



## Announcements

ASERF has instituted **Dr Stya Paul Young Educationist Award** for honouring Young Educationists who have demonstrated their potential by making an impact on Indian education.

Applications from the eligible scholars are invited for the Award of the year 2010. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

**Apeejay Education Society launches courses in Biosciences & Clinical Research:** Apeejay Education Society (AES), has now established an institute for Biosciences and Clinical Research to meet the growing demand for technical personnel in the Biosciences sector. The institute, **Apeejay Svrán Institute for Biosciences and Clinical Research, Gurgaon, (AIBCR)** has been established in collaboration with leading companies in the industry, viz Martin & Harris, ASG Biochemicals and Walter & Bushnell Health Care.

For more, visit: [www.apeejay.edu/aibcr](http://www.apeejay.edu/aibcr)

## 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.

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**Svrán Group**

**ASPECT****Deemed failures**

***The “deemed-to-be universities” case in the Supreme Court gets curiouser and curiouser.***

***Kapil Sibal, Union Human Resource Development Minister. He has said that it is a policy decision that all deemed universities will eventually go.***

Reports about the proceedings on two different petitions before the Supreme Court have made the future of deemed-to-be-universities in the country appear increasingly uncertain.

In one case, *Viplav Sharma vs Union of India*, initiated as a public interest litigation in 2006, the Supreme Court on January 25 accepted the plea of 44 deemed-to-be-universities to restrain the Central government from derecognising them on the basis of the report of the Professor P.M. Tandon Committee, set up to review their functioning, until the court heard them.

A Bench comprising Justices Dalveer Bhandari and A.K. Patnaik directed the affected universities to file their responses before March 8, the next date of hearing. Noting that the issue involved a vital public interest affecting students, the Bench asked the government to place before it the reports of the Tandon Committee and the task force. The court’s directions were in response to the Central government’s affidavit that it accepted these reports.

In another case, the Supreme Court on January 29 issued notice to the Centre and the University Grants Commission (UGC) on a writ petition requesting the court to declare illegal Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956, which enables the executive to grant deemed university status to an educational institution. In his petition, consumer activist Jitendra Narayan Singh said Section 3 of the Act conferred wide and unguided power on the executive to recognise an institution as a deemed university and such action resulted in the commercialisation of the system of granting degrees.

In recent years, the power had been exercised by the executive authority arbitrarily to confer university status on institutions that “have no standards to be recognised as universities”. These institutions in turn indulge in conferring degrees for profit, he told the Bench comprising Chief Justice K.G. Balakrishnan and Justices V.S. Sirpurkar and Deepak Verma.

“The innocent student, after having invested time, money and effort, receives a piece of paper as a degree which has no value or substance. The students ultimately find themselves being robbed of the value for their money paid for services offered by such deemed universities,” he alleged in his petition.

As the establishment of universities was held to be a legislative act, institutions could not be conferred deemed university status by the executive, the petitioner argued. Section 3 of the UGC Act, which confers the power on the

Centre to notify deemed universities, amounted to delegation of an essential legislative function to the executive and this rendered Section 3 *ultra vires* of the Constitution, the petition claimed.

The outcome of the second case will be watched with interest as it involves the judicial review of a legal provision that stood the test of time until allegations about its abuse began to surface in recent years. But it is clear to any observer that the outcome in the first case will have a bearing on the second case, even if the prayers of the two petitioners are different.

In the first case, the petitioner, Viplav Sharma, an advocate, sought a direction from the court to the government to confer the deemed-to-be-university status only on institutions providing quality training and certifications, producing highly rated research material, and having quality professionals with global acceptability. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, which initially opposed his petition, changed its stance after it returned to power following the 2009 general elections, and the assumption of office by Kapil Sibal as the new Human Resource Development Minister.

**UGC review**

On June 4, Sibal directed that all pending proposals for conferring deemed-to-be-university status on institutions that had applied for the same be held in abeyance until a thorough review of the functioning of the existing deemed-to-be-universities was undertaken. He also directed the UGC to review the functioning of all such universities and report within three months the deficiencies with respect to maintenance of standards, qualifications of the faculty and the quality of infrastructure. Sibal pointed out that the deemed-to-be-universities should have obtained the accreditation of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) or the National Board of Accreditation, (NBA), as the case may be, within a prescribed period. Therefore, he asked the UGC to specifically report as to what the status was about accreditation and also about the rectification of deficiencies as must have been pointed out by the UGC in its periodic inspections. He wanted the information on the above to be furnished for each of the 130 deemed-to-be-universities.

Although those three months were over long ago, it is not known whether the UGC has submitted its report to Sibal. Even in its affidavit to the Supreme Court in the Viplav Sharma matter, the Central government is silent on this report.

The NAAC (an autonomous body established by the UGC in 1994) has granted accreditation to 140 institutions. The State-wise list of these institutions, available on its website, shows that some of the 44 deemed but failed universities are indeed among them. They include the Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar; Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune; and the Janardan Rai Nagar Rajasthan Vidyapeeth, Udaipur. The number of institutions that had earned accreditation from the NBA (set up by the All India Council

for Technical Education in 1994) is not available from its website.

The Human Resource Development Minister set up the Tandon Committee, in addition to this review by the UGC, to ascertain whether these universities were serving the purposes for which they were so declared, and whether they were complying with the conditions, if any, mentioned in the notification by the Central government in each case.

#### **Only parts of Tandon Committee report revealed**

In its affidavit, the Central government has chosen to reveal only parts of the Tandon Committee report. The committee comprised Prof. P.N. Tandon, formerly of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, and a former President of the Indian National Science Academy; Prof. Goverdhan Mehta, a former Director of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore; Prof. Anandkrishnan, former Vice-Chancellor Anna Technical University and at present Chancellor of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur; and Prof. Mrinal Miri, former Vice-Chancellor of North Eastern Hill University, Shillong.

The committee invited all deemed-to-be-universities for presentations and face-to-face discussions in August and September 2009 in four sessions. A total of 126 institutions attended these sessions. The committee had sent questionnaires seeking all relevant information to these institutions well in advance.

On the basis of their responses, the committee submitted its report on October 20, 2009. Meanwhile, the UGC submitted reports to the government on 47 of these institutions, and the government made these reports available to the Tandon Committee.

In its affidavit, the Centre has revealed that the Tandon Committee found several aberrations in the functioning of these universities. The committee concluded that only 38 of these universities justified their continuation as “deemed universities”; 44 institutions were deficient in some aspects, which needed to be rectified over a three-year period; and, finally, 44 institutions neither on past performance nor on their promise for the future had the attributes to retain their status as deemed-to-be-universities. Sixteen of these 44 institutions are in Tamil Nadu.

The affidavit only revealed some general adverse comments of the Tandon Committee against the rogue institutions. Although all the 44 institutions whose deemed status was to be withdrawn were named in its annexure, the affidavit refrained from mentioning the specific grounds on which each of these invited derecognition.

Thus, the committee found “undesirable management architecture” where families rather than professional academics controlled the functioning of institutions. Several institutions were engaged in thoughtless introduction of unrelated programmes and proliferation of degrees beyond the mandate of the original terms of grant of deemed-to-be-university status. It also found very little

evidence of noticeable efforts by some institutions in regard with emerging areas of knowledge.

With the notable exception of some publicly funded institutions, very few institutions could produce evidence of “quality” research in terms of publications in leading high-impact journals in respective fields.

Lack of commitment towards research and irresponsible exercise of power with regard to admission, intake capacity, programmes and fee structure were found to be other attributes of such institutions. Many of these, which were once colleges, increased their intake capacity disproportionately and in some cases exponentially in relation to the qualified faculty strength and other academic infrastructure.

In several institutions, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes had been fragmented with concocted nomenclatures. Several institutions have prescribed fee structures considerably higher than those recommended by the official fee structure committees.

The Tandon Committee members also became members of the task force constituted by the Centre on November 16, 2009, to prepare an action plan to safeguard the interests of students enrolled in institutions whose deemed-to-be-university status was proposed to be revoked in the public interest. The task force recommended that all pre-existing colleges not found suitable for the status of deemed-to-be-university should revert to the *status quo ante* as an affiliated college of the State university so that students would be able to complete their ongoing courses and obtain degrees from the affiliating university.

Where an institution is unable to obtain affiliation, it suggested that every effort should be made to facilitate migration or re-enrollment of students to equivalent or similar courses in other institutions.

The affidavit estimated the total number of students enrolled in these 44 institutions to be 1,19,363 at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, in addition to 2,124 students pursuing research in M.Phil and PhD programmes, and an estimated 74,808 students pursuing Distance Education programmes. These 44 universities are spread over 13 States, and they could be affiliated to 28 existing State universities, it said.

The task force made it clear that the entire cost of migration and rehabilitation of affected students should be at the expense of the managements of the failed institutions and must come from the corpus fund that was required to be maintained in respect of each under UGC guidelines.

The Supreme Court’s intervention might have tied the hands of the Centre with regard to derecognising the 44 deemed-to-be universities that the Tandon Committee has found to be unworthy of deemed status. But the Centre has to blame itself for its hasty announcement in its affidavit that it accepted the reports of the Tandon Committee and the task force. The announcement led to widespread concern and unrest among the students of these universities. The right course for the Centre would have been to place these

reports in the public domain, invite public response, and then take a decision.

Source: New Delhi /[Frontline on Net](#)/13 – 26 February 2010

## NEWS

### A new era in physics

The questions surrounding the evolution of the universe have not been sufficiently answered till date. “Astrophysical and cosmological observations have revealed that our present picture of the universe is incomplete and that 96% of the cosmos is not made of ordinary matter, but of a mysterious dark matter and dark energy,” stated Sir Jonathan Richard Ellis, a British theoretical physicist. A comprehensive explanation of cosmic evolution is possible only when physicists would be in a position to comprehend this invisible dark matter. Ellis was participating in a lecture series at Delhi University (DU).

He said that before addressing the question of cosmic evolution certain critical discoveries have to be made. “The most important discovery would be that of Higgs boson. Finding this particle would give an insight into why particles have certain mass. There is a simple underlying logic to this. We are trying to ascertain the matter that constitutes the universe. Matter and mass are complementary and inseparable at one crucial level. However, very little is known about mass till date,” he said, adding that the quest for Higgs boson will be an important precursor to the evolution of a subsequent era of physics or new physics.

CERN, the European Centre for Nuclear Research, is actively involved in research pertaining to astrophysics and cosmology. Incidentally, India is one of the six observer countries at CERN and a majority of scientists at CERN are Indians. “It is now being contemplated to make India an associate member of CERN, a status that has not been enjoyed by any other country till now,” shared Ellis.

Talking about India’s involvement at CERN, R K Shivpuri, director, Centre for Detector and Related Software Technologies (CDRST) and adviser, DU, said, “Indian scientists and engineers have contributed significantly in co-operative research programmes including accelerator, detectors and physics.”

On the benefits of being involved with CERN, Shivpuri added, “India has benefited considerably in terms of training young students who are involved in CERN experiments as part of their PhD studies. To be specific, Delhi University joined the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) experiment over a decade back. About a dozen students from the university have obtained their PhD from their work at the CERN CMS experiment.”

Source: /[Times of India](#)/1 February 2010

### Draft Bill Proposes National Database for VC posts

In a move towards putting together a credible and interference free system to appoint Vice-Chancellors to universities, the HRD Ministry has drafted provisions in a new legislation that promises to usher in structural changes in the higher education sector.

The draft Bill on creation of National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) has proposed a national database of those eligible and qualified to be appointed as Vice-Chancellors or heads of educational institutes. NCHER will be an overarching body that will subsume all other existing regulators like the UGC and AICTE.

The draft Bill, based on the recommendations of a high-powered task force, says that when a vacancy arises in a varsity, instead of going the search-cum-selection committee route that is often misused through political interference, the Commission will simply recommend a set of five names from the national registry — one of whom will be appointed as V-C.

HRD Minister Kapil Sibal’s predecessor in UPA I Arjun Singh had run into controversy when the ministry appointed V-Cs to 14 new central universities just ahead of the Lok Sabha elections and many of these appointments were seen as political in nature. Both the PM-backed National Knowledge Commission and the Prof Yashpal-led Committee report on Rejuvenation of Higher Education recommended politics-free appointments.

The V-C appointments apart, the Bill also proposes that every new university/institute must be accredited before it begins its first academic session or even starts its admission process. The NCHER will outline the norms and standards for granting of accreditation.

The Commission itself will have seven members on Board and a Chairman — all appointed by the President of India on the recommendations of a selection committee that will be headed by the Prime Minister.

