

eNewspaper Clippings
June 19-21, 2010

TOI

DREAMS DERAILED?

HRD spikes UGC move to let tainted univ off

Deemed Varsity Looking To Add 7 Institutes To Ambit

Akshaya Mukul / TNN

New Delhi: Taking strong exception to University Grants Commission's decision to allow Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute — a deemed university under CBI investigation for demanding capitation fee — to bring seven more institutes under its ambit, the HRD ministry has said it will not approve the step. In fact, there is a likelihood of the decision being rolled back.

Explaining that the decision was taken after the higher education secretary Vibha Puri Das left the full UGC meeting, HRD ministry has also objected to the commission's interpretation of the CBI case against the university. Basing itself on a communication by the vicechancellor of SRMCRI, UGC had said that the CBI case was against individuals and not the institute. But HRD has referred to the letter the ministry wrote to the CBI director last August asking him to investigate the allegation of capitation fee. Sources said the ministry went to CBI only after the institute blamed a lower level employee for demanding capitation fee. "The investigation is completely against the institute and not individuals," sources said.

The sources also pointed out that the CBI in its initial investigation report to the HRD in November 2009, had found allegations against SRMCRI and Balaji Medical College to be true and had recommended cancellation of their deemed university status. CBI had also pointed out at systemic failure and recommended changes. However, the HRD ministry had asked the bureau to give another report.

New central varsities fail to find teachers

Hemali Chhapia / TNN

Mumbai: The Centre's ambitious plan of starting over a dozen new central universities has failed the test at the first step itself: they are not finding faculty. Worse, money is being infused into the existing varsities for expansion, but they too are grappling with teacher shortages — government data shows that one in three positions are lying vacant.

Look beyond and the situation is more critical: in many institutes merely half the staff positions have been filled. The worst defaulter in the group is Delhi University, which has less than 50% of the faculty members it ought to have. Of the 1,500 posts sanctioned by the government, there are merely 737 full-time teachers on the DU campus. Officials, however, said the varsity has "advertised to fill up 729 posts and the interviews would soon be scheduled".

They may be considered among the finest Indian universities to graduate from. But whether it is the JNU or the Hyderabad Central University, expansion seems like a tall order without teachers. University faculty said more than teaching, research gets hit. "Across universities there are some streams where the vacancy is absolutely critical, where the attrition rate is extremely high. That affects the ethos of research," said a faculty member from the University of Hyderabad, where 184 teaching spots are vacant.

Centres of excellence, like the Indian Institutes of Management and the Indian Institutes of Technology, and the National Institutes of Technology, have often complained over not finding the right quality of staff. An IIM faculty had once noted that his quality of life index and that of his peers was rungs lower than that of a fresh graduate from his institute. "My argument is not about the money. I know that a forprofit organization can pay

more than an educational institute, and that is the case around the world. But my point is when will India start paying attention to its teachers?" he explained.

IIT officials fined Rs 15k for info delay

New Delhi: The Central Information Commission has slapped a penalty of Rs 15,000 on senior officials of IITKharagpur for delay in providing information to a professor of the institute. The commission has also directed the IIT to pay a compensation of Rs 5,000 to Prof Rajeev Kumar for the loss and detriment suffered by him.

"For two simple and straightforward queries, the complainant had to wait for almost five months. This may be due to the carelessness of the officials or the poor functioning of the institution," information commissioner Shailesh Gandhi said.

Gandhi said there was no reasonable cause for what appeared to be a joint responsibility of registrar Dr T K Ghosal and his OSD T K Mukherjee in delaying the supply of information to Prof Kumar. Kumar, in October last year, had sought from the Rajiv Gandhi School of Intellectual Property Law at IIT the list of all individuals who were called for guest and invited lectures at the school from July 2006 onwards. TNN



Published on June 19 2010 , Page 8

Sibal for common test for varsities

HT Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: In a meeting with state education ministers on Friday, Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal pitched for uniform entrance tests for admission into higher educational institutions.

"We are working on a strategy to reduce the multiplicity of entrance exams for entry into higher education and restoring the weightage to Class XII performance," Sibal said.

We are working on a strategy to reduce the multiplicity of entrance exams.

