

Newspaper Clips

June 26, 2013

HT New Delhi

MoU SIGNED AT DIALOGUE

- MoU between IIT Delhi and University of Nebraska on cyber systems MoU between IIT Bombay and edX on Massive Open Online Courses(MOOCs) MoU between AICTE and American Association of Community Colleges on cooperation for establishment of community colleges MoU between ITM Group of Institutions and Montgomery College on cooperation in capacity development.

HT Mumbai

IITs start blogs, campus tours to woo top-ranked students

NEW INITIATIVES Move will help JEE toppers make informed decisions about subjects and courses



Bhavya Dore

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MUMBAI: Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) across the country have launched unique initiatives for the first time this year to woo students who have cracked the entrance exam and help them make an informed choice on which institute and course to choose.

Blogs (IIT-Banaras Hindu University), an online 'ask a question facility' (IIT-Bombay), Facebook groups (IIT-Kanpur), an Open Day for parents and students to visit the campus (IIT-Gandhinagar) are some of these initiatives, most of which are student-run.

Results of the Joint Entrance Exam-Advanced (JEE-Advanced) were announced on Friday and students have time till June 30 to fill in, online, their choice of courses and institutes.

"At last, the IITs are learning what the students and parents always knew, that there is a competition for good students amongst IITs, and unless IITs try to attract students, they won't get them," wrote IIT-Kanpur professor Dheeraj Sanghi about these initiatives on his blog.

IIT-Gandhinagar's Open Day on June 25 is open to the top

4,000 rankers who will be given a chance to see the college for themselves. Around 50 families are expected to visit that day.

"People don't know what is available and the idea is to show them the campus, let them speak to professors and students and then make a choice," said Rounak Mehta, 19, a third year student helping with this first-time initiative.

Last year the most-preferred IITs among the top 100 rankers were IIT-B and IIT-Delhi. But the younger IITs are trying to make an impression by disseminating information about themselves.

"We aim to help students choose the right courses," said a student helping with the IIT-BHU page. "Sometimes, students choose courses based on superficial factors... After converting to an IIT, IIT-BHU is growing at a very fast rate and we want to inform students about the recent developments."

Students with high ranks tend to opt for computer science or electrical engineering which are the most coveted branches.

"Countless students have fallen bait to the practice of blindly following the cutoffs of the previous years and ended up hating the branch that they choose," said an appeal on the IIT-B page. "We hope YOU, the future IITian will make judicious use of this first-time initiative and make an informed choice."

The first round of allocations will be announced on July 4.

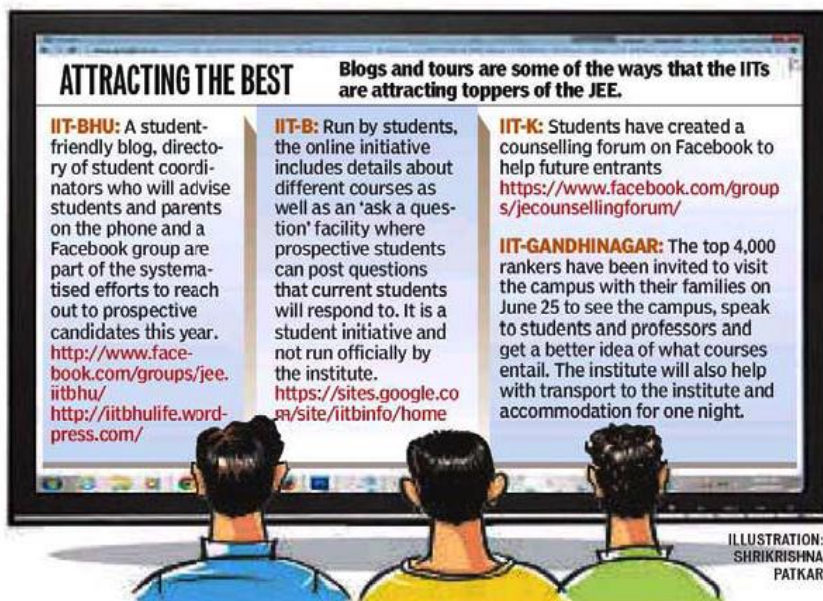


ILLUSTRATION:
SHRIKRISHNA
PATKAR

Soon, free online lectures at IIT-B

HT Correspondent

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MUMBAI: The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-B) will join top universities around the world by launching Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), the latest trend in global higher education.

