



Merchants' Chamber  
of Commerce & Industry

# MCCI Education Forum 2019

Indian Higher Education:  
Bridging the Skill Gap



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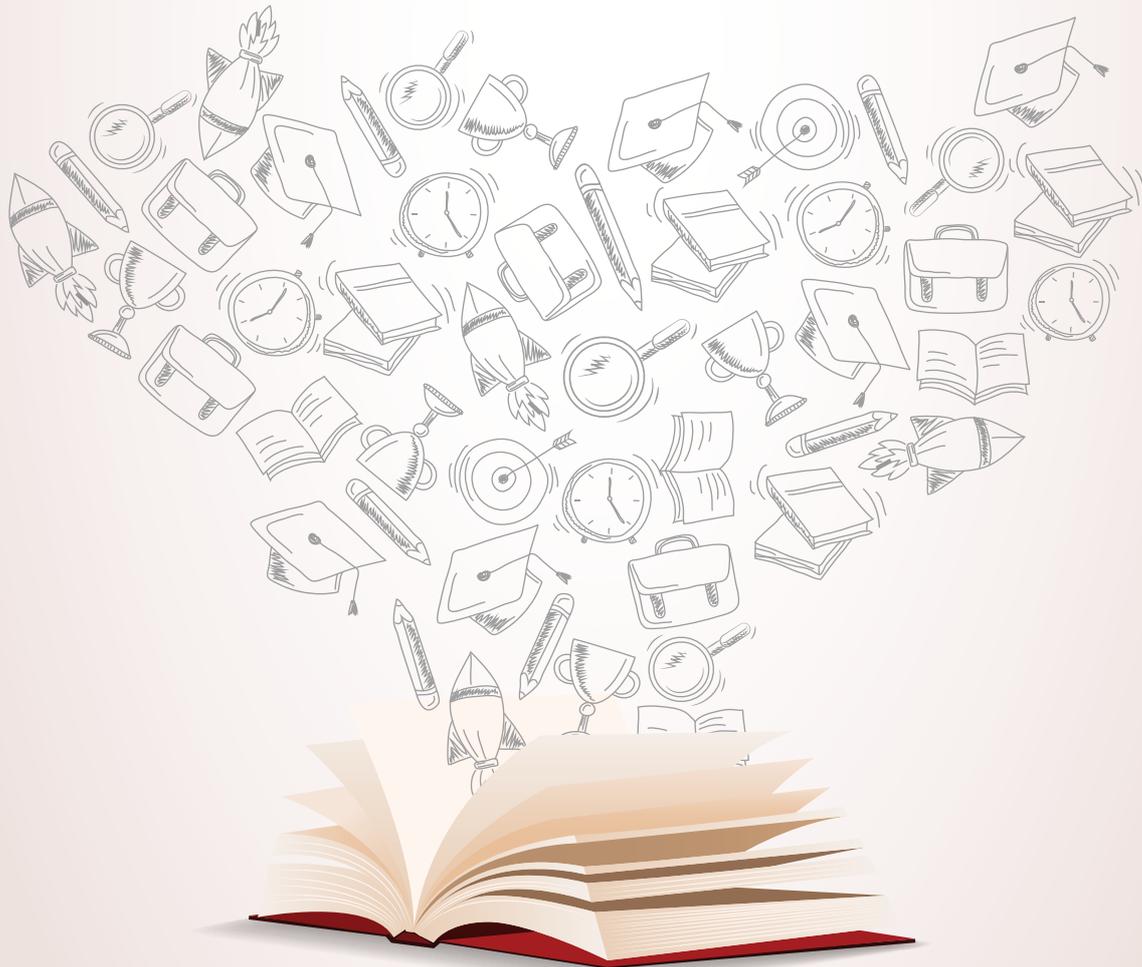
Wednesday, 6 November 2019  
at Hotel Hindusthan International, Kolkata

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The MCCI Education Forum 2019 was organized with prominent academicians with an aim to trigger meaningful deliberations on the education sector. The current trends and outlook for the education sector were also deliberated upon.