Source: New Delhi /[Indian Express](#)/2 February 2010

### NCHER chief to get CEC status

*The chairperson of the National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), the overarching body to look after higher education, will enjoy the status and salary of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India.*

The draft NCHER Bill, prepared by the Human Resource Development Ministry and put on the ministry website for eliciting public opinion, said salaries and allowances payable to, and the status and other terms and conditions of service of, the chairperson of the commission should be the same as that of the CEC.

The document also clarified that the words “chief election commissioner” and “election commissioner” refers to the chief election commissioner and the election commissioner respectively of the Election Commission of India established by Article 324 of the Constitution.

**Part-time members:** The status and privileges accorded to three part-time members should be the same as that of an election commissioner and only such sitting fees and other allowances, as the commission might decide from time to time, should be payable to such members.

The chairperson and the other whole-time members of the commission, which will subsume bodies like the University Grants Commission and the All India Council for Technical Education, should be scholars having a standing in the field of academics and research, possessing leadership abilities, proven capacity for institution building and governance of institutions of higher learning and research.

The members other than whole-time members should be persons of eminence with high academic credentials with proven contribution to economic and social development and experience of engagement with institutions of higher learning and research.

**Appointments:** The chairperson and other members should be appointed by the president on the recommendation of a selection committee headed by the prime minister and consisting of the speaker and the leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha as members. The committee

will also include the HRD minister and the minister in charge of medical education.

Besides, there will be a collegium to aid, offer advice and make recommendations to the commission for coordination, maintenance of standards and promotion of higher education and research.

The collegium should recommend names of eligible persons for inclusion in the national registry of prospective vice chancellors to be maintained by the NCHER.

The NCHER should recommend five names from the registry for appointment to the post of vice-chancellor of Central universities or head of such institutions.

When called upon by the states, it will also recommend five names for the vice-chancellor for state universities.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Deccan Herald](#)/2 February 2010

### Drastic changes likely in higher education

The task force on higher education is likely to submit its report to the State Government during this week.

The panel headed by Trilochan Pradhan, former vice-chancellor of Utkal University, was constituted last year to study the problems in higher education sector and suggest remedial measures.

The task force with academics, scholars and intell actuals held several interactive sessions before finalising its report.

As Orissa is emerging as the metallurgical and energy hub of the country, there is a huge demand for skilled manpower.

Besides, colleges in the State lack the required infrastructure.

Higher education has also not reached the tribal pockets where literacy rate is very marginal.

The task force is expected to take all the problems into consideration and suggest drastic changes. The involvement of private sector in the development of higher education is another issue to be addressed by the panel.

According to official sources, the enrolment in degree first year in 2007-08 academic year was 85,000. But admissions in degree engineering and other technical degree courses was only 20,000. Besides, only 10,000 students took admission in PG first year.

In ITI and polytechnic courses 25,000 students took admission.

Official sources said 138 blocks in the State do not have ITIs and 18 more polytechnics are needed to meet the national average.

The State Government has demanded Rs 250 crore from the Thirteenth Finance Commission (TFC) to provide new infrastructure and for upgradation of existing infrastructure for imparting quality education in government colleges and universities. Besides, steps will also be taken for orienting the students for research career.

The State Government has also sought Rs 85 crore for providing library, laboratory equipment and computer facilities in government colleges to develop human resource in professional and specialisation courses like computer science, MBA, MCA, IT and company secretaries.

However, funds crunch has come in the way of implementation of many of the schemes for development of higher education sector.

The State Government has demanded Rs 641.51 crore from the TFC to meet the additional salary cost on account of new UGC scales to 7,600 UGC grade teachers after withdrawal of funding by it from April, 2010.

Besides, Rs 828 crore is required for establishment of new ITIs in 138 blocks. Establishment of 18 new polytechnics will require Rs 486 crore.

**Source:** Bhubaneswar /[Express Buzz](#)/3 February 2010

### DU agrees to semester system

It's not just our school education system that has entered the 'reformation era'. Universities across the country are on the verge of a sea change - annual exams will now be replaced by a semester and credit system.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recommended some major reforms in higher education.

And now, with Delhi University (DU) shifting to the semester system from the coming academic session, the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry is hoping other reluctant universities will follow suit.

According to the UGC, 64 universities have so far agreed to adopt the new system. The commission funds 180 universities across India.

Though the ministry and the UGC have been urging universities to adopt the system for long, the recently enacted Central Universities Act 2009 - for the creation of new central universities - gave a thrust to it. According to the Act, all new central universities will have to follow the semester system.

The semester system will hopefully end the tried and tested formula of cramming up 'important topics' just in time for the annual exams. Exams will be more frequent and hence, nothing can be omitted as 'unimportant'. Along with the semester system, students will be awarded credits for the courses they choose. It will allow them to pursue diverse disciplines.

For example, studying economics with law or politics with philosophy.

Explaining why the government was reluctant to impose a deadline, HRD Minister Kapil Sibal had recently said in Parliament: "We want to send out a message that we are committed to implementing the semester system. It is good for the student community. We want teachers to cooperate and embrace a system that will benefit the students."

But, he said, implementing the new system was a "difficult process" as universities were apprehensive of it affecting their autonomy.

The UGC had recommended the system in its XIth Plan. Since 2008, the commission chairman has written to all universities (central, state and deemed) at least thrice, urging them to implement it.

UGC secretary, R. C. Chauhan said: "We want to offer quality education. Universities will be given all help to set up the new system. Universities that implement it will get additional grants." He added: "Credit-based semester system is accepted worldwide. It ensures continuity of assessment unlike the present system where students simply cram the syllabi to pass the common university exams." The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Jawaharlal Nehru University have always followed the semester system. All engineering, technology and management streams also follow it. It is the arts/humanities and commerce streams that are reluctant.

A senior HRD Ministry official said: "While new central universities will have to follow the semester system, existing universities have been shying away. It is the teaching community that is mainly opposing it. Students are going to benefit much from continuous and timely assessments." The ministry is happy that the DU has finally decided to adopt the semester system for its undergraduate courses as well. The university has been following the system in its postgraduate courses for some time now.

"What makes it more challenging for a massive institution like the DU is that it has a number of affiliated colleges. In such a scenario, following the semester system is going to be a massive exercise," the Ministry official said.

There has been considerable opposition to the semester system from the university's faculty federation.

The Ministry official said: "Some detractors have raised the autonomy bogey, making it very tough for us.

We want universities to willingly adopt it. We did think of linking it to fund allocation and release of grants, but decided against it. Universities could see it as an assault on their autonomy." DU vice- chancellor Deepak Pental said: "We hope to have our system ready by the end of this month. After that, we will take it to the academic council in March. It will be implemented when the new academic session starts in July." Some states such as Haryana have set the ball rolling for implementing the system. So is the case with Kerala.

Its higher education council has issued a directive in this regard to all state universities.

The HRD Ministry is hopeful that the semester system will be in place across the country by 2011-12.

**Source:** New Delhi /[India Today](#)/3 February 2010

### **New guidelines for private universities: Minimum 35 acres, reservation for poor**

The state government has formulated guidelines for setting up private universities in the state. Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal said, "At least 35 acres of land will be required if one wants to set up a private university. No college will be affiliated with these universities; all the courses will be on campus."

"The vice-chancellors of these universities will have to be appointed by the university management as per the rules, qualification and guidelines laid down by the UGC. Also, besides normal reservation of students under various categories, five per cent seat will be reserved in these universities for poor students and the students admitted under this category by the university will not be charged any fees," said Badal.

He also announced 13 new colleges to be set up across the state, for which two-third funding will be done by the state government and one-third by the Centre.

On the issue of excommunication of Prof Darshan Singh Ragi from the religion by the Akal Takht, Badal said, "In Punjab, Ragi will have no influence. These pro-Congress groups will never be able to control the SGPC. Now when elections of the SGPC are around the corner, these groups have become active."

**Source:** Chandigarh /[Indian Express](#)/4 February 2010

### **Educomp acquires Studyplaces.com**

Educomp Solutions Ltd has acquired popular education portal Studyplaces.com. Owned by Zaptive Internet Services, Study-places provides a platform for students to acquire information related to higher education opportunities in USA, UK, India and various other countries. It has tie ups with various universities and educational institutes for providing educational opportunities in

aforesaid countries. Studyplaces.com covers more than 7,000 institutes across the world.

Educomp had earlier acquired Canada based Savvica Inc that runs education portal Learnhub.com which has a strong presence in North America.

“We are committed to addressing student needs at every stage of the educational lifecycle.” said Shantanu Prakash, CEO & MD, Educomp Solutions Ltd.

Speaking on the development, Malgosia Green, Founder & CEO, Learn-hub said, “The merger allows us to leverage the great synergies between Learn-Hub and Study-Places. Combined, we offer the best resources to universities located in India and abroad (US, Canada, UK) to recruit students in India.”

Learn-hub and Study-places combined host over 10,000 colleges and universities across the world. Learn hub and Study-places are also the largest portal for international students.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Indian Express](#)/5 February 2010

### **No IIT fee hike till HEFC is set up**

The Centre has put the IIT fee hike on hold. HRD minister Kapil Sibal has said that the proposal to hike fees will have to wait till the government sets up the Higher Education Finance Corporation (HEFC). This would ensure that a higher tuition fee does not disadvantage students who are not financially able.

For the time being, the ministry has asked IITs to suggest reforms in the IIT entrance examination, improving external linkages of the institutes and raising the quality of research.

At a brainstorming session on IITs, chaired by Mr Sibal, a committee was set up under IIT Kharagpur director Damodar Acharya to study the existing JEE and GAIT exam and suggest possibilities of improvement.

The committee will submit its report in three months. It is expected to suggest on how to consider the Class XII marks of students while preparing the cut-off for admission. At present, students are required to score 60 per cent in their class XII board examinations for their JEE results to be considered.

At the last meeting of IIT Council, the apex bodies to decide on IIT matters, discussions were held on giving more weightage to marks obtained in school-leaving examinations while selecting students.

The meeting, attended by the IIT directors and chairmen, however, did not take any decision on the proposal to increase the tuition fee of students to make the institutes self-sufficient.

Mr. Sibal said that a proposal to increase tuition fee would be taken up only after the government sets up the HEFC. This proposed corporation would provide assistance to economically disadvantaged students.

IIT Kanpur had prepared a detailed proposal on hiking the tuition fee. At present, BTech students pay Rs 50,000 per year as fee. The proposal suggested increasing the fee to Rs 4 lakh per annum over a period of 10 years.

The minister asked each IIT to indicate, in four weeks, in which area/field they would want to achieve the highest standards by 2020.

The new IITs have been given two months to prepare their roadmap. These IITs have been asked to give a roadmap for compensation that will attract the best faculty from India and abroad and also to give incremental infrastructure development plans for this aim. They have been asked to involve PAN IIT system. Professor Anand Krishnan will head the committee, which would co-ordinate this.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Economic Times](#)/5 February 2010

### **Call for transparency in move against deemed varsities**

Calling for transparency in the government’s move against deemed universities, the Education Promotion Society for India (EPSI) said erring universities would be willing to accept the government’s decisions only if they are shown the rationale behind them.

G. Viswanathan, president, EPSI, said the expert committee constituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development had called for wide-ranging actions against certain deemed universities after classifying them according to some scale. While some deemed universities really did have deficiencies, it was unfair to use a broad brush against all deemed universities, especially without providing the details of the committee’s evaluation process, he said. If the government was intent on reforming the system, it should start by showing more transparency in its own working, he added.

Mr. Viswanathan also questioned the parameters used by the committee and said it took at least a few years before a university could produce sufficient research output. Even State and central universities had problems with faculty and infrastructure and this was part of a general problem in the country which would take a few years to correct, he said.

He said a committee constituted by the University Grants Commission (UGC) had provided detailed reports after making site visits and after evaluating the universities over many days unlike the expert committee constituted by the MHRD.

He said there had been no transparency in the government and asked what action had been taken against erring university owners and chancellors in Chhattisgarh after the 2005 case when 112 private universities were derecognised.

EPSI would represent its case to Kapil Sibal, the Prime Minister and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi. Manohar Chellani, secretary general, EPSI, said deemed universities had played an important role in higher education in the country.

The meeting of 21 universities affiliated to the EPSI was also addressed by S.K. Khanna, former vice-chairman, UGC; and P.K. Gupta, former president, EPSI.

