



**CONTENT**

**Aspect**

August, English

**News**

1. IGNOU to extend education to disabled
2. Common Curricula in Science, Math draws ire of academics
3. 10,000 more medical post graduate seats in India
4. CBSE set to launch International Syllabus
5. Columbia University, GMAT coming to India soon
6. Higher education agenda to be cleared today
7. World bank lends billion dollars to India for Education
8. Deemed unfit but still working abroad
9. Highest allocation for school education
10. International schools gaining momentum
11. Need to create Indigenous model of mgmt syllabus
12. How good is Indian Education system
13. Higher education bill to be sent to cabinet next month

**Analysis/Opinion/Innovative Practice**

1. Education Commission agenda is neo-liberal
2. Govt. to Encourage Private Education Institution: Kapil Sibal
3. A degree better
4. Re-orient Commerce Education: Expert
5. Teacher curricula set to be recast
6. why foreign institutes dig Indian market
7. Jail for demanding Capitation fee, says Sibal
8. Sibal stands for rebooting education system
9. Teacher training to be more child-oriented
10. No move to strip states of powers: Sibal
11. No opposition to foreign universities bill: Sibal
12. Act with Caution
13. Harvard Haryana
14. India's public universities deserve a chance
15. Management faculty should keep upgrading their skills
16. More than a matter of degree
17. Educating Kapil
18. The good, bad and ugly faces of FDI in Indian education
19. Will the foreign education bill help?
20. Vocational courses backbone of our education system
21. Reforming education must: PM
22. Higher Education in India: Statistics Vs Reality
23. The hopes and fears for an Indian revolution
24. Greater Pvt. Role can make India Education hub
25. The content of Education

**Resource**

1. Setting up of schools in PPP mode being encouraged
2. Establishment of Indo-German Science and Technology Centre (IGSTC) in India

**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 Svrn 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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**Svrn Group**

**ASPECT****August, English**

*Parents have ensured the number of children in English schools has doubled in just five years — from 61 lakh to 1.5 crore. But there are concerns that the growth is still not fast enough and that China may soon take away the language advantage.*

Maniram Sharma studied in Hindi medium and took the civil service examination in that language before clearing all the tests to become an IAS officer. He is very clear, though, that he wants his two children to study in an English school. "I respect Hindi, my mother tongue," he says. "But English is the language of the future and it opens up the whole world to you."

It is this realisation of opportunities which English offers that is persuading a growing number of Indian parents to opt for sending their kids to English-medium schools. And the poor are often more desperate to do so, rejecting the option of free education in a government school, where the medium of instruction is usually Hindi or the primary language of the respective region. They willingly bear the burden of not-so-cheap private school education to have their children learn a language that might take them where they, their fathers and grandfathers never went. People like Sunita Devi, for instance. "Since I cannot afford to put both my children in a private English medium school, only my son is going to one," says the woman who works as a domestic help. "My daughter goes to a government school. But if I manage to earn more, I will put her also in a private school."

Official statistics on the number of children enrolled in recognised English medium schools in the country show that it has more than doubled within just half a decade from over 61 lakh in 2003 to over 1.5 crore in 2008. Data collected by the National University for Education Planning and Administration (NUEPA) shows that the number of those opting for English medium from class I-VIII has grown by 150 per cent in these years, while the number of students opting for Hindi grew by just 32 per cent.

Several studies have shown that a large number of students study in unrecognised schools as well. Prof Arun Mehta of NUEPA conducted a study in seven districts of Punjab in 2005 to find that out of 3,058 primary elementary schools, 2,640 (86 per cent) were unrecognised. And most of them are English medium. "In most states, there are thousands of unrecognised schools English-medium schools. Hence, the number of those studying in English could actually be a lot more than what the official data indicates," says Mehta.

A British Council study cites government figures to show that the big shift from public schools to private schools in India may be because parents are aware of the importance of English-medium education. According to the Annual State Education Report 2009, 26 per cent of children in rural areas study in private schools, an increase

of 9.6 percentage points since 2005. In 2006, English as a medium of instruction was fourth — behind Hindi, Bengali and Marathi — but by 2007, it had climbed to second place and grew even further in 2008, beginning to eat into the Hindi numbers.

Ironically, despite all these figures showing a steady increase in the number of people learning English, studies show that the growth is still not fast enough and the skill level remains poor. The British Council study pointed out that the rate of improvement in English language skills of the Indian population was "too slow" compared to many other countries, especially China. It says that a "huge shortage" of teachers and quality institutions is hampering India despite a growing demand for English skills. The study further states that China may now have more people who speak English than India. This could threaten India's English advantage in the global market.

On its part, the government seems aware of the need to retain the English advantage. "An English speaking skilled work force" is listed among India's strengths in a brochure titled 'Advantage India' — brought out by the ministry of communications and information technology. The seriousness with which the need to acquire English is regarded can be gauged from the fact that even the Supreme Court thought it fit to warn the government that China would overtake India as the largest English speaking country if the government did not pay attention to the education sector.

**Source:** [/Times of India/](#)27 March 2010

**NEWS****IGNOU to extend education to disabled**

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Monday announced new programmes which would focus on providing special education to people with hearing, visual and mental disability.

Speaking at the varsity's 21st convocation, Vice Chancellor V.N. Rajashekharan Pillai announced new post-graduate diploma and certificate programmes in special education in mental retardation, visual and hearing impairment. IGNOU has also launched a new sign language programme -- BA degree in applied sign linguistics -- due to start this year.

"Today, IGNOU has an impressive 2.5 million students, a national network of 61 regional centres, over 3,000 learner support centres and a presence in 36 countries. Over 636,000 students have enrolled with IGNOU (this academic year) -- a record for the university, making IGNOU a living testimony to social inclusion and democratization of education," Pillai said.

This year around 133,624 were given their degrees, diplomas and certificates. Nearly 24,000 received these here in person, while gold medals were awarded to 66 students by Padma Bhushan awardee and former director of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) S.K. Joshi, who was the chief guest for the event.

Joshi congratulated IGNOU and stressed the need for more universities, which are "responsive to change, well-funded, better managed and have competent faculty".

He said: "It is heartening to know that 15 percent of the total number of higher education students is enrolled at IGNOU. With the passing of the Right to Education Act and effective working of the Sarva Shikhs Abhiyan, as well as the conomic growth of the country, we should expect an explosive growth in demand for higher education."

He highlighted that higher education in India suffers from a variety of inequalities between social groups, urban-rural groups and based on gender. IGNOU's open learning model of education, which is also the largest in the world, "takes higher education to less privileged sections of society at a reasonable cost", he said.

Source: New Delhi [/prokerala/](#)15 March 2010

### Common curricula in Science, Math draws ire of academics

The effort of the Council of School Board of Education to push for a common curriculum in Science and Mathematics across the country has drawn flak from academics who believe this is an 'overstep' on part of the council, an allegation denied by it.

In a joint statement, four academicians have raised a question over the preparation of curriculum by the COBSE, which is a coordinating body among the school boards in the country.

Prof A K Sharma, Prof J S Rajput, both former Directors of NCERT, Prof N K Ambasht, former Professor in NCERT and Prof A N Maheshwari, former Chairman of National Council for Teacher Education, has issued the statement.

The COBSE last month held a meeting of school boards from the states, which approved a core curriculum prepared in Science and Mathematics. HRD Minister Kapil Sibal has announced that similar curriculum will be prepared by COBSE on the Commerce stream also.

"Such an attempt tends to give an impression that a parallel curriculum is being developed as an alternative to NCERT curriculum. We fail to understand the need for this new effort," said the joint statement.

The NCERT has been preparing the curriculum for last 50 years in the country, it said. "It may appear that COBSE, a coordinating body of the Boards of Secondary Education, has overstepped its role in developing a core curriculum largely for meeting concerns of entrance examinations to professional courses," said the statement.

COBSE general secretary Prof D V Sharma described the views of the academics as "biased". "It is a biased view taken by the academics that no longer belong to NCERT. The school boards have every right to update and prepare curriculum. The curriculum for Science and Mathematics has been prepared as per the suggestions of the school boards," he said.

Source: New Delhi [/Indian Express/](#)16 March 2010

### 10,000 more medical post graduate seats in India

India will add 10,000 more post graduate seats in medical education within two years, a step aimed at curbing brain drain, union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said Wednesday.

'Many graduates of medical education are going abroad for studies. I want to assure an additional 10,000 PG seats within two years,' Azad said at the 94th convocation of the Lady Hardinge Medical College.

These seats will be available in central and state medical colleges, he said. Of the 10,000 seats, the minister said 4,000 will be available from the coming academic session.

Currently India has over 13,500 post graduate seats across the country. With the new announcement, the number will increase to over 23,500 seats.

He said the central government has approved a scheme under which the health ministry will fund and upgrade all medical colleges run by state governments.

'It is a Rs.1,350 crore plan for the state medical colleges,' he said.

'The central government will fund them, strengthen them, upgrade their facility and increase the number of seats in post graduate course,' the minister added.

Currently, hundreds of medical graduates are going abroad to pursue higher education as all graduates cannot be accommodated in post graduate courses. The minister said that with this move, the central government wants the medical brains to stay in the country.

'Please don't fly abroad after your post graduation,' Azad said.

Source: [/sify.com/](#)17 March 2010

### CBSE set to launch international syllabus

Taking the first step towards giving the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) an international character, the HRD ministry has decided that from the next academic session CBSE-affiliated schools abroad will have an international syllabus.

Even CBSE schools in India will be free to introduce this syllabus. While no change will be brought in the mathematics and science syllabus, language and social science will undergo complete change. The new syllabus is likely to be finalized within a month.

"The idea is to model CBSE on the lines of International Baccalaureate (IB). There will be stress on activity-based learning," a ministry official said.

The new international syllabus for class I and IX will be introduced in the next academic session. Then, every year the syllabus for new classes will be introduced.

There are CBSE-affiliated schools in many West and South Asian countries mostly started by Indians there. It was felt that students in these schools are unable to compete internationally by studying an India-centric syllabus.

"Therefore, it was felt that CBSE should become international," the official said.

Explaining the change, the official said there is no point in only teaching Indian history to CBSE schools abroad. "The emphasis should be on local and world history. Also why should only Indian languages be taught in schools outside India," the official said, adding it would be an altogether separate curriculum.

However, the existing syllabus will continue in CBSE schools in India. It is expected that slowly even Indian schools will switch over to the international syllabus.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Times of India](#)/18 March 2010

### **Columbia University, GMAT coming to India soon**

While India opens its doors to foreign education, the world too seems to be taking notice of the opportunity for higher education in the country. The New-York based Columbia University has announced it will set up an international centre for research and regional collaboration in Mumbai later this month focusing on sustainable rural development and architecture.

Moreover, the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), which conducts the GMAT (Graduate Management Aptitude Test) entrance test, has also announced plans to set up an office in India, its third in the world after the US and UK.

GMAC is waiting for the necessary approvals, its president and CEO David Wilson said adding, "I feel there's great potential for growth in the country."

More than 2.65 lakh management aspirants appeared for GMAT across the world in 2009, over 8% of them from India. There has been a steady rise in the number of Indian MBA aspirants taking the test, tripling in five years from 13,463 in 2005 to 30,633 in 2006. And with GMAC setting up base in India, it will mean GMAT aspirants can expect better facilities.

The demand for GMAT is set to rise even further once foreign universities set shop on Indian soil.

However, Columbia University is currently not looking at a full-fledged campus in Mumbai. In Mumbai, Columbia's Earth Institute will share with other scientists, development economists, policy makers, and community development practitioners, best practices and lessons learned from earlier successful project and initiatives.

**Source:** Mumbai /[Times of India](#)/18 March 2010

### **Higher education agenda to be cleared today**

The Union Cabinet is expected to give its approval for three education bills — Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, The National Education Tribunals Bill and the National Authority for Regulation in Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Bill. These bills form the basis of the government's higher education reform agenda. All the three bills were referred to and cleared by

a group of ministers headed by Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar.

The Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill will empower the Centre to initiate criminal proceedings against even private institutes that charge capitation fee or cheat students through other 'unfair practices' such as overpricing of prospectus, false claims in advertisements and brochures.

Stiff penalties and fines against errant institutes have been proposed in the legislation. Unfair practices will attract both civil and criminal action. Malpractices will attract a fine of Rs 50 lakh and imprisonment for three years. Criminal complaints would attract fines in the range of Rs 50,000 to Rs 3 lakh and imprisonment of one month to a year.

The National Educational Tribunal Bill provides for a three-tier system. It would deal with all disputes between students and institutions, teachers and institutions. At the bottom of this three-tier structure is the district educational tribunal.

The proposal is to set up a tribunal in each district, so that complaints from the area can be heard. The tribunal will have the power to deal with grievances of faculty and employees against the management or governing body. The district tribunal can be approached once the complainant has exhausted all existing remedies.

