Newspaper Clips
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Hindustan Times ND 6/07/2014   P-4

Higher IIT 20 percentile cut-offs, experts say need to review system

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NEW DELHI: The top 20 percentile norm for eligibility for IIT entrance tests has once again created a ripple among academicians.

This is mainly because the cut-off to get into the top 20 percentile, of different boards, has gone up this year. Academicians strongly feel there should be an urgent review on this new format of IIT admissions introduced two years ago.

Children have performed better this year across different boards -- as has been revealed by the higher 20 percentile cuts-offs that were put on the JEE(advanced) website on Tuesday.

Former president of the IIT Delhi Faculty Forum, Sanjeev Sanghi, told HT, "It has been two years since the format was introduced. It is time we go for a review and fix it at a certain level. We had earlier suggested that there should be an option of either 20 percentile or 80 per cent, whichever is lower. The percentile system does not work favourably for the boards that give very high marks."

Dheeraj Sanghi, a professor at IIT Kanpur, agrees. "The 20 percentile system is a good criteria for making students more focussed for boards. The problem arises when some boards start giving marks liberally. It has become like a lottery. While this does affect IIT admissions to some extent, the bigger problem is for NIT admissions. We should urgently review this format and what it is has achieved in two years."

"It is a reflection that children are more serious towards their board exams. But at the same time the extremely high 20 percentile cut offs(90% and above) in some boards like the Andhra Board, Tamil Nadu board and the Karnataka board could cause resentment among many brilliant students. We must have a review of this system of admission," says a former IIT professor.

The 20 percentile cut-offs for different boards this year varies from 93.03% in Andhra Pradesh board to 51% in Tripura.

The government had introduced this format for IIT selection in 2013 pushing students to do better in their board exams. In this format, only the top-20 percentile students from each board could be eligible to get admission in the IITs. Before 2013, the only eligibility criteria for admission to IITs was to get a 60 percent in board exams.

While the 20 percentile cut off for CBSE was 81.6% last year, this year it has increased to 83.2%. For Andhra Board this has increased from 91.8% to 93.03%, for Karnataka board from 86% to 93%, for ISC from 83.2% to 85%, Tamil Nadu board from 90.9% to 91.7%. Some boards like Andhra, Gujarat , Goa and Punjab have more than one system of marking for board exams and so have different 20 percentiles.

CUT-OFFS	
Andhra Board	**93.03%**
CBSE	**83.2%**
ISC	**85%**
Karnataka Board	**93%**
Tamil Nadu	**91.7%**
UP	**79.2%**
Rajasthan	**69%**
Bihar	**60.8%**

THE 20 PERCENTILE CUT-OFFS FOR DIFFERENT BOARDS THIS YEAR VARIES FROM 93.03% IN ANDHRA PRADESH BOARD TO 51% IN TRIPURA

IIT में एडमिशन के लिए स्टेट बोर्ड्स का कट ऑफ 2013 से ज्यादा

http://www0.bhaskar.com/article/EDUC-EDNE-for-admission-in-iit-state-boards-cut-off-4669966-NOR.html

एजुकेशन भास्कर। जेईई-एडवांस के आधार पर आईआईटी में प्रवेश के लिए अलग-अलग बोर्ड्स के छात्रों के कट ऑफ घोषित कर दिए गए हैं। एडमिशन के लिए टॉप 20 परसेंटाइल में आना अनिवार्य है।

महाराष्ट्र बोर्ड के छात्रों को टॉप 20 परसेंटाइल में आने के लिए 76.83 फीसदी (600 में 461) अंक चाहिए। पिछले साल के मुकाबले यह करीब 8 परसेंटेज पॉइंट ज्यादा है। सीबीएसई के छात्रों के लिए यह आंकड़ा 83.2 फीसदी है। सबसे ज्यादा कटऑफ कर्नाटक बोर्ड ऑफ प्री यूनिवर्सिटी एजुकेशन के छात्रों के लिए है।

बोर्ड के छात्रों को टॉप 20 परसेंटाइल में आने के लिए 93 फीसदी अंक चाहिए होंगे। आंध्र प्रदेश बोर्ड के छात्रों को 92 फीसदी और तमिलनाडु बोर्ड के लिए 91.7 फीसदी अंक जरूरी होंगे। लगभग सभी बोर्ड के छात्रों के लिए कटऑफ 2013 के मुकाबले ज्यादा है।

Times of India ND 6/07/2014p-3

Net-free app for women's safety

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Indian Institute of Technology Delhi and National Service Scheme have developed an Android app for women's safety. 'Safe Hands' can be used to send distress messages to contacts at the single press of a button and, unlike all other apps, does not require an internet connection to work.

The message would contain the location of the user—latitude and longitude—and their distance from a nearby location deemed a 'safe spot'.

The students and researchers came up with the app under an initiative called Stree formed in wake of rise in cases of sexual assault and rapes in metropolitan cities. Stree works for gender equality and eradication of sexual harassment. It also organizes gender sensitization sessions at IIT and DU colleges.

Distress message can be sent via the app which can be used by the receiver to summon immediate help from relatives or a competent authority. The database of 'safe spots' is pre-stored in the app. The location of the user is determined using GPS, eliminating the need of an active internet connection on the mobile phone.

IIT Delhi and National Service Scheme have developed Safe Hands, an Android app for women's safety

The app has been developed using feedbacks from students of IIT Delhi and DU taken through workshops and stalls organized by Stree. The app has won several awards, including Nina Saxena Excellence in Technology Award by IIT Kharagpur and Gandhian Young Technological Innovation Award by IIM Ahmedabad.

IIT-Kanpur not on top of toppers' mind anymore

- 6 Jul 2014, • Hindustan Times (Lucknow)

KANPUR: The Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) may enjoy the reputation of being India's premier engineering institute, but for the toppers of the JointEntrance Examination(JEE) its location in a non-metro city is such a drawback that they are not ready to take admission here.

Or what else could explain the fact that none of the first ten toppers took admission here and instead went to IIT Bombay, Delhi and Chennai to pursue their education.

Not just the top 10 rankers, only 2 of the first 100 rankers, have joined IIT-K this year, confirms RK Sachan, registrar, IIT-K.

According to him, the institute has been facing the decline in number of high ranking students taking admission here for the past three years and due to three main reasons.

Firstly, the institute is not situated in a metro city while most of the high ranking candidates preferred going to IITs situated in metro cities.

Secondly, for want of metro city facilities here, the big companies avoid coming here for campus placement which upset the students as they want jobs in big companies at a high pay package. Since the IIT Bombay, Chennai and Delhi attract the big companies, students prefer joining these IITs, he added.

Finally, the majority of candidates who appeared from the Mumbai, Delhi and the Chennai zones, preferred taking admission to the IITs near to their home town and avoided taking admission to IIT-K, the registrar said. For these reasons once again, the IIT-K failed to attract the JEE toppers for taking admission here. Besides, the institute has also failed to attract the candidates who wanted admission to the Computer Science and Engineering course this year

The chairman of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Kanpur Zone Dr Neeraj Misra said that only two candidates within one to 100 rank sought admission at the institute. The candidate with 40 and 100 ranks approached for admission here.

The number of candidates in other series of 100 all India rank has also been discouraging. While 41 candidates within 101 to 200 AIR applied for admission here only five candidates within 201 to 300 AIR sought admission here. Similarly, 11 candidates in each series of 301 to 400and 401 to 500 AIR came for admission at the IIT-K, Dr Misra said.

On the other hand, the candidates with one to 10 AIR preferred admission to IIT Mumbai and IIT Delhi. While 58 candidates within one to one 100 AIR went to IIT-Mumbai, the IIT-Delhi got 36 candidates within the same rank.

IndiaToday.in New Delhi, July 6, 2014 | UPDATED 17:37 IST

JEE (Advanced) 2014 second round counseling to be announced tomorrow

Joint Entrance Examination has closed the seat acceptance and first round of seat counselling and candidates who are allocated seats in the second round of allotments need to accept and make the online payment of provisional admission fee by July 10, 2014. The web release of the second round of seat allocation is expected on July 7, 2014.