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Wednesday,  
6 November 2019  
at HHI, Kolkata

# MCCI Education Forum 2019

## 'Indian Higher Education: Bridging the Skill Gap'

A Report



(L to R) Prof. Dipankar Dey, Visiting Professor, Management Department, Calcutta University, Seema Sapru, Principal, The Heritage School, Kolkata, Prof. (Dr.) Suman Kumar Mukerjee, Director General, The Bhawanipur Education Society College, Prof. (Dr.) Prasanta Kumar Das, Dean, Postgraduate Studies & Research and Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Kharagpur, Prof. (Dr.) J. N. Mukhopadhyaya, Director, Department of Management, J D Birla Institute and John Rafi, Principal, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata

### Opening Session:

### 'Higher Education: Bridging the Skill Gap'

#### The speakers at the Opening Session were

- ◆ Speaker & Moderator: **Prof. (Dr.) Suman Kumar Mukerjee**, Director General, The Bhawanipur Education Society College
- ◆ **Prof. (Dr.) Prasanta Kumar Das**, Dean, Postgraduate Studies & Research and Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Kharagpur
- ◆ **Prof. (Dr.) J. N. Mukhopadhyaya**, Director, Department of Management, J D Birla Institute
- ◆ **Ms. Seema Sapru**, Principal, The Heritage School, Kolkata
- ◆ **Mr. John Rafi**, Principal, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata
- ◆ **Prof. Dipankar Dey**, Visiting Professor, Management Department, Calcutta University



Prof. (Dr.) Suman Kumar Mukerjee, Director General, The Bhawanipur Education Society College

**Prof. (Dr.) Suman Kumar Mukerjee**, Director General, The Bhawanipur Education Society College said that much earlier education was esoteric enlightenment. In the next phase,

education was intended to produce gentlemen. Later, education was for the balanced wheel of society. Then education became universal. Now, we realise that education is in the cloud.

The purpose of education is to produce a good human being. If education is about creating a good human being, then why is India so corrupt? Education is intended to generate caring for others and it is meant to further the frontier of general knowledge. Education must lead to acquisition of skills, so that students become employable.

Indians settled in the US have been awarded the Nobel Prize. Then why are people of Indian origin getting the Nobel Prize but not Indians? Similarly, not that many inventions have taken place in India. So, general knowledge is not home grown today and in fact, we are borrowing knowledge from Western countries. An important issue is whether education will further mobility of labour.

Tutorials can be blamed for grooming students in a way that they can anticipate questions, thus killing ingenuity and thirst for knowledge. This is why IITs have not been able to produce a Nobel laureate.



*Seema Sapru, Principal, The Heritage School, Kolkata*

**Ms. Seema Sapru**, Principal, The Heritage School, Kolkata said that educators must create an inclusive society. We nurture children so that they are ready for college. Children at The Heritage School are being taught the following

- **Active listening** is important as today many children are preparing their answer and not listening.
- **Effective communication** as there must be

clarity in what we say.

- **Conflict resolution** as children must be taught to think independently for a solution.
- **Waiting for my turn.** Children must be taught to wait.
- **Taking instructions.** Unfortunately, today many parents have become subservient to children.
- **Plagiarism** – Children must be taught the difference between copying, plagiarism and inspiration. Kids must be taught to acknowledge the ownership of others. Children must give credit to the person who inspires.
- **Vitamin N** – Children are not used to hearing No. Parents and teachers must say No to children.
- Children must be taught to complete assignments in a **timely** manner and meet deadlines. Children must be told that someone else will not clear their mess.



*Prof. (Dr.) Prasanta Kumar Das, Dean, Postgraduate Studies & Research and Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Kharagpur*

**Prof. (Dr.) Prasanta Kumar Das**, Dean, Postgraduate Studies & Research and Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Kharagpur said that IIT Kharagpur is facing the same limitations faced by other institutions. He is dealing with cases of plagiarism. One IIT student recently went to a German University which has complained about plagiarism. Students need to be sensitised to plagiarism which is not happening at many institutions.

The single child syndrome is leading parents to tell their children that they must be successful in university entrance examinations by hook or by

crook. Coaching centres are only teaching children how to solve a problem by any means. So, proper ethical training is not taking place. Consequently, college students lack the analytical skills with which they can bring laurels to the nation.

