

# 'DU's single girl child quota has given us a chance to open up'

**Ashna Butani**

NEW DELHI

For 17-year-old Anshika Singh, her favourite thing about studying at Miranda House in Delhi University (DU) is her new-found independence in a big city.

The student, who hails from Haryana's Rohtak, is one of the 764 entrants in the university under its new supernumerary single girl child quota, which allots one seat in each programme across undergraduate courses for female students who are single children. Last year, a similar quota was introduced for orphaned students.

Ms. Singh, who lost her parents at a young age and began tutoring students at the age of 15, said the quota came as a blessing after years of having to look after herself, despite receiving affection and care from her grandparents.

"I miss my grandparents, and they even call me three or four times a day since I started college, but at the same time, I'm enjoying this feeling of freedom," she said.

## 'Progressive step'

Miranda House principal Bijayalaxmi Nanda lauded the quota as a "progressive step". "So far, we have admitted 43 single girl students via this quota across our programmes," she said.

DU Registrar Vikas Gupta said the quota has been especially useful in encouraging girls to further their education. "Many families do not prioritise girls' education even today," he said.



Darshani Sengar is among the students who have secured admission at DU colleges via the quota. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

For Darshani Sengar, 18, the quota came as a saving grace as she almost lost out on admission to her dream college after falling short by one mark in the Common University Entrance Test. "Thanks to this quota, I got admission to Miranda House in the Political Science course, which was my first preference," she said.

She said she watched webinars organised by the university to understand how to apply through the quota, for which she also required an affidavit signed by a gazetted officer as certification of her single child status.

"While there is one seat reserved in every programme, the rest of the admission procedure is the same for those who have applied via the quota. They are given the best possible preference and if in the second round, a student who has applied via the quota gets a seat higher on her preference list, under unreserved category or any other category, the student can avail of that too," said a DU admissions officer. H/7

# Why is T.N.'s education funding on hold?

Why has Tamil Nadu not received its Samagra Shiksha funds for this year? What are the conditions attached to the release of Tamil Nadu's education funds? How does the National Education Policy 2020 affect funding? Why is the three-language formula a contentious issue?

## EXPLAINER

Priscilla Jebaraj

The story so far:

**T**amil Nadu is yet to receive this year's funds from the Union government under the flagship education scheme Samagra

Shiksha. According to the State government, the Centre has linked these funds to the complete implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which includes provisions that the State has opposed, including the contentious three-language formula. The impasse has come to a head over the last two weeks, with a public war of words between the Centre and State erupting on X.

**What is Samagra Shiksha and why has Tamil Nadu not gotten funds under it?**

Samagra Shiksha is an integrated Centrally-sponsored scheme for school education from nursery till Class 12, with components for teacher training and salaries, special education, digital education, school infrastructure, administrative reform, vocational and sports education, with grants for textbooks, uniforms, and libraries, among others. The scheme's estimated outlay between 2021 and 2026 is ₹2.94 lakh crore, with the Centre and States contributing funds in a 60:40 ratio. For 2024-25, Tamil Nadu's allocation under the scheme amounts to ₹3,586 crore of which the Central share is ₹2,152 crore, with a first quarterly instalment of ₹573 crore, which has not yet arrived halfway through the financial year.

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi last month, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin accused the Centre of imposing a prerequisite for the fund's disbursal, namely, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for another Centrally-sponsored education scheme called PM Schools for Rising India (PM Shri). This scheme, being run from 2022-2027, aims to create 14,500



**In Umbra:** The State implements a two-language formula, making it mandatory for all students to study both Tamil and English throughout their school years. (PI)

model schools across the country to showcase the implementation of NEP 2020, and has a much smaller project cost of ₹27,360 crore. The Centre has sent at least 10 letters to Tamil Nadu from September 2022, asking the State to sign the MoU, which included an agreement to fully implement the NEP.

In March 2024, the State gave an undertaking that it would do so, with Tamil Nadu Education Minister Anbil Mahesh saying that this was because the PM Shri MoU was being linked to funding for the much larger Samagra Shiksha — the delayed third and fourth instalments from 2023-24, and the full funds for the current year. In July, the State signed a modified MoU, dropping the paragraph on NEP implementation, however, this was unacceptable to the Centre. In his August letter, Mr. Stalin noted that States which had signed the MoU had received the funds, and in a September post on X, accused the Centre of “denying funds to the best-performing States for refusing to bow to the NEP”.

The Union Education department has taken umbrage at this implication. In response to an article by *The Hindu*, a Ministry spokesperson said it was “misleading” and “incorrect” to suggest any such “*quid pro quo*”. However, the fact remains that Tamil Nadu has not signed the complete PM Shri MoU and has

not received Samagra Shiksha funds.

**What is Tamil Nadu's problem with the NEP 2020?**

In a post on X, Mr. Mahesh said the State's objections “relate to specific elements like the three-language formula and curriculum changes”, and noted that “Tamil Nadu is already implementing many acceptable aspects of NEP through its own initiatives”. He also warned that linking the release of Samagra Shiksha funds to full NEP compliance “infringes upon the State's constitutional autonomy in education”.

Tamil Nadu's draft State Education Policy (SEP), submitted in July, clearly indicates that the State wants to stick to the 5-3+2-2 curricular formula, rather than the NEP, which includes the pre-school years. The SEP also proposes five years as the age of entry to Class 1, as against six years in the NEP. The State wants undergraduate college admissions to be based on Class 11 and 12 marks, rather than a common entrance test as proposed by the NEP. The biggest hurdle, however, is the NEP's three-language formula.

**Why does Tamil Nadu oppose the three-language formula?**

The NEP 2020 recommends the mother tongue or the local language as the

medium of instruction till Class 5 and says that all school students should be taught at least three languages, of which two must be native to India. This three-language formula recommendation has been in every NEP since 1968, and has been implemented in many States by teaching the local language, as well as English and Hindi, with Sanskrit also offered as an option, especially in Hindi-speaking States.

Tamil Nadu has a long-standing opposition to this formula, dating back to social movements in the pre-independence era. From a widespread agitation against mandatory Hindi in the 1930s to violent anti-Hindi riots in the late 1960s, to protests against the NEP and Navodaya schools in 1986, there has been a consistent political consensus on the issue.

Instead, the State implements a two-language formula, making it mandatory for all students to study both Tamil and English throughout their school years, and they are free to choose Hindi or any other language as an optional third. “We embrace Tamil as a pillar of our identity while also ensuring future generations are equipped with English proficiency,” Mr. Mahesh said in a recent post on X.

NEP 2020 says that “there will be a greater flexibility in the three-language formula, and no language will be imposed on any State”, indicating that it is not mandatory to include Hindi as one of the three languages. However, this would still allow students to choose Tamil as a third language, to be studied for just a few years in middle school.

All major political parties in Tamil Nadu have rejected this formula on principle. When Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan asked whether this “principled” stance against NEP meant that Tamil Nadu was opposing education in the mother tongue including Tamil, Mr. Mahesh responded that the State's policy has “always prioritised inclusive learning with Tamil as a cornerstone, while empowering students with knowledge in English”. (PI) | 8

## THE GIST

Tamil Nadu hasn't received its Samagra Shiksha funds for the current year.

Tamil Nadu rejects the NEP's requirement for teaching three languages, preferring its own two-language formula.

The disagreement over NEP compliance has led to heightened tensions and a public exchange between Tamil Nadu and the Centre.

# Scientists seek transparency in Vigyan Puraskar selection process

**Jacob Koshy**

NEW DELHI

A group of eminent scientists, all former recipients of the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (SSB) Awards, have written to the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) for clarification on whether the selection process employed to select winners of the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (RVP) was “fully fair, transparent and free of extraneous considerations.”

The RVP replaced the SSB awards - traditionally given to outstanding scientists younger than 45 - this year and, in its new avatar, was conferred on 33 scientists on August 23 by the President of India.

Traditionally, the SSB awards were administered by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) where a panel of scientists who are subject experts in a range of fields, are part of seven advisory committees to represent



Scientists have sent a note to Principal Scientific Adviser Ajay Sood.

various scientific fields. They review the profiles of the nominated scientists and these advisory committees recommend final lists of scientists to the CSIR.

The RVP follows a different procedure. There is an apex Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar Committee (RVPC) which constitutes subject advisory committees, which give their recommendation of nominated scientists, and returns it to the RVPC. The RVPC is chaired by the Principal

Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India and is made up of the Secretaries of the six Science Ministries/Departments; up to four presidents of the science and engineering academies and six “distinguished scientists and technologists”.

The RVPC gives their final pruned list to the Science Minister for approval, the website says. Unlike the SSB awards, the RVP awards are administered by the government and not by the CSIR.

A media report alleged that some of the scientists who were part of the RVPC-vetted list were dropped at the last moment because they were critical of certain government policies. “We are writing to ask whether the recommendations of the RVPC were accepted in entirety, or were revised by further committees or authorities. In the latter case, we request that details of the nature of these

committees and the criteria employed in arriving at their decisions be made public,” said the letter.

There are 26 signatories to this letter, some of whom have earlier been part of SSB expert committees, and include senior scientists from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the National Centre for Biological Sciences, the Harish-Chandra Research Institute and the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences. “Our queries are prompted by disquieting media reports which suggest that unfair non-scientific considerations may have influenced the final list of this year’s awardees overriding the recommendations of the experts committee. We very much hope that these fears are unfounded, and feel that complete and detailed procedural transparency is the best way to set all doubts to rest, and to preserve the integrity of this prestigious award,” the letter said. ५/१७

# For Kerala aspirants, rejection over discrepancy deals a blow

**SOPHIYA MATHEW**

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16



**Applications rejected over a discrepancy in the name of the Kerala board.** *File*

ABDUL MAJID from Kerala's Thrissur was denied admission to Hansraj College's BSc Geology course despite getting a seat in the first round. The 19-year-old said he "lost hope", waiting for the admission to be approved by the Delhi University administration, and finally ended up accepting a BTech seat at Jamia Millia Islamia.

Majid is among a few other students from Kerala who were allotted a seat at DU colleges in various admission rounds, but were rejected at the stage of scrutiny of documents. The reason? Discrepancies in the name of the Kerala State Board.

This has left students scrambling for alternative options.

Majid said, "... I did not receive any response from DU even though I wrote about my concerns to them, saying the mistake was from the college side because the Kerala Board of Higher Secondary Examination is an approved board by the Centre."

Another student, Adithya P Babu (19), is still uncertain of what to do. "I have a seat at Vidya Academy of Science and Technology for Engineering in Thrissur but the fees are Rs 50,000 for a year, which is way higher than the fees for DU." He said he had written to the varsity a week ago, stating that his allocation in Bhaskaracharya College of Applied Sciences to the BSc Electronics course was rejected because of an "unrecognised list of boards as per DU". Adithya said, "The Kerala DGE wrote to the uni-

versity... I don't know why our applications are still not approved."

On September 6, the Director of General Education (DGE), Board of Higher Secondary Examinations of Kerala, wrote to the varsity to "facilitate admission" of students from the Board of Higher Secondary Examinations, Kerala. It read: "It was observed that students from our Board faced challenges during the admission due to a discrepancy in the name of our Board as listed on the Council of Boards of School Education in India (COBSE) website. Previously, our board was inaccurately mentioned as 'Board of Higher Secondary Education, Kerala'. However, we've taken immediate action to rectify this issue, and COBSE has now updated the name correctly, i.e. Board of Higher Secondary Examinations, Kerala."

