

Newspaper Clips

June 27, 2014

Indian Express ND 27/06/2014 P-14

The futility of ranking

ONCE more, the issue of Indian universities not figuring in global rankings is cause for hand wringing and heart burn. This time, a sense of indignation has also crept in, as the QS Asia and QS BRICS surveys show that our universities are not figuring adequately even among Asian or BRICS countries. The argument goes that these global surveys do not consider the unique context of India, they give too much weightage to research, to the funding received for research, the percentage of foreign students and so on. Valid points, but the creation of an India-specific ranking system is hardly the kind of measure that will help India improve the quality of its higher education.

My belief is that India featuring among the top 200 universities in world rankings is not a problem. Institutions such as the Indian Institute of Science and the IITs are within striking distance and can be funded and supported to make the grade. But neither the status symbol of a presence in international league tables nor an India-specific ranking system will address the real malaise in our higher education, which is the very poor undergraduate system for basic disciplines. Our 550 universities and their 16,000 colleges, which ought to be the backbone of a thriving higher education system for the basic disciplines, are in dire straits. Most of them are defeated by inadequate resources, the lack of teaching talent and infrastructure, and are without the means to aim for any measure of quality. Our school-teachers emerge from these poor quality colleges and teach our schoolchildren in a system that is based on rote learning, devoid of the spirit of enquiry and critical thinking. The vicious cycle continues as these children in turn graduate in science, arts or commerce, neither evolved in his or her discipline nor having acquired a social orientation or values.



Let's focus on the long haul systemic reform that higher education needs

S. GIRIDHAR

So even if we create our own "contextually valid" ranking system with faultless methodology and perfect execution, it is not going to address the core systemic problem. While the top 25 universities will be in a rat race as they chase the rankings, there would be unhealthy jostling for precious talent and the exercise would suck up resources and public attention. It will do nothing for the lakhs of desperate students who pass through our colleges.

We have evidence that this university assessment *abhiyan* could

We need governance reforms that question the purpose and functioning of the existing governing and statutory bodies. We need regulatory reforms to address deep-rooted rent-seeking and to deal harshly with corruption and unethical commercialisation, organisational reforms that enable decentralisation, splitting up universities and explicitly preventing political appointments. We need reforms so that colleges and universities can implement structural changes that foster academic freedom.

be an exercise in futility. First, an examination of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) will show that its assessment and ratings are not taken seriously or acted upon. The inadequacy of its assessment is also reflected in the manner it liberally gives out "A plus" and "A" ratings. Perhaps the first step is to take a hard look at the NAAC, shake it up, make it use serious yardsticks where the highest rating is reserved for truly global quality institutions and the rest are placed in relation to that standard. That would address

one half of the issue, that of reliable and meaningful assessment.

What of the other and more significant half, the use of these assessments for continuous improvement? That brings me to the second piece of evidence — the various school assessment exercises across the country that have not improved levels of learning. ASER, the dip-stick survey of the country for a decade now, tells us every year that half the children are not learning. Similarly, statewide, detailed quality assessment exercises show that the majority of schools are not

doing their job. Other studies show that neither in private nor in public schools are children learning to develop their potential. But none of these assessments has helped improve school education because the answer lies not in these assessments but in a major systemic overhaul, most importantly, a deep and intensive revamp of our teacher education system. If these assessments have not moved the needle even a little in school quality, what makes us believe they will have different results for college education?

The answer to improving the

quality of our higher education is actually a long-term, difficult process to totally reform our university programmes, organisation and regulation. We need governance reforms that question the purpose and functioning of the existing governing and statutory bodies. We need regulatory reforms to address deep-rooted rent seeking and to deal harshly with corruption and unethical commercialisation, organisational reforms that enable decentralisation, splitting up universities and explicitly preventing political appointments. We need reforms so that colleges and universities can implement structural changes that foster academic freedom in the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, and they are able to recruit and appoint faculty without political interference.

Other things need to be done simultaneously to address the core issue. First, increasing public spending on higher education, because currently we spend a mere 1 per cent of our GDP on it. Second, significantly invest in basic disciplines. Third, improve and give teeth to the NAAC, make it meaningful by including measures of inclusion and equity as well as quality of learning outcomes. Fourth, address the great shortage of quality teachers in our universities by creating a system where the best people in a discipline, be it humanities or the sciences, choose teaching as a career.

We need a 10- or even 20-year strategy and we should implement it steadfastly, without wavering on the way. If one accepts this premise of long-haul reform, where a number of core systemic issues are painstakingly addressed, one will appreciate the limited value of ideas like the creation of a fresh Indian university ranking system.

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Statesman ND, 27.06.2014, P-1

CHAIWALLAH'S SONS FIGHT AGAINST ODDS, AID POURS IN

*From tea stall to IIT***STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**

Chandigarh, 26 June

With the Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi -- who once worked as a tea seller -- serving as role model, the sons of a chaiwallah (tea seller) in Punjab have taken everyone by surprise by clearing the prestigious IIT-JEE examination for the second consecutive time.

The two brothers Amit and Sumit Kumar secured positions 809 and 2014, respectively in the exam. This was despite the fact that they were forced to manage their father's tea shop days before the exam after he met with an accident.

The boys had cleared the exam last year as well but were unable to take admission because

they didn't have enough money to pay their fees charged by the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). At that time, their father had unsuccessfully tried to arrange money from money lenders so that their fees could be paid. "I want to follow in the footsteps of (Mr) Narendra Modi, who became our Prime Minister after having started as a tea seller. We too would like to serve the country," said the elder brother Amit.

Their father Mr Jatinder Kumar, a migrant from Sitamarhi in Bihar, has been selling tea on a cart at Chugitti Chowk in Jalandhar for about 20 years. The Kumar family lives in a small room in the Laddowali area of the town.

I want to follow in the footsteps of Narendra Modi, who became our Prime Minister after having started as a tea seller. We too would like to serve the country

AMIT KUMAR

Selling tea to factory workers, Mr Jitender finds it hard to bear the expenses of his children's studies and the medical expenditure on his sick wife.

