exact sequence of events, but negotiations between the government and a few good banking brains led to a healthy banking industry. When the global market crashed recently because of the faulty lending policies of the American system, Indian banks held their own, thanks in no small measure to the right balance they had struck between orthodoxy and experiment.

A similar situation seems to have arisen in the field of higher education, calling for the right balance between orthodoxy and radical change. But state-run educational institutions have been notoriously resistant to change. As sociologist N Jayaram says, "The Indian university system is extraordinarily rigid and pronouncedly resistant to change: The impetus to change does not come from within the system. When experiments or innovations are introduced from outside, they are resisted; if enforced, they are ritualised."

This inherent resistance may have been engendered by the twin factors of the dearth of able and willing administrators among our best academics and the attitude towards education among the political class. And yet, this was not always the case. In the post-Independence phase, the best academics were not averse to taking up the challenge of university administration. Similarly, members of the political class with vision were highly respectful towards academics.

Who does not remember the incident involving Kerala chief minister E M S Namboodiripad and John Mathai, vice-chancellor of Kerala University? Mathai had sought an appointment with EMS to discuss some problems that the university was facing. EMS told him that it would instead be much easier for him to call on the VC, which is what he did. Such a scenario is almost unthinkable now. Over the last few decades, there has been an increasing apathy on the part of capable academics and members of the political class towards one another.

In the absence of hard evidence, it might be safe to assume that this happy symbiosis began to erode sometime during the 1970s when local politicians



and bureaucrats began to treat institutions of higher learning as extensions of their offices of power. Partly because of this and partly disappointed with the pay structures and lack of motivation for research, many a worthy Indian academic either shunned administrative responsibilities or looked for greener pastures abroad. This was especially the case with academics in the humanities and social sciences. Scientists seem to have had a different attitude; many of the major institutions of science could boast of a galaxy of star scientist-administrators.

In an incisive article, renowned historian K N Panikkar, who is one of the few top-notch academics to take up administrative responsibilities, has analysed the phenomenon in the context of Kerala, laying all the blame for the poor state of education in Kerala at the doorsteps of the government and politicians. But one would like to argue here that the current state of affairs has arisen no less because many of our best academics tend to consider academic administration infra dig, and many others lacking in vision and ability end up doing the job.

As reforms are being carried out mechanically in some universities - without paying much attention to infrastructural as well as pedagogic issues - at some others, academics have joined hands with their teachers' associations. The latter allege that the semester system at the undergraduate level, four-year undergraduate courses, the credit-based and credit-transfer system, the stress on communicative English, are all geared towards the eventual passage of the Foreign Universities Bill. Under pressure from various teachers' associations, the University Grants Commission has deferred the proposal to allow the entry of foreign educational institutions within the existing legal framework. But not all the reforms are geared towards that end.

What are the long-term effects of the proposed and ongoing reforms? How can the strengths of the traditional system be incorporated in the new system? How are the structural changes going to affect the stakeholders, the students, many of whom are from the underprivileged sections of society? How can the system be made more student-centric? If the idea is to ensure student and faculty mobility in keeping with the vision of global communities, is it not necessary also to ensure that the local interests are not sacrificed?

All these are serious issues which progressive-minded Indian academics must address with a sense of urgency. They must willingly facilitate the decision-making and implementation processes even while engaging in dialogues and debates with

the various agencies of the government. Similarly, the government agencies and policy planners should try and draw such academics into a dialogue and assign them well-defined roles and responsibilities.

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

Universities have to face real world

Higher education must break the glass ceiling by spreading out massively. It should help create quality campuses and outreach programmes

With the economic slowdown, many smaller universities globally have seen a fall in application numbers, as the short-term wage advantage for a university graduate falls. In India too, after a decade of the glamour of engineering and management, smaller colleges have been suffering a shortfall in numbers. For a country with severe shortage of higher education, it is interesting to know that most educational institutes have to have a strong marketing programme to get students to cross into their portals.

This is very encouraging because it reinforces the notion that the Indian student chooses with care and needs better information to be able to commit to an investment in a degree. It is early days yet, and student information services are yet to develop in many places, but it is a good start and begins to make the relationship with the university or college a bit more even. This is the beginning of a change in the way higher education approaches and deals with students.

Universities and schools are going to have to change to be able to provide value to their candidates in the next decades. For many it will be a question of survival, for others a fight for their reputation and prestige. The biggest disruption to the traditional bastions of knowledge is of course new technology. Massive online open courses have been so popular that universities, especially smaller universities have had to face up to any intellectual or delivery gaps that they might have. The examples and stories come from countries such as El Salvador and Kazakhstan, but the numbers come from Brazil, India, China and Canada together reportedly one fifth of the enrollments. American enrollments are just over a third on Coursera, a common platform that offers free courses by Ivy league professors. Other platforms such as Venture Lab by Stanford, EdX etc. offer a variety as does the University of the People.

These technology-based solutions have been great levelers, breaking down barriers of geography, ability, income, prior qualifications and offer equal opportunities where equal opportunities legislation could not reach. While nominally the cost is zero,



these are still not available to the poorest except in nations where computers, internet connections and electricity are provided to all — but for many millions this has given them the ability to reach where their current resources could not take them. While these courses currently offer a certificate of participation if all the assignments are done, the lack of credits does not stop employers from appreciating the effort and learning of the candidates. Credits for assessment are not far behind.

Universities have been under pressure for a few decades before this too, to streamline their processes and prove the quality of their research and teaching. The European Bologna process has taken years to trickle down to practice. Asian universities often cast their growth plans in line with the criteria of world university ranking tables and achieve prominence by delivering to these. The competition for quality not just in output but also in inputs is the future of building great institutions of higher education.

Talent wars are a consequence of the demands for quality, scale, reach and access. In India universities complain of the difficulty in finding good faculty as much as they are disappointed in the quality of students. Qualifications are a proxy for ability, and the science of education is often conflated with the business of education. The purpose of the university often seems unclear — often a discovery into personal politics as much as a journey into employability. For some, a quest for knowledge for its own sake, but even here the future is in usable research and innovation.

