

# Why is upskilling necessary for the rural youth?

How can youth in rural India be made employment-ready? What are the skills they need to acquire and how can the government and NGOs facilitate this?

**Simran Kaur**

## The story so far:

**A**t a group discussion held by Life Skills Collaborative, most of the rural youth when questioned about their aspirations for the future said they preferred staying in their village. With the prevalent trend of urbanisation – the UN projects that almost 50% of the Indian population will be living in urban areas by 2047– it is crucial not to overlook those who choose to stay behind in villages.

## What is main source of rural income?

Farming is the main source of rural livelihoods, with children from many rural families supplementing their family's income by working on family-owned farms. But the rural economy is experiencing a major occupational shift with more farmers quitting agriculture to join non-farming jobs, hinting at an agrarian crisis. The

National Sample Survey Office data recorded 34 million farmers leaving their farms and transitioning to other sectors such as construction during 2004-05 and 2011-12. This highlights the need for not only making agriculture an aspiring vocation among rural youth, but also creating alternative employment opportunities.

## How can migration be controlled?

To control migration of these youth to urban areas in search of meaningful employment, it becomes imperative to provide vocational training to students to imbibe relevant rural skills in them so that they can secure a living where they currently live. During discussions at schools, it was found that most students' educational/employment aspirations were limited to choices that were available within the vicinity of their villages. Upskilling opportunities similar to what the Delhi government is trying to achieve with the 'Skills On Wheel' initiative must

be brought to students' doorsteps.

## What is the current vocational education opportunity?

The current vocational education landscape in rural India is interspersed with Industrial Training Institutes to upskill rural populations, but with little to no placement opportunities. Presently, rural education scarcely focuses on skill development, a blow to the majority of youth who reportedly rely on schools to learn life skills. The LSC Voices 2023 survey – of 15,856 young people across 11 districts – revealed that two thirds of youth aged between 19 and 22 had never taken any kind of vocational training with only 5% of them enrolled in these courses. If learning is infused with rural life skills in schools, rural education will have the potential to nurture a generation capable of thriving.

## How can education be improved?

Effective rural education should be

tailored such that technical as well as life skills, needed to empower youth in these areas, become accessible to them through formal education. There are many ways this could be done, as educational evidence from other developing economies suggests – such as Mexico's tele-schools and Bhutan's well-being-infused curriculum. The tele-schools provide lessons on subject matters as well as values, thereby providing a much higher level of access to value-based secondary education for remote areas where secondary schools are scarce. This has shown to have trickling benefits in the local economy with improved attitudes and increased aspirations among children and parents.

Closer to home, organisations such as NIIT Foundation and Pratham Institute are working with children in rural areas to provide upskilling opportunities. Hybrid life skilling programs are offered both by NIIT in collaboration with UNICEF through its self-learning platform, and Pratham, which offers courses in both industry-specific skills (such as in healthcare, electrical, construction) and life skills. By offering rural populations skills in fields like agricultural mechanisation, pollution monitoring, nursing and digital technologies via e-learning, rural India can boost employability in both traditional and non-traditional trades, leading to a vibrant economy.

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## THE GIST



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# Language and urban discontent

Bursts of aggressive Kannada activism seen in Bengaluru emerge from a sense of alienation in the local population over governance failures

**T**he intensity of sporadic bursts of Kannada activism in Karnataka often takes onlookers by surprise. There is little in mainstream Karnataka politics that suggests a prominent place for local language activism. Unlike some of its neighbours, Karnataka has never had an avowedly regional party head as its government. Even the Janata Dal (Secular), whose influence has been confined to Karnataka for a while, likes to keep up the pretence of being a national party. And yet it would be facile to treat the spurts of aggressive activism, like the recent attacks on non-Kannada signboards in Bengaluru, as just the acts of a few vagrants. These bursts of aggressive Kannada activism tend to rise when there is a sense of alienation in the local population over a specific issue.

Kannada activism first made its presence felt in the 1980s with the Gokak agitation for the primacy of Kannada in Karnataka. As Karnataka brought together regions with diverse histories, from being part of presidencies to being princely states, Kannada

was what held the state together. The 1980s was also the time when the state's dependence on what was then Bangalore began to grow. It did not help that Bangalore was, in that decade, in the final stages of integrating its cantonment with its city. Bangalore cantonment had been set up to protect the interests of the British crown at a time when the rest of India was still under the East India Company. It was set up in a princely state, Mysore, rather than a presidency area directly ruled by the Company. To further insulate the cantonment from the territories around it, the population was brought in from outside Mysore, and the language of its streets was English and Tamil. The Cantonment, being ruled directly by the British, outgrew the city of Bengaluru which was under princely Mysore.

The coming of Independence meant these arrangements no longer had any meaning, but changing the language on the streets took longer. As the city spread to engulf Kannada-speaking villages, there was a growing demand to emphasise the Kannada element of its culture. This took a variety of forms, culminating in changing the name from Bangalore to Bengaluru. Once the official dominance of Kannada was established, the city soon realised it had little reason to keep English out. The information technology boom and the coming of call centres made the access to English education the city provided to the poor an asset that was not to be

cast away lightly. Kannada activism receded into the background, but it had demonstrated its potential to intervene aggressively on issues where the local population felt aggrieved.

The potency of Kannada activists as stormtroopers on specific issues was heightened a decade later when they effectively converted the dispute over the sharing of Cauvery river water with Tamil Nadu into a mobilisation around Kannada. Since then, there have been sporadic bouts of Kannada activism prompted by concerns of the local population, which are not reflected in the socio-political discourse. And the current spurt is no exception.

