

Newspaper Clips

September 6, 2011

Mail Today ND, 6/09/2011

P-10

Overhaul IIT entrance

THE seven suicides that the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology have seen this year are simply unacceptable. Given their spread across various IITs, they suggest that the causes are linked to the stress arising from the high expectations that the students put on themselves.

Some of the stress is born out of the fact that students who make it to the IITs, do so more because they have learnt to crack the entrance examination system, rather than because of their innate abilities. Once they are in the institutes, they find it difficult to cope with the requirements of the classroom.

The only way to remove the stress from the system is to make the entrance test a true examination of the innate qualities of the student, rather than the lottery it often tends to be. Further, the IITs should emphasise an education that is genuinely broad-based and students end up acquiring not only engineering skills, but a good knowledge of literature, history and the arts.

Hindustan Times ND 06/09/2011

P-19

Cambridge is world's top varsity

Jeevan Vasagar

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

LONDON: Cambridge has topped a league table of the world's best universities, with Harvard and MIT ranked second and third.

The annual QS World University Rankings remains dominated by US institutions, which took 13 of the top 20 places.

There are five British universities in the top 20 — Oxford ranks fifth, Imperial sixth, UCL seventh and Edinburgh 20th. The only university in the top 20 which is not from the English speaking world is the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, in Zurich, at 18.

The highest ranking Asian universities are Hong Kong at 22, Tokyo at 25, and the National University of Singapore at 28. King Saud University, in Saudi Arabia, at 200 was the highest rated institution in the Arab world.

The Indian Institute of Technology — Delhi was the highest ranked Indian varsity

RANKING

1. University of Cambridge, UK
2. Harvard University, US
3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, US
4. Yale University, US
5. University of Oxford, UK
6. Imperial College, London
7. University College London, UK
8. University of Chicago, US
9. University of Pennsylvania, US
10. Columbia University, US
218. Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi
225. Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

at 218th place. Its sister Bombay institute came in at 225.

It is the second year running that Cambridge University has taken the top spot.

Ben Sowter, QS head of research, said: "The gap between Cambridge and

Harvard is very small, but Cambridge's superior student/faculty ratio helped tip the balance. Individual attention is one of the key attractions of the Oxbridge tutorial system."

Government and private funding for technology-focused research is eroding the dominance of traditional comprehensive universities, compilers of the rankings said. The average age of the top 100 institutions has dropped by seven years since 2010, reflecting the emergence of newer specialist institutions, QS said.

QS suggests that UK higher education is still cheaper compared to many US universities, but other international institutions may offer better value for money.

Universities in the Netherlands, including Amsterdam University (63rd place) Utrecht (80) and Leiden (88), are all in the top 100 and offer English-language courses for less than £2,000 per year, QS said.

THE GUARDIAN

Business Line ND 06-Sep-11

P20

Cambridge beats Harvard again in university rankings

Bloomberg

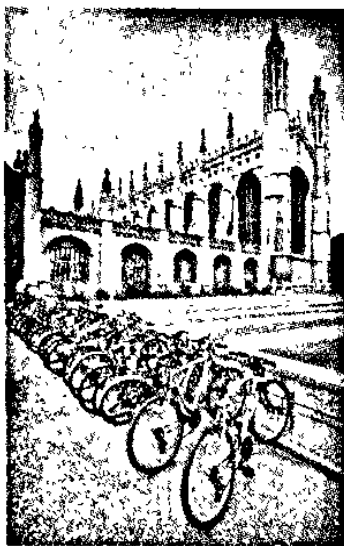
Sept. 5

The University of Cambridge has retained its premier status in the QS World University Rankings, beating Harvard for a second year, as the UK and the US institutions again took the top 10 spots.

The rankings featured six US establishments, with the remainder coming from Britain. Yale University slipped one place to fourth, while the Massachusetts Institute of Technology rose to third from fifth. The University of Oxford moved up one spot to fifth, ahead of Imperial College London and University College London.

There's not much in it but British universities have the edge on international indicators, particularly international faculty, the proportion of staff who are from overseas, Ben Sowter, head of research for the QS intelligence unit, said in a telephone interview.