Prof. Das has trained about 30 PhD students who mostly end up in teaching jobs in India and they are unable to find openings in industry. Those who go abroad find good jobs. So, where is the Indian system failing? In the words of Tagore, it is the shortcoming of both you and mine.

ISRO has huge achievements. Its first mission took place on a lower budget than some Hollywood science fiction movies. ISRO has been successful by creating an ecosystem in its area.

With regard to innovation in higher education, innovation is not something that is earth shattering and which will be awarded the Nobel Prize. Innovation is where research and results are known. Innovation is used to create wealth.

With digital conversion, even a common man can be empowered with a lot power by using technology.



*Prof. Dipankar Dey, Visiting Professor, Management Department, Calcutta University*

**Prof. Dipankar Dey**, Visiting Professor, Management Department, Calcutta University said that India has developed a dual society. In the first one, the country has no control over the general knowledge. In other words, in formal education, the general knowledge is not controlled by us. The second system, or the 'karigar' economy consists of those who are independent of others. 70 p.c. to 80 p.c. of our economy is in the informal sector or 'karigar' economy. India should bridge the gap between the

'karigar' economy and the 'indigo economy'. India should adopt 'bare feet managers'.

There is a debate on India's not joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). India did not have the courage to join the trade block as it lacks competitive advantage over other nations. Even after 70 years of Independence, India has an edge in very few product categories. India is not producing apps on its own operating system. It may be surmised that the country has not produced useful workers. Our best brains are working for MNCs. The culture of memorising things continues from the past. Today, teachers see the length of an answer before giving marks. If we do not inculcate the habit of asking, we will not be able to solve problems.



*Prof. (Dr.) J. N. Mukhopadhyaya, Director, Department of Management, J D Birla Institute*

**Prof. (Dr.) J. N. Mukhopadhyaya**, Director, Department of Management, J D Birla Institute said that we are currently experiencing the fourth industrial revolution. The earlier revolutions were the steam powered engine, the electric engine and then computers.

JDBI realises that we need to shift from job seekers to job creators. Hence, it is promoting entrepreneurship. There is exponential change in the economy and blue chip companies such as Kodak have become obsolete. With IoT, we need things that are inter connected.

The factories of the future will not have workers. Instead factories will be taken over by robots with machines talking to each other.

There is in general a huge demand for skilled workers which is unfulfilled. Today, it is difficult to find a good driver, plumber, electrician, etc. We are

unable to fill job vacancies with people with the right skills. The country needs a degree that can be called Bachelor of Vocational Courses, which is a mix of knowledge and skills.

The integration of technology with management skills is necessary. Lean manufacturing is necessary. Innovation must be frugal innovation and not expensive innovation.

Two travel agencies, namely Thomas Cook and Cox & Kings have closed down. This points to the need for ethical businesses.

In the last 50 years, we have seen a paradigm shift to Artificial Intelligence and machine learning. At the same time, we also understand that not everyone is brilliant. So, skilled workers, such as carpenters, plumbers and electricians, must be respected which will bridge the skill gap.

This is the age of continuous learning. One must continue to learn even after one has gotten a degree and digital learning can help. In other words, we need to continuously upgrade our skills in order to stay relevant. Among other problems, India is suffering from a shortage of motivated teachers.



*John Rafi, Principal, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata*

**Mr. John Rafi**, Principal, La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata said that Orissa has used Tata STRIVE for developing soft skills and Tech Mahindra to develop hard skills. We are seeing integration of technical and management sides.

India has many unemployed youth and many job vacancies. One of the biggest problems is the **skills gap**. A huge disparity exists between the required skill set and the skill set the candidate actually possesses. The Skill Gap means a shortage

of appropriately skilled labour. According to the latest India Skill Report (2019), only 45.6 p.c. of the youth graduating from educational institutions are employable. Students are now being trained for jobs that do not exist anymore. Today, we have a growing skills gap.

The major problem facing India today is unemployment. The country has 260 million under-employed or unemployed people in the age group of 18 to 50 years. The skill base of the Indian economy is low. Only 2 p.c. of the youth in the age group 18 to 29 years receive formal vocational training. The problem will only increase in the years to come.

