

Newspaper Clips

September 19, 2013

Statesman ND 19/09/2013 P-5

IITs to comply with NBA but on their own terms

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 18 September

All 16 Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) have been exempted from going through the procedure followed by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) for giving accreditation. In lieu of the time taking procedure followed by the NBA accrediting other institutes, IITs will enjoy the privilege of furnishing their internal self-assessment report to the NBA as the basis for getting accreditation.

This latest move by IIT council to make all IITs submit themselves to the NBA has arisen out of the need to make these premier institutions a global brand. In this regard, IITs will open themselves to NBA accreditation to get into the Washington Accord, which facilitates recognition of degrees by sig-

natory countries. The accord has 15 permanent members, India is a provisional member.

However, HRD ministry officials insist that allowing IITs to go for an internal review rather than making them submit to the prevailing procedure followed by the NBA for giving accreditation to other institutions, is not a kind of special treatment given to the IITs.

"It is up to NBA to decide whether the review IITs are doing is acceptable or not," said an official of the MHRD.

Seeking to defend the move accepted by the IIT council here, he said the internal review of IITs is much more stringent than the accreditation process itself. Besides, members from outside (but from within the IIT family) will be engaged in the accreditation.

Clarifying the objective of the move he said "the re-

view will help India meet the requirements of Washington Accord of which India is provisional member" and added this move would also encourage other institutes including the private ones to emulate IITs feat and raise the quality of teaching.

Significantly, the IITs would also put themselves through an external peer review to be carried every five year. The external peer review, as discussed by the council, will take place once in five years and would cover the new IITs as well.

The Review Committee will consist of five eminent persons from industry and academia, to be selected by the Chairman of the Council of IITs. The report of the Review Committee will be placed before the IIT Council for its consideration.

Besides periodic review of the institution, each IIT

will similarly undertake, an in-house, department-wise review before any external Peer Review is carried out.

The issue of rankings of the IITs at the international level also came for discussion at the council meeting, with the minister stating that IITs have to reinforce the IIT brand at the global level.

None of the IITs at present figure among the top 200 in the world. Officials said the system evolved would definitely help the IITs scale up the ladder in the QS World University Ranking list.

Admitting that there was a gap between information sought by the global agencies who determine the rankings and information provided to them by our institutions, the MHRD has formed a committee of IIT directors to understand the methodology of Great Britain based QS ranking system.

Deccan Herald ND 19 Sept 2013 P-8

Bill moots council of central varsities V-Cs, students

NEW DELHI: A draft bill seeking to bring all central universities under one law has suggested setting up councils of vice-chancellors and students.

The Union human resource development minister will be the chairperson of the vice-chancellors' council, which will comprise three MPs—two nominated by the Lok Sabha and one by the Rajya Sabha—the MHRD secretary, University Grants Commission chairperson and the vice-chancellors of all central universi-

ties. The council will also have three persons nominated by the Centre to represent the finance, youth affairs and sports and the science and technology ministries. Setting up a council of students, however, is not mandatory.

"Any existing specified central university may, having regard to the need of the students in the matter of academic, research and cultural matters, and the role of students' association and the Union in these matters and if

it is of the opinion that it is necessary so to do, it may constitute a students' council for every academic year," the draft bill states.

The dean of students' welfare will be the chairperson of the proposed council of students. Twenty students will be nominated by academic councils on the basis of their performance in studies, sports and extra-curricular activities.

Another 20 people will be elected students' representatives. The proposed legislation,

drafted by a three-member committee, has also proposed establishment of a board for recruitment of central university teachers.

The three-member committee, headed by A M Pathan, former vice-chancellor of the central university in Karnataka, has sought suggestions from various stakeholders on the draft legislation.

The panel was set up by the HRD Ministry in April this year. The move to bring all central universities under one

act is purported to give them more financial and academic autonomy.

The bill has provisions for assessment of teachers' performance, besides creation of a fund by every central university within three months of implementation of the proposed law. All grants and fees received by the central universities will be deposited to this fund. It will be spent towards salaries, allowances and other remuneration.

DH News Service

HT New Delhi

BRAKES ON META UNIVERSITY?