Harvard, the world's



Cambridge University campus (file photo)

richest university, had headed the QS rankings every year from 2004 until last year, when the provider of information to educational establishments stopped compiling the list with Times Higher Education. The US institution took the top spot in the magazines own ranking last year.

The QS rankings are an

annual league table of the top 600 universities in the world, devised by surveying each institutions reputation among academics and employers. The respondents are asked how they view each university's research output. More than 34,000 academics were surveyed this year.

FUNDING CHANGES

Cambridge may face pressure on its top ranking as the UK government makes changes to higher education funding, Sowter said.

The government is allowing British universities to treble tuition fees to as much as £9,000 (\$14,600) as it tries to reduce state funding to the institutions, part of an austerity drive to cut a budget deficit.

"If they've got less money for research then it will have an impact on Cambridge's ranking," Sowter said.

Harvard charges overseas students an average of

\$38,000 to \$40,000 a year for a course, while Cambridge charges overseas students \$18,000 to \$20,000 a year for a course, according to QS research.

Cambridge in an international comparison still looks good value for money, Sowter, a University of Nottingham graduate, said.

Canada's McGill University was the highest placed outside of the US and the UK at 17th, one ahead of Switzerland's ETH Zurich, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, which retained its 18th spot. The University of Hong Kong was once again the highest ranking Asian university, moving up one spot to 22nd.

The average age of the top 100 institutions has dropped seven years since last years rankings, reflecting the emergence of newer specialist institutions particularly in Asia, QS said in a statement.

Financial Chronicle ND 6/09/2011 P-10

Wipro Mission10X, Harvard join hands to train college principals

N VASUDEVAN

Bangalore

WIPRO'S Mission10X, a not for profit trust, has collaborated with Harvard Business School Publishing to launch advanced academic leadership workshop to facilitate principals of engineering colleges to enhance their leadership skills and develop them as institution builders. This is being done as principals can make a significant difference to all the stakeholders in engineering education.

Harvard Business School Publishing is a not-for-profit subsidiary of Harvard University and works on extending the reach of Harvard Business School, serving as a bridge between academia and organisations.

According to Wipro, Mission10X has so far empowered more than 16,000 fac-

The workshop will aim to enhance leadership skills of engineering college principals

ulty members in the Mission10X Learning approach, covering more than 1,000 engineering colleges from 24 states in India. Mission10X was formally launched by Wipro chairman Azim H Premji amidst academicians on 5th September 2007 - Teachers Day.

Dr Selvan D, senior vice

president - talent transformation, Wipro, said, "India's growth depends on institution building at grass root levels. Academic leaders play a most important role in developing the institution. Realising this need, Mission10X has taken the mantle of developing this, and based on the intense research conducted over the last two years, this programme is rolled out."

Raymond Carvey, executive vice-president, Harvard Business School Publishing, said "Harvard Business School Publishing's mission is 'to improve the practice of management and its impact on a changing world,' and this makes our partnership with Mission10X on the advanced academic leadership programme core to our purpose."

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Higher education and expectations

Things seem to be improving in education in developing countries, at least as far as enrolment is concerned. Across the world, literacy rates have gone up, school enrolment rates are rising and dropout rates are falling. Much of the improvement has taken place in the regions that most needed it, in relatively low-income countries that previously had very low enrolment ratios. Improvements in educational outcomes have been particularly marked for girls and young women, so gender gaps are falling.



C.P. CHANDRA-SEKHAR

In some regions, gender gaps have even been reversed, even in tertiary education, which was traditionally the hardest gap to bridge.

This is clearly good news, even if critics can point out that in several parts of the world these improvements are still nowhere near fast enough. And of course, the bare fact of enrolment tells us very little about the quality of education and its relevance for both those being educated and for the society. Even so, increasing enrolment is an important first step.

What is particularly interesting in several developing regions, including the most populous parts of the world, is that there has also been significant increase in tertiary education. Once again, this is good news. But it does have implications for the future that are still inadequately analysed.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES
UNESCO data on enrolment in education provide some relevant indicators. Chart 1 shows the enrolments in tertiary education by region. The first point to note is that while globally tertiary enrolment rates have been rising, regional differences still remain dramatic.