Shanavas S, Kerala DGE, told *The Indian Express*: "I wrote to the DU Vice-Chancellor and Registrar, and copies of the communication were also shared with Maithry (DU's Kerala Students' Association)... I didn't know some students still have to get their admissions confirmed. If that is the case, I'm ready to talk to the Dean or

whoever is concerned."

On why the students were denied admission, DU, Dean of Admissions, Haneet Gandhi said, "There was a difference in the name of the board on the COBSE list, which is why we asked the students to bring a letter from their respective boards. We received a communication from the Kerala Board, that the name of the board has been updated on the COBSE list. But until yesterday, we have been checking and still can't find it updated." Gandhi said they have requested the DGE to send the particular update, but received no response.

The varsity, Gandhi added, follows the COBSE list to check authenticity of documents provided by students during admission.

Shanavas, however, said: "I did not receive an official communication asking for a COBSE link. There is some miscommunication because we will not be authorised to share the link, that is a matter of the central government."

For 18-year-old Anjali D, who had got a seat in the BA History (Hons) programme at Janki Devi Memorial College before her application was rejected, the only option is to make do with her "backup plan" — classes at the Government College for Women in Thiruvananthapuram.

Akamsha, vice-president of Maithry, which has been helping students, said, "It was with a lot of difficulty that we got in touch with the Kerala DGE... If the Kerala Board had taken action sooner, these students wouldn't have had to apply for mid-entry rounds..."

# Ajit Ranade terminated from GIPE Vice Chancellor's post

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
PUNE, SEPTEMBER 16



**Dr Ajit Ranade**

**ECONOMIST AND political analyst** Dr Ajit Ranade was terminated as the Vice Chancellor of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE) on Saturday.

He was issued the termination letter by Chancellor Bibek Debroy after a fact-finding committee found that his candidature "did not conform to the established norms set forth by the UGC".

Some students and staff of GIPE had first approached Kaustubh Patil, an advocate of Bombay High Court, one and a half years ago to fight against Ranade's appointment.

According to UGC guidelines, a Vice-Chancellor must have at least 10 years of experience as a professor at a recognised university or academic institution or in administrative educational institutions. Advocate Patil said Dr. Ranade did not meet these criteria. Chancellor Debroy had set-up

a fact-finding Committee to examine a show-cause notice issued to Ranade by former Chancellor Dr Rajiv Kumar, on June 27, 2024. The Committee recommended removal of Ranade from his position, following which Debroy issued the termination letter.

The FFC recommendation as quoted in the termination letter to Ranade stated, "The Committee, after careful consideration, is of the opinion that Dr. Ajit Ranade's candidature does not conform to the established norms set forth by the UGC... The Committee strongly recommends the removal of Dr. Ajit Ranade from his position as Vice Chancellor of GIPE, Pune."

Ranade assumed charge as the V-C of GIPE on February 4, 2022. He was appointed for a period of five years by the then Chancellor

Dr Rajiv Kumar. For 18 years till February 2022, he had served as the president and chief economist at the Aditya Birla Group.

In June, GIPE had issued a show-cause notice to Ranade, accusing him of "suppressing material information at the time of his appointment, including falsifying requisite qualifications, wilfully misrepresenting facts...".

While Ranade had not responded to the notice on time, later speaking at a press conference in July he had said, "I did not submit my bio-data (for V-C position). I was invited by the search and selection committee and, after that, I submitted my bio-data."

"UGC wrote to our then chancellor Rajiv Kumar on June 4 and again on June 26 stating that the institute had not given the correct reply to a January letter... That letter was never addressed to us and we didn't receive it. It was written to the Chancellor. The institute didn't know that UGC was having a problem as they didn't ever ask us," said Ranade at the press meet.

19/11

# Empowering teachers, empowering India: Paving the path to becoming Vishwa Guru

With the National Education Policy 2020 and NCTE programs paving the way, India is poised to reclaim its status as a global beacon of knowledge

**P**M quotes 'Education is not just a way to gain knowledge but a means to transform the world'. It is our teachers who will lead this transformation, making India not only a land of knowledge but a beacon of hope and wisdom for the entire world. Teacher's Day, celebrated few days back, serves as a poignant reminder of the selfless contributions made by teachers throughout their careers.

It allows students to express their gratitude, love, and respect for the people who have guided and inspired them to become true citizens. The celebration is a vehicle for recognising the immeasurable value teachers bring to society and emphasising the importance of education



**PANKAJ ARORA**

as a pillar of the nation. India now moves closer to realizing its dream of becoming a Vishwa Guru, the teaching profession continues to be a vital force in this journey, as India is well on its way to reclaiming its ancient mantle. India's rich educational heritage is deeply rooted in its culture, recapitulating the legacy of Indian education, where teachers are equated

with creators 'Brahma, the creator of the universe' in Hindu philosophy. This essence of the guru-shishya (teacher-student) relationship, where knowledge was imparted by sages in gurukuls, gave a strong emphasis on the holistic development of children. The teachers or 'Gurus' were revered, holding a status that was even higher than that of emperors. India's ancient universities like Nalanda and Takshashila were some of the earliest global learning centres of learning for the world. India's ancient texts, such as the Vedas and Upanishads, have long been sources of wisdom for the world.

As India strives to reclaim its position as a global leader in knowledge, the role of teach-

ers becomes even more crucial who are at the centre of this transformation. The time is ripe for the youth of India to embrace the teaching profession; by investing in the teaching profession and addressing its challenges, India can build a strong foundation for a future where it leads not just in power, but in wisdom and knowledge as well. The role of teachers in this endeavour is indispensable, making them the true architects of India's bright future, by inspiring curiosity, encouraging critical thinking, and instilling values, they are shaping the future leaders of the world. Prime Minister Modi's vision for India as a global leader is not just about economic growth or technological advancement; it is



about creating a society where knowledge, wisdom, and values are cherished. As India marches towards its goal of becoming a Vishwa Guru, the teaching profession will be playing a pivotal role in shaping this vision. Teachers are the torchbearers

of knowledge, and their empowerment is crucial when India embarks on its mission of becoming a Vishwa Guru. India's aspiration to become a Vishwa Guru is deeply intertwined with its education system, where National Education

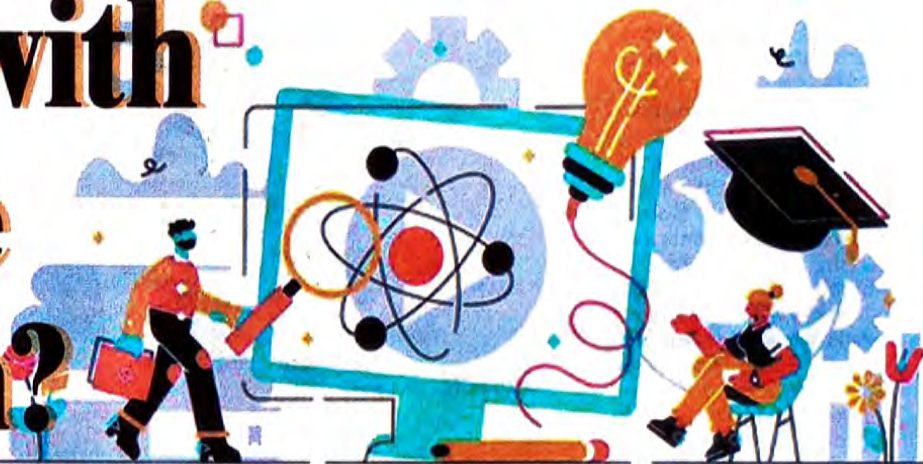
Policy (NEP) 2020 has emerged as a significant step in this direction, focusing on improving teacher education, and professional development, and creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes a more flexible, multidisciplinary approach to education, places a strong focus on the professional development of teachers.

For India to truly become a Vishwa Guru, it must invest in its teachers, who serve as architects of the nation's future through their unwavering dedication. This is where NCTE is playing a pivotal role in providing them with the resources, training, and support they

need to excel in their profession. The flagship programs of NCTE are instrumental in elevating the status of teachers in society, by giving them the right support & training. India's teachers will undoubtedly lead the way in shaping the future of the world. It recognizes that to nurture future leaders, teachers themselves must be continuously learning and adapting to new pedagogies to ensure that they are equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

*(The writer is the Chairperson, National Council for Teacher Education, Ministry of Education, New Delhi and Professor of Education in the Department of Education, University of Delhi; views are personal)*

# How is EdTech changing education with an adaptive curriculum?



**MUDDASSAR NAZAR**

The educational landscape is undergoing a paradigm shift with the increasing integration of cutting-edge technologies, redefining conventional teaching and learning methods. One of the most significant approaches, adaptive curriculum, has contributed greatly to revolutionising the education sector. It includes different teaching strategies, assessments, and materials intended to personalise the educational experience for every student.

At the forefront of the adaptive curriculum lies EdTech systems, which provide educators with the latest tools based on technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), data science, and machine learning. These systems can assist teachers in identifying areas where students are experiencing difficulties while carrying out specific measures to help them improve. Moreover, these systems also help students learn at their own pace, providing the required assistance to succeed. Following these perks that EdTech systems bring, Fortune Business Insights has projected that the global adaptive learning market will reach 7.94 billion by 2027.

## Key technological components of EdTech systems

The technological framework with which EdTech systems are based ensures that the students receive practical and customised learning experi-

ences. Here's a look at some of the key technical components that facilitate the successful implementation of adaptive curriculum:

**Machine learning (ML) and AI:** Both AI and ML have transformed the EdTech business. AI systems can analyse student data and provide personalised learning experiences based on their abilities and weaknesses. On the other hand, ML can assist in dis-

covering student behaviour trends and provide teachers with information to help them enhance their instructional methods.

**Learning management systems (LMS):** These are software programs that manage and deliver educational content. These programs can communicate with other EdTech systems via Learning Technologies Interoperability (LTI), an industry protocol

for integrating educational tools and processes. LTI enables seamless integration of various EdTech systems, making it easier for instructors and students to access and utilise additional technologies.

**User interface (UI) and UX (User Experience):** These are the critical components of an EdTech system. The UI/UX design of a learning platform can significantly influence

learning results and student engagement. Additionally, students can navigate and engage with the platform effortlessly with a well-designed UI/UX, whereas a poorly designed one might cause discontent and alienation.

These technologies are deployed in the adaptive curriculum to bring about a change in the conventional ways of providing education to students. The EdTech solutions developed with these technologies intend to provide students with technical education training and skill development, ranging from online courses to virtual classrooms, altering how skills are learnt. Furthermore, these digital solutions foster involvement, engagement, and adaptability among students that traditional techniques fail to match.

While incorporating EdTech systems into the adaptive curriculum might seem challenging at first, the technology needs to be effective. A possible strategy is to correspond the technology with the educational goals and outcomes.

This will help to ensure that technology is utilised to support the curriculum instead of substituting it. Also, with adequate training and support to educators regarding the utilisation of the novel EdTech systems, it can be ensured that the technology remains effective and beneficial to students.



University of Strathclyde invites applications for MSc

# environmental engineering

The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, invites applications for its MSc environmental engineering course starting in January 2025.

The course caters to the environmental engineering industry, hence meeting the needs of urban regeneration, land contamination management, environmental protection and infrastructure investment portfolios in Scotland and worldwide.

Students will undertake five core classes and a range of optional classes. Each class is normally taught for two hours per week over 8 to 11 weeks. After successful completion of the taught component, students will undertake a dissertation from June to August. In addition to the dissertation topics proposed by course leaders and industrial partners, students may propose topics that can be of relevance to their future career or their employers.