This round of dissatisfaction emerges from the specifics of Karnataka's growth. The state's economy has become increasingly dependent on Bengaluru, and the political class seems keen to further strengthen this dichotomy. While there are periodic statements about developing other cities in the state, the approach is entirely capital intensive with little hope of the local population taking an active part in the process. While landowners get a one-time benefit from the sale of land, they are not the main beneficiaries in terms of jobs. And the local population is typically priced out of secondary benefits like education and health facilities.

The political insensitivity to this reality cuts across all political parties. State governments have been voted out consistently for nearly four dec-



The political management of Kannada activism may maintain a semblance of order in the city, but does little to address the underlying dissatisfaction

ades, but that is dismissed through meaningless jargon like anti-incumbency. New state governments lose no time in reinforcing the practice of spending on expensive projects in Bengaluru. The current deputy chief minister sought ₹50,000 crore for a tunnel in Bengaluru, without even waiting for technical evaluations. Those on the periphery of the city do not see how they will benefit from this long hole in the ground, creating a sense of dissatisfaction and helplessness. Kannada activism thrives in such a mood. As the state government spends tens of thousands of crores on world-class infrastructure for Bengaluru, it generates dissatisfaction bordering on anger among those on the periphery who cannot see themselves benefiting from these projects. Kannada activists are adept at diverting this anger to one against "outsiders". It may not be entirely accidental that much of the destruction in the recent round of Kannada activism was on the road leading to the newly opened world-class Terminal 2 of the Bengaluru airport.

The political class is not unduly bothered by these rounds of Kannada activism. Individual political leaders have developed, often clandestine, alliances with one set of activists or another. This allows politicians to make deals with individual activists, usually in ways that meet the interests

of the activists rather than the underlying source of public dissatisfaction. To facilitate such arrangements, the activists confine themselves to superficial demands, like the current one of increasing the share of Kannada in name boards of shops and companies from 50% to 60%.

The political management of Kannada activism may maintain a semblance of order in the city, but it does little to address the underlying dissatisfaction. And voters do not have to wait for five years to express their disapproval. They can vote differently in assembly and parliamentary elections. A year after the Congress came to power in 2013, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won the parliamentary elections. Again, a Congress-JD(S) government was in power in 2019 when the BJP swept the parliamentary elections.

As political parties continue to turn a blind eye to the dissatisfaction with Karnataka's economic strategy, the state's policies can be expected to continue as they are. Kannada activists will periodically divert this dissatisfaction into issues of language, and the attention-getting targeting of the "outsider".

Narendar Pani is professor and dean, School of Social Sciences, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru.

The views expressed are personal

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Narendar Pani

FONDLY REMEMBERED BY FORMER COLLEAGUES FOR 'CHARISMATIC PERSONALITY, OUT-OF-THE-BOX THINKING'

# Prof Uberoi, instrumental in establishing Sociology discipline in India, dies

ARJUN SENGUPTA  
& MALLICA JOSHI

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 3

AN "ECCENTRIC" yet charismatic figure, a sociologist who insisted on theorising not from the point of view of an Indian scholar but a global thinker, and an inspiration for his students — JPS Uberoi, who taught at Delhi School of Economics for three decades, passed away at 90 Wednesday.

"He was a charismatic figure... as a teacher, he had a way of pointing things out that completely arrested you. And

he could do that because of his original way of thinking, totally at odds from the received wisdom and conventional thinking that one is used to... He was brilliant at taking what seemed to be self-evident, and completely shredding it apart. And making you do the job of figuring out what to replace it with," said sociologist Amita Baviskar.

Baviskar was his student between 1986 and 1988 and a colleague 1994 onwards, when she started teaching at D-School.

"Indian Sociology... was very much a product of post-Independence decolonial

thinking, that we need to understand our own society, as it changes and modernises... But, at the same time, it led to what has been called Indian exceptionalism... He was unique in that, from the very beginning, until his work on Sikhism in the 1980s and beyond, he did not work on India at all. His attitude was, 'I might be Indian in origin but my work should address classical questions in anthropology'," Baviskar added.

A stalwart instrumental in establishing the discipline of Sociology in India, Uberoi was born in Lahore in 1934 and stud-



JPS Uberoi taught at Delhi School of Economics for three decades

ied at the University College, London, and University of Manchester, returning to India in the late 1960s.

His colleague of many years, Rajni Palriwala recalls the several discussions the two had over a cup of coffee or in some departmental activity.

"I never really knew him as a teacher, but could imagine what it was like for the connections he made took you out of the box. Our offices were next to each other for several years. Our approaches were different and we would get into arguments often. But I would leave knowing there was something

I had to think about..." she said.

"He was not an easy person but what was amazing was the way he made you think and how he would think with you... Every department trying to make good its intellectual claims needs a mad professor and he was ours," she said.

Palriwala believes the depth of creativity and contribution in Uberoi's sociological and intellectual work have not been sufficiently recognised. "It may be partly because he questioned so many dominant paradigms, he did not let you stay in your comfort zone, he made it a point to provoke. I also must say that I

don't know how much of what he accomplished would have been possible without his wife, Patricia, who has also been an intellectual companion," she said.

Professor Satish Deshpande, who also worked with Professor Uberoi, said, "He was one for the few anthropologists with fieldwork outside India. His very important work in Afghanistan is an example of that."

