

Newspaper Clips

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CEA Subramanian goes to classroom for a week: GST tops list of questions

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/cea-subramanian-goes-to-classroom-for-a-week-gst-tops-list-of-questions-117061201247_1.html

Arvind Subramanian will hold classes for a week on applied economics at IIT Delhi



The Lecture Hall Complex at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, is looking unusually busy these days, with hundreds of students and faculty members rushing in early to find good seats. The guest speaker is not a celebrated scientist or an engineer, but an economist. Arvind Subramanian, chief economic advisor to the government and former economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has taken time off from his regular schedule to hold classes for a week on applied economics at IIT Delhi.

This is the first time after taking over as CEA in 2014 that Subramanian has donned a professor's hat. His classes are part of the 'Summer School for Economics Teachers', a seven-day programme organised by the ministries of finance and human resource development to popularise open online courses.

The excitement among participants, including lecturers from IIT and other varsities (such as Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University), was evident. Business Standard found on Monday that students from Subramanian's alma mater, St Stephen's College, and also from Hindu College, Lady Shri Ram College and others had turned up in large numbers at the third floor lecture hall at 10 in the morning, and stayed on for the whole day.

If the history of Indian economics was like a starter on day one (Sunday), Subramanian took up some of the contemporary topics on Monday. But the two items that consumed most of his time were the goods and services tax (GST) and inflation. "What happens when an item is exempted under the GST and is used as an intermediary for another product?" asked an elderly economist. "As the GST is applicable on the added value of a product at every stage, how does a company that sources its raw materials captively get income tax credit," a PhD scholar was eager to know.

"One of the key benefits that the GST would bring in is it would have self-policing properties. In order to get input tax credit, a dealer would have to ask his seller for invoice, forcing a paper trail. But if the GST exempts an intermediary item, the chain of paper trail would break. This is a big challenge," his answer was prompt.

As the debate over the GST heated up, Subramanian's explanations touched on varied aspects of the new indirect tax structure. "While the GST would reduce corruption and leakages, in principle, some people may still remain outside the tax net," he said.

“Gold was one of the battles I fought and lost.” He was explaining his inclination towards imposing a higher tax on gold, rather than the 3 per cent that has been decided. “The NSSO data show over 80 per cent gold is consumed by less than 15 per cent of the population. But it was ultimately kept low as the counter argument that was put forward was too high a tax may lead to evasion,” said Subramanian.

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Arvind Subramanian, chief economic advisor

He also threw light on exempted goods. While nearly 80 items including products like curd, bread and sindoor are exempted under the GST, actual taxation on them is not nil as intermediary items to produce these goods would still attract tax.

“Net tax on consumers for exempted items would not be nil, although that’s how it appears”, he explained.

Then there were questions around the Reserve Bank of India and interest rates, a subject over which the CEA has been in news recently.

Replying to a question on the possibility of 0 per cent interest, he said, “I am still fantasising about having the repo rate at 5.5 to 6 per cent and you gentleman are hoping for a zero interest. That would be too much for even me to take.”

He laughed and so did his audience.

Subramanian ended the day at 4:45 pm, some 15 minutes ahead of time, after promising to meet again at 10 am on Tuesday.

IIT Delhi: Arvind Subramanian to give free classes under SWAYAM scheme

http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/iit-delhi-arvind-subramanian-to-give-free-classes-under-swayam-scheme-117051000398_1.html

The 'Summer School for Economics Teachers' will be recorded for students to access



Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian will deliver a lecture series of 10 days at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi on ‘trends in the Indian economy’ to economics teachers in the second week of June.

‘The Summer School for Economics Teachers’ by Subramanian will be recorded and made into free a online resource.

Among the participants, 100 faculty members from the economics department of various universities and colleges, including St Stephens, SRCC, Hindu, and Lady Shri Ram College, are likely to attend the lectures, The Hindustan Times quoted an HRD ministry official as saying.

They will be spread out over seven days. He will conduct a 40-hour course on the economy, focusing on major economic trends, possibly even the demonetisation issue, which will subsequently be hosted online on Swayam.