The Architecture Aptitude Test (AAT) was taken by the qualified JEE Advanced 2014 candidates aspiring for Bachelor of Architecture (B Arch) courses on June 26, 2014 and the results were declared on June 29, 2014. The seat allotment will be made on the basis of the category-wise All India Rank (AIR) in the JEE Advanced 2014 and the order of choices exercised.

The deadline granted to JEE Advanced 2014 candidates who were allocated seats in the first round, to accept seats and make online payment of provisional admission fee, has been extended from July 4 to 5 pm on July 5, 2014. The web release of the first round of seat allocation was made on July 1, 2014.

The web release of the third round of seat allocation is expected on July 12, 2014.

Candidates need to note that the withdrawal of seats can be done from July 9 to 5 pm on July 11, 2014.

Of the 9,711 students selected for the admissions process after clearing JEE (Advanced), a total of 9,061 have accepted their admission and the remaining 650 students which includes many in the general category did not accept admissions.

JEE Advanced qualified candidates can gain admission into the undergraduate (UG) programs of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian School of Mines Dhanbad (ISM Dhanbad).

OPINION
PRANAB MUKHERJEE

'Education separates light and darkness'

Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya established in 1964 as University of Indore, reminds us of the great ruler Devi Ahilyabai Holkar who was a benevolent ruler of Malwa and commands great respect. The association of her name with the university places great responsibility on the university to combine its role in higher education with service to society.

It is said that India lives in villages. This is particularly true for Madhya Pradesh, a tribal — rural area-dominated state, with more than 72 per cent population living in rural areas. The ratio of tribal population to the total population in Madhya Pradesh is about two and a half times of that at the national level. Furthermore, there are 40 tribal development blocks out of 54 development blocks in the eight districts of Indore division. This implies that challenges of higher education in Madhya Pradesh are higher than those at the national level. Adequate interventions in terms of policies, plans and approaches are needed for the education of students drawn from tribal and rural backgrounds.

Friends, education separates light and darkness; advancement from backwardness; excellence from mediocrity. If one investment can truly define a subtle linkage to future progress, it is education. Countries built on the strength of education and knowledge have achieved development over longer periods of time. Such countries have exhibited greater adaptive powers to changes in resource endowments. If India has to be one of the front-ranking nations in the world, the way ahead is only through a robust education system. Accordingly, the government proposes to set up an Education Commission to draft a new education policy. The last modifications to the National Policy on Education was made in 1992. The country has witnessed tremendous changes since 1992. A new, comprehensive National Education Policy is the need of the hour in order to attune education to meet global challenges and address issues of quality, research and innovation as well as capitalise on the "demographic dividend".

India has a sizeable number of young people, with two-third of the population below 35 years of age. Their proper grooming is essential as they are our future. Sadly, enrolment in higher education is below 20 per cent in India. Recognising that this is not enough and may drag down the potential of our future generation, rapid strides have been made to expand the higher education infrastructure in recent years. The government now proposes to establish institutions of national importance such as IITs and IIMs in all the states.

A new, comprehensive National Education Policy is the need of the hour in order to attune education to meet global challenges

Yet, if we undertake an honest analysis of the state of higher education in our country today, it is evident that many higher academic institutions lack the quality to produce graduates for the global market. I have been sharing my concerns about the performance of Indian institutions in world university rankings during my visits to the universities. Not a single Indian university figures in the list of top 200 universities in the world.

We must transform our Universities into world class institutions. Indian civilisation has a long-standing knowledge tradition. Our ancient universities – Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramashila, Valabhi, Somapura and Odantapuri – were renowned seats of learning that attracted scholars from outside.

I am happy to find that our institutions have started to accord due seriousness to the rankings process. In September last year, the Finance module of IIM, Calcutta was adjudged by a reputed agency as the best amongst business schools offering the Master of Management programme. In the World University Ranking done subject-wise by another reputed agency, two IITs – Madras and Bombay – are amongst the top 50 institutions in civil engineering, while IITs – Delhi and Bombay – are in the top 50 in electrical engineering. I want our institutions to build up on these micro-level successes and achieve a much higher overall ranking.

Faculty is the bedrock of education. The quality of teachers determines educational standards. Several measures are required for faculty development. Vacant teacher positions have to be filled up on priority. Talented faculty from abroad must be hired to inject new thinking and diversity in academic approach. The Scholar-in-Residence 'ENCORE' programme and Faculty Recharge Programme of the UGC should be utilised better.

Many ills that afflict efficient functioning of our universities stem from the lack of good governance practices. Governance structures have to promote faster and transparent decision-making. In this context, the induction of reputed alumni into the governance mechanism could provide the dynamism that our institutions are often in short supply of. Alumni expertise can also be drafted to review existing courses and introduce new ones.

Technology is a knowledge carrier and information disseminator par excellence. Knowledge networks facilitate intellectual collaboration. They mitigate physical constraints as well. Effective use of technology-based media for greater academic exchange is the need of the hour. The government intends to promote launching of massive open online courses, virtual classrooms and also establish a national E-library.

It is now over 80 years since an Indian university produced a Nobel Prize winner. The last person to win the Nobel Prize while working in India was C V Raman in 1930. Amartya Sen, S Chandrashekar, Hargobind Khorana and Vekataraman Ramakrishnan were all graduates of Indian universities but obtained their Nobel Prizes while working in US universities.

If we have to change the above situation, the neglect of research in our universities must be reversed. We must adopt multi-disciplinary approaches in our academic system since most research activity requires the meeting of minds from diverse disciplines.

Edited excerpts from the speech made by the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee at the annual convocation of Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, June 28, 2014

Deccan Herald ND 6/07/2014   P-7

UGC amendment draws HRD Minister's attention

NEW DELHI: Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Smriti Irani may review a University Grants Commission (UGC) decision to allow founding presidents of private deemed universities, or their close relatives, to hold the post of chancellors.

The minister was learnt to have prima facie disfavoured the idea of giving such a leeway to private university founders, soon after she came to know that the UGC relaxed the provisions on appointing chancellors, sources said.

The commission had approved the amendments to the UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2010, on June 13 on the basis of an HRD Ministry directive in February, when the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government was in power. Irani is understood to have sought the details of the amendments to the regulations.

Despite the UPA directive, the approval of the new HRD minister is necessary before

Smriti Irani

a final call is taken on the issue.

"All the decisions taken by the UGC are subject to the approval of the ministry," a source said.

A committee of experts had formulated the regulations to put an end to the domination of founders and their relatives in the management of institutions. It, however, faced stiff opposition from many private deemed universities which demanded amendments in the provision, with some of them even filing petitions in court.

Both the UGC and the HRD Ministry initially resisted the demands of the private universities. During the UPA regime, former HRD minister M M Pallam Raju, however, decided that the regulations should be amended.

The UGC was subsequently directed to consider institutions' long-pending demands. The HRD ministry, however, said that the relaxation should only be for private institutions that had the status of deemed university for at least 25 years and had secured "A" rank from the NAAC. "The sponsoring society/trust/company of such an institution can also appoint the president/trustee/promoter of the sponsoring society/trust/company or his/her close relative as its chancellor provided that such a person is an eminent educationist or a distinguished public figure. The existing regulations may be amended accordingly," the UGC had ordered, complying with the ministry's directive.

DH News Service

Another licence raj must end

fifth
COLUMN
Tavleen Singh

THE MOST eloquent comment on the crisis in Indian higher education comes in the form of the long lines of anxious students outside colleges at this time of year. Students, who have worked hard to get marks in the nineties, fear they may not get admission to the colleges of their choice because there are 'cut-off' rates that can even be 100 per cent. The very idea of 'cut-offs' is peculiar to India, as are these queues outside colleges. But this is so normal for us that the media paid more attention to the ugly spat between the UGC (University Grants Commission) and the Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University.

The UGC should not have interfered in the university's right to devise its own courses, but the academics, activists and political commentators who supported the Vice-Chancellor failed to ask why there should not be autonomy all the way down the line. They never asked why the licence quota raj that controls the building of more colleges and universities should not be ended. It is because nobody asks the right questions that standards of higher education are so low today that Indian universities and colleges never rank among the best in the world.