**Source:** Chennai [/Beta. The Hindu/](#)6 February 2010

### **Govt. to ensure high standards for foreign varsity campuses in India**

Reiterating the rationale of opening up the education sector to foreign universities, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee Oscar Fernandez told FE that it is done mainly to stem the exodus of Indian students to such universities. Fernandez was speaking on the sidelines of a CII education summit. "The parliamentary standing committee would thoroughly study and lay down a system of rules and procedures for the functioning of foreign universities before they are allowed to set shop here," he said to allayed apprehensions on opening the higher education sector to foreign varsities.

The Centre would adopt a blend of PPP (public private partnership) and PFI (private financing initiatives) in addressing the demand challenges of the higher technical education (HTE) scenario in the country, he said. The government would go for the best of both models to enable economic empowerment through the roots of higher education in the country.

"Public funding or private financing, the government is striving to evolve a system of syllabi and curriculum in higher education to suit the needs and demands of corporates and industry. However, a day will come when the industry will fund the education sector in the country," he pointed out.

On profound regional imbalances in the proposed central universities under the Central Universities Act 2009 kicking up a ruckus, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee refuted it by quoting Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement on setting up higher learning institutions of various specialities in different regions of the country to avoid regional disparities. The Act proposes setting up 15 varsities in 12 states, leaving other states untouched.

Irregularities in the service conditions of teaching staff and appointment of inferior quality staff in order to pay less allegedly being the causes of derecognition of a few deemed universities he said, "The HRD ministry would hear the case of derecognised deemed institutions before proceeding further over the matter." Never before has the government set aside a sum of Rs 85,000 crore as a budgetary allocation to resolve the shortcoming of primary and higher education in the country, he added.

Meanwhile, delivering the inaugural address at the summit he said the government's objective is to raise the number of higher education optees from mere 7% to 15%. Secondly, he stressed on the importance of tech-based education where Indian workforce is found to be endowed with only 10% when compared with industrially advanced Korea...

**Source:** Chennai [/Financial Express/](#)6 February 2010

### **To be or not to be: MSU still indecisive on CBCS**

Is M S University (MSU) prepared to offer choice-based credit system (CBCS) to its students from next academic year? While state education department is keen that all universities of Gujarat start semester system and offer CBCS to revolutionise Gujarat's higher education, MSU hardly seems to have geared up to do the job.

CBCS, which has also been recommended by University Grants Commission (UGC) and National Knowledge Commission is based on western model of education, which ensures that a student entering into any stream gets a wider choice of subjects. For instance, if a science student wants to take up music as one of the subjects or vice versa, CBCS enables him to do so. While a circular from education department had stated that CBCS should be implemented at graduate level from this year, different faculties of MSU are yet to decide over their course of action.

If MSU has to implement CBCS, it will have to put the system in place before April when its faculties start admission process. Before that such changes are to be cleared by faculty boards apart from bodies like syndicate and senate. However, while faculty of arts has already completed its faculty board meeting without any provision of CBCS, MSU's faculty of commerce, which has the largest students base, is worried about the practicality involved in it.

"We had organised our faculty board in January and it was after that we received state government's circular. We believe that more time is required in implementing the new system. However, if we get clear directions from the university, we will hold an emergency faculty board meeting to find out a way," says dean of arts faculty professor Nitin Vyas.

Officiating dean of commerce faculty professor A R Hingorani on the other hand says the faculty will decide over CBCS' implementation on February 15.

"While we are keen on implementing the system, it depends on the board's decision. If CBCS has to be implemented, work has to start on a war footing. CBCS will put more pressure on system as we will have to offer a variety of choices to 5,000 students for which we need more support in terms of teaching staff," adds Hingorani.

Science faculty, which will be holding its faculty board meeting in March, hopes that it will be able to offer CBCS. "It was last year that we decided to implement semester system from academic year 2010-11. We will also finalise details of implementing CBCS now," says officiating dean professor Nikhil Desai. But the catch here is that students will get minimum choices of subjects even if the faculty implements CBCS as the faculty has to do with fluctuating number of new entrants, who try their luck first in engineering colleges.

**Source:** Vadodara [/Times of India/](#)6 February 2010

### Nationwide common curriculum for B.Ed soon

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) is in the process of finalising the 'Revised Curriculum Framework 2010' to be adopted by all universities with necessary changes.

While the syllabi for the B.Ed programme is common in entire Tamil Nadu owing to the presence of an exclusive university, in other States, the syllabi varies from one university to another. The 'Revised Curriculum Framework 2010' will accord high thrust to training programme, skill orientation, motivation, aptitude formation, and integration of computer learning skills, the Chairperson of Southern Regional Committee, NCTE, Bangalore, C. Thangamuthu, told reporters here on Sunday.

Dr. Thangamuthu felt universities must introduce B.Ed with specialisation in Elementary Education similar to the programme offered by the Delhi University and a few other universities for filling faculty positions in Teacher Training Institutions (TTI) offering Diploma in Teacher Education. At present, the focus of B.Ed is on secondary and higher secondary education. Candidates with B.Ed. in elementary education will be more competent and confident to teach in TTIs.

Tamil Nadu, he said, has set an example worthy of emulation by other States by revising the curriculum for Diploma in Teacher Education last year. Alongside testing the grasp of methodology, the revised curriculum determines the knowledge of the candidate in subject content to the extent of 50 per cent.

Dr. Thangamuthu found favour with the plea for bringing teacher education under the higher education system, pointing out that it was in accordance with the recommendation of the Kothari Commission as early as in 1964. The scope for modernisation of curriculum was more if that happens, he felt.

In the southern region that accounts for nearly fifty per cent of the country's 13,000 TTIs and B.Ed colleges, the NCTE has withdrawn recognition for 300 institutions for want of infrastructure and adequate teaching faculties. Six hundred more colleges that have been found deficient have been given time for fulfilling the requirements, Dr. Thangamuthu said.

**Source:** [Tiruchi /Beta. The Hindu](#)/7 February 2010

### Separate exam board likely for higher studies

In what is being heralded as a welcome move by educationists, the state government may form a separate examination board for conducting examinations of courses such as engineering and MBA that come under the ambit of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The state government has asked for suggestions from experts and other stakeholders on the plan.

This may well also be considered as the first step towards the formation of an independent state level examination board for higher education that will only conduct exams

and will reduce the burden of universities that are overburdened with the logistics related to holding of exams and assessment of papers.

"If the exams part is separated, varsities could give more time to academics," said Nandkumar Nikam, president of state federation of principals. He was speaking at the seminar on examination reforms on higher education arranged by Vidyapeeth Vikas Manch.

"The state government recently invited suggestions on having an independent examination board for conducting engineering and other courses that come under the AICTE. If the move is extended to other streams too, universities will be free from the huge burden of exams," he said. He cited the example of SSC/HSC board that conducts the exams for the entire state. "Something can be thought for higher education too along these lines," he said.

Central Planning Commission member Narendra Jadhav, who was the chief guest at the function, applauded the suggestion and said the state government should consider it seriously.

With the growth in affiliated colleges and hence number of students, load has increased manifold in last few years. However, the staff in the examination section has not increased in that proportion.

The University of Pune, for example, has around 6,00,000 students. The examination department has to conduct exams for these students every year and that has led to many discrepancies such as wrong marking, paper leak and mass copying. Moreover, unavailability of approved teachers to correct the answer sheets has also emerged as a major issue.

**Source:** [/Indian Express](#)/7 February 2010

### UGC may soon fund universities across India to digitise academic papers for online access

*A national committee proposed the idea so that universities could digitise about 20,000 theses of the last five years*

The University Grants Commission (UGC) is likely to fund universities across the country to digitise files that are five years old at least (including theses and dissertations) for open access if it accepts the recommendations of a national committee initiated by Inflibnet Centre, Ahmedabad.

Inflibnet is the sole agency looking after documentation, and now digitisation, of various papers generated by around 200 UGC-funded universities across the country.

Last year, Inflibnet director Jagdish Arora called representatives from various universities and the UGC to ponder how academic documents in Indian universities could be digitised.

The committee, consisting of about 10 representatives, submitted its recommendations two months ago, proposing the UGC could fund universities to digitise academic documents of the last five years at least.

The project may cost each university Rs 8 to 10 lakh, said Arora. A handful of universities have already taken the initiative on their own.

If recommendations are accepted by the UGC, the universities will then have to sign memoranda of understanding with Inflibnet, stating their intentions to digitise their archives. The Inflibnet would then contact the UGC and facilitate the funding.

Arora said universities average about 100 theses and dissertations per year and so the proposed move would mean digitisation of about 20,000 academic papers by students very soon.

Once these are digitised and uploaded online, they would be accessible to all.

The committee had also recommended that universities adopt an anti-plagiarism software called Turnitin to not only check intentional plagiarism in university research, but also unintentional ones — such as omission of references by students and researchers.

Asked how this would differ from the common practice of posting sections of submitted academic papers on Google and searching for similar works to detect plagiarism, Arora said this method could track only those works that are in the public domain.

The Turnitin software, used internationally upon subscription, can crawl through huge databases that are not necessarily public and identify possible plagiarised items.

**Source:** Ahmedabad [/Indian Express/](#)7 February 2010

### **Eight colleges to be made role models**

A project is in the pipeline to bring college education on par with the best in some of the backward districts, which are saddled with a lack of infrastructure.

Thanks to the plan initiated by the University Grants Commission (UGC), eight government colleges have been identified to be transformed into role models for other colleges in the districts.

The enrolment ration in these districts where the colleges are located is less than the national average.

In 2008, UGC had decided to build model colleges in 374 backward districts across the country, including 21 in Karnataka. It was also decided to convert the existing colleges, which had started functioning since 2007 into new ones.

As per the plan, each college will get a grant of Rs 9 crore and the state government will provide five acres of land. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the 11th five-year plan (2007-12).

In December, 2008, the National Development Council approved colleges which were started after 2008.

The Department of Collegiate Education has identified the eight colleges at Hitnal in Gulbarga, Chikka Basur in Davanagere, Melkote in Mandya, Baada in Haveri, Hettur

in Hassan, Yagathi in Chikmagalur and in Alavanti. These colleges lack permanent buildings. "We have identified a first-grade college from Mangalore too," said K Mahesh, coordinator of the quality assurance cell, Department of Collegiate Education.

Each model college, that will come up in five acres, will have a library, a laboratory, classrooms, workshop shed, a men's hostel, a women's hostel, staff quarters, a teachers' hostel, a seminar hall, a committee room, a counselling cell, an auditorium, a tutorial room, a canteen building, a non-resident students' centre, a health centre and sports facilities among others.

Mahesh explained that according to the latest UGC circular, the state government will sponsor two-thirds of the funds for the colleges, with the remaining one-third to be contributed by the Centre.

He said the colleges are aimed to be set up as benchmarks for newer colleges that come up in future in these districts. "UGC's intention is to gradually turn these model colleges into autonomous institutes," Mahesh added.

**Source:** Bangalore [/Express Buzz/](#)8 February 2010

### **Bar Council versus HRD**

The Bar Council of India (BCI) has rejected the human resource development ministry's proposed law to create a new overarching higher education regulator and will boycott intra-government consultations planned on the subject.

The BCI has written to the HRD ministry formally demanding that the National Commission for Higher Education and Research Bill exempt legal education from the purview of the proposed regulator.

The BCI has also said that it will not join consultations slated for February 13 between a ministry task force and higher education regulators, [The Telegraph](#) has learnt.

"We are boycotting the HRD ministry-sponsored consultations because we do not recognise the bill, in its present stage, as a Government of India bill but merely one that is being pushed by the HRD ministry," a BCI official said.

The bar council's letter has set the stage for an open confrontation between the apex regulator of the legal profession and the ministry on the bill that aims to restructure India's higher education regulatory structure.

The tussle may be resolved only through an intervention by the Prime Minister himself, sources said.

The commission, announced by the President as a key agenda of the UPA in its second term, is envisaged in the bill as a single regulator that will monitor all streams of higher education other than those related to medicine.

The University Grants Commission, the All India Council for Technical Education and the National Council for Teacher Education will be wound up, their tasks taken over by the panel.

The BCI and the Council of Architecture perform two tasks — regulating education in their respective streams and issuing licences mandatory to practice as a lawyer or an architect in India.

The bill proposes to transfer control over legal and architecture education to the new regulator while allowing the BCI and the architecture council to continue as quality monitors of both professions.

Two independent government panels — the National Knowledge Commission and the Yash Pal panel to review higher education — have recommended taking regulation of legal education away from the BCI.

At present, no degrees in legal education can be offered unless they are approved by the bar council.

But the BCI's decision to boycott the consultations reflects that the council is not willing to even consider giving up its powers over legal education. In its letter to the ministry, the BCI has said that it believes it is performing well as the regulator of legal education.

