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Knowledge is going to be the order of this age: President

Promoting a detergent doesn't require the skills of an IIT-an, said the President, stressing on the fact that India has been unable to produce an environment which can facilitate and promote research.

President Pranab Mukherjee on Monday urged students to take up more research at higher education institutions, and questioned if "lack of conducive atmosphere" in academia was pushing the best talent towards regular jobs instead of critical research.

Mukherjee also urged them to foster a spirit of inquiry, saying, "Knowledge is going to be the order of this age."

Access to higher education improved but challenges remain: M Venkaiah Naidu

Access to higher education has improved in recent times but areas like quality of education, dearth of motivated teachers and lack of focus on research remain a challenge, Union Minister M Venkaiah Naidu today said.



"These areas need immediate addressing to be able to fully realize India's human resources potential with equity and inclusion," the minister said at the convocation of Galgotia University in Greater Noida.

"Now, India's higher education system is the third largest in the

world, next to only the US and China. As per the latest reports available, **India has around 760 universities, 38,498 colleges and 12,276 Stand Alone Institutions with a total enrolment of around 3.4 crore students,**" he said.

Naidu said that while access to higher education has improved, the spread and quality of education, funding, shortage of motivated teachers, and lack of focus on research and innovation remain to be a challenge and need "immediate addressing".

The Ministry of Human Resources Development has taken a leap forward and taken a lot of transforming and path-breaking initiatives, the minister said, adding that several new institutions have been started during the last two and half years including six new IITs and seven new IIMs.



HRD to bring 'graded regulatory mechanism' in UGC: Javadekar

The HRD ministry will bring in a "graded regulatory mechanism" as part of key reforms in the University Grants Commission (UGC) to usher in greater transparency, freedom and autonomy, Union minister



Higher Education secretary feels university autonomy shouldn't be absolute

Presidency Mentor Group (PMG) chairman and Member of Parliament Sugato Bose in his inaugural speech said that he would want the historic institute to be a global university with

Prakash Javadekar said on Sunday.

He said that as per the Right to Education Act, learning outcomes are being defined and will be part of the coming academic session.

Speaking about UGC reforms, Javadekar said that thrust is to give more autonomy to good institutes and "monitor mid-level and monitor more those in the lower rungs".

"It will be any time learning and anywhere learning," he said while thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley for the budget provisions.

Asian flavour. But, he immediately pointed out that to achieve the status and compete globally, the state government should play an enabling role but not an interfering one.

"Autonomy cannot be absolute and autonomy along with accountability must go hand in hand," Vivek Kumar - secretary of higher education pointed out.

The Education Minister met all university VC's and college principals, it has been decided to introduce Choice-Based-Credit-System (CBCS) and semester in the 8 new universities from next academic session. The other established universities will be gradually introducing both CBCS and semester system in their academic process," said a source in the higher education department.

NAAC to provide 2-year extension to higher education institutes with good grades

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bengaluru will be providing a two-year extension in their accreditation to all those education institutions which get the highest grade from it. The council recently took a decision saying those institutions which have obtained the highest grade for three cycles continuously will get an extension of the validity period of NAAC accreditation from five years to seven years.

According to an *HT* report, if an institution applies for re-accreditation within the stipulated period of six months before the

end of the cycle of accreditation, the gap period between two consecutive accreditations will be approved, as per the NAAC guidelines.

New guidelines

- If other institutions do not apply as per the guidelines, the maximum period for approval would be one year between the two consecutive accreditation cycles
- The principles of approval in case of NAAC accreditation will also be applicable in case of National Board of Accreditation (NBA)
- If the institution is graded with A++ and A+ (3.51 and above out of 4) in currently enforced seven point scale of NAAC, it will be considered as the highest accreditation for these regulations

As DP Singh, Director, NAAC, says, "In recognition of the maturity of the quality assurance processes in these institutions and also taking into cognisance the high degree of standards and consistency as set by the assessment and accreditation processes of NAAC, the decision of extension to seven years has been taken as approved by the UGC.

Crying need for outcome-based education in India

"Are higher education policies focussing on the right goals to achieve the skilling that industry requires?"

The most important indicator of educational progress is easily the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). At present, at the higher education level, GER stands at a little over 24 per cent. There is also a class and gender-disparity in these figures, although the situation is improving in the latter case.

The curriculum that is offered by institutes of higher education in India hardly keeps pace with industry demands. Therefore, there is an urgent need to shift from input-based indicators of educational

progress like GER to an outcome-based approach.

- An extreme focus on educational outcomes is seen in the practice of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) that has been adopted by many countries around the world.
- The system defines a set of outcomes that are to be accomplished at the end of the course and the faculty acts as a mentor to the student in achieving the defined goals.
- There are multiple benefits from such a move. It creates a sense of clarity among students of what is expected of them. It gives the faculty flexibility on the method of teaching as their goal is to achieve a pre-defined set of outcomes and not just complete specific set of hours in delivering lectures.
- There is also much more involvement of students in the classroom as they are expected to do their own learning and gain complete understanding.

India needs a similar focus on outcome-based measures to skill its workforce for the evolving industry trends. The changing work environment across the world calls for a change in education curriculum and policies at a similar pace

Ionidea new wins in OBE space

Ionidea Bagged two orders during Dec '16 - Jan '17



- **A G Patil Polytechnic College, Solapur**
- **K G Reddy College of Engineering and Technology, Hyderabad**



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