The future of universities will be in stepping out of the tower. The traditional high bastions too have had to step out and create campuses and outreach programmes all over the world. Even as the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010, waits its turn in Indian parliament, foreign universities have found ways of collaborating with Indians to support the next phase of education — to teach and to learn in the process. Harvard, Oxford, U Penn all have India links. The latest entrant is the Stanford Graduate School of Business which comes to India with a programme on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and many more will come for the market that is India.

Source: 15 November, 2012/ [Daily Pioneer](#)

Indiana Commission On Higher Education: Increasing Education Attainment An Urgent Priority

The Indiana Commission on Higher Education had a clear message for Howard County Wednesday

night: increasing educational attainment here is an urgent priority.

"For many of us, we grew up in a time when determination and hard work gave you a good middle class life," said Teresa Lubbers, Indiana commissioner for higher education.

People had jobs right out of high school that offered good pensions, health insurance and vacation time. Those same jobs often aren't available today without some sort of post-secondary training, Lubbers told a group of educators gathered for a meeting Wednesday on college success.

So the state of Indiana has set a goal for 60 percent of Hoosier adults to have some sort of post-secondary degree by 2025.

That includes Howard County, Lubbers said.

Statistics show the county is ahead of the curve in terms of providing children and young adults access to college, but students here don't always follow through.

According to statistics provided by the Indiana Commission on Higher Education, 89 percent of Howard County students graduate from high school, and 47 percent go on to study at a public college or university, Both of those figures are higher than the state average.

Once those students get to college, though, 35 percent of them need some sort of remediation. Statewide, only 31 percent of college students need remediation.

What's more, only 27.2 percent of Howard County students graduate with a bachelor's degree on time. The state's average is 31.5 percent.

Howard County's Career Success Coalition is trying to change that.

Lubbers said 32 local businesses and organizations have joined forces to host activities that promote post-secondary success.

The group has hosted 56 different college-related activities since its inception earlier this year.

"We've been thrilled with what we've seen," Lubbers said.

But there's still work to do. Educators voiced their continuing concerns.

Southeastern School Corp. Superintendent John Bevan said kids have no idea how much college costs. That became apparent when he sat on several scholarship committees and read scholarship applications last year, he said.

Lubbers said that's a problem statewide.

"We need to do a better job of connecting with students, so they don't wake up all of a sudden in



the second semester of their junior year and think they still have time," Lubbers said. "They don't."

She said the commission on higher education has made a concerted effort to reach out to students as young as first and second grade to talk about college and its costs.

Marilyn Skinner, Director of the Center for Early Childhood Education at Indiana University Kokomo, said there needs to be more of a focus on reaching students sooner here.

"The state has got to look at preschool," she said. "Students come into kindergarten behind. [Some] children come in and don't even know how to hold a book."

Kindergarten curriculum becomes more advanced every year, Skinner said. Parents need to know what they can do to prepare their students, she said.

Lubbers said that's a concern she thinks the state is taking a closer look at.

"If we're going to close the achievement gap, we have to look at early childhood education," Lubbers said.

For Ivy Tech Community College Kokomo Region Chancellor Steve Daily, student debt is the real concern right now.

"We've got to get control of the debt problem," he said. "People are abusing the loan system. They borrow money they don't have to borrow."

Lubbers said that is certainly a "huge" issue today. She said with rising college costs, families are beginning to wonder if college is even worth it anymore.

College is still worth it, she said.

"You just have to be smart about it," she said.

Parents should start talking about and planning for college when their kids are in preschool, educators advised.

Lubbers said Indiana and Howard County are on the right track to fix some of those problems. The real changes are going to be made at the local level.

"The hard work to move those numbers will be done at schools and at colleges and universities," she said.

Source: 15 November, 2012/Huffington Post

RESOURCE

Investment opportunities in higher education: Report

The Indian education space is evolving, which has led to the emergence of new niche sectors like

vocational training, finishing schools, child-skill enhancement and e-learning among others. However, over the past few decades, the global economy has shifted from being manufacturing-centric to a knowledge-driven one.

In a report released by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Private Limited titled, 'Indian Higher Education Sector: Opportunities aplenty, growth unlimited!' it is stated that success in leveraging knowledge and innovation that could contribute to hi-tech manufacturing and high value-added services is only possible with a sound infrastructure of higher education.

As per projections, the sector is expected to register a CAGR of 12pc from 2008 to reach a size of USD 31.47 bn.

The Government has set itself an aggressive target of doubling the GER in higher education from 15pc at present to 30pc by 2020.

As per estimates, to meet such a target huge investment will be required in terms of capital and operating expenditure which based on past experience Government would not be able to provide by itself.

The role of private sector in higher education has significantly increased in the last decade however due to various impediments the amount of FDI attracted by this sector since 2000 is dismally low at just USD 400 mn.

It is very important for foreign investment and experience to flow in this sector in order to transform our higher education institutions into the world's top league, said the report.

However, the report highlights the attractiveness of the higher education sector and the excellent opportunities it provides for Indian private and foreign investment even within the existing framework.

According to a Deloitte spokesperson, "The foreign education bill and other regulatory reforms when approved will be an icing on the cake. The investors need to wary about a unique set of challenges which present themselves while investing in this sector however they can be countered by innovative solutions."

Under the extant regulatory framework a number of innovative opportunities exist for Indian private and foreign sector players.

These could be establishing formal educational institutes under PPP mode and expanding the existing ones and twinning arrangements/ academic and financial collaborations with Indian institutions, course content development, training (faculty and students) and other innovative service offerings for



the higher education sector also importantly providing infrastructure services including construction/ development.

The Indian Higher Education is the "sunrise sector" for private and foreign sector as it presents an unparalleled opportunity in terms of market size, minimal impact of recession and future potential reform measures proposed by the Government.