IIT-B signed a memorandum of understanding with edX, a non-profit group set up by Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to provide online lectures delivered by its professors to students across the world.

There is no date yet as to when the lectures might become available or how many will be offered online.

"We have to plan it out now, but it will be soon," said Devang Khakhar, director of IIT-B. He said the lectures would not involve any certification from the institute. For now, the courses will be available for free.

While an early version was created in 2008, MOOCs are being called the future of education by experts and analysts, owing to fewer seats in colleges, higher tuition costs and more young people seeking higher

education.

"Quality education, imparted to our students on campus by expert and experienced faculty of IIT Bombay, can now be accessed by all learners," said a press release from IIT-B. "...Collaboration with edX, and with partner universities, will help us better understand and solve issues in scaling up quality education using technology. This will enable technology to be deployed in other areas of education, such as vocational training, school education, and faculty empowerment."

Tribune ND 26-Jun-13 P-1

India to implement US concept of community colleges

8 awards of joint research projects under Singh-Obama Knowledge Initiative announced

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 25

The India-US relations are set to graduate to the education sector. India today drew the contours of a course for collaboration with educational institutions in the United States, with particular accent on developing skills through tie-ups between technical institutes and community colleges.

At the India-United States Higher Education Dialogue co-chaired by Human Resource Development Minister MM Pallam Raju and US Secretary of State John Kerry, the minister said besides institutional ties, deepening co-operation in research and development, encouraging faculty exchange,



US Secretary of State John Kerry with HRD Minister M M Pallam Raju in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

MEETING NEWER CHALLENGES

- Community colleges work with the industry to provide training and impart skills that will meet the requirement of the end user
- HRD Minister Pallam Raju said he visualised skill development as an integral part of education to ensure the workforce is trained to meet newer challenges
- India faces the task of skilling 500 million youth
- Tie-ups with 200 community colleges are on the anvil

development an integral part of the country's education system."

Raju said he visualised skill development as an integral part of Indian education and hoped to learn from the US experience of community colleges, which work with the industry to provide training and impart skills that will meet the requirement of the end user.

Raju said while a tie-up with 200 community colleges was being discussed, there was scope for 20,000 such colleges. Today, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the All-India Council of Technical Education and the American Association of Community Colleges to establish these institutes.

Continued on page 13

and development of teachers is the way forward. The roadmap also includes promoting a student exchange, skill development and thrust on online edu-

cation such as Massive Open On-Line Courses (MOOCs). Sharing the HRD Ministry's vision of the education system, he said: "We wish to make skill

US concept of community colleges

From page 1

Kerry appreciated India's efforts to make education a right. Describing the goal set by the ministry in the education sector as challenging, he said the US was willing to forge partnership in various fields. He said community colleges were the lifeline of education in the USA and stressed the need for people-to-people exchange. Highlighting the role of technology in promoting education, Kerry underlined the need to further promote research by the two countries.

Besides community colleges, three MoUs were signed today -- one between IIT-Delhi and the University of Nebraska on collaboration on Cyber System,

bay and edX (a leading provider of Massive Open On-Line Courses) and the third between the ITM Group of Institutions and Montgomery College on capacity development.

Eight awards of joint research projects under the Singh-Obama Knowledge Initiative were also announced. Under it, both India and the US committed \$5 million each for projects through faculty exchanges and research and innovation collaboration in areas of food security, climate change, sustainable health and public health.

The first 126 CV Raman Fellows, who will conduct post-doctoral research in different institutions in the fields

culture, biotechnology, microbiology, pure sciences, bio chemistry, engineering and arts from the Fall Season was also announced.

India, US discuss visa, online courses

fe Bureau

New Delhi, June 25: India on Tuesday promoted on-line education such as Massive Open On-Line Courses (MOOCs) and cooperation in community colleges with the US while the latter stressed on jointly working towards increasing skills of students.

"We need to make sure that next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs have the skills and training," US Secretary of State John Kerry said at the India-US Higher Education Dialogue.