Another question we do not ask is why no former Minister of Human Resource Development has ever managed to end the licence raj. Why has it been allowed to breed corruption, poor standards of learning and education mafias? Since new colleges and universities are built by quota under the licence raj, it is usually senior political leaders who end up getting the licences. This enables them to grab expensive urban land in the name of building a college or an institute of technical training.

It was this licence raj that prevented Kapil Sibal from allowing 1,500 new universities to be built. The former HRD Minister told me in 2009 that India needed 1,500 new universities to be built urgently to cope with the rapidly increasing numbers of students who now choose to go to college. Ironically, those who do not manage to find admission in Indian colleges find it quite easy to find a place in foreign universities.

So it is not the lack of ability that cuts short their learning, but lack of opportunity. All this has happened in the name of making college education affordable for students from financially backward communities. In fact, what the leftist thinkers who control academia did was restrict learning and lower standards. The only solution now is to disband the UGC and its technical cousin, the AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education). People who run private technical colleges say that the powers of the AICTE to micromanage technical education are limitless. So technically, you can be fined for helping your son do his science homework.

The new Minister of HRD has the chance to do for higher education what Dr Manmohan Singh did for Indian industry in the Nineties: abolish the licence raj. When she makes her new education policy, she needs to begin by stating that she wants 1,500 new universities to be built over the next five years and anyone who wants to build them will need no licences. The UGC can be restricted to setting standards for accreditation. And, providing financial assistance to needy students instead of to institutions, as it currently does. Student loans and scholarships should become its main endeavour instead of interference in academic courses and salaries. Experts estimate that Indian universities face a shortage of more than 5 lakh faculty members and that one big reason for this is the low salaries on offer. So the best Indian professors prefer to teach in foreign universities.

The crisis in higher learning is so daunting that instead of worrying about Smriti Irani's educational qualifications, what we should worry about is whether she has the guts to make a real difference. She has the choice of just tinkering as her predecessors have done, or of going down in history as a liberator. If she makes the second choice, she will need immense courage because of the vested interests lined up against her. What might help persuade her to dismantle the licence raj is if she keeps in mind that unless she does this, there is not the smallest chance of the Prime Minister's dream of a shining new India coming true.

This dream can turn into a real nightmare, as the Prime Minister himself often points out, if the Indian economy is unable to create jobs for the 15 million young Indians who come into the workforce every year. These jobs can only be created if these young Indians are educated enough to be employable. How can they if we leave higher learning in the hands of officials whose main aim is to keep their own jobs safe by not letting go of quotas and licences?

Follow Tavleen Singh on Twitter @tavleen_singh

Edu pact: Indian signatory wasn't even in Mauritius

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: As international cooperation goes, history was created last November when Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) of Mauritius and Association of Indian Universities (AIU) signed an agreement. The venue was Mauritian capital of Port Louis, but the Indian signatory was not present there. He was somewhere in India.

The Indian delegation consisting of then HRD minister M M Pallam Raju, senior HRD and UGC officials came up with a novel method. After the TEC representative signed, the last page of the agreement was scanned and sent to an AIU official who was not even in Delhi. He was asked to sign the agreement, scan it again and mail it back.

The TEC-AIU agreement and subsequent agreement between UGC and TEC in January this year have become a riddle as more and more layers are coming out in the open. Though the UGC had referred only the UGC-TEC agreement to the HRD ministry for examination, a comprehensive look at both of them revealed many missing links and a possible scam. Within the ministry there is a pall of silence as officials refuse to talk about the agreement. Show cause notice that was being sent to UGC chairperson Ved Prakash has been put on hold but there is a likelihood of he being asked to proceed on leave.

One, why was an AIU official sitting in India forced to sign an agreement. An AIU official asks, "We were only shown the last page. We do not even know if the idea to

> **After the TEC representative signed the agreement in Port Louis, the last page of the document was scanned and sent to an AIU official. He was asked to sign the agreement, scan it and mail it back**

sign an agreement came up in Mauritius or was it preplanned. Then why no one from AIU was made part of the delegation? Why did HRD ministry did not object to the manner in which signing was done? What was the rush to sign the agreement when the existing pact was to expire only in 2015?"

Subsequently, it became clear that TEC-AIU agreement was important for UGC. In January when a UGC delegation went to Mauritius it took a direct clearance from Pallam Raju instead of the ministry.

The agreement between UGC-TEC made a mention of TEC-AIU agreement while talking about mutual recognition and equivalence of qualification between the two countries. However, AIU sources say the TEC-AIU agreement has nothing to do with mutual recognition and equivalence. "Why did UGC which for many years was forcefully telling Eastern Institute for Integrated Learning in Management to close its Mauritian campus stopped sending directives after last September," the AIU official asks.

Times of India ND 6/07/2014 P-6

# DU scientists find cure for drug-proof TB

Shreya Roy Chowdhury | TNN

New Delhi: Delhi University scientists, led by Rup Lal from the zoology department, have managed to produce an antibiotic that works even against multi-drug-resistant TB. Their paper, accepted by The Journal of Biological Chemistry and published online, is 10 pages of impossible tongue-twisters but the upshot, as Lal's PhD student Anjali Saxena explains, is: the bacterium *Amycolatopsis mediterranei S699* has been "genetically manipulated" to produce a chemical that's shown "excellent antibiotic potential" even against MDR-TB.

The *A. mediterranei S699*, discovered in 1957, produces the compound rifamycin B which has antibiotic properties. "But its activity is low so six derivatives were created, of which rifampicin is most effective against tuberculosis," explains Saxena, "It's been used since the 1960s." But, as the paper explains, "A long period of use and a combination of poor compliance and poor medical supervision have resulted in rifamycin-resistant strains of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*."

Lal and team have created the mutant strain of *A. mediterranei 34* such that it produces 24-desmethylrifamycin B which is rifamycin B with a single methyl group (CH3) "knocked off" from the 24th position. 24-desmethylrifamycin B is chemically altered to produce 24-desmethylrifampicin which has shown "antibiotic potential against MDR strains of TB."

Rup Lal (in photo) led a team of scientists who have produced a chemical that has shown excellent antibiotic potential even against MDR-TB
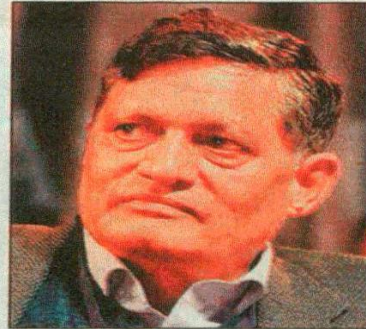
in Germany," says Lal, "We developed a system to negotiate with the bacterium *A. mediterranei S699*." That's as far as they got in 1991. "My wife and I worked for nearly three years in Germany without success." Back in India, he moved from Sri Venkateswara College to the zoology department and set about "to develop a system… for the production of rifamycin B analogue(s) that…could be used against multi-drug-resistant strains of TB."