**Source:** Kolkata [/Telegraph India/](#)11 February 2010

#### **Four-year integrated B.Ed. course planned**

In a bid to make teacher education more professional, the Tamil Nadu Teachers' Education University is planning to introduce a four-year integrated B.Ed. course for students completing Plus Two.

Hindu on Thursday that the university is Official sources told The in the process of framing the syllabus for the proposed integrated course.

On successful completion of the proposed course, a student will receive a B.Sc. or a B.A. degree and also learn teaching methodology for a B.Ed. degree.

T. Padmanaban, university Vice-Chancellor, said a meeting of a specially constituted syllabus committee to frame the curriculum for the four-year course would be held in a few days. The integrated course would cover both undergraduate content and teaching methodology.

Welcoming the move, Kokila Thangasamy, principal, Lakshmi College of Education, Gandhigram, said it would tone up the quality of teacher education and expand opportunities for youngsters. "Teachers' education will become a professional course like engineering, medicine or law where students decide at Plus Two what they want to become," she said.

When contacted, Higher Education Secretary K. Ganesan said the government would wait for a concrete proposal from the university before taking any action.

Simultaneously, the State government has decided not to accord permission for starting any more B.Ed. colleges in Tamil Nadu.

With 645 B.Ed. colleges, including seven government-run and 14 government-aided colleges in the State, the Vice-Chancellor said it was felt there was no need to start new colleges.

"The Tamil Nadu Government has asked the National Council for Teacher Education not to accept any fresh applications for opening new B.Ed. colleges," Mr. Ganesan said. However, minorities will be permitted to start new B.Ed. colleges, if they want, sources said.

**Source:** Chennai [/Beta .The Hindu/](#)11 February 2010

#### **Lack of rehab policy in NCHER agitates UGC employees**

Employees of the University Grants Commission have started an agitation over the lack of a rehabilitation policy in the proposed National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) that will replace UGC.

The employees have decided to wear black badges on Thursday and threatened a strike if they are not "automatically placed in the proposed NCHER".

On Wednesday, the entire staff of UGC, from officers to grade four employees, raised slogans against chairperson Sukhdeo Thorat and the HRD ministry for not "highlighting their concerns about their rehabilitation". The employees to apprise them of their future prospects called Thorat. It is believed Thorat said he was not sure how things would shape up. But he promised to take up the issue with the ministry's task force when it meets the regulators on February 13 about NCHER.

UGC employees point out that the draft NCHER Bill, prepared by the task force, is silent on how to rehabilitate the employees of regulatory bodies that the new regulatory body will subsume it. NCHER will take over the functioning of All India Council for Technical Education, UGC and National Council for Technical Education.

The draft Bill only says that the central government will take consequential action in regard to officers and staff in the regular service of UGC, AICTE and NCTE. There are about 600 employees in UGC, 150 in AICTE and 100 in NCTE.

Dev Swarup, president of the Officers Association, UGC, said in a statement, "The staff and officers of UGC voiced concern at the arbitrary manner in which the issue of employees in the proposed commission has been addressed and the insensitive and inhuman manner in which the ministry is hell bent upon ruining the future of UGC employees, who have served the cause of higher education for more than 50 years,"

**Source:** New Delhi [/Times of India/](#)11 February 2010

#### **NIIT takes fun way to tap school education market**

Is there a better way to find which part of a flame is the hottest, than putting your finger into it? Or for school students to be proficient enough in sound editing as to help with real life sound-editing requirements? And can math and science be made easier and more enjoyable for students?

Learning solutions, major NIIT feels all of that is possible, and in the process level the playing field for students across the range of educational institutions as well.

"We now have 14,000 schools across 16 states in the country, comprising both government and private schools, in which about 8 million students are using our learning methodology for computer education as well as tech-enabled learning for other subjects", says TG Mathur, Head - Operations, of NIIT.

According to him, two of the company's innovations, namely a math lab and a smart science station have been particularly well-received by schools and students across the country. The latter is a hardware that lets students do over 200 experiments to cross check what they have learned in theory.

Company officials said the training focus had now shifted from the employability aspect, where some vocational training is given to those who have completed a particular course, to empowerment, where training is given to employees to sharpen their skills, and that the latest trend was to catch them young by empowering the new generation right from childhood.

According to NIIT national sales head for channels, Anurag Dixit, parents want their children to excel in all fields and towards that end, making learning fun is of fundamental importance. He said NIIT's school learning solutions aimed to do this, shifting the focus from rote learning to experiential learning.

Company zonal head Jitendra Pradhan said stress was a common factor across educational campuses, with parents, teachers and students all feeling the heat of stress, making it all the more relevant to have learning methods that were more enjoyable.

Mathur said NIIT did not have immediate plans to take either its math lab or smart science station solutions to international markets, because of the significantly large opportunity still to be tapped within the country.

**Source:** Thirvendram [/Economic Times/](#)11 February 2010

### **Education Loan Approval before admission for students going to the USA**

Credila Financial Services, an HDFC Ltd. Venture, is a specialized education loan lender. Credila announces a special benefit to the students who plans to pursue higher studies in the USA. Credila will, underwrite the education loan application file and issue education loan Approval letters to the credit-worthy students even before their admission to the US Universities.

"Credila's education loan approval before admission to the USA is the first ever in India!", said Prashant A. Bhonsle, Country Head of Credila Financial Services. He continued to say, "Unless students demonstrate the sources of funds, the US Universities don't give I-20 to the students. With Credila's education loan approval letters, thousands of

creditworthy students from India, now, will be able to fulfill their dreams of higher education in the USA".

The Catch-22 Dilemma of US Bound Indian Students: There are severe restrictions that are based on The US Federal Immigration laws and policies on funds that an Indian student can receive at U.S. universities. Matter of fact, universities will not confirm admission unless students can demonstrate their ability to bear the cost of an American Education.

### **American Education and the I20**

An US University can conditionally admit the student for a particular course based on various parameters, ranging from Standardized Test Scores (GRE, GMAT, etc) to Leadership Qualities. However, it does not release the official document confirming a students' admission until and unless the student is able to demonstrate financial ability to pay for the first year of the course and continued funds to support the remaining years of education.

This official document of admission, also called the Form I20, is in fact a legal document tied to US Immigration Services. The I20 is not only the only proof of secured admission but also forms the basis of that student's US student visa claim and attempt to enter the US for education. In a nutshell, if you don't have an I20, you don't go to the US for education.

### **Obtaining the I20**

Demonstrating financial ability can be tricky, especially because only a few forms of documentary evidence are accepted by the US University. A typical Indian student has limited options - receive funding from the university in form of scholarships, waivers, etc that are extremely difficult to secure OR document family funds OR obtain an education loan. "Credila loan approval letter was one of the important financial docs which I was holding to get I20", said Suraj T., studying in SUNY at Buffalo, USA. Another student Ajin N. who obtained education loan from Credila and studying in University of Illinois at Chicago, USA said, "Credila gave me the liquidity to go ahead with the fees payment. So the embassy was happy with loan approval letter and the way of funding for my course".

### **The Chicken-Egg Syndrome**

Indian Students that plan on obtaining an education loan to fund their US studies face a typical "Chicken-Egg" syndrome every year: The US University requires proof of assured funds to confirm the admission and release the I20; Indian banks do not Approval or authorize education loans until the student has confirmed admission and received the I20. So what comes first—the I20 or the bank loan authorization? Chicken or Egg?

This limitation of Indian Banks put a severe damper on several qualified students that plan on obtaining the I20 and funding their American education via loans. Unfortunately some students, out of sheer desperation, resort to unethical measures to forge such documentation which makes things worse overall. Mr. Richard Yam, Foreign Student Advisor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst notes "We see a

lot of loan approval letters that prospective students from all over the world send to us to document proof of funds. [But] I do not think I have seen anything [similar] from India.” This is echoed by Mr. Hrayr Tamzarian, Asst. Dean of International Admissions at Smith College, a highly selective private undergraduate college near Boston—“We normally accept loan letters [for I20 sponsorship] as we are very expensive and understand that the student and family may not have full funding proof and may take student loans to pay the balance fee...if the family funds plus the loan add up to the required amount, then we can issue the I20.”

### **Credila’s Unique Solution for students applying for studies in the USA**

One of the objectives of a recent and exciting development relating to educational loans in India aims at solving this “Catch-22” situation jeopardizing the Indian student community.

Credila Financial Services, is currently India’s first and only fully-dedicated education loan provider. Credila has entered into key partnerships with various organizations and educational institutes around the globe to better serve the Indian student community. Credila Financial Services is an HDFC Ltd. venture. HDFC Ltd. is a strategic investor in Credila. Over 40,000 students and parents have applied to Credila for education loan in the past few months. So far Credila has funded students for their studies in Universities such as Columbia Univ., Cornell Univ, Purdue Univ., Carnegie Mellon, Oxford etc.

Credila is offering Education Loan Approval letter to credit worthy students even before they get any confirmed admission from the USA. Credila does not mandate “Confirmed Admission” to process or grant education loan offers and Approvals. So a student can apply and receive a loan approval letter from Credila even before being admitted to the course of his/her choice. This may also help the student to secure admission to better courses.

Source: [/Big News. Biz/](#)13 February 2010

### **Pioneer varsity on unfit list**

#### **- 44 deemed institutes found wanting but given a three-year lifeline**

The first Indian Institute of Information Technology that spurred controversial policy changes allowing the proliferation of a breed of questionable, brand-new deemed varsities is itself unfit for the tag, a central review panel has found.

The Gwalior IIIT, started in 1997, is one of 13 public deemed universities on a list of 44 found unfit for the tag but thrown a three-year lifeline by the panel to meet required standards.

The IIIT in Jabalpur, started in 2005 in collaboration with Japan after talks involving Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Japanese officials, is also on this list of substandard deemed varsities given a three-year lifeline.

Well-known private institutions like the Pune-based Symbiosis and Bharati Vidyapith and Mumbai’s Narsee Monjee management school are also on this list of unfit deemed universities named in the closely guarded review report accessed by [The Telegraph](#).

Two deemed universities run by Tripura governor D.Y. Patil’s family, and another run by the family of Congress MP Datta Meghe, are on the list.

The Bharati Vidyapith is run by Maharashtra minister Patangrao Kadam’s family.

All these 44 institutions will lose their deemed tag in three years unless they “significantly improve”.

The deemed tag allows them to offer degrees without seeking affiliation as mere colleges to recognised universities.

The review’s finding deflates the argument peddled for a decade by government officials for allowing institutions deemed status without meeting requirements, made possible by policy changes introduced citing the IIITs.

Institutions working in emerging areas — like information technology in the 1990s — could be allowed special freedom to produce quality research and to train engineers, successive governments have argued.

But the findings show that the IIITs, held up as examples to justify the policy changes, have themselves failed to fulfil their promise, years after being set up.

This list of 44, including the two IIITs, is independent of another list of an identical number — 44 — found by the review to be too poor to deserve even the lifeline.

The human resource development ministry has disclosed the names of the 44 found unworthy of a lifeline in an affidavit before the Supreme Court, stating it wants to withdraw the deemed tag immediately from these institutions.

But the list of the other 44 unfit deemed varsities, including the two IIITs, and the central review’s report have been kept a tightly kept secret, not even revealed to other government arms or deemed universities themselves. They will only be disclosed in an affidavit that the HRD ministry is expected to file before the apex court soon.

The review was ordered by HRD minister Kapil Sibal soon after he took over in 2009. The probe panel consisted of neurosurgeon P.N. Tandon, IIT Kanpur chairman M. Anandakrishnan, former Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, director Goverdhan Mehta and former North Eastern Hill University vice-chancellor Mrinal Miri.

The IIITs were started in the late 1990s to build the academic backbone — through research and training of engineers — to support India’s then growing clout as an information technology power.

Deemed varsity status, allowed till then only to colleges existing for at least 10 years, was opened up to *de novo* (fresh in Latin), untested institutions like the IIITs despite not meeting UGC requirements.

The BJP government in 2000 argued that these institutions would struggle to fulfil their potential as colleges affiliated to a university as their “cutting-edge” field needed the autonomy available to deemed universities.

The Gwalior IT institute — which later expanded into management studies, too, and is today called the IIIT&M — was granted deemed university status in 2001 after the changes in UGC guidelines.

But the flood of institutions seeking deemed varsity status under the *de novo* category started under the UPA's first term with Arjun Singh as HRD minister. The UPA not only continued with the 2000 guidelines of the UGC, but also justified the *de novo* category citing the IIITs.