Students can even apply to work on industry projects as part of the independent study classes in collaboration with industry. Industrial partners will often sponsor projects applicable to student dissertations.

A distinctive feature of this course is its topical nature. Glasgow has been undergoing extensive urban regeneration, includ-

ing building on land that has been contaminated in the past. Students will closely study and examine challenging 'real world' issues, hence gaining the experience and the ability to translate the principles of environmental engineering that they have learned into national and international contexts.

It is noticed that the graduates of the MSc in environmental engineering are widely scattered internationally because of environmentally related jobs, including large numbers of environmental and engineering consultancies, industries, local government, and national and international regulatory agencies.

**Eligibility-** Normally a first-class or

second-class honours degree (or international equivalent) in engineering, earth sciences, environmental management, or a background in the chemical, physical, biological or mathematical sciences.

Fee - £27,500 (full-time) for international students.

Scholarships - There are a number of scholarships available for the January 2025 programme, and the deadline is 6 January 2025.

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# NIOS Project Begins Today, With Bumps

## 30 Of 96 Study Centres Closed; 8 New Ones Started

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**New Delhi:** The school project of the National Institute of Open Schooling will commence classes on Tuesday. However, the programme, which was designed for students who couldn't keep up with their counterparts in govt schools, will see at least 30 of its existing 96 study centres closing down this year due to low enrolment. There are eight new study centres to ensure students do not have to travel long distances.

This development comes at a time when the high dropout rate is a concern in Delhi govt schools. To put things in perspective, only 6,200 of the 17,000 govt school students who failed Class IX for the second time in the 2023-24 academic year enrolled in NIOS to continue their education.

This project was specifically designed for students of classes IX and X who were enrolled in a govt school in Delhi and who failed to clear their examinations for a minimum of two times. An official at the Depart-

**Only 6,200 of the 17,000 govt school students who failed Class IX for the second time in the 2023-24 academic year enrolled in NIOS to continue their education**

ment of Education's NIOS project revealed that it was an attempt to provide a new opportunity to such students by providing them encouragement to continue their education through a more flexible assessment system. He added that the students who pass the programme successfully can resume studies in Class XI in govt schools.

This lack of interest among low-performing students to continue their education through the NIOS school project may have been the trigger behind the circular issued by HR Sharma, DoE's director of distance education (NIOS Project), which says, "As many as 30 NIOS study centres have been closed as they were no more viable due to reduced

strength. The guest teachers working in these schools shall continue to work in the same schools and assist the teachers in taking classes of regular students, till further orders. Some of these teachers may also be adjusted in the eight newly opened study centres."

Officials said that schools have been mapped and the study centres have been instructed to provide support to the students who have failed twice in their examinations. They emphasised that the project aims at providing a lifeline to those who may be at risk of dropping out. The heads of the designated study centres have been instructed to coordinate with the mapped schools to ensure a smooth start of classes.

"The heads of the mapped schools are directed to inform all the students registered with the NIOS Project about the commencement of classes by using the mass SMS facility and by making phone calls to individual students immediately," said Vikas Kalia, an official at the NIOS project.

# How a Faridabad boy busted an Indian 'fraud among geniuses' in America

A boy who had no interest in studying for marks conned his way to a frontline university in Pennsylvania on a full scholarship. He lived the American dream for 6 months till a BTech student here did some online sleuthing to expose him

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On Feb 23 this year, a post dropped into a Reddit group with 50,000 members called Btechartds. It was a long read. The chronicle of a crime in lurid detail. No bloodshed, but cold-blooded white-collar delinquency through which a boy who had barely passed his 12th boards had made it to a leading US university on a full scholarship to study computer science.

The anonymous writer was making a full disclosure on a startling revelation after another like a Keigo Higashino-style 'come, get me' than Agatha Christie whodunit. Through a series of dexterous frauds, a boy with no interest in studying but desperate to go to an American university had managed just that and settled into life as a "fraud among geniuses".

He also wrote of the astonishment in his family when he broke the news of his US admission. "Tujhe to plus-minus bhi nahi aata, yeh kaise ho gaya? (You don't even know how to do addition and subtraction, how did this happen?)" his father asked.

But why put it all out there?

"I have built my career on LIES and FRAUD", the post's title, cried out for attention. What was this?

A confession?  
A cathartic release?  
Bragging by an artful dodger?

There were many thoughts that the post stirred up in MG (we will refer to him by his initials because he does not want to be named), who as moderator of Btechartds was among the first to read it. At 3am, India time, MG was moving in and out of internet rabbit holes when he saw the post. He read it, and read it again, and again.

Surprise turned into anger.

MG is the polar opposite of the Reddit post's writer. Nineteen years old and a BTech student himself, he is studying hard at a private tech campus in Faridabad for scores that let him go to the US for higher studies.

MG is a data buff. He has no time or inclination for detective work, no hunger for thrillers. But he decided to get to the bottom of this. "It wasn't an ordinary post. Generally, if any post has objectionable content or mentions trigger words such as nudity, sex, rape, etc, it gets flagged by filters. In this post, there were no such issues... but it caught my attention," MG, who has a knack for reading and gaming, told TOI over a call.

A series of dark choices

In the post made from the account u/Transportation0k3726 - the writer hadn't just detailed his frauds but was also candidly honest about his dark choices. "I haven't told anyone how I got to the point

## This is how the post began

> So, it all started when our 10th board exams got cancelled. From that day till now, I haven't seriously studied for even 2 hours. As usual, I took Science in 11th, dreaming of cracking JEE and all, but soon realized it wasn't a piece of cake. I barely passed 11th with 49%. Then, in 12th, I thought I would restart everything and took admission in a dummy school. I might have studied seriously for like 2-3 days, but then again, I started repeating the same things. There was a time in my life where I was just eating, sleeping, and watching movies. I used to watch horror movies all night long for months, then sleep the whole day and my parents thought I was studying the whole night...

where I am right now. It would destroy everything I have," he wrote. The writer said he "edited" his exam marksheets from Class IX to XI and made the documents "perfect", even buying a fake stamp and seal of his school principal to make them look authentic. Then he made a fake profile of himself. In his applications to US colleges, the teenager, who was studying at Ruby School in Rajasthan's Kota, said he belonged to Chandigarh. He added accolades to his name that "could not be verified" but were "impressive" nonetheless.

He also planned how to sidestep any checks by colleges, which usually verify applicants' details by domain in his school's name and with it an e-mail ID of his school principal to make correspondence between the school and the college he would apply to formal.

With fake marksheets and es-

## In his words, this is how he did it

So, I planned a very very structured fraud plan.

> I got my result for 9-11 class edited them like in a very perfect way anyone would not recognize as if it's edited, then made a completely fake predicted result for my 12th class even bought a fake stamp and seal of my school's principal to make it look perfect. Then, as all these transcripts needed to be sent by my school's official email id, but my school only had a gmail.com email... So, I made a fake email id of my school, not any regular email like echnolname@gmail.com, I bought a similar website domain of my school and got the email like if it's of principal then principal@schoolname.com so it looked exactly official, then I started preparing my application, they need your academic achievements in high school, outside of academic achievements, made a complete full fake profile of me, and I didn't mention any of the activities like won any Olympiad medal or anything I put on which cannot be verified but are still impressive, and even if they wanted to verify something, they would send an email to my school of which I had access to



says written using generative AI, by copying pieces available on the internet and cloning the writing style but to different topics, he applied to Ivy League varsities. When he did not hear from them, he thought they had seen through the bluff in his applications when suddenly a leading university responded. "I don't know what, but one college, I would not write his name for obvious reasons, it's a top 25 in the US and a reputed college. I don't know how they accepted but gave me a very very good financial aid package which covered almost everything except my meal plan cost. It was like USD 5,000 a year, which is about Rs 4-5 lakhs a year," he wrote.

On paper, shining on boards, killing a parent

And now that he felt luck was on his side, he decided to push for full scholarship. "I wanted my freedom at any cost, and if I could go to college without spending a penny of my parents' money, only then could I get that. So, I planned another very wrong and fraud thing," he wrote in the post.

So, he wrote back the university saying his father had died of

cancer, and he couldn't afford tuition or living expenses in the US. "They took that seriously, and instantly increased my aid package to full cost of attendance, which means tuition, housing, meals, and even one round trip ticket to India every year," the post read.

It was now time for the final act. Forging the Class XII marksheet. He explained exactly how in the post: "I was worried that I might not even pass 12th. This was the only barrier now I got my result. I scored 58%, and that too was more than enough for me. As soon as I got the result, I first edited the result page to 91% to show to my parents, and for which they were really happy, and I was feeling guilty, and then got the copy from digi locker, edited that, made that 91%, and sent it to the college from school's official email which I created. They quickly accepted it and made my admission official, and everything was in place now."

He confessed he was surprised even by the 58% he scored in the final. During the boards, he wrote he realised how "messed up I was". Referring to the physics exam, he wrote, "I remember there was a question, how are x-rays produced. I wrote x-rays are produced by x-ray machines." And then, in maths, he "basically rewrote the questions".

The visa interview was up next, and the writer was nervous because he knew bluffing would not work there. He wrote about seeing an applicant ahead of him getting rejected and getting further worked up inside but managing to look normal when his turn came. The

## Timeline

Aug 2023: AA lands in US on a full scholarship from Lehigh University after committing a series of document frauds

> He cheats in his semester exam to secure a 4/4 GPA

## This is what he wrote about his board results

> Okay, so for my boards, I was curious to know how I even passed, so I ordered the photocopies of my graded answer sheets from the CBSE website. When I received my answer sheets, I was literally shocked. I got like 10-15 marks in all the subjects except English and PE. It was written on the front of the answer sheet like 13 for maths, 15 for physics, 11 for chem, but on the result portal, they passed me by giving 29-30 in every subject and extra 20 with practical, so I got like 45-50 in every subject, so if someone who is giving boards rn, remember this, CBSE tries to pass you in every way possible

session was brief. As soon as the visa officer saw he had a full scholarship from the university, his application, he wrote, was cleared.

## A fraud among geniuses

And so, in Aug 2023, he landed in the US with his airfare paid by the varsity. Created through forgery, he could now live the American dream for real. "I got to know few students from India who were like on full tuition scholarship and also from some other countries, and they all are like geniuses. They have done research in some fields, some are intl Olympiad winners and all that, and I am a fraud," he wrote.

But life as a fraud among geniuses wasn't going to be easy. There were semester exams to clear and editing marksheets wasn't going to work. A GPA of 3 out of 4 is must to retain the scholarship. So, he wrote, he began studying to make an earnest effort to pass, but made no progress. That's when the next devious idea struck him.

"So, I sat near the exit, and as

soon as I got the paper and saw the invigilator was facing the other side, I left the room with the paper in my jacket wrote all the answers using internet, and at the end, there used to be a crowd as people were going in and out and submitting the exams, so I came back, mixed with the crowd and submitted the paper. I did all the exams like this and got near to perfect marks in all and got a 4/4 GPA last semester," he wrote.

By this time, he felt like toffin. So, for cash in hand to spend for a better lifestyle, he made a fake resume, edited transcripts to look like a third-year marketing student and managed to bag a remote work offer as a marketing intern from a New York-based firm for USD 1,500 a month. He used this money to indulge himself, like buying a new gadget and getting a drink. In a remarkably candid insight into his psyche, he wrote at

Lehigh University in Pennsylvania," he said.

