

# Newspaper Clips

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30/01/2013 P-1

'IT AIN'T BROKE. DON'T FIX IT'

## CEOs Tell Govt to Stay Out of IIMs' Business

Proposal for HRD minister-led council to oversee 13 IIMs draws alumni fire

### TEAM ET

A battery of powerful CEOs, many of whose careers were birthed at IIM-Ahmedabad, are rallying in protest against a government proposal seeking greater control over the 13 IIMs in the country.

"Any move to control IIM-A, now run autonomously, will bring down the standard of the institution as well as dilute a global brand," said AM Naik, executive chairman of engineering giant Larsen & Toubro, and also the chairman of IIM-Ahmedabad. "It will be like driving in reverse gear."

"It ain't broke. Don't fix it," said Phaneesh Murthy, chief executive officer of iGate, who graduated from the institute in 1987. "It is amazing how with so many problems in education the government wants to divert its efforts to the one thing that is already working well."

An ET report on Tuesday outlined a government proposal to make IIMs accountable to an umbrella council headed by the Union HRD minister. The proposed law also dangled a carrot — it seeks to convert IIMs from registered societies into national institutions empowered to award degrees, not just diplomas as is the current practice.

While newer IIMs are happy to trade autonomy for the greater credibility that a degree brings, older institutes, led vociferously by IIM-A, didn't fancy the deal, ET had reported.

"I do not believe that issuing a

### Up in Arms

Top CEOs who are also IIM-A alumni feel any govt interference is not good for the IIMs. Here's their reaction on some of the contentious proposals:

■ **Proposal:** An overarching body to make the 13 IIMs more uniform under a new law

■ **Reaction:** **MAY DILUTE IIM-A'S EDGE**

■ **Council to be headed** by Union HRD minister will coordinate the activities of all IIMs

■ **MAY ERODE IIM AUTONOMY**

■ **Council will submit a review report to the govt on each IIM, and recommend actions to be taken**

■ **COULD SPELL MORE GOVT INTERFERENCE**

degree is any great incentive for an IIM to lose its autonomy," said Manvinder Singh Banga, senior partner at the private equity fund Clayton Dubilier & Rice, and a former member of Unilever's global top management team. He is an IIM-A gold medallist (1977).

"A degree is most welcome, but without curbing (the) freedom of (IIMs)," echoed Kiran Karnik, former president of Nasscom, who also happens to be an IIM-A alumnus.

Most view the new proposal as a noose around IIMs' necks.

**'Why Take Away Autonomy?' >> 17**

## 'Why Take Away IIMs' Autonomy?'

>> From Page 1

"It's a bad move," said Jerry Rao, founder and former CEO of Mphasis, entrepreneur and a 1973 IIM-A graduate. "IIMs are working well. It's difficult to understand why the government would want to take away their autonomy."

"Our government has done enough damage to great universities such as the Mumbai University and Madras University. Any government interference will curtail IIM autonomy and their ability to experiment," Rao added. The move to bring all IIMs under a central command will do more harm than good, CEOs argued. "This council will be counter-productive as IIM-A will lose the autonomy it enjoyed to create educational excellence," said Narendra Madhusudan Murkumbi, MD, Renuka Sugars.

"A decision to control from the Centre will be unattractive for both the talent and faculty," he added. An IIM-A graduate, Murkumbi teaches entrepreneurship at the institute. Naik, who has been trying to rope in global directors into the IIM-A board, feels newer government controls could hamper this. "With government regulations, international faculty may lose interest in joining the board," he said. Naik gave an alternative. "The government should give management institutes an option; institutes that do not want to give degrees should be allowed to remain autonomous." "I am unhappy. While it is well-intentioned and looks at putting in place an IIT kind of council, I believe IIMs were already a step ahead," Karnik said.