Deshpande further said, "He was very inspirational for his students and spent a lot of time with them. He was completely dedicated to the institution and teaching. He also had a lovely sense of humour and the abil-

ity to laugh at himself."

Baviskar, meanwhile, spoke about Uberoi's ability to think about how two opposing things would come together. "He took us on a walk through the walled city of Shahjahanabad... he had this remarkable way of seeing the city. It wasn't how a historian would take you around... he made you aware of how the city of Shahjahanabad nestled between the hills of the Ridge, and the river Yamuna. He used the structuralist approach to great effect, showing how opposing things came together to create a unity in diversity," she said. JE

# Reset the growth priority



AMARTYA LAHIRI

To create high-value jobs at scale, India needs combined strength of manufacturing and service sectors

INDIA IS AWASH with discussions about where it is headed economically and how it might achieve its desired development goals. Some of this discussion is unfortunately a distraction. One example of this is the spectacle of myriad commentators tying themselves in Gordian knots while projecting India's march towards a \$5 trillion economy by 2025. Leaving aside the incredulosity of some of the assumptions underlying the projections, this exercise itself is a distraction because it focuses on aggregate GDP. The development challenge is to make the average citizen better off. Hence, the relevant target should be GDP per person, not total GDP.

A recent book by Raghuram Rajan and Rohit Lamba, *Breaking the Mould: Reimagining India's Economic Future*, has tried to frame the debate in more relevant terms. The book asks whether India can grow and develop by prioritising service sector growth rather than industrial growth. The backdrop to the question is that the currently developed economies had gradually switched their economic resources from agriculture to manufacturing to services as they developed. This pattern of structural transformation has also characterised the more recently industrialising Asian economies like China, Korea and Taiwan.

India has had difficulties in expanding the share of the manufacturing sector in its economy. Instead, it has witnessed a somewhat different development path wherein most of the growth has happened in the service sector. Manufacturing's share of both output and employment in India has plateaued at or below 20 per cent. In other words, India appears to be jumping a stage in the development process by going from a primarily agrarian to a mainly service economy. Is this sustainable in the long run?

Growth of the service sector typically occurs through rising demands for medical, legal, entertainment, accounting and other personal services. Growth in these demands is the result of rising personal incomes of residents as well as increasing outsourcing of business processes by firms as they grow. Rapid industrial growth creates ideal condi-

tions for growth in domestic demand for both of these components. Since industrial growth in India has been tepid at best, where will the demand for the service sector come from?

Rajan and Lamba spy an opening for India in the world business service growth that has been facilitated by the increasing sophistication of information technology. Firms globally are outsourcing parts of their business service requirements. This is becoming an increasingly important part of the global supply chain. The book provides examples of service business back offices that India is becoming a part of. The challenge of course is to do this at scale.

The problem facing India though may be difficult to solve using a service-led model alone. India is adding around 8-10 million new workers to its labour force every year. This pace will continue for at least a decade. Moreover, a majority of these new workers are arriving in the labour market armed with high school or better educational attainment levels. Hence, their aspirations are commensurately high and further buoyed by the general national narrative of India finally arriving at the international stage of accomplishment.

India is currently failing to meet the aspirations of young Indian workers. Monthly statistics from CMIE show that while the overall unemployment rate itself is very high at over 8 per cent, the unemployment rate for youth in the age-group 15-24 is above 40 per cent! Dealing with this looming employment crisis requires expedited measures to incentivise job creation at scale by private employers.

It is in this context that one needs to evaluate both the service sector-led development model versus the more conventional manufacturing-led model. The current service sector in India is very segmented. Its output growth is primarily in high-tech services, while its job creation is mostly in low value-added, low skill services. Thus, the current service sector job creation does not generate income streams that the young aspire to.

The back-office led service sector vision stressed by Rajan and Lamba, may be able to generate a substantial number of jobs in due course. However, it will still take 10-15 years

for it to become a viable alternative. The problem is India's skill deficit. India currently produces about 2.2 million STEM graduates, post-graduates and PhDs. Unfortunately, a majority of them are unemployable with the training that they receive. It will require sustained investment in the quality of higher education to create a cohort of adequately skilled workers who can be profitably employed in these higher human capital sectors.

What happens in the interim though? One might be able to find some employment opportunities by expanding innovative health and education outreach programmes like anganwadi workers. But there are limits to these. Plus, it is also unclear whether these programmes meet the aspirations of a majority of the young. One interpretation of the government's PLI scheme is that it is an attempt to meet the political economy challenge of generating jobs now. If domestic and international businesses do indeed set up production centres in India that create jobs, then some of the jobs deficit may be corrected. The concern with the scheme is that it is production linked, not employment linked. Current component assembly-based production models in decentralised global supply chains do not necessarily create many jobs. Additionally, there are concerns about whether these businesses will stay or leave after the incentive schemes end.

India's jobs problem is real. With a median population age of 28, the problem will only get worse over time unless things change quickly. The country needs to combine the manufacturing and service sector models. It needs to go beyond the PLI schemes by incentivising private industry to scale up. Key for this are land and labour regulatory reforms. The good news is that these are fiscally costless though they do entail political costs. At the same time, India needs to address its skill deficit by raising its investment in higher education. India's demographic dividend will become a demographic curse if the country fails to create relatively high value-added jobs at scale. It needs to act quickly and comprehensively.