By afternoon of Feb 23, less than 12 hours after reading the post, MG wrote to the US university flagging the admission fraud. He did not give away his identity and used an anonymous e-mail ID.

"I am reaching out to bring to your attention a concerning post shared on our platform, which provides comprehensive details regarding an alleged case of admission fraud involving an Indian student... As a responsible online community, we feel a moral obligation to report this matter to appropriate authorities to ensure a thorough probe takes place," he wrote.

As methodical as he was in his search for the university, MG also pointed out clues that the college could use in identifying the student. These were:

- 1 Indian
- 2 Has given a fake death certificate named under his father (cause of death as cancer) to get a full scholarship
- 3 Claims to have made a fake school result around 91%
- 4 Make a fake school domain name and principal id
- 5 Illegally doing a part-time job to earn USD 1,500

Almost a month later, a university official got in touch with him. The two got on a video call on March 20, and on May 13, MG got confirmation from the university that the student he had flagged was expelled and arrested. He now knew his identity. Another 19-year-old, whose initials are AA.

After reaching a plea deal there, AA was deported from US in June. Son of an officer in the armed forces, AA appeared for his boards from Ruby school in Kota, where he studied at Kantiyara Vidyalaya in Kanpur and Hyderabad. His family is based in Chandigarh.

"It felt right to flag this problem because so many genuine students wait to get admission abroad every year. I am also a JEE aspirant, and I understand students' struggles to pursue a good career," MG said.

Lehigh University, too, acknowledged MG's role in bringing this fraud to their attention, saying in a statement that it "appreciates the report to its ethics hotline and the diligent investigation."

The university told TOI it does not have any additional statement at this time" on the case. Education consultants who guide Indian students for applications abroad said foreign varsities verify information by candidates by getting in touch with schools or colleges in the home country on official e-mail IDs.

"Many universities also carry out verification process through agencies. Chances of admission fraud increase when they don't hire agencies to verify," said Swapna Abroz, an overseas education consultant. Abroz said action needs to be taken against such admission frauds because these aren't just harmful for students' record, but also malign a country's name.

the end of the post: "I just don't like to do anything in which my mind is involved unless it's fraud."

## How he was caught

Poring over this Reddit post at his home in Faridabad, MG knew he couldn't let it go. "I felt it was serious and needed to be flagged," he told TOI. So, he decided to probe. The post was anonymous. The account of the writer had no personal information. So, MG began scanning his previous posts for clues.

He found a photo of what seemed like a university building on his thread. Adept with online tools, he decided to carry out a Reverse Google Image search - a freely available feature that allows uploading a picture for the search engine to find the source or similar images to the one provided online.

The results led him to Lehigh University in Pennsylvania.

MG was sure he had hit bulls-eye with a little more scanning. There was one giveaway on the writer's account. "The only univer-

to Lehigh University, flagging the admission fraud

Apr 30 AA is arrested in the US

June After reaching a plea deal, AA is deported to India

a full scholarship to college without studying for a minute

MG, a Btech student in Faridabad, reads the post while working as a moderator for the subreddit

> MG writes a mail

# Enrol C'garh girl, who missed admission due to accident, under J&K quota, HC tells Mum univ

**Mumbai:** Bombay high court directed Mumbai University to admit a Chhattisgarh student under the supernumerary quota reserved for students from Jammu & Kashmir after she failed to secure admission due to an accident.

The girl could not secure admission as she failed to attend the counselling session held by MU's Centre for Excellence in Basic Science. In her plea, she said she had met with an accident two days prior and was unable to walk.

A division bench of Justices G S Kulkarni and Somasekhar Sundaresan, in its Sept 12

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**It would be necessary to recognise the petitioner's merit and not let her opportunity to secure admission suffer for the sheer inability to attend an in-person meeting, the HC observed**

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order, said Lamyia Khurshid Siddiqui has an excellent academic record and had scored 98% in the national level entrance test conducted for this course. It would be necessary to recognise the petitioner's merit and not let her opportunity to secure admission suffer for the sheer inability to attend an in-person meeting, the HC observed. The bench took

note of the fact that two other students who had informed MU of their inability to attend the session due to medical issues were permitted to send a representative with all necessary documents and they were given provisional admission.

Noting that Siddiqui has suffered an apparent injustice solely due to her inability to attend the counselling session,

the bench said it was persuaded to grant relief on the basic consideration that the two supernumerary seats would remain unutilised. Then the merit of the petitioner would be a casualty, the HC said. "Thus, recognising that the right to education being not only a statutory right but also a right that leads to the enjoyment of the right to life under Article 21, without creating any precedent since this is a peculiar set of facts, it would be appropriate to use one of the two unutilized supernumerary seats to accommodate her," it said. PTI 

# खादी ग्रामोद्योग का NIFT से करार

## ट्रेनिंग, कपड़ों की डिजाइनिंग और ब्रैंडिंग में मदद करेगा NIFT

■ विस, नई दिल्ली: खादी और ग्रामोद्योग आयोग ने नैशनल इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ फैशन टेक्नॉलजी (NIFT) के साथ एक करार किया है। यह समझौता 'सेंटर ऑफ एक्सिलेंस फॉर खादी 2.0' के लिए किया गया है। आयोग के अध्यक्ष मनोज कुमार ने कहा कि खादी को 'ग्लोबल ब्रैंड' के रूप में विकसित करने के लिए NIFT के साथ किया गया यह समझौता 'क्रांतिकारी कदम' है।

मनोज कुमार ने बताया कि NIFT इस समझौते के तहत खादी सेंटर ऑफ एक्सिलेंस 2.0 के जरिए सहयोग देगा



समझौते के दौरान मौजूद अधिकारी।

जिससे 'खादी ब्रैंड' को और लोकप्रिय बनाया जाएगा। इसके जरिए खादी संस्थानों को ट्रेनिंग, खादी कपड़ों की डिजाइनिंग और खादी भवनों को नई साज-सज्जा में लाने में

मदद मिलेगी। कुमार ने बताया कि खादी की गुणवत्ता बढ़ाने के लिए खादी ग्रामोद्योग अगले 3 वर्षों में COEK के जरिए करीब 25.17 करोड़ रुपये खर्च करेगा। NIFT जल्दी ही नई दिल्ली में एक हब सेंटर बनाने का काम पूरा करेगा, साथ ही बेंगलुरु, गांधीनगर, कोलकाता, गुवाहाटी, पंचकुला, हैदराबाद और भुवनेश्वर में स्पोक सेंटर बनाएगा। इसके अलावा IIT दिल्ली कैम्पस में खुले खादी ग्रामोद्योग के मॉडर्न स्टोर की तर्ज पर देशभर में स्टोर खोले जाएंगे और फैशन शो और ट्रेनिंग प्रोग्राम आयोजित किए जाएंगे।

# NMC introduces seat upgrade option in the third counselling round

It will allow candidates to enrol in the medical college of their choice if they are not satisfied with the colleges allotted to them in the earlier rounds

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The Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) recently released a list of 6,947 virtual vacancies for MBBS, BDS, and BSc Nursing admissions for the second round of counselling. Earlier, students were allowed to apply for a seat upgrade only in the first and second rounds. To increase flexibility and transparency, the National Medical Commission (NMC) will also allow candidates to opt for an upgrade in the third round of counselling.

A virtual seat is created in a medical college when the candidate who has been allotted that seat decides to opt for a seat upgrade in the next round of counselling. Once the candidates get the upgrade/seat of their choice, the seat allotted earlier becomes a clear vacancy and will be allotted to the next candidate on the rank list.

This year several virtual seats have been added to medical colleges across various states and union territories, including Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Delhi (NCT), Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jhark-

hand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal.

"Virtual vacancies are not clear vacancies; they are not vacated yet. If somebody is holding a seat and wants to upgrade to a better college/seat, that seat will be marked as a virtual vacancy. Only when the candidate who has asked for an upgrade gets an upgraded seat will his/her seat become a clear vacancy. If the candidate does not get a seat, his seat will not be allocated to another candidate. Virtual vacancies are those where the person holding the seat vacates it for a higher seat," says Dr B Srinivas, se-

**When a candidate gets an upgraded seat, it creates a clear vacancy allowing the next aspirant in**



cretary, NMC. Students had the upgrade option for the first and second counselling rounds for the last few years, but from this year onwards, candidates will be able to apply for the seat upgrade for the third round of counselling, too. "Choice filling is left to the students, and they can opt for as many seats as they want. The idea is that the seats should not remain vacant. If the candidates go for an upgrade, then vacant seats should be filled," says Dr Srinivas.

**Increases student mobility**

He points out that seats in government colleges are the first to be taken. Most seats remain vacant in private colleges, or NRI seats might get fewer takers. "Allowing candidates to upgrade seats enhances student mobility. They can either choose a government college or a private one," says Dr Srinivas.

The reason for the introduction of the virtual vacancies was to prevent seats from being wasted. "Virtual vacancy is a good option to prevent the seats from remaining vacant in prestigious colleges. It increases accessibility in the admission process, reduces the paperwork, and provides a clear picture to candidates. However, technical issues might cause

unnecessary problems. It is essential that all candidates know about virtual vacancies; often, candidates in rural areas are not aware of these vacancies and lose the opportunity. Another challenge is that if the deemed or private colleges get to know about the candidate leaving the institute, they might force the candidate to apply for the next round, so they can use his seat for their stray vacancy round," says Dr KM Abul Hasan, chairman, IMA Junior Doctor's Network.

Virtual vacancies are also creating slight confusion among both colleges and students. Colleges are unsure whether students who have been allotted the seats will join or not. "For example, if 200 seats have been allotted and 25 students do not join despite paying the fees and have applied again in the second round of counselling, such vacancies create slight confusion among colleges and students. Colleges are unsure whether the candidates who have been allotted a seat will join or not. However, there is more flexibility for the candidates to get a seat of their choice," says Dr Ajit Kumar, director, Sharda University, Uttar Pradesh.

This will ensure more transparency as the expected vacant seats and the ratio of candidates seeking admission to the medical college will be clear. "Now students will have an option to verify information about a medical college and then decide whether they want to join or not," says Dr Kumar.

# AICTE introduces standardised format for MTech certificates

HEIs will have to align with national standards to enhance MTech credibility

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To ensure quality in technical education, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) recently approved a standardised format for postgraduate certificate courses. It has directed all institutions offering MTech to uniformly adopt the standardised format for issuing their certificates, starting from this academic year.

The format clearly specifies the main branch of engineering, followed by the specialisation within parentheses. For example, if a student has completed his/her MTech in the field of Computer Science with a focus on Artificial Intelligence, the certificate should read: MTech in Computer Science (specialisation in Artificial Intelligence). This approach will not only bring uniformity across all HEIs but also enhance the recognition and value of the qualifications conferred to students.

**Core area of expertise**

TG Sitharam, chairman, AICTE, says, "The primary reason for introducing a standardised format for MTech certificates is to ensure that the main branch of study is clearly reflected alongside the specialisation. This clarity is crucial for recruiters and other stakeholders, as it makes it easier and allows them to accurately understand the student's core area of expertise. The format will also benefit the recruitment process for employers when hiring



**For standardisation of BTech certificates, a panel is looking into nomenclatures for major, minor degrees**

across states or from multiple institutions. It will simplify the process for employers by making it easier to compare and verify credentials along with the main branch and specialisation." The process will simplify the selection process as in an era of interdisciplinary education, where specialisations often overlap, explicitly stating the main branch provides a clear foundation of the student's academic background. "This distinction not only enhances the transparency of the qualifications but also ensures that the candidate's knowledge in their core field

is recognised, giving them an edge in fields where interdisciplinary skills are becoming increasingly relevant," adds Sitharam.

