



‘UGC panel for cancellation of final-year exams’

In view of the countrywide surge in Covid-19 infections, exams of even final-year students in higher educational institutions, scheduled to be held in July, are likely to be cancelled and commencement of the new academic session deferred to October, government sources said on Wednesday.

The pending CBSE exams, which were scheduled to be held between July 1 and July 15, are also likely to be cancelled. The decision is expected on Thursday when the Supreme Court hears the issue, sources said, adding that engineering and medical entrance tests like JEE (Main) and NEET-UG are also to be postponed.

Reviewing the prevailing situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic on Wednesday, the UGC’s panel of experts, headed by Haryana University Vice-Chancellor RC Kuhad, recommended cancellation of the final-year examinations in universities.

“An expert panel has observed that the final examinations cannot be held in July as scheduled due to the risk of exposure to lakhs of students. The new guidelines are likely to be issued in a couple of days,” said a senior UGC official. The UGC will announce the guidelines after getting approval from the HRD ministry. HRD minister Ramesh Pokhriyal tweeted, “I have advised UGC to revisit the guidelines issued earlier for intermediate and terminal semester examinations and academic calendar. The foundation for revisited guidelines shall be health and safety (of) students, teachers and staff.”

As per the new suggested guidelines, final-year students will now be evaluated based on the previous semester examinations and internal assessments, sources in MHRD said.

The April 29 guidelines for assessment of final-year students had suggested universities to conduct examinations in offline or online mode, while it was recommended that first and second-year students be promoted on the basis of internal evaluation and performance in the previous semester/year. However, it also recommended that in case a student was not satisfied, he/she will be allowed an improvement opportunity when the situation normalises. The final-year exams were scheduled between July 1 and July 31.

“There have been representations from teachers and students raising concerns over conducting exams in the present situation and universities too have communicated their inability to conduct exams in the prevailing situation,” said an official of the ministry.

As per the earlier UGC guidelines, the universities were expected to reopen for second and third year students on August 1 and for the fresh batch from September 1. Now, the dates are likely to be deferred to October.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 when the central government announced a countrywide classroom shutdown.

[Link:https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/ugc-panel-for-cancellation-of-final-year-exams/articleshow/76605336.cms](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/ugc-panel-for-cancellation-of-final-year-exams/articleshow/76605336.cms)

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HRD minister virtually launches YUKTI 2.0 for Higher Education Institutes

Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', on Tuesday launched an initiative 'YUKTI 2.0' to help systematically assimilate technologies having commercial potential and information related to incubated startups in our higher education institutions.

Minister of State for HRD, Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre, Additional Secretary (Higher Education), Rakesh Ranjan, Chairman, AICTE Prof. Anil Sahasrabudhe, Member Secretary, AICTE, Dr. Rajiv Kumar and Chief Innovation Officer, MHRD's Innovation Cell Dr. Abhay Jere were also present

during the occasion through online medium.

Earlier, the Minister had launched the YUKTI (**Young India combating with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation**) web portal on 11 April, 2020. Ministry of HRD prepared the portal in view of coronavirus.

The portal intends to cover the different dimensions of COVID-19 challenges in a very holistic and comprehensive way. Through this portal, the Ministry of Human Resource Development will endeavor to ensure that students, teachers and researchers in higher educational institutions are getting appropriate support to meet the requirements needed to advance their technologies and innovations.

While addressing the participants Pokhriyal said that YUKTI 2.0 is logical extension of earlier version of 'YUKTI', an initiative of MHRD, to identify ideas relevant in COVID pandemic. He also informed that all the outcomes of earlier version of 'YUKTI' will be released soon.

The minister appreciated the initiative and said that our Prime Minister has given us the mission of making Bharat 'Atmanirbhar' and, YUKTI 2.0 initiative is a very important step in that direction.

"Our youngsters are very capable of thinking innovatively and we should make every possible effort to help them convert their ideas into enterprises," said Pokhriyal.