Former Jamia Millia Islamia vice chancellor Najeeb Jung's exit has put on the backburner the much talked about Meta University concept. Jung, during his tenure, was in talks with fellow VCs from Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and the director of IIT-Delhi for giving shape to the university. He had also stated in his final interview as VC that it was the onus of the incumbent VC to carry forward plans of integrating the education imparted by all four universities into one amalgamated institution of learning.

P&B Daily ND 19 Sept 2013 P-10

IBM ties up with IIT Madras

MUMBAI, SEPT 18

TECHNOLOGY major IBM today tied up with IIT Madras, Karunya and Shiv Nadar universities to deploy its 'smarter computing' technology aimed at improving the education process.

"IIT Madras, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Bhopal, Karunya University in Coimbatore and the Shiv Nadar University (SNU) have selected IBM high performance computing (HPC) solutions to aid high-end research, refine processes and elevate the IT infrastructure in universities," IBM said in a statement—PTI

Business Bhasker ND 19/09/2013 P-3

आईबीएम और आईआईटी मद्रास में हुआ गठजोड़

प्रेट्र • मुंबई

टेक्नोलॉजी कंपनी आईबीएम ने बुधवार को आईआईटी मद्रास, कारुण्णा और शिव नादर विश्वविद्यालय के साथ अपनी 'स्मार्टर कम्प्यूटिंग' तकनीक को लागू करने के उद्देश्य से गठजोड़ किया है। नई तकनीक छात्रों को भविष्य के रोजगार के लिए तैयार करने और शिक्षा पद्धति को निखारने के उद्देश्य से ईजाद की गई है।

आईबीएम ने अपने बयान में कहा, 'आईआईटी मद्रास, इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ साइंस एजुकेशन एंड रिसर्च (आईआईएसईआर) भोपाल, कोयम्बटूर का कारुण्णा विश्वविद्यालय और शिव नादर विश्वविद्यालय ने अपने उच्च स्तरीय शोध और आईटी इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर को निखारने के लिए

आईबीएम के हाई परफॉर्मेंस कम्प्यूटिंग (एचपीसी) को चुना है।' शोध एजेंसी आईडीसी के अनुसार 40 अरब डॉलर के घरेलू आईटी कारोबार का 5 फीसदी हिस्सा शिक्षा क्षेत्र से है। इस कारोबार में सॉफ्टवेयर, हार्डवेयर और आईटी सेवाएं सम्मिलित हैं। 2017 तक यह बाजार करीब 12 फीसदी तक बढ़ने की संभावना है। इसे देखते हुए आईबीएम जैसी आईटी कंपनियों के लिए बेहतर अवसर बना है।

आईबीएम इंडिया/दक्षिण एशिया मिड मार्केट और इनसाइड सेल्स लीडर टोबी कक्कामथेतिल ने कहा, 'शिक्षा लोगों की प्राथमिकता में शुमार हो चुका है। नया समझौता स्मार्टर कंप्यूटिंग के क्षेत्र में विस्तार की संभावना को दर्शाता है।' इनके अतिरिक्त भी आईबीएम का कई अन्य शिक्षा संस्थानों के साथ गठजोड़ है।

MENTORING MECHANISM

Have academic incubators lived up to their potential?



Support system: Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala's Rural Technology and Business Incubator at IIT, Madras, has helped start-ups develop research-driven projects.

With close to 10 active academic incubators in the country and more than 1,000 start-ups incubated, the fact that only about 50 of them have been successful so far is not a good sign

By APARNA GHOSH
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BANGALORE

In 2007, Ashok Jhunjhunwala, then professor-in-charge of the incubation cell at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M), had visitors to his small research lab called Tenet in the electrical engineering department of the campus.

Umesh Sachdev and Ravi Saraogi, who were recent graduates from Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, had come from Delhi after just one nod of approval from Jhunjhunwala for their idea—a speech recognition platform that could process 14 Indian languages.

They joined Jhunjhunwala's Rural Technology and Business Incubator (RTBI) from where they built an application that would later help in interactive voice recognition (IVR) in mobile banking for rural India.