But times appear to have changed for the Kumar family now as many are coming forward with promises of financial help and the two brothers will no longer miss entering the IITs for monetary rea-

sons. Many, including the State Bank of India (SBI), a retired Supreme Court judge, industrialists and several others, have offered to sponsor or contribute for their education. The brothers have received a little more than Rs 3.6 lakh from various people in Jalandhar in just three days.

The SBI has already sanctioned them a loan, gifted them laptops, deposited Rs 51,000 each in the bank accounts of Sumit and Amit. The bank is also making arrangements to help them attend the IIT counselling in Delhi and Dhanbad. Both the brothers attribute their success to their parents who funded their education despite great difficulties.

INDIA MUST ADVOCATE R&D

WAY FORWARD

The government should work to create Navratna universities

Harini Sriram

Why is it that America and Europe produce the most number of Nobel Laureates while India can only boast of a few such names? The reason, as some vice chancellors and professors point out, is that India does not spend enough on research in its universities.

Discussing the need to re-think research funding strategies in India, as part of a panel discussion during the launch of Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2014, VCs and professors agreed that there is a serious lack of government funding to carry out research in Indian universities. Prof Seyed E Hasnain of IIT Delhi cited the examples of initiatives in countries like Korea, Japan, Ireland, etc, for which the government gives a bare minimum funding to universities and this spend increases significantly based on the university's performance.

"It is important to hand-hold universities in the initial stages and support them with generous funds. In India, there is a disparity in government funding between research institutions and universities. Besides, the funding that most universities get is sometimes not even sufficient to meet the salaries of the staff, leave alone to carry out research," he added.

Pawan Agarwal, adviser, higher education, Planning Commission, said that the challenge lies in deploying selective research funds. Comparing public funding patterns in US universities with that of India, he added that India has a long way to go. "For



■ In India, there is a disparity in government funding between research institutions and universities

PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION

instance, the National Institute of Health in Maryland, USA, spends more than 1,000 times the money that Indian research institutions do on research. Similarly, while in the US, universities receive about 45% funding for facilities and services, Indian universities receive between 0% and 5%. A research excellence framework (REF) is non-existent in the context of Indian universities," he said.

Even as efforts are on to increase the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education to 30% (from 19% now) in 2020, improving the quality of research, teaching and infra-

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF RESEARCH, TEACHING AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN INDIA UNIVERSITIES ARE PARAMOUNT

structure are paramount. Prof SC Lakhota of Banares Hindu University (BHU) argued that the focus should be on quality education rather than research. "We must realise that universities are more than just science and technology. Our students are compart-

mentalised as we have narrowed down our branches of study and demarcated universities and research institutions, creating more disparity.

Every institution gets basic public (government) funding and we must create a post-doctoral culture in the country, as this will help prevent brain drain," he said.

Hasnain added the government should work towards its proposal to create Navratna universities (on the lines of Ivy League universities) and nurture them selectively through funding and more autonomy.

**Times of India ND
27/06/2014 P-9**

SC puts engg admissions on hold for 14 days

Adarsh Jain | TNN

Coimbatore: The Supreme Court on Thursday deferred engineering admissions across the country by two weeks pending the disposal by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) of 521 applications for new engineering colleges and additional seats in existing institutions.

The apex court directed AICTE to complete inspections within a week and asked universities to complete affiliations by no more than a week after that. A bench of Justices Vikramjit Singh and Shiva Kirti Singh on Thursday directed AICTE to take a decision on the 521 applications within a week.

Hindu ND, 27.06.2014, P-7

PSLV set for third commercial launch

Madhumathi D.S.

BANGALORE: Apart from having Prime Minister Narendra Modi as its VVIP witness, Monday's multiple satellite launch event by the Indian Space Research Organisation will be a rare, all-commercial launch on the home-grown PSLV space vehicle.

There will be no Indian satellite on it but, five foreign satellites whose ride has been paid for by four customers.

The French Earth observation satellite, the 714-kg SPOT-7, will be the main passenger on the PSLV's 27th flight and will be put into space at about 650 km from ground, along with four small co-riders.

They are Germany agency

DLR's 14-kg nanosat AISAT to monitor sea traffic; Canada's NLS 7.1 and NLS 7.2, each weighing 15 kg; and NTU Singapore's 7-kg small satellite VELOX-1.

ISRO Chairman K. Radhakrishnan told *The Hindu* that this was the PSLV's third dedicated commercial launch since it started taking up non-Indian spacecraft for a fee way back in May 1999.

He was speaking ahead of the countdown, which begins at Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota from Friday morning.

Over the next two years, the ISRO has scheduled three more such 'dedicated' commercial PSLV flights, he said, but did not share the amount

that the ISRO's marketing arm, Antrix Corporation, has charged these customers.

"With Monday's launch, PSLV would have made 40 commercial flights. We have a few more commercial launches in the pipeline," he said.

A fully commercial launch means there is no Indian spacecraft on the launcher and customers pay for the launch of their respective satellites on the PSLV.

In the past, PSLV-C21 carried SPOT-6, which is the present SPOT-7's complementary satellite, and PROTERES into space in September 2012; PSLV-C10 lifted Israel's TEC-SAR in January 2008, and PSLV-C8 launched Italy's AGILE in April 2007.

Dr. Radhakrishnan said that the PSLV, which can lift a total satellite weight of around 1.6 tonnes to a height of around 650 km, is firmly placed on the multi-billion-dollar global market of satellite launchers and has been commanding a good price that has risen from the promotional rates in its early years.

In its next three fully commercial PSLV launches, he said the ISRO would put into orbit three 350-kg-each British DMC-3 disaster monitoring satellites together on one; Singapore's TeLEOS-1 and a few smaller customers on another; and the 950-kg German environmental EnMAP on the third. In the recent years, western global launch majors have developed rockets that can lift eight to 10 times the weight categories that PSLV can handle, and there are very few proven rockets internationally left in the PSLV class besides European agency Arianespace's new vehicle Vega, he said.

