

Newspaper Clips

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Students can now take JEE in Urdu as well



■ Over 60,000 students will take JEE (mains) in Gujarati, Marathi and Urdu for admission into IITs.

HT FILE

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NEW DELHI: For the first time, over 60,000 students will take the joint entrance examination (JEE-mains) in languages like Gujarati, Marathi and Urdu at a few centres in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Registration for the JEE (mains) closed on Monday. The top 1.5 lakh students from JEE (mains) will be allowed to write the JEE (advanced) exam for admission to different IITs. The rest will seek admission to other central and state institutes.

In 2013, only Gujarat had agreed to adopt the result of JEE (mains) for admission to its technical institutes. This year, three states — Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha — have also joined the exam system.

Students who have opted

for any of the 35 centres in Maharashtra can write the exam in Marathi, Urdu, English or Hindi. Those opting for a centre in Gujarat can write the exam in Gujarati, English or Hindi.

According to official sources, nearly 340 students have registered for writing the exam in Urdu, 938 in Marathi and 60,142 in Gujarati.

“This is a positive trend and will help in giving a level playing field. We are hopeful that more states will join us next year. This will give us a wider platform to include more regional languages for the exam. In the long run, it will benefit the students,” a senior official said.

With three more states joining, the overall number of registrations for JEE (mains) has also increased this year as compared to last year.

यमुना नदी पर नया पुल बनाने के लिए 142.70 करोड़ मंजूर

अरविंद विश्राम

नोएडा। यमुना नदी पर बने ओखला बैराज पुल के समानांतर एक और पुल बनाने के लिए प्राधिकरण अध्यक्ष व मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी (सीईओ) रमा रमण ने 142 करोड़ 70 लाख का बजट मंजूर कर दिया है। मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी की मंजूरी के बाद वर्क सर्किल ने पुल बनाने का नोटिस इंवाइट टेंडर (एनआईटी) तैयार कर टेंडर की कार्यवाही शुरू कर दी है। इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ टेक्नोलाजी (आईआईटी) नई दिल्ली ने इस बजट को पहले ही मंजूर कर दिया है।

अब प्राधिकरण को सिर्फ नेशनल बोर्ड ऑफ वाइल्ड लाइफ की अनापत्ति का इंतजार है। ओखला पक्षी विहार की सौ मीटर की परिधि में होने के कारण बनने वाले पुल के लिए नियमानुसार नेशनल बोर्ड ऑफ वाइल्ड लाइफ का अनापत्ति प्रमाण-पत्र जरूरी है। अप्रैल तक इसके मिल जाने की उम्मीद है। इस बीच टेंडर की कार्रवाई पूरी कर ली जाएगी। फिर अप्रैल में काम शुरू कर 24 महीने में

मिलेगी सुविधा

- प्राधिकरण अध्यक्ष व सीईओ ने दी मंजूरी
- अप्रैल महीने से शुरू होगा काम

इसे पूरा कर लिया जाएगा। इसके बनने के बाद नोएडा-दिल्ली के बीच बगैर जाम के सफर किया जा सकेगा। दिल्ली-नोएडा को जोड़ने वाले कालिंदी कुंज ओखला बैराज पुल पर रोजाना लाखों वाहनों की आवाजाही होती है।

सुबह-शाम यहां रोजाना दिल्ली-नोएडा आने जाने वालों को घंटों जाम में जूझना पड़ता है। इस जाम को खत्म करने के लिए प्राधिकरण यहां पहले से बने हुए छह लेन के 550 मीटर लंबे पुल के समानांतर छह लेन का एक और पुल बनाएगा। नए पुल के बन जाने के बाद यह पुल नोएडा से दिल्ली जाने के लिए होगा।

पुराना पुल दिल्ली से नोएडा आने के लिए होगा। इस तरह से यमुना नदी पर वाहन चालकों को एक साथ 12 लेन के पुलों से आवाजाही की सुविधा मिलेगी।

'यहां सीटें खाली नहीं रही अब तक'