# IIM-A पर कंट्रोल के प्रस्ताव से CEO नाखुश



[ ईटी ब्यूरो मुंबई ]

आईआईएम पर सरकारी नियंत्रण के प्रस्ताव से देश के दिग्गज सीईओ खफा हैं। इनमें से कई सीईओ आईआईएम अहमदाबाद के प्रेजुएट हैं। आईआईएम अहमदाबाद के चेयरमैन और एलएटी के एग्जिक्यूटिव चेयरमैन एम एम नाइक ने बताया, 'आईआईएम अहमदाबाद को कंट्रोल करने का कोई भी कदम न सिर्फ इस संस्थान का स्तर गिराएगा, बल्कि ग्लोबल ब्रांड के तौर पर भी इसकी हैसियत घट जाएगी। यह कुछ रिवर्स गियर में ड्राइव करने जैसा होगा।'

1987 में इस संस्थान से पास आउट और आईगेट के सीईओ फणीश मूर्ति ने कहा, 'यहां गड़बड़ी नहीं है। इसमें छेड़छाड़ नहीं होनी चाहिए। एजुकेशन सेक्टर में कई तरह की समस्याएं हैं और सरकार उस तरफ अपना ध्यान लगा रही

है, जहां सब कुछ ठीकठाक चल रहा है।' हाल में छपी इकनॉमिक टाइम्स की खबर के मुताबिक, सरकार ने आईआईएम को एक काउंसिल के प्रति अवाबदेह बनाने का प्रस्ताव किया है। इस काउंसिल की अगुवाई केंद्रीय मानव संसाधन मंत्री करेंगे। आईआईएम-ए को प्रस्ताव के तहत कंट्रोल करने से इस आईआईएम को रजिस्टर्ड संस्थान का स्तर गिर जाएगा

बात है। इससे ये संस्थान स्टूडेंट्स को डिप्लोमा के बजाय डिग्री दे सकेगे। फिलहाल, आईआईएम से स्टूडेंट्स को डिप्लोमा मिलता है। खबरों के मुताबिक, नए आईआईएम संस्थान जहां सरकार के इस प्रस्ताव से अपनी साख बढ़ने की संभावना से खुश हैं, वहीं आईआईएम अहमदाबाद के नेतृत्व में

पुराने संस्थानों को यह रास नहीं आ रहा है। प्राइवेट इक्विटी फंड क्लेटन ड्यूबिलियर एंड राइस में सीनियर पार्टनर और यूनिवीर की ग्लोबल टॉप मैनेजमेंट टीम के पूर्व सदस्य एम मानविंदर सिंह बंगा ने बताया, 'मुझे नहीं लगता कि स्वायत्तता की कीमत पर डिग्री का सौदा आईआईएम के लिए किसी भी तरह से फायदेमंद है।'

बंगा आईआईएम अहमदाबाद (1977) के गोल्ड मेडलिस्ट हैं। नैस्कॉम के पूर्व प्रेसिडेंट और आईआईएम अहमदाबाद के प्रेजुएट किरण कार्निंक ने कहा, 'डिग्री का प्रस्ताव स्वागत योग्य कदम है, लेकिन यह संस्थानों की आजादी पर अंकुश लगाए बगैर मिलनी चाहिए।'

Business Line, ND 30/01/2013 p-8

## Stemming the rot in higher education



B.S. RAGHAVAN

OFFHAND

Going by the widely prevalent perceptions of discerning observers, there has been a sharp fall in the quality of higher education in India. Already, there is a cry among industry associations and business firms about the abysmally low percentage of graduates, post-graduates and professional degree holders measuring up to the performance expected of them as employees. Figures about the employability of notionally-educated candidates have not been more than 10-15 per cent of the lakhs of graduates churned out on the assembly line mode by the various universities in India.

Some recent media reports reveal a

really scary scenario. In a recent teachers' eligibility test, conducted by the Tamil Nadu Recruitment Board, it was found that as many as 42,000 out of 6.5 lakh teachers who took the test did not know how to fill the application forms and committed a variety of mistakes, including omission to fill their names in the allotted column. Even if this could be excused, when the answer sheets were evaluated, only 2,448 could be declared to have passed.

I am sure that the situation in other States is equally disturbing, if not even more so. If this is the quality of teachers who act as feeders for institutions of higher learning, one shudders to imagine the snow-balling effect of the extensive damage being done to the minds of young students who are taught by them and the potential danger it poses to the future of the country in terms of the quality of citizens, standard of governance and conduct of public affairs.