What should a skill set include? A 'skills set' should ideally include niche and creative domains. Futuristic skills are the need of the hour.

What are the most desirable soft skills that companies are looking for? The most desirable soft skills are creativity, collaboration, adaptability and time management.

What are the top five skills in demand? These are communication skills, ability to work in a team, problem solving skills, leadership skills and a strong work ethic.

What are the most desirable hard skills that companies are looking for? These are cloud computing, analytical reasoning, people management, sales leadership, animation skills, business analysis, journalism, competitive strategies and computer graphics.

The challenges include

- new technologies
- ever-changing skills requirements
- outdated curricula

It is imperative to

- develop applied, research-based education
- rethink higher education curricula
- refine existing strategies
- embrace improved technologies
- keep pace with evolving digitalisation

It is time that educators and policymakers re-think course content and curricula to make it more innovative, less obsolete and more relevant.



*Lighting of the lamp (L to R) Vishal Jhajharia, President, MCCI, Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal, Sudesh Dhankhar, Taranjit Singh, Co-Chairman, Standing Committee on Education & Skill Development, MCCI and Prof. Anju Seth, Director, IIM Calcutta*

## Special Session: 'Education in India: Way Ahead'

### The participants at the Special Session were

- ◆ Welcome Address by **Mr. Vishal Jhajharia**, President, MCCI
- ◆ **Prof. (Dr.) Chiranjib Bhattacharjee**, Pro Vice Chancellor, Jadavpur University
- ◆ **Rev. Dr. J. Felix Raj**, S.J., Vice Chancellor, St. Xavier's University, Kolkata
- ◆ **Prof. Anju Seth**, Director, IIM Calcutta
- ◆ Address by Chief Guest: **Mr. Jagdeep Dhankhar**, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal
- ◆ Vote of Thanks by **Mr. Simarpreet Singh**, Director, JIS Group
- ◆ Mrs. Sudesh Dhankhar and Mr. Taranjit Singh, Co-Chairman, Standing Committee on Education & Skill Development, MCCI were present on the dais

**Mr. Vishal Jhajharia**, President, MCCI in his welcome address said that India has the demographic edge - a young talent pool. There is no doubt that India's higher education sector has supplied some of the world's best talent including Nobel laureates. The CEOs of some of the biggest Fortune 500 companies like Microsoft, Google, MasterCard and Adobe are the products of the Indian higher education system. As per QS India Rankings 2020, IIT Bombay tops in the list, while Calcutta University topped among the state-run universities. Calcutta University has secured the 11th spot in QS India Rank 2020 followed by Jadavpur University at 12. But creating only one or two centres of excellence will not be able to address the problems in higher education in India. Moreover, the factors like low-quality education in most of the colleges, out-dated syllabi, lack



*Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal addressing the gathering. Seated (L to R) Souvik Banerjee, DG, MCCI, Prof. Anju Seth, Director, IIM Calcutta, Vishal Jhajharia, President, MCCI, Sudesh Dhankhar, Rev. Dr. J. Felix Raj, S.J., Vice Chancellor, St. Xavier's University, Kolkata, Prof. (Dr.) Chiranjib Bhattacharjee, Pro Vice Chancellor, Jadavpur University and Taranjit Singh, Co-Chairman, Standing Committee on Education & Skill Development, MCCI*

of adequate faculty members and discipline in the college campuses, excessive political and bureaucratic interference are reportedly encouraging the huge exodus of students from West Bengal to the select southern and northern Universities where the quality of education and environment are decidedly better.

Our higher education landscape has expanded over the past decade - from 436 universities in 2009–10 to 993 Universities, 39,931 Colleges and 10,725 Stand Alone Institutions as per All India Higher Education Survey 2018-19. Total enrolment in higher education is estimated to be 37.4 million. Females constitute 48.6 p.c. of the total enrolment. Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education in India is 26.3 p.c. Student enrolment, is the third-largest in the world, next to China and the United States. Coupled with spreading urbanization and rising income levels, the demand for higher education is likely to touch new pinnacles of growth. Concurrently, Indian economy will also surge at a rapid pace while factors such as need for rapid industrialization would require a workforce of 250 million by 2030.