आईआईटी मद्रास की मानव संसाधन विभाग की रिपोर्ट पर प्रतिक्रिया

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देश के लाखों छात्र-छात्राओं का किसी भी तरह भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थानों (आईआईटी) में पढ़ने का एक अदद सपना होता है, लेकिन देश में विरले ही छात्र-छात्रा होते हैं जिनका आईआईटी में चयन हो पाता है। इस बड़े सपने के बीच हाल ही केंद्रीय मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय (एचआरडी) की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि आईआईटी में लगातार सीटें खाली पड़ी रहती हैं और छात्रों द्वारा प्रवेश नहीं लिया जा रहा है। इससे सबसे बड़ा सवाल यह उठ खड़ा हुआ है कि क्या छात्रों का आईआईटी जाने का सपना अब धीरे-



धीरे दरक रहा है? यह देशभर में एक बड़ी बहस का मुद्दा बन गया है कि क्या आईआईटी की गरिमा का परभाव हो रहा है या आईआईटी का स्तर अब वह नहीं रहा जिसके लिए वह विख्यात है? ऐसे दर्जनों सवाल आईआईटी पर उठ खड़े हुए हैं।

एचआरडी की रिपोर्ट पर अब तक देश के किसी भी आईआईटी ने मुंह खोलने की हिमाकत नहीं की थी,

लेकिन आईआईटी मद्रास ने इस रिपोर्ट पर अपना मुंह खोलते हुए सीधे इस बात से इन्कार कर दिया कि मद्रास आईआईटी में अब तक एक भी सीट खाली नहीं रही। अभी तक कोई वर्ष ऐसा नहीं गया जब मद्रास आईआईटी में सीटें खाली रही हों और छात्रों ने प्रवेश न लिया हो। जहां तक देश के अन्य आईआईटी संस्थानों का सवाल है तो उसके लिए वे संस्थान

नहीं बल्कि उनमें प्रवेश लेने वाले छात्र-छात्राएं अधिक जिम्मेदार हैं। इसके पीछे कारण बताया गया कि हमेशा छात्रों की अपनी एक पसंद होती है कि वे इस आईआईटी में जाएं, लेकिन वे उसमें नहीं जाएंगे। छात्रों की इसी मानसिकता के चलते हो सकता है कुछ आईआईटी संस्थानों में सीटें खाली रह गई हों। अन्यथा होता कम ही ऐसा है।

सवाल ही नहीं उठता

यह सवाल ही नहीं उठता कि आईआईटी संस्थानों में सीटें खाली रह जाती हैं। मैंने एचआरडी की रिपोर्ट नहीं पढ़ी है, लेकिन जहां तक सीटें खाली होने का सवाल है, तो यह छात्रों पर भी निर्भर करता है क्योंकि उनकी भी अपनी पसंद होती है कि वे कहां पढ़ना पसंद करते हैं। इसी के चलते कई बार सीटें खाली रह जाती हैं।

वी.नागराजन, सब-रीजिस्ट्रार,

आईआईटी मद्रास

प्रतिष्ठा कायम

अभी तक तो मैंने ऐसा नहीं सुना है कि किसी आईआईटी संस्थान में सीटें खाली रह जाती हों और छात्रों ने प्रवेश परीक्षा पास करने के बाद भी एडमिशन न लिया हो। जहां तक आईआईटी की गरिमा या उसकी प्रतिष्ठा का सवाल है तो यह अब भी कायम है।

अनुकृति गुप्ता, द्वितीय वर्ष की छात्रा, केमिकल ब्रांच, आईआईटी, मद्रास

Send out positive vibes, UGC



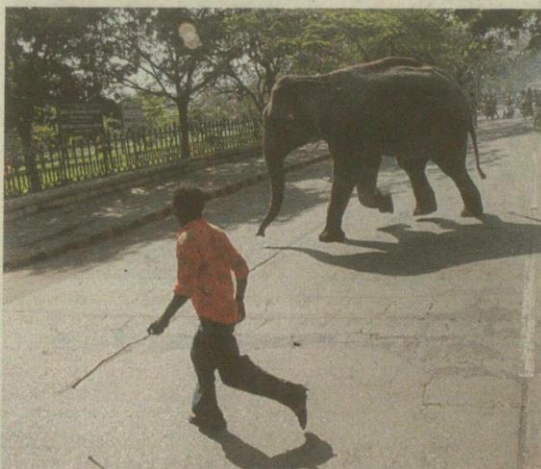
C. GOPINATH

▶ *Institutions will innovate and excel only if they are built on a foundation of trust.*

In a speech at a high school in Brooklyn, New York, a few months ago, US President Barack Obama is reported to have spoken about the need for reforms in education to enable students to innovate and compete in a global world in which jobs can go anywhere. He warned that billions of people from China and India were working hard to outsmart American students, especially in the field of mathematics and technology.