These spatial variations are possibly even more marked within the developing world than globally. Thus, tertiary enrolment rates have been rising fairly rapidly in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as East Asia and the Pacific, but much more slowly in

There has been a significant increase in enrolment in higher education in developing countries (especially Asia) in the past decade. This edition of MacroScan examines recent trends and considers the challenge of generating employment to meet the expectations of the growing number of new graduates.



JAYATI GHOSH

oversupply certain skills.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This can have troubling social implications. Simply because of the shortage of higher level jobs, many young people are forced to take jobs that require less skills and training than they have actually received, and are of lower grade than their own expectations of their employability. This in turn can create resentment and other forms of alienation that get expressed in all sorts of ways.

The third aspect – and one that we all ignore at our peril – is related to the second, but reflects a slightly different process. The recent increase in tertiary enrolment across the world is certainly to be welcomed, but it should be noted that a significant part of that has been in private institutions with much higher user fees. As public investment in education has simply not kept pace with the growing demand for it, there has been in many societies, a mushrooming of private institutions many of whom are designed to cater to the demand for supposedly more “marketable” skills such as in technology, IT and management.

HIGH COSTS

This is especially true in developing countries where pri-

mate institutions charging very high fees have in some cases come to dominate higher education. In India, for example, around two-thirds of such enrolment is now estimated to be in private colleges and universities and similar institutes.

Even in countries where public education still dominates, there are moves to increase fees. This creates another complication around the issue of employability.

Many students, including those coming from relatively poor families, have invested a great deal of their own and their families’ resources in order to acquire an education that comes with the promise of a better life.

In the developing world, this hunger for education is strongly associated with the hope of upward mobility, leading families to sell assets such as land and go into debt in the hope of recouping these investments when the student graduates and gets a well-paying job.

But such jobs, as noted earlier, are increasingly scarce. And so these many millions of young people who will emerge with higher degrees, often achieved not just with a lot of effort but a lot of financial resources, are likely to find it even harder to find the jobs that they were led to expect. This does not augur well for social and political stability. Policy makers across the world, and particularly in developing countries with a demographically youthful society, need to be much more conscious of this challenge than they seem to be at present.



The hunger for education is strongly associated with the hope of upward mobility and well-paying jobs

greater in the coming period, given increases in secondary education in these regions.

Since Asia and sub-Saharan Africa continue to have much lower average tertiary enrolment rates (averaging 10 to 20 per cent compared to more than 60 per cent in the advanced countries), this proportion is likely to increase even further in the near future. So the bulk of new entrants into higher education will come from these regions in the coming decade.

PROGRESS OF WOMEN

It is noteworthy that the number of women in tertiary education has increased at a much faster rate than for men, as shown in Chart 4. Globally, women now outnumber men in tertiary education! In some regions (like

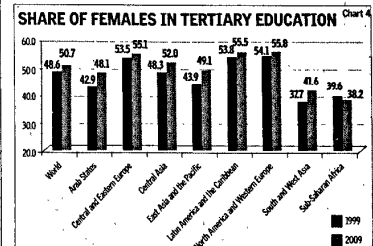
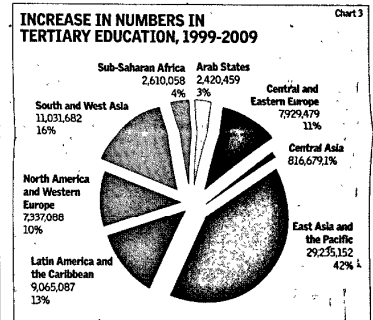
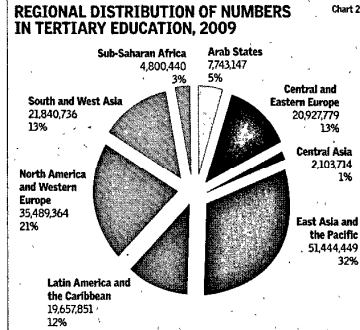
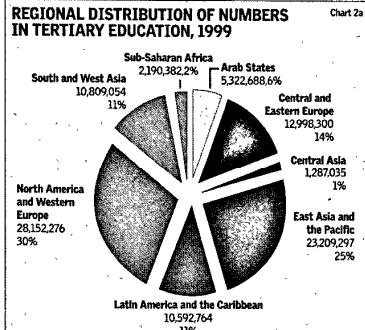
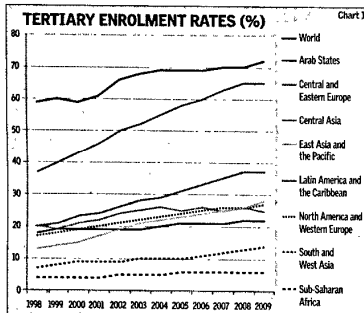
North America, Western Europe, Latin America and Eastern Europe), the ratio is significantly above half. This too is a process of great significance, because it is likely to bring in its wake all sorts of social and economic changes and hopefully a much greater degree of gender equality in other spheres of life as well.