"This recognition further stems from the fact that the sector offers a huge untapped market in regulated and non-regulated segments due to low gross enrollment (GER) ratio, high concentration in urban areas and growing per capita income of the middle class," said the spokesperson.

India has the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of enrolments, after China and the US.

The number of students enrolled in the universities and colleges (formal system) has been reported to be 16 mn in academic year 2010-11.

This does not include enrollment in higher education offered through Open and Distant Learning.

India is acknowledged to have the largest higher education systems in the world in terms of number of institutes.

The university and higher education system comprises 610 universities and in addition, there are 33,023 colleges.

Source: 01 November, 2012/ [New Kerala.com](http://www.newkerala.com)

Private sector can help resolve issues in higher education: Report

Expressing concern over problems facing India's [higher education](#) segment, a report today said that private sector can play an important role in pushing its overall growth by creating knowledge networks and innovation centres.

The higher education sector is plagued with various challenges such as low [gross enrolment ratio](#) (GER) and lack of quality research and education, said the report by Planning Commission-Ficci-Ernst & Young.

This situation is despite 11 per cent increase in student enrolments in higher education and a 9 per cent growth in institutions during the last decade, it added.

Although the government has proposed several initiatives in the 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) in the areas of expansion, excellence and funding, there are several systemic barriers that restrict entry of private higher education providers.

The government intends to achieve enrolment of 35.9 million students in higher education

institutions, with a GER of 25.2 per cent, by the end of the 12th Plan period through the co-existence of multiple types of institutions including research-centric, teaching and vocation-focused ones.

"The private sector can be expected to play an instrumental role in the achievement of these outcomes through the creation of knowledge networks, research and innovation centres, corporate-backed institutions and support for faculty development," said the report, 'Indian Higher Education: The Twelfth Plan and Beyond'.

M Anandakrishan, Chairman [Ficci](#) Higher Education (HE) Committee said that private unaided institutions and universities are the fastest growing segment of Indian higher education and accounted for 59 per cent share of total enrolments in 2012.

Pawan Agarwal, Advisor (HE), Planning Commission highlights that the issues in the sector are complex and thinking and action on them is needed at different levels by a variety of stakeholders.

The report said India's higher education system faces challenges on three fronts - expansion, excellence and equity.

"There is wide disparity in the GER of higher education across states and the Gross Attendance Ratio in urban and rural areas," it added.

The report suggested six steps to significantly improve the quality of higher education institutions. They include merit-based student financing, which should ensure admissions to meritorious students independent of financial background.

It also suggests for internationalisation of education; enabling a research environment; high quality faculty; improved technology for education delivery and employability.

"Making education-industry relevant and practical would be the right way to ensure a highly employable talent pool," it said.

Source: 04 November, 2012/ [Economic Times](http://www.economic-times.com)

India lags in higher education enrolment, says report

Involving the private sector in higher education could help solve many of the problems

Even an 11 per cent increase in student enrolment in higher education courses and a nine per cent growth in the number of institutions in the past decade have not helped improve India's higher education scenario, says a report prepared by the Planning Commission, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) and professional services firm Ernst & Young.

The higher education sector is still plagued by various problems such as a low gross enrolment



ratio (GER), inequitable access to higher education and the lack of quality research, notes the report titled 'Indian Higher Education: The Twelfth Plan and Beyond'. To address these challenges, the government has proposed several initiatives in the 12th Plan in the areas of expansion, equity, excellence, governance, funding and implementation, and monitoring.

According to the report, the thrust should be on augmenting capacity in existing institutions, creating targeted schemes for the backward and minority communities and creating excellence in higher education institutions through research and innovation, faculty development and internationalisation. However, there are several systemic barriers that restrict entry of credible private higher education providers contributing effectively.

THE LEARNING CURVE

- 25.9 million students are enrolled in over 45,000 degree and diploma institutions in India
- Two-thirds of these institutes have been set up by the private sector
- Undergraduate courses enroll 87% of the total number of students enrolled in degree courses
- 4.2 million students are enrolled in distance education programmes
- India's average of 16 % is much below the world average of 27%; China (26%) and Brazil (36%)
- There is acute shortage of faculty in central universities (40%) and state universities (35%)
- 62% of universities and 90% of colleges were average or below average in 2010 (NAAC accreditation)
- India's relative citation impact is half the world average

“The government intends to achieve an enrolment of 35.9 million students in higher education institutions, with a GER of 25.2 per cent, by the end of the 12th Plan period through the coexistence of multiple types of institutions including research-centric, teaching and vocation-focused ones,” said Amitabh Jhinghan, partner and national leader, education practice, Ernst & Young.

Jhinghan added that the private sector could play an instrumental role in the achievement of these outcomes through the creation of knowledge networks, research and innovation centres, corporate-backed institutions, and support for faculty development.

The report recommends six levers — merit-based student financing; internationalisation of

education; enabling a research environment; high quality of faculty; improved technology for education delivery and employability; enhancement of quality of Indian higher education institutes.

Source: 05 November, 2012/ [Business Standard](#)

Six levers to enhance India's higher education: FICCI/E&Y

Private sector expected to play significant role in achieving targets.

Even a near 11% increase in student enrollment in [Higher education](#) and a 9% growth in the number of institutions during the last decade has not helped better India's higher education scenario.

The higher education sector is still plagued with various challenges such as low gross enrollment ratio (GER), inequitable access to higher education by community, geography and gender and lack of quality research and education, says a Planning Commission-FICCI-Ernst & Young report on 'Indian Higher Education: The Twelfth Plan and Beyond'.

To address these challenges, the government has proposed several initiatives in the 12th Plan in the areas of expansion, equity, excellence,

governance, funding and implementation and monitoring.

The accent is on augmenting capacity in existing institutions, creating targeted schemes for the backward and minority communities and building excellence in higher education institutions (HEIs) through research and innovation, faculty development and internationalization.