For young entrepreneurs like Sachdev and Saraogi there was no formal body to help them develop research-driven products. All they had were research groups run by individual professors. Later, academic institutions realized there was no strategically better place to incubate such ideas than at the source of this brimming entrepreneurial effervescence itself—technical institutions and business schools. To fight the lack of market-ready products, academic incubators spawned across the country in the mid-nineties. Jhunjhunwala mentored Sachdev and Saraogi for two years until their product could become market-ready. Even after their graduation in 2005, the two are still seated in an independent office in the same research park—except now they pay rent.

"Though we were not IITians, Professor Jhunjhunwala and Vijay Anand (who was a part of RTBI then) guided us. We took their word because they had seen many start-ups through their evolutions. Not many accelerators can boast of that," says Sachdev.

With accelerators emerging in dozens every year, the definition of incubators—especially academic incubators—has become fuzzy. An incubator is usually a combination of physical space given to start-ups, basic administrative services and mentoring in return for a small equity in the companies. The only real difference between incubators and accelerators is the time given to companies to reach maturity.

Accelerators believe in expediting the process of preparing its product for the ecosystem by giving rigorous mentoring to the entrepreneurs,

while incubators give 1-3 years for the same

Today, Uniphore, the mobile platform driven technology company founded by Sachdev and Saraogi, has 43 major clients in the banking and consumer sector and churns out a great deal of revenue.

India has eight academic incubators, many of them attached to the premier IITs, Indian Institutes of Management and the National Institutes of Technology. The Technology Business Incubator (TBI) at Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani is a big success because of the engineering school's tightly knit and magnanimous alumni network.

Apart from the incubator, BITS Pilani offers a three-credit course called new venture creation that pushes "college students to get their hands dirty in building a start-up during their college days", says Rishabh Kaul, vice-president, Spark Angels, BITS Spark, an angel funding network supported by the alumni.

"If the idea is promising, even if they are very, very early stage start-ups, we will take them. In short, we accept people that no accelerator will accept," says G. Sabarinathan, chairperson, NS Raghavan Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (NSRCEL), the entrepreneurship development arm of IIM, Bangalore.

A well-known fact resonates through the ecosystem: Nine out of 10 start-ups fail. "But the more people trying means the more failure, but it also means the more chance of some success," experts say.

Hundreds of applications

Academic incubators have physical space enough to incubate 15-20 companies at a given time, while they receive hundreds of application round the year. To accommodate more than just physical incubates, they offer a "virtual incubation" model as well, in which case the crucial aspect of mentoring—which some people at the Cell for Technology Innovation, Development and Entrepreneurship Support (C-Tides), the second incubation cell at IIT-Madras, equate with "tender loving care"—is given through an online platform.

While RTBI, Jhunjhunwala's incubation cell at IIT Madras, will nurture any interesting project with an application for rural India, C-Tides is open to incubating any technology product that comes out of IIT Madras.

RTBI incubates around five companies every year and C-Tides a maximum of 15. Both these cells have their independent selection committees and receive more than 100 applications a year. Three out of 60 applications get through. "As our selection is not channelized into one application process, we sift through applications and send it to the other cell if we think it is more relevant there," says Suma Prashant, director,

RTBI. At NSRCEL, the selection process is easier. There are no prerequisites that applicants have to be affiliated to the institution and the products don't have to cater to any specific sector either. The cell receives around 30 applications every time there is a vacancy; it can seat between 12 and 14 start-ups at any time.

The application success rate is one out of six companies. "We have an informal 31 criteria when choosing our candidates. They have to be innovative, impact-driven and must have that success ingredient, which is the entrepreneur himself," says Sabarinathan. It is justified to wonder why so many entrepreneurs apply to these academic institutions when the wider start-up ecosystem lays out more tempting offers in the form of accelerators and venture capitalists. What have they to gain from an academic institution, probably run by academicians who have never built companies from scratch?

Brand name is the answer. An IIT or IIM brand on the profile of a start-up gives the promoters an edge in recruiting employees and facing investors while pitching their products. Apart from this superficial advantage, entrepreneurs have access to world-class facilities in the form of infrastructure, mentoring (from alumni and faculty), network-building events and the most important, seed money.

Academic incubators provide funding in the form of grants and funds from government bodies such as the Department of Science and Technology and the Technological Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs. They provide start-up seeds fund between 5 lakhs and 15 lakhs, and hold equity of 2-9% in the company. Returns from a normal exit go back into the incubator's maintenance funds—the reason for silent attrition spikes within senior staff in these institutional organizations.