The increase in tertiary education in the developing world is clearly a positive sign and obviously there is much scope for substantially more such increase in the coming years. But, like all positive changes, it also brings forth challenges, and many of these are still not recognized in full. The most obvious challenge is that of ensuring enough productive employment to meet the expectations of these new graduates.

This issue of ensuring jobs for the young are going through more levels of education than the previous generation has several inter-related aspects. The first is that of sheer quantity of available jobs. Even during the phase of global boom, the most dynamic economies in the world were simply not creating enough paid employment to meet the needs of those willing to supply their labour. In some countries this reflected in rising rates of open unemployment, especially among the youth; in other countries with poorly developed social protection and unemployment benefits, disguised unemployment was more the norm. But this was during the boom – obviously the Great Recession and subsequent continuing uncertainty in

global markets have made things a lot worse. So in most economies, there are simply not enough jobs being created, even for those who have received higher levels of education.

The second aspect is that of quality, of matching education and skills with the available jobs, or what is often described as the “employability” of the labour force. This problem of skills mismatch is a problem even in growing economies, which face severe labour shortages for some kinds of workers and massive oversupply in others. Often this is not in spite of, but because of, market forces, because markets and higher educational institutions tend to respond with lags to the demands of employers for particular skills, and then to





Students make a formation during Teachers Day celebrations in Ahmedabad. — PTI

Now, teachers are Facebook-friendly too

Navadha Pandey
Chennai, Sept. 5

The Gurukula parampara of yore just got very modern. Far from *shishyas* going and staying in the homes of gurus, today's teachers are seeking out students — on Facebook and Twitter.

On the occasion of Teachers' Day, some teachers in Chennai shared their experiences with *Business Line*.

K.N. Satyanarayana, a professor in the Civil Engineering Department at IIT Madras who has been teaching for 20 years, says, "The best thing about this profession is that you interact with the best minds in the country.

"There is no greater satisfaction for a teacher than knowing that you have made an impact in a student's life. When former students come back to visit us and say that they still remember something that was once taught in class, it is the greatest reward for any teacher."

He also says that his teaching methods have changed with technology. Today, there are better ways of delivering a lecture than just the textbook. There has been a considerable change in the way a student can be taught a subject because of technological advancements.

"Facebook helps me keep in touch with former students

► "Facebook helps me keep in touch with former students and see how well they are doing in life. It is a great boost to see your students achieve the zenith of success and Facebook has made that possible."

and see how well they are doing in life. It is a great boost to see your students achieve the zenith of success and Facebook has made that possible."

V.K. Raghunathan, who teaches print journalism at the Asian College of Journalism, is popular for his guitar sessions with students. He feels that the student-teacher bond can be enhanced by tapping into the power of social media.

He says, "Facebook helps you connect with students.

A classroom is a formal set up. But once you are outside it, social media help in reaching out to students. The platform helps you understand their problems in a better way. Thus, a teacher's bond with his students gets strengthened."

He tries to keep in touch with all his former students. He says, "A former student, who now works as a journalist with a leading daily, sent me a text message at 2:30 a.m., saying that he still remembers me telling him not to be lazy

and finish work quickly."

He adds that interacting with students gives the teachers a new perception on life everyday. "It opens a window of communication with students that was not there before."

Aruna Kannan, Principal, Sir Sivaswami Kalalaya Senior Secondary School, Mylapore, who has been teaching for 21 years, says, "Today, you cannot reach out to students if you don't speak their language. The days of '*guru-shishya parampara*' no longer exist. We as teachers have to reach out on the same wavelength. Students don't need idols now."