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Jhingan added that the private sector can be expected to play an instrumental role in the achievement of these outcomes through the creation of knowledge networks, research and innovation centres, corporate-backed institutions, and support for faculty development.

The report recommends six levers--- merit-based student financing; internationalization of education; enabling a research environment; high quality faculty; improved technology for education delivery and employability-- to enhance quality of Indian higher education institutes.

Source: 05 November, 2012/ [Business Standard](#)

Report paints bleak picture of higher education sector

Painting a bleak picture of the higher education scenario in India an industry report pointed out that its gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 16% was much below the world average of 27%, while 90% of colleges were average or below average in 2010, on the basis of their NAAC accreditation.

The higher education sector is plagued with various challenges such as low GER and lack of quality research and education, said the report "Higher Education in India: Twelveth five year plan and beyond" by Planning Commission-FICCI-Ernst & Young.

This situation is compounded by 11% increase in student enrolment in higher education and a 9% growth in institutions during the last decade, it added.

Speaking on the issue, minister of state (MoS) for HRD [Shashi Tharoor](#) said that the university system was not producing "well-educated" graduates to meet needs of Indian companies, giving an opportunity to firms to enter the sector in the "guise" of training.

He also said that the national education policy in the past has been out of step with the times.

"The major problem remains that our national education policy in the past has remained out of step with the time. Whereas countries in the

Middle-East and China are going out of their way to woo foreign universities to set up campuses in their countries, India turned away many academic suitors who have come calling in recent years," he said.

Speaking at a two-day higher education summit, Tharoor said, "Companies are entering the higher education space in the guise of training. Our university system simply is not producing well educated graduates to meet the needs of Indian companies today."

The HRD minister said there will be no need for many Indian students to go abroad to study if good higher education institutes were set up in the country. "We will also work towards putting our reform agenda back on track," he added.

Tharoor said there is a proposal to establish 50 centres for research in frontier areas of science, design innovation centres, innovation centres in different universities and also research parts of the IITs and other technical institutions. "If finally established, it would transform the research environment in our country," he said.

The government has proposed several initiatives in the 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) in the areas of expansion, excellence and funding. It intends to achieve enrolment of 35.9 million students in higher education institutions, with a GER of 25.2%, by the end of the 12th Plan period through the co-existence of multiple types of institutions, including research-centric, teaching and vocation-focused ones.

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

Skewed ratio of student intake a concern

For every five students who join engineering courses, there is only one student who takes up polytechnic education. The ideal ratio of student intake, however, is three students in polytechnic for one student joining engineering education.

The contrast has been highlighted in a note on reforms in polytechnics put up for consideration by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) at its meeting to be held on Thursday.

"Polytechnics suffer from a skewed ratio of student intake," the note says, while pointing out that the oversupply from engineering institutions and undersupply from polytechnic institutions has led to students who graduate as engineers finding employment as technicians.

The ratio is also an outcome of the growth of the [Indian economy](#) in the last few decades with the services sector outperforming the [manufacturing sector](#), the note said. "Engineering education is viewed as offering greater opportunities for employment in such scenario than the polytechnics,



which have not been able to re-orient to the emerging workforce requirements of the service sector-led economic growth," it said. This calls for efforts to change the quality and image of polytechnics, it added.

Over the years, the polytechnic sector has diversified from offering three-year generalised courses in conventional subjects like civil, electrical and mechanical engineering to electronics, computer science, information technology and other engineering branches. The sector recorded a significant growth during the XI Five-Year Plan period (2007-2012).

As of now, there are 3,224 polytechnics across the country with a total capacity of 12 lakh seats. Of this, 80% seats are for courses related to engineering and technology. A total of 2,204 institutions are in the private unaided sector, the CABE note stated. "Maharashtra has 415 polytechnics and almost 80% of these are private unaided institutions," said Shridhar Vaidya, secretary of the Teachers Association for Non-Aided Polytechnics.

In the last two years, the AICTE has taken up initiatives aimed at increasing the capacity in polytechnic sector. This includes raising the student intake from 180 to 300 per course, tuition fee waiver for 5% supernumerary seats for economically weaker sections, lateral entry to polytechnics from the industrial training institutes, permission for second shift polytechnics in degree colleges and existing polytechnics, conduct of modular courses for skills during evening hours in polytechnics and recognition of experienced polytechnic teachers for appointment in degree colleges.

Source: 07 November, 2012/ [Times of India](#)

Only one in six college-educated Indian women work full time

A Gallup study shows that China outpaces India for Women in the Workforce. Chinese women are taking part in their country's labor force in vastly greater numbers than Indian women are, according to Gallup surveys between 2009 and 2012. Overall, 70% of Chinese women are either employed in some capacity or seeking employment, vs. 25% of Indian women.

Not only do Indian women participate in the labor force at lower levels, those who do participate have a harder time finding jobs than women in China. Gallup's data indicate that, among Indian women who are labor force participants, 15% are unemployed -- meaning they are available for work and looking for jobs -- compared with 5% among India's male labor force participants. Among the

much larger share of women in the Chinese workforce, 5% are unemployed.

Literacy

The most recent UNESCO statistics put the literacy rate among Chinese females at 91%, approaching the 97% rate among Chinese men. This rate of literacy far exceeds that in India, where half of women are literate, along with three-quarters of Indian men. Indian women are less likely than Chinese women to receive even a basic education -- and those Indian women who do achieve higher levels of education are less likely to apply it in a full-time job.

Labor Force Participation Rates in China and India

	China		India	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
OVERALL	70%	83%	25%	80%
Primary/early secondary education	70%	83%	25%	82%
Secondary education	69%	81%	20%	67%
Tertiary education	81%	82%	34%	78%

2009-2012

GALLUP

A long time to change especially with literacy and education problem

[The Economist has a discussion of women in work in different countries.](#) There are many cultural shifts that have to occur and restructuring how the society is organized to enable shifts in women participation in the workforce.