"Professors who head the incubators see the institution get a bulk amount of money from a successful venture, but he still gets a fixed government salary. Where is the incentive for making smart investments?" says Sabarinathan, who fears that this could be a reason for model of incubators attached to academic institutions eventually failing. IIM-B follows the same system.

On the other hand, the Centre of Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE), the incubator wing of IIM-Ahmedabad, has a venture fund called the INFUSE (Indian Fund for Sustainable Energy) that functions like a venture capitalist. There is an incentive for good investments and it is on the basis of sharing-profit margins.

"We follow this model because this sector is a risky sector in the ecosystem and not many investors want to support such areas. By offering this, it is not difficult to get access to good ideas," says Kunal Upadhyay, CEO, CIIE.

This raises an important question about the success of academic incubators.

It is no doubt that there are a handful of success stories out of these incubators, but is this as many as there could have been?

With close to 10 active academic incubators in the country and more than 1,000 start-ups incubated, the fact that only about 50 have been successful so far is not a good sign, experts say.

"Nurturing companies that focus on rural development is a tough field and to make this commercial, it takes a lot of time a money. We have just formally set up this year, but we will not change anything. We still believe we can't be too selective," says Jhunjhunwala, who is co-chairman of RTBI.

"There have been success stories like Midas and DesiCrew that came out of academic incubators. Midas is now approximately a ₹500-crore company, so money is not the issue. The point is these incubators look at problems that solve India's problems, and they cannot be addressed overnight in an accelerator," says Vijay Anand, founding partner, The Start-up Center, a Chennai-based accelerator.

"Instead of building flying cars, most entrepreneurs focus on Instagram and Twitter related applications. We need an ecosystem where people focus on big problems with long gestation periods, this is what academic incubators are really for," he adds.

Midas is a company involved in building solar panels, while DesiCrew is a rural-centric focused on providing employment to rural youth, both of which were incubated at the IIT Madras incubator as a part of RTBI.

"We can't be compared to MS Accelerator, Morpheus or Kyron because we don't have the kind of templated approach that they have. But I also know that we might not even sustain," says Sabarinathan.

"Academic incubators are like gardeners, we let the flowers blossom. Some may bloom and some may not, it's not our fault," says Jhunjhunwala.

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An IIT or IIM brand on the profile of a start-up gives promoters an edge

HRD ministry 'retires' Yadav as UGC member

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: Rejecting the eight-page reply of political scientist Yogendra Yadav, the HRD ministry on Wednesday "retired" him from membership of the University Grants Commission (UGC) with immediate effect.

In an 11-page order, the ministry reiterated that after Yadav joined Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as an office-bearer "his antecedents and credentials, at the time of his appointment in July 2011 and now stands substantially altered". It said his continuance may not only set "a dangerous precedent, it may even given scope for a future politicization of UGC and its academic decision making".

Dismissing Yadav's argument that there is no conflict of interest, the ministry said "monetary compensation is not the sole determinant of interest". "It is the power to extend and grant privileges and largesse which is crucial to determine the issue. Yadav has exercised due diligence before deciding not to quit from the UGC is a proof of the power/influence that any member of the UGC can wield on higher education sector in the country." Due



I am surprised that despite there is (sic) nothing in the UGC Act, the government has gone ahead. Am I surprised? Not quite. I am a student of politics and I understand the price one has to pay

YOGENDRA YADAV

diligence refers to Yadav having asked former HRD minister's private secretary if he should quit or stay on.

Yadav told TOI, "I am surprised that despite there is (sic) nothing in the UGC Act, the government has gone ahead. Am I surprised? Not quite. I am a student of politics and I understand the price one has to pay. The question is if it becomes a precedence to remove any member without justification. I had consulted a number of eminent academicians before taking up the assignment, and I shall go back to them."

The order also did not accept Yadav's contention that ideology of AAP is not in conflict with UGC. The ministry said it neither has the wherewithal, nor the intent to verify and validate the ideologies of different parties. Regarding Yadav's argument that

his removal is an attack on autonomy of UGC, the ministry said autonomy implies answerability and accountability to a higher authority, independence connotes sovereignty.

