

IONEDUCATION NEWSLETTER

January 2017 - Volume 1 / Issue 10



Higher education: Creation of three varsities only silver lining

The government's decision to set up three new universities in the state - Patliputra University, Purnia University and Bihar Animal Sciences University - was the major highlight of academic development in 2016. With the inclusion of three new universities, the total number of universities in Bihar would touch 23.

The VCs and academics discussed at length a proposal mooted by BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, regarding establishment of a state-level higher education board to conduct the examinations of all the universities in the state.

The chancellor also constituted a three-member committee headed by Justice (retired) Akhilesh Chandra to probe the alleged irregularities committed by the acting vice-chancellors of all the universities, except L N Mithila University, since April 2013.

Autonomy finalised for proposed 20 world class universities: HRD ministry

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Highlights:

Autonomy finalised for these universities

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Doubt on the term 'world class'

It was also discussed whether the term 'world class' could be used in the nomenclature for these institutes. It may be called institutes of excellence.

Public educational institutions- 10, Private- 10

The number of minimum students in these institutes was also deliberated upon in the meeting. The HRD ministry plans to create 20 world class institutions, 10 in public educational institutions and 10 private.

Developments:

Need of 20 world class universities: View of former HRD Minister Smriti Irani

Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani said "the government will soon make 20 educational institutes each from private and public sector world-class." Also, this move was announced during the Budget 2016.



HRD wants National Testing Service for all higher education entrance exams



AICTE chief concerned over higher education quality

All India Council for Technical

Currently, over 40 lakh students appear for seven entrance tests — CAT, JEE (Main), JEE (Advanced), GATE, CMAT, NEET, NET — conducted by the CBSE, IITs, IIMs and AICTE every year. The National Testing Service (NTS), as proposed by the HRD Ministry, will assume responsibility for conducting all these examinations.

“The primary mandate of bodies such as CBSE and AICTE does not include conducting entrance exams on such a large scale. This leaves them stretched for time and resources.

The Ministry is now making a fresh attempt to revive the plan after the CBSE wrote to the University Grants Commission about being overburdened with the responsibility of too many entrance tests.

To begin with, the NTS will hold NEET, JEE, GATE, UGC-NET from October 2017 to March 2018.

The Ministry invited comments on the proposal from different ministries in December. It will send the note for the Cabinet’s consideration as soon as the idea is approved by the Committee on Establishment Expenditure.

Education (AICTE) chairman Anil Sahasrabudhe gave a sanction to the concern shared among educationists since long over the quality of higher education. The chairman held that industry bodies are not too sure about the employability of the graduates. Students should also learn soft skills — effective communication, team work, discipline, ethical practice — the AICTE head said.

"Rapid expansion in the number of colleges and universities in India during the last two decades has made the country create access to higher education and also equity, with a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of more than 24.3%. Sahasrabudhe said. The AICTE chairman wanted JU to take the lead in interdisciplinary research because subjects taught in colleges particularly in technical education becomes outdated by the time students pass out.

"One needs to catch up with any new technology or subject as it emerges, else one becomes irrelevant," he advised the young graduates.

Global rankings which was time and again brought up by various stalwarts in the higher education field in Bengal also found stress in the address of the AICTE chairman.

Women empowerment in India only possible through education: President

"Real empowerment of women would be possible only through education, encouragement of economic self-dependence and provision of opportunities enabling the unfolding of one's full potential."

--- President Pranab Mukherjee



"A society which does not empower its women will end up as a loser " said President Pranab Mukherjee while speaking on the need for women empowerment.

Recently, while addressing a gathering at Hyderabad, President Pranab Mukherjee emphasised on the need for women empowerment.

- He praised the role played by the Mahila Dakshata Samiti in women's empowerment and recalled the contributions of the Samiti's founding members such as Suman Krishankant, Professor Pramila Dandavate and Goa Governor Mridula Sinha
- "The only long lasting solution is to create cooperative structures comprising of the government and private stake holders as well as civil society. In fact, the developmental goals of health, education, livelihood etc. cannot be achieved by the government alone. Such co-operative structures are relevant for all of them," said the President

Iondea new wins in OBE space

Iondea Bagged two orders during Nov - Dec 2016.

- **Curtin University, Malaysia**
- **Bharati Vidyapeeth's Institute of**



Technology, Palus



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