The Chinese

economy is currently outperforming India's: The World Bank put China's growth rate at 9.0% in 2011 and India's at 6.8%. But over the coming decades, demographic trends will pose a serious challenge for China's high-octane growth. Its aging population and low fertility rate means its workforce will shrink



as a share of the total population by as much as 11% over the next 40 years, according to one estimate. In India, by contrast, the proportion of working-age people in the population is not projected to peak until around 2030.

However, women's participation in the formal economy will help determine how well India will be able to convert its "demographic bonus" into economic gain. Here, Gallup's global data demonstrate China has a distinct advantage: The country's female labor force participation is among the highest in Asia, while India's, like those of most south Asian countries, is among one of the lowest. The difference is most pronounced among more highly educated women, further supporting the notion that Chinese women contribute more to their country's "human capital" stock than Indian women.

Source: 08 November, 2012/ [Next Big-Figure](#)

Report: China, India to Overtake U.S. Economy

Our children and grandchildren will live in a vastly different global economy.

Someday, U.S. economic dominance will be a distant memory. A new report is showing just how soon that might be. The paper, from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, a European-based think tank, shows that over the next 50 years, the size of China and then India's economies will surpass that of the U.S.

According to the report, the global economy is expected to undergo seismic shifts over the next 50 years. China will surpass America as the world's largest economy as early as 2016, and a fast-growing Indian economy will outstrip the American economy by 2060.

These are just individual examples of a broader change that will take place over that period. The share of global GDP from OECD member countries—currently consisting of many of the world's large, advanced economies, like the U.S., European Union member countries, Japan, Australia, Canada, and Mexico—will shrink considerably, from nearly 65 percent as of 2011 to 49 percent in 2030 and just over 42 percent in 2060. Non-OECD countries, a group that includes all of the emerging BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), will likewise grow, from 35 percent in 2011 to nearly 58 percent in 2060.

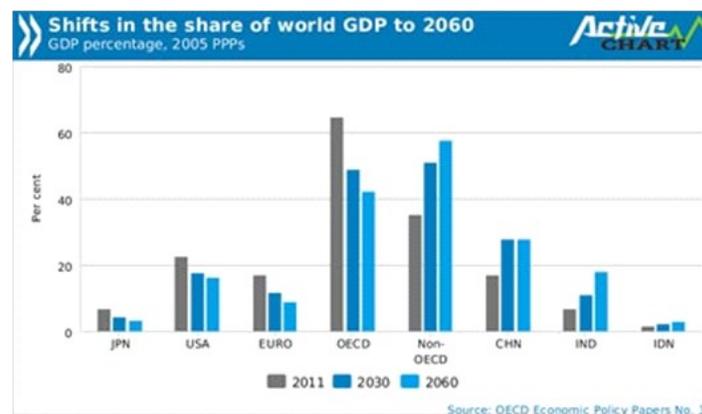
"As the largest and fastest-growing emerging countries fully assume a more prominent place in the global economy, we will face new challenges to ensure a prosperous and sustainable world for all. Education and productivity will be the main drivers

of future growth, and should be policy priorities worldwide," said OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría in a statement accompanying the report.

The booming emerging economies will be led by China and India, as well as Indonesia, which are all expected to show massive productivity growth.

"The reason why productivity growth over the next 50 years tends to be higher in emerging economies as compared with more mature economies is that they start out from comparatively low levels of productivity," writes Asa Johansson, OECD senior economist and the report's lead author, in an email. "Thus, there is greater scope to 'catch-up' with leading economies" through like improving technologies, management practices, and labor force skills, she says.

But once those productivity-building phenomena take hold, those economies' growth will slow from their rapid rates. Non-OECD economies on average grew by 6.7 percent annually from 1995 to 2011 but are expected to only grow by 2.8 percent from 2030 to 2060.



The idea of the U.S. losing its No. 1 spot may sound alarming, but it doesn't mean that the American economy is set to shrink. Rather, it means that its share of the global economic pie is shrinking, though the pie itself will continue to grow. With the world shaking off the economic crisis, the OECD predicts that global GDP will grow at around 3 percent, on average, through 2060. The U.S. economy's rate will grow slightly more sluggish, averaging 2.3 percent growth from 2011 through 2030, and only 2 percent from 2030 to 2060.

That slowdown will be largely due to Americans growing grayer. As the U.S. population grows older, the population of working-age Americans will grow more slowly, says Johansson. In this way, aging will also contribute to several other countries' slowing growth in coming decades, as life expectancies grow and, in some countries, fertility rates drop. In other words, we will simply slow down as we grow older.

Source: 09 November, 2012/ [US News](#)



Report on Annual Status of Higher Education in States and UTs Released at CII Higher Education Summit

The "ASHE – Annual Status of Higher Education in States and UTs 2012" report joint brought out by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Planning Commission and prepared by Eduvisors was released at the "AICTE-CII University-Industry Congress & 4th Global Higher Education Summit" on Friday.

Billed as the first attempt to critically evaluate and map the demand and supply side of higher education in India with more focus on industry perspective, the report provides data, facts and figures that would help stakeholders move away from supply-centric planning and focus on a more holistic approach that considers both supply and demand perspectives.

The comprehensive report gives incisive insights into socio-demographic data, university and university level institutions, key higher education indicators, growth in higher education institutes and student enrolment, industry, employment scenario and current Initiatives and key challenges

This report aims to be used by several stakeholders – Central and State agencies, State and local officials, business leaders, scholars and researchers and the general public – to formulate programs, apportion resources, monitor services, research issues and make informed decision. "The key intent is to provide various stakeholders a system-level picture that will help them with a variety of aspects leading to decisions towards achieving improved expansion, equity and excellence in the respective State/ UT, says Mr Vijay Shukla, Managing Partner, Eduvisors.