NEWSMAKER / DINESH SINGH/ DELHI UNIVERSITY VICE-CHANCELLOR

Mathematician who got his equations wrong

AMID ANGRY students marching towards Rashtrapati Bhavan being detained at the Parliament Street police station and others protesting in front of the vice-chancellor's residence in Old Delhi, Delhi University's media advisor, Malay Neerav, held a brief press conference on Thursday. The university — read, Vice-Chancellor Dinesh Singh — he said, was ready to reconsider a three-year honours degree course under its Four Year Undergraduate Programme, or FYUP. Neerav said approval of the University Grants Commission, or UGC, was awaited even as admissions had ground to a halt in India's leading university.

For the past 10 days, Delhi University (DU) has been in ferment after the demand for the reversal of FYUP to a regular three-year undergraduate programme found favour in the human resource development ministry and UGC. And Singh, depending on whether you were an opponent of FYUP (the majority) or a supporter, became a villain or the hero. There were cries of joy and of condemnation alike on Tuesday when Neerav sent a text message to 139 journalists saying, "VC has resigned." Subsequently, Singh's supporters, including Pro Vice-Chancellor Sudhish Pachauri, forced Singh to do a rethink.

Labelled the "most controversial vice-chancellor till date" by his detractors, many of them part of the university faculty, Singh was lambasted for making FYUP an "ego battle" and refusing to heed UGC's directive to revert to the three-year degree system. His supporters see in Singh a hero fighting to protect the "autonomy of the University and academic freedom" against the "diktats" of UGC. The commission, they

alleged, was working at the behest of the new government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, which, in its manifesto for Delhi, had promised to scrap FYUP. An academic who has known Singh for the past 15 years says the vice-chancellor is a "visionary" who is being unfairly targeted.

The man who evokes such strong feelings either side of the fence is a former student of DU. After a post-graduate degree from St Stephen's College, he did his doctorate in mathematics from Imperial College in London and returned to his alma mater as a teacher in 1981. There he was popular among the girls for his "good looks and his oratory", recalls one of his former students.

And if current Delhi University Teachers' Association President Nandita Narayan is firmly pitted against him on FYUP, then too, when they were departmental colleagues at St Stephen's, she was perceived as being the polar opposite of him.

Singh admits to enjoying reading, travelling and listening to music. He surprised many when in 2007 he held his first painting exhibition at New Delhi's India Habitat Centre. A self-taught painter, he says he finds strong parallels

between painting and mathematics and believes painting is therapeutic.

Singh took over as the vice-chancellor four years ago, moving up from his role as the director of the university's South Campus, like his predecessor, Deepak Pental. Students were impressed by his open approach — he took steps for creating additional hostel facilities and started an innovative festival called "Antardhwani" in 2012 which became a platform for students and teachers to embark on collaborative projects.

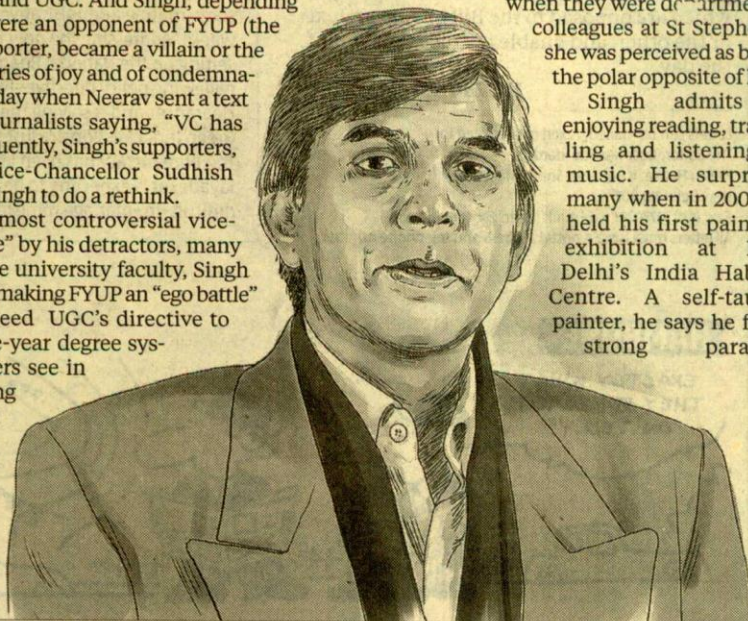
However, the majority of teachers allege he is aloof and interacts only with his select group of academics. They say he has never met members of the teachers' union even once after taking over.

In 2012, Singh mooted FYUP on the lines of American universities. While the then HRD minister Kapil Sibal wanted it implemented at the earliest, the teachers protested at the manner in which he tried to have the controversial format incorporated in the university without going through the regular processes that take place when a significant thing as the curriculum changes. Cutting across party lines, the students, through their organisations, AISA, NSUI and ABVP, too voiced their opposition but it went unheard.

Some of his critics concede that FYUP is just the kind of academic reform that is needed to shake up the moribund Indian educational system and bring it on a par with international standards. However, they feel Singh should not have "hastily" pushed it through. They recall how eyebrows were raised on the campus when a year after FYUP's adoption, Singh was honoured with the Padma Shri by the United Progressive Alliance government before it was voted out of power.

In the final analysis, Singh, being a mathematician, should have known that for an equation to work, the variables needed to be firmly factored in. In the case of FYUP, he left the variables—the teachers and the student body—out in the cold.

KAVITA CHOWDHURY



DU proposes 'blending' FYUP with 3-yr course

UGC Rejects Plan, Says Revert In Toto

Akshaya Mukul,
Shreya Roy Chowdhury
& Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: Breaking 10 days of silence over rollback of the four year undergraduate programme (FYUP), the Delhi University on Thursday wrote to the University

FULL COVERAGE: P 2, 3

Grants Commission (UGC) proposing a 'blended' formula that incorporates elements of FYUP in a three-year semester system.

By evening, however, UGC had written back rejecting the proposal and rebutting the varsity's argument that a migration to the old three-year course would

BARGAINING BEGINS

► DU responds to UGC directive on scrapping FYUP, proposes 3-year semester course that retains features of FYUP

► Varsity says complete rollback will take time and hold up admissions as it requires nods from bodies such as AC, EC

► UGC rejects formula. Says FYUP was illegal, so no clearances required for reverting to earlier system

hold up admissions as it would require clearances from DU statutory bodies such as the academic and executive councils.