KAPIL SIBAL

For entry into an institution, class XII marks and entrance test could be the criteria. The marks of different boards could be equalised through a mathematical formula for weightage.

To start with, the CBSE, a school education board under

the HRD ministry, will merge the All India Engineering Entrance Exam and All India Pre-Medical Test, Sibal said.

After the merger, physics and chemistry will be common for both, the medical students can answer only the biology paper and the engineering students can answer the mathematics paper.

The Council of Boards of School Education has already prepared a common curriculum in science and mathematics. He said the state boards

should adopt the curriculum that would help in holding a common entrance test.

TEACHERS INSURED

The government has also planned to provide 60 lakh teachers life and health insurance.

"I discussed with state education ministers today on the plan for starting insurance and housing schemes for 60 lakh teachers. In principle approval has been given by them for the schemes," he said.

(with PTI inputs)

DU teachers to skip admissions

UNION STRIKE Boycott may delay the declaration of first cut-off lists

HT Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Just two days before the expected declaration of the first cut-off lists, differences between the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) and Vice-Chancellor Deepak Pental over the introduction of a semester system are threatening to delay the admission process.

DUTA has asked all teachers to dissociate from the admission procedure as a sign of protest against what they call a "unilateral and arbitrary imposition of syllabi by the V-C in violation of the ordinances of the DU".

DUTA claimed on Saturday that the staff associations of 53 colleges have decided to abstain from advising their principals on admissions, formally or informally. The DU registrar had sent a letter to all principals asking them to remind teachers they would be violating Ordinance 124 (a) of their service agreements, under which they are bound to participate in the process.

Some principals expressed concern, saying this stand-off would delay admissions. "Calculating cut-offs is very difficult without the teachers. I have been trying to convince them

SCENARIOS

- Dissociation of teachers from admissions may force principals to declare cut-off lists based on last year's levels
- With no markers to go by, some colleges may declare high cut-offs to ensure they don't miss out on good candidates
- If some colleges declare cut-offs and others don't, those who don't will lose out on good candidates

to help. We can depend on non-academic staff only to a certain extent," said Aslam Parvez, principal of Zakir Hussain College.

But others such as P.C. Jain, principal of Shri Ram College of Commerce, played down the controversy. "I don't think this is going to have any bearing on the first cut-off list. It will be as per schedule."

"Though it is difficult to prepare the cut-off list without the teachers, we cannot withhold the list. We will send it as per schedule," Minoti Chatterjee, principal of Kamla Nehru College, said.

"How can they hold the university to ransom? I hope reason will prevail and the first list will come on June 22, as scheduled," Pental said.

» CATE RESULTS OUT. P4

CABE backs higher education authority

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI | JUNE 19

THE Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) on Saturday threw its weight behind the proposed National Commission for Higher Education & Research (NCHER) — an overarching body that will bring all higher education related issues under a single authority. The CABE also endorsed the inclusion of medical education under NCHER despite the Health Ministry's opposition to the proposal.

CABE which has all state education ministers and eminent educationists on its board has, with this seal of approval, paved the way for fast tracking the Bill. The legislation is currently at the draft stage with the HRD Ministry having set up a special task force to go into the matter.

Consensus had so far been eluding the NCHER Bill. "State governments have by and large

'UGC concerns will be met'

NEW DELHI: HRD Minister Kapil Sibal said that the concerns of all UGC employees will be addressed and that their seniority and pay scale will be factored in once UGC is subsumed under NCHER. UGC employees have been protesting against the Commission being subsumed under the proposed authority. **ENS**

endorsed the NCHER document drafted by the task force. Some education ministers did raise some issues and they will be submitting their views in writing to the Task Force over the next one month. Once that is done, the Task force will revise and submit a final draft to the HRD ministry which will take a final view and then take the proposal to the Cabinet," HRD Minister Kapil Sibal, who chairs the CABE, said.

Sibal unveils whole new education agenda

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 18

A COMMON entrance exam for engineering and medicine aspirants after Class XII instead of a separate All India Engineering Entrance Exam (AIEEE) and All India Pre-Medical Test (AIPMT), a full-fledged curriculum for value education for schools, mandatory sports classes across schools, and insurance and housing schemes for 60 lakh school teachers — these are among the new key initiatives Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Kapil Sibal announced on Friday as part of his next one-year agenda.