At the other end of the spectrum, the procedures, topics for research,

and credentials of guides/advisors, with respect to conferment of Ph.D.s have become a cause of intense alarm for anyone with a modicum of awareness of what is going on. At one time, as a member of some University/College bodies to select faculties, I found a Ph.D. on a subject pertaining to English literature not knowing who the Lake Poets were and a Ph.D. in Law not being able to recall the writs mentioned in the Constitution and the purposes they were intended to serve.

### SEVERE INDICTMENT

As per Srilata A Zaheer who has become the first Indian woman to head the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, "In the past 15 years...we have seen a decline in the numbers of high-quality applicants from India into US business PhD programmes. This does not bode well either for more Indian-origin deans in the future or, of greater concern, to meet a growing need for research-trained faculty both in India and worldwide."

Another write-up by *Careers360* published on November 11, 2012, is more severe in its indictment: "...a PhD should be the easiest degree to earn in India. No screening tests and interviews, no coursework, and no rigorous assessment of research work. Just a Master's degree in hand and a pre-determined waiting period will lead you to a doctorate!"

### GREASING PALMS

It quotes Sushil Upadhyay, Assistant Professor at Uttarakhand Sanskrit University, as saying: "...anyone can virtually buy a PhD degree. You just need to pay two to three lakhs to the right person."

The general purport of his remarks is that in many universities, registration, coursework, thesis and viva-voce can all be "effectively" managed by greasing the palms.

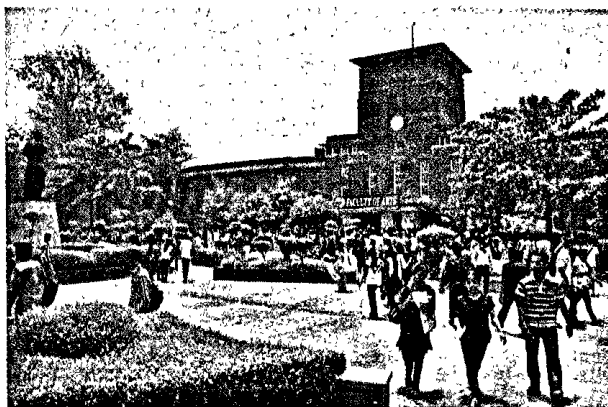
Things will head downhill with Ph.D.s now being offered through distance education mode also, without any guidelines being set by the University Grants Commission.

And finally, the incubus of falling standards seem to be slowly spreading to IIMs and IITs, thanks to the cumulative effect of the malaise afflicting higher education.

(Even in industrial countries, as an article, 'The University's Dilemma' published on November 27, 2012 in the strategy+business Web site points out: "Today, many academics invest their efforts in relatively narrow research, writing papers read only by other academics, with relatively little time spent teaching and training students. ....the research simply offers alternative perspectives on long-standing, foundational knowledge such as the writings of Aristotle.")

All the hopes built round the legislation to give effect to the Right to Education incorporated in the Constitution will come to nothing without remedying the ills of commercialisation, quotas, constant lowering of bars such as pass marks, grades and the like, and the poor quality of the faculty and infrastructure in higher educational institutions.

**INITIATIVE**



**ELIGIBLE:** Central, State and deemed-to-be universities can be tagged as Innovation Universities. PHOTO: RAJEEV BHATT

# Out-of-the-box ideas

Aarti Dhar

Even as the Universities for Research and Innovation Bill, 2012 awaits Parliamentary approval, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued guidelines for a new scheme "Innovation Universities" with an aim to promote innovative ways of learning, teaching and research.

The scheme is meant to support "bold and big ideas" that require substantial support and flexibility; ideas that usually do not fit into any of the existing patterns of funding and do not, therefore, see the light of the day.

Central universities, State universities and deemed-to-be-universities — classified under Category A by the Tandon Committee — are eligible to be tagged as Innovation Universities. The universities should be NAAC 'A' accredited and having at least 10 years of standing at the time of application.

The Universities for Research and Innovation Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha on May 21, 2012 by the then Minister of Human Resource Development Kapil Sibal. The Bill seeks to allow the Centre to set up universities for research and innovation through notifications. These universities shall be enabled to emerge as hubs of education, research and innovation. They may also establish campuses in foreign countries.