Prateek Sharma, vice-chancellor, Delhi Technological University (DTU), says, "The students normally see the contents of the programme before enrolling. Inconsistencies in course titles and degree classifications create confusion, especially in fields like AI where multiple departments offer related programmes. The standardised format will give them clarity on which programme they want to study and from which department. It will also help in implementation of NEP 2020 because if there is a consistent nomenclature across the country, it will also create opportunities for credit sharing."



# UGC plans to train faculty to integrate 58,000 HEIs into NIRF

Inclusion of more HEIs will foster healthy competition and drive continuous improvement through data-driven insights into institutional performance

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## Key benefits for institutions

- Data-driven insights into performance of institutions
- Enhanced decision-making on academic programmes, research, and infrastructure
- Accreditation opportunities linked to NIRF ranking as an eligibility criterion
- A platform to showcase institutional strengths and areas for improvement

## Support mechanisms

- Training, resources and mentorship through workshops and seminars
- Customised guidance to help institutions meet NIRF ranking criteria
- Transparent methodology and relevant parameters to create a level playing field

## Key insights into the new categories

**State public universities:** Will have a platform to showcase their unique contributions to higher education.

**Open universities:** Will have tailored parameters focusing on reach, accessibility, and learner outcomes.

**Skill universities:** Will emphasise industry-relevant programmes and focus on skill-based education.

bringing 58,000 HEIs into the NIRF ranking system presents challenges, given the diverse nature and varying levels of development among institutions," Prof Kumar says. "The inclusion of these HEIs in the NIRF framework aims to offer a holistic view of

the strengths and areas for improvement across a broader spectrum of HEIs. "The NIRF rankings are a great platform for measuring various institutional quality aspects," says Prof Kumar, adding that the inclusion of more HEIs will not only foster



**The NIRF rankings are an incentive for all higher education institutions to continuously improve**

healthy competition but also drive continuous improvement by offering data-driven insights into institutional performance.

## Challenges in integration

With such a vast number of

HEIs of varying sizes, locations, and levels of development, integrating all institutions into NIRF is not without its hurdles. The UGC chairperson highlighted the diversity in institutional quality as one of the key challenges but assured that the board is prepared to provide ample support.

"The UGC is committed to offering support and guidance. We aim to strengthen the NIRF framework so that every HEI aspires to be a part of it. By introducing relevant parameters, refining the

methodology and increasing transparency, we aim to create a value proposition that will make NIRF an indispensable tool for institutional development," he says.

## Broadening the scope

The inclusion of 58,000 HEIs is set to reshape the Indian higher education system, promoting quality education across the board. "The NIRF rankings are an incentive for all institutions to continuously improve," says Prof Kumar, emphasising that UGC has been instrumental in encouraging participation in NIRF. Currently, over 6,500 institutions participate in NIRF, and expanding this to 58,000 marks a monumental shift.

"By participating in NIRF, institutions gain access to valuable insights that help them grow and align with global education standards," he adds. NIRF acts as a motivator, providing institutions with measurable goals to strive for improvements in key areas like research, teaching, and employability.

## NExT for Ayush 2021-2022 batch to bolster quality of Ayurveda education and health care standards

The exam which will be conducted in 2026 for the first time has set the ball rolling for curriculum modification

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With a view to ensuring a fair and transparent process along with maintaining the quality of Ayush education and health-care standards, the National Exit Test (NExT) for Ayush will be effective for the students of 2021-22 batch and thereafter. The Union Minister of State for Ayush (Independent charge) Prataprao Jadhav announced that the decision was based on the recommendations of a committee set up for this purpose to review the concerns of the students in this regard.

The committee has recommended that NExT will be applied to the students enrolled in the 2021-22 academic session under the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) and the National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH) Acts, 2020, eliminating ambiguity about its implementation. The committee was presided by Professor Sanjeev Sharma, vice-chancellor, National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur, who was responsible for reviewing the suggestions from the students and submitting the recommendations to the ministry.

NExT is mandatory for licensing and enrolment in the state or national register after completing a one-year internship and the structure is a pro-

blem-based examination to assess the clinical competency, medical ethics understanding, and ability to handle medico-legal cases for graduates in Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, and Sowa-Rigpa as the case maybe.

Speaking to *Education Times* about the recent initiative, Vaidya Jayant Deopujari, chairman, NCISM, says, "Since the proposal to conduct NExT is in alignment with the NCISM Act, the decision was made as per the regulations. Following the representation of students citing Covid for their academic loss in addition to the fact that medical colleges were conducting exams that were non-uniform across the country, they suggested NExT should be

implemented for students of 2021-22 batch and onwards, and not prior to that." It is to be noted that the NCISM Act, 2020 and the NCH Act, 2020 came into force with effect from June 11, 2021 and July 5, 2021, respectively. NExT is required to be conducted by NCH under the provisions of these Acts within three years from the date of their enforcement. "As per the norms, NExT should have been conducted in 2024 (as was decided earlier), but following the representations of the students from the Ayush stream and their meeting with the Union Minister of State (IC), the committee set up to evaluate their concerns suggested that the exam be conducted from the 2021-22 batch. This signifies that the first NExT exam will be conducted in 2026," says Deopujari, adding that the curriculum for Ayush courses has been modified in keeping with the exam's format and NEP 2020 with a focus on students' clinical skills.

"The curriculum is being implemented through a Competency Based Dynamic Curriculum (CBDC) from the academic session 2021-22. Hopefully, this will enable the 2021-22 batch to complete their internship and get prepared for NExT exam," says Prof PK Goswami, dean, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (UP).



## CBSE issues show-cause notice to 27 schools for violating norms

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has issued show-cause notices to 27 schools in Delhi and Rajasthan for violating the affiliation by-laws. Following the board's recent inspections, irregularities were found with enrolment and attendance records. There were certain schools that violated infrastructure norms, calling for the need for explanations from the institutions concerned.

The inspections showed that the schools had enrolled a much higher number of students from classes XI and XII who were not attending classes. The CBSE's official notice reads, "In response to these findings, CBSE has issued show cause notices to 27 schools - 22 from the two regions of Delhi and 5 from Ajmer region. These notices require the schools to provide clarification regarding their enrolment practices, adherence to infrastructure standards and other norms of the board."

16/9

# राजस्थान में भी अब हिंदी माध्यम से होगी एमबीबीएस की पढ़ाई

जागरण संवाददाता, जयपुर: मप्र के बाद राजस्थान में भी छात्र हिंदी माध्यम से भी एमबीबीएस की पढ़ाई कर सकेंगे। पहले चरण में मारवाड़ मेडिकल विश्वविद्यालय से संबद्ध जोधपुर के डा. संपूर्णानंद मेडिकल कालेज और बाड़मेर के मेडिकल कालेज में इसकी शुरुआत की गई है। दोनों मेडिकल कालेजों में शैक्षणिक सत्र 2024-25 में प्रवेश लेने वाले छात्रों को अंग्रेजी व हिंदी माध्यम से शिक्षा प्राप्त करने का विकल्प मिल सकेगा।

प्रदेश की चिकित्सा सचिव गायत्री राठौड़ ने बताया कि ग्रामीण पृष्ठभूमि अथवा हिंदी माध्यम के छात्रों को अंग्रेजी माध्यम में संचालित आयुर्विज्ञान पाठ्यक्रमों में अध्ययन से समस्या होती थी। जल्द ही अन्य मेडिकल कालेजों में भी यह सुविधा प्रारंभ होगी। अक्टूबर 2022 में मप्र के मेडिकल कालेजों में पहली बार हिंदी में एमबीबीएस प्रथम वर्ष का पाठ्यक्रम शुरू किया गया। 25/16

# पाक को भारतीय योजना अपनाने की सलाह

इस्लामाबाद, प्रेड्र : एशियाई विकास बैंक (एडीबी) ने पाकिस्तान को अपनी खराब शिक्षा प्रणाली को ठीक करने और नागरिकों को गुणवत्तापूर्ण प्रशिक्षण प्रदान करने के लिए भारत की योजना उल्लास को अपनाने की सलाह दी है। मनीला स्थित ऋणदाता की यह सिफारिश पाकिस्तान द्वारा शिक्षा प्रणाली में सुधार करने और स्कूल न जाने वाले सभी बच्चों को शिक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए वित्तीय सहायता के अनुरोध के जवाब में आई है।

गैर-साक्षरों और औपचारिक स्कूली शिक्षा से चूक गए वयस्कों की मदद के लिए भारत सरकार द्वारा पिछले साल जुलाई में अंडरस्टैंडिंग आफ लाइफलांग लर्निंग फार



एशियाई विकास बैंक • फाइल फोटो

आल इन सोसाइटी (उल्लास) की शुरुआत की गई थी। ऋणदाता के अनुसार, एडीबी की सिफारिश है कि सरकार एक रणनीतिक और बहु-हितधारक परामर्शी दृष्टिकोण अपनाए, जो भारत सरकार की नई केंद्र प्रायोजित योजना उल्लास जैसी सर्वोत्तम अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रथाओं को अपनाए।

एडीबी ने इस बात पर जोर दिया कि उल्लास योजना गुणवत्तापूर्ण

शिक्षा तक पहुंच बढ़ाने के लिए संघीय और प्रांतीय दोनों सरकारों को तत्काल सहयोग करने की आवश्यकता पर जोर देती है। भारतीय योजना का उद्देश्य न केवल मूलभूत साक्षरता प्रदान करना है, बल्कि 21वीं सदी के नागरिकों के लिए अन्य आवश्यक घटकों जैसे वित्तीय साक्षरता, डिजिटल साक्षरता, वाणिज्यिक कौशल, स्वास्थ्य देखभाल और जागरूकता सहित महत्वपूर्ण जीवन कौशल को भी शामिल करना है। यह सिफारिश एडीबी अध्यक्ष मासत्सुगु असाकावा की पाकिस्तान की यात्रा से कुछ दिन पहले आई है। एडीबी अध्यक्ष सोमवार को पाकिस्तानी हितधारकों से मुलाकात करेंगे। 5/16



# आस्ट्रेलिया का मेलबर्न विश्वविद्यालय अब देश में देगा दस्तक

जागरण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली : विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए दरवाजा खोलने के बाद दुनिया के शीर्ष विश्वविद्यालयों का देश में दस्तक देने का सिलसिला जारी है। इंग्लैंड के साउथहेम्प्टन विश्वविद्यालय के बाद आस्ट्रेलिया के प्रसिद्ध मेलबर्न विश्वविद्यालय ने भी अब देश में अपना एक केंद्र बनाने का फैसला लिया है, जो दिल्ली में स्थापित होगा। इसके जरिये विश्वविद्यालय अपनी सभी शैक्षणिक व शोध गतिविधियों को संचालित करेगा। माना जा रहा है कि विश्वविद्यालय इसी हफ्ते इसकी अधिकारिक घोषणा भी कर देगा।

मेलबर्न विश्वविद्यालय वैसे भी मौजूदा समय में क्यू रैंकिंग में आस्ट्रेलिया का नंबर एक व दुनिया