I don't know about China but the good news for Obama is that he need not worry about India. The University Grants Commission (UGC) seems to work hard to prevent the kind of innovation that institutions need to be working on, by assuming that all institutions are crooked and need to be dealt a heavy hand.

On December 23, the UGC issued a new set of guidelines concerning professional institutions such as engineering and management colleges and wanted all the stakeholders to respond by December 30. That is perhaps unrealistic, for those in the field of education know educational institutions are usually in suspended animation during the holiday period.



Punishing ways: This is hardly the way to bring universities to heel. — M. A. Sriram

The UGC in its public notice also says that comments were invited earlier from stakeholders, and a sub-committee considered them before these draft regulations were issued.

Yet, the Education Promotion Society of India that includes the heads of institutions that are affected by these guidelines, issued a statement that they were not consulted by the UGC while framing the regulations. Well, that is a matter between them.

FULL OF STRICTURES

My concern is that distrust seems to be the unstated theme of these regulations.

When regulations are designed, it is assumed that most would believe in and subscribe to the objectives, but a few would be likely to violate, and therefore punitive action is included to address the violations.

Alternatively, it can be assumed that everyone is likely to violate the

regulations, and they can be designed accordingly.

The UGC regulations seem firmly founded in the latter premise and are full of warnings and threats of what should not be done.

Let me take the example of a few of the rules that I found. A list of course names are given that institutions need to use. There is no logic to this kind of standardisation.

An institution is also required to declare a model curriculum. I assume that will tell you what the content of the course will be, which is more meaningful. Now, if you wish to design a new course, "prior approval by the university shall be necessary" although there is no information if the UGC is bound to clear a new proposal within any stipulated time.

Shouldn't we want our institutions to quickly innovate and design new courses to meet market needs than fit them into straitjackets?

Another regulation deals with part-time programmes and defines part-time as "activities conducted in evening time, i.e. 5.30 pm to 9.30 pm (six days a week) wherever first/general shift working exits (sic)".

I dread to think of what happens to an institution that feels the need to run classes from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. because its students find that more convenient. Can't institutions be trusted to plan their own time schedule?

LEARN TO TRUST

Let us take one more example. The rules say, "Grant of approval is based on self disclosure of required facilities and infrastructure availability as submitted in the application. An affidavit sworn before First class Judicial Magistrate or Notary or an Oath Commissioner that the technical and/or professional college has required facilities and infrastructure as per the provisions of this (sic) regulations and in the absence of which the university is liable to invoke the provisions, both civil and/or criminal as per the regulations in place, is to be submitted."

These are institutions that are set up to educate individuals, grant degrees and diplomas, and prepare our youth for the future. And we don't trust the leadership of the institution enough to assume they must be telling the truth about what facilities they have. Does swearing before a judicial magistrate make a dean more likely to tell the truth?

An alternative way of dealing with this would be to say that anybody submitting information that is found to be untrue would be punished.

In this case, you assume trust but penalise those who violate that trust, rather than assume every institution will cheat and require them to get some judicial magistrate to endorse this.

Similarly, every institution is expected to send a compliance report every year. A system of trust would say that once approved, you maintain records every year, but inspection will take place every five years or so; or if you have doubts about some institutions at the start, put them on probation and require them to submit more frequently.

INNOVATE AND PROSPER

The field of education is one that must seriously foster innovation for that is the need of the hour. Massive open online courses (MOOCs) are attracting large numbers of students around the world. People are wondering if degrees are relevant anymore. The student of the future may only be looking to see what knowledge she can obtain, or skills he can build, rather than acquire a degree certificate. This generation of school and college students accesses information in completely different ways from the previous, thanks to the ubiquitous web that can be reached from a phone, a tablet, and perhaps some other device that is in the process of discovery. Instructors are having to re-learn how they will foster learning.