DU's letter, sent by registrar Alka Sharma, appeared to be an attempt by vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh to retain features of FYUP while acceding to UGC's diktat. It said

'New plan retains worst of reforms'

DU's middle-of-the-road formula for undergraduate courses retains some of the most controversial elements of FYUP and was put together by a group DU described as "eminent citizens", including some who were members of the task force which designed the FYUP. Teachers and students opposing FYUP alleged that the proposal was all about "keeping the worst reforms" intact. **P 2**

the formula put forth by "eminent citizens" will "obviate the need to call for fresh registrations" for admissions. The proposal also suggests reducing the number of foundation courses in first-year and removing FCs from the second-year syllabus altogether.

► 'Will save time' P 2

DU says it will save time, UGC points at anomalies

► Continued from P1

"Admissions can't take place to a course of study for which necessary approvals have not been obtained... Compliance with the UGC letters would also require fresh admission registration of students..." the letter says. The modalities of effecting this change that was to be sent to the university by the committee set up by the UGC had not been received, it added.

The BTech courses remain with their current structures, a total of 17 papers of the 'major' subject will be taught in three years and an optional

fourth year will fetch an "Honours by Research." "This proposal," writes DU, "draws on some already existing and approved courses and will supplement courses that existed under the older undergraduate courses in the earlier semester system. This may considerably reduce the time needed for reviewing and adopting the older undergraduate courses that existed before FYUP."

The UGC shot back a two-page letter dismissing the university's arguments. "When FYUP ordinances themselves are illegal where is the need for fresh meeting of AC and EC



Delhi Police joint CP SBS Tyagi tries to stop an AISA activist during a protest

for reverting to the three-year course? Ordinances of three year courses are still there. All DU needs to do is to im-

plement them and go back to pre-2013 UG programme. DU wants us to agree to their plea at any cost. We summarily reject it," a source said.

UGC sources also pointed out anomalies in the letter. "In the second paragraph, she (the registrar) talks of clearances from statutory bodies that will be needed to revert to the three-year course and in third paragraph says a new proposal by academicians is under DU's consideration," a source said. "We would like to know if DU has agreed with those proposals. Also, why has the registrar in the last paragraph talked of convening a

meeting of necessary statutory bodies. Will that not be time consuming?"

Within minutes of receiving Sharma's letter, UGC had swung into action. Though at one point there was a view that while the three-year programme should be allowed in all courses except BTech in IT and computer science, later it was decided that since FYUP itself was illegal, letting even a few four-year courses will be endorsing the new programme.

UGC also decided to postpone the meeting of the standing committee that would advise DU on migration from FYUP to the three-year course.

DU sends proposal, UGC shoots it down

HT Correspondents

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Hours after Delhi University sent University Grants Commission a proposal to blend courses in the three-year and four-year programmes, UGC – in another directive to DU – reportedly rejected the formula.

The varsity finally broke its

silence and wrote to the commission that the proposal submitted by a set of “eminent citizens” – to DU as well as UGC – is being actively considered and may provide a way forward. In its directive, sources said, UGC asked DU to revert back to the 2012 three year undergraduate programme for all courses.

Sources said that while the UGC and the HRD ministry had

more or less agreed to the formula, the change of mind came after a legal opinion was sought in the evening.

According to DU sources, the university may also now seek legal advice on whether UGC is empowered to give a directive to the varsity in academic matters.

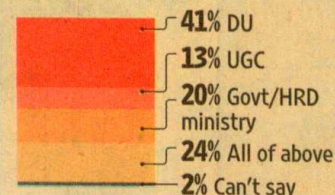
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

» **END OF SILENCE, P7**

» **WHERE'S THE V-C?, P7**



Who do you think is responsible for the FYUP mess?



Total votes: 1,684 by 10.30pm on Thursday

DU sends proposal, UGC shoots it down

“I have welcomed the offer made by DU to carry out both the programmes. There was a positive development on behalf of DU,” said M M Ansari, member, UGC.

Shortly after receiving the letter from the university, UGC chairman Ved Prakash met HRD minister Smriti Irani for an hour, and also held deliberations with senior ministry officials. Earlier, the meeting of the standing committee of UGC, expected to be held at 5pm on Thursday, was postponed.

The DU proposal says that foundation courses should be reduced and offered only in the first year, an honours degree ought to be given

in three years, more main subject courses should be added to the mix, and that the university could also have an optional fourth year for a new degree, ‘honours by research’. It rules out bringing back the BA programme, B Com programme, and BSc physical science and life sciences course.

Conducting admissions in the system that prevailed in 2012 will require approval from various statutory bodies of the university, says the letter.

“You (UGC) will appreciate that admissions cannot take place to a course of study for which necessary approvals have not been obtained,” the letter reads.

Varsity breaks silence, sends proposal to UGC

UNEXPECTED University sends proposal formed by a group of citizens and academicians close to V-C Dinesh Singh to commission

Mallica Joshi

■ Mallica.joshi@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Delhi University's administration finally broke its silence on Thursday and wrote to the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The UGC may have expected to get a compliance report from DU, agreeing to roll back the FYUP and revert to the three-year programme that prevailed in 2012, but what it got was a proposal formed by some 'eminent citizens' that spoke about how the university could implement a new three-year programme.

The question that arises, however, is why after so many days the university broke its silence for these suggestions.

The committee that listed six suggestions for a new system comprises six Delhi University college principals and nine current or former professors — all of whom are close to the vice-chancellor and his administrative team.

This team met the vice-chancellor in his house on Wednesday evening with suggestions. DU sent a letter to the UGC, attaching this letter along with its reply.

The letter stated that if the university tries to go back to the programme that existed before FYUP, courses will have to be made all over again.