"From 1992 to 2010, we got negative results," Lal recalls, "It became difficult to face students who'd worked hard without success. Without results we couldn't publish and were unable to get funds." He was berated often for working on what looked like a lost cause. Finally, in 2011—two decades after Lal and his wife found a way to "modify the producer strain"—a student, Aeshna Ni-

MBA in Meltdown
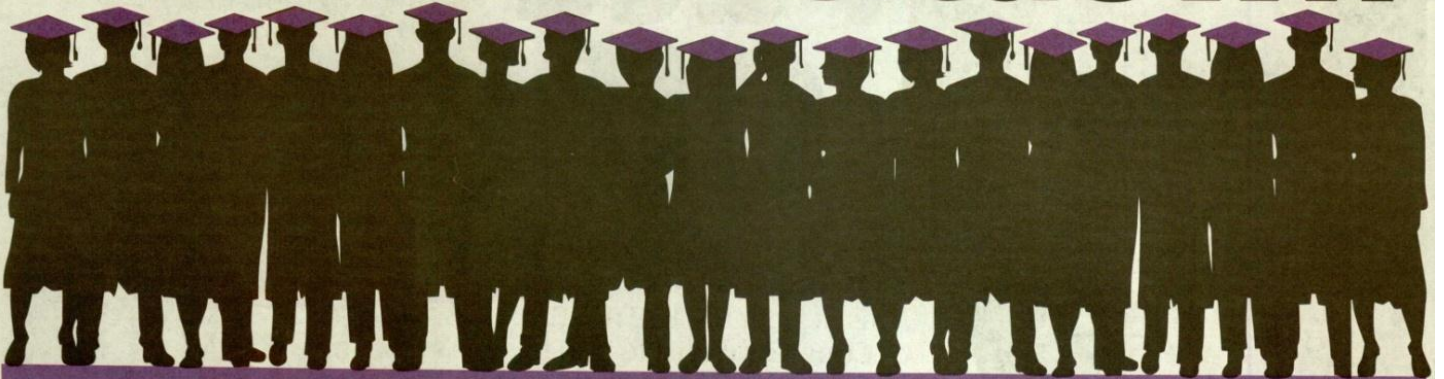
A glut in supply and constricted demand are leading to an army of unhappy management graduates, raising uncomfortable questions about a once coveted degree

:: **Rahul Sachitanand**

Two years after graduating with a master's in business administration (MBA) from GLA University, affiliated to the UP Technical University in Noida, Isha Singh, 25, discovered how difficult life can be in the real world. While she specialized in HR and marketing, the best role she could find herself was as an HR executive in a small firm in Udaipur, Rajasthan. Under pressure from her parents, she also studied for entrance exams for government jobs during her year-long stint, before quitting to further add to her academic qualifications and in the hope of a better job.

While Singh spent nearly a year in the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Delhi, her move has yielded few results. "I thought this was a good additional qualification, but I am yet to get a job even though I have been interviewed by at least six companies," she says. "I'm confused and clueless on the way forward."

AK Verma, dean of placements for GLA University, declined to answer queries on the issue, both on the phone and by email.

Singh's quandary is hardly new across India. As young executives queue up to apply to apply for business schools, they are faced with increasingly gloomy prospects. While companies may use the MBA as a basic filter, they are getting increasingly picky with their hires. The management education sector is being roiled by a massive oversupply of talent, coupled with shrinking demand from companies.

Thousands of executives who flocked to colleges over the past six or seven years to bolster their CVs are now facing tough prospects. While those from obscure colleges are struggling for jobs, further up the pecking order graduates in the past couple of years are having to struggle for their preferred role (say, marketing); and, in the top tier too, the gulf between expectation and reality has only widened.

The halo attached to the MBA has sharply faded.

From Worker to Leader

According to estimates from Elements Akademia, a pan-India chain of institutes that focuses on making youth employable, barely a fifth of the students at these lesser colleges get placed. While sectors such as information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services (ITeS) may be generating thousands of jobs, the students graduating from these colleges aren't up to speed on many skillsets demanded by employers and remain unhireable.

Another factor, specific to India, is the nature of students who opt for management programmes. In developed markets, most MBA candidates have five or more years of experience before they apply. What's more the pool of MBA applicants is more diverse — more people from liberal arts, science and other fields.

In India, curiously, engineers dominate, since it's seen as a quick way to a fancier job and heftier designation. However, when the placement season yields few lucrative offers, students opt for whatever they can lay their hands on. "I was a fresher and I was a non-engineer," says Arul John, a graduate from a B-school in Bangalore, who settled on a job with an out-of-home solutions firm, when faced with few offers.

In the past six or seven years, MBA institutes have been in a rush to tap

RAHUL ROY, 25

MBA FROM:
Aurora PG College, Hyderabad

WANTED: A job at a top digital marketing firm

GOT A JOB:
With a small agency in Hyderabad

Education Mismanagement

According to research agency Crisil, the number of business schools increased from **3,000 in 2009-10 to 4,500 in 2012-13**, with **no** corresponding increase in demand

Many institutes **struggled to stay afloat**, with **poor placement, ill-trained faculty** and **few corporate tie-ups**

According to Crisil, some **176 institutes shut** between 2012-13 and 2013-14 due to their **poor performance**

Students with **lofty goals** of investment banking and consulting careers from the struggling colleges **ended up under employed**

The spurt in MBA colleges mimicked the **explosive growth for engineering** programmes, followed by a rapid cooling

Growth in Institutes vs Student Intake

STUDENT
INTAKE

247,201
2006-07

311,129
2009-10

354,421
2013-14

2,614

3,290

3,364

NUMBER OF INSTITUTES
(AICTE affiliated only)

Source: AICTE

CAT takers for the past five years

	NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	TEST TAKERS
2009	241,000	230,000
2010	204,000	185,000
2011	205,000	186,000
2012	214,000	195,000
2013	194,516	173,738

Source: AICTE

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the burgeoning demand from executives keen to upgrade their skills. Much of this demand has been driven by engineers keen to grow from being grunt workers to team leaders and managers. And, the belief has been that once they return to work, a fatter pay cheque and greater responsibilities await them.

A muted economy and oversupply of management graduates have put paid to many of those dreams. In a hurry to establish their institutes, promoters have paid scant attention to building pedagogy, hiring strong faculty and attracting top companies to hire their talent. "I am of the firm opinion that bad schools must be shut down. Fly-by-night business schools shouldn't be allowed to take students for a ride," says Devanath Tirupati, dean (academic) and director in-charge, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore.

Students from these institutes would agree. "We had a class of about 400 students and no more than 100 got placed," says Rahul Roy, 25, a graduate of Aurora PG College in Hyderabad. Unlike top-tier institutes such as the IIMs or the Indian School of Business (ISB), students like Roy had to fend for themselves, relying on their own contacts and persistence to get hired.

Roy was lucky; he managed to get a job in a small digital marketing agency, but is bitter about how his MBA was sold to him. "The college spoke of some large companies visiting the college, but few of them actually turned up and fewer yet hired anyone," he says.

According to Narasimha Rao, deputy director of placements, Aurora Group, some 60 companies visited the MBA campuses this year and placement has been sharper than previously. He also blamed "the poor attitude of students" for news of underwhelming placements and said the group was building strong ties with industry to place more students.

Structural Problems

Students at the lesser-known B-schools are quick to accuse their institutes of poor placement and under-investing in their faculty and infrastructure. Setting up a business school is a time-consuming and expensive process, say experts, and those institutes set up as get-rich-quick method for promoters will wither away. Bala Balachandran, a professor at the Kellogg School of Management in the US and founder of the Great Lakes Institute of Management in India, has a dire warning for the B-school industry here.

He says that there's a structural problem with management schools, which makes them unattractive to everyone involved. A poor school with weak placements won't attract a strong crop of fresh applicants. In turn, if there are no high-potential students for faculty to polish, they won't be interested in their job, which in turn will result in poorly trained

students with few job offers.

The vicious cycle will only perpetuate in this difficult environment. Balachandran says B-schools too will suffer the same fate as engineering institutes did, which first mushroomed and then shrank. "Only some 200 business schools have closed in India; soon it will be 1,000 out of the current 3,000 or even more," predicts the professor.

The foundations are certainly being rattled. According to a recent research note by Crisil, a research and advisory firm, some 176 B-schools shut between 2012-13 and 2013-14. In a report titled "MBA dream withering away", published in May 2014, it notes that the number of business schools increased from 3,000 in 2009-10 to 4,500 in 2012-13.

However, the interest in B-schools has dimmed recently, the report adds, with average occupancy rate at 68-70%. "There are fewer takers for MBA programmes, especially in tier-III and tier-IV B-schools...several institutes have had to shut shop," the report led by Ajay Srinivasan, director, research, Crisil, notes.