Even Obama, who has been complaining about the high cost of education and the need to improve access, has been facing complaints and resistance from institutions in the US who see increasing regulations hampering their ability to operate and meet desired objectives.

Our universities need to innovate, invent and excel. We need regulations that give them this freedom while certainly helping to ensure that certain minimum standards are met, rather than requiring all institutions to race to the bottom.

(The author is a professor and Dean of the Jindal Global Business School, Sonapat, Delhi NCR.)

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RESERVATION OF SEATS

THE TUG-OF-WAR BETWEEN THE UGC AND AICTE WILL, HOPEFULLY, BE RESOLVED SOONER RATHER THAN LATER, WRITES DEBAMEETA BHATTACHARYA

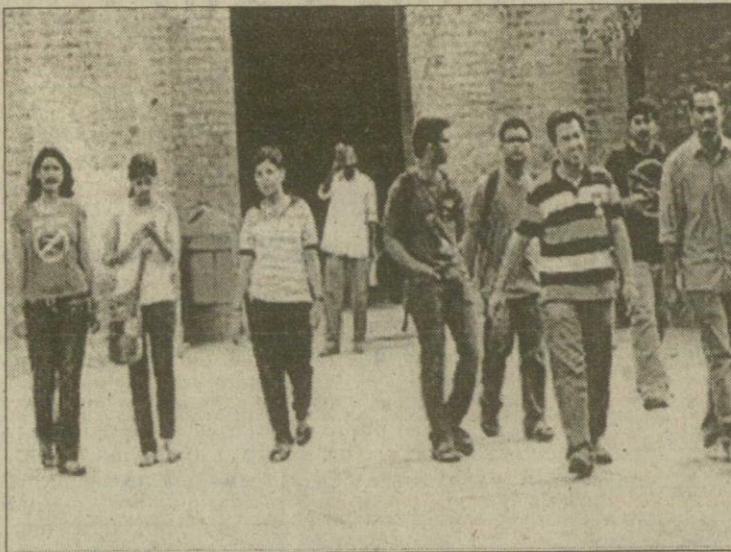
If you think chaos breaks out and drastic steps are taken only at the management or parliamentary levels, the latest buzz could prove you wrong. There has been a tug-of-war between the University Grants Commission and All-India Council for Technical Education for quite some time now as to who is going to shape the future of our budding engineers and managers. But if we go by the latest proposed directive of the UGC that says state universities could decide on plummeting admission seats in engineering colleges that remain vacant when this comes into effect, the technical and professional colleges will only be answerable to their respective universities, whereas the Aicte will be out of the picture.

The Union human resource development ministry, however, backed the UGC and asked the higher education regulator to go ahead with framing the rules. "The Aicte chairperson is upset that the council is losing its regulatory powers. But technical and professional education is currently unregulated. The government cannot allow such a state of vacuum to continue," according to a senior official of the ministry.

The UGC's action is in agreement with the Supreme Court's ruling that colleges need not seek Aicte approval to run technical courses. It said the UGC was the regulator for such courses and the Aicte was only an advisory body. Following the apex court's ruling, the ministry had started the process of amending the Aicte Act to overrule the decision. The ministry also decided on an ordinance as Parliament is not in session. But, in a U-turn, it backed the UGC's decision to frame the regulations, apparently because of the uncertainty over the passage of the ordinance.

Sources said the recent controversy over the ordinance on election reforms, which the government had to withdraw, must have also played on the ministry's mind.

After the new Act becomes operable and implemented in 2014, state universities could decide for themselves on dropping admission seats in engineering colleges that remain not reserved by applicants. It might be interesting to know that a handbook for affiliation that was drafted in advance by the UGC has now been uploaded on its official website for various stakeholders to see



A tug of war is on between the University Grants Commission and the All India Council for Technical Education over the Supreme Court order that approval of Aicte is not required to obtain permission and run MBA courses by private institutions since it does not fall under the definition of technical education.

and comment on. As stated in the new rules planned by the UGC, Aicte functioning will be limited to only affiliating universities in a state.

This function covers the allowance of establishing new colleges, change in location or site of an already set up and running college, extension of approval of functioning colleges and conversion of women's college into co-ed institutions, increase or reduction of admission seats allotted and offered by a college, shutting of institutions or closure of courses and matters linked to supernumerary or Non-Residential Indian seats. These are some of the issues that affiliated universities will decide upon.