- दिल्ली में खोलेगा अपना केंद्र, सभी शैक्षणिक व शोध गतिविधियां होंगी संचालित
- दो आस्ट्रेलियाई विश्वविद्यालय पहले ही गिफ्ट सिटी में खोल चुके हैं अपना परिसर



का 13वां सर्वश्रेष्ठ संस्थान है। विश्वविद्यालय के इस फैसले से देश में दस्तक देने वाला यह चौथा विदेशी विश्वविद्यालय होगा। इससे पहले आस्ट्रेलिया के ही दो विश्वविद्यालय

## एनईपी की सिफारिश के बाद तेज हुई पहल

विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों के देश में दस्तक देने का यह सिलसिला नई राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (एनईपी) आने के बाद शुरू हुई है। इसमें विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए देश के दरवाजे खोलने की सिफारिश की गई थी। इस सिफारिश के बाद विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (यूजीसी) ने देश में परिसर खोलने वाले विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए एक नई गाइडलाइन भी तैयार की है। दुनिया के शीर्ष सौ रैंकिंग में शामिल संस्थानों को देश में परिसर खोलने की अनुमति मिलेगी। शिक्षा मंत्रालय की मानें तो इस पहल से उच्च शिक्षा के लिए हर साल देश से बड़ी संख्या में छात्रों के विदेशों में होने वाला पलायन थमेगा।

डीकिन व बोलोंगांग गुजरात के गिफ्ट सिटी में अपनी शैक्षणिक गतिविधियां शुरू कर चुके हैं। वहीं इंग्लैंड का साउथहेम्प्टन विश्वविद्यालय भी अगले साल से गुरुग्राम में अपना

परिसर शुरू करने जा रहा है। सूत्रों की मानें तो इस साल के अंत तक कुछ और विदेशी विश्वविद्यालय देश में अपनी शैक्षणिक गतिविधियों को शुरू करने का ऐलान कर सकते हैं।

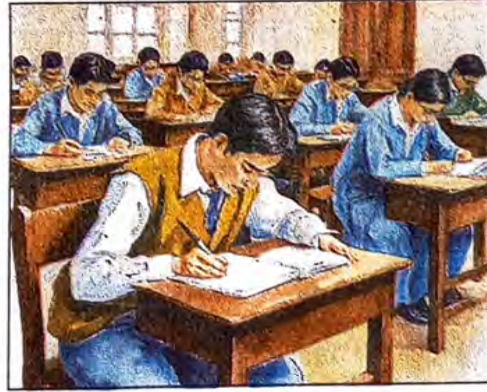
# फीस के रिफंड पर नहीं चलेगी मनमानी, माननी होगी पॉलिसी

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■ नई दिल्ली: विश्वविद्यालय अनुदायन आयोग (UGC) ने 2024-25 के लिए फीस रिफंड पॉलिसी तय की, लेकिन अभी भी कई यूनिवर्सिटीज और कॉलेज छात्रों को उनके हक का पैसा वापस नहीं कर रहे हैं। यूजीसी के पास छात्रों की शिकायतें आ रही हैं और आयोग के दखल के बाद छात्रों की फीस वापस की जा रही है। यूजीसी के अध्यक्ष प्रफेसर एम. जगदीश कुमार का कहना है कि छात्रों की हर शिकायत का तय समय सीमा में निपटारा किया जा रहा है और उनकी फीस वापस करवाई जा रही है, लेकिन शिक्षा संस्थानों को छात्रों की रिक्वेस्ट पर तय नियमों के मुताबिक फीस वापस करनी होगी।

यूजीसी कमिशन की 580वीं बैठक में 2024-25 के लिए फीस रिफंड पॉलिसी मंजूर करते हुए यह कहा गया था कि हर यूनिवर्सिटी को इस पॉलिसी के मुताबिक ही चलना होगा। अगर कोई भी छात्र एक यूनिवर्सिटी या कॉलेज से एडमिशन कैसल करवाता है और दूसरे



AI Image

■ यूजीसी अध्यक्ष ने कहा, छात्रों की रिक्वेस्ट पर यूनिवर्सिटी खुद ही कर दे फीस वापस

किसी संस्थान में माइग्रेशन लेता है तो उस स्थिति में 30 सितंबर 2024 तक आवेदन करने वाले हर छात्र की पूरी फीस लौटानी होगी। 31 अक्टूबर 2024 तक नाम वापस लेने पर प्रोसेसिंग फीस के तौर पर अधिकतम एक हजार रुपये ही काटे जा सकते हैं। जिन संस्थानों में एडमिशन प्रक्रिया 31 अक्टूबर के बाद तक भी जारी रहती है तो कम से कम 15 दिन पहले आवेदन करने वाले छात्रों की 100 फीसदी फीस वापस होगी।

**NBT**  
**Lens**

समझिए खबरों के अंदर की बात

इस वर्ष ज्यादा अहम है फीस रिफंड पॉलिसी

2024-25 में कॉमन यूनिवर्सिटी

एंट्रेस टेस्ट यानी सीयूईटी रिजल्ट देर से आया है, ऐसे में मौजूदा सेशन में फीस रिफंड पॉलिसी काफी महत्वपूर्ण है। बहुत से छात्र सीयूईटी रिजल्ट आने से पहले ही दाखिला ले चुके थे। ऐसे में कई यूनिवर्सिटीज छात्रों की फीस वापस नहीं कर रही हैं। सवाल यह है कि शिक्षा संस्थान निर्देशों की अनदेखी क्यों कर रहे? यूजीसी का कहना है कि छात्र ही शिकायत पर यूनिवर्सिटीज से संपर्क कर निर्देश दिए जा रहे हैं। यूजीसी ने यह संकेत भी दिए हैं कि निर्देशों की अनदेखी करने वाले संस्थानों के खिलाफ ऐक्शन भी लिया जा सकता है।

NBT/16

# Justice Nagarathna calls for diversity in legal profession

**Utkarsh Anand**

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**NEW DELHI:** Supreme Court judge justice BV Nagarathna on Saturday spoke on the significant challenges facing the legal profession, delivering a clarion call for reforms to ensure diversity, uphold individual responsibilities and address misconduct within the Bar.

Addressing graduates at the convocation of the National Law University in Delhi, justice Nagarathna described the current state of affairs as “disturbing”, lamenting the gender imbalance in the legal profession and the pervasive culture of irresponsibility, all of which threaten the very foundations of liberty and justice.

She lamented the lack of diversity in the legal profession, particularly in terms of gender.

“Out of 788 judges in high courts in India, only 107 are women — that’s just 13%,” noted justice Nagarathna, pointing out the systemic barriers preventing women from advancing in their careers.

This lack of representation is not limited to judges but pervades the entire legal profession, said the judge, adding that women constitute only 15% of enrolled lawyers in India and a significant number of women drop out of the profession during



**BV Nagarathna**

the prime of their careers.

The reasons for this, according to justice Nagarathna, are predominantly related to a lack of work-life balance, which women in the profession are forced to navigate. She cited a report revealing that 60% of women lawyers between the ages of 35 and 55, the peak years of their career, leave practice. Most disturbingly, only 2.04% of State Bar Council representatives are women, and the Bar Council of India has no women representatives at all, she said.

These figures, justice Nagarathna emphasised, are not mere statistics, but reflection of a deeper, systemic issue. “They represent missed opportunities, unheard voices, and important perspectives of which our legal system has been deprived.”

The judge called upon the graduates to take responsibility in changing this narrative. “As

constructive citizens, it is your responsibility to provide and create spaces for more women, in fact all genders, to actively participate in the profession without fear or hesitation,” she said.

Justice Nagarathna further took a broader look at the concept of liberty, pointing out that liberty cannot exist without a corresponding ethos of individual responsibility. “Liberty cannot persist without a corresponding ethos of individual responsibility. Being a free member of the community carries with it not just a privilege but a responsibility as well,” she reminded the graduates.

This, she explained, is deeply embedded in the ethos of the Indian Constitution, specifically in Part IV-A, which outlines the Fundamental Duties of Indian citizens. Though these duties are not enforceable by law, they are meant to guide conduct in civic and social life. Citizenship, she elaborated, is not merely a set of legal entitlements but is also predicated upon certain virtues — patience, tolerance, respect for the law, and promise-keeping. “These virtues are the lifeblood of a well-functioning democracy,” she asserted, warning that without such virtues, society risks becoming hollow, with citizenship reduced to entitlements devoid of deeper commitment.

HT/15

# Celebrating Excellence and Innovation

**O**BSERVED annually on September 15 across India, National Engineers Day, a day dedicated to recognising the critical role that engineers play in shaping the nation's infrastructure and technological landscape, not only celebrates engineers' noteworthy contributions and achievements but also commemorates the birth anniversary of Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya, a distinguished engineer, whose contributions have left an indelible mark on India's development.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The history of National Engineers Day in India is intertwined with the legacy of Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya — an Indian civil engineer, statesman and the 19th Dewan of Mysore — whose pioneering work in engineering is considered the benchmark of excellence in the field.

Born on September 15, 1861, Visvesvaraya's innovative spirit and technical expertise laid the foundation for much infrastructural advancement in India. National Engineers Day was established to honour the memory and legacy of Sir Visvesvaraya and highlight the importance of engineering in national development. It serves as a reminder of engineering's vital role in addressing contemporary challenges, from sustainable development to technological innovation.

## A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

Recipient of India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya is regarded as one of India's greatest engineers, visionaries and statesmen and renowned as the "Father of Engineering" in India. His career is marked by several notable achievements that underscore his exceptional contributions to engineering and public service. The eminent engineer of the late 19th and early 20th centuries made remarkable contributions to infrastructure and irrigation in India. Notably designing and patenting the automatic weir water floodgates installed at Khadakvasla Dam in 1903, he advanced significantly irrigation systems. His innovative designs were employed later at Tigris and KRS Dams in Gwalior and Mysore respectively.

Sir Visvesvaraya's expertise benefitted places beyond Indian borders, as evidenced by his study and

preparation of a water supply and drainage system that was successfully implemented in Yemen's Aden in the early 1900s.

He gained prominence for designing the flood protection system for Hyderabad and developing a system to safeguard Visakhapatnam port from sea erosion. Additionally, he served as the Chief Engineer for the KRS Dam in Mysore and later chaired the board of engineers for the Tungabhadra Dam in Karnataka's Hospet. As the Dewan of Mysore, Visvesvaraya spearheaded the establishment of factories and institutions funded by Maharaja Krishnaraja Wadiyar IV, significantly contributing to the overall development of the Kingdom of Mysore.

Alongside playing a key role in founding the Government Engineering College, now known as the University of Visvesvaraya College of Engineering, in Bangalore in 1917 — one of India's earliest engineering institutes — he also oversaw the commissioning of new railway lines in Mysore. He provided technical advice for the Mokama Bridge over the Ganges. Sir Visvesvaraya's legacy, marked by contributions well into his 90s, exemplifies the transformative power of enduring dedication and ingenuity.

## CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations of National Engineers Day are multifaceted, involving a range of activities — seminars, workshops, and lectures — organised by the government, educational institutions, and professional bodies.

These events provide a platform for engineers to discuss contemporary issues, share knowledge, and explore innovative solutions. These activities not only honor the contributions of Sir Visvesvaraya but also inspire the next generation of engineers to follow in his footsteps and contribute to national development.