"These courses have been

POINTS PROPOSED BY THE VARSITY

- Independent Committee - Reduce foundation courses and offer them only in the first year
- Standing committee - All courses that existed prior to FYUP must be restored. These will include BA (Programme), BSc (Programme), B.Com (Programme), B.El.Ed and all Honours courses.
- Independent Committee - Keep B Tech courses as they are, just remove foundation courses
- Standing Committee - For existing B.Tech students, the fourth year should be retained and they should be eligible for a B.Tech degree as per the terms and conditions at the time of taking admission.
- Independent Committee - Offer a fourth year of study as an option for those who want to pursue an 'Honours by Research' programme
- Standing Committee - No suggestion on a fourth year at all

replaced by courses under the FYUP in the ordinance. Bringing them back will be a time-consuming process as a committee of courses will have to be constituted. These will have to be passed in the Academic and Executive Council," said DU spokesperson Malay Neerav.

The university has suggested that some already existing courses be used to supplement courses that existed under the older undergraduate courses under the semester system.

What they have failed to explain is that if some older courses can be brought back, why can't all? Will these older courses not need to be made all over again by the committee of courses? If not, then why can't the three-year programme be brought

back in the form that it existed in 2012? This is what teachers and students, who have been at the forefront of the struggle against the four year programme, been saying all along.

There is no clarity on why the university decided to push the recommendations of the independent committee.

"What we don't understand it why would the university want to send a separate proposal. The UGC did not ask for a proposal. It ordered the university to comply with its order. If the university thinks it is in the right, it should have clearly refused to comply. A new formula means the university knows it is wrong and it trying to save face," said a senior professor who did not want to be named.

Deccan Herald ND 27/06/2014 P-1

Impasse continues over UG course

NEW DELHI: The impasse over the four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) continued on Thursday even as Delhi University on Thursday put the ball in the court of the University Grants Commission.

The varsity urged the UGC to consider accepting the suggestions that a group of academicians made on Wednesday for tweaking the four-year undergraduate programme. "This may considerably reduce the time required for reviewing and adopting the older undergraduate courses that existed

before introduction of the FYUP," DU registrar Alka Sharma said in a letter to the commission.

The Human Resource Development Ministry examined the DU's proposal after it was brought to its notice by UGC chairman Ved Prakash. The UGC chairman also met HRD Minister Smriti Irani and discussed the proposal made by the varsity.

Sources said the UGC would most likely reject the DU's proposal as the HRD minister wanted a complete rollback of

the contentious FYUP, not tweaking of its format.

To end the deadlock, a group of 20 academicians, comprising vice-chancellor of Punjab University Arun Grover and DU college principals among others, on Wednesday approached both the DU and UGC and proposed a six-point formula to tweak the contentious FYUP.

They suggested that a three-year undergraduate programme with Honours could easily be devised by reverting to "several features" of the old

semester format and by "drastically" reducing the existing courses in the FYUP that are not of the Honours stream.

The university may offer a fourth year of study to grant "honours by research" degree to students undertaking the programme within an overall credit based system with the approval of "all regulatory bodies".

The foundation courses, proposed in the FYUP, may be reduced in number and offered only in the first year.

» **Impasse, Page 8**

Impasse continues over Delhi varsity UG course

Impasse, from Page 1

The existing B Tech courses, offered under the FYUP, may be left untouched "except for a reduction in the number of the foundation courses," the academicians had proposed

"The university is of the opinion that given the situation where admissions are being delayed, time is of the essence, and hence this blended proposal

submitted by some eminent citizens to the UGC and DU may provide the necessary way forward," the DU registrar said in her letter to the UGC, referring to the suggestion made by the group of academicians.

The DU's proposal was immediately rejected by Delhi University Teacher's Association president Nandita Narain. She said the proposal lacked 'academic merit'.

"We want the admissions to start soon. If the proposal gets accepted, then with the approval from the statutory bodies (academic and executive council), admissions can begin soon," media coordinator Malay Neerav said, however, suggesting that DU was ready to tweak the FYUP to end the impasse. The DU said that reverting to the old three-year undergraduate programme struc-

ture would require the various statutory bodies of the university to adopt a course of study similar to the course that existed prior to the FYUP.

"We have told them that we need time to follow the old procedure because there are course committees, statutory bodies and they will need to meet for that purpose," Neerav said.

DH News Service

Delhi HC refuses early hearing of two cross petitions on DU's FYUP

ANI | New Delhi June 25, 2014 Last Updated at 17:19 IST

http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/delhi-hc-refuses-early-hearing-of-two-cross-petitions-on-du-s-fyup-114062500777_1.html

The [Delhi High Court](#) on Wednesday declined permission to urgently hear two petitions on the Delhi University's Four Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP).

The plea challenging the University Grants Commission's (UGC) notification to scrap FYUP has been filed by Delhi University professor Aditya Narayan Mishra.

Supreme Court advocate R. K. Kapoor on the other hand filed a petition to restore the earlier three year academic programme.

"The court was of the view that since one of the judges in the division bench cannot hear the matter, therefore, since the matter is to be heard by divisional bench, a regular bench, which would be constituted on 1st of July, 2014 would hear the matter. Therefore, the court has fixed the hearing for 1st of July, 2014," said Kapoor.

Meanwhile, students of B. Tech course, favouring four year undergraduate programme (FYUP), protested outside University Grants Commission.

One of the protesters, Sonakshi, demanded that their B. tech degree should not be scrapped.

"We want that our B. tech degree should not be scrapped and it should be continued for four years so that the batches in the coming years can pursue the same degree. If they change our B. tech degree to B.SC then there will be no value of our course," said Sonakshi.

On Tuesday, the UGC informed that 57 out of 64 colleges under DU have agreed to revert back to the three-year undergraduate programme.

Reports also said that DU Vice Chancellor Dinesh Singh had resigned over the raging controversy.

The UGC had on Sunday issued a directive to DU asking it to scrap the FYUP. The order fuelled criticism from some quarters that the UGC was trying to over step its boundaries.

DU students as well as aspiring students have been facing a lot of difficulties due to the ongoing tiff between the UGC and the university over the FYUP.

The Supreme Court had also dismissed a petition asking it to intervene and resolve the matter. It has instead asked the petitioner to approach the high court.