The 'Summer School for Economics Teachers' will be recorded for students to access under the government's SWAYAM platform. Study Webs of Active-Learning for Yung Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) is HRD ministry's initiative of providing open online courses to students.

"It was felt that SWAYAM platform needs to be popularised and the lecture series by the chief economic adviser will help in achieving that," said a senior HRD official.

The HRD ministry, however, has extended invitations only to the faculty of select institutes on a first-come-first-serve basis. They will also offer accommodation for visiting scholars at IIT Delhi, says Economics Times.

Professors Turn Students At IIT Delhi To Take Lessons From Arvind Subramaniam

<http://www.ndtv.com/education/professors-turn-students-at-iit-delhi-to-take-lessons-from-arvind-subramaniam-1711213>

Nearly 150 professors from across the country have turned students to learn about demonetisation, challenges in the Indian economy and the way forward from Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramaniam.

NEW DELHI: Nearly 150 professors from across the country have turned students to learn about demonetisation, challenges in the Indian economy and the way forward from Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramaniam. The first lecture of the course titled "Contemporary Themes in India's Economic Development and the Economic Survey" was held yesterday at IIT Delhi, the inauguration of which was attended by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar.

"For the first time a policy maker has turned a professor for the MOOC courses. For seven days he will conduct a 35-lecture course which will help in developing an in-depth understanding of the Indian economy- its history, recent developments, and impending challenges," Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

The course will cover the history of the Indian economic development and the current progress, challenges and the strategy to go forward. It will cover these themes through the analysis presented in the Economic Surveys of the previous three years (2014-15 to 2016-17).

"The participants will become proficient in understanding and analysing macro-economic developments and policy. They will also become familiar with the current dominant thoughts and tools used for economic policy making and research," Mr. Javadekar said.

The topics will include global and Indian economic history, monetary policy and inflation targeting, economic crises and the twin-balance sheet problem in India, reviewing macro-economic developments and understanding macro-economic policy, state capacity, fiscal capacity, and the social sector in India and demonetisation.

Swayam to offer 2000 online courses in 1 year: Prakash Javadekar

https://news.franchiseindia.com/education/Swayam-to-offer-2000-online-courses-in-1-year-Prakash-Javadekar_e14556

Swayam is an indigenously developed platform by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with the help of Microsoft

In an attempt to promote affordable education, Human Resource Development Minister, Prakash Javadekar said the government aims to offer about 2000 online courses within one year through Swayam.

Swayam is an indigenously developed platform by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with the help of Microsoft.

After inaugurating a week-long Teachers Workshop at IIT Delhi, Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar, said, "Currently, 380 courses are offered through this platform and this will be enhanced to 2000 courses in one year."

Javadekar said, "About 60,000 students have already completed their courses through this affordable platform launched last year. It makes knowledge available anytime anywhere like ATM offers cash."

IIT Delhi Delegation to Visit Bay Area, Los Angeles to Meet Interested Students, Faculty

http://www.indiawest.com/news/business/iit-delhi-delegation-to-visit-bay-area-los-angeles-to/article_b2552946-4d75-11e7-977d-9f91c55eba37.html

A group of visitors from the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi is going to be visiting the United States shortly to meet with students and faculty potentially interested in a career at IIT Delhi, as well as for alumni interaction.

Among those heading to the U.S. include professors Ramgopal Rao, Ashok Gupta, dean of alumni affairs and international programs Sanjeev Sanghi, dean of faculty Sandeep Sen, and humanities professor Ambuj Sagar.

IITD, in addition to being one of the topmost universities for undergraduate education, has also witnessed a steady rise towards a research institution of international repute, according to a news release.

QS World University Rankings in 2016 rated IITD No. 71 globally in the discipline of engineering and technology. Nearly all of IITD's traditional departments — computer science, civil, chemical — were rated under top 100, with EE breaking into the top 50.

To take the institute to its next level of standing, the leadership team has envisioned a focused drive to reach out to prospective faculty and educate them about various benefits of working at IIT Delhi, it said.

Another objective is to identify various star students and faculty at top universities, both of Indian and non-Indian origin, and introduce them to IITD.