She adds that social media help improve the rapport between teachers and students. She also advises students not to restrict themselves to books in order to gain knowledge.

"They can learn from their favourite sportspersons too. Just pick up the good things from wherever you can and imbibe them."

Hindustan Times ND 06/09/2011

P-12

Not the best in their class

- The absence of Indian universities in global rankings points to a deeper rot in the sector

▪ **T**he season of university rankings has begun. The QS World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities have been among the first off the blocks. But an array of others will come out before the West's academic year begins.

ourtake

Along with these two surveys, the Times Higher Education list will also be watched closely. There is rarely much change in the top 20 institutions. And even less controversy — these are the reigning academic brands of the world. The real churn lies in the 200 institutions that follow. But one thing does not change: Indian universities and institutions of higher education never make it to the top 100 and rarely even the top 200. The latest QS ratings are no different: the highest rated Indian university is the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi and comes in at a lowly 218. It is telling that almost all the dozen or so ranking systems agree on the mediocrity of Indian universities.

University ratings, it is sometimes said, are like making lists of the best works of art. Educational institutions are each unique and, more importantly, the requirements of the students who attend them are highly personal. But the rankings use indices that are commonsensical — reputation among academicians, student-faculty ratios, infrastructure, quality and quantity of publications. Similar measures are used by the Indian government to determine accreditation of domestic institutions. The human resources development ministry is known to criticise such ratings. But its grumblings are probably driven by an unwillingness to accept that the ministry's tertiary education record has been mediocre and its mindset regarding this crucial area parochial and unimaginative.

+ Indians take pride in their best universities, especially the IITs and the Indian Institutes of Management. There are now a number of outside assessments which argue that their greatness lies mostly in their ability to select the best and the brightest of India's student population. More telling is that their productivity is almost criminally low — the IITs collectively graduate less than 3,500 students and do almost no original research. The number of universities who achieve even IIT levels of quality should be expanding by leaps and bounds to keep up with India's rising student population. If anything, many universities seem to be regressing thanks to poor administration, faculty who cannot be dismissed, social engineering demands and political interference.

+ World class tertiary educational institutions are more than a matter of pride. Without them India's hopes to maintain high rates of economic growth, to sustain its accomplishments in the field of technology, produce a competitive manufacturing base and cash in on its "demographic dividend" will be impossible. Rankings are not everything. But they are a signal that there is something rotten in the state of higher education in India.

Indian Express ND 06/09/2011 P-3

Dalai Lama gets IGNOU degree for world peace and development



Dalai Lama being presented with the Doctor of Letters degree by IGNOU Vice-Chancellor V N R Pillai

AMIT MEHRA

NAVEED IQBAL

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 5

"I'M A lazy student, and getting one more honorary degree without any effort is great," said the 14th Dalai Lama as he accepted the Doctor of Letters presented to him by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Honoris Causa. The degree was presented "in recognition of his contribution to world peace and development".

Addressing the gathering at the 24th convocation of IGNOU here on Monday, the Dalai Lama

insisted that the 21st Century should be a period of peace, and problems should be resolved through dialogue and understanding. "No religion, no matter how good, can ever be universal. But science and philosophy can be," he said.

IGNOU Vice-Chancellor V N R Pillai announced the transformation of the Pan-African e-Network Project into the India-Africa Virtual University. "As announced by the prime minister in Addis Ababa, we are going to set up the India-Africa Virtual University," he said.

He also announced the establishment of an Indian Sign Language Research and Training Center at the IGNOU headquarters in Delhi, which would become functional this month itself.

As many as 1,11,898 graduates received their degrees, diplomas and certificates at the convocation at the headquarters as well as the regional centres. Speaking at the occasion, Minister of State for Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) D Purandeswari stated that the quality of education must not be lost in the open or

distance-learning mode.

"The ministry (MHRD) is considering economical laptops for children, so they can also benefit from technology," she said. Minister of State (MOS) for Ministry of External Affairs and HRD E Ahamed expressed concern over the fact that many universities did not concentrate on research, and were becoming "mere degree-providing institutes". He said, "This is a matter of concern as the global economy is being driven by research, and we cannot afford to be left behind."