The National Authority for Regulation in Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Bill would make it mandatory for higher education institutes to be accredited. At present accreditation is voluntary.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Economic Times](#)/19 March 2010

### **World Bank lends billion dollars to India for education**

The World Bank on Thursday said it was providing India with 1.05 billion dollars in credit to improve education, the development lender's largest investment in education to date.

The bank approved the financing Thursday for two education projects designed to boost the number of children enrolling in and completing elementary school, and to improve quality of engineering education across the country.

The World Bank said 750 million dollars would go to the Indian government's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a nationwide program that aims to provide quality elementary education to all children.

The remaining 300 million dollars of the credit announced Thursday was provided for the Second Technical/Engineering Education Quality Improvement Project.

That financing will support "some 200 competitively selected engineering education institutions to produce higher quality and more employable engineers," the Bank said.

The Washington-based bank has supported the SSA with two loans, totaling 1.1 billion dollars, since 2003.

Source: Washington [/google.com/](http://google.com/) 19 March 2010

### Deemed unfit but still working abroad

The taskforce set up to draw the future course of action for the 44 blacklisted deemed universities is grappling with some questions that have no answers. The reason: lax regulation allowed these universities to circumvent several norms for years. The result: hundreds of students who signed up under distance learning for professional courses like engineering, or several candidates in other countries enrolled for programmes started by these deemed universities which have no validity, now face a bleak future.

Even as India speaks of allowing foreign universities to fly in, it is essential that a clear exit policy for Indian varsities from foreign lands too, be designed. But India's lax policy towards deemed universities has forced India to ask host countries to deal with the blacklisted varsities' off-campuses under their laws.

The task force has prepared an action plan to implement recommendations of the review committee on deemed universities and proposed a slew of measures on the road ahead. Though UGC rules specify that deemed universities are not permitted to set up branch or off-campuses, many started them in various parts of India and also in foreign lands.

The task force report stated, "Programmes run in foreign countries have to be affiliated to one of the state universities, if permissible under the law governing such universities, else, dealt with under the relevant local laws of the host country."

Experts stated that with no exit policy in place, the country is in an embarrassing position. Some of the institutes which have violated the norms and started off-campuses include, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, Pondicherry; Vinayak Mission's Research Foundation, Salem and Barath Institute of Higher Education and Research, Chennai.

In most instances, states and local public universities would have to shoulder the burden of these deemed universities which would be reduced to their earlier status — that of a college. However, "a new institution/ college established after acquiring the 'deemed to be university' status, which did not have any prior affiliation to any university at the time, would have to seek fresh affiliation to an appropriate state university," the report pointed out. Also according to sources, most states would find it difficult to accommodate such students. "The pool of seats is so small and it is not easy to accommodate any additional students. We don't have vacant seats," said a state official.

Lastly, students enrolled in distance learning programmes would be transferred to courses run by a state open university or by the IGNOU. However, students enrolled in courses that violate norms and cannot be taught in distance learning mode, will have to be discontinued.

Source: Mumbai [/Times of India/](http://Times of India/) 20 March 2010

### Highest allocation for school education

Works for infrastructure facilities taken up at a cost of Rs.767 cr. School education has been given the highest allocation of over Rs.10,000 crore in the State budget for 2010-2011, K. Gnanadesikan, Principal Secretary (Finance), said on Friday.

Responding to reporters' queries on the proposals, he said under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rs.540 crore had been allocated. Works for infrastructure facilities had been taken up at an estimated cost of Rs.767 crore with assistance from the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), benefiting 850 government high schools and higher secondary schools.

To a question on the implementation of the scheme of exemption of tuition fee for first-generation students of professional courses, Mr. Gnanadesikan said students, who secured admission through single window, were required to give a self-declaration, which would have to be certified by local revenue authorities.

Earlier, presenting the budget in the Assembly, Finance Minister K. Anbazhagan said the proposed Anna University of Technology in Madurai would cover engineering colleges in Madurai, Dindigul, Theni, Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga districts from the coming financial year. With this announcement in the State budget, there would be five universities of the name following the 2007 split of the university into four with headquarters in Chennai, Tiruchi, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli.

The government also announced the setting up of a medical college at Tiruvannamalai and four new government arts and science colleges in Pudukottai, Theni, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram districts with Central assistance. It will also be used to start seven new polytechnic colleges in the coming year.

The government announced a postgraduate extension centre of Thiruvalluvar University at Villupuram and the establishment of a centre of excellence at Manonmaniam Sundaranar University.

Of the Rs.1,751 crore allocated for the Higher Education Department, Rs.93 crore would be spent on constructing buildings for new engineering colleges started in Panruti, Thanjavur, Dindigul, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari. Fifty classrooms would be constructed in engineering and polytechnic colleges at a cost of Rs.3 crore and Rs.3.89 crore spent on construction of laboratories and development of infrastructural facilities in government arts and science colleges.

### Dictionaries

Ninth standard students in government and government-aided schools would be provided English-English-Tamil dictionaries free of cost through the Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation.

The government would provide computers to 2,000 middle schools in the coming year and had allocated Rs.50 crore for the purpose.

Two hundred middle schools would be upgraded as high schools and 125 high schools as higher secondary schools. Infrastructure facilities would be upgraded in 850 government high and higher secondary schools with NABARD support and maintenance works taken up in primary and middle schools at a cost of Rs.266 crore.

The State would bear 45 per cent of expenditure under the SSA. New high schools and middle schools would be established under the National Scheme for Development of Secondary Education and Rs.150 crore had been allocated for the scheme.

New textbooks under the common syllabus would be introduced for standards I and VI under the Tamil Nadu Uniform System of Education.

In the succeeding year the common syllabus would be extended to other classes, Mr. Anbazhagan said.

**Source:** Chennai /[Beta. The Hindu](#)/20 March 2010

### **India to host education consortium in South Asia**

India would host and lead an education consortium on the information and communication technology (ICT) platform to enhance educational resources and teacher education in South Asian region. The ICT platform to be launched by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) would have Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal apart from India as its members, said Ignou vice chancellor V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai on the sidelines of a conference. India would host and lead an education consortium on the information and communication technology (ICT) platform to enhance educational resources and teacher education in South Asian region. The ICT platform to be launched by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) would have Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal apart from India as its members, said IGNOU vice chancellor V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai on the sidelines of a conference.

**Source:** New Delhi /[livemint](#)/24 March 2010

### **International schools gaining momentum**

With 'Being Global' being the new mantra and increasing number of parents subscribing to the philosophy of 'Omnia Paratus' (preparing for everything), 'International Schools' offering an integrated mix of globally relevant educational solutions, are now finding more takers.

International schools are witnessing momentum as number of parents are now keen on imparting education that equips a child to be competitive in a globalised scenario, says Kishanlal Ganesh, CEO, Jain International Residential Schools.

The demand has been further driven by parents, generally expats, who have returned home and are looking out for education similar to that abroad, as well as parents who

have traveled abroad and are keen on education that prepares their wards to take on global careers in future, says Ajay Sekhar, Director Marketing, Indus International School.

"We are also seeing a large number of parents foreign nationals, especially from South East Asian countries, working at MNCs and here on deputation, that are keen in global education," says Ganesh.

While some of these schools offer international curriculum, others focus on world class infrastructure and others have a mix of students of various nationalities, says Githa Shankar, Chairperson Brigade Schools.

"We offer a wider basket in terms of curriculum and grading, there is 360 degree learning", he says. These schools offer a platter of technology-aided education, activities aimed at developing critical thinking and personality and intensive sports coaching.

"Traditional schools are limited by their curriculum and learning is highly based on academics. These could help a child score well and gain entry into an MNC, but to rise up to head it, he would need more than that", says Ganesh.

Sprawling over acres of land, these schools, many of which are residential, boast of luxurious interiors equivalent to well managed corporate houses, hi-tech auditoriums, well maintained golf lawns, horse riding tracks and amenities like e-libraries, buffet food centres and Maths laboratories.

"We have 30 sports coaches who are internationally trained. Twice a week we have life skills development classes and a project and presentation module, apart from a special product launch activity where students launch a product" he says while talking about all-round grooming.

As opposed to traditional schools, where large numbers are at a disadvantage, international schools have a better child-teacher ratio. "I am happy there are just 25 children in a class while a leading branded traditional school has something like 60 per class, which makes individual attention almost impossible", says Ritu, a parent.

Parents are active participants in the education process in these schools unlike earlier traditional schools where teacher parent interactions are largely twice-a-year affair, says Ajay.

The management of these schools are also based on modern corporate governance with dedicated parent-customer cells, feedback-oriented policies. "There is a very high accountability factor involved. It is value for money that parents demand. If they pay, they want to exactly know what will be delivered", says Ajay while agreeing that the fees charged are much higher than traditional schools.

Ganesh opines that traditional branded schools are losing their competitive edge and international schools are here to stay with their out-of-the-box offerings.

However, countering charges of international schools, retired Colonel John Ellis, Principal of Bishop Cotton Boys School, a leading traditional branded school, says the craze for international schools might be just be a temporary phenomenon. Moreover, cropping up of an international

school is in no way competition to branded traditional school, he opines.

With careers in future expected to be located within India, education rooted in strong Indian education traditions would help better prepare students for the future. "The world is looking at us", he says and a westward looking education might not really help in the future scenario.

He also dismisses claims of traditional schools lacking in infrastructure. "We offer the best of infrastructure", he says pointing out that his school boasts of a swimming pool, an upgraded gymnasium, apart from a well stocked library.

Results at the Board level and achievements during inter-school competitions reveal the story might be quite different with traditional school students walking away with trophies, be it debates, elocution or sports, he contends.

He also debunks claims of international school of having an ideal teacher-student ratio. "There is no guarantee they will not increase the number of children in future". As of now these schools do not receive such a large number of students and they are resorting to aggressive marketing to promote these numbers. "We have a huge demand", he says.

**Source:** Bangalore /[Economic Times](#)/24 March 2010

### **Need to create indigenous model of mgmt syllabus**

Though the youngest of the social sciences, management continues to be the most popular discipline in India.

As the demand for management education grows, so do the challenges and opportunities. Today, business schools in India face the challenge of creating an indigenous model of the management curriculum.

“Adapting the global model of management education to an Indian context is both a challenge and an opportunity,” says Kunal Basu, reader in marketing, Said Business School, Oxford University.

Though the market for management education is a global one, the curriculum should reflect local aspirations.

The emphasis, feels Ashoke Dutta, director, IIM Shillong, should be on local case studies where broad management principles are examined, questioned and streamlined to positively impact challenges of the local/national business environment.

The other challenges facing management education in India are quality assurance and research excellence. To discuss higher education for the 21st century with a focus on management education, business leaders, academics and policy-makers will participate in the Oxford India Business Forum 2010 to be held in New Delhi on Thursday.

The forum is part of the Said Business School India annual programme. The speakers include Kapil Sibal, minister of human resource development, Andrew Hamilton, vice-chancellor, Oxford University, Meghnad Desai, director, Centre for the Study of Global Governance, LSE, Gita

Piramal, director, BP Ergo and Pankaj Chandra, director, IIM Bangalore.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Times of India](#)/25 March 2010

### **How good is Indian education system?**

“Tell me the books you read and I will tell your character”, goes the saying. However, education is not just about reading books or garnering knowledge. Books are a means to education, and education is a means to knowledge, neither implying an end in itself. Education is the pragmatic application of knowledge for the betterment of people, society, and self.

Education sustains our present and insures our future. Unfortunately, the education scenario in India is very disturbing. The ‘EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010’ (UNESCO), ranks India 105 among 128 countries, and it continues to figure alongside a cluster of African and a couple of Asian countries, such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, in the group of countries with a low educational development index (EDI). In 2007, India was ranked not only behind countries such as Norway, Japan, and Germany that figured at the top, but also past several Latin American, African, and Asian developing countries.

The pupil-teacher ratio, too, in primary schools in India is very low (1:40) compared with countries like UK (1:21.6) and Japan (1:19), despite the fact that India allocates more expenditure as a percentage of GDP on education, i.e. ~3% (a popular research result reveals that public expenditure on education should account for at least 4.07% of GDP). The average pupil-teacher ratio in the developed countries is 13.7. The global average is 24.6 pupils per teacher (1:24.6) in primary school.

The dropout rates in India, at the high school level are also on the rise (~50%) in spite of increased educational expenditures by the states. Moreover, the infrastructure facilities in schools are pathetic. According to the latest statistics available from the Flash Statistics and Analytical Reports on Elementary Education in India, published by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration in 2009-10, there are only three classrooms per primary school in India, on an average, and only three teachers per school. About 14% of the schools have only one classroom each, and single-teacher schools constitute a similar proportion. While the standard national pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools is 1:40 (one teacher for every 40 students), 30% of the schools have a ratio above this. In Bihar, while the standard ratio at the State level is 1:59, there are 92 (1:92) students on an average per classroom. All this indicates a poorly organized system of education.

### **Need of the Hour**

The implication of all the above arguments is that a pupil-teacher ratio of around 20 (1:20) may be taken up as a desirable ratio. We need good quality teachers in sufficient numbers. This is a basic prerequisite for quality primary education.