A graduate of Acharya Institute of Management in Bangalore, Divya Prabhu, 24, exemplifies the growing distrust accorded to management institutes. She wanted to focus on a career in marketing research, but the best her college could offer her was a sales job in a small pharma firm. An electronics and electrical engineer, she instead went job-hunting on her own and, a few months down the line, managed to bag a job in an advertising firm in Bangalore. "The real world we experience is far from the rosy picture painted to you when you plan to do an MBA," she contends.

> Much of the demand **for skill upgradation** has been driven by engineers **keen to grow from being grunt workers** to team leaders

No Fat Cheques

The numbers don't lie. According to data from the All India Council for Technical Education or AICTE, the number of institutes affiliated to it went up from 2,614 in 2006-07 to 3,364 in 2013-14. Simultaneously, the number of students went up from 247,201 to 364,421 in the same timeframe. Despite this rapid increase, the interest in doing an MBA course seems to be on the wane, if tests for CAT applicants and takers are considered. That number has dropped nearly 20% and over 24% respectively between 2009 and 2013.

The return on investment in an MBA is also suspect. According to the Crisil study, the average salary during placements in 40% of B-schools is less than ₹3 lakh per annum. Only 1% of the 4,500-odd institutes assures B-school graduates of making money; and only if you study in a tier I college can you expect an average annual salary of ₹9 lakh or more. The cost of an MBA degree averages ₹8-lakh-plus at a premier institute and ₹2-4 lakh at a non-tier-I B-school.

Top colleges seem to be doing well – for now. In placements for the class graduating in 2014 at IIM-Bangalore, students saw an average salary of ₹19.5 lakh, with all stu-

ISHA SINGH, 24

MBA FROM: GLA University

WANTED: A job in HR or marketing

GOT A JOB: With a small firm in Udaipur, Rajasthan, then did a mass communications course; since unemployed

Economic Times ND 6/07/2014   P-4 TO 6

dents placed in just four days. While the top offer exceeded $100,000, some 428 offers were made during the placement process.

"The demand for good management graduates will always be there especially in a growing economy like India," argues Tirupati. "At IIM-B, our programme – the postgraduate programme in management (PGP) – is of top quality; our pool of aspirants is large and global, and we strive to maintain our standards, so no worries there. Having said that, we do not rest on our reputation or laurels; there is a constant effort to maintain excellence in research and teaching."

That, however, is cold comfort for hundreds of thousands of management students and graduates who aren't lucky or good enough to study at the IIMs. Over 2,600 students study at the 11 IIMs nationwide, but for the hundreds of thousands more across management institutes elsewhere, prospects have only got dimmer.

Ajay Bhatkal, a veteran executive who advises B-schools on improving placements and curriculum, lays the blame squarely on students. "They opt for an MBA with the perception that they will be managers with a top bank or consultancy with multiple clients and large teams," he says. "Instead, they often end up working in a drudge role for a small company and rue signing up for such a programme." Most colleges he advises struggle with placements, he admits. With perhaps just one in 15 students recruited by a large firm this only diminishes the rapidly fading halo around MBA courses further.

Need for Change

"Rather than a degree to beef up your management skills, in India an MBA is considered a quick way to get a promotion from your current role, or worse, a quick escape hatch from your job," Bhatkal says. Having studied in management schools in India and Europe, he says, the difference couldn't be more stark. European institutes have a broader blend of academics, their students are older and more mature and more aware of the potential and pitfalls of such programmes.

ISB dean Ajit Rangnekar stoutly defends the need for management graduates but admits that there may need to be a sharp correction in student intake for the programme to stay relevant. "Currently, the intake is over 200,000 annually, but I think there will be a correction and the ideal number of graduates should be no more than 50,000-60,000 in India," he says. ISB, Rang-

"Only some 200 business schools have closed in India; **soon it will be 1,000** out of the current **3,000** or even more"
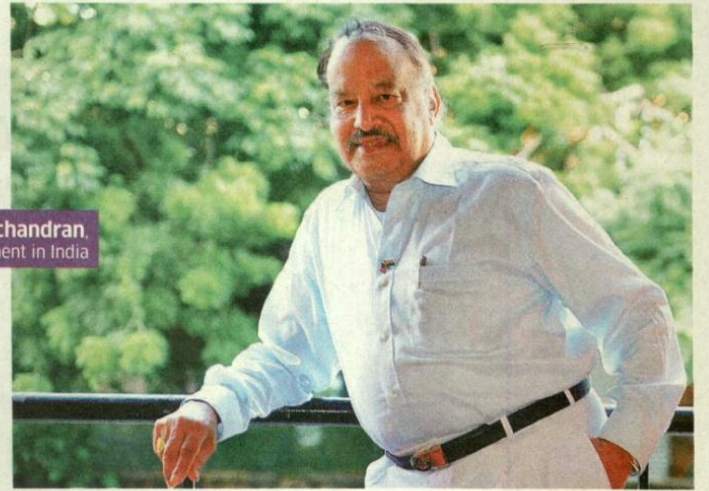
Bala Balachandran,
founder, Great Lakes Institute of Management in India

nekar says, has benefitted from having a strong faculty and curriculum – its placements have stayed steady, despite intake doubling from 400 to 800 between 2005-06 and 2013-14. "Every Tom, Dick and Harry thought that spending two years in some sort of business school was a passport to riches – this is nonsense. With a 20% increase in intake and 5% growth in the economy, there is a painful correction underway," he adds.

Experts think that even though the halo around MBA programmes – and the people who take them – has faded, companies in general will continue to need managers for many roles. However, what has changed is the type of manager companies want, and most colleges are unable to make this adjustment, says Narayanan Ramaswamy, head of education at KPMG India. "Managers can't afford to manage from ivory towers anymore...the world has changed rapidly," he says. "B-schools need to think of the future when they design courses... marketing is still taught using age-old concepts...a marketer is rarely exposed to the nuances of emerging areas such as social media. Colleges need to make their students future ready."

For wannabe managers, a part of that future may be away from the classroom, with MOOC or massive open online courses gaining currency. KPMG's Ramaswamy says that the tra-

DIVYA PRABHU, 24

MBA FROM: Acharya Institute of Management

WANTED: A role in marketing research

GOT A JOB: With a small advertising firm, after a six-month search

ditional MBA – and managers who emerge from it – may be under fire from nimbler executives who can multi-task a day job and an MOOC management programme.

Survival of the Best

Even as the institutes deal with this pain, management graduates themselves are wondering if it's all worth it. Three years ago Nishant Sharma, 29, graduated from IMT Nagpur with plans to get a marketing job for himself. However, since then he has changed three jobs, cycled through roles in media, in a psychometric testing firm, before moving to Mumbai and clinching a job with a small hosiery design firm – in the supply chain function.

"Everyone tells you it is hunky dory in college, but a more harsh reality awaits you once you graduate," says Sharma. An electrical and electronics engineer, he says he has rarely used the heaps of theory he slogged through in class, at work. "The MBA is an overrated degree...I think more people will lose interest in it."

According to Rajiv Krishnan, partner and India leader, people and organization, Ernst & Young India, the business school market is seeing a consolidation similar to those seen in the markets for business process outsourcing, when a gold rush to tap a potentially massive opportunity melted down once the pretenders faded. Similarly, he thinks that building an education brand, especially in management, will take two or three decades of toil.

"You can't use traditional concepts such as breakeven to measure the success of a B-school...this will come over time, once they have built this brand," Krishnan says. In the interim, B-schools face a bruising battle for existence, as applicants and faculty vote with their feet, pushing the weaker schools out of business.

Vishal Pandit, 30, faced the problems of doing his MBA a tad too early and of finding a job with a start-up, specifically in education.

A graduate of MDI, the electronics engineer even added a degree from Europe in the quest for his dream job. While the MDI course was in international management and gave him plenty of exposure to global companies, Pandit had to work hard to find opportunities in his chosen space. He took the long route, opting to help a friend run a soya-processing unit, worked with a sports goods multinational, and only then found his way to Function Space, his current employer, which is a social learning network for science.

Having studied in management schools in India and Europe, he says, the difference couldn't be more stark. European institutes have a broader blend of academics, their students are older and more mature and more aware of the potential and pitfalls of such programme.