More importantly, initiative like YUKTI 2.0 will also help in fostering the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in our academic institutions".

The Minister expressed his happiness while launching the YUKTI portal. He also invited students, faculty members, startups and other stakeholders of higher education institutions to register on the YUKTI portal and share their technologies and innovations.

"This database will provide a clear picture of the state of the innovation ecosystem of our higher educational institutions. This will also help the government to identify bottlenecks and formulate appropriate policies to strengthen the innovation ecosystem in the country. Ministry will provide the best possible help to support creative innovations and technologies to help the society at large," he added.

The Minister hoped that this portal will prove to be a milestone towards promoting innovations and entrepreneurship culture in our higher education system and involving youth in nation building.

Link:<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/hrd-minister-virtually-launches-yukti-2-0-for-higher-education-institutes/articleshow/76543487.cms>

Significance of 360-degree learning and virtual reality in new-age media

The way today's generation consumes information has changed manifolds. These dramatic shifts in the development of media to a new age era of communication has paved way for a progressive form of learning, popularly touted as: comprehensive 360-degree curriculum.

Media simply means a channel of communication. So how does one decode this simple yet effective term and its burgeoning impact in today's high-tech world?

The evolution of media to a new age of communication has given birth to an array of developed mediums that are being harnessed by the millennials to consume information. Other than the conventional film, television, print and radio, the advent of new technologies with internet has opened the Pandora's Box of an array of new opportunities for millennials, provided they have an access to the education that is in par with the industry standards.

So, how does one incorporate these changing developments and bring an advanced curriculum to the classrooms? How do we, as teachers and mentors, guide them through the maze of multiple careers and specialisations through a cohesive, 360 degree model of learning? And above all, how do we as their guiding forces make sure that they are on the right track?

There are several factors that encompass the rationale of a 360 degree learning module. Some of them are as follows:

Digital Learning: Today there are many digital platforms, which offer high quality courses, curated by renowned universities and industry partners. With technological advancements like these; students have an opportunity to think out of the box and choose courses of their choice. It exposes them to a new world altogether while providing a global industry perspective.

Online learning or mentoring: Courses like Fashion Communication, Advertising and Content Creation need a definite global perspective. Most of the students in these streams will be working or collaborating with global companies and international platforms. Online learning helps us to create guest lectures, master classes, webinars and other exciting events in the classroom in real time by using the web. Sometimes industry leaders who cannot come into a school for various reasons; usually conduct their workshops online, much to the students' benefit. Industry in the classroom is essential, be it live or online.

Career Counselling: This becomes essential in any school that specialises in creative learning and creative education. Students have a vast ocean of choices in front of them, and each career has sub careers along with several specialisations.

The new reality is going to be creative careers, creative industries and creative businesses. From fashion to films, gaming, design, media, entertainment, advertising and communications, the mundane and the routine will be automated under the influence of new technologies. The

creative parts of the industry will be where the big careers lie.

To fit into this world of virtual reality, students have to be mentored and it is not enough to merely teach. Teachers today have to guide, advise, mentor, counsel, give shape to and show the way forward. Counseling is one of the most important parts of creative education today and most schools and institutions of higher learning have special guidance cells for the same.

International exposure: For fashion students, there are International Fashion Events across the globe. For students of cinema, there are International Film Festivals through the year. Ditto for all other streams, and it is up to us as teachers and mentors to make sure that our students are exposed to these events regularly; and are even allowed to participate, wherever there are openings for them as interns.

Some film festivals allow short films and as teachers we must keep a hawk's eye on all such opportunities and get them to our students while encouraging them to participate also.

Classroom in industry: Live workshops at photography labs, at television studios, in newsrooms, tours of retail stores (critical in Luxury Brand Management), spending time at live shoots, live events and watching industry in action is an essential part of the 360-degree spectrum.

Link:<https://www.deccanherald.com/supplements/dh-education/significance-of-360-degree-learning-and-virtual-reality-in-new-age-media-842362.html>

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