Innovation is another aspect of the quality of education. Innovation in education is not only necessary, it is absolutely crucial. Firstly, innovations in subjects offer a host of choices to students. Secondly, innovations in examination patterns facilitate precise evaluation of their skills in a subject. Innovations also enable a student to arrive at a better-informed choice of subjects. The choice of subjects will 'involve' the students and equip them with skills befitting their interest, which could be harnessed for the benefit of self and the nation. For instance, let's say that someone is interested in journalism and wants to pursue investigative journalism rather than mere reporting. The course has to offer various choices within journalism (say, investigative journalism, reporting, business journalism, sports journalism, etc.). If the course doesn't offer these choices, then one who is genuinely interested in something may not get the opportunity to pursue it and end up doing something that one doesn't like, as there is Hobson's choice. This may hamper one's potential in giving one's best, and may directly or indirectly scuttle the opportunity in contributing towards the country's economic growth.

The issue of innovation brings us to an important aspect of education – choice – that seems to be sufficiently lacking in our education system to enable better academic performance of students and to elevate the quality of education.

#### **The True Role of Education: Introspection**

The human being is a social animal whose needs and urges are originated and fulfilled within a given society and rarely in isolation. While the primary objective of any education is to enable us to know things we did not know earlier, so as to improve the quality of life, this principle had not been appreciated in depth by our educational policy makers for decades. Artificial barriers in the nature of knowledge were created. It was specified that knowledge could either be for its own sake or for the sake of its application. However, on reflection, it becomes clear that unless any form of knowledge is applied, it cannot be improved or suitably channeled. A large proportion of people need knowledge that is of an applied character and that helps them simplify important activities of daily living. Moreover, each person is gifted with a particular range of skills. These two facts indicate that a continued thrust on a rigid academic structure would not be desirable. One must understand that provision of choices – over academic subjects or electives – is a continuous process. The system would work better if students were given an opportunity to exercise choice earlier in their education – rather than later – when several factors, other than their inherent competencies, exert an influence over their choice of subjects.

Source: [/merinews/](#)26 March 20110

#### **Higher education Bill to be sent to Cabinet next month**

The National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) Bill will be sent to the Cabinet within the next one month, according to Narendra Jadhav, member, Planning Commission. Jadhav is a member of the task force which has drafted the Bill. He was addressing a round table on the NCHER Bill here today.

NCHER aims at bringing different regulatory bodies — including the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) — under one organisation. It will be a centralised body with a chairman and six members, supported by a collegium, and will have the authority to prepare a national registry of people eligible for appointment as vice-chancellors.

The establishment of NCHER follows the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) and the Prof Yash Pal committee on higher education. The NKC recommended an independent regulatory authority in higher education to serve as an apex body and called for dissolution of all existing regulatory bodies such as the UGC, the AICTE, the Medical Council of India and the Bar Council. It further suggested that UGC could not be a grant-giving and a regulatory body at the same time. So, its role should be restricted to giving grants, said Jadhav.

The Yash Pal committee, on the other hand, recommended that all existing regulatory councils be "subsumed" under NCHER.

The preamble of the Bill mentions two key objectives — co-ordination and maintenance of standards in promotion of higher education and research and promoting the autonomy of higher educational institutions for free pursuit of knowledge and innovation. The Bill also talks of compulsory accreditation and empowering universities.

Academicians, however, said the terms of the proposed Bill might not address the issue of autonomy. "The main provisions of the Bill contradict the objectives it plans to achieve. Education today needs to be de-centralised, but the draft, on the other hand, favours centralisation and concentration of powers. Perhaps the current draft needs to be re-drafted with more emphasis on autonomy and de-centralisation," said an academician present at the round table.

Academicians said the problems that the higher education sector was facing were not because of inefficient management but because of the inability of the system to ensure quality. "Preparing a registry of eminent academics eligible for appointment as vice-chancellors is not wrong, but the criteria for deciding eminence may be a matter of dispute. Imposing a vice-chancellor in this manner is highly objectionable as it amounts to a serious assault on the autonomy of universities and infringement of states' rights," said a director of an institute.

Source: Mumbai [/Business-Standard/](#)28 March 20110

#### **ANALYSIS/OPINION/INNOVATIVE PRACTICE** **Education Commission agenda is neo-liberal**

The Campus Front of India (CFI) has launched a campaign till March 25, to expose the neo-liberal agenda behind the educational reforms under the National Commission for Higher Education and Research Bill, 2010.

Mohammed Anisujjaman, general secretary of CFI said the nature of the Commission is against the federal principle of the nation. As per the Commission, all the Higher Education system will be come under one umbrella. The Centre will only be the deciding authority. No state government can interfere with the power of the Centre.

Just last month during the current session of the Parliament, the Centre had announced to set up a new panel for higher education. It was announced by Kapil Sibal, Union minister for HRD as National Commission for Higher Education and Research Bill, 2010.

He said higher education was already on the State List. But, after emergency, it was shifted to the Concurrent List. Even when education is in the Concurrent List, the state governments can just be mere silent spectators and can't do anything after a certain limit. Also, state governments cannot do anything if any student is affected by the private institutes in the level of higher education in their own states, even if it requires immediate action.

Also, Anisujjaman said, Sibal's announcement of the new education policy that a single national-level entrance test for students to get admission into engineering, medical, economics and commerce courses can't be digested. ``It is because, we can see the entrance tests have been abolished in the Tamil Nadu, to relieve the students from the extra burden and stress of exam preparation.

The Campus Front of India has also submitted its demand in the National Students Convention at New Delhi last year, that all state governments should abolish entrance tests for admissions in their respective states and the Centre to reduce its weightage to 50% in central universities and institutions. He said the Campus Front of India feels that the new education policy is an assault on the Indian education system by the neo-liberal interests of the ruling class.

He also said that rolling out the red carpet and inviting foreign universities will further increase the commercialization of education. Foreign universities are not coming to provide free educational service for students with rural backgrounds and poor students. They are bringing the education as a commodity for sale, he added.

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

### **Govt. to Encourage Private Education Institution: Kapil Sibal**

The Government of India is proposing several legislative amendments in the higher education to encourage private participation in educational arena, said the Minister for Human Resource Development.

“There are three legislations we are planning to propose for improving higher education in the country including,

one allowing domestic and foreign players to set up educational institutes, setting up National Accreditation Authority and for the Educational Finance Corporation,”

Mr Sibal said at the Conscious Capitalism Summit organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Conscious Capitalism Institute (CCI).

Minister said that the government would reduce its intervention in the education. “The National Accreditation Authority would do all the evaluation process of the institutes as per their declarations made on their websites pertaining to the infrastructure, faculty members etc for the quality education,” he said.

The Ministry of HRD has also sent a proposal to the Planning Commission for setting up the Educational Finance Corporation. “This will reduce the fee structures in private institutes as they would be provided with long term commercial borrowings. Similarly, students would also be extended with the facility to fund their education and would not have to depend on their parents,” Mr Sibal said.

He emphasized on the role of private players in the higher education sector and said, “Only about 12% students enrolled in schools enter in the colleges for higher education who fall in the age-group of 18 - 24 years. We want to increase the resources for them & States alone cannot do it.”

Mr Sibal also pointed out that the satellite mapping could be used to curb the menace of encroachments and slum dwelling in the cities.

“During my tenure as the Minister for Science and Technology, we developed a system through satellite imaging and mapped entire Chandni Chowk area of Delhi. All small and big constructions were mapped in the systems and any new cropped up construction or encroachment would be caught by the system which was not mapped even on previous evening.

We are planning to employ this technology in other areas of the city and gradually other cities which could resolve illegal constructions and encroachments,” Mr Sibal said.

Dr Shubhro Sen, Co-founder and Executive Director of the Conscious Capitalism Institute speaking on the institute said that it is here to make a positive difference in India in the way our corporations are run and conduct themselves in the society. “We want India’s current and future leaders to be world class and be on the right side of society. The institute also wishes to help India recognize that these ideas and practices that are so contemporary and successful are timeless and rooted deeply in ancient Indian values,” he said. Dr Sen stated that Conscious Capitalism can become one of India’s most important exports to the rest of the world. “We can lead the way with values driven capitalism in the 21st century,” he said.

At the CII’s summit, Dr J J Irani, Past President of CII and Director of Tata Sons said, “Corporate Social Responsibility is not an expense but investment. JRD Tata in his first 3-4 years of entrepreneurship focused completely on the

development of community around its business set ups and hence could create Jamshedpur.”

Dr Raj Sisodia, Chairman of the Conscious Capitalism Institute and Professor at the Bantley University explaining the need of such an institute said, “In a survey on trustworthiness of the entrepreneurs in USA, only 2% respondents believed that the CEO’s are ‘Very Trustworthy’. This shows that earning community’s trust would be pivotal for sustainable growth of organizations.”

**Source:** [/overseasbuyers/](#)15 March 2010

### A degree better

After years of being stalled by political opposition and legal quagmire, the cabinet has approved the bill that will inaugurate a new path for international education providers to open up campuses in India. The clunky title — the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations, Maintenance of Quality and Prevention of Commercialisation) Bill — is some indication of all the anxieties that surround it.

There are already hundreds of educational collaborations between Indian institutions and foreign ones, mostly in high-return areas like business and technical education. Concentrated in a few regions, these initiatives have an ambiguous track record. However, the hunger for respectable educational options is manifest in today’s India. Currently, Indian students are the largest contingent in American universities, their numbers having steadily swelled in the last two decades. These students contribute significantly to the US economy, and many of them stay back and assimilate into the country with stunning success, depriving India of much homegrown talent. The Foreign Educational Providers Bill is partly an attempt to stem that migratory wave. Certainly, it focuses on a thin and affluent slice of the schooling market — but that slice is also part of the entire continuum of higher education needs. It might persuade a section of migrating students to stay here, it might provide a new option for another segment of students who seek educational cachet and signalling benefits from a fancy foreign school. It might also improve academic staffing, which is critical — by allowing faculty to move more flexibly within India and from abroad. Either way, it is a valuable new

array of choices in a country that is reeling under a quality and quantity deficit. As the prime minister ruefully noted, only 7 per cent of India’s 18-24-year-olds enter higher education (compared to 21 per cent in Germany and 34 per cent in the US, which in any case have an array of vocational options as well).

While the bill has been sold with visions of glittering Ivy League institutions, there have been concerns that its terms are too restrictive and will only facilitate degree mills rather than encouraging research. Those are valid fears — and as with the entire saga of higher education in India, these experiments will only be as good as the governance they get.

**Source:** [/Indian Express/](#)17 March 2010

### Re-orient commerce education: Expert

Chief economist and deputy general manager of Canara Bank, Manoranjan Sharma, called for re-orientation in commerce and management education in order to fully realize India’s growth aspirations.

Addressing the commerce faculty at Karnatak University’s Academic Staff College (ASC) here, he said India’s demographic dividend will turn into demographic disaster if the focus on education, vocational employment and training are not given sharper focus.

“The role of higher education cannot be examined in vacuum. It needs to be placed in proper historical and comparative perspective for a correct assessment,” he noted.

University education has to go beyond courses and curriculum, and emphasize industry exposure and interaction with industry practitioners. This is necessary to provide well-rounded and holistic education, he observed.

ASC director Prof Meena Chandavarkar said: “To be a good teacher, one has to have the urge to know new things and continue to learn. This would enable the teachers to update students’ knowledge,” she added. She reminded the participants that the day is not far if one will not perform, “they will perish, and one has to come out from comfort zone and complacency to competency”.

B H Nagoor welcomed and introduced the chief guest while dean of faculty of commerce, S G Hundekar, proposed a vote of thanks.

**Source:** Dharwad [/Times of India/](#)18 March 2010

### Teacher curricula set to be recast

Aspiring school teachers may soon need to study longer and meet stricter qualification norms than at present, under a new national teacher education curriculum roadmap the human resource development ministry is scheduled to unveil tomorrow.

Current teacher training programmes across the country should be replaced by longer courses, including teaching experience at schools, the new national curriculum framework for teacher education will recommend, officials told The Telegraph.

The curriculum framework, which human resource development minister Kapil Sibal will tomorrow unveil, is critical to the government’s plans of balancing the need to fill massive vacancies in teaching posts, while improving standards of teaching.

India’s teacher training programmes at present adhere to a curriculum framework drafted in 1998 -- before the launch of key school education initiatives that either have, or hold the potential to, transform schooling in the country.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, started in 2002, has helped improve the gross enrolment rate into primary schools to over 95 per cent. But the quality of education imparted at

many schools has been questioned. Many states also struggle with chronic teacher shortage.

In 2005, India adopted a National Curriculum Framework for school education textbooks, for the first time emphasising that schooling must focus on activity-based learning, must be child-centric and sensitive to students from disadvantaged groups.

The landmark Right to Education Act will be implemented from April 1, providing for legal punishment for teachers that physically punish students and school administrators who turn away students despite having vacant seats.