At the Crossroads

For young executives looking to take their next step in their careers, this turmoil can be unsettling. With four years of experience in communications, 25-year old Priyanka Tadipatri thought it was time to upgrade her skills. A management postgraduate degree seemed a logical choice – recruiters for management jobs she coveted wanted to see an MBA on her CV and companies used it as a basic

"Every Tom, Dick and Harry thought that spending **two years in some sort of B-school** was a passport to riches – this is nonsense"

Ajit Rangnekar,
ISB dean

filtering tool to weed out applicants.

However, in the past few weeks, Tadipatri isn't so sure an MBA is the way to go; she's struggled to find a programme which will give her the required push into meatier marketing jobs she seeks and as the aura around MBA graduates has faded her resolve has dissipated. Instead, she has now decided to do shorter marketing courses to further her career prospects.

As companies mop up the last few hireable graduates, management education in India will now need to deal with its sharpest crisis of confidence – or risk becoming irrelevant in a fast-changing world. ∎

We actually need more IITs

IIT as brand must be preserved and nurtured. We should take all possible steps to ensure that the new IITs we set up become the greatest assets of our country

SS MURTHY

The recent announcement by HRD minister Smriti Irani to set up IITs in each state is welcome as it gives a big boost to higher technical education in the country.

Apprehensions expressed in some quarters (and even by some IITians) are ill-founded and biased, reflecting a 'third-class compartment' mentality, wherein the crowd after struggling to enter prevents others to get in. Lakhs of motivated candidates write JEE seeking admission to less than 10,000 IIT seats, while top 1 lakh of them would be equally intelligent deserving tier-1 institutions comprising IITs, NITs, etc, and qualify for world-class education. Thus, it is imperative to increase their numbers and start more IITs.

The above proposal is easily doable since only two major states, Karnataka and Kerala, are deprived of IITs and establishing only two more IITs in these states (as an immediate step) in addition to the existing 16 should not be a big challenge. When we can have 25 NITs and about 50 central universities, the opposition to new IITs that add to the quality of higher technical education is unreasonable. Both the above states are educationally conscious and getting quality faculty to IITs established here will not be all that difficult compared to many of the new IITs that suffer from problems of connectivity and ambience. The location of IITs in these states must be within a two-hour drive from a major airport to attract best faculty and visiting experts. Any other remote place decided due to 'political pull' will be disastrous and investment will go to the drain.

Location of present IITs is geographically skewed as bulk of them are in the northern belt (almost in all states, with UP having two and the rest—Rajasthan, Punjab, Himachal, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam—one each). Other major states—Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat—have IITs. Thus, setting up IITs in Karnataka and Kerala will rectify this imbalance. Converting ISM Dhanbad into an IIT will cater to Jharkhand. Next in line could be Seemandhra, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, J&K and the North-East. We must ensure that no two IITs are spaced within 300 km to ensure proper geographic spread.

Resource crunch is not a critical issue as there are enough funds. Ashok Thakur, education secretary, in a recent article mentions that ₹1.25 lakh crore is the annual turnover of private coaching centres, which is more than the annual budget of the government for higher education. Indian parents spend over $4 billion each year to send their children for higher studies abroad; setting up quality institutions in India will reverse this drain. The promise of the new government to raise spending on education to 6% of GDP can easily support the expansion of the IIT system.

Of course, we must create competition for the IITs as well; thus, we must encourage private players and allow reputed foreign universities to set up campuses here. The goal is to have a basket of about 100 tier-1 institutions—comprising IITs, NITs, select central universities, deemed and private universities (such as BITS, VIT, etc) and foreign universities—to educate the
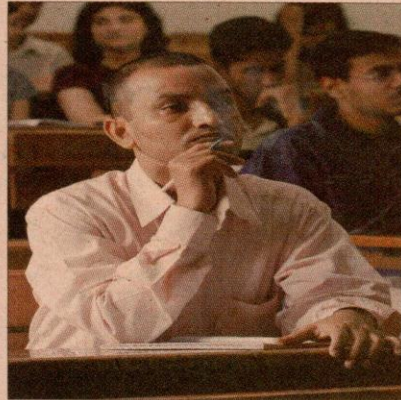
above-mentioned top 1 lakh school leavers to become world-class engineers to drive the nation's development. A mechanism must be evolved to create synergy among centrally-funded institutions to share resources, facilities and personnel. The concept of a meta-university in a region can also be promoted.

IIT as brand must be preserved and nurtured. And we should take all possible steps to ensure that the new IITs we set up become the greatest assets of our country. There is no doubt that increasing the number of IITs and other tier-1 institutions is a national necessity.

The author, formerly V-C, Central University of Karnataka, and director, NITK Surathkal, is senior fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology. He is also member of the IET India Scholarship Advisory Committee

Economic Times ND 7/07/2014   P-10

HRD Ministry Sets Agenda for Budget Session

OUR BUREAU
NEW DELHI

The human resource development ministry has set out its agenda for the budget session of Parliament — ensure that students graduating from IIIT Kancheepuram, SPA Bhopal and SPA Vijaywada get degrees, lay the legislative framework for the Mahatma Gandhi Central University in Motihari, as well as a central university in Telangana, and set up a national database of academic awards (degrees and diplomas) in electronic format, which can be verified and authenticated.

All three efforts would require Parliament to pass legislation. Officials said that work was under way on the proposed items of legislation and Cabinet approval would be taken soon.

The National Academic Depository Bill had been introduced by the UPA government in 2011. However, it was not passed by Parliament and lapsed when the 15th Lok Sabha was dissolved.

The Bill makes it mandatory for all institutions — universities, colleges, polytechnics and school boards — to lodge every academic award with the depository, where it would be verified and stored in an electronic format. This would enable education institutions, students and employers to access the depository for the records as and when required without having to approach the institution or board everytime a transcript of an award was required to be verified. The system of online verification would also help

HRD ministry has decided to introduce some changes in the National Academic Depository Bill

eliminate instances of forged certificates and marksheets. The ministry has after consultations decided to introduce some change in the original bill. A senior ministry official said "the most notable change is that no private agencies would be roped in to upload the academic award in electronic format and that students would not have to pay for the service."

In the legislation proposed by the UPA government, to decentralize and facilitate the lodging of awards in the depository, private agencies such as bank branches and educational institutions and interested private companies were to be authorized by the national depository to provide the required services. The parliamentary standing committee had expressed its concern about allowing private agencies to serve as authorized depository agents.

Times of India ND 7/07/2014   Education Times P-4

US-India EMBA

Ruchi Chopda/TNN

Following a successful run in China through its partnership with Fudan University, the Washington University in St Louis (WUSTL) has partnered with IIT-Bombay (IIT-B) to offer in India a joint executive MBA programme that will enable students to get a degree from both the institutes. Aimed at professionals with a minimum of seven years' work experience, the programme is for students not only within India, but from neighbouring countries, too.

Speaking at the launch recently, Devang Khakhar, director, IIT-B, said, "The programme is meant for working executives and will be conducted on a part-time basis involving faculty from WUSTL's Olin Business School as well as IIT-B's Shailesh J Mehta School of Management (SJMSOM). We hope that the programme will create a new interface with executives and companies in the Mumbai region and that there will be a great demand for it."

Mark Wrighton, chancellor, Washington University, added: "We have been partners of IIT-B for almost 10 years now collaborating on various projects. This particular alliance will enable us to make a significant contribution to the business community in Mumbai."

The course will be spread over 18 months, where classes will be offered four days a month (Thursday to Sunday) in Mumbai with assignments and teamwork that students will need to work on outside the classroom. It will end with a two-week capstone experience at Washington University.

Said S Bhargava, head, SJMSOM, "The programme will provide a platform to executives aspiring to take up new positions and responsibilities. It will create a positive mindset in executives to orient them towards facing the challenges related to innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship."