Giving a point-by-point rebuttal of Yadav's reply, the ministry said he resigned from advisory bodies of department of school education through a written communication but "preferred the oral mode of communication while thinking about the prestigious UGC membership". It also highlighted the fact that while he consulted the former HRD minister's PS in October 2012, while AAP was formed on November 26, 2012. The order also says that due to the range of functions that the UGC performs, section 5 of the UGC Act implicitly excludes politicians.

Opening of technical institutes down by half in three years

Only 494 new management and engineering & technology institutes have so far sought permission from All India Council for Technical Education in FY14 compared to 892 in FY12

KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai, 18 September

Call it the slowdown effect. For the first time in three years, the number of new management and engineering and technology institutes being opened has come down by half.

Consider this: In FY12, a total of 892 new management and engineering & technology institutes were opened in India and in FY13, 626 new institutions were launched. In FY14, only 494 new management and engineering & technology institutes have so far sought permission from the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the country's technical education regulator, to set shop.

Among the states that lead in setting up new institutions are Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, followed by Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Kerala.

While Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have seen 73 new management and engineering and technology institutions being set up in the current financial year, Andhra Pradesh has seen 51 institutes and Maharashtra has seen 48, respectively. Kerala has seen 21 new institutes being set up.

"Shrinking of the numbers is a course correction. It is better to have a lesser number of

institutions. The focus should be on quality of institutions at the national and global level. We have thousands of B-schools but hardly a few of these figure in the top 500 at the global level," said Harivansh Chaturvedi, director, Birla Institute of Management Technology, Noida.

Chaturvedi added that starting a new B-school during the downturn is full of challenges. "Only long-term players will survive," he added.

Despite the fall in the number of new institutes, seats are going vacant. In Maharashtra alone, out of the total 45,700 MBA seats available, only 12,800 have been filled so far, leaving around 32,000 vacant. This has resulted in many B-schools converting the minority quota seats into general category seats. Over 35 B-schools have already converted the minority seats. In Tamil Nadu,

80,700 seats in engineering colleges have found no takers.

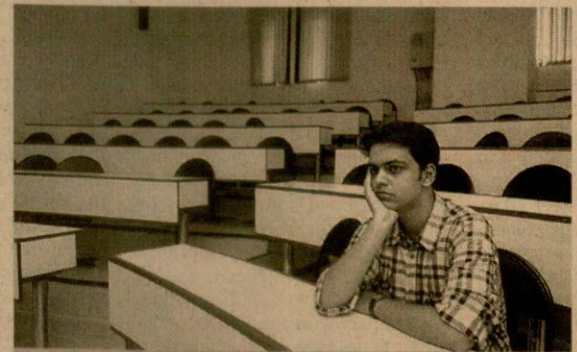
"There is no direct relationship between seats remaining vacant and the shutting down of institutions. In a country where the gross enrolment ratio is hardly 19 per cent, you need more people to come into the system and should look at the supply side. In fact, the rate of enrolment is increasing every year. That is the good point. I am not worried about seats going vacant and new colleges starting," said Shankar S Mantha, chairman of AICTE.

So far in the current financial year, a total of 116 engineering and management institutes have shut down, compared with 100 last year and 79 in FY12. Andhra Pradesh saw the highest number of institutes downing shutters, 49, followed by Uttar Pradesh at 16 and Maharashtra at 13.



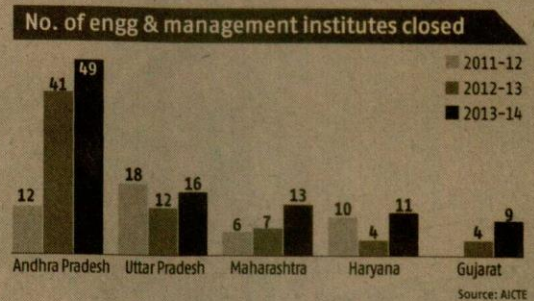
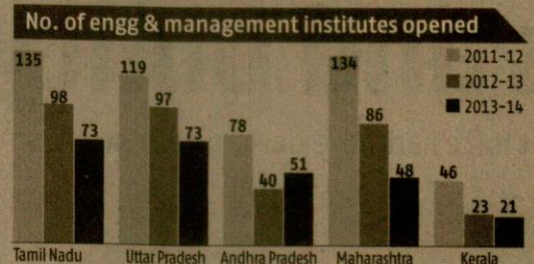
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SHANKAR S MANTHA
Chairman, AICTE