But current teacher training courses based on the 1998 framework do not adequately address the challenges thrown up by the education programme, curriculum framework and the education legislation.

Teacher education has also exploded as an industry over the period since the last curriculum framework.

From 3,489 courses in 3,199 institutions and an intake of 274,072 in 2004, the numbers swelled to 14,523 courses in 12,266 institutions with an intake of 10,73,661 by December 2008, according to the ministry's data.

"It is all these changes that have forced us to evolve a new teacher education curriculum that will help us meet the challenges of hiring more teachers, while improving the skills teachers today need," a source said.

Teachers in classes up to VIII at present need a D.Ed (diploma in education) which can be acquired through a two-year course immediately after completing high school.

A B.Ed (bachelor in education) obtained as a second degree after initial graduation in a particular subject allows a teacher to teach in secondary and higher secondary classes. The B.Ed course has a one-year duration now.

But the new curriculum framework suggests gradually replacing the two-year post-school diploma -- D.Ed -- with a degree-level course similar to a four year B.El.Ed (bachelor of elementary education) which Delhi University offers.

The two-year diploma straight after school does not even equip prospective teachers with basic knowledge of subjects they will teach in elementary school, the framework says.

The framework also recommends a gradual shift from the one-year B.Ed to a two-year programme "with deeper and more protracted engagement with school-based experience and reflective and critical engagement with theory".

The two-year programme, the framework suggests, should include projects requiring teacher trainees to teach for short periods in schools -- to gain field experience.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Telegraph India](#)/18 March 2010

### Why foreign institutes dig Indian market

For foreign universities, which haven't yet recovered fully from the aftershocks of the worldwide recession, India

presents, to quote a word re-introduced into the English vocabulary by Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, a 'fabjous' opportunity.

More than 100,000 students leave Indian shores annually to study at universities abroad. Their presence has made foreign universities wake up to the incontrovertible fact that there's another 'creamy layer' below these students abroad whose families are prepared to pay upwards of Rs 2.5 lakh a year for quality education.

International students are the economic mainstay of foreign universities, but these institutions are not in a position to meet the demand for the education they provide on their own campuses back home. This untapped market makes the business of overseas campuses that much more lucrative.

For over a decade, foreign universities have been lobbying hard for the passage of the Foreign Education Providers Bill, which has been a pet project of HRD minister Kapil Sibal.

The most recent of these exploratory visits was that of Robert A. Brown, president of Boston University, who was in the Capital in January to plan collaborations with leading universities here.

He said there was an insatiable appetite for quality education in India and collaborations would mutually benefit both countries. US's Georgia Institute of Technology announced its plan to set up campuses in Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam as soon as the Bill gets Parliament nod.

Central Michigan University, meanwhile, has taken another route to plant its flag in India. It has been offering a collaborative MBA programme with the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, for the past five years.

Experts associated with these universities explain the economic logic of their plans for India: the proliferation of private institutions in the country - especially in engineering, medicine, management and law - that charged fees upwards of Rs 2.5 lakh a year was evidence of the vast market waiting to be tapped.

These institutions attract the second layer of the country's higher education market. These are students whose families can't afford foreign education ( upwards of Rs 15 lakh a year), but want to be in the top four favourite streams.

India, according the now- defunct National Knowledge Commission, needs 1,500 universities, compared with about 350 now, to raise the enrollment numbers from 7 per cent of the population aged 18- 25 to developed country averages.

But even before the Bill got the cabinet's nod, Indian universities had initiated the process of collaborating with their international peers to offer degrees or diplomas. A National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) report in 2008 pegged the number of these institutions at more than 130.

For Bangalore University vice- chancellor A. N. Prabhu Deva, collaboration is the way forward.

"It will help a higher education institution rise to the standards of its foreign partner," he says. But for this collaboration to become meaningful, says R. Govinda, NUEPA V-C, teaching must go hand in hand with research. "Only then will quality education and foreign collaborations be meaningful," he says.

Either way, for foreign universities, this is a win-win situation. Narayanan Ramaswamy, executive director of the management consultancy KPMG, points to the "massive demand supply gap" driving the international higher education market.

**Source:** New Delhi [/India Today/](#)18 March 2010

### **Jail for demanding capitation fee, says Sibal**

No more capitation fees, the government said Friday as it proposed punishment for educational institutes found fleecing students in the guise of hidden costs during admission and the management could also face jail.

'The union cabinet today (Friday) cleared the Prohibition of Unfair Practices Bill, 2010. This means capitation fee charged by educational institutions will be a cognizable offence,' Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal told reporters Friday.

'Those who are indulging in it will be prosecuted - some will get monetary penalty and others fine and imprisonment.

'We are very serious about capitation fee. This is destroying our education system. Its a cognizable offence now,' he said.

He said the thousands of educational institutes in the country will have to disclose all their fees and charges in the prospectus and nothing can be charged beyond that.

'This is a historic step that we are going to take through an appropriate law,' he added.

'Why can not they disclose it in the prospectus. We are moving towards a self disclosure regime,' the minister argued.

He said the civil offences entailing monetary punishment will be adjudicated in the educational tribunals, while the cognizable offences will go to courts.

Authorities hinted that the jail term could extend up to three years.

Earlier in the day, the union cabinet cleared a proposal to set up education tribunals to solve disputes ranging from affiliation to accreditation of higher educational institutes quickly.

'This will solve many disputes of the higher educational institutes,' Sibal added.

He said other than a central educational tribunal, all the state will have one such tribunal to deal with matters at the state level and 'this is a historic step for reforming education'.

The ministry said the state tribunals would adjudicate matters related to teachers and other employees and students of higher educational institutions in the state. The

national tribunal will work as an appellate body, which will adjudicate issues pertaining to regulatory bodies in higher education and also matters related to institutions located in two and more states.

The government, the ministry said, intends to bring the Educational Tribunal Bill, 2010, in the current session of the parliament.

The minister said the cabinet has also cleared the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority Bill, 2010, that aims to set up a body to assess and accredit every higher educational institution.

'The authority will set norms for accreditation. The process of accreditation will be outsourced to agencies of integrity registered with the authority,' the minister added.

**Source:** New Delhi [/news.yahoo.com/](#)19 March 2010

### **Sibal stands for rebooting education system**

The Human Resource Development (HRD) minister Kapil Sibal was invited in a seminar organized by HP and CNBC-TV18 titled 'Education 2.0: Rebooting the Indian Education System' as its chief guest and key note speaker here recently, which focused on sustaining and maintaining the Indian education system.

"The Indian education system has captured the attention of the world due to its talent pool, which has been one of the most sought after in world. The growth of the Indian economy and the compulsion to sustain it is also forcing the Indian government to accelerate the process of developing all the branches of Indian education system today," said a press release.

"While India's future lies in the classrooms it is very necessary to understand and ensure that the talent been churned out from the Indian education system has the capability to match the best in the world. Keeping this view point in mind HP and CNBC-TV18 presented Education 2.0: Rebooting the Indian Education System," it added.

Other prominent speakers at the panel included Mr. Vinay Awasthi, Director, Desktop Systems Group, Hewlett-Packard, India, Mr. Karan Bajwa- General Manager, Public Sector for Microsoft India and Dr. Gautam Bose, Deputy Director General, National Informatics Centre, who discussed and shared view points on upgrading the education system to level 2.0 from 'brick-and-mortar' approach to 'click-and-mortar' approach.

The panel discussion analyzed the various avenues, including collaborative educational systems, online or TV based classrooms and tools like e-book readers, economical IT/PC solutions to help bring the idea of quality education to Indian education system.

While speaking at the occasion CNBC-TV18 spokesperson said, "Though a lot of India's human resource is most sought after in the world and we do have a few good numbers of educational institutes that can compete with the best educational institutes of the world. It is preliminary education system in India that needs to be developed. The

seminar will highlight and ideate on the various possibilities in which Information Technology can help in taking the Indian education system to the next level."

Ms. Deepti Dang, Head, Marketing - Commercial & SMB, Personal Systems Group, Hewlett-Packard India Sales Pvt. Ltd said, "Access to technology at affordable prices has the potential to fast track the growth of education sector in India. At HP we are committed towards developing products and solutions that provide impetus to this growth. Multi Seat, powered by Microsoft Windows Multi Point Server 2010, is one such technology that has the potential to bridge the digital divide through giving access to collaborative and economical technology."

**Source:** New Delhi /[India Edu. News](#)/19 March 2010

### **Teacher training to be more child-oriented**

HRD minister Kapil Sibal will finally release Five years after the National Curriculum Framework for schools that stressed on revamping the teacher education programme to bring it in tune with the change in pedagogy a new curriculum for teachers on Friday.

The curriculum also takes into account the importance on quality of teachers in the Right to Education Act, 2009. Prepared by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), the National Curriculum for Teacher Education talks of teaching in a manner where the focus is entirely on the child so that she can learn through outdoor activity, exploring the surroundings. The curriculum also stresses on teaching that has gender perspective as well as equitable development. Even the role of community knowledge and Information and Communication Technology finds an important place.

In the absence of a new curriculum for teacher education, the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) undertook a massive exercise to train teachers through workshops when NCF-2005 came into being resulting in new NCERT textbooks. Now even state governments have adopted these books.

The curriculum for teachers has been prepared after a nationwide consultation. States and universities have been asked to align diploma, bachelor and masters courses in education with the new curriculum. NCTE has even proposed to come up with a model curriculum, which states/universities can adopt.

Under RTE, more than 10 lakh teachers are to be appointed to bring the teacher, student ratio to 1:30 within six months of the law coming into force.

The law also says that untrained teachers have to get the necessary qualification within five years of RTE coming into force. RTE expects teachers to give primacy to the all round development -- mental and physical -- of the child, ensure that teaching makes the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety so that she can express her views freely. Also, the system of comprehensive and continuous evaluation, already started by the Central Board of Secondary Education, will also be implemented in all schools.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Times of India](#)/19 March 2010

### **No move to strip states of powers: Sibal**

Human Resources Development Minister Kapil Sibal today said the proposed Higher Education bill would be taken up only after wider consultations with stakeholders, including state governments.

Sibal, who was here to preside over the convocation of IIM-Kozhikode, said the legislation was actually meant to strengthen higher education and not to take away powers of states, as some quarters fear.

The purpose of such a legislation is to improve quality of higher education and not divest the states of their power, he said.

When reporters sought to know the latest position on the action against "deemed universities" functioning in many parts of the country, he said the matter was now under judicial scrutiny.

**Source:** Kozhikode /[ptinews](#)/20 March 2010

### **No opposition to foreign varsities bill: Sibal**

HRD minister Kapil Sibal scorched all talk of opposition within Congress on allowing foreign universities to set up campuses in the country. Sibal said that the idea of a legislative framework to allow foreign education institutions in India was part of the President's address to Parliament.

"There is no opposition to the bill. This is something in national interest. The Foreign Education Bill is part of the President's address in Parliament," the minister said.

Though the Cabinet gave its approval to the Foreign Educational Institution (Regulation of Entry & Operation) Bill, 2010, last week, there has been some cause of concern about the bill's provision, which allows foreign education institutions to have their own admission process and fix fees.

Sibal argued that the law of the land applicable to private institutions would be applicable to foreign universities aspiring to set up campuses in India. At present, a state level committee headed by a private judge fixes the fee for private engineering and medical colleges. There is no mechanism to finalise the fee structure in private universities.

Sibal said that foreign education providers will "neither be discriminated against nor will be shown any favour". Confident that the government will be able to convince the opposition parties, the minister said, "we are trying to go to a regulated regime from a deregulated regime on foreign universities. The foreign institutions will come through registration." As for the Left, which had prevented UPA-I from introducing the bill in Parliament, Mr Sibal said, "the Left is already left out".

The government plans to introduce this bill in the current session of Parliament after it convenes following the recess. It will be introduced along with three other bills that

were approved by Cabinet on Friday. Among these bills is the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill, 2010. This legislation lists out 25 “unfair” practices, including charging capitation fees, which will attract both civil and criminal action. “Capitation fee charged by any institute will be a cognisable offence. People will be prosecuted without fear and favour,” Sibal said.

The two other legislation are the National Education Tribunals Bill and the National Authority for Regulation in Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Bill.

The National Education Tribunal Bill proposes to set up a two-tier grievance redressal system. The tribunals will adjudicate disputes pertaining to accreditation, affiliation and inter-institution matters. The tribunal at the national level will comprise nine members.

The tribunals will act as forums for fast-track and speedy resolution of issues in institutions. The state tribunals will adjudicate matters concerning teachers, employees and students of institutions in the respective states. The national tribunal would deal with all matters concerning regulatory bodies in higher education and also matters involving institutes located in two or more states. It would act as an appellate body against the orders of the state educational tribunals.

The purpose of the National Authority for Regulation in Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions Bill is to ensure that students get quality education. Every institute will make self-disclosure about it, which can be audited by the accreditation authority. It will be an independent statutory body for quality control.