Business Standard, ND 6/09/2011

P-8

World's smallest electric motor

CHEMISTS at Tufts University's School of Arts and Sciences have developed the world's first single molecule electric motor—a development that may create a new class of devices applicable to sectors like medicine to engineering.

In a report published in *Nature Nanotechnology* this month, the Tufts team reported an electric motor only one nanometer across—ground-breaking work, considering the current world record is a 200-nanometer motor. A single strand of human hair is about 60,000 nanometers wide. E Charles H Sykes, associate professor of chemistry at Tufts and senior author of the paper, says, “There has been signifi-

cant progress in the construction of molecular motors powered by light, and by chemical reactions. But this is the first time electrically-driven molecular motors have been demonstrated, despite a few theoretical proposals... We have been able to show one can provide electricity to a single molecule and get it to do something that is not just random.”

Sykes and his colleagues were able to control a molecular motor with electricity by using a state-of-the-art, low-temperature scanning tunneling microscope (LT-STM), one of about only 100 in the United States. The LT-STM uses electrons instead of light to 'see' molecules. The team used the met-

al tip on the microscope to provide an electrical charge to a butyl methyl sulfide molecule placed on a conductive copper surface. This sulfur-containing molecule had carbon and hydrogen atoms radiating to form what looked like two arms, with four carbons on one side and one on the other. These carbon chains were free to rotate around the sulfur-copper bond.

While there are foreseeable practical applications of this electric motor, breakthroughs would need to be made in the temperatures at which electric molecular motors operate. The motor spins much faster at higher temperatures, making it difficult to measure and control the rotation of the motor.

The Hindu ND 06/09/2011 P3

Delhi University may replace FMS exams with CAT

Vijetha S.N

NEW DELHI: Delhi University may soon scrap the Faculty of Management Studies (FMS) entrance tests and replace it with the Common Admission Test (CAT) that are followed by a few other management institutes.

According to the minutes of the meeting held by faculty members of the Faculty of Management Studies here on Monday, the decision to replace the FMS exam with CAT was taken in the light of the university expressing its inability to help conduct the tests. The costs of using the CAT entrance exams for admissions, however, has many teachers worried. The univer-

sity will have to shell out a onetime membership fee of Rs.50,000 and an annual fee of Rs. 2 lakh in addition to Rs.200 per candidate to obtain the CAT scores. "If you consider the number of candidates sitting for the entrance year after year and do the math. The university will end up spending over a crore. This 'outsourcing' is a way to commercialise the public funded institutions" said Abha Dev Habib, a Physics teacher in Miranda House College and executive council member of the Delhi University Teachers' Association.

A few other faculty members are concerned that the academic value of the exam is being over-looked. "Our for-

mat is distinctive from CAT, over 40 per cent of our questions have never been asked in CAT," said faculty member, Prof J. K Mitra, adding that the exams were scheduled to happen in December and the untimely decision could have negative implications for everyone concerned. "It's a 40-year-old tradition and the FMS exams have always been a bench-mark for other entrance exams. It did not deserve to be scrapped without due notice."

Students of the institute are also unhappy. "The FMS exams are a legacy that will be lost and totally different from CAT. I personally am against it being scrapped" said Rahul, a second year student.

Financial Express Hyderabad

05.09.2011 P-6

Yahoo! India R&D hosts 'Hack U' at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Yahoo! India R&D recently hosted another series of its University Hack Day event—Hack U—at IIT Kanpur. Building on the success of the most recent Hack U at IIT Kharagpur earlier this year, over 150 students participated in this four-day event of learning, hacking and fun, which is part of Yahoo!'s on-going commitment to nurture talent and innovation among the student community. Conceptualised along the lines of Open Hack Day, Hack U



brings together students to work on product ideas and developing innovative hacks in a 24-hour 'Hackathon'. The event allow students to innovate and create the next generation of products for consumers by developing and building applications using Yahoo!'s Open APIs (Application Programming Interface) like YAP, YQL, YUI & BOSS and even create a new product concept.