Briefing the media after a meeting of the State Education Ministers in New Delhi, Sibal said the government

wanted to reduce the multiplicity of entrance examinations for entry to higher education. To start with, a combined entrance exam for engineering and medicine would be started in 2011.

“While there will be one common entrance exam designed to test raw intelligence and aptitude of students after Class XII, we will also mull over the weightage that should be given to Class XII marks and the scores attained in this aptitude test. Most states also said they were not averse to the idea. There will also be a value education curriculum that will be prepared with the help of NCERT and other stakeholders, and physical education will be made part of school syllabus for a more holistic development of children,” Sibal said.

IIT-K eyes US, Malaysia to go global

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BANGALORE | JUNE 19

THE Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) plans to set up campus in the United States and Malaysia, besides Noida and Bangalore, with an ambition to compete internationally with top global universities, its Director Professor S G Dhande said on Saturday.

The IIT-K's first footprint outside its 1,050 acre campus in Kanpur will be Noida, which would give the Institute a foothold in Delhi and its adjoining areas, he added. Dhande was speaking at an innovation convention, organised by the IIT-K Alumni Association as part of the golden jubilee celebration of its alma mater, where he pushed the idea of "borderless concept" of the institute

The IIT-K is holding discussions to open a research centre in Penang — an electronics industries hub — in Malaysia that will give the institute a strategic presence in south east Asia, said Dhande.

He also proposed a research centre in the US — either in the Silicon Valley or Boston or Washington — to attract research contracts not only from national and international agencies but also from corporates. In addition, the IIT-K plans to have a presence in Bangalore given the city's industrial and intellectual capital growth.

"The IIT-K needs to compete with China, Singapore and Korea and many top universities. If we want to be internationally recognisable, we must have presence in different parts of the world," said Dhande.

UGC concerns will be met'

THE Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) on Saturday threw its weight behind the proposed National Commission for Higher Education & Research (NCHER) — an overarching body that will bring all higher education related issues under a single authority. The CABE also endorsed the inclusion of medical education under NCHER despite the Health Ministry's opposition to the proposal.

CABE which has all state education ministers and eminent educationists on its board has, with this seal of approval, paved the way for fast tracking the Bill. The legislation is currently at the draft stage with the HRD Ministry having set up a special task force to go into the matter.

Consensus had so far been eluding the NCHER Bill. "State governments have by and large NEW DELHI: HRD Minister Kapil Sibal said that the concerns of all UGC employees will be addressed and that their seniority and pay scale will be factored in once UGC is subsumed under NCHER. UGC employees have been protesting against the Commission being subsumed under the proposed authority.

ENS endorsed the NCHER document drafted by the task force. Some education ministers did raise some issues and they will be submitting their views in writing to the Task Force over the next one month. Once that is done, the Task force will revise and submit a final draft to the HRD ministry which will take a final view and then take the proposal to the Cabinet," HRD Minister Kapil Sibal, who chairs the CABE, said.

IIT-Bombay streamlines technology licensing

21 Jun 2010, DNA (Daily News & Analysis)

To ensure that its technologies end up benefiting the society and are commercialised on a larger scale, the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B), has streamlined its technology licensing process.

A website has been created to enable interested parties and potential licensors to review its research and development efforts available for licensing, and express their interest online. They can view the details of the patents and published patent applications, which have not been licensed so far.

"The idea is to make the process more systematic and user-friendly, so that the industry finds it simpler to get information on the technologies developed by the institute at one place," said an IIT-B official.

What's more, for the first time, IIT-B is also advertising all its intellectual property (IP) which can be licensed. The aim is to publicise, track, and license technologies similar to what is done by universities abroad, said the official.

Around 55 Indian patents and 30 international ones have been granted to IITBombay. Currently, there are over 138 Indian patent applications filed by the institute. Over 100 technologies have been licensed to IIT-B in the last six years.

"More efforts need to be made if we want to reach critical mass. We have several technologies which are of great use to the society, but there may not be awareness regarding them," said an IIT-B faculty. Further details can be accessed at www.iitb.ac.in/licensing.