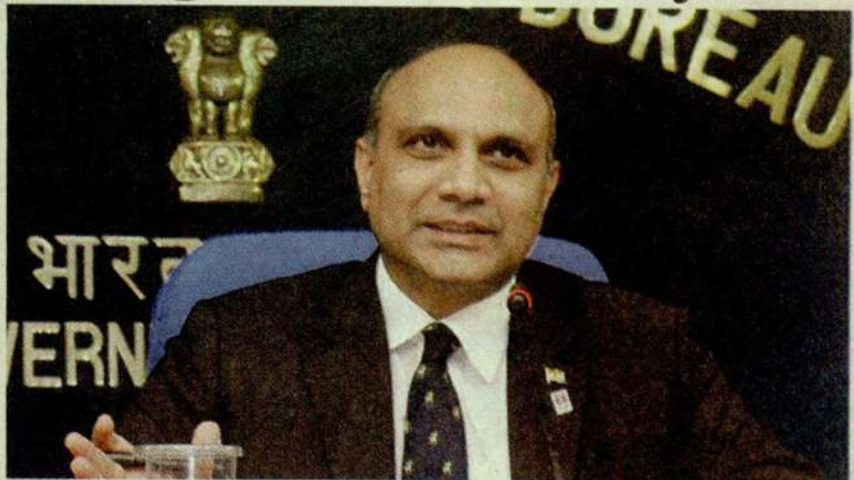
In continuation of the educational partnership between the two nations, the US State Department announced eight institutional partnership projects for the second round of Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative awards.

Incidentally, HRD minister M M Pallam Raju had visited the US last month for forging linkages and collaborations in the field of higher education. In the education sector, the two sides signed four agreements—IIT-Delhi and University of Nebraska on the Cyber Systems, IIT-Bombay and edX on Massive Open Online Courses, AICTE and American Association of Community Colleges and ITM group with Montgomery Colleges.

Each project will receive an award of approximately \$250,000 that can be utilised over a three year period, with the objectives of cultivating educational reform, fostering economic growth, generating shared knowledge to address global challenges, and developing junior faculty at Indian and American institutions of higher learning.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Barack Obama announced the Obama-Singh Initiative in November 2009 as an affirmation of their commitment to building an enhanced India-US partnership in education.

India to have community colleges like US: Raju



Union Minister for Human Resource Development M M Pallam Raju addresses a Press conference on India-US Higher Education Dialogue-2013, in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Based on USA's experience of community colleges, India on Tuesday took the initiative to develop such colleges across the country. Talking to media after the India-US Higher Education Dialogue, HRD Minister M M Pallam Raju said the idea is to borrow the concept and not replicate what is happening there in the US as the economic condition of the two nations are different.

"It is a relevant model. Over 100 years, the US has fine tuned that model. It has become much more than impacting skills. It will work closely with industry and business from the area to develop skill sets that are required from the local areas," Raju said about the skill development through community colleges.

Faced with the task of skill development of 500 million youth, Raju said that India and US have great potential to expand co-operation in Higher Education Sector. It includes promoting institution to institution ties; deepening co-operation in R&D; encouraging faculty exchanges; and development of teachers. The blueprint also includes promoting a two-way student exchange, skill development and give thrust to on-line education such as Massive Open On-Line Courses (MOOCs).

Meanwhile, the US stressed on jointly working towards increasing skills of students to face future challenges and said this can be done through exchange programmes and

partnerships between India and the US. "We need to make sure that next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs have the skills and training. Those who work in the Government and private sectors need to join together in order to focus and meet the challenges in education," US Secretary of State John Kerry said. Raju and Kerry co-chaired the India-US Higher Education Dialogue.

Four agreements were signed between IIT-Delhi and University of Nebraska on the Cyber Systems, IIT-Bombay and edX on Massive Open Online Courses, AICTE and American Association of Community Colleges, and ITM group and Montgomery Colleges.