In 2005, Arjun Singh's HRD ministry started the Jabalpur institution, called the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing, in collaboration with Japan. It won the deemed tag in 2009.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Telegraph India](#)/13 February 2010

### UGC against setting up of new watchdog

On the eve of the crucial meeting of HRD ministry's task force on the proposed National Commission for Higher Education and Research with regulators like University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and National Council for Teacher Education, UGC employees asked their chairman, Sukhdeo Thorat, to protest the setting up of the new body.

In a note to Thorat, the employees pointed out that the proposed NCHER would hardly be different from the UGC. "Even the mission and objective of the NCHER draft Bill are more or less similar to the functions of the UGC. Therefore, one fails to understand the justification for the creation of a new body NCHER. In this backdrop, it is highly insulting and demoralising for the UGC employees that a new body is coming up with its mandate being similar to that of UGC," the note said.

However, it needs to be pointed out that Thorat as a member of the Yashpal Committee that recommended setting up of NCHER had agreed with the recommendation. But much later he sent UGC's view disagreeing with the recommendation.

UGC employees also told Thorat that in case the new body comes up, they should be automatically shifted to the new body as the nature of work will be similar to that of UGC. "It should be ensured that the interests of UGC employees are fully protected and that each and every employee of the UGC gets rightful placement with full dignity and without causing any loss to them whatsoever, including their financial interest in the new set up," the employees said in the note.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Times of India](#)/13 February 2010

### Global: Education under increasing attack\*

Around the world, schools and universities have faced brutal military and political attacks in an increasing number

of countries over the past three years, according to a new report published by UNESCO. Since 2007 there have been thousands of reported cases of students, teachers, academics and other education staff being kidnapped, imprisoned, beaten, tortured, burned alive, shot or blown up by rebels, armies and repressive regimes.

The report, *Education under Attack 2010* was written by *University World News* correspondent Brendan O'Malley and he says the sheer volume of incidents demonstrates that attacks on education are "by no means limited to supporters of the Taliban fighting in the hills of Afghanistan". Education and those involved have been subject to attacks in at least 31 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

"In a worryingly large number of places there are times when students, teachers and academics have good reason to fear that if they turn up to work or lectures they risk being bombed by rebels or picked off by assassins or even abducted by their own government's security forces," O'Malley says.

In Iraq, 71 academics, two education officials and 37 students were killed in assassinations and targeted bombings between January 2007 and July 2009, the reporting period of the study. Universities were bombed or shelled in Colombia, Gaza, Georgia and Iraq.

Academics or students were reported killed, 'disappeared', shot at, issued with death threats, arbitrarily detained, or tortured in Guatemala, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Venezuela.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo 47 academics sought rescue grants to escape threats and persecution in 2002-07.

One Colombia University received 312 death threats from paramilitaries, including a letter from *Aguilas Negras* (Black Eagles) in November 2008 declaring 32 students to be military targets. Seventeen Colombian students were killed and one disappeared in the reporting period.

O'Malley says the motives vary from country to country but attacks on academics are thought three times as likely to be carried out by government or government-backed forces as by rebels. Common reported motives include the desire to silence opposition, prevent the publication of sensitive research, or prevent the voicing of concerns by minorities.

"In higher education, students and academics may be attacked to silence criticism of government policies but also to limit academic freedom and prevent political pluralism," he says.

"The effect is to undermine the quality of higher education provision and restrict its contribution to economic, political and human development by inhibiting the growth of ideas, destroying intellectual capital and deterring bright minds from pursuing an academic career."

The report recommends the international community do more to ensure punishment of the perpetrators of attacks on education. It proposes strengthening protection of higher

education in international law and establishing a global system for monitoring attacks at all levels of education.

Source: [/University World News/](#)14 February 2010

## ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

### Sibal moots a body to finance higher education for poor

To help students from financially poor backgrounds pursue higher education, the Ministry of Human Resource Development is contemplating the formation of an Education Finance Corporation (EFC) to provide education loans at low interest rates.

Discussions are on with the Planning Commission in this regard, Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal said here on Monday, adding that they were optimistic about setting up the EFC in the 12th Five Year Plan. He was in Kanpur to attend the 48th Rajya Sammelan of the Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Shikshak Sangh.

Sibal pointed out that the ratio of students attending degree colleges was far lower the number of students attending primary and secondary schools. "Currently 22 crore children attend primary and secondary schools, whereas only 2.6 crore students go to degree colleges," he said. The EFC, it is hoped, would play an important role in bridging this gap.

"Generally students are hesitant to take education loans from private banks. Therefore we decided to come up with a corporation that can provide them loan for higher studies at lower interest rate and simpler conditions," Sibal said.

Speaking about the worrying trend of students committing suicide, the minister said that parents should reduce expectations from their children. High expectations and unwarranted pressure put on children by parents were an important reason behind the increase in the number of suicides, he said. "Rather than making comparisons with other students and scolding children for failing to live up to their expectations, parents should encourage their children to prepare better for examinations," he said.

According to Sibal, the ministry had taken up the issue of suicides and depression among students very seriously, and one of the steps adopted in this regard was introduction of the grading system. "We have already introduced a grading system for CBSE students up to Class X and efforts are underway to extend the system to Class XII," he said.

Sibal also said that locations have been identified for the construction of 6,000 model schools across the country. "There are several communities which have been deprived of proper resources for education for the many decades now. Under the project, 3,500 locations in rural belt and 2,500 locations in semi-urban areas have been identified," he said.

Commenting on the Vision 2020 of the ministry, Sibal said: "In the next 10 years, we want to see at least seven crore

students going to degree colleges, and for the purpose, we have major plans for the construction of more universities." The existing 480 universities in the country cannot accommodate the seven crore students, he said.

"For the construction of universities and degree colleges, a number of projects have either been launched or are in the pipeline," he added.

Source: Kanpur [/Indian Express/](#)2 February 2010

### Indian varsities may soon match Oxbridge: US expert

Amidst major funding cuts in British universities, a top US academic has told a London audience that India and China could soon build institutions that match Oxford and Cambridge. Professor Richard Levin, president of Yale University, said increasing focus in India and China on higher education means that institutions there would be ranked alongside Oxbridge within 25 years.

At a recent event at the London School of Economic (LSE), Mukesh Ambani, chairman of Reliance Industries, wondered why Indian universities did not figure in the top 100 in the world and called for achieving such an objective within the next 10 years.

"In 25 years, only a generation's time, these universities (in Asia) could rival the Ivy League. China and India ... seek to expand the capacity of their systems of higher education ... and aspire simultaneously to create a limited number of world-class universities to take their places among the best", Prof Levin told 'The Guardian'

"This is an audacious agenda, but China, in particular, has the will and resources that make it feasible. It has built the largest higher education sector in the world in merely a decade."

Prof Levin suggested that some of the top researchers in the world could be increasingly attracted to positions in cities such as Peking and Shanghai. By 2006, China had reportedly invested 1.5 per cent of its GDP on higher education nearly triple the rate a decade earlier.

His comments come amid fears that British universities risk losing their position among the world's elite following the announcement of sweeping higher education budget cuts, putting at risk research and university places for thousands of students.

Commenting on the funding cuts, Prof Levin said it would be a "shame if the British government didn't recognise the status of Oxford and Cambridge as global leaders."

China has reportedly more than doubled its number of higher education institutions in the last decade from 1,022 to 2,263. More than five million Chinese students enrol on degree courses now, compared with one million in 1997. British universities make up four of the top 10 institutions in the world, according to rankings from Times Higher Education magazine. Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial and University College London are the only non-American institutions featured among the global elite. Harvard tops the list, which also features Yale.

“If the emerging nations of Asia concentrate their growing resources on a handful of institutions, tap a worldwide pool of talent, and embrace freedom of expression and freedom of inquiry, they have every prospect of success in building world-class universities”, Prof Levin said in a lecture to the Higher Education Policy Institute. “It will not happen overnight; it will take decades. But it may happen faster than ever before”, he said.

Source: [/Indian Express/](#)3 February 2010

### **Tribal health and education in poor condition**

The officials of the country are neglecting this large ratio of tribal population. There are so many tribes and communities in India, which are facing many problems. The main problem is their exploitation.

According to 2001 census of India the tribal population in India is more than 83 millions. It is 8.08 percentage of the total population. The officials of the country are neglecting this large ratio of tribal population. There are so many tribes and communities in India, which are facing many problems.

The main problem is their exploitation. As they are coming in contact with outsiders, they are being treated them like a commodity and use them as slaves. Their social and cultural structure is being disturbed and disorganized. After independence, first time it was considered that their security is as important as security of others. To develop their identification, separate development programmes have been introduced. Although, much work has been done in fields of economic, social and political spheres, yet there is a great need to make new and practical programmes.

There are so many political, cultural, social, economic & educational problems of this community, but the important problems are related to health, nutrition and educational development.

Generally, a balanced diet provides all the food substances needed by the body for healthy growth and development. Good nutrition also includes eating the proper amount of food each day. It helps keep the body healthy and fit. When they are not able to get two meals a day, how is the concept of nutritious food applicable to them.

Lack of medical facility is another problem for them. The poor tribal do not get food regularly so they fall sick. Doctors recommend that people have medical care at the first sign of any illness. Early care can result in quicker cure. But the tribal are deprived of all these basic needs. Due to mosquitoes bites, skin diseases, jaundice, natural calamities, they suffer and do not get any treatment on time.

Hygiene problem is very common in rural as well as in tribal areas. Due to unhygienic conditions, their children suffer with many diseases like measles, mumps, polio, tetanus, and whooping cough. Prevention of disease is an important part of medical care. Parents should make sure

that their children receive immunization against diphtheria, German measles, measles, mumps, polio, tetanus, and whooping cough. But tribal parents are ignorant of these things.

As already mentioned, food is one of our most basic needs. We cannot live without it. Food gives us the energy for everything we do--walking, talking, working, playing, reading, and even thinking and breathing. Food also provides the energy our nerves, muscles, heart, and glands need to work. In addition, food supplies the nourishing substances our bodies require to build and repair tissues and to regulate body organs and systems.

The supply of food has always been one of the major concerns of the human race. In many areas of the world, millions of people go hungry and many die of starvation. Food shortages and famine result from crop failures, natural disasters, increasing desertification, overpopulation, wars, poverty and other causes.

Education, in its broadest sense, refers to the ways in which people learn skills and gain knowledge and understanding about the world, and about themselves. Most countries spend a large amount of time and money to provide education for their citizens. But this is lacking in the tribal belt which creates new problems. In short their problems are as follow-

1. Due to poverty, instead of sending their children in school, they send them to farms for labour work to earn money.
2. The children who take admission in primary schools drop out. This is a great concern as it worsens their situation.
3. The youth of a tribal community, who take higher education, start rejecting their cultural aspects. Therefore the benefits of higher education are proving to be detrimental to that tribe.
4. Due to lack of agriculture as an occupation, maximum people do not accept the utility of such education.
5. With the increasing tendency of unemployment, the interest towards education has been decreased.
6. The misuse of tribal scholarship and mid day food has discouraged the present system of education.

There is great need of making a strong public opinion to propagate proper educational programmes, so that they can get regular support and attention.

Source: [/merinews.com/](#)4 February 2010

### **A project to undermine autonomy**

The NCHER Bill does not allot appropriate levels of autonomy to State governments and universities. Concentration of powers in the commission will undermine academic autonomy and federalism in governance.

The publication of the draft Central legislation on the constitution of the National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) lays bare the real

objectives of the United Progressive Alliance government in dismantling the University Grants Commission (UGC). The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and setting up a body with overarching powers and responsibilities. (The document is on the website of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, at [www.education.nic.in](http://www.education.nic.in)).

It is no longer necessary for academia to engage in endless discussions on the impossibility of reconciling the vision of academic freedom that Professor Yash Pal put forward with the agenda of neo-liberal reforms that Sam Pitroda was so impatient to implement. The Task Force constituted to aid and advise the MHRD to set up the NCHER has side-tracked the issue by paying lip service to the objective of promoting autonomy and recommending a structure that would centralise planning, administration, regulation and financing of higher education, leaving little room for either decentralised academic activity or federal structures of governance in higher education. It is becoming clear that the orchestrated campaign against the discredited deemed universities was but a ploy to divert attention from the agenda of dismantling federal and democratic structures and putting in their place a highly centralised and authoritarian system that is amenable to the emerging global trends in higher education.

In setting up the NCHER the underlying presumption is that the quality of higher education could improve dramatically if multiple regulatory agencies are replaced by the benevolent dictatorship of an all-powerful and overarching agency endowed with the kind of status that the Election Commission of India enjoys. It is further presumed that a consensus among the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Leader of the Opposition would result in the selection of seven wise men or women who are competent and committed enough to innovate and implement academic policies and programmes relevant for this vast country. The presumption, which is obvious enough, is sought to be covered up by the veil of a national collegium of advisers, a structure that will be neither completely within, nor completely outside, the proposed national commission.