Nai Duniya ND 06-Sep-11 P8

आईआईटी में प्रवेश के अवसर

माननीय मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल जी का आई.आई.टी. एंट्रेस में छात्रों को तीन मौके देने का विचार निस्संदेह सराहनीय व स्वागत योग्य है। यह निश्चित ही उन छात्रों को एक नया जीवन देने के समान है जो परिस्थितिवश या कुछ अंकों से अपने सपनों को पूरा नहीं कर सके थे। पर आधिकारिक घोषणा में विलंब क्यों? शुभ काम में देरी कैसी? न जाने कितने बच्चे मजबूरन दुखी होकर कहीं भी प्रवेश लेने को विवश हो रहे हैं। क्या मंत्री का यह नैतिक कर्तव्य नहीं कि इस व्यवस्था को तत्काल लागू

किया जाए या यह आने वाले वर्षों में अपने प्रियजनों को मौका देने की भूमिका है। भारत जैसे विकासशील देश में छात्रों को तीन मौके देना आवश्यक भी लगता है। हमारा समाज अनेक तबकों में बंटा है, कोई गरीब है तो कोई धनी। ऐसे में सबको समान अवसर प्रदान करना न सिर्फ नैतिक रूप से सही है बल्कि व्यवस्था के स्तर पर भी यही उचित जान पड़ता है। आशा है मंत्री महोदय शीघ्र ही संशोधित अवसर लागू करके निराश हो चुके छात्रों में आशा का संचार करेंगे।

अमित गुप्ता, गांधी नगर, ग्वालियर

Economic Times ND 6/09/2011

P-11

SPV के जरिए गांवों में इंटरनेट लाने की वकालत

बीएसएनएल के बजाय वित्त मंत्रालय ने राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क की जिम्मेदारी मोबाइल कंपनियों को देने की सिफारिश की

जोषी थॉमस फिलिप
नई दिल्ली

वित्त मंत्रालय ने टेलीकॉम विभाग से कहा है कि वह 20,000 करोड़ रुपए की लागत से राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क बनाने का जिम्मा सरकारी कंपनी बीएसएनएल को न दे। राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क का मकसद दूरदराज इलाकों और गांवों को तेज रफ्तार इंटरनेट से जोड़ना है। वित्त मंत्रालय ने सिफारिश की है कि कई मोबाइल फोन कंपनियों को शामिल कर एक स्पेशल परपज व्हीकल (एसपीवी) बनाया जाए और उसे ही इस प्रोजेक्ट का जिम्मा सौंपा जाए। मंत्रालय ने यह भी कहा है कि इन कंपनियों का चुनाव पारदर्शी तरीके से और प्रतिस्पर्धी निविदा प्रक्रिया के जरिए किया जाना चाहिए।

टेलीकॉम विभाग ने पहला राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क तैयार करने के लिए तीन कारोबारी मॉडलों को पहचान की थी। विभाग ने योजना बनाई थी कि या तो मौजूदा ऑपरेटर्स को ग्रामीण भारत तक अपना डाटा नेटवर्क फैलाने के लिए रकम मुहैया कराई जाए या राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क तैयार करने के लिए एक स्पेशल परपज व्हीकल बनाया जाए, जिसे सरकार समर्थन दे या यह बुनियादी ढांचा खड़ा करने के लिए सरकारी कंपनी बीएसएनएल को सौंपा दी जाए। जुलाई में संचार एवं सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल ने कहा था कि विभाग में फैसला लेने वाली सबसे बड़ी इकाई टेलीकॉम आयोग ने नेटवर्क तैयार करने के इस प्रोजेक्ट को मंजूरी दे दी है। इस प्रोजेक्ट के तहत यूनिवर्सल सर्विस ऑब्लिवेशन फंड (यूसओएफ) का



इस्तेमाल कर देश की सभी ग्राम पंचायतों को इंटरनेट नेटवर्क से जोड़ना है। सिब्बल ने कहा था कि इस प्रोजेक्ट की शुरुआती लागत करीब 20,000 करोड़ रुपए बढ़ेगी। उन्होंने यह भी कहा था कि इतनी ही रकम का का निवेश निजी सेक्टर से होने की उम्मीद है।

मोबाइल फोन कंपनियां अपनी सालाना कमाई का पांच फीसदी हिस्सा इस यूसओएफ में देती हैं। इस फंड का इस्तेमाल ग्रामीण इलाकों में टेलीफोन सेवाओं को बेहतर बनाने में किया जाता है। यूसओएफ में बिना इस्तेमाल हुई रकम करीब 25,000 करोड़ रुपए पर पहुंच गई है।