Minister dubs UK visa bond as 'deterrent factor'

NEW DELHI: Terming as "deterrent factor" the UK Government's plans to collect a hefty bond of ₹2.75 lakh from Indian visitors, Raju said it will make all diplomatic efforts to negate the impact on Indian students going there. The UK Home Office has announced a pilot scheme under which most visitors from six high-risk Afro-Asian countries, including India, Pakistan and Nigeria, will be required to furnish a 3,000 pounds bond for a six-month visit visa, which they will forfeit if they overstay in Britain.

PNS

India, US sign four pacts on education

Move to set up community colleges in India

Our Bureau

New Delhi, June 25

India is taking steps to fill the gaps in conventional education and is looking at starting at least 200 community colleges in the country.

Minister for Human Resource Development M.M. Pallam Raju said that given the size of the student community in the country there was a scope for establishing at least 20,000 community colleges.

On Tuesday, four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed in the

educational space during the ongoing India-US Higher Education Dialogue 2013.

He said that there was substantial progress and clarity on how to progress on community colleges. The Ministry is working with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), to develop a framework for community colleges in the country.

An MoU was signed between the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the AACC for setting up community colleges in India.

Further, Raju also said that with the transformation that Massively Open Online Courses (MooCs) are bringing in the educational sphere, the Government is planning to focus on this area.

An MoU for this has been signed between IIT Bombay and edX, a non-profit entity created by Harvard and MIT that develops higher education content for open online courses.

Besides this there is an effort to enhance teacher capacity development in collaboration

with institutes in the US.

Raju said that through these initiatives the Government was trying to adopt best practices of teaching and not trying to mirror models in the West.

When asked if the recent move to introduce four-year courses in University of Delhi could be seen as replicating a Western model and whether it would work in India, Raju said the Government was keeping a close watch on the concerns and any lacunae in the course would be sorted out. While addressing concerns that the

talks and MoUs signed on Tuesday could be a way of giving foreign institutions a backdoor entry, given that the Foreign

Education Providers (Regulation) Bill is yet to come to pass; Raju said these are straightforward agreements to encourage both American and Indian students to go to each others' countries for studies.

He said the Bill, which is pending in Parliament, would be tabled in the upcoming session.

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Hindustan Times ND 26-Jun-13 P-11

US, India focus on education and skill

Vanita Srivastava

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NEW DELHI: India and the United States have stressed on collaborations and partnerships in technology driven education to meet the challenges in skill development and knowledge sector.

"We need to focus on providing education and skills to the children. I strongly feel that technology could be used as a tool to instil values in children," the US Secretary of State John Kerry said at the India-US Higher Education Dialogue here on Tuesday.

The dialogue discussed various enhanced two-way student

mobility, research collaborations, faculty development, establishment of community colleges, collaborations for cyber system and technology enabled learning like the Massive Open On-Line Courses (MOOCs). Emphasising on the need for new collaborations Kerry said that US was willing to forge partnership in various fields.

"This is a very important dialogue. The contours have been outlined and now we need to take it forward. It is the third, so it is growing, we are learning where the important places of emphasis ought to be, we are learning where the challenges are, but there is a great deal we can learn from each other,"

Kerry added. HRD minister Pallam Raju said that education and knowledge is a key pillar of the India-US strategic partnership." The partnership offers a huge opportunity to use and share the experience and best practices in the development of institutions of higher learning and research," Raju said.

Apart from signing four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), eight Joint research partnerships, 126 Raman fellows who will travel to the US for post doctoral research, and 'Connect India' programme aimed at inviting students from US universities for short term courses in India, were announced.

MoU SIGNED AT DIALOGUE

- MoU between IIT Delhi and University of Nebraska on cyber systems MoU between IIT Bombay and edX on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) MoU between AICTE and American Association of Community Colleges on cooperation for establishment of community colleges MoU between ITM Group of Institutions and Montgomery College on cooperation in capacity development.