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# A CRIME ON CAMPUS

Arrest of accused in IIT-BHU sexual assault case is a first step towards justice. The case will be watched, much is at stake

**T**HE STUDENT WAS taking a walk near her hostel with a friend when three men waylaid and sexually assaulted her, all the while documenting the crime on their phones. The incident, which took place on November 1 on the IIT-BHU campus, once again brought to centrestage the spectre of sexual violence that haunts many women, on college campuses, at workplaces, on the daily commute. That the three accused in the IIT-BHU case were arrested on December 30, nearly two months after the assault, offers hope that in this case, justice may be served. That the police investigation has linked the men to three previous cases of molestation at IIT-BHU underlines that it must be served without fear or favour.

A political row has broken out over the affiliation of the three accused with the BJP's IT cell — the association ended in November, according to the BJP Varanasi (Mahanagar) president. It is of utmost importance that the police conduct its investigation professionally. This would help reassure citizens that crimes against women are taken seriously by the authorities and that culprits, regardless of their political connections, will be brought to book. The rise in women's mobility, their growing visibility in public spaces and contribution to the economy and increased participation in all fields, from politics to sports to entrepreneurship, has been a remarkable feature of Indian life in the 21st century. But the picture is often marred by persisting questions about how safe women really are as they step out in a society that remains patriarchal in many ways. The echoes of past crimes that drew the nation's attention — the December 2012 gang rape in a moving bus in Delhi, the gang rape of a photographer in 2013 in Mumbai's Shakti Mills, the 2019 rape and murder of a vet on her way home after work in Hyderabad — have still not faded.

Making women's safety a priority helps the larger cause of enabling them to claim their rightful place, whether it's at work, on the streets and in public parks or in Parliament. It is for the government at every level to ensure that women's safety does not come at the cost of their hard-won freedoms — which means rejecting the impulse to impose dress codes, curfews and other restrictions. This requires a different imagination of what women's safety and freedom means, and it can no longer be postponed. *TELS*

# Why has the 110-yr-old Indian Science Congress been postponed?

ANONNA DUTT & AMITABH SINHA  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 3

FOR THE first time since its inception in 1914, the Indian Science Congress, the annual gathering of scientists and students, is not being held this year.

The five-day event that takes place between January 3 and 7 annually had to be put off due to disagreements between the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA), the organisers, and the central government's Department of Science and Technology (DST), the main funder.

The Science Congress is a one-of-its-kind event, which brings together scientists and researchers from not just the country's premier institutions and laboratories, but also teachers of science from colleges and universities.

It offers them a platform to interact with students and the general public on matters relating to science.

## Unprecedented

Though the Science Congress has faced severe criticism in recent years due to the declining standards in its discourse, the postponement is unprecedented. With the exception of the two years following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic — 2021 and 2022 — the Indian Science Congress has been held every year since 1914. The 108th edition of the Congress was held in Nagpur in January 2023.

The inaugural event of the congress has always been attended by the Prime Minister.

## The postponement

The postponement is due to the unresolved dispute between ISCA and the DST.

In September 2023, the DST withdrew its funding support to the congress, alleging "financial irregularities". ISCA denied the accusation and challenged the DST's directive that government funds shouldn't be spent on anything related to the Science Congress, in court. The lawsuit remains pending.

The DST's contribution (which was raised to Rs 5 crore in 2023 from Rs 3 crore earlier) pays for most of the event's expenses. The ISCA also receives some funding from a few other government bodies and raises some more on its own.

ISCA had decided to move this year's congress from the original venue, Lucknow University, to Lovely Professional University (LPU) in Jalandhar, hoping that the private university would be able to share some of the funding burden.

While LPU had also hosted the 2019 Science Congress, the DST was said to be unhappy with the ISCA's choice for this year. The ISCA, however, argued that its executive committee does not need the DST's clearance for the venue and that a DST representative was in any case present when LPU was chosen.

Amid this tussle, LPU last month withdrew its offer to host the event.

## Steady decline

The Science Congress has been in steady decline over the past several years.

Random speakers have used the platform to make outlandish claims and promote pseudoscience. The papers that are presented or the talks that are delivered, hardly reflect the latest advancements in science. Most of India's credible scientists now avoid the event. Leading scientific institutions and laboratories have only a token presence, if at all. Most attendees are from colleges and universities with limited scientific credentials.

Many scientists question the usefulness of the event in its current form and have called for reforms. Successive governments have also expressed discomfiture over the goings-on but nothing much has changed.

## Government's dilemma

ISCA is an independent body, and the

government has no role to play in the selection of the panellists or speakers, the papers to be presented, or the subjects to be discussed at the Science Congress.

But at the same time, ISCA runs with DST support. The government also pays the salaries of the ISCA's permanent staff. And as the event is attended by the PM and other ministers and senior officials, it is perceived as being closely associated with the government. As such, every time the event lands in controversy, the government is blamed.

There has been a strong sentiment within the government in favour of reviewing its association with the Science Congress. This feeling goes back to at least 2008, when then Science Minister Kapil Sibal was said to have explored the possibility of discontinuing government support until some reforms were introduced.

However, governments have been reluctant to actually go ahead on this path. They have been wary of opening themselves up to accusations of being "anti-sci-

ence". They have also been mindful that the event attracts a large number of students from across the country.

The government has been reducing its involvement in the Science Congress. For instance, the PM no longer presents the awards at the inaugural plenary as some past awardees were subsequently found to have dubious credentials.

## End of the road?

ISCA general secretary Ranjit Kumar Verma has said while the postponement is unfortunate, it does not mean the end of the Science Congress. "We will hopefully be able to organise the Science Congress before March 31 and we are hopeful that the Prime Minister will attend the event," he added.