पारदर्शिता का ध्यान

वित्त मंत्रालय ने कहा कि मोबाइल फोन कंपनियों को शामिल कर एक स्पेशल परपज व्हीकल बनाया जाए और उसे ही इस प्रोजेक्ट का जिम्मा सौंपा जाए। मंत्रालय ने कहा है कि कंपनियों का चुनाव पारदर्शी तरीके से और प्रतिस्पर्धी निविदा प्रक्रिया के जरिए किया जाना चाहिए।

जुलाई में संचार एवं सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल ने कहा था कि दूरसंचार विभाग में फैसला लेने वाली सबसे बड़ी इकाई टेलीकॉम आयोग ने ग्रामीण भारत में नेटवर्क तैयार करने के लिए इस प्रोजेक्ट को मंजूरी दे दी है।

इस प्रोजेक्ट का उद्देश्य यूनिवर्सल सर्विस ऑब्लिवेशन फंड का इस्तेमाल कर देश की सभी ग्राम पंचायतों को इंटरनेट नेटवर्क से जोड़ना है।

वित्त मंत्री ने यह भी कहा है कि राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड प्रोजेक्ट का सरकारी खजाने पर कोई भार नहीं होगा।

वित्त मंत्रालय ने डीओटी को भेजे अपने संदेश में कहा, 'भारतीय कंपनीय एक्ट के तहत बनाए गए एसपीवी को यह प्रोजेक्ट लागू करने की पहले चरण से ही जिम्मेदारी दी जा सकती है। यह एसपीवी योग्य ऑपरेटर्स में से प्रतिस्पर्धी बोली प्रक्रिया के जरिए इसे लागू करने वाली एजेंसी का चुनाव करेगा। इस प्रक्रिया को रफ्तार देने के लिए बीएसएनएल का सहयोग लिया जा सकता है ताकि ब्योरेवार प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट बनाने और सर्वे में इसकी

मदद ली जा सके। हालांकि, सावधानी के तौर पर अलग से विशेषज्ञों की भी मदद ली जा सकती है।'

डीओटी ने जैसे एसपीवी मॉडल का विचार पेश किया था, उसके तहत सरकारी टेलीकॉम कंपनियों को इसमें 49 फीसदी हिस्सेदारी होगी और बकाया हिस्सेदारी निजी कंपनियों की होगी, जिसमें किसी एक इकाई की अधिकतम होल्डिंग 26 फीसदी हो सकती है। हालांकि, वित्त मंत्रालय ने डीओटी से कहा है कि वह यह चीज सुनिश्चित करे कि इस एसपीवी में बहुमत हिस्सेदारी सरकारी टेलीकॉम कंपनियों की हो।

वित्त मंत्रालय ने यह भी कहा है कि ऑप्टिक फाइबर बिछाने का काम और इसके रखरखाव का काम पब्लिक प्राइवेट पार्टनरशिप मॉडल के जरिए भी किया जा सकता है और इसके लिए निजी इकाइयों का चुनाव पारदर्शी निविदा प्रक्रिया के जरिए हो सकता है। वित्त मंत्रालय ने कहा है, 'रियायती एग्रीमेंट में कहा जाएगा कि निजी इकाई सभी सर्विस प्रोवाइडर्स को खुला एक्सेस मुहैया कराएगी।'

इस साल की शुरुआत में ट्राई ने राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क को खड़ा करने के लिए 60,000 करोड़ रुपए के निवेश की बात की थी, जिसमें केंद्र से भी सहयोग शामिल था। ट्राई ने यह भी प्रस्ताव दिया था कि एक सरकारी एजेंसी इस इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर को तैयार कर सकती है, जो 500 लोगों से ज्यादा की आबादी वाले गांवों और दूरदराज इलाकों को साल 2013 तक इंटरनेट के नेटवर्क से जोड़ सके। ट्राई ने कहा था, 'देश के सभी गांवों तक शिक्षा, हेल्थकेयर और दूसरी सेवाओं को पहुंचाने के लिए राष्ट्रीय ब्रॉडबैंड नेटवर्क खड़ा करने की तत्काल जरूरत है।'