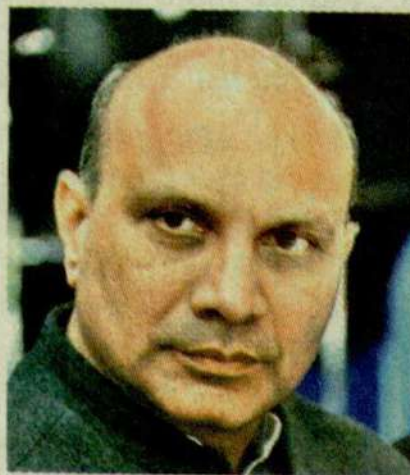
Millenium Post ND 26-Jun-13 P-5

Pallam Raju, John Kerry create blueprint for education exchange

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Human resource development minister MM Pallam Raju, after his meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry on India-US Dialogue said that both countries possessed 'great potential to expand co-operation in education Sector.' Giving a road map for the collaboration, Raju said that this 'includes promoting institution to institution ties, deepening co-operation in R&D, encouraging faculty exchanges and development of teachers.'

'The blue print also includes promoting a two-way student exchange, skill development and give thrust to on-line education such as massive open on-line courses (MOOCs). We wish to make skill development integral part of the country's education system,' said Raju. He also laid stress on the US helping in the process of crystallizing the ministry's strategy for institutionalizing the community colleges in India. Raju said his vision is to transform the country's educational institutions into hubs of knowledge creation and promoters of innovation



HRD minister Pallam Raju

as also provide opportunities to its youth for their skill development and employment. Kerry said the two countries need to focus on providing education, skills and cultural values to the children who form the most valuable part of the future world population.

The major announcements made during the dialogue include eight joint research partnerships under Singh-Obama 21st century Knowledge Initiative; announcing the final list of 126 Raman Fellows, supported by the University Grants Commission (UGC), who are ready to travel to US Institutions for Post-Doctoral research and 'Connect India' Programme aimed at inviting students from US institutions for short term courses in India.

Business Standard ND 26-Jun-13

P-8

IIT-Bombay, MIT, Harvard in tie-up for e-courses

BS REPORTER ■ Mumbai

The Indian Institute Technology, Bombay, has entered into a partnership with edX, a not-for-profit company set up by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard, to launch open online courses.

Hindu ND 26-Jun-13 P-8

Graduation blues

Raktima Bose

Almost half of the country's graduates are not employable for industry

That graduation is the stepping stone to the employment market holds no good in present times with a latest report finding out that as many as 47 per cent graduates in India are not employable for any industry role. Their lack of English language knowledge and cognitive skills were identified as the major obstacles to their suitability in the job market.

This, again, underscores the urgent necessity of substantive intervention at school and college levels for improving basic skills of stu-

dents as well as renewing the focus on imparting vocational training alongside theoretical learning.

The report, titled 'Aspiring Minds' National Employability Report', is a national audit of employability of three-year Bachelor's Degree graduates. The survey included 60,000 students from colleges across India, slated to graduate this year.

According to the report, the employability of graduates varies from as low as 2.2 per cent in roles such as corporate

communications/content development and 2.59 per cent in accounting to 15.88 per cent in sales-related jobs and 21.37 per cent for roles in the business process outsourcing (BPO/ITeS) sector. Most of the graduates (35.95 per cent) were found suitable for clerical/secretarial roles.

For an analyst's role, close to 84 per cent graduates were found to lack the right levels in cognitive ability. Ninety per cent graduates did not have required proficiency in English communication.



HURDLE: Lack of vocational skills.

Another area of concern is that many graduates from accounting and information technology backgrounds remain 'invisible' to potential recruiters since they do not belong to the top colleges usually preferred by companies. Forty-one per cent of graduates employable in accounting roles hail from colleges beyond the top 30 per cent

colleges, whereas for the IT services sector this percentage is 36 per cent.

This system, apart from creating economic inefficiency, also breeds unfairness for the students. An effective means to tackle it, the report says, is to employ a scalable certification to 'discover' the employability of students across the nation.

Times of India ND 26-Jun-13 P-7

Stephen's, SRCC, LSR closer to autonomy

HRD Ministry Is Planning To Allow These Colleges To Open Campuses In Other Locations

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: The long-nursed dreams of autonomy for St Stephen's College, Shri Ram College of Commerce and Lady Shri Ram College may come true at last and will be accompanied by incentives from the Union government.

Besides reviving the 6th Five Year Plan's (1980-85) proposal for autonomy to top colleges in the country, the ministry for human resource development is planning to allow the newly autonomous colleges to open campuses in other locations. It is working on removing bureaucratic hurdles so that interested colleges find it easy to apply for autonomy.