The course is aimed at equipping students not only with a globally recognised management degree, but also bring with it the depth of technical science, health and other disciplines that are the hallmarks of the two institutes. Elaborated Mahendra Gupta, dean, Olin Business School, Washington University, "The modules will be tailored based on the needs of the students and their experiences. We will also adopt the experiences and applications from different parts of the world and customise it to the Indian context." He added, "We will also try to create additional learning opportunities for students in their specific interest areas or industry verticals." The institutes are expecting an initial cohort of 50-60 students representing 25-30 organisations. Scheduled to start in 2015, the programme will cost about $55,000-60,000.

For the complete story, visit www.educationtimes.com

NEED OF THE HOUR

MANISH THAKUR lists the important educational issues the upcoming budget needs to address

Education is the key driver for achieving a socio-economic transformation and a concerted policy focus on this sector is crucial for reaping the demographic dividend in the global knowledge economy.

Appreciably, the past few years have witnessed a sustained increase in budgetary allocation to education. During the 11th plan period (2007-2012), central expenditure on education grew at 25% per year. However, public expenditure on education as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) continues to hover around a meagre 4%.

Budget 2014 has to send out a definitive signal of the government's commitment to raise the public expenditure on education to 6% of the GDP, a nationally-mandated goal ever since the recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964-66).

Further, the budget also needs to cut down drastically on cess-driven allocations to education. Ever since the education cess of 2% on income tax was introduced in the 2004-05 budget, and additional 1% in 2007-08, there has been a perception that the government is relying solely on cess-generated revenue and has gone easy on its allocations to education. This year's budget needs to dispel this notion.

An important factor to consider while deciding on the central expenditure towards education is the realignment of priorities between the states and centre. State governments contribute to a larger chunk of public expenditure on education. However, three-fourth of the states' expenditure is on school education, with only a quarter of the sum going towards higher education.

In contrast, the centre spends close to half of its educational allocation on higher education and the remaining on elementary and secondary education. Obviously, states require considerable financial support to improve the state of higher education. A synchronisation of priorities between the centre and state governments towards education is the need of the hour.

The centre should stay away from promoting centrally-sponsored schemes, and focus on increasing budgetary allocations for the Rashtriya Uccha Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) with the purpose of offering strategic support for higher education institutions in states. This would mean embracing the politically uncomfortable decision of not squandering away the budgetary allocation to higher education on the promised IITs and IIMs in every state.

The 11th plan has witnessed the setting up of 65 new higher education institutions by the centre including 21 central universities, eight IITs and seven IIMs.

However, a budget goes beyond allocations and expenditures alone. It is about aligning a nation's financial resources with the larger vision of economic growth, social justice and inclusive development. One area that calls for generous budgetary support is the national mission for teachers and teaching, which includes many teaching quality improvement initiatives.

The 12th plan allocated a paltry sum of Rs 1,200 crores towards this programme at a time when the enhanced allocation was needed to boost the professional qualifications of a large number of teachers across the states. This, in turn, will enrich the learning outcomes in numerous government elementary schools.

It is likely that the budget will push for the setting up of newly-conceived community colleges, like what exists in the US. It would be good to remember that during the 11th plan the government could set up merely 45 of the 374 planned degree colleges.

Consolidation of the earlier initiatives, rather than spreading the resources thin, could well be a better strategy to achieve our educational goals. Underlining all our pretensions of becoming an economic powerhouse is the fact that the mean years spent in schooling in India is 5.12 years, well below China (8.17), and even Brazil (7.54).

(The author is associate professor, public policy and management, Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Calcutta)

BUDGET 2014

The charade of world-class education

The four-year undergraduate programme was the hand-maiden of a lopsided growth model on which India is tripping

therightlessons

Saroj Giri

Delhi University's (DU) four-year under-graduate programme (FYUP) has been shelved in favour of the three-year pro-gramme. However, the thought underlying the FYUP is very much dominant today, even as some private universities are push-ing it as the panacea for educational ills. DU vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh once called the opposition to the FYUP 'ideological'. But the FYUP itself was ideological, part of the dominant mantra and diktat of the market and economy.

The diktat today is that everything has to be 'world class' and 'global'. This often means a crude Americanisation of all things existing, imposing 'new ideas' and 'innovation' on society. There was never any attempt to understand the flaws and strengths of the earlier programme — only an arrogant craze to 'change things'.

Singh and his acolytes loved to point out that the FYUP will make education job-friendly. But it will actually make the young mere cogs in the wheel of commerce. Only the well-off will do liberal arts and the humanities and engage in 'critical thinking', the rest should just enter the job market and toil for the growth model. Corporate capital is getting smarter and reflexive now as it wants to fund liberal arts, 'critical thinking' and 'alternative knowledge' and not just vocational courses.

Private universities undermining public institutions like DU and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) are a reality today. Big capital promoting critical social thinking, and not just engineering or IT, will give rise to unseen perversities. DU colleges seek-ing autonomy will also be part of this same trend. All this amounts to poorer youth doing vocational courses so that they can keep things running for the 'thinking' elite.

Not that the earlier programme was innocent as it stood for the many vested interests of a kind of a soft statist secularist Left elite. The FYUP is the hand-maiden of a lop-sided and crude 'growth model' on which the country is tripping.

In that sense, the FYUP was in sync with Narendra Modi's development agenda. Hence the BJP's stance opposing the FYUP is a paradox. The BJP government has been led to this position not because of its own sound insight but owing to the power of the movement and protests against the FYUP.

The BJP's Nalin Kohli's view is that the FYUP is illegal (http://tinyurl.com/kfb-tyw6), while Shashi Tharoor says that it is not (http://tinyurl.com/ol7xp23). Tharoor writes that the FYUP had been "presented to and approved by the University's Academic Council and its Executive Council, that too by lopsidedly overwhelming majorities".

Neither knows the real dynamics of how it unfolded. It was legal in a very for-mal sense, but underneath the seeming 'overwhelming majorities' was a sinister arm-twisting, favouritist game and (mis) use of executive power by the university. Tharoor uses the argument of institutional autonomy to justify not intervening against the FYUP — that is an argument made in tremendously bad faith.

The FYUP getting stuck when India (under Modi) is fast embracing the 'growth model' is indeed a paradox. Indeed, the opposition to the FYUP can easily be pre-sented as the groaning tired voice of the old Left and public sector vested interests. However, the present vibrant movement shows that it is not just this old decrepit Left but a broad coalition of forces that are putting out an alternative viewpoint. The FYUP would have led to formalising the inequalities of wealth and power in society — this must be opposed and the poor youth must assert their agency beyond seeking employment and toiling for the rich.

Saroj Giri is a professor of political science in Delhi University
The views expressed by the author are personal

Making education accessible and affordable

A Delhi-based serial entrepreneur is simplifying the learning experience through innovative technologies in rural as well as urban India

Monalisa Sen

JUDGED as Bollywood diva Sridevi's comeback vehicle, *English Vinglish* was one of the most-anticipated movies of 2012. But when audiences walked out of theatres (or turned off their screens) after watching the film, it was to talk not about the star, but her role: of Shashi Godbole, the Maharashtrian housewife from *English Vinglish* who smiles through her family's taunts at her sub-par English language skills. Humiliated for her inability to speak English, Shashi joins a four-week course at a language school, and the movie ends on a happy note with Shashi making a heartfelt climactic speech in fluent English. The movie is inspired by countless true stories of people struggling in their personal and professional lives due to their inability to interact in English.

Vivek Agarwal, CEO of Liqvid, the elearning company says, "I was once talking to a taxi driver and asked him if he wanted to learn English. He said he did because all his customers sitting in the backseat used to speak in the language, which he did not understand and hence felt small. So there is a basic feeling of inadequacy if you can't speak English."