In the post-industrial era, the skill sets once obtained in college or university served



*Vishal Jhajharia, President, MCCI*

an engineer throughout his career. However, over time, the shelf-life of skills has declined. Educational institutions, unfortunately, have not kept up with these changes. In case of professional education, the supply gap is being met to a large extent by private institutions mostly with poor quality, inadequate infrastructure and faculty resources. The significant skill gap has been brought out repeatedly by National Employability Report conducted by Job-Skill Matching Platform, Aspiring Minds. Their 2019 employability report has found that over 80 p.c. of engineers in India are unemployable as they lack the technological skills

required by employers now. It is observed that a low proportion of engineers take up projects beyond curriculum and do internships. Further, there is lack of faculty talking about industry application of concepts in class or students getting exposure through industry talks. A recent Deloitte report also identified that in 79.7 p.c. institutions there is lack of quality faculty and 78.3 p.c. graduates are suffering due to lack of skill sets required for their employability. Therefore, a well-structured and sufficiently reformed higher education system need be in place, so that India can emerge as a global supplier of skilled manpower.

At present we have developed capacity to export in sectors like Pharmaceuticals & IT because only our 'first boys' and 'first girls' dominate these sectors. In the Auto sector we have developed expertise due to automation support. Japan and China have expertise in 4,000 items because of trained and educated labour. So to achieve and compete we have to develop such trained and industry-friendly labour force. Uneducated, untrained and half-fed labour cannot bring an industrial revolution.

Management education is also going through dramatic changes. It has so long focused on turning out professional managers for large enterprises, particularly manufacturing. It has now changed in at least two dimensions. The pass-outs are starting their own ventures and hence, the curriculum should focus on this new aspect. Secondly, many industries have moved away from manufacturing to services, thus calling on the Institutes to deal with not only manufacturing business but also understanding customers' needs, leading knowledge workers and delivering high quality services. Alongside, to promote sustainable economic growth, start-ups should be encouraged among the students of management institutions apart from job orientation.

**Prof. (Dr.) Chiranjib Bhattacharjee**, Pro Vice Chancellor, Jadavpur University said that education is important for economic development. Even in ancient times, education was important in India as exemplified by Nalanda and Taxila.

The Government of India's Atal Tinkering Labs in schools and Atal Incubation Centers were novel ideas. A target to train all teachers by 2020



*Prof. (Dr.) Chiranjib Bhattacharjee, Pro Vice Chancellor, Jadavpur University*

has been introduced by Government of India. The challenge is in both quality and quantity in higher education.

Jadavpur University was one of the Universities studied under the **Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan** (RUSA). RUSA focuses on equity and excellence in higher education and it promotes entrepreneurship. Jadavpur University has received a Rs. 100 crore grant under RUSA on a funding ratio of 60 : 40 between the Central and State Government. The University has already received Rs. 42 crores in RUSA funding. (Note: RUSA aims to work with 300-plus state universities and its affiliated colleges to raise the bar of campus life. Launched in 2013, the RUSA aims at providing strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions. The central funding (in the ratio of 60:40 for general category states) is based on norms and is outcome dependent. RUSA places greater emphasis on the improvement of the quality of teaching-learning processes in order to produce employable and competitive graduates, post-graduates and PhDs. The programme draws upon the best practices of colleges and universities across the nation.)

Jadavpur University has set up an **Idea Incubation Centre** under RUSA with a Start-up Cell and a Entrepreneurship Development Cell. The University has established an **Institute Innovation Council** as per suggestion by AICTE.

Jadavpur University is benefiting from the **Technology, Education & Quality Improvement Programme** which is funded by World Bank. The thrust is on entrepreneurship and incubation.

Entrepreneurship and incubation are thrust areas for Jadavpur University. Societal benefit is of concern for educators. One of the major areas of emphasis is **outcome based education** (OBE) and education has been quantified by objectives. About 20 countries have signed the Washington Accord in OBE and India signed on 13 June 2014. OBE has been introduced in 14 out of 16 engineering departments at Jadavpur University. The University seeks to streamline education in engineering.