Specially on the role of private sector in higher education, ASHE 2012 report says that the private participation in the education sector should of quality and of great intent. Taking cue from the success of private involvement in education in the 11th Plan, the report says that private sector should be encouraged to establish larger and higher quality institutions in the 12th Plan. It has been proposed to re-examine the 'not-for-profit' status in higher education, so as to allow the entry of for-profit institutions in select areas, with the necessary vision to ensure quality and equity.

Innovative methods to infuse more private capital in the higher education sector without changing its 'non-for-profit' status will also be evaluated. To provide private institutions access to long-term and low-interest rate debt, 'infrastructure' status should be given to higher education."All types of institutions of higher education to be established

under section 25 of the Companies Act. Conversion of educational trusts and societies to Section 25 companies seamlessly should be permitted," observes Mr Bharat Parmar, Partner, Eduvisors.

The report suggests that educational infrastructure companies should be permitted to build and lease physical facilities to academic institutions with lease revenues subject to the same tax treatment as housing finance companies. Educational trusts, societies and companies should be allowed to raise funds from the capital market by issuing bonds and shares without changing their tax status. FCRA provisions for investments should be relaxed to allow NRIs to invest in not-for-profit education. Education companies should be allowed tax exemptions in line with those enjoyed by IT companies. In addition, support to private institutes should be given by the government in the following three ways:

- Access to public student financial aid would be extended to accredited private institutions
- Private institutions would also have access to research funding on an equal footing with public institutions
- Private institutions would benefit from various long-term quality enhancement efforts including enhanced use of technology and faculty development initiatives that are taken up during the Twelfth Plan.
- New models of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in higher education will also be encouraged during the Twelfth Five Year Plan, particularly in the establishment of research and innovation institutions. Based on the Eleventh Plan experience of setting up Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) and polytechnics in PPP mode, a framework will be put in place to encourage the spread and growth of PPP models, increase and improve resource utilization and enhance the quality of education in such institutions.

Source: 11 November, 2012/ [India Education Diary](#)

Open Doors 2012:

International student enrollment increases by 6 percent

The 2012 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, released today, finds that the number of international students at colleges and universities in the United States increased by six percent to a record high of 764,495 in the 2011-12 academic year, while U.S. students studying abroad increased by one percent, according to an Institute of International Education news release.



Here are some interesting finds from the report, per the release:

- This year, international exchanges in all 50 states contributed \$22.7 billion to the U.S. economy.
- There were increases in the number of students from 12 of the top 25 places of origin, including Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Venezuela and Vietnam.
- Numbers declined from several major sending countries, including India (down four percent), South Korea, (down one percent), and Japan (down six percent).
- In the 2010-11 academic year, 273,996 American students studied abroad for academic credit, an increase of one percent—an all-time high.
- Five percent more students studied in China and 12 percent more students studied in India than in the prior year.
- The United Kingdom remains the leading destination for American students, followed by Italy, Spain, France and China—which remained the fifth largest host destination for the fifth year.
- Study abroad by American students has more than tripled over the past two decades.

About the report: The Open Doors Report is published by the Institute of International Education, the leading not-for-profit educational and cultural exchange organization in the United States. IIE has conducted an annual statistical survey of the international students in the United States since 1919, in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since 1972.

Source: 11 November, 2012/[Lubbockonline](#)

Fewer Indian students going to America; Chinese, Saudi surge

Amid an all-time high [international education](#) exchanges, fewer Indian students are coming to America, while there is a surge of Chinese and Saudi students while more American students are going to India.

The number of students coming to America from India dropped for the second successive year, according to the annual "Open Doors" survey of international students in US released Monday.

Published by the Institute of International Education in partnership with the US State Department, the report shows 100,270 Indian students in the US in 2011/2012, a four per cent drop from previous year, after the number peaked at around 105,000 in 2009.

Meantime, number of students from China shot up from 157,558 in 2010/2011 to 194,029 in 2011/2012, a 23 per cent increase.

The top five countries from where the US is hosting international students are China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Canada. Saudi Arabia recorded a big 50 per cent surge, the number of its students going up from 22,704 in 2010/2011 to 34,139 in 2011/2012.

After trailing China for much of the 1990s, the number of students from India overtook the number of Chinese students in early part of last decade, but China has surged ahead since.

The study says factors behind the decline in the numbers from countries such as India and Japan may include global and home country economic issues, growing higher education opportunities at home, and stronger employment opportunities at home after graduation.

Overall the number of international students at colleges and universities in the United States increased by six percent to a record high of 764,495 in the 2011/12 academic year, while US students studying abroad increased by one percent.

This year, international exchanges in all 50 states contributed \$22.7 billion to the US economy, the report said There were increases in the number of students from 12 of the top 25 places of origin, including Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

At the same time, numbers declined from several major sending countries, including India (down four percent), South Korea, (down one percent), and Japan (down six percent).

In the 2010/11 academic year, 273,996 American students studied abroad for academic credit, an increase of one percent-an all-time high. US students studying abroad increased in 17 of the top 25 destination countries, including India. Twelve percent more students studied in India and Five percent more students studied in China than in the prior year.

The United Kingdom remains the leading destination for American students, followed by Italy, Spain, France and China -

which remained the fifth largest host destination for the fifth year, the report found. There were significant increases in the number of Americans studying in several "non-traditional" destinations outside Europe: India, Brazil, China, Costa Rica and South Korea.

Source: 13 November, 2012/IANS/[Newtrack](#)



Higher education sector in India needs more FDI: Deloitte

India, which has the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of enrolments, after China and the US, needs more FDI to meet its target of doubling the gross enrolment ratio (GER) by 2020, a global consultancy firm has said in its report.

"The private sector's role in the higher education sector has been growing at a rapid pace over the last decade and needs to further expand at an accelerated rate in order to achieve the GER target,"

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India said in a recent report titled 'Indian Higher Education Sector: Opportunities aplenty, Growth unlimited'.

The government has set an aggressive target of achieving 30 per cent GER in higher education by 2020 from the current level of 15 per cent.