The responsibilities of affiliating universities will also include approving changes in an institution's name, introducing dual degree and integrated/joint courses or evening classes and part-time programmes in the existing colleges. The universities will, in turn, be answerable to the UGC on all the stated issues. The draft is official but a final decision is yet to be out. Sources say it is expected to be announced in a few weeks' time. The directive has been in accordance with the Supreme Court's judgment of 25 April 2013, which stated that colleges affiliated to universities did not come under the purview of the definition "technical institution" under Section 2(h) of the Aicte Act, 1987.

Besides, the universities will also act as affiliating bodies of colleges. This will lead to reduction in the abnormal increase in seats, after the approval process authority is handed over to affiliating universities.

NALANDA UNIVERSITY 2.0

PAST REBORN

Ancient seat of learning that drew the best minds from all over the world will re-open by 2020

Indo-Asian News Service

The revived Nalanda University, an international centre of learning coming up in Bihar, is taking a small but positive step towards launching operations from later this year.

The first batch of students, faculty and staff are to move by February-end to Rajgir, about 100km from Patna, adjacent to where the sprawling international university is set to come up.

"By the end of February we are moving to Rajgir. We are taking hotels nearby, exploring all options," said an official source.

Nalanda University at present has 40 students or Nalanda fellows. Along with the faculty and staff, they would operate out of the temporary campus till the actual structure comes up.

"The Bihar government has offered us use of its health department office. The Bihar chief minister (Nitish Kumar) is personally monitoring the project," the source added.

MAJOR SUPPORT

The university, an initiative of the Indian government and the 18 East Asia Summit (EAS) countries, is coming up around 12km from the ruins of its ancient namesake that was flocked by thousands of scholars and thinkers from across the world till the 12th century. It was then destroyed by an invading Turkish army of Bakhtiyar Khilji, a general of Qutbuddin Aibak. It was set on fire by the invaders and the blaze in the huge library is believed to have raged for several days.

An around eight-km boundary wall marks the 446-acre campus where the modern centre of excellence is to come up.

The residential university, due to be completed by 2020, is to have seven schools — all for postgraduate and doctorate students.

The university, which has Nobel laureate



Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh shakes hands with Chinese Ambassador Wei Wei after signing an MoU on Nalanda University as PM Manmohan Singh and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang look on in Beijing, China (above); Nalanda ruins (right)

PTI & HT PHOTO

DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE HAS CLEARED THE ₹2,700 CRORE COST FOR NALANDA UNIVERSITY. BIHAR CM NITISH KUMAR IS MONITORING THE PROJECT

Amartya Sen as its chairperson, is to start its first academic session from this year. The first batch of students would be enrolled for two postgraduate programmes in history and ecology and environmental studies.

Last May, the Nalanda board approved the architectural plan of the proposed university

"The government is fast-tracking the university," said the source. The Nalanda University (Amendment) Bill 2013 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on Sep 5, 2013, by the external affairs ministry and was referred to a parliamentary standing committee. The committee's report was tabled in the Rajya Sabha during the December session.

The department of expenditure has cleared the ₹2,700 crore cost for the university to be spent over 10 years. The approval of the cabinet committee on economic affairs is now being sought.

The architectural design approved for the new university has proposed a lake on cam-

OLD AND NEW OF NALANDA

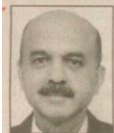
- Last May, the Nalanda board had approved the architectural plan of the proposed university
- An eight-km boundary wall marks the 446-acre campus
- Once a seat of learning flocked by thousands of scholars and thinkers from across the world till the 12th century, it was set on fire by an invading Turkish army of Bakhtiyar Khilji. The blaze in the huge library is believed to have raged for several days
- The residential university, due to be completed by 2020, is to have seven schools - all for postgraduate and doctorate students
- The university, which has Nobel laureate Amartya Sen as its chairperson, is to start its first academic session from this year
- The first batch of students would be enrolled for two postgraduate programmes in history and ecology and environmental studies



pus. The library, a dome-shaped structure, would come up in the middle of the lake and be half submerged. China has already committed \$1 million for the project, Singapore has pledged \$5-6 million and Australia about \$1 million Australian dollars. Last October, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh inked agreements with seven EAS countries that have pledged their commitment to the Nalanda University project.