### **Unequal mix**

The structure of the collegium is complicated in that it has two types of members: one set of core members and another set of co-opted members. It is not clear from the draft as to who would nominate the core members, how many of them would be nominated, and whether the nomination of the core members would precede or proceed from the constitution of the commission. As the arrangement stands, the collegium has to suggest a panel from which the members of the commission will have to be selected. Obviously, such an arrangement will bring the collegium into existence, at least in part, before the commission is born. But once the commission comes into existence, the collegium will take on the role of an advisory body, the advice of which will not be binding on the commission.

The co-opted members have only a subordinate status in the collegium in that they owe their position to the support of the core members and in that their tenure is limited to five years while the core members are nominated for life. The patronage of a position for a lifetime is an innovation for which the MHRD can take credit! The possible rationale is that it would ensure both continuity and change in the determination of policies in higher education.

### **Deficit of federalism**

The deficit of federalism in the new arrangement to regulate higher education is evident from the mode of appointment and the status of the co-opted members who will represent the States and Union Territories in the collegium. The collegium is only an advisory body, external to the commission, the advice of which is not binding on the commission. The right of the core fellows to decide on the area of expertise that particular States could provide in the collegium could be effectively used to eliminate the possibility of federal dissent. The only right the States have is to propose a panel of five experts, of whom one will be chosen by the core fellows.

An arrangement in which the Central government could nominate experts in various fields and the States representatives of their choice, would have been more in tune with the principles of federalism. This would have ensured the representation of a variety of views and interests in the collegium, while also ensuring due representation of experts. The integration of the collegium into the structure of the commission as its governing body with policy-making responsibilities, and the constitution of a seven-member executive committee from within the governing body and responsible to it (in place of the present seven-member commission) will make more sense, in both academic and federal terms.

The authority of State legislatures to set up universities will be seriously eroded once the commission comes into existence. In the new situation, universities set up through State Acts can start academic operations only with authorisation from the commission. A better option would have been to make authorisation mandatory for the operation of universities beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the legislating authorities.

The Bill provides for the preparation of a national registry of people eligible to be selected as Vice-Chancellors and mandates that Vice-Chancellors of State universities be appointed from a panel of names selected by the commission from the registry. The question is not whether the commission would always act fairly, but whether such an arrangement would be consistent with the principles of autonomy of higher educational institutions, which is touted as the basic objective of the commission. The idea of a registry may not be an objectionable one if States have the option to choose any name from the registry and if the right to appoint a person as Vice-Chancellor from outside the list is not entirely ruled out.

Though the commission is insulated against any intervention by the Central government in its day-to-day

administration, the Central government has adequate powers to determine the general policies on higher education and interpret such policy prescriptions. The provision for the exercise of such powers by the Central government has been incorporated to ensure that the government's right to frame policies and implement them are not delegated to a small agency created by it.

But the Act does not fully recognise the complementarities in the roles of the Central and State governments, universities and other institutions of higher education. The primary objective of promoting autonomy of higher educational institutions has been overlooked by the appropriation of all powers by the proposed NCHER. The roles of the State governments, universities and other higher educational institutions within their territorial and constitutional jurisdiction have either been trampled upon or ignored. Autonomy implies decentralisation of powers and responsibilities and creation of appropriate norms and structures at different levels to ensure accountability. The Act does not apportion appropriate levels of authority to States, universities and other higher educational institutions, and in the process it violates the principles of federalism and autonomy in the governance of higher educational institutions.

**Source:** [/Beta. The Hindu/](#)6 February 2010

#### **Sibal's efforts bear fruit: Yale agrees to develop India-specific program**

In a first positive feedback to HRD Minister Kapil Sibal's efforts to woo Ivy League universities, Yale University has agreed to collaborate as a "small measure" by developing an India-Yale Leadership Program in areas like curriculum development, faculty development and academic planning.

In a letter to Sibal, Yale president Richard C Levin said, "The goals that you have articulated are ambitious but achievable and sorely needed if India is to achieve its full promise in the years ahead." Levin said Yale would use its experience with the Chinese education ministry as a "potential template" for collaboration.

HRD ministry will firm up a plan before a Memorandum of Understanding is signed between the ministry and Yale later this year when Levin visits India.

Indirectly, Levin also told Sibal that India needs to do a lot to meet its goal. HRD's Foreign Education Providers Bill is in the final stages. However, before India puts a legislative framework in place, Levin said, the collaboration as a small measure "would publically reinforce that Yale is supportive of your efforts to reform higher education in India".

In specific terms, Levin suggested that it could help develop an India-Yale University Leadership Program for the leaders of India's educational institutions. "Such a program, our experience suggests, should be targeted to a set of current and future leaders of institutions in India. Yale and the ministry could work together to develop the

program to best suit the needs of Indian higher education," he said.

Levin said building a leadership program in China helped educational leaders to the practices and conventions of American higher education. "We have been pleased to see that many of the reforms...that China has undertaken in recent years started in discussions in New Haven," Levin said.

**Source:** New Delhi [/Times of India/](#)6 February 2010

#### **Most self-financed colleges exploit the demand-supply gap'**

Higher education — or what goes for higher education in India — itself is, save a few shining examples, either a money-spinning business or a moth-eaten system.

On one side, we have many colleges and universities that are run by governments. They are no different from any other government office. As a matter of tiresome duty, they produce graduates and post-graduates every year.

Next to them, there is a group of premier institutions, run with the support of the government. The right word would be "elitist". Until last year, they opened their doors only to those who were regarded as "meritorious", without regard to the fact that, while science tells us that merit is evenly distributed, not all sections of society have the same ability to convert that merit into marks in an entrance examination.

For a long time, and perhaps even now, these premier institutions turned out first rate graduates, many of whom had - and have - graduation as the first goal and emigration as the next. The values are no doubt changing, but painfully slowly.

There is a third set of institutions of higher education. For them, education is commerce. Since demand for seats in colleges far exceeded the supply through legitimate sources, there was a huge business opportunity that was grabbed with both hands by shrewd business persons. The bulk of these self-financing colleges and self-styled universities are no more than money-spinning businesses that exploit the demand-supply gap. Giving them comfort are the regulatory bodies that laid down regulations that promoted not quality education but profitable business.

It is in this dreary world of higher education in India that we have shining examples, such as St Xavier's College. It was founded by the Society of Jesus. Long before Shri Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr S Radhakrishnan, Dr Zakir Hussain, Dr Humayun Kabir and my good friend Shri Kapil Sibal, there was an intrepid soul named Fr H Depelchin. Along with six Belgian Jesuits, he arrived in Kolkata and founded the St Xavier's College.

The college has been in the service of the nation for 150 years. Not only in Kolkata, but in many other parts of India, the Society of Jesus has rendered yeoman service to the cause of education. Its 153 high schools, 38 university colleges, 14 technical institutes and five business administration institutes teach, at any given time, over 230,000 students belonging to every section of the society. St Xavier's alone has over 4,000 students.

Like every Jesuit educational institution, St Xavier's College has an admission policy that is biased in favour of the poor, especially the socially and financially marginalised, and I commend the college on its sense of social responsibility. We are beholden to the Jesuits for the unwavering dedication, the sense of duty, and the strict discipline they bring to their work and to the institutions founded by them.

I passed through a Jesuit institution and I fondly remember the great teachers: Fr Murphy, Fr Sequira, Fr Coyle, Fr Lawrence Sundaram, Fr Amascua and Fr Yedanapally. It surprises me even today how so many of them could leave such an indelible impression in a period of barely one year.

We are still debating the norms and values that must prevail in an institution of higher learning, and especially the place of the non-government sector in providing higher education. I recognise and support the role of the private sector in higher education, but I am absolutely clear in my mind that the private sector in higher education ought not to mean private business in higher education. As far as I am aware, no great university in the world was established for the purpose of profit. I believe that some activities in a society must stand outside the world of profit and higher education, in my view, ranks first amongst such activities.

For over 150 years, the Society of Jesus has done just that in Kolkata, in Chennai and in many other towns and cities. For that and for many other blessings that they brought to India, we thank them and we salute them.

**Source:** Kolkata [/business-standard/](#)7 February 2010

### **Private sector participation must in education: Sibal**

Human Resources Development Minister Kapil Sibal today said private sector participation and investment are essential in providing quality education to all in the country.

"In the next few years, around 40,000 more colleges and institutes of higher education would be required to absorb the students and this cannot be done by the government only, private sector's role is a must here," he said while delivering the Justice P D Desai Memorial lecture here.

He, however, said that though private participation was welcome, the government will not allow profiteering in the education sector.

According to Sibal, India spends around three per cent of its GDP in the education sector and therefore there is huge scope for the private sector to chip in and participate in preparing the future generations of the country.

He also said the Centre will not compromise on quality of education in either government-run or private institutes.

**Source:** Ahmedabad [/ptinews/](#)13 February 2010

### **Stumbling block for Indian entrepreneurs is they don't dream big: Prof Shivaram**

*Hailing from Mysore, the 60-something professor tinkers with the minds and spirit of people, putting to use his wealth of three decade-long industrial and research*

*experience. Prof Shivaram Malavalli (SM), who has nurtured 200-plus entrepreneurs, maintains a low-profile.*

*The professor was once approached by an aspiring entrepreneur asking him to recommend a good project that was easy to handle and could fetch maximum returns with minimum risk. The professor responded: "If there were such a project, I would have done it myself and not disclosed it (to him). There is nothing like a good project. It is the entrepreneur who makes it or breaks it."*

*The architect of India's first Science and Technology Entrepreneurs Park (STEP) has donned several hats in diverse areas — healthcare, education and entrepreneurship (not necessarily in that order). He may be the brother of billionaire and Brocade Communications Systems co-founder Kumar Malavalli of the Silicon Valley hall of fame, but this professor's vision is "to create billionaires." Prof Shivaram has his hands full strategising for city Mysore's development with all stakeholders and being a Board member on India's upcoming first integrated healthcare SEZ Biopure, among others, but he never fails to make time for those with the "fire in the belly" attitude, for, his agenda is to simply stoke their spirit. ET caught up with prof Mallavalli in a tete-a-tete.*

### **How many entrepreneurs have you nurtured till date? How do Indian entrepreneurs fare vis-a-vis those from other countries?**

French economist Richard Cantillon first introduced the word 'entrepreneur' in the early 18th century. But I feel the word originates from "antharprena," a Sanskrit word meaning "one who has inner urge to do something different."

The government of India's Department of Science and Technology (DST) and JSS Maha Vidyapeetha gave me the opportunity to establish the first Science & Technology Entrepreneurs Park (STEP) in the country. Since its inception in 1985, till now, I have nurtured over 200 aspiring entrepreneurs and mentored them in establishing their own enterprises.

The combined impact of these enterprises, spread across Mysore, Bangalore and other parts of Karnataka, is around Rs 200 crore in annual turnover. This, I believe, led to my recognition by the World Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, which conferred a special award (a citation and a medal) at China during their annual conference. The journey is challenging, sometime frustrating, but most of the time fun and always fulfilling.

Entrepreneurship in India, compared to other countries, especially the US and other developed world, was restricted to the privileged few that were traditionally rich. Entrepreneurship was only transferred to the second generation. Traditionally, Indians used to invest in education. Profit was considered a dirty word and most were scared of failure. The IT revolution spawned first-generation entrepreneurs. The biggest stumbling block for Indian entrepreneurs is their lack of dreaming big, apart from the lack of the ability to work in a team and stepping

aside without holding onto the leadership position at the right moment of growth.

**Which are the flourishing areas for entrepreneurs?**

IT is the area where Indian entrepreneurs are flourishing, thanks to manpower availability and globalisation of IT business. Of late, a similar revolution is happening in the spheres of biotechnology, biopharma and healthcare.

**How would you describe the current entrepreneur scenario? Is the interest more among men than women? If so, what would you attribute the reasons to?**

Thanks to the government's vision, the STEP initiative and the recent technology business incubators movement have given a professional entrepreneurial environment for technocrats to flourish plus a funding mechanism that encourages innovation and scaling-up opportunities.

Though entrepreneurial interest cuts across gender, the Indian cultural backdrop has restricted more women from becoming entrepreneurs. However, incentives and changing traditional values, especially in urban areas, have given impetus to women starting new ventures and thereby directly participating in the country's economic growth.

**Can you give an update on the sister city tie-up between Karnataka and the US?**

San Francisco's youngest mayor in a century, Gavin Christopher Newsom, led a team of businessmen and thought-leaders have ink seven MoUs with the American city's "twin sister" Bangalore.