M Tech in Network Computing at TIST gets AICTE, Cusat approval

Press Trust of India | Kochi June 26, 2014 Last Updated at 14:51 IST

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/m-tech-in-network-computing-at-tist-gets-aicte-cusat-approval-114062600562_1.html

The All [India](#) Council for Technical Education ([AICTE](#)) and Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) have given approval to a new M Tech course in "Network Computing" introduced by Toc-H Institute of Science and Technology (TIST) at its Arakkunam campus.

The two-year post graduate course has been designed to cater to the growing demand for professional network engineers in various industry verticals.

TIST Vice Principal, Prof Babu John said the postgraduate course focuses on acquiring knowledge in multimedia networking, network management, wireless and mobile networks to make the students expert in network engineering.

Apart from giving prime importance to coding theory, network security and advanced communication technologies, the course also imparts training in information and resources management, cluster and grid computing, cloud computing and big data analysis.

The college has set up well equipped laboratories for the students to gain hands on experience in computer network and wireless network protocols.

JEE (main) merit list could be delayed further

Friday, 27 June 2014 - 6:25am IST | Agency: DNA

<http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-jee-main-merit-list-could-be-delayed-further-1998054>

Wait of nearly 12.5 lakh engineering aspirants from across India who appeared for the national test JEE (main) in April 2014 doesn't seem to be over. On Thursday, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the competent authority which conducted the national level test for engineering, extended the deadline for Std XII marks' confirmation from June 27 to 30, fuelling speculations of delay in the announcement of rankings.

Interestingly, CBSE has not yet announced the date of the release of all-India rankings. However, according to sources, it was slated to be released on July 7.

A circular put up on the JEE (main) website on Thursday attributes the delay to the state boards who failed to submit their data on time, which has pushed the deadline of confirmation of marks by candidates, an online procedure mandatory for all aspirants. The JEE (main) ranks will be used by central institutes (NITs and IITs) and other prestigious ones across India.

The notice doesn't name the slow-paced states. However, according to sources, half a dozen boards submitted the data only on Wednesday and Sikkim and Haryana are yet to do the same.

The development is stressing out the aspirants even more as private varsities started their admission process in mid-May and would be winding up even the management quota in the next few days.

"I don't know where I rank in the country and if I will get National Institute of Technology or not," said a candidate, who has already secured a seat in SRM University but plans to leave it if he get a seat in any of the 28 prestigious NITs.

Private varsities full

Most of the private varsities — BITS, VIT, SRM and Manipal — have already conducted their admissions and most of their seats are filled. A candidate said, "Last year, admission in top 10 NITs closed approximately at 15,000. Since we are clueless about our ranks, most of us have secured a seat in a private varsity." CBSE chairman Vineet Joshi was unavailable for comment.

Another test for Smriti Irani: Open letter from a NIT alumnus

Daily Bhaskar | Jun 26, 2014, 09:03AM IST

<http://daily.bhaskar.com/article/NAT-TOP-an-open-letter-from-a-former-nit-student-to-the-hrd-ministry-4659599-NOR.html>

New Delhi: Amidst huge furor over the cases of corruption and favoritism existing across various National Institute of Technology(s) in the country, a former student of NIT has written an open letter to the new HRD Minister, Smriti Irani, asking for stringent action against those responsible for the downfall in the quality of NITs.

There have been cases against the Directors of NITs, where they have been accused of having failed at running a prestigious institution like NIT, and only being in the positions they are in because of political affiliations.

Daily Bhaskar brings you the entire letter written by a former NIT student. The letter was first published in [Saddahaq](#).

"To,
Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani,
Union Minister of Human Resource Development,
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi – 110001,
Email : dhe-mhrd@nic.in
Dear Smritiji,

I am writing to you with great concern and hope. I am an alumnus of NIT, Hamirpur. Recent events in the NITs across the country have left me disheartened. The dignity and authority of these institutions have been diminished due to political interference with vested interests.

Congress led UPA replaced all NIT's Directors with their loyalists across the country

In 2002, the MHRD, Shri Minister Murli Manohar Joshi, decided to upgrade the status of the Regional Engineering Colleges to "National Institutes of Technology" (NITs). When, in 2004, the Congress led UPA took over from [BJP](#) led NDA, they replaced all NIT's Directors with their loyalists across the country.

All the NIT's are autonomous and their fee structure is too high for students. The democratic process has not been working at all in these institutions. Most of NIT's became corruption hub during the Congress led UPA government. Congress loyalists are enjoying perks of being a Director at such institution.

As a concerned alumnus of this revered institution, I request you to ensure speedy action on the below mentioned points of concern that many members of the alumni share with me.

Fee Structure is very high in these institutions

1. *Fee Structure is very high in these institutions (Most of the students in these institutions are from a poor background).*
2. *No democratic process to choose the student representatives.*
3. *There are no student council in these elite institutions. And it has been observed that students are often alienated from most of the decisions related to student welfare.*
4. *The Congress appointed Directors are working like dictators and there is no participation from the faculty side as well as student side. One has to agree with directors of these institutions. There is no room for dissent or disagreement.*
5. *There are some new Policies adopted for the promotion of the members of the faculty wherein one needs to have one patent, one self-subsidize course for next promotion and it is applicable to the entire faculty, even if one is recruited 15 years back. Now if the management wants to implement such policies they can implement the policy for new faculty rather than faculty recruited 15 years back -- this is disheartening and unfair.*
6. *Couple of years back exams were conducted twice before Final semester and student got a fair chance to improve; now this process has been replaced by single term examination without any rationale behind the same.*
7. *Corruption is rampant in these institutions and often the faculty members are silent on such issues as their own Annual Confidential Report is prepared by the Director, and annual appraisal also depends on the Director. It must be a two way process. Director must evaluate faculty and faculty must evaluate director.*

I would also like to inform you that an RTI was also filed regarding this and the reply from the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) sums up the apathy.

The reply from the first appellate authority of MHRD was regarding appointment of directors for 13 NIT's. NIT Warangal is also among the 13 NITs where the post of Director is lying vacant.

Here is gist of reply:

1. *The CPIO misses our RTI application.*
2. *First appellate authority says non traceability of RTI application led to delay of information and regrets for it. How come an application be misplaced when all our earlier RTIs reached the CPIO? It is only this RTI that got misplaced even when it was sent by speed post to the same old address.*

Clearly, something fishy is happening.