The memorandums of understanding (MoUs) were signed with Australia, Cambodia, Singapore, Brunei, New Zealand, Laos and Myanmar. India signed the MoU with China during the PM's visit to Beijing.

ARJUN SUBRAMANIAM



THOUSANDS of personnel from the armed forces retire every year and resettle in civil society, with many taking up a second career. While attempts have been made by the services and the government to ensure integration of these personnel into society, much can still be done to leverage the wide range of competencies they have to offer. Recent initiatives to give a serious push to the education sector present an excellent opportunity for the three services to offer skilled manpower and help make India a large repository of human capital. In pursuit of this objective, there is a need to induct ex-servicemen into the education sector.

The diversity of competencies and qualifications possessed by retiring personnel makes it important to highlight these, so that matching them with suitable institutions becomes easier. Many personnel below officer rank in the army, who retire from the Army Education Corps (AEC) and other technical branches, may have had an opportunity to acquire a graduate degree through correspondence. Apart from an excellent potential to teach in schools, those

from the Corps of Signals, Corps of Engineers and Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (EME) are ideally suited to teach at vocational training institutes and ITIs. As far as the navy and air force are concerned, a large percentage of personnel who retire between the ages of 35-45 are graduates; a few are post-graduates, capable of being trained and absorbed at college level, and sometimes even at university level.

A majority of officers in the three services retire between the ages of 54 and 56. Many of them are post-graduates with varied competencies. A large number have teaching and instructional experience in institutions of professional learning spread across the services. The number of doctorates among officers is also increasing. While the corporate sector has welcomed retiring officers with open arms, the same cannot be said of education.

Opportunities abound for ex-servicemen to be absorbed in the sunrise education sector if the right approach is identified. Starting with a bottom-up approach, a number of personnel retire and settle down in their native villages or towns, taking up jobs in the unorganised sector or looking after their ancestral property. Those with gradu-

ate degrees can easily be motivated to become school teachers after appropriate training, which need not be a BEd. Personnel with a technical background can join vocational institutes. Officers with more qualifications can easily join colleges, ITIs and other vocational institutes as lecturers, administrators and counsellors after appropriate training. Highly qualified officers can be

MANY RETIRING officers are post-graduates with varied competencies. Many have teaching experience across the services. Opportunities abound for ex-servicemen to be absorbed in the sunrise education sector.

offered professorships, depending on their experience, competence and willingness. On a different plane, the UGC can offer competitive fellowships and visiting faculty positions to highly qualified serving officers for up to two years at prestigious institutions like IIT, NIT, AIIMS. At senior levels, retiring officers could be included in selection pan-

els for positions like deans or vice chancellors of universities.

The first step would be an inter-ministerial understanding and awareness drive, followed by familiarisation visits by HRD ministry officials and professionals from NCERT, UGC and vocational institutes to training establishments and units across the services. These visits could be coordinated by the Directorate General of Resettlement, and would lay the foundation of a long-term relationship between the services and the education sector.

The next step would be to identify vacancies and training requirements, apart from deciding on remuneration packages. Since higher education is being privatised, bringing the private sector on board is crucial for the success of this initiative. A sustained publicity and media campaign that revolves around nation-building and influencing the next generation with discipline and commitment would go a long way in motivating ex-servicemen to become teachers, administrators and leaders.

One of the major recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission was to facilitate lateral transfer of ex-servicemen at all levels into the paramilitary, Central and state police forces.

A similar move into education may be contemplated by the Seventh Pay Commission. Setting up training capsules and laying down accreditation criteria for ex-servicemen is not going to be easy. Two role models of soldier-scholars across the globe assuming positions of great academic responsibility in recent times have been Lt General Zameer Uddin Shah (retired), a former deputy chief of the Indian army, and Admiral James Stavridis of the US navy (retired), a former Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe. While Shah is currently the vice chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University, Stavridis has recently been appointed dean of the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts University. Both have demonstrated an engaging style of leadership, with emphasis on academic rigour and development of leadership skills. Let us not squander the opportunity to exploit the diverse potential of retiring men and women in uniform and inculcate in the younger generation the values of hard work, courage and discipline, along with academic excellence.