The authority would also monitor and audit the accreditation agencies registered under it. Accreditation agencies like National Accreditation and Assessment council and National Board of Accreditation will function under the National Accreditation Regulatory Authority.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Economic Times](#)/20 March 2010

### Act with caution

*“Foreign universities will force local reforms as well.”*

With the Union Cabinet approving a legislative bill to allow foreign universities to open campuses in India, the dream of lakhs of students in this country to get a higher education of international standards is a step closer towards realisation. The bill is now ready for introduction in parliament. Several overseas educational institutions are already known to be interested in setting up campuses in the country. The proposed legislation should benefit Indian students as they can now expect to get a foreign degree at a fraction of the price abroad. While education in these institutions is likely to be expensive and far more costly than that provided by government and private institutions in the country, studying here will be less of a financial burden than if one went abroad for an equivalent degree. Hitherto, students have not always found it easy to security admission into a foreign university.

The entry of foreign players is expected to put enormous pressure on Indian educational institutions, most of which at present lack quality. They will have to reform themselves to compete and remain relevant. They will have to match international standards. Actually, time may be running out for them; unless such institutions embark upon a path of reforms, time may not be far away when their very survival may be in doubt. However, while the proposal to allow foreign varsities will force local institutions and academia to pull up their socks, it will not by itself raise educational standards in the country. Reform in the higher education sector requires more than opening the gates to foreign players.

Probably, the reservation system that is applicable to the country’s higher educational institutions may not be applicable to foreign players entering the country. That is what Human Resources Development minister Kapil Sibal has hinted at, though the exact position on this important aspect would be known only when the bill is out. There is thus an area of concern — the gap in the quality of education that the rich and poor can hope to access, which is already wide, may widen further. There is a danger too of low-quality overseas institutions swooping in to make a fast buck in the country. The regulatory body that will scrutinise proposals from these institutions must exercise utmost care while granting permission to open campus.

**Source:** /[Deccan Herald](#)/20 March 2010

### Harvard Haryana

With 466 universities, thousands of colleges and 13 million students enrolled in them, quantity has never been a problem with higher education in India. Ensuring quality is another matter. Will the proposed entry of foreign universities make a difference? Is Harvard, Haryana or Oxford, Orissa possible? Others have been down that road. Are there any lessons for us?

### Singapore: Not quite Boston

More than a decade ago, Singapore opened its doors to foreign universities with the “vision of becoming the Boston of the East and an incubator of ideas”. Under the Global Schoolhouse project, the Economic Development Board (EDB) draws top foreign universities and the ministry of education keeps a close watch on them. Singapore can justifiably boast about attracting some top-notch institutes — the University of Chicago, INSEAD, Tisch School of Arts, DigiPen Institute of Technology — but even today, the sector is undeveloped.

None of the universities have expanded their course menu. “On whether they are full campuses, I’d say they have physical premises, though they may not be large-scale campuses,” says Lily Kong, a vice-president at the National University of Singapore.

This, despite the manner in which the country “courts the universities: the EDB played up Singapore’s cosmopolitan nature, and then used tangible material resources in the form of financial and other incentives,” observes Kristopher

Olds, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who's taught at the NUS for six years.

The Singapore government gets into a unique confidential legal arrangement with each foreign university. INSEAD, for example, received \$10 million for research, land at a third of the market price, soft loans, housing access, etc. Olds notes that the University of Chicago-Booth School of Business also received several million dollars in subsidy via the renovation of the historic House of Tan Yeok Nee building, their Singapore campus. The University of New South Wales (UNSW) also benefited from subsidies upwards of \$80 million.

Even so, within months of being set up, UNSW folded up citing its "unsuitable financial model". Three years ago, the John Hopkins Centre, which received \$52 million in funding since its 1998 arrival in Singapore, also closed down as it did not meet the performance benchmark. And the UK's Warwick University, which was to set up a full campus in the real sense of the term, backed out at the last minute.

Ten years down the road, as Singapore draws up a balance sheet of its expectations and realities, experts say there is a yawning gap between the two.

#### **China: Half-open door**

In 2003, China opened up to foreign universities, albeit in Maoist fashion. A foreign university cannot enter China without a local institute as partner. There is a reason for this door half-open policy, which seems like a straight lift from 'The Little Red Book'. As Philip Altbach, Boston College's director at the Center for International Higher Education puts it, "This arrangement ensures that the Chinese have everyday close supervision on what the foreigners are doing."

But there is a flip side. Altbach points out that "while the Chinese partnership model is viewed to be the best one, there is internal criticism of deals that provincial governments have entered into with some foreign universities offering crappy courses."

But China can boast of two good partnerships — the University of Nottingham-Ningbo, China, established in 2004 and the Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University, set up two years later.

According to Agora, a British forum for culture and education, which released a paper on 'British Universities in China: The Reality beyond the Rhetoric', "The Chinese government has placed science and technology firmly at the top of the agenda, backed up by phenomenal investment." The University of Nottingham-Ningbo, originally envisaged as a liberal arts college, is now shifting more towards science and technology.

Ian Gow, founding provost of the University of Nottingham-Ningbo, warns that foreign universities must stop pussyfooting around this aggressively ambitious country. "Make no mistake," he says, "China wants to be the leading power in higher education, and it will extract what it can from the UK."

It will also learn from the rest of the world, adds a Chinese university professor, who refused to be named. "When we shadow foreigners, we understand best and worst practice. Then there will come a day when we would know exactly how to run our own institutions."

#### **The Gulf: Running on petro dollars**

The world arrived here with dollar signs in its eyes. The model adopted by the Gulf nations in setting up 'knowledge cities' and 'academic zones' has been an expensive one. The states and local patrons have largely footed the bill. When the education gold rush began, local students were regularly quoted to say they had the world's best in their neighbourhood.

Dubai, Qatar, UAE, and Kuwait have managed to attract some of the finest universities to their lands — Weill Medical College of Cornell University, Georgetown University, Carnegie Mellon, Michigan State University, New York University, Texas A&M.

But they come at a price. American academics estimate that the annual running cost of the NYU campus alone is \$300 million. Moreover, the universities have found it hard to find teaching staff and consequently run some programmes using distance-learning and video-based classes. Just last month, academic audits conducted by the University Quality Assurance International Board, found serious gaps in various campuses and it have threatened to shut down some of them.

#### **Israel: An open-and-shut case**

Sixteen years ago, Israel threw the gates open to foreign universities. But regulation was loose and several sub-standard institutes arrived. Altbach recalls that a low-grade teacher training college from the north of Boston set up base but was "forced out after some years".

When the government took stock, it realized that this was not what it had planned and asked all the foreign providers to leave.

Source: [/Times of India/21 March 2010](#)

#### **India's public universities deserve a chance**

For about a year now, Delhi University has been trying to push for a semester system. Given that students leave the country in droves every year seeking the flexible and dynamic university education system in the West, you would have thought that the move would have gone through smoothly.

But no, it stays stuck in a logjam: union protests, the intimidating task of overhauling a fossilised exam department, and a body of practices that have gotten so deeply rooted over eight decades that they have to be decimated before anything new can be attempted.

Delhi University may be able to afford the luxury of staying bubble-wrapped in time a little longer. "Our older system is quite strong too, so we want a debate before we start anything new," says proctor Gurmeet Singh. "But the

smaller, less robust public institutions will need to get their act together quickly.”

Singh has a reason to sound the warning: the Foreign Education Institutions (FEI) Bill, which will allow global universities to set up shop in India, will bring in systems far more alert to the needs of a changing world. And the worst hit will be the public universities in India that have been chugging along for decades without feeling the need to incorporate advanced practices. Even the mushrooming of private universities — be they deemed or doomed — did not shake them up.

Foreign universities, however, may create an uneven playing field. They will reportedly be governed by another regulatory agency, will not have to deal with prickly issues like reservation, and can charge fees that will help make up for the hefty corpus they need to set aside as guarantee money. All this while desi universities have to stick with the fees, salaries, calendars and admission policies dictated centrally by the UGC.

“Our state and central universities function under several restrictions, pertaining to the nature of the programmes they conduct, the salaries they pay, the fees they can charge, how much they can expand, the number and kind of students they take in. If you allow foreign universities to establish, grow and function with great flexibility and individuality while clamping down on the Indian universities, they will slide further still,” says Rajashekhar Pillai, vice chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University.

The need for university education is humongous and going to get even bigger. The country needs another 269 universities, as per the Knowledge Commission, to cater to the needs of its very young population.

This could mean that there is room in the country for all kinds of institutions — public, private and foreign depending on what students need and can afford. Those who can cough up the money needed will continue to seek degrees abroad for the kind of cultural experience it brings with it. Those who top the merit chart will get to the reputed Indian universities. And those who cannot make it to these will settle for the private institutions.

The foreign universities that will come to India then will cater to students who fall somewhere between these slots, given that they are bound to charge high fees but offer perhaps qualitatively better education than the private universities and the weaker public universities of India.

“There is a spectrum of quality of institutions and students. In this spectrum, there will be a set of students who would forego study abroad plans and choose a branch campus. I expect that students from smaller cities would find the local branch campuses most appealing. These students face constraints of financial resources, information availability or academic preparedness and hence this opportunity may fit in well with their aspirations,” says Dr Rahul Choudaha, a US-based education specialist.

Private universities are in fact best placed to capitalise on the arrival of foreign universities in India by offering partnerships that could benefit both parties. They are better placed to adapt and collaborate by offering foreign universities existing infrastructure and resources if they do not wish to invest 100 per cent in a branch institution. There are already around 150 private institutions that have some kind of a tie-up with a foreign universities. Some offer twinning arrangements or dual degree programmes.

Those who feel passionately about the public universities of India built on idealism feel that they deserve a better chance at pulling themselves out of the quagmire of complacency. Pratap Bhanu Mehta, member of the Supreme Court committee on Indian Universities, says that they too deserve a liberal regime to survive, expand and grow.

“Apart from the IITs and IIMs, we have around 15-20 excellent public institutions. But if we have a two-tier regulatory system, one for the Indian universities and another for the foreign, can they compete? Why not give them the freedom too?” asks Mehta.

Amitabh Jhingan, who heads Ernst & Young's higher education division, believes that nine out of 10 public universities are already facing huge challenges. But given their dependence on government funding there is so much and no more they can do to raise resources.

**Source:** Mumbai [/DNA India/](#)21 March 2010

### **Management faculty should keep upgrading their skills**

The Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, recently organised a workshop for faculty members from leading business schools in India. This was the first event as part of a unique initiative by the ISB to introduce cutting edge practices in management education across B-Schools in India. The workshop was in the area of marketing analytics, and had over fifty faculty registrants from across 25 leading B schools in the country.

Speaking on the need to enhance the quality of management education in India, Ajit Rangnekar, dean, ISB, said: "India will need many more high quality management graduates to sustain its high growth, and also to make it inclusive. To do this, what we need is collaboration, not competition, so that Indian management education wins, and as a consequence, all of us do. We are making this investment with the conviction that it will produce positive returns for Indian management education, and ultimately, raise the standards of all Indian B schools."

Gary Lilien, a professor from Pennsylvania State University, USA, who led the workshop on marketing analytics said: "I am delighted that the ISB, through this initiative, both encouraged and hosted this workshop. I expect this initiative to pay great dividends for Indian business education as a whole."

The participants in the workshop comprised marketing faculty members from several Indian business schools including IIMs, BITS Pilani, IRMA, IIFT, IMT Ghaziabad

among others. They spent the entire day at the ISB exploring innovative techniques that could enhance their teaching delivery. "A great initiative by the ISB to help the teaching fraternity in India," remarked Mridula S Mishra, assistant professor, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi. Echoing this sentiment, Saji Nair, professor of marketing at IIM Lucknow said "the workshop provided a wonderful opportunity to walk through the many possibilities in teaching analytical marketing."

Arun Pereira, head - initiative for excellence in teaching and learning, ISB said; "India has the potential to become the destination of choice for management education tomorrow, if we take the right steps today. After all, the vast majority of growth markets are in this part of the world, and it will be in everybody's interest that India becomes home to top quality B Schools." He added, "ISB will continue to organise such workshops that will act as a forum for faculty to imbibe global best practices, collaborate, network, and share their classroom experiences." The workshops will vary in scope, and address different aspects of management education, from classroom content to delivery. Teacher training is a vital ingredient in the economy.

**Source:** [/Economic Times/](#)21 March 2010

### More than a matter of degree

India sends the highest number of students abroad, after China — almost 1,53,300, according to UNESCO's Global Education Digest 2009. This statistic may change if the foreign education Bill gets parliamentary approval.

Higher education is becoming increasingly global, and institutions are looking beyond their home countries to have an international footprint. Today, there are more than 150 offshore campuses around the world; US and UK universities are the most active in setting these up and there are a plethora of franchise arrangements where courses are delivered through collaborations and partnerships.

Though education without borders is the buzzword, Phil Baty, editor of the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, is cautious. "There is a lucrative demand for higher education in India, but if foreign institutions set up campuses to exploit student demand and make quick money, it would be damaging for the country." But Baty adds, "Good international universities can help improve quality in Indian universities — not just through increased competition for students, but from increased partnerships and sharing of best practices in teaching and learning."