Liqvid, (based on two root words: 'Liquidus'—Latin for 'fluid' or 'flowing', and 'Vid'—Sanskrit for 'to know') is trying to address this need. Liquid, by definition, takes the shape of the mould. Seen as a language of utility by many, English is fast becoming an essential business tool for firms across the globe. Almost everyone aspires to converse in perfect English. In a country
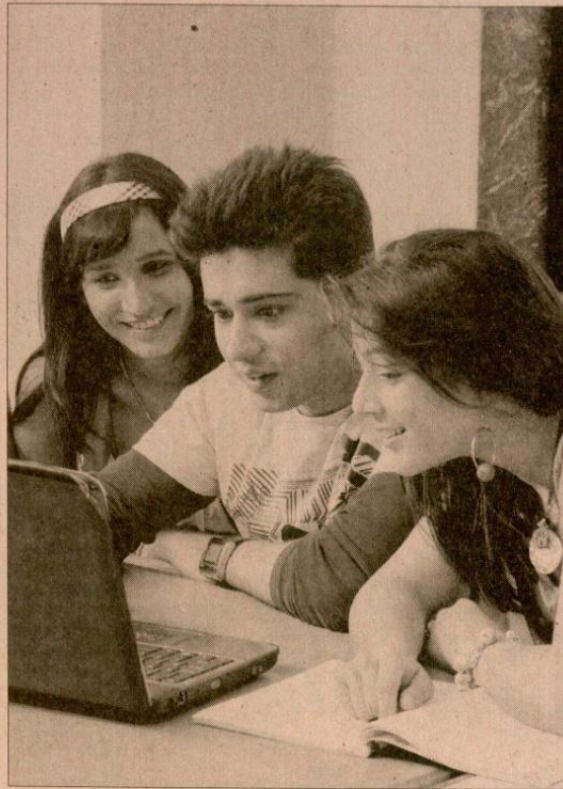
> **In a country like India, where an elementary understanding of English can increase social mobility and open up job prospects, failure to grasp the language can prove to be a real handicap**
>
> **VIVEK AGARWAL,**
> CEO, Liqvid

where an elementary understanding of the language can increase social mobility, open up job prospects, failure to grasp the language can prove to be a real handicap, adds Agarwal.

A product of IIM-Calcutta, Agarwal started his startup Liqvid in 2002. He is now the chief executive officer of the company. He has launched EnglishEdge, a software to provide English language learning at an affordable cost. Prior to this venture, he had co-founded eGurucool which was subsequently sold to NIIT.

It was this thought that gave birth to EnglishEdge, a programme that empowers teachers to deliver an effective learning experience through technology. "The programme is available through the Internet on computers, tablets and mobile phones. It

has nearly 1,500 hours of content," Agarwal says.

Based out of Noida, a suburb of New Delhi, Liqvid has an impressive infrastructure that delivers quality learning services that include custom content development, training design services, technology services, and learning support services for corporations, academic institutions and government organisations

across the world.

Liqvid is a venture launched by key members of egurucool.com, which had established itself as India's foremost elearning brands, created over 8,000 hours of elearning content and had tied-up with over 1,600 schools. "We, at Liqvid, pride ourselves on having gained reputation of being an eLearning company which matches global benchmarks and delivers rapid eLearning through cost-effective solutions."

The company follows a unique technology based, learning methodology that leverages the power to technology to make learning scalable. The English programmes are offered on PCs, tablets and mobiles.

Liqvid has more than 250,000 learners across schools, colleges, vocational institutes and corporate for this programme and its customers include IIT Delhi, Jamia Millia, British Council and Educomp. Liqvid also has a tie-up with BBC Active.

Agarwal has a passionate interest in education and is committed to exploring how technology can be used to make high quality education and training available to a very large number of people at a cost that they can afford and at a place they can reach. Liqvid sells its software to schools, colleges, training institutes and corporates. Its audience ranges from six-year-olds to middle-aged users.

Agarwal says, "In the next three years, we are targeting about 5,000 schools. We currently have a few hundred. Our goal is to reach 10 million learners across top 500 cities. By 2017, our goal is to reach 10 million learners across top 500 cities. We charge between ₹500-5,000 per learner per programme for a single course of 60-100 hours. Where there are more than a 1,000 learners in one place, we license the software for close to ₹2-3 lakh a year," he says. We plan 5,000 more centres by 2017, he adds.

Liqvid aims to make quality education and training available to billions of people at a cost that they can afford and at a place that they can access.

This rocket engine will revolutionize space travel

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

London: A British scientist has created a revolutionary engine that may make space travel cheaper in future.

The brainchild of engineer Alan Bond, Synergetic Air-Breathing Rocket Engine (Sabre) operates as a traditional jet engine at take-off and during the ascent, before "transforming" into a powerful hydrogen-burning rocket engine to propel a spacecraft at Mach 25 beyond Earth's atmosphere. This allows the spacecraft to operate like a plane and re-enter the atmosphere, before landing on a normal runway.

The spacecraft to be used for this mission — Skylon — is equally revolutionary. It is built using ultra-lightweight material and will essentially be one huge hydrogen tank, making it light enough for easy re-entry. The result will be a craft that costs £500m to buy and just £3m to launch per mission that will be "operated by a (ground) crew of 50 and be able to manage a return trip with payload in just two days before people are able to go again." Bond said, "Sabre is at heart a rocket engine designed to power aircraft directly into space (single-stage to orbit) to

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SKY IS THE LIMIT: Synergetic Air-Breathing Rocket Engine (Sabre) operates as a traditional jet engine at take-off and during the ascent, before 'transforming' into a powerful hydrogen-burning rocket engine to propel a spacecraft at Mach 25 beyond Earth's atmosphere

allow reliable, responsive and cost-effective space access and in a different configuration to allow aircraft to cruise at high speeds (five times the speed of sound) within the atmosphere." In the past, attempts to design single-stage-to-orbit propulsion systems have been unsuccessful largely due to the weight of an on-board oxidiser needed by conventional rocket engines.

Sabre is the first engine to operate in two rocket modes: initially in air-breathing mode and subsequently in conventional rocket mode:

In the air breathing mode the engine sucks in air as a source of oxygen (like in a typ-

ical jet engine) to burn with its liquid hydrogen fuel in the rocket combustion chamber. Then the engine transitions to using conventional on-board liquid oxygen once it is beyond the atmosphere. In both modes the thrust is generated using the rocket combustion chamber and nozzles. This is made possible through a synthesis of elements from rocket and gas turbine technology. This approach enables Sabre-powered vehicles to save carrying over 250 tonnes of on-board oxidant on their way to orbit and removes the necessity for massive throw-away first stages that are jettisoned once the oxidant has been used up.

Millenium Post ND
7/07/2014 P-10

NASA builds world's first flying observatory

NEW YORK: NASA has fitted a 17-tonne telescope with an effective diameter of eight feet on a modified Boeing 747 jetliner that the US space agency is using as a flying observatory to study stars.

The infrared telescope called 'Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy' (SOFIA) is mounted behind a sliding door that reveals it to the skies. The jet can stay airborne for over 12 hours and its range is up to 6,625 nautical miles (7,624 miles).

According to NASA, 'The data provided by SOFIA cannot be obtained by any other astronomical facility on the ground or in space.'

SOFIA is mobile, so it can better spot transient space events like supernovae and comets. The telescope, built with the help from German Aerospace Centre (DLR), can easily be repaired or reprogrammed when necessary. NASA plans SOFIA - now in Germany for its last extensive maintenance and refitting leg - to launch in 2015 which will keep flying for another 20 years, wired.com reported. IANS

डायरेक्टर ने आईआईटी कैंपस का किया भूमिपूजन

http://naidunia.jagran.com/madhya-pradesh/iit-135156

इंदौर। पांच साल बाद आईआईटी इंदौर कैंपस का रविवार को डायरेक्टर प्रदीप माथुर ने भूमिपूजन किया। इसके बाद अब सिमरोल स्थित कैंपस का निर्माण कार्य शुरू होगा। 300 करोड़ की लागत से होने वाले निर्माण कार्य कोलकाता की कंपनी को दिया गया है। फिलहाल यूनिवर्सिटी के आईईटी विभाग में आईआईटी की कक्षाएं लग रही हैं। सूत्रों के मुताबिक काम को तीन साल में करने का लक्ष्य रखा गया है। मगर प्रबंधन अभी समयसीमा के बारे में स्थिति स्पष्ट नहीं कर रहा है। - See more at: http://naidunia.jagran.com/madhya-pradesh/iit-135156#sthash.iuAaoNWy.dpuf