The writer is a serving air vice marshal of the IAF. Views are personal

SKILL ENHANCEMENT

Women scientists aim to be better managers also

Breaking the myth that only men can be better scientists and managers, 15 female scientists from various organisations in India have taken up a course in management at Management Development Institute, Gurgaon. This step will help them climb further in the 'promotion ladder' in their respective organisations.

'Advance Techno-Management Programme for Women Scientists', which started on December 23 last year will continue till January 25, at the MDI campus. The programme, designed under the 'Disha programme for women in Science' scheme 2013-14, is sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India. It aims to enhance the role of women scientists in research and development in the public sector and the scope of women's contribution in science and technology.

Scientists from organisations like Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Directorate of Maize Research, Jawahar Lal Nehru Bharatiya Chikitsa Evum, Ayurveda Mental Health Research Institute, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre are participating in this programme.

One of the scientists, Lakshmi VM, scientist/engineer, S F, ISRO, says, "This management course will help me in my promotion as in upper levels the percentage of managerial skills are more important than technical skills. I am already doing a half-managerial job and once I do this course,

it will help me gain a position in my organisation and I will be able to manage people right from the technical department to the senior scientists."

Talking about the hardships faced by female scientists, Lakshmi, adds, "The situation is getting better now and more women are entering this field. Due to family issues and marriages, women drop out of these jobs. After marriage, they have to shift with their spouses and hence, their career takes a backseat. But now the mindsets are changing and more and more women are becoming focused and career-oriented."

Another female scientist, Harshika Srivastava, scientist-D, DRDO, seconds Lakshmi on this matter, "This will give us a breakthrough in a man's world. A course in management will help me rise and

"Although being a woman I have never faced any kind of discrimination, but still the fact of the matter is that the higher-level positions, like director and deputy director are all taken up by males."

LAKSHMI VM

gain a more important position in my organisation and help me excel as a leader."

The training programme is an integration of science with management discipline. Women scientists from different levels are attending sessions on various subjects like women leadership, role of IT in scientific organisation, role

of social networking for research, corporate social responsibility in research and development organisation and conflict and negotiation management.

It is a known fact that almost 100 per cent higher level positions are occupied by men and women have to just be happy with middle-level positions in the organisations. Sharing views on this, Josna Susan Joy, scientist/engineer, S F, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, says, "Although being a woman I have never faced any kind of discrimination and people do respect our ideas, but still the fact of the matter is that the higher-level positions, like director and deputy director are all taken up by males. So, I think this course will definitely benefit me in the future."

The objective of the programme is to sensitise the participants about the relevant issues in science, technology and innovation policies and to create an understanding in management of R&D institutions. This development programme also aims to create awareness among the mass and to enhance the scope for women participation in science and technology.

Vinod Kumar Gupta, Dean, MDI is happy that they have been successful in bringing these women scientists to their campus and given them an opportunity to prove their mettle. "Most of them are really happy to get this exposure because management skills are very important in R&D too. It has been like an eye-opener for them and we hope to get even more response next year."

Neha Das



FEMALE BRIGADE (From left to right) Josna Susan Joy, Lakshmi VM and Harshika Srivastava.

PLAN HURDLES

WITH the 12th Plan clearly ruling out setting up of any prominent education central educational institute like IITs, IIMs or Central Universities, there is very little scope for the Pallam Raju-led HRD Ministry to roll out the goodies ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. They are, however, making do with whatever is possible within financial constraints. It is learnt that as many as 54 Kendriya Vidyalayas will be doled out before the polls with one each in the Gandhi stronghold Amethi and another in Raju's constituency Kakinada among others. That apart, while the ministry has quite a list of pending Bills, it will also make special effort to try and push through the Bill in the Lok Sabha to set up a Women's University in Rae Bareilly — Sonia Gandhi's constituency — when the House meets next.

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IITian's Urdu website completes 1 year

A non-profit online resource for promotion and propagation of Urdu literature and poetry, Rekhta, completes one year of serving numerous aficionados of ghazals and nazams on January 11. The website was launched on January 11, 2013, by the then communications minister Kapil Sibal. An initiative of IIT Kharagpur alumnus Sanjiv Saraf, the website has readers in 140 countries across the world. **TNN**