As a celebration of the engineering profession and a tribute to Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya's extraordinary contributions, National Engineers Day in India serves as an opportunity to reflect on past engineering achievements while motivating current and future engineers to address pressing global challenges through engineering excellence, innovation and sustainable practices. *JEIS*

# Across boards & states, more Class 12 girls than ever are choosing science

**ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 14

**GIRLS ARE** closing the gap in science at the school level, with more of them opting for the stream than ever before, as is evident from an analysis of their

Class 12 Board results.

*The Indian Express* analysed data from 25 school boards between 2010 and 2023, and found that of the total students who passed their Class 12 Board exams in the science stream, 45.53% were girls — up from 38.22% in 2010. The proportion

of boys in the science stream decreased from 62% to 54% during the same period.

The trend is evident even among the total number of girls who cleared Class 12 — the share of those who studied science in this cohort went up from 31% in

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

IS/14

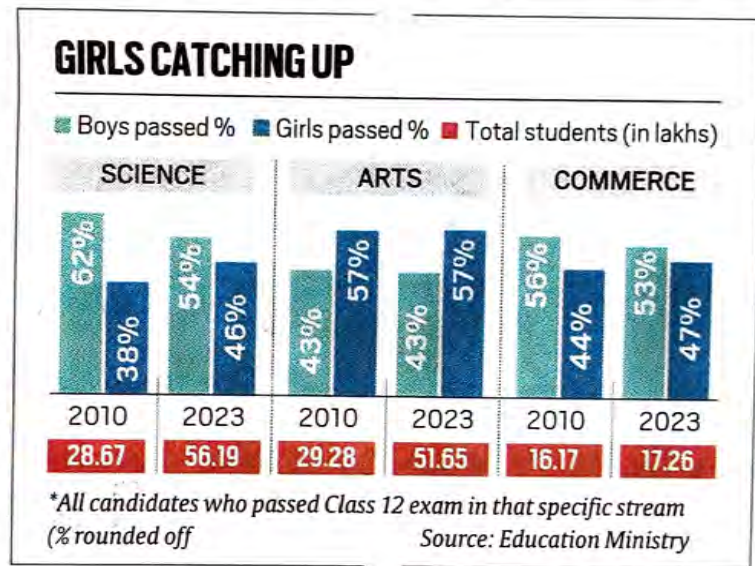
# Across boards and states, more Class 12 girls than ever choose science

2010 to 40% in 2023. During the same period, the share of girls who cleared Class 12 in the commerce stream went down from 20% to 12% and those in arts streams, went down marginally from 46% to 45%.

The findings are in line with the increasing enrolment of women in sciences in higher education, where, in fact, in many programmes, the gender gap has already closed. As per the 2021-22 All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) released earlier this year, in the science stream, out of the 57.18 lakh students enrolled at the undergraduate, postgraduate, MPhil, and PhD levels, 52.1% are women.

Unlike for science, the gender gap in the commerce and arts streams hasn't registered a big shift. For instance, in 2023, among all Class 12 students who passed the Board exams in the commerce stream, 47% were girls, up from 44% in 2010. During the same period, the proportion of boys in the commerce stream fell marginally from 56% in 2010 to 53% in 2023.

In the arts stream, where girls have traditionally dominated, their share among all students who cleared Class 12 is now 57%, while boys represent 43%. Thirteen years ago, the picture



was nearly identical (56.8% girls, 43% boys).

While nationally, 45% of students who passed with science in Class 12 were girls, there are many states where the gender gap has already closed completely. The state boards of Chhattisgarh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu saw more girls than boys clearing Class 12 in the science stream in 2023.

The state board with the largest share of girls in the science stream in 2023 was Chhattisgarh — 63.25% of those

who cleared Class 12 were girls — a big jump from 39.18% in 2010. A significant rise was also seen in the state boards of Madhya Pradesh (from 34.42% in 2010 to 50.89% in 2023) and Nagaland (from 39.04% in 2010 to 46.64% in 2023).

While the central boards — CBSE and ICSE — too have been recording a rise in the share of girls clearing Class 12 in the science stream, their numbers are slightly lower than the all-India figure of around 46%. While in CBSE, 42.64% of those who cleared their Class 12 in science subjects in 2023 were girls (up from 37.91% in 2010), in ICSE,

their share rose from 39.41% in 2010 to 43.85%.

The Indian Express analysed data from 2010 to 2023 since it was from 2010 that the Education Ministry started collecting state-wise data for Board results. The Indian Express also analysed Class 10 Board exam results and found that more students are now scoring over 60%.

Out of 20 board examinations analysed for both 2023 and 2007, 19 recorded an increase in the percentage of students scoring 60% or more last year.

The only exception was the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, where the percentage of students scoring 60% or more in Class 10 fell from 25.25% in 2007 to 15.29% in 2023.

Out of the 20 examination boards for which data was available in the Education Ministry's report for 2007, the Himachal Pradesh Board of School Education saw the highest rise of around 67 percentage points. This was followed by the Nagaland Board of School Education with an increase of around 53 percentage points, and the Uttar Pradesh State board (Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad) with a rise of around 48 percentage points. *SE/14*

# KIIT Annual Convocation: Youth leading nation's transformation, says Odisha Governor

**BHUBANESWAR:** "The country is going through both a challenging and exciting phase. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set the vision of transforming the country into 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. It is estimated that Bharat will become the 3rd largest economy of the world by 2030," said Raghubar Das, Governor of Odisha, while addressing the Batch of 2024 at the 20th Annual Convocation of KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, on Saturday. Students of KIIT have excelled not only academically but also in sports, he noted,

highlighting that many students from the institute have participated in the Olympics, making the country proud. "Dr. Achyuta Samanta has done unparalleled work in establishing such an institute of professional and higher education. He has effectively used education as a tool for empowerment, helping underprivileged people integrate into the mainstream of society", Das stated. The Governor said, "Today youth are leading the change in the country. They are playing a leading role in innovation and start-ups. India is among the top



three countries of the world in the startup ecosystem. They are making unicorns and providing opportunities to lakhs of people. Our youth are not only shaping their career; they are also shaping the country's future. Instead of job seekers, they are becom-

ing job givers". In her convocation address, delivered virtually, Oleksandra Matviichuk, Nobel Peace Laureate (2022), Ukraine said that KIIT has become one of the most prominent institutions in India and globally in a short time. "Achyuta Samanta's example in building institutions and his efforts in reducing inequalities remind me of one simple truth - ordinary people have much more impact than they can even imagine. Ordinary people can do extraordinary things", she stated. On the occasion, KIIT-DU

conferred Honoris Causa D.Sc. and D.Litt. Degrees upon four eminent persons from different walks of life. Dr. D. Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman, Asian Institute of Gastroenterology & AIG Hospitals, was conferred Honoris Causa D.Sc. Degree, while Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathy, Eminent Writer, Spiritual Thinker, and Humanitarian; Kishor Patil, Co-Founder, MD & CEO, KPIT Technologies Ltd; and Ashirbad Behera, Hony. Secretary, Odisha Athletics Association & Football Association of Odisha were honoured with Honoris Causa D.Litt.

Degrees. They were honoured for their pioneering contributions in the fields of health, spiritualism, business, and sports respectively. Expressing gratitude for the honour, Dr. Reddy, in his acceptance remarks, said that KIIT serves as an exemplary model of giving back to society. Dr. Samanta has instilled a sense of hope in marginalised communities who once never dared to dream, stated Dr. Satpathy. Patil remarked that India has the potential to become a global hub for core technology and research. Behera ded-

icated the honor to the sports fraternity. As many as 7283 students received degrees at the convocation ceremony. These include 5455 Bachelors, 1597 Masters, and 186 Ph.D. degrees. Congratulating the batch of 2024 for their outstanding performance, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS exhorted students to take risks, fail, learn, and rise. "Always keep in mind the 3 I's: Idea, Innovation, and Impact. These three will shape your future and the world around you," he told students in his message. MPOST

# Ask states to implement exam reforms, NCERT urges Centre

## Plea comes amid differences over NEP implementation

**AMRITA MADHUKALYA**  
NEW DELHI, DHNS

**W**eeks after it introduced a new evaluation system with different weightage methods, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has written to the Union education ministry urging it to write to state governments to implement the recommendations that are laid down in consonance with the National Education Policy.

Some of these reforms include removing board exams in the 9, 10 and 11 standards so that the marks obtained there are used to evaluate the results in the 12th standard.

In all, there are 59 school boards for senior and senior secondary education countrywide, including three na-

tional-level boards like the CBSE and ICSE.

The NCERT's letter comes even as the ministry of education and the Tamil Nadu government is in the midst of a confrontation over the implementation of the recommendations of the NEP.

Amidst the tug-of-war between states ruled by the opposition parties and the Centre, there are some of the state boards that are open to implementing these reforms, but they need a notification from the state government. To this end, the Centre will have to write to the state issuing the notification, the NCERT has written in its letter.

The report, titled 'Establishing Equivalence across Education Boards', was submitted by PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review

and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), a regulatory body under the NCERT.

Among the recommendations is that state boards divide the academic year into two terms, and that the 'weightage of formative and summative' marks will be adjusted progressively from class 9 to class 12, with increasing emphasis on summative assessment.

As per the reform, the evaluation in class 12 will include 15% from class 9, 20% from class 10, 25% from class 11 and 40% from class 12.

The PARAKH report also pointed at variation in performance of students not only across state boards, but even within the boards.

Many Opposition-ruled states have refused to implement the NEP, and some of these states including TN, Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal. A report has since emerged that the Centre has withheld funds to these states despite their better parameters. Consequently, Delhi and Punjab agreed to implement them.



# NMC's revised guidelines for MBBS curriculum still has deficiencies, say activists

**Bindu Shajan Perappadan**  
NEW DELHI

The National Medical Commission has reissued the Competency-Based Medical Education Curriculum (CBME-2024) guidelines for MBBS students.

Last month, the NMC withdrew the guidelines following protests by transgender and disability rights groups. The revised version too has come under fire. Activists said the 466-word document had no mention of key terms such as “dignity” and “transgender”. They have now written to all stakeholders demanding immediate revision of the guidelines.

Satendra Singh, a disability rights activist, said while eight hours has been dedicated to “sports” in

**Rights groups want the reintroduction of the mandatory hours on disability competencies**

the two-week foundation course, there is no explicit mention of disability competencies that were mandatory in the 2019 curriculum (seven hours).

Psychiatry continues to refer to “gender identity disorders” and physiology describes sexual differentiation or intersex variations as “abnormalities”. Furthermore, paediatrics fails to address gender incongruence, dysphoria, or non-heterosexual orientations.

He further added that the subjects focus solely on the management of “dis-

ability” without acknowledging diversity. The revised document has dropped “lesbianism”, “sodomy”, and other such terms from the MBBS syllabus.

In the new syllabus, the medical body has included topics related to the histories of gender, and sexuality-based identities and rights in India, as well as the decriminalisation of adultery and consensual adult homosexual behaviour.

Disability and transgender rights groups have demanded the reintroduction of the mandatory hours on disability competencies, introduce provisions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and the Transgender Persons Protection Act, 2019 in the curriculum of ethics.

# Delhiwale

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## Anglo Arabic Sr Secondary is here

The Walled City dictionary

**PUBLIC  
INTEREST**

As part of our 'Walled City dictionary' series, that is chronicling every significant Old Delhi place.

When stone is sewn into air, the two elements unite to become a jaali. Such a lattice screen makes a heavy structure look light, as if a strong breeze might lift the structure into the sky at a moment's notice.

Some of the Capital's most exquisite jaalis lie preserved inside a Walled City school, where they frame the boundary of a centuries-old grave chamber.