According to projections, the sector is expected to register a CAGR of 12 per cent from 2008 to reach a size of \$31.47 billion.

According to Deloitte, as per the recent estimates by National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUPEA), in order to achieve this target, an additional investment of \$190 billion which includes capital expenditure and operating expenditure, has to be made in the next eight years.

"Therefore, given the limited support, which government can provide to this sector in terms of investment, the private sector needs to play a much larger role," the report noted.

Stating that the role of private sector in higher education has significantly increased in the last decade, the report said, "However, due to various impediments, the amount of foreign direct investment attracted by this sector since 2000 stood dismally low at just \$400 million."

Therefore, it is important for foreign investment and experience to flow in this sector in order to transform the domestic higher education institutions into the world's top league, Deloitte report said.

The number of students enrolled in the universities and colleges (formal system) has been reported to be 16 million in academic year 2010-11, the report said, adding, "this does not include enrolment in higher education offered through Open and Distant Learning. The university and higher education system comprises 610 universities besides 33,023 colleges as well. "

Source: 13 November, 2012/ Profit.ndtv.com

Attack On Secular Higher Education In India – OpEd

Given that the world is interconnected and one cannot stay on an island of secular intelligent people with the winds from oceans of bigotry not bringing its foul odor, we need to stand up for progressive causes everywhere. Here is a take on changing education landscape in India that is increasingly being attacked by fundamentalist forces.

While opinions vary on the performance of the first Indian governments in different sectors, higher education is a sector where India's first steps usually evoke a positive response across the board. One can clearly see the success of secular advanced education that has paid dividends in India in a strong contrast to the other countries of the Indian subcontinent where either higher education was not given enough emphasis or was not secular in its character. Do not get me wrong, higher education in India has clearly not been an all-sunshine story, as India is far from its true potential but what I am trying to emphasize is that it is not a complete failure as yet. You will get to see that 'as yet' is the operational word, as we are soon heading down the lane of Pakistan and Afghanistan, courtesy of the dirty politics of New Delhi.

Even though initial seeds of education were sowed with a foresight of modern secular thinking, Indian academia has failed to truly blossom. We certainly need to explore all the reasons for the Indian failure to launch but right now the call of the hour is to protect the barely-alive academia from the ongoing onslaught of the myopic, vindictive and dictatorial central government that is hell bent on destroying secular character of our advanced education system. Let us take the example of the University of Delhi, one of the largest of the central government universities that once used to be projected as a pride of India. The University, like all central universities is structured such that power is in the hands of few people who are politically appointed, instead of entirely merit-based autonomous council that is outside the influence of politicians. The University of Delhi has a Visitor who in theory has the ultimate power. This Visitor is the President of India. Then comes the Chancellor, who is the Vice President of India. The president of India on the advice (but in reality on the dictates) of the office of the Prime minister and the ministry of Human Resource Development appoints the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor (VC) is in effect the head of the University. The VC can act like the dictator of the University, if he or she wants to, with obviously no reporting to the constitutional namesake head of India – the President. The VC



appoints his team that plays a role in deciding the allocation of resources, approval of course work, appointment of college principals, teachers and eventually all policy matters. This structure although constitutionally has some balances and checks in the form of some elected members in the administrative bodies and vibrant trade unions but to overcome this menace of democracy, for over two years the Vice Chancellor has decided not to call any meetings of these bodies.

Few years ago at the University of Delhi, a collusion of Hindu far right BJP and right wing opportunistic Congress's political interests, led to a laughable act of allowing astrology (no, not astronomy but dumb stone age astrology) to be part of its curriculum. After much of controversy and worldwide ridicule acclaimed intellectuals it was eventually withdrawn. One may wonder that after such infamy the government would not redo such mistake again but alas. The trend of non-secular intervention continues unabated. Somehow magically fundamentalist administrators, be it a Muslim, Sikh, Christian or Hindu whosoever suits Congress's electoral play continues being appointed. Some of the ethnically focused institutions, whether for segments within minorities or majorities were created to encourage enrollment of students from segments who otherwise faced the danger of being left out without such privileged institutions. The goal was to create a modern alternative to inadequate and often sectarian madarasa or ashram kind of religious education that these youngsters might be turned to in absence of secure modern alternatives. To provide such education faculty from all ethnicities were hired and promoted. Now with politicization, somehow the faculty enrollment has started paralleling the bias in student enrollment, throwing the criteria of merit of faculty in the dirty ditch of politics. Such bias denies good quality education to target segments that these institutions were in the first place set up to provide for.

While a trip around the University of Delhi would bear out many such examples of decadence of this administration, I would like to point out a single notable piece of capitulation to religious fundamentalism so you can better see how appeasement of different ethnic group works for political convenience. Recently based on orders from Congress headquarters, the Vice Chancellor forced the University to withdraw 'Three Hundred Ramayans', a great text by AK Ramanujan that quite clearly captures the ubiquitous nature of Ramayana tales in the whole of Indosphere, even beyond Indian subcontinent like in the islands of Indonesia or lands as distant as Cambodia. The