3. It doesn't mention clear cut selection procedure for appointment of Director's for INI (Institutes of National Importance). Why is the ministry hesitant to give selection procedure?

4. 147 applications have been received by MHRD including 7 nominations.

5. The appellate authority denies giving copy of applications received by MHRD quoting section 8(1) h.

I request you to kindly look into the matter and restore the dignity of these great institutions of learning.

Yours faithfully,
Hitesh Rangra."

IIM-Lucknow's new batch comprises 46% women

http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/on-campus/iimlucknows-new-batch-comprises-46-women/article6151495.ece?utm_source=RSS_Feed&utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=RSS_Syndication

New Delhi, June 26 :

Around 46 per cent of the PGP batch of IIM Lucknow comprises women candidates this year. Also, more than half of the PGP agri business management batch i.e. 52.27 per cent of the students are women. Last year the percentage of women candidates in the batch was 38 per cent.

A total of 210 female students have been inducted this year at IIM Lucknow, 187 (out of 409) in PGP and 23 (out of 44) in PGP ABM.

While the IIM has managed to get a good mix in terms of gender diversity, in terms of academic diversity, a majority of students still have an engineering background. A total of 306 (74.8 per cent) students in PGPM and 29 (65.9 per cent) in PGP ABM are engineers.

Around 30 per cent of the PGP batch comprises freshers with no prior work experience and 47 per cent has two years or lesser experience. Twenty-three per cent of the batch has more than two years of experience.

CM seeks to set up AIIMS, IIT, IIM in Goa

TNN | Jun 26, 2014, 12:20 PM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/CM-seeks-to-set-up-AIIMS-IIT-IIM-in-Goa/articleshow/37241319.cms>

PANAJI: The state government has begun to identify land to set up India's most prestigious educational institutes in Goa.

Chief minister Manohar Parrikar on Wednesday said that the Union government has asked the state to send a proposal within 30 days to set up the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) in the state.

"We are positively inclined to set up AIIMS, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM)

in the state," Parrikar said. He added that the state has informed the Centre that land allotted to the institutions would be restricted as Goa does not have much free land.

"I have asked that land for AIIMS, IIT and IIM be identified," Parrikar said, explaining that specifically large tracts of non-productive government land, which could be made available to make Goa an educational hub, should be listed.

Parrikar said that as per his estimate each institute would require around 100 acres of land. "We will try to keep IIT, IIM and AIIMS together," Parrikar said.

Once land has been identified, the state government will send a proposal to the Union government to set up the institutes in the state.

Parrikar also said that in the next two days Union human resources development (HRD) minister Smriti Irani will visit Goa. Since Irani is the party leader in charge of Goa, Parrikar expects that the state will get preference when it comes to allotting an IIT and IIM to it.

Parrikar also said that land acquisition for the National Institute of Technology is in an advanced stage at Cuncolim. "I am monitoring it personally. Section 7 has been issued, Section 9, 11 and 12 will be issued within two months and by September land would be in our possession," Parrikar said. He added that if required government can lay a foundation stone for the NIT on Gandhi Jayanti, October 2.

Open IIT in Jammu: Jitendra Singh to Irani

Press Trust of India | New Delhi

June 26, 2014 Last Updated at 22:35 IST

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/open-iit-in-jammu-jitendra-singh-to-irani-114062601373_1.html

A campus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) should be set up in [Jammu and Kashmir](#) as the state has tremendous potential to produce meritorious students, Union Minister [Jitendra Singh](#) today urged the HRD Ministry.

"While J-K has tremendous potential to produce young meritorious technocrats, there is, ironically, no IIT in the state. Jammu, with its geographical and logistical advantages, is an ideal location for the setting up of such an institute," Singh told [HRD Minister](#) Smriti Irani here.

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, handed over a proposal requesting her to set up the IIT in Jammu.

Irani assured Singh that she will pursue the matter in right earnest, according to a Ministry of Personnel release.

Singh, the [BJP](#) MP from Udhampur, also discussed a wide range of issues with the HRD Minister which were related to J-K and come under the purview of her ministry.

Among other things, he suggested that the process of appointment of the faculty and Vice Chancellors in the various universities in J-K be streamlined. He also called for the necessary steps to be initiated for the optimal utilisation of the central university at Jammu.

Singh also suggested that a campus of the Central university be opened in Ladakh. Additionally, he proposed that a

campus of Jammu University be started in Udampur and called for an upgrade of the existing campus of Jammu University at Kathua.

Singh asked the HRD Minister to open a Kendriya Vidyalaya in Doda and also offered to arrange for the land for the same, which may be acquired by the government to set up the school, the release added.

27 Jun 2014, Hindustan Times (Mumbai), Apoorva Puranik apoorva.puranik@hindustantimes.com

IIT-B students can learn basics of entrepreneurship with BTech

<http://paper.hindustantimes.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

MUMBAI: In a first across all Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), students of IIT-Bombay will soon be able to take up a minor course in entrepreneurship along with their Bachelor of Technology (BTech) degree.

The institute has received a grant to the tune of 1 million dollars (6 crore), in February for this 'Centre for Entrepreneurship' from Bharat Desai, founder of Syntel and alumna of the batch of 1975 at IIT-B.

Through this centre, a curriculum has been built to touch upon different aspects of start-ups such as the marketing, analysis, pricing, product development etc.

Currently, IITs offer minor programmes in subjects like physics, environmental sciences, bio sciences etc.

A basket of 15 courses in entrepreneurship will be offered to third semester and onward students at the institute and will constitute of 30 credits.

“Despite having the technology and the idea for a product or service for the start-up, students lack the skills like communication, marketing, leadership etc. which they are not exposed to during the undergraduate level,” said Milind Atrey, coconvenor of the cell. Students at the institute have welcomed this change and are eagerly waiting for July, which is when the first programme will be held. “An alumna from IIT-B, Raj Jasua who works in Silicon Valley will be coming in for the lectures. It will be great learning from him,” said Soham Chowdhary, a second year student at IIT-B.

While the institute already has a start-up incubation center, Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), the course will help students learn the ropes of the start-up trade right from the undergraduate level.