There was a debate at Jadavpur University whether it should participate in **Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)** launched by Ministry of HRD to foster culture of innovation in Higher Education Institutions. While the University did not participate in the current year, it will participate from next year.

The Government of India has launched **Revitalising Infrastructure & Systems in Education (RISE)** to increase investment in research and related infrastructure in education institutions. It will make an investment in next four years and funding will be managed by Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA).

The Government of India plans to train youth under the **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)**. In December 2018, 2.43 million candidates were enrolled in PMKVY. (Note: PMKVY is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) implemented by National Skill Development Corporation. The objective of this Skill Certification Scheme is to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.)

Government of India seeks to raise the Gross Enrolment Ratio to about 30 p.c. The Government has instituted **Institutions of Eminence**. Jadavpur University has been selected as one of the Institutions of Eminence and there is a requirement for matching grant from Government of West Bengal. Jadavpur University seeks this recognition as it will allow the University to enter global ranking. Lastly, Jadavpur University wants its students to contribute to the societal needs of India.



*Rev. Dr. J. Felix Raj, S.J., Vice Chancellor, St. Xavier's University, Kolkata*

**Rev. Dr. J. Felix Raj, S.J.**, Vice Chancellor, St. Xavier's University, Kolkata said St. Xavier's University tells students to care for people. Every education institution has a role to transform lives.

Pandit Nehru said that education institutions are temples of knowledge. The more knowledge we promote, the more empowered we become.

India has 90 million college graduates or about 10 p.c. of its population. There are about 850 Universities in the country, comprising of 47 Central Universities, 388 State Universities, 125 Deemed Universities and 286 Private Universities.

India has undertaken massive structural changes in education. By 2030, India will have the largest population in the world. Rapid industrialisation will increase the size of the workforce. India can become a global supplier of skilled labour.

The Indian education system needs radical reforms. We need to focus on enforcing higher standards and transparency. Currently, there is a lack of linkage between primary education and higher education. There is no Indian University among the top 100 universities of the world. Only 30 p.c. of Indian institutions have gone for assessment and accreditation.

Four important areas to consider in University education are

- **expansion** of academic infrastructure
- **equity** by reducing gender bias
- **excellence** in teaching, learning and research
- **employability** by making the courses relevant

The Gross Enrolment Ratio is currently at about 20 p.c. to 22 p.c. depending on the State. Government of India has plans to raise Gross Enrolment Ratio to 30 p.c. to 35 p.c. by 2030.

Regulatory bodies should not take away freedom from academic institutions. In other words, Universities should be free of interference.

In 2005, India had only 20 private universities which have grown to 286 today. There is scope for a large role of the private sector in education as the public sector has limited funding and it faces interference. The private sector can help meet the huge demand in quality education for better employability prospects.



*Prof. Anju Seth, Director, IIM Calcutta*

**Prof. Anju Seth**, Director, IIM Calcutta spoke about the important elements of the Vision 2030. The critical issue is how do we develop **excellence** in Universities in the global context. In this regard, Indian Universities should not only follow but they should also lead by setting global standards of excellence. The second issue is regarding **accountability** of education institutions which leads to issues such as creation of jobs, encouragement of critical thinking, etc. IIM Calcutta is developing metrics to measure accountability. **Servant leadership** is an important concept for Universities for taking a nuance to serve society. It is important to build **critical thinking** capabilities not just in classroom learning but continuing to learn later in life. **Inclusiveness and diversity** are important and institutions are seeking more female students. IIM Calcutta wants to enable each and every student for success, which requires personal intervention. Universities have multiple stakeholders such as students, teachers, alumni, government, etc and

**collaboration** is necessary. Collaboration is a good way to work for the upliftment of society.

The IIM Corporate Innovation Park encourages entrepreneurship in West Bengal and North East. It seeks to incubate new ventures for the betterment of the region.

IIM Calcutta was recently ranked at number one in India and second in Asia by Financial Times for its flagship PG programme. The Institute wants to work in a collaborative manner for the progress of the nation.



*Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal*

**Mr. Jagdeep Dhankhar**, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal said that he has come to West Bengal to serve the people of the State.