Bangalore is San Francisco's 15th sister city, the first created under Mayor Newsom's administration. The two cities have pursued this relationship for over three years now. The agreement is expected to strengthen ties between the two cities that are considered leaders in biotechnology, medical technology and digital technology, and maintain major cultural, business and education centres.

**An update on Malavalli Group's Indus International School, its expansion and investment plans.**

Indus International School, Bangalore, has been ranked the top international school in the city and the fourth in the country, in a survey conducted by the journal 'Education World'. Factors like academic progress, teacher quality, community sensitisation, holistic growth opportunities, infrastructure, leadership potential, professional development, technology, parent connect and happiness quotient have been taken into account. We have already branched out to Hyderabad and Pune. We plan to start in Bangalore North and Jaipur too.

**What about eHealth TBI? How many entrepreneurs have availed the fund and to what extent?**

eHealth TBI is a technology incubator that provides a platform to help technocrats turn into successful entrepreneurs. The directors are experienced in developing STEP and incubators and have evolved

several models to successfully mentor entrepreneurs to reach their goals. An unique Innovation fund is being managed by providing idea-stage funding with a provision for scale-up funding increasing the success rate.

Ideation-level funds range from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 15 lakh while Rs 40 lakh is available for the second phase of scale-up.

Six innovators have been funded through the Innovation fund of DCSIR of DST government of India under the name and style of Techno Entrepreneur Scheme and another six are on the anvil.

Further, eHealth TBI has entered into an MoU with the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC), that covers programmes like joint technology entrepreneurship development initiatives, entrepreneurship development exchange programmes, exchange of best practices, joint research and development of global entrepreneurship initiatives, entrepreneur linkages and joint mentoring and providing opportunities for start-ups to establish their operations in Special Economic Zones (SEZ).

**Source:** Chennai [/Economic Times/](#)13 February 2010

**Education in India**

India has an ancient tradition of education. The world's 1st university was established in Tashkila in 700 B.C. Indian mathematicians introduced the zero, the decimal system and the method of multiplication.

**Primary Education:** India has made huge progress in terms of increasing primary education attendance rate and expanding literacy to approximately two thirds of the population. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is the apex body for school education in India.

**Secondary Education:** The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, has provided for environment awareness, science and technology education, and introduction of traditional elements such as Yoga into the Indian secondary school system. Another feature of India's secondary school system is its emphasis on profession based vocational training to help students attain skills for finding a vocation of his/her choosing.

**Tertiary Education:** India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after China and the United States. Some institutions of India, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), have been globally acclaimed for their standard of education.

**Women's Education:** Women have much lower literacy rate. The number of literate women among the female population of India was between 2-6% from the British Raj onwards to the formation of the Republic of India in 1947. The Indian government has tried to provide incentives for girls' school attendance through programs for midday meals, free books, and uniforms. Private education Because of poor quality of public education, 27% of Indian children are privately educated. Private schools cover the

entire curriculum and offer extra-curricular activities such as science fairs, general knowledge, sports, music and drama. Most teachers in private schools are female, graduates and reasonably experienced.

**Online Degrees:** Online degrees courses in business, education, information technology, real estate and even healthcare allow you to advance your career without disrupting your life. You can study at home, on your own time, at your own pace. A perfect choice for the working professional, online courses are practical, focused, and relevant to your career. Electronic learning is a type of Technology supported education/learning (TSL) where the medium of instruction is through computer technology, particularly involving digital technologies. E-learning is naturally suited to distance learning and flexible learning, but can also be used in conjunction with face-to-face teaching, in which case the term Blended learning is commonly used.

**Goals of e-learning:** E-Learning lessons are generally designed to guide students through information or to help students perform in specific tasks. Information based e-Learning content communicates information to the student. Communication technologies used in e-learning. Communication technologies are generally categorized as asynchronous or synchronous. Asynchronous activities use technologies such as blogs, wikis, and discussion boards. Synchronous activities involve the exchange of ideas and information with one or more participants during the same period of time.

**Benefits of e-Learning versus traditional classroom settings:** e-Learning allows people to avoid travel, thus reducing the overall carbon output.

1. E-Learning is a more environmentally friendly solution.
2. Quality education, made affordable...
3. Convenience and flexibility to learners:

**Online Education in India:** Online learning programs are gaining popularity day by day. In other words, online learning programs are premium education programs that are aimed to enhance the knowledge of students as well as individuals by using modern technologies and guidelines of skilled teachers.

**Added Benefits of Online Learning Program In India:** Online learning programs are different from traditional education systems and there is no need of a classroom and face-to-face interaction with teachers.

1. No need to actually live on campus or near the university
2. Great flexibility in the type of course you choose to study
3. A wide range of online programs to choose from.

#### **Types of Degrees Available**

1. Associate Degree
2. Bachelor's Degree
3. Master's Degree
4. Doctorate Degree
5. Degree Resources

**Online University:** we provide information on various career courses, important educational institutes like IITs, IIMs, JNU, DU and other MBA colleges. we have details on online education and different distance-learning courses and spreading numerous opportunities available to the Indian students already pursuing education in India...here some top 10 online university

1. Nalanda Open University (Patna Bihar)
2. All India Institute of Medical Sciences (Delhi Delhi)
3. Indira Gandhi National Open University (Delhi Delhi)
4. Guru Jambheshwar University (Hisar Haryana)
5. Maharshi Dayanand University (Rohtak Haryana)
6. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (Jammu Tawi, Jammu & Kashmir)
7. Manipal Academy Of Higher Education (Manipal Karnataka)
8. University of Mumbai (Mumbai Maharashtra)
9. Birla Institute of Technology & Science (Pilani Rajasthan)
10. University Of Lucknow (Lucknow Uttar Pradesh).

**Source:** [/blogza.in.th/](http://blogza.in.th/) 15 February 2010

#### **In quest of a real face**

The Indian Institutes of Management have a mandate to contribute quality manpower for nation building. However, over the years they have come to be perceived as institutes that churn out managers who merely aspire for big salary packages or placements in top companies. IIM-Indore is working towards demystifying that image. According to N Ravichandran, director, IIM-Indore, IIMs should not be synonymous with industry.

"IIMs are operating on government grants. Hence we need to give back to the society and shift our priorities from churning out students who want to enter investment banks to developing real people who are interested in social causes," he explained.

"Being a social entrepreneur does not mean you have to run an NGO," Ravichandran clarifies. "A social entrepreneur is someone who recognises a social problem and uses entrepreneurial principles to organise, create and manage a venture to impact change. You can still create a business model for profit," he adds. However, those coming to IIMs are not motivated enough to be social entrepreneurs. "It is the responsibility of IIMs to generate this spirit by bringing students face to face with social problems and real life situations," opines Ravichandran.

It was with this objective that IIM-Indore had recently organised a rural immersion programme for its first year students. Students visited villages of Madhya Pradesh to analyse the problems and challenges plaguing rural economies. They learnt about various government schemes such as NREGA, Indira Awaas Yojna, Kapil Dhara and many more. They felt that these schemes are very inclusive in nature but their success has been limited on account of several constraints that are being experienced in terms of ground level implementation.

Another batch of students visited Border Security Forces (BSF) amenities in Amritsar, Kolkata and Siliguri. Abhishek Chatterjee, who was part of this team said: "We learnt about problems that are typical to border areas. We also acquired some eye-opening management lessons from the BSF jawans. We realised that it is easy to talk about management practices within the confines of secure walls. The BSF leaders are real managers as they manage to keep their human resources motivated under the toughest conditions. All in all this immersion programme oriented us with real social problems and now many of us are aspiring to become social entrepreneurs."

**Source:** [/Times of India/](#)15 February 2010

### **Innovation & research to steer India's knowledge economy**

In order to be part of the future world order India is working towards a knowledge economy. In keeping with its mission, the government has set a target to create a critical mass of people that would propel the knowledge economy. This critical mass is envisaged as the wealth of the nation and needless to say education will drive this wealth creation.

However, Kapil Sibal, union human resource development minister, pointed out that at the outset it is important to have a precise understanding of the concept of wealth in the context of knowledge economy. "The real success of the knowledge economy would depend on the quality of wealth and not the quantity. And quality can only be achieved by having people who have an orientation towards research and innovation," Sibal said while speaking at a session on 'Changing face of Indian Education System' organised by FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO).

To promote innovation and research, it is important to improve access and quality at the university level. "We have failed to understand the basic difference between a college and a university which led to a confusion about deemed-to-be-universities. An institute which is not creating wealth through research, interdisciplinary studies and does not have centres of excellence cannot be called a university," Sibal said. He also alluded to the need of reducing the number of affiliating colleges with respect to individual universities.

Going forward the government will appoint a body to deal with education malpractices. "This body will make sure that the claims made in an institute's prospectus are implemented in reality," Sibal informed. There will also be a National Accreditation Authority (independent of government representatives) for constant monitoring of quality. But will additional bodies compound the already chaotic situation that is now apparent in our education system as far as regulation is concerned? "We want to do away with the inspector Raj. We want to create a regulation system where norms and standards are set. Adherence to these norms will automatically determine the players who can survive in the long run," informed Sibal.

Also there is need to ensure access to higher education. "Many people are expecting that the government will

create 35,000 colleges and 1,000 universities. This is an impossible task. To achieve this the role of public-private partnership has to come into play. However, we shall ensure that the private sector in higher education does not enter for profit making," said Sibal.

According to Sibal the bill to regulate entry of foreign institutions will also aim at making quality education available to Indian students. "But there are apprehensions about this bill as quality foreign institutions are not yet ready to set up their campuses in India. At present, most foreign institutes are eager to collaborate and go for joint programmes or research. Hence, we want to create an atmosphere of confidence wherein these institutes feel assured of India's potential to create wealth, which is competitive and accrues to international standards," he added.

For all this to happen, the most important task is to improve quality and quantity at the school level. "Around 93% of investment in school education comes from the government sector. Only 7% of investment is met by the private sector. We need to realise that school education will remain a prerogative of the government for many more years. Along with changing curriculum and teaching methodology, we also need good leaders to run the schools," observed Sibal. "The government is planning to appoint people from IITs and IIMs to run schools. We will also ensure that every university has a centre for education to create leaders in school education," he concluded.

**Source:** [/Times of India/](#)15 February 2010

### **Ready for the industry**

The biggest beneficiary of economic liberalisation in India has been the financial services segment, which is commonly referred to as the Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) segment. Liberalisation has brought in new products, new services, new players — all of which have resulted in multiple choices for financial consumers. While more choices leave consumers confused about the products and services best suited for them, the financial service provider helps them make a choice.

Therefore, thorough knowledge and skillset is crucial for a successful financial career. All financial services organisations look for people with quantitative and analytical skills, knowledge of financial products and markets along with communication, marketing and interpersonal skills. It is imperative, therefore, that aspiring students get the right inputs in terms of knowledge and certifications.

The Indian School of Business and Finance (ISBF) offers a comprehensive oneyear full-time Post Graduate Diploma in Finance (PGDF) that covers all aspects of financial services. In addition to covering basic quantitative techniques and financial knowledge, the course covers curricula of most internationally accepted certifications including the CFA (US) Level I and II, as well as the CFP certification. Thus, the PGDF introduction and detailed study of areas such as financial reporting and analysis,

quantitative methods, economics, portfolio management techniques, security analysis and asset valuation equips finance and investment professionals to be industry ready. As far as placements are concerned, ISBF has a good record.

Located in the heart of the Capital, ISBF is among one of the few affiliate centres of the University of London. It also offers undergraduate degree courses in economics, finance and management from the University of London in association with the London School of Economics and Political Science.

At the postgraduate level, ISBF offers a two-year full-time PG Programme in Management (PGPM), which incorporates an MBA degree from a UGC recognised university with specialisations in finance, marketing, international business, HR and entrepreneurship. ISBF also serves the financial services industry as an authorised education provider of the Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB), India.