27 Jun 2014 Hindustan Times (Indore) AS TOLD TO RHEMA MUKTI BAXTER

‘It’s time for government to stop politicising education’

NEW DELHI: For thousands of DU aspirants like me, these are frustrating times. As the slugfest over the four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) is going on, the fate of aspirants like us is hanging in balance.

I passed my class 12 from Somerville School, Vasundhara Enclave. I scored 92.2% in my board examination.

I wanted to pursue honours in either English or History. I wanted to join Delhi University because it has good colleges which are considered the best for these courses. I wanted to study in LSR but considering the hype over cut-offs touching an all-time high, I thought I won’t be able to make it. So I was hoping to get admission in either Hindu or Miranda House College.

But, now instead of debating which college I should join, I am stuck with the depressing feeling that I might not even get admission this year.

Cut-offs have been delayed due to the crisis. Everybody involved — the DU administration, the UGC and the Central government — should realise that the future of thousands of students is at stake. They cannot be indecisive over the admission process and that too at this point in time. The conflict should be resolved as soon as possible.

As far as my views on FYUP are concerned, I would personally prefer studying under the three-year programme.

I feel the FYUP is a sheer waste of time. I cannot understand the logic behind extending a course when it can be completed within three years.

I have seen my seniors slog on various projects as per the FYUP syllabi. These projects are so time-consuming that most of them don’t concentrate on their main subjects.

The UGC and DU administration should stop blaming each other and work for the good of students like me who have worked hard to get where they are and now have to suffer because of the bureaucracy.

Even though the HRD ministry has refuted claims that it is interfering in the UGC and DU ego tussle, I feel they are involved. The government should stop politicising education.



I had always dreamt that DU would have been the ideal destination for me. But despite all this mayhem, I would still opt for DU.

Brain implant helps paralysed man move his hand using thoughts

Washington: For the first time, a 23-year-old paralysed man from US has been able to move his hand using his thoughts, thanks to an innovative device that bypasses the injured site. Ian Burkhart, from Dublin, Ohio, is the first patient to use Neurobridge, an electronic neural bypass for spinal cord injuries that reconnects the brain directly to muscles, allowing voluntary and functional control of a paralysed limb.

Burkhart is the first of a potential five participants in a clinical study by the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Centre and Battelle. "It's much like a heart bypass, but instead of bypassing blood, we are actually bypassing electrical signals," said Chad Bouton, research leader at Battelle. "We're tak-

Ian Burkhart in the US is the first patient to use Neurobridge, an electronic neural bypass for spinal cord injuries that reconnects the brain directly to muscles, allowing voluntary and functional control of a paralysed limb

ing those signals from the brain, going around the injury, and actually going directly to the muscles," said Bouton. The Neurobridge technology combines algorithms that learn and decode the user's brain activity and a high-definition muscle stimulation sleeve that translates neural

impulses from the brain and transmits new signals to the paralysed limb. Ian's brain signals bypass his injured spinal cord and move his hand, hence the name Neurobridge. Burkhart was paralysed four years ago during a diving accident.

During a three-hour surgery on April 22, Ohio State neuroscience researcher Dr Ali Rezai implanted a chip smaller than a pea onto the motor cortex of Burkhart's brain.

The tiny chip interprets brain signals and sends them to a computer, which recodes and sends them to the high-definition electrode stimulation sleeve that stimulates the proper muscles to execute his desired movements. Within a tenth of a second, Burkhart's thoughts are translated into action. ■

Tiny, self-beating hearts grown in lab

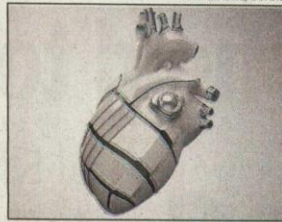
Organ Created From Stem Cells; They Contract At 30 Beats/Min

This device can help transport stem cells on planes

London: Miniature human hearts that beat of their own accord have been grown in the lab using stem cells.

The tiny hearts are just 1 mm in diameter and contract at around 30 beats per minute, according to researchers at Aberystwyth University in the UK. They have been developed specifically to find a cure for heart hypertrophy — a form of heart disease that can lead to sudden death.

Although healthy to begin with, the scientists are using chemicals to simulate the physiological conditions that will make the hearts hypertrophic — enlarged, due to abnormal growth of the cells that make up the heart (cardiomyocytes). Once diseased, the hearts are



© Viaframe/Corbis

RAY OF HOPE: They have been developed specifically to find a cure for heart hypertrophy, a disease that can lead to sudden death

then treated with newly developed medications to see if they can prevent the damage from occurring. "Although human hearts have been grown in labs before, this is the first time it has

ever been possible to induce disease in them," said Professor Nikolai Zhelev, who is leading the research.

"Heart hypertrophy can be hereditary, can be caused by diseases such as diabetes, or can be caused by doing too much strenuous exercise. The disease causes the heart muscle to thicken and stiffen, and makes it harder for the heart to pump blood around the body. In some people, a life-threatening abnormal heart rhythm will develop, and this is the most common cause of sudden death in young people. Although there are treatments, these only help to control the symptoms, and there is no known cure at the moment," Zhelev said.

Zhelev believes the miniature

hearts could help change that.

Using biosensors, Zhelev has been able to label specific molecules within the hearts to see where they are going — which pathway they follow. By establishing which molecules cause the hearts to become hypertrophic, he has been able to target drugs at these molecules and prevent them from going down the path they would usually take, and prevent them from becoming hypertrophic.

"We've tested a number of different compounds on these hearts — some of them entirely new ones that haven't been tested in humans yet, which is why we're testing them on these hearts we've grown in the lab," Zhelev said. PTI

A group of US engineering students has developed an electronics-free device to transport stem cells on planes. The cells need to be constantly agitated so that they don't clump together and lose their medical properties. The US Federal Aviation Administration doesn't allow packages with running electronics on planes so a standard device driven by motors is not an option. The team at the Jacobs School of Engineering at the University of California, built a device inspired by a mechanical clock, which is spring-driven and can house and agitate tubes of stem cells during shipping without use of electronics. PTI