A government official told *The Indian Express* that financial support to the Science Congress could resume. "Discussions for collaboration will continue for the Science Congress scheduled for 2025," he said.

**EXPLAINED  
SCIENCE**

# 7 education trends to watch out for in NY

## IN 2024, THE SPOTLIGHT WILL BE ON IMMERSIVE TECH, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND PERSONALISED LEARNING

**ANINDITA ACHARYA**

From the rise in hybrid learning, increased emphasis on sustainability and emotional intelligence, to a growing popularity of exchange programmes,

several key trends will dominate the education sector in 2024. **Millennium Post** talks to educationists to find out the transformative trends that will shape the educational landscape this year.

## POWER OF VERNACULAR

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 prioritises the promotion of vernacular languages in education. NEP 2020 states "the mother tongue or the regional language should be the language of instruction up to at least the primary stage". In 2024, educationists believe that the popularity of vernacular education will see a rise. "Gross Enrollment Ratio can be increased only if higher education can be conducted in vernacular languages where there is a paucity of content. So, to put the horse before the cart, I expect major government funded initiatives for vernacular content creation in 2024," said Dr Umashankar. Meanwhile, Dr Radhika shared how vocational education will also remain in spotlight in the New Year.



## HYBRID LEARNING

The Covid-19 pandemic saw the educators and students adapting to hybrid learning and in 2024, it seems this model is here to stay. "The hybrid model will continue to evolve in 2024, blurring the boundaries between physical and virtual classrooms. Institutions will refine this approach, leveraging the best of both worlds to offer flexibility, accessibility, and enriched educational experiences," said Gaurav Goel, CEO and Co-Founder of Toprankers. Dr Radhika Y, Associate Dean Academics, GITAM (Deemed to be University), believes the blended learning model will provide new opportunities for innovation and improvement in educational delivery. Sardar Taranjit Singh, Managing Director JIS Group, also anticipates further evolution of hybrid learning models, which will provide flexibility and enhance the overall learning experience.

## PERSONALISED LEARNING

In 2024, personalised learning will revolutionise higher education and cater to diverse student needs and enhance academic outcomes, mentioned Dr Shahi. "Student centricity is a pivotal driver of future trends in education, steering the focus towards individualised learning experiences," she said. Goel also echoed similar sentiments and said with the rapid utilisation of AI-driven tools and adaptive technologies, educators will craft customised learning experiences and foster greater engagement and mastery too.

## SUSTAINABILITY

A school embracing sustainable practices shows dedication to future-oriented learning. Singh believes that in 2024, educational institutions are likely to integrate sustainability education into their curriculum, and will advocate eco-friendly practices among students. For Kanak Gupta, Director, Seth MR Jaipuria Schools, sustainability is no longer a buzzword. "Classrooms will run on renewable energy, and students will not just learn about climate but make ground level changes," he said. Shashi Banerjee, Director of Education, Shiv Nadar School, highlights how it has become imperative for schools to focus on nurturing empathetic, empowered and socially-conscious citizens. "The students should engage with the world beyond the factory model of learning," he said. Goel of Top rankers didn't mince words when he informed how education in 2024 will place a heightened emphasis on sustainability and global citizenship. "Curricula will instill environmental consciousness, cultural appreciation, and a sense of responsibility towards creating a more equitable world," he shared.

## COLLABORATION & EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

An exchange programme and collaborations enhance educational skills and helps students create a stronger portfolio. According to Prof (Dr) Sujata Shahi, Vice Chancellor, IILM University, Gurugram, the integration of learning strategies aligned with business objectives is a trend to look forward to in 2024. "Educational institutions are increasingly forging partnerships with corporations to co-create curricula that address specific industry needs. This collaborative approach not only enhances students' employability but also fosters a seamless

transition from education to the workforce," she said. "Despite the government's efforts to encourage foreign universities to set up campuses in India, it is a medium to long term prospect. In the shorter term, there is likely to be a push towards collaboration and exchange programmes with foreign institutions with credit transfers for courses completed in India and the terminal part of the education can be done abroad leading to a joint or terminal degree from the foreign university," said Dr Venkatesh Umashankar, director, PGPM, GLIM, Gurgaon.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

This year, there will be a growing emphasis on the development of emotional intelligence, believes Gupta. "In a world obsessed with grades, empathy and emotional intelligence step into the limelight. Schools are no longer just factories churning out standard products, but helping every student achieve their true potential," he said. Goel also believes that beyond academic excellence, 2024 will prioritise emotional intelligence (EQ) as a critical component of education. "Curricula will integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) to nurture empathy, resilience, and interpersonal skills, preparing students to navigate an increasingly complex world," he said.

## TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

In 2024, technology will emerge as the educational architect, reshaping learning landscapes worldwide, said Dr Shahi of IILM. "Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) will create immersive, experiential lessons, fostering deeper understanding in 2024," she said. Dr Umashankar strongly believes that generative AI is here to stay. "Dynamic institutions will take the lead in reforming their teaching and testing pedagogy as quickly as possible to incorporate the benefits of AI based tools. Students have been using it already and now it will be the turn of the educators to catch up," he said. Banerjee is of the opinion that advancements in AR, VR, and Mixed Reality will transform and redefine teaching and learning beyond substitution and augmentation.

# AICTE issues guidelines for polytechnic colleges

*Admission status should be minimum 80% in previous three academic years*

## OUR CORRESPONDENT

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has released specific guidelines and policies concerning the grant of autonomous status of polytechnic institutions. According to AICTE norms, the institute must have a minimum of 10 years of existence and should hold NIIA accreditation for at least 30% of eligible programmes. The accreditation should be valid until a period of an additional year from the date of submission of the application. Otherwise, the institution must have been operational for a minimum of 25 years.