text educates to the fact that Ramayana has many local variants and it is a truly a tale of all Indic region with amazingly deep cultural penetration that has sway in shaping even an atheist like me, leave alone some orthodox Vaishnav Hindu. After saffron politicians stroke trouble objecting to this long-standing course material the talibanized RSS goons of akhil bhartiya vidyarthi parishad (ABVP), the student wing of BJP got offended to this whiff of knowledge. Their argument (or more accurately non-argument) was that Valmiki Ramayana is the accurate one. The claim that one version of Rmayana is celebrated more is correct, especially when viewed with strictly North Indian Vaishnav lenses but the argument is ridiculous, as the material was not taught as a course on religion. This text was not an effort to say one version is right or wrong or which imaginary fried should one believe in or which organize religion is better but a historical collection of different texts that exist in the Indosphere. Five exemplary texts that captured the largest heterogeneity were chosen to capture the diversity of cultural heritage. Congress did not want to loose Hindu fundamentalist votes to BJP, so to one up the idiots of sangh, Sibbal decided to use his bully pulpit to remove the text from the course work all together. This move, where history and literatures appropriateness is decided by the sentimentality of ill educated political goons instead of facts, is no different than banning some book because of a fatwa by some crazy Mullah in streets of Lahore, Ryadh or Kabul. Such yielding to pressure from religious bigots in general public life of India is not new and not even unique to Delhi's Congress-BJP dominated politics. Who can forget unsympathetic treatment meted out to Taslima Nasreen by the stalwarts of left, the so-called secularists? What is new is the systematic attack on academic integrity by a demon of religious fundamentalism, corruption and dictatorship that is unleashed by Sibbal on the commands from 10 Janpath. This removal of highly acclaimed essay is being condemned worldwide and such acts continue to degrade the legitimacy of Indian education and validity of higher academic degrees. More than the damage to Indian image or to the validity of Indian educational credentials, the impact from such acts, if recurrent, will render an already barren Indian innovation and academic landscape to become completely sterile. A healthy academic culture, where one can discuss life stories surrounding the myth and reality of lives of Prophet Mohammad, Guru Nanak, Jesus Christ or Lord Rama, when in the context of history or of linguistic style, independent from the sentimentality of religion or conduct research on the impact of a particular pesticide on human health, independent of the



connections of that pesticide company to the ruling party, is a necessary backbone of any country aspiring to innovate and grow. I am actually not much of a fan of Nehru the name sake fabian socialist first prime minister of India, on most socioeconomic and defense issues but what I think was his singular undisputed legacy of sowing the seeds of higher education is now being destroyed by his own great grandson.

Source: 14 November, 2012/eurasiareview.com

Canada failing to attract foreign students, Ottawa's own study says

Canada is failing to attract high-quality university students from China, India and Brazil, internal research commissioned by the Foreign Affairs Department concludes.

The findings of the focus groups conducted in those countries represent a setback to the Harper government's ambitious efforts to broaden Canadian trade and investment in the three emerging markets.

Initiatives designed to forge educational links have been a feature of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's strategy to deepen economic ties with Asia during his trips to China and India this year.

Meanwhile, Governor-General David Johnston travelled to Brazil in the spring with 30 university presidents in tow, one of the biggest delegations abroad to push the benefits of Canadian education.

Polling firm Ipsos-Reid said in its March report to Foreign Affairs that Canada needed to do more to "communicate its post-secondary education advantages" abroad.

Despite that conclusion, Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird decided two months later to cut a popular program that promoted Canada in foreign universities.

The "Understanding Canada" program brought foreign scholars to Canada on the condition they teach university courses on the country for several years after they return home.

Canadian and foreign scholars have criticized the government for cutting the \$5-million program because they say it will reduce awareness about Canada in foreign academic circles.

The cut was part of an effort to trim \$170-million from Foreign Affairs' annual budget.

A senior government official defended the cutting of the Understanding Canada program .

"This program has traditionally funded foreign academics, not foreign students. What we have done is streamline its administration," the official said Tuesday on condition of anonymity.

The Ipsos-Reid research, conducted between January and March this year, found that awareness of Canada was lacking in China, India and Brazil.

"Canada is not a top-of-mind destination for foreign study for participants in any of the three countries except with Brazilian participants interested in language studies," said the research company's report.

"There is no awareness that Canada has world-class educational establishments, indeed, apart from a few mentions of the University of Toronto there is very little awareness of any Canadian educational establishments."

The United States and United Kingdom, by comparison, "dominate" discussions about post-secondary opportunities.

The report said that because having world-class educational institutions is a major draw for foreign students "this lack of prominence is a serious obstacle."

The findings were a result of 11 focus groups held in the three countries, and one-on-one interviews.

The participants included prospective students, parents and educational advisers.

Even though the report found some awareness in Brazil of Canada, it noted one factor that was not favourable: "The weather – COLD."

Prior to his Brazil trip in April, Mr. Johnston acknowledged that Canada has a mediocre record in attracting foreign students. But he insisted that Brazil was fertile ground, noting "a huge appetite in Brazil for Canadian education. To my great delight, Canada is the most favoured nation for Brazilians studying abroad."

The Ipsos-Reid survey found deficiencies in the main advertising brand that the federal government and the provinces use to promote Canadian education abroad: the bilingual "Imagine Education au/in Canada" promotion.

The Imagine initiative, with an annual \$1-million budget, was launched in 2007 to convey "a message of openness and supportiveness through the concept of 'Empowered Idealism,'" according to its website.

"Like those of our competitors, our education system is founded on quality, and our brand aims to convince international students that the quality of a Canadian education will provide them with the tools they need to develop their full potential."

The Ipsos-Reid report recommended some major changes to the brand because "it is confusing and not seen as sufficiently linked to education in Canada."



Focus groups wanted more specific information about the rankings of Canadian schools, top areas of study, famous and successful people who've graduated in Canada, and information about Canadian institutions in major publications.

“The absence of a clear national brand, which is present among Canada's competitors, leaves participants wondering who the sponsor of the communications is.”

The Harper government has tried to make its own education inroads with India and China in recent years.

In 2010, the India and Canada signed a memorandum of understanding to promote higher education.

In his speech last week to the World Economic Forum in New Delhi, Mr. Harper said his government places great importance on education links as it tries to deepen relations with India.

Mr. Harper said that 23,000 Indian students conducted research in Canada last year, a one-third increase in one year, and two-and-a-half times greater than in the past three years.

On his trip to China and February, Mr. Harper signed a broad strategic partnership that called for greater education in energy, natural resources, science, agriculture and education.

Source: 14 November, 2012/[The Globend.com](http://TheGlobend.com)



Contribute

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

Researchers are also invited to send in their published documents so that they can be hosted on this site.

Please email your contributions to aserf@apeejay.edu

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