Calcutta University, Jadavpur University and IIM Calcutta should be complimented for the recognition that they have earned recently. Jadavpur University is in fact one of the Institutions of Eminence which has made great contribution to the State. Mr. Dhankhar congratulated the speakers who spoke at the MCCI Education Forum 2019 and he complimented MCCI for selecting an excellent topic for the Forum.

Dr. Radhakrishnan was the President of India. Although he held high office, Dr. Radhakrishnan is remembered first as a teacher and then as President of India.

Currently, there is a debate about who is the boss at Universities – the Chancellor or the State Government. We do not allow Universities to function as they are supposed to. Universities should be allowed to operate on their own instead of worrying about the greater boss. The role of Government is to improve the education

environment in campuses. All State Universities in West Bengal are subject to statute. Both the Chancellor and the State Government have little role in running Universities. So, they should cooperate instead of competing about who is the bigger boss.

Dues of the teachers should be given and one is satisfied with a recent Rule by the Government of West Bengal over payment hikes to the teachers.

Mr. Dhankhar requested MCCI to come forward with the excellent inputs gathered at the Forum for proper action to be taken by the Central and State Governments. He also assured his support towards catalyzing the situation at the Government level. Mr. Dhankhar added that if some action needs to be taken from the Forum, then he would be pleased to use his good offices to ensure that key decision makers in Government come to hear of the message.



*Simarpreet Singh, Director, JIS Group*

**Mr. Simarpreet Singh**, Director, JIS Group gave a hearty Vote of Thanks.

#### **Key Take Aways:**

- Indians settled in the US have been awarded the Nobel Prize. Then why are people of Indian origin getting the Nobel Prize but not Indians? Similarly, not that many inventions have taken place in India. So, general knowledge is not home grown today and in fact, we are borrowing knowledge from Western countries. An important issue is whether education will further mobility of labour.
- Tutorials can be blamed for grooming students in a way that they can anticipate questions, thus killing ingenuity and thirst for knowledge. This is

why IITs have not been able to produce a Nobel laureate.

- Children must be taught the following
  - ◆ Active listening is important as today many children are preparing their answer and not listening.
  - ◆ Effective communication as there must be clarity in what we say.
  - ◆ Conflict resolution as children must be taught to think independently for a solution.
  - ◆ Waiting for my turn. Children must be taught to wait.
  - ◆ Taking instructions. Unfortunately, today many parents have become subservient to children.
  - ◆ Plagiarism – Children must be taught the difference between copying, plagiarism and inspiration. Kids must be taught to acknowledge the ownership of others. Children must give credit to the person who inspires.
  - ◆ Vitamin N – Children are not used to hearing No. Parents and teachers must say No to children.
  - ◆ Children must be taught to complete assignments in a timely manner and meet deadlines. Children must be told that someone else will not clear their mess.
- The single child syndrome is leading parents to tell their children that they must be successful in university entrance examinations by hook or by crook. Coaching centres are only teaching children how to solve a problem by any means. So, proper ethical training is not taking place. Consequently, college students lack the analytical skills with which they can bring laurels to the nation.
- India has developed a dual society. In the first one, the country has no control over the general knowledge. In other words, in formal education, the general knowledge is not controlled by us. The second system, or the 'karigar' economy consists of those who are independent of others. 70 p.c. to 80 p.c. of our economy is in the informal sector or 'karigar' economy. India should bridge the gap between the 'karigar' economy and the 'indigo economy'. India should adopt 'bare feet managers'.
- Even after 70 years of Independence, India has an edge in very few product categories. India is

not producing apps on its own operating system. It may be surmised that the country has not produced useful workers.

- There is in general a huge demand for skilled workers which is unfulfilled. Today, it is difficult to find a good driver, plumber, electrician, etc. We are unable to fill job vacancies with people with the right skills. The country needs a degree that can be called Bachelor of Vocational Courses, which is a mix of knowledge and skills.

- In the last 50 years, we have seen a paradigm shift to Artificial Intelligence and machine learning. At the same time, we also understand that not everyone is brilliant. So, skilled workers, such as carpenters, plumbers and electricians, must be respected which will bridge the skill gap.