According to MHRD officials, select colleges nationwide including Stephen's, SRCC and LSR in Delhi, St Xavier's in Mumbai and Chennai's Loyola College are being con-



Once autonomous, these colleges will become deemed universities with the freedom to design their own curricula and courses

sidered. Once autonomous, these colleges will become deemed universities with the freedom to design their own curricula and courses as well as avail of external funding and conduct independent examinations.

However, they will not have the authority to confer degree and the

university they are affiliated to at present will continue to do so.

"The biggest gain, however, will be that these colleges may open campuses in other locations and for that they will be given grants initially," said a senior MHRD official. St Stephen's was offered autonomy in 1981 but the plan was

shelved owing to opposition from Delhi University Teachers' Association and the university administration. SRCC's proposal, too, faced opposition when in 1976 its then principal Dr C B Gupta prepared a framework on autonomous institutions.

Welcoming the move, principal

of St Stephen's Valson Thampu said, "This is a progressive idea but one long overdue. The government should enter a partnership with an NGO of high credibility. Only Muslims matter as minorities because of vote bank politics. Christians don't matter but it is they who have done the most for education in this country. There should be at least 5,000 St Stephen's across India if we want to make a qualitative difference to higher education."

The University Grants Commission has promised to take up the issue in its next full commission meeting. "We will remove all bureaucratic hurdles for colleges keen on autonomy provided they get the highest rating from National Assessment and Accreditation Council. As an incentive, we will make it easier for autonomous colleges to open more campuses across the country," said the ministry official.

Doctors by merit, not privilege

Sujatha Rao

India is the only country that authorises, as official policy, the sale of medical seats by private medical colleges, implicitly accepting the principle that the ability to pay, and not merit, is what counts. Further, in the absence of any system of third party certification by way of an entry or, more importantly, an exit exam — which could guarantee the qualities and competencies a doctor must possess before starting to practice — many medical colleges are producing quacks. The tragedy is that we all know about it.

The issue is not just about illegal capitation fees that range from Rs.50 lakh to Rs.1 crore for a MBBS seat. The process of admission is itself flawed with a walk-in system for those with money but for the others, it is a harrowing tale of expensive tuitions and writing 15 to 20 examinations across the country — a process that once again excludes and deters several.

Entrance test

In order to reduce the stress of multiple examinations, make it more equitable and ensure minimum levels of competence, having the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) as a qualifying requirement for admission has been a long-standing recommendation of experts. It was reiterated in 2010 by the Medical Council of India (MCI), inspired by rapidly deteriorating standards of school education.

The delay in implementing NEET was because of a lack of political will and the growing clout of private medical colleges in a neo-liberal environment that has encouraged a deadly cocktail of money power and political muscle. It is creditable that despite pressures, the MCI conducted NEET in 2012, for 90,000 aspirants.

Defying the MCI mandate on regulating entry into medical colleges, about 90 private colleges held their own examination and, on specious grounds, successfully obtained a stay from the Supreme Court. On May 13, the Supreme Court issued an interim order, making NEET voluntary and permitting the private colleges to go ahead with admissions based on their own examinations. For the harried students, it was Black Monday.

As business

Archaic and outmoded rules, regulations and eligibility conditions requiring a capital base of more than Rs.150 crore have made the establishment of medical colleges a business proposition. Combined with no incentives for quality education, there has been a twofold impact: **1.** commercialising the medical profession, where "recouping" the investment is the prime concern for the investor and graduating doctor alike; and **2.** an aggravated shortage of doctors in three ways: 15 per cent of those in the Non-Resi-

Cleaning the mess in India's medical education first needs a strengthening of the Medical Council of India through the appointment of members by an independent and rigorous selection process



dent Indian quota within the 50 per cent management quota do not practice in India; of the remaining 35 per cent, many do not practice, migrate abroad or establish themselves in cities for better incomes; and, poor training makes many "unemployable" as amplified in a provider survey by Jishnu Das in Madhya Pradesh which found a marginal difference in the practices of "qualified" doctors and quacks. Clearly, the commercialisation of medical education is one of independent India's biggest mistakes.