The circular also mentioned that 50% of the faculty members amongst the AICTE approved faculty pattern should be working on regular basis. Moreover, at least 60% of faculty should



possess more than five years of experience, with 50% retaining their positions over the last 3 years. Also, more than 50% of the faculty members of the institution should have undergone at least one: course in MOOCs or SWAYAM/ FDP (Min. two weeks)/ Industrial Training (Min. three weeks) in the current/previous academic year.

According to the AICTE circular, the college needs to maintain a consistent academic record, with results of 60% and above in all semesters for the last three years. Additionally, the admission status of the institution should be minimum 80% in the previous three academic years. Around 75% of the students in accordance with the final year pass-outs should have obtained placement or opted for entrepreneurship/ higher studies during the previous three academic years.



## Trending COURSES

### Senior Management Programme from IIM Calcutta

This advanced 12-month course starting January 21, 2024 equips seasoned professionals with crucial leadership skills to steer their companies deftly and adaptively. The programme is tailored specifically for top-level executives with over a decade of experience under their belts. Through a distinctive, dynamic, and creative learning approach, IIM Calcutta's senior management programme will enable the participants to master breakthrough strategies and surpass standards in their respective fields.

The course will focus on market economies and macroeconomic policies, legal aspects of business, development of a strategic marketing plan, quantitative tools for decision making, financial reporting and analysis and corporate finance and financial markets. The face-to-face campus sessions may include topics such as being a CEO/board member, leadership and business communication, conflict and negotiation skills, business analytics and its applications, challenges of entrepreneurship, understanding self, and global political economy.

## BUZZER ROUND

Q) In which year was Pulitzer Prize established?

Send us your replies to [careersmp22@gmail.com](mailto:careersmp22@gmail.com). We shall publish the names of the first 3 correct entries in next week's edition



**Answer to our December 28 edition question: Rabindranath Tagore**  
**Correct answers were sent by: Arvind Konnar, Shruti Mishra, Kanad Roy**



**TO PRESERVE AND PROMOTE INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS**

# IIT ROORKEE JOINS HANDS WITH IIT BHILAI FOR TRIBAL RESEARCH

**OUR CORRESPONDENT**

IIT Roorkee and IIT Bhilai have recently signed an MoU to strengthen the academic and research collaboration between the two institutions. The MoU was signed at IIT Bhilai by the heads of both institutions i.e. Prof K K Pant, Director IIT Roorkee and Prof Rajiv Prakash, Director IIT Bhilai. This strategic partnership aims to preserve and promote Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and seeks to contribute to socio-economic development in tribal areas, emphasising research on traditional medicinal plants, tribal culture studies, agricultural practices in tribal



regions, and financial literacy among the youth about Indian culture and heritage, aligning with the Government of India's ambitious vision of Viksit Bharat@2047. Moreover, the partnership will actively support the objectives outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasising the integration



This collaboration represents a significant stride towards fostering awareness among the youth about Indian culture and heritage

of Indian Knowledge Systems into the education system. "IIT Roorkee is glad to collaborate with IIT Bhilai, and this MoU reflects our commitment to fostering groundbreaking solutions for today's education system. Through this collaboration, we aim to bridge the gap between ancient and modern education, facilitating both basic and translational research, and contributing to our shared vision of "Viksit Bharat" - a developed India," said Prof K K Pant, Director, IIT Roorkee. Prof Rajiv Prakash, Director IIT Bhilai said, "This partnership will create new opportunities for research and development. It will also promote our ancient knowledge and our heritage." Both institutions commit to exchange knowledge and promote Indian culture, Indian Knowledge systems and develop projects on sustainable & rural development, ancient Indian science, fintech, health science, agriculture, Artificial Intelligence (AI), complementary and alternative medicine, life management, environment, renewable energy, food processing, tourism management, languages, peace and conciliation, music, humanities and common interest. They have also agreed to jointly organise seminars, workshops and short-term training programmes.

# IIT MADRAS TO INCUBATE 100 START-UPS IN 2024

*Plans to begin new courses in IITM Zanzibar*

**OUR CORRESPONDENT**

IIT Madras is targeting incubating at least 100 start-ups across various sectors next year, in 2024. Recognised as one of the top deep-tech start-up ecosystems in India, the IIT Madras Incubation Cell (IITMIC) is the institute's umbrella body for nurturing, supporting, and overseeing various innovation and entrepreneurship projects.



has a lot more exciting initiatives and socially relevant projects that would greatly benefit the nation. "We are looking at closing this financial year (March 31, 2024) with 366 patents. We will try our best to see one patent a day. It is a matter of great pride at IIT Madras that we do a lot more of innovation. We are also looking at starting 100 start-ups in 2024. We are also seeing a lot of interesting technologies coming up through Hyperloop start-up, ePlane, Agnikul Cosmos and Mindgrove

Sharing his targets for 2024, Prof V Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, said, "IIT Madras saw a lot of ambitions realised during 2023. In the past year, we took up several important projects including IITM Zanzibar Campus, which became the first-ever IIT to be established overseas, launched a Department of Medical Sciences and Technology, and are aspiring to do many more things in this direction. We are also looking forward to launching a new school on interdisciplinary sciences. It is very important as today, we are moving towards interdisciplinary education. We also want to close this financial year with the maximum amount of projects." Prof Kamakoti said that in 2024, the institute

of which are IIT Madras-incubated start-ups. These start-ups will deliver products, which will be of great national importance," he said. He further added, "We are also working very hard towards maintaining the 1 ranking in NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework). Hopefully, we are also looking to move to higher rankings in World Rankings as well. We want to start a couple of new courses in IITM Zanzibar."