Delhi's oldest surviving educational institution, Anglo Arabic Senior Secondary School is a world of red sandstones and lakhori bricks, arched doorways and miniature chhatris. (One door has its wooden exterior etched into flowers.) It was also the subject of a scholarly book published two years ago by Oxford University Press—*The School at Ajmeri Gate: Delhi's Educational Legacy*.

This afternoon, the school is teeming with hyperactive life. "Mister Sufiyan" and "Miss Javeria," both Class 12 students, are playing badminton near the principal's office, while others are involved in the customary school-hour action.

The large premises is full of grand trees, including two chir pines, rare in Delhi. A two-storey edifice in the corner, partly raided by a dense green

vine, is invoking a kind of magic-realism encountered in the novels of García Márquez and Isabelle Allende. Talking of literature, printed flyers are plastered on the school walls asking students to "submit their stories, poems, essays in Urdu & Hindi to Mr. Mohd Imran, and in English to Mrs. Saba Rehman... write-ups should be original."

The centrepiece of the school's architectural history is the red sandstone mosque. It was built by Ghaziuddin Khan, who founded the school as a madrasa in 1692 (he was the father of Hyderabad's first nizam).

The aforementioned tomb chamber, surrounded by the gossamer-like jaali, happens to be Ghaziuddin's resting place, and lies just beside the mosque. This stone enclosure overlooks the windows of class 10-B (very friendly but very noisy boys!) See photo.

The school's most impressionistic portion is a long corridor embellished with a series of smoothly sculpted arches. These graceful arches give a peculiar character to the corridor, permeating it with a vague sense of retrospection. As if the air inside is mournfully remembering the school's past, perhaps desiring the resurrection of... of men like Yunus Jaffrey, Naseem Changezi, Haji Miyan Faiyazuddin and Abdul Sattar. These departed figures were among Old Delhi's most illustrious Purani Dilli wale, and they all were Anglo Arabic's "old boys."



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# Hindi, and its role in the unified future of India

**H**indi Divas (Hindi Day), observed every year on September 14, calls for a reflection on the language's journey from adoption as the official language of the Union in 1949 to what it is today and what it is going to be tomorrow.

Today, Hindi has the fourth-largest speech community in the world. It is commonly spoken in ten states and three Union Territories. As per the 2011 Census, Hindi has 55 distinct varieties, and some of these may have their own dialects. The varieties differ mostly in the use of verb-forms — for example, *kha rahi hai* (Hindi), *kha-wathe* (Chhattisgarh), *khaiche* (Bajjika), *khatari* (Bhojपुर), *khane* (Kumauni) and *khave hai* (Rajasthan-Jodhpuri). Hindi and its varieties have a preponderance of Sanskrit vocabulary in primary or derived forms. Mutual intelligibility across Hindi's varieties and with other major languages of India stems from the fact that Indian languages have either evolved from Sanskrit or are heavily influenced by it. The Hindi-Urdu speech community is the third-largest globally (after Mandarin and English). Many countries now have sizeable Hindi-speaking populations, making it an international language.

This journey has not been without problems. In a culturally and linguistically diverse country, arriving at a consensus is not always easy. The Constituent Assembly showed remarkable vision in adopting Hindi with the

Devanagari script as official language of the Union. This showed India's true national character as many non-Hindi leaders supported Hindi for independent India. However, continuing with English as an official language indefinitely has not been without controversy. The 22 major languages listed in the Schedule VIII include languages from the Indo Aryan (15), Dravidian (4), Tibeto-Burman (2) and Austro Asiatic (1) families. A classification of our languages on the basis of five *prakrits* would have made more sense.

Since English posed tough competition, the government took several measures to enrich Hindi and promote its use in administration and education. The Central Hindi Directorate (CHD) was established in 1960 to promote Hindi in non-Hindi regions. The Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology (CSTT) was established in 1961 to

develop technical terminologies and content so that education and administration could happen through Indian languages. In 1967, the Central Hindi Committee (CHC) was set up. In 1971, the Central Hindi Translation Bureau was set up, followed by the department of official language (DOL) in 1975 to coordinate efforts for the development of Hindi. The Committee of Parliament on Official Language (CPOL) was constituted in 1976. The Central Hindi Training Institute was set up in 1985 to continuously train and facilitate the government officials/staff in using Hindi.



Girish  
Nath Jha



Hindi has the fourth-largest speech community in the world

HT ARCHIVE

The Centre's efforts are coordinated by the DOL. Among the activities led by DOL, the meetings of the CPOL led by the home minister are perhaps the most important. This committee reviews the progress made in the use of Hindi in the official domain and recommends measures to the President for promotion and enrichment of Hindi. The DOL also coordinates the efforts of the Nagar Rajbhasha Karyanvan Samitis and implementation by the government offices/institutions, to monitor Hindi's progress in official use. The development of necessary software tools like *Kanthastha*, a machine translation system, has been a remarkable achievement. Integration of *Kanthastha* with e-office is another initiative to facilitate the use of Hindi in government offices. LILA-Rajbhasha by CDAC facilitates Hindi-learning through 14 other Indian languages. The credit goes to the DOL for also leading the work on preparation of an online Hindi dictionary called *Hindi Shabd Sindhu*, an all-inclusive relational database of Hindi including words from various domains, dialects and other major Indian languages making it a truly *sarva samaveshti* Hindi kosha.

This *kosha* has more than 400,000 headwords and is equipped with an automatic speech recognition. The DOL has been periodically equipping its officers and staff in using Hindi in offices using digital tools.

To popularise Hindi and recognise the efforts to promote Hindi, the DOL organises the annual Hindi Divas celebrations and has been organising the Akhili Bharatiya Rajbhasha Sannelan since 2021. Rajbhasha Gaurav and Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar Yojanas by DOL are two popular schemes to promote writing in Hindi.

Hindi has been a popular language in the digital world. Though it ranks very low in its share of websites, it is the fourth most-used language on YouTube. The rise of Indian language users on the internet has also put pressure on software developers to develop tools. The tools from CDAC, Google (Google Assistant, Google Translate), Microsoft (Bing Translator), Microsoft-Swiftkey (mobile keyboard), and Amazon Alexa, among others, have facilitated Hindi, but more efforts are needed in the digital space. The online *shabd-sindhu* by DOL and searchable glossaries by CSTT are going to become more important in the future.

The forward march of Hindi has been impressive. It has to continue progressing with inclusiveness so that it is truly *sarva samaveshti*, for the unified and inclusive future of India. On the Artificial Intelligence (AI) front, there is a need to exercise some caution. Implementing AI solutions in a diverse nation as ours has been a challenge for various reasons. However, the current pace of efforts will go a long way in ensuring the suitable implementation of AI for Hindi and other languages.

Girish Nath Jha is chairman, Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology. The views expressed are personal

HT/14/8

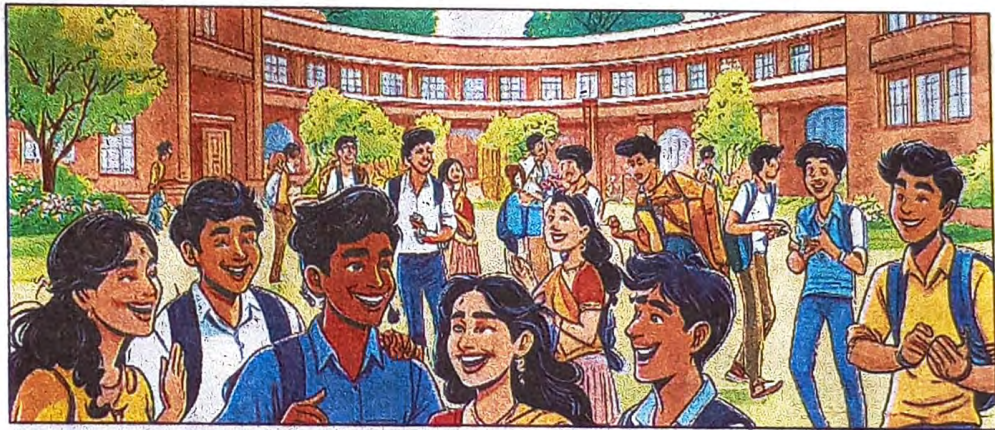
# यूजीसी बोला, 'टोबैको फ्री कैम्पस' से जुड़ी गाइडलाइंस सख्ती से लागू करें

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■ नई दिल्ली : विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (UGC) देश भर के सभी शिक्षा संस्थानों को सख्त हिदायत देते हुए कहा है कि टोबैको फ्री कैम्पस के लिए लागू गाइडलाइंस का शत प्रतिशत पालन होना चाहिए। कैम्पस में तंबाकू का किसी भी रूप में इस्तेमाल नहीं होना चाहिए। कैम्पस के आसपास तंबाकू उत्पादों की बिक्री पर लगी रोक को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए भी कड़े कदम उठाए जाने चाहिए। यूजीसी ने 11 सितंबर को सभी यूनिवर्सिटीज के वाइस चांसलर और कॉलेजों के प्रिंसिपल्स को लिखा है कि युवाओं में तंबाकू की लत बड़ी चिंता का विषय है। शिक्षा संस्थानों की जिम्मेदारी है कि वह इस समस्या को दूर करने की दिशा में तय किए गए हर नियम को सख्ती से लागू करें। छात्रों के बीच ई-सिगरेट के बढ़ते प्रचलन पर भी यूजीसी ने चिंता जताई है।

**20 साल से कम उम्र में लगी लत ताउम्र रहती है :** यूजीसी ने ग्लोबल यूथ टोबैको सर्वे (GYTS) 2019 का उदाहरण देते हुए कहा है कि 13 से 15 वर्ष की आयु के 8.5% स्टूडेंट्स अलग-अलग तरीकों से तंबाकू प्रोडक्ट्स का इस्तेमाल



**NBT**  
**Lens**

समझिए खबरों के  
अंदर की बात

## आखिर कैसे निकलेगा समस्या का हल?

शिक्षण संस्थानों में तंबाकू के प्रयोग पर रोक पहले से लागू है, बावजूद इसके स्टूडेंट्स को कैम्पस और हॉस्टल में ई-सिगरेट और तंबाकू प्रोडक्ट्स आसानी से मिल जाते हैं। विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि केवल यूजीसी के लिखने से उद्देश्य पूरा नहीं होगा, जब तक यूनिवर्सिटी-कॉलेज अपनी जिम्मेदारी ठीक से नहीं निभाएंगे, तब तक यह समस्या बनी रहेगी। यूजीसी के सज्ञान में आया है कि ऑनलाइन स्टोर्स व लोकल वेडर्स के जरिए ई सिगरेट मिल जाती है। स्टेशनरी स्टोर्स की मिलीभगत से भी छात्रों को ई-सिगरेट मिल जाती है।

करते हैं। 5500 से ज्यादा बच्चों को हर साल तंबाकू की लत लगती है। सर्वे में सामने आया था कि भारत में करीब 14% स्टूडेंट्स (13-15 वर्ष) तंबाकू के आदी हो गए थे। इसके बाद से शिक्षा संस्थानों में मुहिम चली और कुछ असर भी देखने को

मिला। लेकिन स्टूडेंट्स द्वारा तंबाकू यूज करना अभी भी चिंता का विषय है। इस सर्वे में दावा किया गया कि 20 साल से कम उम्र में तंबाकू सेवन की शुरुआत करने वाले ज्यादातर लोग ताउम्र इसके आदी हो जाते हैं।

NBT/14