- This is the age of continuous learning. One must continue to learn even after one has gotten a degree and digital learning can help. In other words, we need to continuously upgrade our skills in order to stay relevant. Among other problems, India is suffering from a shortage of motivated teachers.

- One of the biggest problems is the skills gap. A huge disparity exists between the required skill set and the skill set the candidate actually possesses. The Skill Gap means a shortage of appropriately skilled labour. According to the latest India Skill Report (2019), only 45.6 p.c. of the youth graduating from educational institutions are employable. Students are now being trained for jobs that do not exist anymore. Today, we have a growing skills gap.

- The major problem facing India today is unemployment. The country has 260 million under-employed or unemployed people in the age group of 18 to 50 years. The skill base of the Indian economy is low. Only 2 p.c. of the youth in the age group 18 to 29 years receive formal vocational training. The problem will only increase in the years to come.

- In the post-industrial era, the skill sets once obtained in college or university served an engineer throughout his career. However, over time, the shelf-life of skills has declined. Educational institutions, unfortunately, have not kept up with these changes. In case of professional education, the supply gap is being met to a large extent

by private institutions mostly with poor quality, inadequate infrastructure and faculty resources. The significant skill gap has been brought out repeatedly by National Employability Report conducted by Job-Skill Matching Platform, Aspiring Minds. Their 2019 employability report has found that over 80 p.c. of engineers in India are unemployable as they lack the technological skills required by employers now. It is observed that a low proportion of engineers take up projects beyond curriculum and do internships. Further, there is lack of faculty talking about industry application of concepts in class or students getting exposure through industry talks. A recent Deloitte report also identified that in 79.7 p.c. institutions there is lack of quality faculty and 78.3 p.c. graduates are suffering due to lack of skill sets required for their employability. Therefore, a well-structured and sufficiently reformed higher education system need be in place, so that India can emerge as a global supplier of skilled manpower.

- The Government of India's Atal Tinkering Labs in schools and Atal Incubation Centers were novel ideas. A target to train all teachers by 2020 has been introduced by Government of India. The challenge is in both quality and quantity in higher education.

- The Government of India has launched Revitalising Infrastructure & Systems in Education (RISE) to increase investment in research and related infrastructure in education institutions. It will make an investment in next four years and funding will be managed by Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA).

- The Government of India plans to train youth under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). In December 2018, 2.43 million candidates were enrolled in PMKVY. The objective of this Skill Certification Scheme is to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.

- The Indian education system needs radical reforms. We need to focus on enforcing higher standards and transparency. Currently, there is a lack of linkage between primary education and higher education. There is no Indian University among the top 100 universities of the world.

Only 30 p.c. of Indian institutions have gone for assessment and accreditation.

• Four important areas to consider in University education are

- expansion of academic infrastructure
- equity by reducing gender bias
- excellence in teaching, learning and research
- employability by making the courses relevant

• The Gross Enrolment Ratio is currently at about 20 p.c. to 22 p.c. depending on the State. Government of India has plans to raise Gross Enrolment Ratio to 30 p.c. to 35 p.c. by 2030.

• The critical issue is how do we develop excellence in Universities in the global context. In this regard, Indian Universities should not only follow but they should also lead by setting global standards of excellence. The second issue is regarding accountability of education institutions which leads to issues such as creation of jobs, encouragement of critical thinking, etc. IIM Calcutta is developing metrics to measure accountability. Servant leadership is an important concept for Universities for taking a nuance to serve society. It is important to build critical thinking capabilities not just in classroom learning but continuing to learn later in life. Inclusiveness and diversity are important and institutions are seeking more female students. IIM Calcutta wants to enable each and every student for success, which requires personal intervention. Universities have multiple stakeholders such as students, teachers, alumni, government, etc and collaboration is necessary. Collaboration is a good way to work for the upliftment of society.

• Currently, there is a debate about who is the boss at Universities – the Chancellor or the State Government. We do not allow Universities to function as they are supposed to. Universities should be allowed to operate on their own instead of worrying about the greater boss. The role of Government is to improve the education environment in campuses. All State Universities in West Bengal are subject to statute. Both the Chancellor and the State Government have little role in running Universities. So, they should cooperate instead of competing about who is the bigger boss.

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