Therefore, the solution of "flooding the market with doctors by opening more medical colleges" to contain the menace of capitation fees without in the first instance, overhauling the regulatory framework related to quality of instruction, faculty development, better salary structures and banning private practice, etc has little merit.

Issue of quality

There are no short cuts or easy solutions to what has become a highly political issue. If people's health really matters for this government and if India is to stay competitive globally, it can no longer look the other way. It has to exercise its constitutional authority to bring in much needed institutional reform to clean up the mess, just as it did in 2010 by replacing a corruption-ridden MCI with a

board of governors by way of an ordinance.

In the same year, the ministry also drafted a bill to establish a National Commission for Human Resources for Health (NCHRH) to address the issue of quality by balancing the three critical functions of the profession: **a)** curriculum — what is to be taught and for how long; **b)** accreditation — who is to teach and in what manner; and **c)** ethical practice — adhering to the best interests of patients.

While the first two aspects were placed within the domain of a nominated body of experts, ethical medical practice was to be ensured by an elected body of the MCI. A distinction between nomination and election was made keeping in view the professional expertise needed to address complex issues related to content, standards, quality, competencies and skills as required by the country. Such expertise has to be sought and is not thrown up through electoral processes. It is for this reason that in most countries such as the United Kingdom, regulators are selected by the Public Service Commission based on merit and suitability. In addition, the U.K. Medical Council also has patient groups, student representatives and civil society activists as members of the Medical Council. Such openness and transparency is the only effective antidote to an indiscriminate abuse of power.

Focus on the regulator

In October 2012, the Parliamentary Standing Committee returned the NCHRH Bill to the government to re-examine three major concerns: **1.** States' autonomy and potential violation of federal principles; **2.** excessive bureaucratisation and centralisation, and **3.** faulty selection procedure of regulators, providing scope for abuse. Rather than seizing the opportunity to come up with a better draft, the ministry has, for the third time, reconstituted the board of governors with a retired Directorate General of Health Services as chair.

It is believed that the main purpose of the reconstituted body is to oversee the elections to the Board of the MCI. If true, this is disheartening. The MCI is the regulator for medical education and practice just as the Reserve Bank of India is for financial institutions or the Election Commission of India for elections. Regulators cannot be elected on popular mandate — they have to be invited by the government for their professional eminence and moral authority. The

MCI has to discipline and police the profession, more so on account of the extensive market failures that characterise it. Elected persons are compromised individuals and cannot do the task effectively. We have seen how disastrous our experience has been with an elected body; within the decade 2000-2010, it was set aside twice, once by the Supreme Court and the second time by the government by way of an ordinance. No other regulatory body has suffered such humiliation.

Since medical education is in the concurrent list of the Constitution, the Central government needs to leverage that power to bring in some discipline before permitting any more colleges to be established. The time has come to strengthen the regulator first by having the MCI Board freed from the clutches of doctors to include all stakeholders and have the members appointed through a rigorous selection process by an autonomous body like the Union Public Service Commission. This will end the nomination process of the ministry and the consequent conflict of interest. Once appointed, the regulator can be allowed to enforce its own rules and regulations.

The government needs to attend to a range of reforms from: appointing a tariff committee, indicating the right quantum of fees to be charged and legally enforcing the same; providing autonomy to medical colleges to stimulate excellence and innovation; constituting a committee of experts under the chairpersonship of a senior politician to examine some of the contentious issues, including the frequently made suggestion to nationalise private colleges, and appointing an advisory committee to undertake some of the critical functions of curriculum change and accreditation pending the establishment of a body like the NCHRH, which in today's circumstances may take not less than three years. What is required is a non-negotiable, high priority concern for patient welfare and safety by focusing on the quality of doctors being produced, in sufficient quantity of the skill mix.

In conclusion, sorting out the mess in medical education requires a consensus across the political spectrum. Any shifts in the status quo will be bitterly opposed, so deeply entrenched are the vested interests. But the time has come for the government to act as the acute shortage in human resources is the main barrier to achieving universal health coverage. The more the delay in addressing the critical challenges facing human resources for health on grounds of political expediency, the greater the social, political and financial costs this country will have to bear in the years ahead. Prudence lies in stemming the rot by decisive action and before it is too late.