Accordingly, the dean of Toronto-based Schulich business school Dezso Horvath envisions a business school in India that will "meet the same professional excellence norms and standards that prevail at the Toronto campus," says Ashwin W Joshi, executive director, Schulich MBA Programme in India.

For most foreign institutions, however, research collaborations and student/faculty exchange is the focus. "We prefer learning centres and research partnerships than a campus. We have several research partnerships with India, including a programme in biodesign that has resulted in medical device inventions," says Lisa Lapin, assistant vice-president, University Communications, Stanford University.

Meanwhile, some like Columbia University and Harvard Business School (HBS) are following a different path. HBS has an India Research Centre (IRC) in Mumbai and the Columbia Global Centre opens in Mumbai soon. "The South Asia centre in Mumbai will provide a hub for quality research in the region," says Tanya Domi, a spokesperson for Columbia University.

There are others such as Ajit Rangnekar, dean of the Indian School of Business (ISB) Hyderabad, who feel that India should be "realistic" about which foreign institutions are likely to come. Strong brands like Harvard, MIT, Oxford or Imperial are unlikely to open offshore campuses, he says, as "their focus is on high-quality students and research collaborations, for which they do not have to open a campus here. Those likely to come are the second-tier institutions offering professional and short-term courses."

Another common perception is that an offshore campus may not be as prestigious as the home campus. Tanya N Mayadas, associate professor of pathology, Harvard Medical School, says, "I would prefer to study at Harvard or MIT in the US, where they have, over the years, invested in building up their academic rigour and reputation. This may change over time if the campus in India has a similar rigorous acceptance policy, recruits distinguished faculty and has superior facilities and infrastructure. After all, the reputation of a university is ultimately based on the student body, faculty and the success of the alumni."

Students often go abroad as much for the international experience as the course and college. "New Zealand's spectacular environment and enjoyable lifestyle are a major appeal for international students, and these cannot be replicated offshore," says Michelle Waitzman, communications specialist, Education New Zealand.

Narendra Jadhav, member, Planning Commission, agrees that the Indian experience may not be the same as on an overseas campus, but adds "We can expect that the foreign degree in India will be worth no less."

But, Cass Business School student Arun K points out that he opted to study M.Sc. in Actuarial Sciences in the UK so that he could "gain work experience in a foreign market". For Samarth Modwal, it was a dream to study in McGill University, Canada, where Ernest Rutherford conducted the experiments that won him the Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

Living abroad enables students to learn about other cultures, languages, religions, and forge new relationships with people around the world. A student of Leeds University, UK, says she decided to go overseas for a second master's degree because "it was more than just the academic degree. The experience was very different from

my first master's in Delhi University. I interacted with students and faculty from other countries. It has given me the confidence to be able to live and work in any part of the world."

Source: [/Times of India/21 March 2010](#)

### Educating Kapil

*A nation must educate its own, foreigners can only help at the margin* Kapil Sibal is a minister in a hurry. That is the good part of the news. India needs more such ministers, especially in critical areas like education and infrastructure. His ministry, the Union Ministry for Human Resources Development, needed someone like him after a decade of destruction under the whimsical and arbitrary leadership of two policy dinosaurs, Murali Manohar Joshi and Arjun Singh, their ideological thought-managers and bureaucratic know-it-alls.

But, Mr Sibal is in danger of over-selling his initiatives. Cautioning Mr Sibal, this newspaper editorially urged him to "tread carefully" (February 25, 2010) because education is a subject that affects us all, especially the vocal, urban middle class. Any change in the education policy requires careful political handling.

Defending his latest initiative, the proposed Foreign Educational Institutions (Entry and Operation) Regulation Bill 2010, in a television interview to Karan Thapar last week, Mr Sibal likened his initiatives for education reform to the economic reforms of the early 1990s. The opposition to his proposed foreign education Bill was coming, Mr Sibal said, from the same kind of quarters that criticised economic liberalisation in 1991.

Look where India is now. QED, suggested Mr Sibal, today's critics will be tomorrow's beneficiaries. In 1991, the opposition to reform melted quickly as middle class households saw tariff rates come down and stock market indices go up! Rahul Bajaj was hamara, but the Mumbaier did not like his Bombay Club.

Dr Manmohan Singh had the middle class on his side when he pushed for reform. Mr Sibal must ensure he too has the middle class on his side. India's upwardly mobile, vocal middle class has no other weapon but access to education to empower them. They will resist any change that may be viewed as curbing that access or threatening the process.

In a perceptive study of higher education reform in India, Devesh Kapur and Pratap Bhanu Mehta (Indian Higher Education Reform: From Half Baked Socialism to Half Baked Capitalism, 2007. Available at: [www.ncaer.org/downloads/IPF2007/kapur-mehta.pdf](http://www.ncaer.org/downloads/IPF2007/kapur-mehta.pdf)) tellingly make the point that inequality in access to education in India is far worse than the inequality in income or wealth. "India is to education inequality what Brazil is to income inequality," says Kapur.

Hence, any education reform has to be dovetailed with the strategy for inclusive growth. Economic reform is about jobs and incomes. Education is about status and

opportunity. Trade liberalisation and industrial delicensing may have been about the future of businessmen, but for the middle class, it was about new opportunities to consume and new sources of employment. Education reform, on the other hand, is about a generation's future. Any initiative must carry conviction and credibility with India's vocal middle class.

Perhaps, the real problem with the foreign education Bill is that it is not as big a reform measure as what Mr Sibal makes it out to be. Is opening up higher education to foreign investment, that too with layers of bureaucratic red tape still in place, the same as reducing tariff rates from 300 per cent to 50 per cent and below, and permitting 100 per cent foreign ownership in scooter manufacturing?

Mr Sibal is marketing this Bill as a "game-changer". He may have been better off marketing it as a "facilitator". Consider the facts. Kapur and Mehta mention in their paper that in 2005-06, the Government of India was spending a total of US\$4.3 billion on higher education, while Indian citizens were paying out almost US\$3.5 billion as tuition fee to foreign universities and educational institutions around the world. Both numbers would have gone up since, as Mr Sibal himself has correctly claimed. There are several reasons why Indian students are spending so much money abroad.

The most obvious reason is that an increasing number of Indians can afford to do so. Two decades of over 7 per cent growth has created a wealthy business class, a prosperous professional class and a newly-rich rentier class that are spending money on their children's education abroad. Some go because they want to, some go because they have to — given that they have the high school scores to secure admission to good colleges but there aren't enough seats available at home in good institutions.

Those who go abroad for education because they want to are unlikely to stay home if equally good opportunities are available at home. But those who go because they have to may prefer being home if enough seats are available. Foreign investment and brands can help ease the domestic supply constraint and, therefore, ought to be welcomed.

The fact that the foreign exchange outgo would get reduced, because Indian students would pay in local currency at home, is an important factor. Instead of Mohammed going to the mountain, the mountain will come to Mohammed! In the process, India saves foreign exchange, families get to keep their children home and foreign educational institutions will compete with Indian ones to attract students.

But India's higher education system is in need of a much bigger reform and financial support. Increasing access is one challenge. Improving excellence is another, even bigger, challenge. Kapur and Mehta worry about the Indian elite opting out of publicly-funded higher education, as they have from public hospitals. When tax payers stop worrying about public service delivery, the service will suffer and so will tax collection!

Political interference, cronyism, casteism, trade unionism and an assortment of ills are stifling higher education. No foreign investor or institution is going to change this game. In education, as in national security, India must first help itself before anyone else does.

**Source:** New Delhi /[Business-Standard](#)/22 March 2010

### **The good, bad & ugly faces of FDI in Indian education**

*A significant number of academics, especially the left-leaning educationists in Kerala, are not in favour of the entry of foreign universities. However, old-timers like former VC of Mahatma Gandhi University Kottayam, Dr A Sukumar Nair, welcome the move.*

“It may not automatically lead to the upgradation of university education in the country. Developing nations like India should be concentrating more on empowering the universities through public-private partnerships,” said development scientist and VC of Kannur University Prof P K Michael Tharakan. He pointed out that the university system in India was quite uneven with a set of institutions like the IITs, IIMs and some universities on a higher plane whereas most other universities did not possess even basic infrastructure. “The emphasis should be to make university education more accessible,” he said.

#### **Uruguay Round fallout**

Former Vice-Chancellor of Kerala University Dr B Ekbal said the present move was part of honouring the General Agreement on Trading in Services, a treaty which resulted from the WTO’s Uruguay Round negotiations. This will make education more of a trade and he feared that all the institutions will have to be extended subsidies at par with Indian universities. “Instead, we should have ideally restricted ourselves to academic associations like twinning and teacher exchange programmes,” he said. He expects those institutions, which normally target the NRI sector also to jump en masse onto this “foreign bandwagon”.

However, former VC of Mahatma Gandhi University Dr A Sukumaran Nair felt that opening up the foreign universities was the best that could happen to the higher education sector. He pointed out that Indian students who studied abroad had already built a reputation for themselves. Hence if the campuses were at home, it would enable a large number of students to prove their mettle.

#### **Welcome, say VCs**

VCs of four reputed universities and two former VCs in coastal districts of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi favour foreign universities. Manipal University Pro Chancellor Prof H S Ballal, while welcoming foreign universities, hoped that there is level playing field and only good universities come. “Every year about 1,60,000 students go abroad, mostly to US, for study. The arrival of foreign universities may succeed in stopping this in part.”

Yenepoya University VC Syed Akheel Ahmed argued that India has no option but to welcome the foreign universities considering the fact that the Gross Enrolment Ratio of

India in higher education is only 12.4 per cent compared to 23 per cent international average and 55 per cent of the developed nations.

Nitte University Vice Chancellor Prof (Dr) M Shantharam Shetty said the only way to keep mediocre universities at bay is to collaborate with good universities so as to develop infrastructure and also exchange knowledge.

Mangalore University VC Prof T C Shivashankar Murthy believes arrival of foreign universities will not affect Indian universities, as the high fee structure of foreign universities will prove a deterrent. He believes Indian universities can compete with foreign universities depending on which universities come to India.

Mangalore University former VC K M Kaveriappa welcomed healthy competition. “The arrival of foreign universities will help Indian universities to grow further. To be in the race, you have to compete and if you are not good, you will be eliminated.” Citing the mushrooming of MBA and BBM courses in the last couple of years, he said many colleges closed down in a short span of time. However, all rules applicable to Indian universities should apply to them, including reservation,” he said.

#### **Eyeing management**

Prof B M Hegde, former VC, Manipal University, noted the many fake universities abroad, especially in Australia, which dole out worthless degrees. In that sense, the foreign universities Bill is welcome. He said foreign universities are keen to come to India simply because their existence is threatened due to the economic recession and drastic reduction in students from the Gulf. “Foreign universities are eyeing only management education,” he felt.

#### **UGC, AICTE may feel heat**

Entry of foreign universities does not pose any threat to IITs or IIMs where the standard is quite high. But the University Grants Commission and All India Council of Technical Education that together run and manage various Indian universities and colleges, may feel the heat as they have in recent times fallen from grace and been discredited for more than one reason, argues Prof Sujoy Basu, ex-Director, School of Energy Studies and ex-professor of Electrical Engineering, Jadavpur University. Entry of famous universities or colleges as Imperial College, London will throw up a major opportunity for Indian students to pursue their studies here, because such international colleges are noted for their global merit and standard. That they would surely plough back a portion of the profit into India for their own sake, goes without saying, Basu points out.

Since these foreign colleges are expected to function without any political interference which is unfortunately a bane in West Bengal, it will translate into a major success story within a few years.

However, there should be some regulatory mechanism before the government opens the gate for their entry.

#### **Foreign Exchange loss**

“In principle, globalisation of higher education is welcome” but the issues go beyond that, says Col Dr G Thiruvasagam, Vice-Chancellor of University of Madras, one of the oldest in the country. However, allowing foreign universities to set up campuses here “without any strict regulatory measures will certainly discourage the existing systems and institutions,” he said.

The Constitution’s emphasis is on providing equal opportunity to all, but it is not clear whether the foreign universities would take care of the needs of the underprivileged sections, he said adding that there were already criticisms that our higher education system “is not affordable to the common man”.

Also, a large number of International students coming to India for higher studies fetched good foreign exchange for our Government. If the foreign universities set up shop here, international students would go to those campuses resulting in foreign exchange loss for us, he explained.

### **Mysore waits**

Likely entry of foreign players has evoked mixed response in Mysore, home to a 90-year-old university and three more, including Dr Gangubai Hangal Music University, which is to be set up. Dr M Chindananda Gowda, former VC, Kuvempu University, feels competition may be good but our own varsities need to be strengthened. IT and BT companies have shown the world that Indians are knowledge rich. Our education did not come from US or UK; it was from our own Taksha Shila University.