The tour starts off in Raleigh, N.C., June 13 and ends at Princeton June 25. They will be in the San Francisco Bay Area at Stanford University June 16 at 1:30 p.m. and in the Los Angeles area June 17 at 3 p.m. at the UCLA Tesla Room.

Rao, who serves as the director, would also like discuss his vision of the institute with the alumni and also like to hear their views on the way forward for IITD. An alumni gathering is also planned for the Bay Area June 16 from 7 to 9 p.m. at 1060 Laureles Drive in Los Altos.

The many joys of conducting a dance workshop

<http://www.asianage.com/life/art/130617/the-many-joys-of-conducting-a-dance-workshop.html>

It is a fertile ground watered by sinking into the ground of one discipline while tasting the various fruits of the cultural garden.



Kapila Venu performing koodiyattam.

At the rehearsal venue for our SPICMACAY student intensive workshop presentations, I had a chance to chat briefly with Bharatanatyam guru, Kanaka Srinivasan, an artist I have been very fond of, and deeply respect since the early 1970's. I reminded her of a conversation we had once had about dance workshops and her feeling then that they had no real value in teaching classical dance.

Fortunately, Kanaka had been convinced to participate in the annual SPICMACAY conference held in Delhi this year at IIT and now realised what a meaningful exposure this actually was. One can almost visibly see the mental light bulbs going off as students from around the country try on traditional art forms. Participants are immersed in one visual or performing art while having the opportunity to witness great performance.

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Those who already have some training in a dance, here have “permission” to learn from another guru of the same genre or inhabit the body and energy of another style. Musicians discover dance, dancers learn to sing and many learn visual arts from calligraphy to Madhubani painting.

As everyone in Delhi knows, Kiran Seth is the founder of this remarkable initiative to bring Indian classical dance, music and related arts to schools and colleges, which is now celebrating 40 years of his vision. With his alma mater institution, IIT-Delhi, the host for this year’s gathering, I appreciated his decision to include so many Delhi-based teachers and gurus in sharing their teaching with the participants.

The student presentations culminating the 5-day, 3-hour-a-day intensive workshops, were held in five different venues, which was efficient for completing all in a limited time frame, though it meant I couldn’t see a number of presentations I had looked forward to. The session in which my Odissi students performed was preceded by an abhinaya lecture-demonstration by the senior Kathak artist, Uma Sharma.



Presentation by Munna Lal Shukla’s students (clockwise from above) at SPICMACAY.

I noticed that some students had attended their own Delhi-based teachers’ class, which did ensure a polished performance but did not challenge them to leave their comfort zone to grow. They definitely enjoyed the experience and it was a well-spent five days, but perhaps SPIC MACAY participants might be encouraged or required to explore a new discipline or at least a different gharana within their own style.

Munna Lal Shukla’s students, all beginners, learned the basics of not only Kathak basic footwork (Tatkar), but also the graceful movements and elegance of the Lucknow gharana.

Perna Shrimali’s beginners started with reciting bols (paran) and then followed with matching footwork moving in two circles that nicely made all visible on the filled stage. Gitanjali Lal presented her exuberant Kathak students in full matching costumes while Saroja Vaidyanathan’s Bharatanatyam group presented a lovely Ganesh vandana.

Ranjana Gauhar’s students presented Namami Mangalacharan, the traditional first dance taught to beginning students followed by the basic stepping they had covered during her Odissi intensive workshop.

A spectacular conclusion to the session in which my group participated was Rajendra Gangani’s massive group of 30 students who dazzled us with their brilliant command of Jaipur gharana Kathak.

My students performed just before Rajendra Gangani's splendid tour de force and I was happy to have a brave non-dancer, a Rajasthan violinist along with other participants trained in Kathak, Bharatnatyam, and modern dance opting for my workshop. As anyone who reads my columns knows, I believe strongly that the abhinaya in Indian classical dance a unique contribution to world dance that is supported by all the various movement techniques. Because of this, I chose to teach an ashtapadi from the Geeta Govinda so that the students could learn something about communicating the emotions of the text as well as interspersed jatis.

Lalita Lavangalata expresses the poignant longing in separation from the Divine beloved during the spring season of Vasanta.