CHANGING SCENARIO

Institutes opened and closed in states



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Google USA offers DTU student ₹93L per annum

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: It was the best campus placement in the history of Delhi Technological University and comes at a time when the economy is in gloom. A computer engineering student, Himanshu Jindal, received an offer of an annual package of Rs 93 lakh (US\$ 1,15,000) plus 125 stock units from Google, USA.

Another final-year software engineering student, Nilesh Aggarwal, received an annual package of Rs 70 lakh (US\$ 1,05,000) from EPIC, a US-based software company.

The academic session of the university started on August 1 and over 40 companies have visited the campus so far. A total of 265 job offers were received in the first month. Accord-

ing to officials, Google, USA has offered the highest package so far to Jindal, a fourth-year student.

"I am happy that I've got such an excellent placement in a world-renowned company. This is due to my hard work, the blessings of my parents and the support of my friends," said Jindal.

Eleven students, including Aggarwal, bagged offers from EPIC. Navy Singla, Mohit Yadav, Ekaansh Goel, Ujjwal Arora and Ashutosh Mishra, all from the computer engineering branch, also received offers.

A student has been offered a pay package of Rs 28 lakh by Goldman Sachs and eight students a package of Rs 19 lakh from Amazon. The leading companies are also offering paid internship to third-year students.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi; Date: Sep 19, 2013; Section: Times City; Page: 3;



Prez asked not to raise VC's retirement age

DU Court Member Says Move Is Wrong And Misconstrued

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: A Delhi University Court member has urged the President to reject the proposal for increase of retirement age of the vice-chancellor, pro-vice-chancellor, dean of colleges, director of South Campus and director of Campus of Open Learning from 65 to 70 years.

The executive council of the university had passed the amendment in August.

V K Agrawal, member DU Court, a statutory body, in his letter, stated that making the Central Universities Act 2009 the basis for the amendment is "wrong and misconstrued".

In another letter, Agrawal said the proposed amendments in the composition of the selection committee for the post of assistant professor in colleges were in violation of UGC regulations notified in 'The Gazette of India,

The member, Agrawal, said the amendments proposed in the composition of the selection committee for the post of assistant professor in colleges violated the UGC regulations

September 18, 2010.

Teachers, meanwhile, are alleging that amendment in the retirement age has been proposed keeping in mind the fact that the dean of colleges, holding an additional charge of PVC, is reaching the age of superannuation within a couple of months.

Agrawal said, "The MHRD letter dated December 31, 2008, as Appendix-I of UGC regulations on 'minimum qualifications for appointment of teachers and other academic staff in universities

and colleges and measures for the maintenance of standards in higher education 2010', does not have any provision to enhance the age of superannuation of the PVC, or the dean of colleges, or the director of a campus of any of the central universities from 65 to 70 years. This arbitrary and unilateral proposal to amend the statutes is not in consonance with the MHRD's letter."

Stating that the idea is borrowed from Central Universities Act 2009, president of Action for Academics and Development (Rathi) J Khuntia said, "We are against the enhancement of retirement age to 70 years, because it will obstruct entry of unemployed youngsters who are looking for a job. Tomorrow the entire world of academics can demand enhancement of retirement age on the basis of this provision. We are appealing to the President of India not to

give his consent to this illegal amendment."

The teachers are also opposing the amendment proposed for the selection committee for the post of assistant professor in colleges. Agrawal said the VC has deliberately flouted directions of the visitor (the President) with regard to implementation of the UGC regulations to influence the selection procedures.

S C Panda, former EC member and a teacher with Satyawati College, said, "Without waiting for the consent of the visitor, the colleges are going ahead with the advertisements for the posts of permanent teachers and are collecting money for application. One lot of advertisements has already gone bad as the process was withdrawn due to problems in rostering. Why is money being collected when the applicants are not guaranteed an interview call?"