Source: [/Times of India/](#)15 February 2010

### The Way Forward

*What will be the priorities of budget 2010 in the education sector? Education Times talks to a cross-section of people about their expectations.*

**Budget 2009:** Rs 900 crore for 'Mission in Education through ICT' Rs 827 crore allocated for opening one Central University in each uncovered state Rs 2,113 crore allocated for IITs and NITs National Mission for Female Literacy launched A scheme introduced to provide full interest subsidy during the period of moratorium to cover loans taken from scheduled banks Allocations made for the new schemes of National Fellowship for Students from minority community and grants-in-aid to Central Wakf Council for computerisation of records of State Wakf Boards

**Budget 2008:** Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provided Rs 13,100 crore with the focus to shift from access and infrastructure at the primary level to enhancing retention and improving quality of learning. Mid-day Meal allocated Rs 8,000 crore; secondary education allocated Rs 4,554 crore Rs 130 crore provided to establish Navodaya Vidyalaya in 20 districts having large concentration of SC& ST Funds (as part of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) provided for additional 410 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas in educationally backward areas 16 Central Universities in each of the uncovered states

**Budget 2007:** Increase in allocation for school education by 35% from Rs 17,133 crore to Rs 23,142 crore Provision for strengthening of teachers training institutions increased from Rs 162 crore to Rs 450 crore Mid-day Meal Scheme provided Rs 7,324 crore Provision for secondary education doubled from Rs 1,837 crore to Rs 3,794 crore National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme: selection through a national test from among students who have passed class VIII; each student awarded Rs 6,000 per-year A corpus fund of Rs 750 crore created and augmented by a like amount annually over the next three years

**Budget 2006:** The outlay increased from Rs 7,156 crore to Rs 10,041 crore in 2006-07; allocations for 5,00,000 additional class rooms and appointment of 150,000 more teachers 12 crore children covered under Mid-day Meal Scheme; allocation enhanced from Rs 3,010 crore to Rs 4,813 crore 1,000 residential schools for girls from SC, ST, OBC and minority communities under the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Scheme; Rs 128 crore provided; an additional Rs 172 crore provided during the year A sum of Rs 3,000 deposited in the name of the girl child who passes the VIII Standard Examination and enrolls in a secondary school

— Compiled by Tirna Ray and Surbhi Bhatia

**Laveesh Bhandari Director, Indicus Analytics:** The forthcoming budget is 'likely to focus on vocational training. Considering the large number of unemployable youth that we are producing, we should focus on skilled manpower. It is a matter of grave concern that despite their school and college education, students are not equipped in terms of practical job skills. It is time we realise that they need to be industry-ready. Incompatibility between learning and application has already led to an unwarranted situation. In order to ensure a desired balance, the government should try and enable the entry of private sector and also look at quality issues, among others.

**Madhav Chavan Co-Founder, Trustee & Director-Programme, Pratham:** With the 11Five-Year Plan already in place, 'the government is not likely to go beyond the plan. However, I guess that secondary schooling will be one of the priorities of the forthcoming budget. With the government having planned to set up 6,000 model schools, there shouldn't be any further delay in terms of its implementation. Hiring teachers, especially in rural, tribal and backward areas and creating mechanisms for training teachers should be one of the major concerns. Also, apart from allocating funds for new initiatives the focus should now be on 'outcome' oriented investments and 'effective' utilisation of funds. Or else, we are unlikely to achieve anything in the long run.

**Riad Joseph Associate Director, Ernst & Young:** The finance minister in his budget speech last year 'stated that one of the policy objectives of the new government is to create a competitive, progressive and well regulated education system of global standards. To fulfil this goal, the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) has proposed several education reforms. For example, the National Commission for Higher Education and Research Bill, 2010, the National Authority for Regulation of Accreditation in Higher Educational Institutions Bill and the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Education Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2009, has been proposed. These bills once enacted will seek to avoid the multiple overlap of functions between regulatory agencies, create a super-regulator for higher education in India, improve the accreditation regime and will create a regulatory mechanism against erring institutes. A key expectation from

the budget will be the announcement of time-lines to approve and enact the bills that have been proposed. The private sector is also hopeful that the budget will contain policy statements on models for public-private partnerships, new schemes for education loans to students and broad base financing options for private institutes (eg foreign loans).

**Rekha Sethi Director-General , All India Management**

**Association (AIMA):** AS far as the budget is concerned , allocations should be increased in the higher education sector as our economy is expected to grow at over 7.5%. We need highly skilled, technical and managerial expertise to sustain this in the long run. Investment in institutions of higher learning, both technical and managerial, which are technology driven in areas like telecom , health, agriculture (including pharmaceuticals and biotechnology) software product development, infrastructure and governance should be continued. The budget should also encourage research in new areas such as energy, infrastructure and technology innovation. Also, it is important to invest in faculty development . Rather than going in for large universities, the government should aim at investing in smaller institutions with focused learning. It should also focus on creating institutes to offer management programmes in emerging and rapidly growing sectors.

**Praveen Jha Associate Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, JNU:**

MY prediction is that in the forthcoming 'budget there will be some increase of fund allocation in the area of elementary education. This is because of the right to education (RTE-2009 ). My prediction is based on the fact that the current annual expenditure amounts to 1.39 lakh crores in elementary education. So even if you go by the CABE committee recommendations it has to be hiked by 'at least' Rs 75,000 crore. However, in terms of fund allocation, elementary education is likely to be followed by higher education. Personally, though, I feel that as far as education is concerned, there are gaps at almost every level — primary, elementary, secondary, tertiary. It is time we took an integrated view of things and did things not only in a coordinated manner but also raised resources substantially. Right now, we should ideally have a coordinated plan for the next five years.

Source: [/Times of India/](#)15 February 2010

## RESOURCE

### **Inauguration of the Indo-German Max Planck Centre on Computer Science at IIT Delhi**

Shri Prithviraj Chavan, Hon'ble Minister of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences along with H.E. Mr. Horst Koehler, President of the Federal Republic of Germany inaugurated the Indo-German Max Planck Centre on Computer Science at Indian Institute of Technology here today. Dr. T Ramasami, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Prof Peter Gruss, President Max Planck Society, Germany and Prof Surendra Prasad, Director,

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi were guest of honour during the inauguration function.

The concept of setting-up Indo-German Centre on Computer Science in India was discussed during the visit of German Chancellor to India in October 2007. The Centre inaugurated today at Indian Institute of Technology Delhi would also engage researchers from Institutes viz Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai and Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai from Indian side and Max Planck Institute for informatics (MP-INF), Saarbruecken from German side.

The Indo-German Max Planck Center for Computer Science (IMPECS) will be engaged in collaborative basic research in Computer Science (CS) between Indian and German scientists and serve as a bridge between computer scientific communities from both sides. The Centre will act as a center of excellence for faculty and students from both sides. The research areas envisaged under the Indo-German Computer Centre would be Algorithms and Complexity, Database and Information Retrieval; Graphics and Vision and Networking.

The Indo-German joint Centre will benefit both countries. The major benefits for India would be further strengthening of the research base in Computer Science that would develop expertise of highest caliber needed by academia and industry. Germany would benefit through improved collaboration with leading Indian scientists and a highly visible outpost with highly professional environment and large pool of young talent.

The Indo-German Centre on Computer Centre has been set up jointly by Department of Science & Technology (Govt. of India) and Max Planck Society of Germany under the over-all aegis of Indo-German S&T Cooperation programme for an initial duration of 5 years at a total cost of approximately Rs.12 crores from Indian side by DST and approximately 2 million Euros by Max Planck Society from German side.

Source: New Delhi [/pib.nic.in/](#)3 February 2010

### **Amendment to the NCTE Act, 1993**

#### **Cabinet Decision**

The Union Cabinet today approved a proposal from the Ministry of Human Resource Development to amend the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993 to clarify its applicability to matters relating to norms for minimum qualification for appointment of school teachers and clarify its applicability to schools and school teachers.

The National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993 came into force on 1st July 1995 with an objective to achieve planned and coordinated development of teacher education system in the country and ensure proper maintenance of norms & standards in the above system.

The Act mandates the NCTE to lay down guidelines on minimum qualifications for a school teacher with a view to ensure uniform quality of teaching in the schools. The

NCTE has framed regulations to discharge this function, which are binding on all States in the matter of appointment of teachers.

Recently it came to the notice of this Department that Supreme Court in the case of Basic Education Board, U.P. Vs. Upender Rai & others, held that NCTE Act does not deal with educational institutions like primary schools, etc. Thus in the matter of laying minimum qualification for appointment as teachers, the NCTE Regulations will not be applicable, and the State Legislation/Rule on the subject will prevail.

In the above judgment, the Supreme Court interpreted a Central Law, but neither the NCTE nor the Union of India was impleaded in the case. A review Petition filed by NCTE in the Supreme Court was also not admitted. Therefore, a decision has been taken to amend the NCTE Act in order to clarify that the Act applies to schools, teachers and the NCTE is empowered to lay down the minimum qualifications for a person to be eligible as a teacher in schools.

The National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill 2009 will be moved in Parliament for consideration.

**Source:** New Delhi [/pib.nic.in/](http://pib.nic.in/)4 February 2010

### **GATE online in two subjects**

Indian Institutes of Technology at Bombay, Delhi, Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Madras, Roorkee and the Indian Institute of Science Bangalore successfully conducted online Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) 2010 for two out of 21 papers yesterday. Examinations in two subjects, namely Textile Engineering and Fiber Science (TF), and Mining Engineering (MN) were conducted using computers by these institutes. About 1700 candidates were registered for these examinations, which were conducted simultaneously in eight cities over two shifts.

This experiment was conducted in GATE 2010 this year for the first time and depending upon the experience, online examination might be repeated on a larger scale in subsequent years. The offline version of the exam in other 19 papers shall be conducted all over the country on Feb 14, 2010.

Graduate Aptitude test in Engineering (GATE) is an all India examination administered and conducted jointly by Indian Institute of Science and seven Indian Institutes of Technology on behalf of the National Coordination Board - GATE, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). Admission to postgraduate programmes with MHRD and some other government scholarship/assistantship in engineering colleges/institutes is open to those who qualify through GATE. GATE qualified candidates with Bachelor's degree in Engineering/Technology/Architecture or master's degree in any branch of Science/Mathematics/Statistics/Computer Applications are eligible for admission to master's/doctoral program in Engineering/Technology/Architecture as well

as for doctoral programs in relevant branches of Science with MHRD or other government scholarship/assistantship.

**Source:** New Delhi [/pib.nic.in/](http://pib.nic.in/)9 February 2010

### **DISE School Report Cards get e-Governance Award**

School Report Cards ([www.schoolreportcards.in](http://www.schoolreportcards.in)) under District Information System for Education (DISE) jointly developed by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA, New Delhi) and Department of School Education and Literacy, Union Ministry of HRD has been awarded the prestigious e-Governance 2009-10 National Award under the Category Special Sectoral Award - Focus Sector - Education. The award is given every year by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Union Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

District Information System for Education (DISE) developed by NUEPA, New Delhi under implementation in all the districts of the country is the monitoring tool of the Government's flagship programme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. All the District Elementary Education Plans under SSA are being based on data generated through DISE annually. For the year 2008-09, 1.3 million schools have been covered under DISE which has been received from 70,000 clusters, 7,000 blocks and 633 districts spread over 35 States and Union Territories of the Country. A set of seven publications are being brought out by NUEPA every year all which are based on the DISE Data. The project covers both Primary and Upper Primary schools of all the districts of the country. DISE has completely eliminated the time-lag in availability of educational statistics which has come down drastically from 7-8 years to less than a year at the national and only a few months at the district and state levels. DISE at NUEPA is supported by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and UNICEF.

The National University has successfully developed School Report Cards of more than 1.30 million Primary and Upper Primary schools which are available online ([www.schoolreportcards.in](http://www.schoolreportcards.in)). In addition to quantitative information, the Report Cards also provide qualitative information and a descriptive report about individual schools. The Report Cards are produced to provide users comprehensive information on all the vital parameters, be it student, teacher or school related variables, yet concise, accurate information about each school in a standard format which is easy to understand and allows meaningful comparisons to be made among schools. A number of scholars from across the World are exclusively working on DISE data.

**Source:** New Delhi [/pib.nic.in/](http://pib.nic.in/)11 February 2010

## Contribute

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If you are an academician, a researcher, an investigator or a thinker then, Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation invites you to send your inputs by way of your opinion, information, suggestions and experiences in the field of education.

Researchers are also invited to send in their published documents so that they can be hosted on this site.

Please email your contributions to [aserf@apeejay.edu](mailto:aserf@apeejay.edu)

**Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation (ASERF)** is guided by the vision of eminent educationist, industrialist and philanthropist Dr. Stya Paul's vision of value-based holistic education for a responsive and responsible citizenship with a finely ingrained attitude of service-before-self. It is supported by Apeejay Stya Group, a leading Industrial & Investment House of India with interests in diverse fields. It will attempt to shoulder the efforts in serving the broader issues of Access, Quality, Equity & Relevance of Education and gear up to face the challenges of the new world order using collaborative and multidisciplinary approach. The foundation will become the repository of information on education and conduct research in new educational methodologies while collaborating with premier educational institutions globally.

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