(Sujatha Rao is a former Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. E-mail: ksujatharao@outlook.com)

Hindustan Times ND 26-Jun-13 P-1

HIGH-TECH CONNECT FOR YOU, LADIES!

Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women has a lot on the cards – a knowledge park, an incubation centre and new courses, says Gauri Kohli

There is good news for budding women engineers who wish to study in Delhi. Giving a thrust to research, innovation, engineering, technology, management, applied sciences and allied areas, the Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology (IGIT), which was set up in 1998, has been upgraded to the Indira Gandhi Delhi Technological University (IGDTU) – the first such

university for women in India. Earlier, IGIT was part of Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University.

Fresh MTech and MBA

Besides the BTech (computer science and engineering), BTech (electronics and communication engineering), BTech (mechanical and automation engineering), BTech (information technology), MCA, and MTech (ECE) part-time programmes on offer, the university will launch new MTech programmes from

2013-14. These include information security management; mobile and pervasive computing; robotics and automation and very large-scale integrated (VLSI) design.

"We also plan to start MBA, master's in architecture, town planning and urban design and MTech in nanotechnology programmes in future. MTech in renewable energy and green technology with a focus on smart grids is also on the cards. We are also aiming to set up a knowledge park, an incubation centre and an entrepreneur development cell by next year," says Professor Nupur Prakash, founder vice chancellor of IGDTU.

Focus on research, entrepreneurship

Elaborating on the new approach of the university, Prakash says, "Our main focus will be on research and innovation and helping our girls develop entrepreneurial skills, for which we are seeking help from the department of science and technology."

Prakash adds that about 25% of the students at the institute get into hardcore research. The rest of them prefer to opt for careers in application-oriented areas. About 75% go in for software development, software architecture design, software project management, mobile application development, automotive engineering and VLSI design. Hardware design and telecom services and management are the other choices. Industry-university tie-ups are also being worked out. "GE Research, which has set up labs in Bangalore,

ADMISSION DATES AND COURSES ON OFFER

- New MTech programmes (offered w.e.f. August 2013)
- MTech (information security management)
- MTech (mobile and pervasive computing)
- MTech (robotics and automation)
- MTech (VLSI design)

IMPORTANT DATES
Sale of admission forms for

MTech programmes: June 1 to July 1, 2013 at 20 branches of Panjab and Sindh bank across Delhi
Last date for receiving application forms: July 1, 2013
Date of counselling: July 15, 2013
Eligibility: BTech/MCA/MSc in relevant discipline with minimum 60% marks (55% for SC/ST category candidates)

For more details, visit www.igdtu.ac.in or www.igdtu.ac.in

selects two girls from our university every year for research. They are awarded a scholarship of \$3600 per annum and then absorbed in the organisation. Cisco also selects five to eight students of our university every year as network engineers. We are also trying to get funding from research agencies to be able to work on live projects," she says. The university has also tied up with Intel and is looking to collaborate with Texas Instruments and CoreEL. An agreement in 2010 was worked out with Nokia Finland in 2010 to train students in mobile architecture and programming, with Ericsson in 2011 for web-based instructional training telecom equipment and software, ARM and Atmel in 2012 for setting up Embedded Systems Design Lab and Flour Danial for setting up lab in mechanics of solids, etc.

Academic alliances

IGDTU is also entering into academic alliances with companies for developing the curriculum. Citing an example, Prakash says, "We have collaborated with Nokia, ARM

and Atmel to develop syllabus for certain subjects and introduce industry relevant courses. Nokia will help us develop topics such as mobile operating system, mobile databases, mobile cloud computing, and mobile programming and architecture."

The course curriculum, which was earlier revised once in five years or so, will now happen faster. "Now that we are a university, we have started the process of curriculum revision for the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes," adds Prakash. The university will also start offering PhD programmes in engineering, science and technology from 2014 and admit research scholars (full-time and part-time) based on the UGC guidelines. The full time PhD scholars will work with the university as teaching assistants.

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The university will launch new MTech programmes from 2013-14, including information security management; mobile and pervasive computing and very large-scale integrated (VLSI) design