**In 2024, the institute has many exciting initiatives and socially relevant projects**

# TIGPS Bolpur student to compete in National Basketball Championship

**OUR CORRESPONDENT**

Meghadrita Ghoshal is on cloud nine and she has her reasons. The class VIII student from Techno India Group Public School (TIGPS), Bolpur, is gearing up to make her alma mater proud at the National Basketball Championship in Rajasthan. Meghadrita and her team defeated South Kolkata in the district basketball competition, earning them a spot in the nationals.



it is Meghadrita who is bringing that dream to fruition. "My mother was a basketball player, and I am carrying on her legacy. She dreamt of competing at the nationals, and since it couldn't be fulfilled, I am happy that I am doing that now," she said. Meghadrita, who is set to depart for Rajasthan on January 5, expressed her gratitude towards her school and highlighted the unconditional support she has received from teachers and friends throughout her journey. "I wouldn't have come so far without the help of my teachers," she said.

The school is beaming with pride for her achievements, and the teachers are confident she'll make her proud in her next basketball match in Rajasthan.

# NEWS & VIEWS

The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE Main) 2024 Session 1 is scheduled to take place from January 24 to February 1, 2024. According to the official schedule, the admit cards for session 1 of JEE Main 2024 will be issued three days before the examination. Once the NTA issues the admit cards, registered candidates can visit the official website [jeemain.nta.nic.in](http://jeemain.nta.nic.in), to view and download their admit cards. The examination for Paper 1 (BE/B.Tech) is set to take place from January 24 to February 1, 2024, with Session 2 scheduled for April 1 to April 15, 2024. JEE (Main) 2024 will be held in 13 languages, including English, Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu.

The Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB) has released the admit card for Class 12 practical exams in 2024. To get the admit card, candidates can go to [seniorsecondary.biharboardonline.com](http://seniorsecondary.biharboardonline.com). The practical exams will be held from January 10 to January 20, 2024. Meanwhile, BSEB mentioned that this admit card is specifically for the practical exams, and a different one will be given for the theory exams. The intermediate exams are scheduled from February 1 to February 12 in two shifts: 9.30 am to 12.45 pm and 2 pm to 5.15 pm. Results for Class 10 and Class 12 board exams will be announced in March/April 2024.

Uttar Pradesh Police Recruitment and Promotion Board (UPPPRB) will soon open applications for the posts of Sub Inspector (SI), Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police and Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police (Accounts). There are 921 openings, and the application period is from January 7 to January 28, 2024. Interested candidates, aged between 21 and 28 years, can apply through the official website [uppprb.gov.in](http://uppprb.gov.in). Eligible and interested candidates can visit the official website of UPPRB and apply for the same. To apply, candidates need to pay a fee of Rs 400, and this payment should be done online.

# 2,274 cadets to take part in NCC Republic Day Camp 2024

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

A total of 2,274 cadets will take part in the NCC Republic Day Camp 2024 here, which will see enhanced participation of girl cadets this year, its director general said on Wednesday.

During a press briefing at Delhi Cantonment, Director General of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh also said that there is a "steady increase" in enrollment of girl cadets in the NCC every year.

The NCC R-Day Camp which captures the essence of India, will be inaugurated by the vice president and culminate with the PM Rally.

"For this year's NCC Republic Day Camp, we have 2,274 cadets and enhanced participation of girl cadets this year, as 907 of them will be there in this year's camp," he said.

A total of 2,155 cadets, including 710 girls, drawn from all 28 states and eight union territories, had participated in the nearly month-long camp in 2023, according to an official statement issued by the government last year.

"Various competitions will be held, starting from best contingent, best cadet and horse riding. The camp captures the essence of NCC training imparted throughout the year," Lt Gen Singh told

reporters on Wednesday.

The camp takes place at the Cariappa Parade Ground in Delhi Cantonment.

During his briefing, the DG, NCC gave a presentation on the 2024 camp and later shared information on the NCC's plan to make the training of cadets more relevant to contemporary needs.

"We are in the process of revising the NCC syllabus, which is a continuous process. We want to make this training contemporary, we want to include the latest facets, we are in the process of analysing how we can train cadets on drones, improve life skills and make the training more contemporary and relevant," he said.

The top officer said for instance for map reading, the NCC has already included GPS and satellite imagery training for them.

"So, one is to make our training more contemporary. The second aspect is to improve the infrastructure for training, we have NCC training academies at various places, and we have training aides there. So, the next effort would be to improve the infrastructure so that we can train the cadets well, and the training aides get the latest equipment.. And, thirdly also to look after the welfare of all the staff of NCC," Lt Gen Singh said in response to a query. ११०

# IIT Kanpur files record-breaking 122 intellectual property rights in 2023



**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KANPUR, 3 JANUARY

The Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur has achieved a remarkable milestone by filing 122 intellectual property rights and achieving an

exceptional licensing rate of around 14 per cent to industry partners in 2023.

The accomplishment highlights the institute's strength in cutting-edge research and innovation, and marks its third straight year of securing the most intellectual property rights (IPRs) in its history, taking the numbers to 1,039 IPRs so far.