Devanura Mahadeva, writer, said we have been sold lies since centuries and to say that foreign universities will help us get better is another sheer lie. Education, decades ago was the preserve of a particular community. This will assume a new form with only rich accessing higher education since foreign universities sure want to make money when they come.

Prof V G Talawar, VC, Mysore University, noted that globalisation has touched every sector and education is no exception. Competition can always bring out the best, provided they are on level playing field.

Prof J Shashidhar Prasad, former VC of Mysore University, said as per National Knowledge Commission’s recommendations, the country has to start 1500 more universities. But bringing in foreign universities to meet the need would be disastrous.

### **Allow the good ones**

Kuvempu University former VC S P Hiremath said In India, only eight per cent youth enter universities where as in western nations it is 23 per cent. The Indian Government, therefore, is aiming to increase the percentage of students pursuing post-graduation to 15 per cent. Hence, establishment of foreign universities would be a boon to enhance the standard of Indian education.

University of Agriculture Science Dharwad in-charge Vice-Chancellor H S Vijaykumar said select foreign universities of high repute alone should be allowed into India.

Source: [/Deccan Herald/](#)22 March 2010

### **Will the Foreign Education Bill help?**

Apart from the possibility that top-class foreign universities will not want to set up campuses if they’re going to come in as ‘deemed universities’, there is the issue of a level playing field for Indian institutions.

**B Raj**; Country Head and Director, Stamford India Education Centre

***Well-established, foreign universities may not like the deemed university status in India - they may consider such campuses as a dilution of quality***

The Foreign Educational Institution (Regulation of Entry and Operation) Bill, 2010, if passed in its current form without removing the existing anomalies in the higher education system, will lead to deterioration in quality and increased corruption in higher education. Unlike his predecessors, Kapil Sibal has made a sincere effort to improve the higher education sector, but he has unfortunately not been able to make the Bill attractive enough to get in enough foreign universities to help India improve higher education and achieve a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 21 per cent.

India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world with around 430 universities and 22,000 institutions of higher education. The present GER in higher education is around 12 per cent (world average 23.2 per cent, developed nations 54.6 per cent, Asian countries 22 per cent) and the government wants to increase this to 21 per cent by 2017. There is an interim GER target of 15 per cent by 2011-12, for which the enrolments in universities/colleges need to be substantially raised to 21 million students. The government estimates that the share of enrolments of private, unaided higher education institutions will be around 51 per cent. It is obvious that the government alone will not be able to achieve GER target and will require public partnership, private investment, and participation of foreign institutions to achieve this ambitious goal.

After the Cabinet approved the Bill, Sibal said “This is a milestone which will enhance choices, increase competition and benchmark quality. A larger revolution than even in the telecom sector awaits us”. In the telecom sector, MNCs have given tough competition to MTNL and BSNL and, as a result, consumers in India can now make a telephone call at 30 paise/minute from anywhere to anywhere in India. MNCs that have brought down the prices in telecom sector are allowed to transfer the profit back home. Higher education is private investment for private gain. In India, most of not-for-profit educational institutions are serving public interest for “private gain”, thus making higher education unaffordable. Malpractices like capitation fee exist because of the not-for-profit concept in higher education. Increasing private investments in higher education can produce greater benefits, including enhanced access to higher education and improvement in

quality, with the increased competition in a levelled playing field.

But there is hardly any incentive in this Bill for genuine foreign universities to set up campuses in India. The big question is why a foreign university should use its own resources and capabilities to solve India's problem of higher education. What will they get in return?

In order to enter, universities need to invest in at least 51 per cent of the total capital expenditure needed to establish the campus. Getting a suitable, accredited Indian partner who is really not interested in profit for remaining 49 per cent investment will be difficult for an accredited foreign university. The university has to go through an elaborate three-level registration process and will be granted deemed university status under Section 3 of the Universities Grants Commission Act, 1956.

According to the proposed NCHER Bill, universities will not be able to appoint vice-chancellors (VCs) on their own. It will be the prerogative of the NCHER to appoint VCs of all universities in India. Therefore, despite having a majority stake, foreign universities will not be able to appoint VCs on their own. Higher education in India has always been over-regulated and under-governed. Moreover, well-established accredited foreign universities/institutions may not like the status of a "deemed university" in India and may consider off-shore campus in India as a dilution of quality and something that can lower their brand image. Hence, most foreign universities will continue to explore collaborations/ partnerships with Indian educational institutions rather than setting up campuses in India.

Many believe this Bill will help save an outflow of about \$7.5 billion of foreign exchange per annum as over 500,000 Indian students go abroad for higher education (mainly in engineering, management and medical courses). The reason for studying abroad is not just acquiring a foreign degree but to get exposure to the foreign culture and environment. Moreover, it is the work permit (an opportunity to work in a foreign country) after successful completion of the course that encourages the students to study abroad. Students will continue to go abroad for higher studies as foreign universities' campuses in India will neither provide foreign environment nor the work permit to them.

**B S Sahay**; Director, MDI, Gurgaon

***The government must ensure the same rules apply to Indian institutions, whether on reservations, on fixing fee, on taking out surpluses and so on***

The Foreign Educational Institution (Regulation of Entry and Operation) Bill, 2010 has been hailed by most Indian institutions including the Management Development Institute (MDI). Healthy competition is good for growth of the economy and, thus, for the country. We have seen the positive impact of competition in many sectors like telecom, automotive, IT etc, and I presume this holds good for the higher education sector also. I have not seen the revised draft of the Bill, and am going by what has been

reported in the media. I think this is a bold step in the right direction.

However, the government must ensure that only top-class foreign universities are allowed to set up campuses in India — this will help Indian institutions come up to global education standards. The Bill should not lead to a situation where all types of foreign universities are allowed to set up campuses in India. The process for allowing these universities to set up their campuses needs to be absolutely transparent and objective-oriented without any biases — otherwise, we will land up in the same situation as has happened with some approved private universities and institutions.

It is important that the foreign institutions entering India offer the same curriculum, quality of education and degrees that they provide in their own countries. Some issues, such as regulatory framework to look into dual degrees and the portability of credits, have not been addressed in the Bill; hence, some guidelines on foreign institutions looking forward to partnership models will be a welcome move.

There are some apprehensions that the entry of such institutions may result in faculty members from top institutions and universities in India joining foreign institutions that may offer higher salaries. There may be some mobility of faculty members, but the majority would prefer to continue with their present institutions — most professors have opted for academics as a career by choice, they can never be lured by salaries in dollars. The right academic and research environment is important and it will take foreign universities years to set up institutes of excellence.

It is anticipated that once foreign universities set up campuses here, this will stop Indian students from going abroad to study — according to Assocham, over 500,000 students go overseas every year for education and, in 2008-09, \$2.25 billion was spent on this. There are three sets of students who go abroad — those who get admission in top universities because of their high academic credentials; those who cannot get admission in top institutions in India but can afford to go abroad and stay there and the third are those who just want the foreign stamp. In short, those who want to go abroad for higher education will go irrespective of foreign institutions setting up campuses in India. However, after the arrival of top universities, these institutions may be able to attract some good students if their fee is reasonable — otherwise only those students will prefer to join such institutions who are not able to make it to the top Indian institutions/ universities.

In addition, there has been some concern over the Bill's provisions that allow foreign educational institutions to have their own admission processes and freedom to fix fees. This rule should be applicable to the Indian institutions also.

The government policy should ensure the same rules are applicable to Indian as well as foreign institutions. They should be gauged by the same yardstick. If the government allows foreign institutions to take out some reasonable

surplus, the same rule should be applicable to private Indian institutions also.

Similarly, if the reservation policy is not applicable to foreign institutions, it should not be applicable to private Indian institutions also. The rules of the game have to be the same for all.

It is going to be tough for the government to raise gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education from the present level of around 12 per cent to 30 per cent by 2020. The government alone will not be able to achieve the GER target and, therefore, will require partnership both with Indian and foreign institutions.

Source: New Delhi [/business-standard/](#)24 March 2010

### **New approval norms only for upcoming engg colleges, says AICTE**

The All India Council for Technical Education's new Approval Process Hand Book, which has stringent provisions for approval of engineering colleges and courses offered by them, will be applicable in full only to new institutions, the council has told the Madras High Court.

Recording the submissions of the AICTE, Justice N Paul Vasanthakumar, before whom the writ petitions filed by the Consortium of Self-Financing Professional Arts and Science Colleges in Tamil Nadu and others came up for hearing, extended the interim stay on the operation of the new rules up to March 26.

The AICTE also filed an additional counter-affidavit, stating that the existing colleges could continue to recruit BTech degree holders as assistant professors, in view of the shortage of MTech degree-holders for teaching vacancies.

Reiterating that the new norms and standards published by the AICTE on February 6 will have only prospective effect, the council said: "It means that the ongoing technical education programmes in existing technical institutions will not be affected adversely. If existing institutions intend to start new programmes or courses, their applications will be evaluated as per the new regulations."

Also, all applications, whether for establishment of new technical institutions or seeking various kinds of approval by existing institutions, should be filed online on the web portal of the AICTE, the counter said.

Among other things, the revised process required all unaided engineering colleges to upload the information relating to their institutions on the AICTE's web portal [www.aicte-india.org](http://www.aicte-india.org). The new norms required an assistant professor to possess an MTech degree qualification in addition to BE or BTech degree. Similarly, PhD qualification has been made mandatory for the post of associate professor in addition to an MTech degree.

College managements have assailed the new regulations on the ground that uploading vital information, including financial details of colleges, on a web portal without

protective measures would harm the interest of these institutions, and that it was impossible to comply with the regulations before the deadline.

Source: Chennai [/Times of India/](#)24 March 2010

### **Vocational courses backbone of our education system**

*Switzerland has maintained one of the lowest unemployment rates, even during the recent economic crisis. It also has one of the highest proportions of skilled workers. This is ascribed to their system of vocational education and training. Rudolph H Strahm, one of the pioneers of this system, spoke with Subodh Varma:*

#### **What is the Swiss vocational education and training (VET) system?**

We call it the dual system because students spend one to one and a half day in classrooms in a college and three to three and a half days in an industrial unit getting hands-on training. There are 243 trades in 22 fields on offer. A tripartite commission consisting of the federal government, the employers' associations and the employees' associations determines the content of these courses. It is periodically reviewed so that the latest technologies are included. Courses last for three to four years. Students are admitted after completing compulsory school at the age of 15. They are guided in their choice by state-run occupational guidance offices. Companies pay them about 800 Swiss francs per month for the duration of apprenticeship.

#### **Are these courses popular?**

They are the backbone of our secondary education system. Sixty-three per cent of compulsory school pass-outs enrol in vocational and professional education courses. Only 23 per cent go for academic baccalaureates. Even after completing this secondary stage, about three quarters of students go for higher education in professional colleges or higher VET, with practical training. Almost 90 per cent of the VET and PET passouts get jobs. The average wage a new trained entrant in industry gets is about 5,600 Swiss francs. Some of them continue into the higher vocational or professional education sector. Many existing workers join courses in new trades if they think they are better suited for them.

#### **What is the key to this success?**

It is the involvement of employers and the state together in a public-private partnership. There is no law forcing industry to take in apprentices. But they need highly skilled people, especially in new emerging skill areas. The apprentices are trained in these skills and they infuse the mainstream economy with it. Economic analysis shows that productive work by apprentices in the workplaces starts yielding profits to the company from the second year itself. So, it is very beneficial to the industry. Expenditure on education by the state is just like any other advanced country -- in the range of about 6 per cent of GDP. But such a vocational system is unique to us, and our neighbours -- Denmark, Austria, Germany and Holland -- for historical reasons.

**India's experience of vocational education has not been very happy. Do you have any suggestions?**

I can't recommend any formula, because every country has its own tradition and evolution. But perhaps a better linkage with the needs of industry -- with them taking on some responsibility too -- would help close the gap and ensure better employability of the workers.

We ourselves have kept changing the course content over the years according to popularity -- in the 1980s it was banking services and in the 1990s informatics. Since the whole system is closely aligned to industry needs, changes in the macro-economy are speedily reflected in courses and seats. Ours is a service sector-based economy. This is reflected in the vocational courses. The same can be adapted for a more differentiated economy like India's.

Source: [/Times of India/](#)24 March 2010

**Reforming education must: PM**

The Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday endorsed a proposal made by the HRD minister Kapil Sibal for reforming India's higher education sector, with a view to make it a robust domestic counterpart to the foreign universities that are about to set up centres here. In the full Planning Commission meeting here on Tuesday the need for the bolstering the domestic higher education sector was emphasized, and Sibal made a detailed presentation on how this could be achieved, official sources told FE.

The Prime Minister also saw merit in the proposal of rural development minister CP Joshi on how to equip the panchayati raj institutions to run professionally, with minimal bureaucratic interference. The idea is to impart a non-governmental culture in the conduct of these institutions that have greater ability to interact with the people, identify the local development needs and devise compatible programmes.

Singh said the for mid-term appraisal of the 11th Plan brought out the resilience of the Indian economy and these strengths can help it to return to the 9% growth trajectory by 2011-12.