Under the new scheme, universities can submit proposals on innovative teaching, educational and research programmes for

The UGC issues guidelines for a new scheme 'Innovation Universities' to promote innovative ways of learning, teaching and research

grants from the UGC under the XII Plan.

Both localised and generalised innovations will be recognised and supported. Innovation will include, but will not be limited to, innovative teaching/educational programmes including new types of degrees and courses, evaluation and creation of teaching and learning material.

The Human Resource Development Ministry had earlier planned to create 15 Innovation Universities but then drastically reduced the number and instead decided to grant funds to the existing universities, if found worthy.

The innovative research programme can include



**KNOWLEDGE HUBS:** Only if worthy. PHOTO: M. SRINATH

inter-disciplinary and cross-border challenges, creation of research facility that may be shared by a number of universities and research institutions; research that connects academic knowledge to 'traditional' and 'practical' knowledge or innovations that take place outside the academia.

Innovations in admission process and expanding access; innovative ways of improving diversity profile and deepening equity, of involving students in the decision making can form part of organisational innovation.

The proposed scheme is not intended to cover up-gradation of the overall infrastructure of the university, creation of new departments and centres in the established disciplines or those covered by existing schemes.

Financial grant will be given under three categories: 'Innovative Project' would involve a one-time grant of up to Rs. 25 crore and would typically relate to one or two specific objectives. An 'Innovative Programme' would involve a grant from Rs. 25 crore to Rs. 100 crore while 'Innovation University' shall be eligible to receive a grant from Rs. 100 crore up to Rs. 300 crore for a period of five years.

A Standing Committee on "Innovation Universities" shall evaluate the proposals submitted by the universities while the Detailed Project Reports would be studied by an Expert Committee. The recommendations would be placed before the UGC for a final decision.

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**One-year masters course in law gets UGC nod**

**Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN**

**New Delhi:** Universities can now introduce one-year master's degree in law (LLM) from 2013-14 academic session. The University Grants Commission (UGC), the regulatory authority of higher education in the country, had issued the guidelines for introduction of the one-year LLM programme. According to

the guidelines, the universities will have to conduct an all India admission test. Universities are also asked to make the course more rigorous as the duration has been reduced to one year.

Universities interested in introducing the programme must have a centre for Post-Graduate Legal Studies (CPGLS) as well and the one year programme will be divided into trimesters of 12 weeks each.

HT Indore

# Communication skills, consistency key to IIM-I PGP

**AGENDA** Letters sent to shortlisted candidates; interview and written ability test after April 6

**Amrita U Kadam**

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**INDORE:** Consistent performance, confidence and communication skills are the few parameters that Indian Institute of Management, Indore (IIM-I) would be stressing on for admitting students to the postgraduate programme 2013-15 batch.

The institute released the list of the shortlisted candidates on Monday and has also sent the call letters to them, informed admission chair Rohit Kapoor.

Call getters this time are the students who have scored above 90 percentile (for general category) in the Common Admission Test and also based on their scores of the higher secondary, senior secondary and graduation examination.

“We released the list yesterday and the candidates can check it on the website. The second phase of admission process, which would be personal interview (PI) and written ability test (WAT), of these candidates would begin after April 6 and would go on till mid-May.”

This time, PI and WAT will have 35% and 15% weightage and the remaining 50% weightage would be given to the academic performance in the higher secondary, senior secondary and graduation examination divided as 17, 17 and 16% respectively.

“The CAT score would be counted twice so that we would get consistent performers. We would check their communication skills and their ability



**PI AND WAT WILL HAVE 35% AND 15% WEIGHTAGE AND 50% WEIGHTAGE WOULD BE GIVEN TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

to write. They would be given topics to write on their logical reasoning and articulation would help them score,” said Kapoor.

He added that there isn't any change in the format for the WAT and PI and it would be the same as last year.

He said the students will have to perform well in WAT/PI as 50% weightage would matter a lot to make way for them into the IIM-I. Kapoor said the composite score of WAT/PI and past academic record will be considered for the final selection.

The students of IIM-I have also shared information about their iMentor programme where the current PGP students would guide the newcomers by solving their queries online to clear their doubts about WAT/PI and to seek their guidance about how to give their best and make a mark in this stage of admission process.