The 122 IPRs filed include 108 patents, four design registrations, three copyrights, and one trademark application along with four US and two China patents. The year also saw 167 IPRs being granted with 15 technologies licensed.

The patents for inventions from varied domains such as MedTech and nano technology include innovative healthcare solutions like a portable medical suction device and a continuous lung health monitoring system. Other notable patents include solid-state sodium-ion batteries and an affordable Braille learning device for the visually impaired.

Prof S Ganesh, director, IIT Kanpur expressed his enthusiasm and said, "We are proud to maintain the momentum by filing 122 IPRs, achieving a record of over 100 filings in our institute for the third year in a row. The institute's commitment

to pushing the boundaries of research and technology has resulted in this record-breaking number of IPRs and positioned the institute as a leader in driving positive change through intellectual contributions.

"The collaborative spirit among our researchers and the support from various stakeholders have played a pivotal role in reaching this milestone," he said on Wednesday. The institute also saw a substantial increase in the number of IPRs granted in the calendar year. The 167 patents include innovations such as a gas sensor for detecting ammonia at room temperature, a method

and apparatus for treating industrial wastewater, a tactile watch for the visually impaired, and a lateral flow immunoassay strip for detecting mastitis in bovines.

Prof Tarun Gupta, Dean, Research and Development, IIT Kanpur, said, "Inventors are thinking beyond publications; patent filing and technology transfer have become the real accomplishments, proving reproducibility. The increase in the number of IPRs is attributed to a simple process of patent filing, an enabling policy framework by the government, and support from the IPR management committee members." *stat*

# With 1 cr enrolments in 3 mths, Academic Bank of Credits tally hits 3 cr

**Manash.Gohain**  
@timesgroup.com

**New Delhi:** One crore students joined the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) platform in the last three months, taking the total to over three crore by the end of December, 2023. Last year, the total number of students enrolled for higher education also increased from around 3.4 crore to 4.3 crore.

According to a senior official with the University Grants Commission (UGC), the crossing of three crore accounts in the ABC platform is a significant achievement. The official said that the commission is working to include every student in the higher education system on the ABC. "This is very important for the successful implementation of the National Credit Framework (NCF), which provides more choices to the students. If a student does any course during his studies, his credits will continue to be deposited in the bank. Apart from this, he will also get the credit framework's benefit."

Under the NCF, students can upload their credits,

transcripts and certificates to the ABC account and credits earned will continue to be stored in the academic account. Students usually faced difficulties in taking admission from one institute to another, but after the implementation of the provisions of NCF, now they will be able to easily shift to another institute. Also, with the provision of multiple entry and exit, he/ she will be able to resume his studies.

UGC is writing to all universities and colleges from time to time to nudge them to ensure every student has an account. "Students can also take courses on self-learning platform Swayam and earn credits and deposit the same in the ABC on successful completion of the assessments," said the official.

The student will continue to get the benefit of the credits he will get in ABC during his studies and thereafter. Students will upload their credits, certificates, and transcripts. "ABC is, in a way, a virtual storehouse, which will keep records of the data of every student," said the official. *tos*

# Deposit ₹30 cr for land transfer to CUHP: Anurag

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DHARAMSALA, JANUARY 3

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur today said that the state government should deposit Rs 30 crore for the transfer of land to the Central University of Himachal Pradesh (CUHP) for the construction of a campus at Jadrangal in the Dharamsala Assembly constituency.

Anurag, while talking to mediapersons at the Gaggal airport, said that the Union Government had allowed two campuses of the CHUP at Dharamsala and Dehra, both in Kangra district. The land at Dehra was transferred to the CUHP last year and the work on the campus was in progress. "The Union Government has given approval for the construction of another campus of the CUHP at Jadrangal in Dharamsala. However, the project has been delayed as the state government has not deposited Rs 30 crore for the transfer of forestland at Jadrangal to the CUHP," he added.

## Work on varsity campus at Jadrangal has been hanging fire

BJP legislators had raised the issue during the winter session of the Assembly last month. One CUHP campus was to come up at Dehra, which falls in the Hamirpur parliamentary constituency represented by Anurag, and the other at Jadrangal in Dharamsala, which is part of the Kangra Lok Sabha constituency. The work on the Dehra campus is in progress while the construction of the Jadrangal campus has been hanging fire due to the delay in the transfer of land to the CUHP.

With the Lok Sabha elections due next year, the BJP is accusing the Congress government of delaying the work on the CUHP campus at Jadrangal. Sources said that the university authorities had also urged the government to hand over the Jadrangal land to them so that the work on the campus could be started.



Former CM Jai Ram Thakur honours Union Minister Anurag Thakur at the MP Khel Mahakumbh-2.

## Sports vital for 'overall development'

OUR CORRESPONDENT

HAMIRPUR, JANUARY 3

"Sports play an important role in the overall development of the personality of sportspersons. Sports have also emerged as a lucrative career," said Anurag Thakur, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, while addressing the closing ceremony of the MP Khel

Mahakumbh-2 at Ghumarwin in Bilaspur district today. He said, "The Khel Mahakumbh has been successful in identifying the sports potential of the youth in the Hamirpur parliamentary constituency. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ensured the development of a state-of-the-art sports infrastructure in the country that has helped in improving the standards of

sports. Indian players had won a record number of medals in different international sports events last year."

Anurag said that over 49,000 players take part in different games, including volleyball, basketball, cricket, wrestling, football, kabbadi and athletics, in the Khel Mahakumbh-2. He added that players were given cash prizes of over Rs 50 lakh.