Commenting on inclusive growth, a concept enshrined in the 11th Plan document, he said in addition to the 9% growth target, "our policies have helped not only the advanced states, they are also helping the poorer states to improve their performance as well."

"A very positive feature of developments in recent years is that the growth performance across states shows definite narrowing of dispersion. Data are only available up to 2008-09, but they do show that previously poorer performing states are also accelerating," he said in his opening remarks to the meeting of the full Planning Commission.

Singh expressed happiness over the fact that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, the largest centrally sponsored scheme in the system with an annual outlay of around Rs 40,000 crore, generated employment in 2009-10, about three times the level achieved from the wage employment programmes in operation earlier in the country. Stating that several centrally sponsored schemes have played a major role to push the inclusive growth agenda, Singh said, "The Mid-Term Appraisal also brings out many deficiencies in the implementation of these schemes that need to be removed. Our focus must shift from making demands for more resources to expand schemes to undertaking a serious review of their effectiveness and improving the implementation on the ground." The total expenditure on the centrally sponsored...

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**Source:** New Delhi /[Financial Express](#)/24 March 2010

### Higher Education in India: Statistics Vs Reality

The UPA Government has now started using statistics to justify its move to allow foreign universities in the country. However, the government is trying to highlight the areas where Indian higher education system is lagging behind. Let us have a look at what we have and what we need (according to Kapil Sibal).

India has the largest students' population in the world. In 2005-06, the total enrollment of students in both professional and non-professional courses was about 11.5 million.

Ours is the third largest higher secondary education system in the world with 25 Central Universities, 231 state universities, five institutions established through state legislation, 100 deemed universities, 31 Institutes of 'National Importance'. Besides these, there are about 1,500 B-schools in India and the number of students passing out every year is about 100,000.

HRD Minister Kapil Sibal added more clarity to these statistics on Wednesday. According to him, India has about 480 universities and about 22,000 colleges. The size of India's higher education market is of about \$ 40 billion per year. Besides the domestic institutions, over 500,000 students go abroad every year for higher education by spending about \$ 10 billion.

After relaxation of some norms, as many as 156 foreign educational institutions have started their courses in India in collaboration with the local institutions. Put together, India has about 220 million enrolled students, out of which 14 million are enrolled for higher education.

Presently about 12.4 percent of students go for higher education from the country. But according to Sibal, if India were to increase that figure of 12 percent to 30 percent, it would need another 800 to one thousand universities and over 35,000 colleges in the next 10 years.

These statistics show that there is a huge gap between the demand and supply. The HRD ministry says that the foreign institutions could fill this gap to a large extent.

Close to 50 foreign universities - including Duke University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Yale University, Harvard, Cornell, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University and Imperial College London - might enter India.

But realistically speaking, the foreign institutions alone could not fill this gap. We won't have 800 foreign universities or 35,000 foreign colleges in next 50 years. Then how will government bridge this gap? The

government is yet to come up with a clear answer. It appears that by mobilising public support it just wants to ensure that the Bill gets cleared in the Parliament.

This is the third attempt being made by the government to liberalise higher education system. Two attempts were made in 1995 and 2006 to bring foreign universities to India.

But due to lack of political consensus, both attempts failed. This time, by taking support of statistics, the UPA government wants to ensure that the Bill is passed.

It would be interesting to see what more the HRD Ministry do in the coming few weeks to promote the Bill.

**Source:** Hyderabad /[c2clive](#)/25 March 2010

### The hopes and fears for an Indian revolution

To its supporters, it holds out the promise of desperately needed university places for greater numbers of India's vast population.

To its critics, it raises the prospect of an influx of foreign-owned "degree mills" and the commercialisation of Indian higher education.

The long-awaited foreign education providers bill, allowing overseas universities to award degrees independently and to set up branch campuses in India, was approved by the country's Cabinet this month.

A previous bill was blocked by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), but it is no longer part of the country's ruling coalition.

However, the bill still needs approval from Parliament before it becomes law. Universities in the UK and the US will be watching developments with interest.

Kapil Sibal, the minister for human resource development who is championing the bill, sees opening up the Indian academy to foreign institutions as an integral step towards meeting the government's target for 30 per cent of young people to enter higher education. This is a tall order in a country with a population of 1.2 billion and a current higher education participation rate of just 12 per cent.

William Lawton, policy adviser at the UK Higher Education International Unit, met Mr Sibal in India earlier this month.

He said the key change for foreign institutions would be the ability to award their degrees independently - which means they could be taught in partnership with Indian universities - rather than a green light to open branch campuses.

"The level of activity is going to have to go up because of the increased demand for higher education in India, which the minister knows the country cannot cope with," Dr Lawton said. "That is why he is seeking international input. India's capacity requirements are on another scale altogether."

Don Olcott, chief executive of the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, said he did not expect a decline in the number of Indian students coming to the UK if

the bill becomes law. At present they are the largest group of overseas students after those from China.

"The bill will take time to implement and the demand by Indian students to attend high-quality, reputable universities in the UK, the US, Australia and other countries is unlikely to be seriously affected in the short term," he said.

Lancaster University is one of several British institutions that already have a presence in India. It linked with a private company to launch the GD Goenka World Institute in Gurgaon, near Delhi, last year.

Anthony Marsella, Lancaster's director of marketing and external linkages, said the standard model of educating international students in the UK is "not a sustainable position in the long term".

Indian critics of foreign provision fear students will be exploited by universities seeking profitable ventures. But Dr Marsella said that the advantages of foreign provision for India include students benefiting from high-quality education at a lower cost than living abroad, local economic benefits and additional employment opportunities for Indian academics.

"I think that India benefits more than the UK - exactly the opposite of students coming to Britain to study," he said. "It is a more equitable deal for India."

**Source:** [/Times Higher Education/](#)25 March 2010

### Greater Pvt. Role can make India Education hub

With top educational institutions of the world queuing up, and with the country boasting of highly qualified teachers, India is poised to become a global hub of higher education. To achieve the goal, it is important to rope in the private sector to increase the inflow of funds into higher education.

This was stated by the government's chief economic adviser Kaushik Basu at a top-notch education platform, the fifth Oxford India Business Forum 2010, here on Thursday. Organised by the Said Business School, Oxford University, the forum was partnered by The Times of India to draw in educationists and industry leaders on one platform.

The meet was designed to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing higher education in the 21st century, especially at a time when a slew of reforms and changes are in the pipeline. While the forum's focus was on higher education, it dealt in detail with management and business education in India.

Said Basu, "India has an edge in higher education, but we have not done well in primary education and literacy. However, in last 15 years, basic school education has started picking up, with 1991-2001 witnessing the sharpest rise in basic literacy. But in higher education, India is beginning to lose some of the edge."

Seconding Basu on private participation in higher education, Professor Emeritus with London School of

Economics, Lord Meghnad Desai, said: "There is no need for any government regulation. Let private institutions come up and students can make their choice based on the information on which institutes provide quality education."

He was critical of subsidies in higher education and said bank loans should be given to those seeking education. "There is no reason why university education should be subsidized. An institution cannot run till you charge the basic cost, if not more. But there is a point in subsidizing research."

On his first visit to India as vice chancellor of Oxford University, Prof Andrew Hamilton, also stressed on research. Citing Oxford's research orientation, he said 38% of his university's revenue came from research grants, while two-thirds of its employees had been hired on research contract. Minister of state for science and technology and earth sciences, Prithviraj Chavan, said encouraging research in higher education was high on the government's priorities.

**Source:** New Delhi [/Times of India/](#)26 March 2010

### The content of education

There's been a lot of wordage on the foreign universities bill recently approved by the Union Cabinet and whether or not it would transform higher education. Since no one knows what will finally be legislated, let alone details of the rules the education bureaucrats would draft to enforce the law, much of this is crystal gazing. What we'd like to offer for thought are some stray items on the sector over recent weeks. There is, for instance, the new four-year course to be offered by the Vellore Institute of Technology, a B Tech degree in mechanical engineering with specialisation in automotive engineering; it was put together by VIT and the Pune-based Automotive Research Association of India. To ensure the automobile industry keeps growing at a rapid pace, the industry needs young people to specialise on its issues, with both analytical and practical skills. A university would have a problem affording the facilities for practical training, but ARAI already has these.

Then there is the third year of the four-year dairy technology course of the Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat; the students spend this entire year actually running a 100,000 litre-a-day dairy. The dairy is registered under the Companies Act and has an annual turnover of Rs 80 crore. The students not only learn the technicalities of milk processing but also how to market the products at a profit. Space precludes us from going into the details, which are fascinating. Then, there is the decision of the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, to allow students to defer their campus placement by up to two years after finishing their MBA course: they can do research, try their own or a family venture, or just take a break. And, then opt to join the institute-organised placement. There are many more examples, but the point should be clear. Classroom study needs to be married to marketable skills and practical experience. Academics need to test their ideas. You need a loosening of rules to permit institution heads to enable

these. Chambers of business are an obvious ally; every employer despairs at the sort of school and college graduates he has to choose from. And, apart from learning how to pass examinations, students have close to no exposure of the world outside, or much testing of their own interests and capabilities. This is the more difficult (and imperative) reform, and a process, not a one-off step.

Source: [/expressbuzz/](#)26 March 2010

## RESOURCE

### Setting up of Schools in PPP mode being encouraged: Shri Kapil Sibal

The Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri Kapil Sibal has said that the setting up of schools in the PPP mode is being encouraged, especially in semi-urban or semi-rural areas, where despite the mushrooming of private schools, their quality level at present needs much to be desired. We will ensure that in the PPP model that we adopt, we are able to provide greater access and quality, so that these schools can become the benchmarks for private schools, he said. He was speaking at the Session on "Private Participation in Health and Education" at a Conference organized by the Planning Commission, "Building Infrastructure – Opportunities & Challenges."

Shri Sibal said that Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in education in their simplest form can broadly be at three levels. He stated that at the simplest level, the building of infrastructure for schools and colleges can be outsourced to the private sector through its own resources and could be paid for by the public sector on an annuity basis, subject to satisfactory performance to be judged by an 'independent' evaluation mechanism. He said, "This will have the advantage of mitigating government capex so that extensive infrastructure can be built very quickly. The second advantage would be the application of the "no service no payment" principle, so that the standards of maintenance always remain high. Thirdly, innovative and cost effective building designs can be deployed through private sector initiatives".

The Minister said that the second mode could be to outsource in PPP the maintenance of buildings, non-educational services like school transport, maintenance of gardens, running of school canteen etc. He pointed out that the third model could be that all educational services could be provided under PPP, so that the private sector can run a school or college and get paid on the basis of the number of students sponsored by Government subject to fulfillment of certain performance criteria like examination results, students and teachers' attendance, reduction of dropout rate, excellence in co-curricular activities etc.

The HRD Minister pointed out that the refurbishing of older schools belonging to State governments through the PPP mode is being considered and that State Governments can avoid budget constraints for creating educational

infrastructure through this method. At the level of the Central Government, entrusting construction and maintenance of buildings of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas through PPP is being considered, he said.

Shri Sibal underlined that the Scheme of 'ICT in Schools' is largely being implemented through PPP under which the private sector has provided ICT infrastructure in schools and maintains it for a period of five years and secures payment on a quarterly basis based on the usage and availability of ICT facilities. As this has significantly improved the performance of ICT infrastructure in schools and saved expenditure in outright purchase and installation of IT infrastructure, we have increased the outreach of the 'ICT in schools' programme to over 1 lakh schools, he stated.

Source: New Delhi [/pib.nic.in/](#)23 March 2010

### Establishment of Indo-German Science & Technology Centre (IGSTC) in India

The Union Cabinet today approved the establishment of Indo-German Science and Technology Centre (IGSTC) in India with matching contribution as per Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) approval of 2 million Euro (approximately Rs.13 crore at current exchange rates) per year for next five years. The Centre would be registered as a "Society" under the relevant Act.

The Indo-German Science and Technology Centre shall play a proactive role in facilitating participation of industry in joint R&D projects; provide/assist in mobilizing resources to carry out industrial R&D projects. The Centre shall facilitate and promote Indo-German bilateral collaborations in basic and applied science, research and technology through substantive interaction among Government, academia and industry. The Centre shall also encourage public private partnerships (PPP) to foster elements of innovation and application and cultivate a culture of cooperation between science and industry.

The total expenditure for the proposal is approximately Rs.65 crore for next five years w.e.f. 2010. This is the matching contribution equivalent to 2 million Euro per year from German Government side.

#### **Background**

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India visited Germany in April, 2006 on the occasion of Hannover Trade Fair, where India was the partner country. Both Heads of the Governments (Prime Minister and German Chancellor) issued a joint statement stating that both sides (India and Germany) would work together to set up Indo-German S&T Centre in India to facilitate research and industry collaboration to develop new technologies and commercialize it for overall economic and societal development of both countries

Source: New Delhi [/pib.nic.in/](#)25 March 20110



## Contribute

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

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

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

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