

Two new schemes to beef up math & science outcomes in schools and teachers' training to be rolled out next year, says HRD Minister at FICCI's Higher Education Summit
Deepening of the student exchange programme with India on the priority says Ms Nikki Randhawa Haley, Governor of South Carolina, USA
UK to liberalise visa norms for Indian students: Minister Greg Clark

NEW DELHI, November 13, 2014: The Government will roll out the 'Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan' next year with a view to arresting the falling trend of learning outcomes in mathematics and science of students in classes 6-8 and upgrade the skills of teachers in line with the needs of modern-day society.

This was announced here today by **Smt. Smriti Irani, Union Minister for Human Resource Development** while inaugurating the 10th FICCI Higher Education Summit 2014 on the theme 'Higher Education Vision 2030: Making it Happen'.

"I look upon education as an opportunity to redefine India's destiny and am happy to note that in the last six months we have undertaken a review of all regulators in the field of education to redefine the way forward and ascertain the needs of the future, **the Minister said.**

To address the issue of quality in higher education, the Government has announced GIAN (Global Initiative for Academic Network) inviting industry experts and academicians' world over to teach in different Indian universities, **Ms Irani said.**

Earlier, the Minister released FICCI-EY knowledge paper on 'Higher Education in India: Moving towards Global Relevance and Competitiveness' and there were awards given to Tamil Nadu Agricultural University for Overall Excellence, BITS Pilani for ICT integration and Lifetime Achievement Award to Prof. N R Madhav Menon for excellence in judicial education. There was also a special mention of Manipal University for its achievements over the years.

Ms. Nikki Randhawa Haley, Governor of South Carolina, USA, stated that the US and India were natural allies in strengthening the education system and improving the quality of life. "We hope to see a deepening of the student exchange programme with India and I see a bright future for this country," she said added that South Carolina would always look to support partnerships in education with India.

Mr. Greg Clark, Minister of State for Universities, Science and Cities, The UK, in his address, announced that the British Government had initiated a programme, under which 25000 young people would be sent to India to study in the next five years. The first batch of students will reach Indian shores next summer, he said.

Dr. (Ms.) Jyotsna Suri, President-elect, FICCI, in her remarks pointed out that FICCI's Vision 2030 for higher education in India proposes a three tiered higher education system representing research focused, career focused and foundation institutions. This differentiated approach will offer students a wider variety of unique and quality programs at both graduate and undergraduate levels. This way, while planned expansion will create capacity for the ever increasing numbers of students, the differentiated system will be instrumental in directing them to the right stream and the appropriate institution.

Delivering the theme address, **Mr. T V Mohandas Pai, Chairman, FICCI Higher Education Committee,** said that the private sector would have an 80% share of students by 2030. This massive expansion is estimated to need a funding of over INR 800,000 cr (133 Billion Dollars) at current costs.

Given this vision and the challenges it gives rise to, Mr. Pai said, “There is a need to empower all our Universities by giving them Full Autonomy: Academic, Administrative and Financial. We must create a 21st century architecture for our regulations based on Transparency, Respect for Autonomy and Acceptance of Diversity based on Principles of Open Systems.

Mr. Rajan Saxena and Mr. Avinash Vashishtha, Co-Chairs of the FICCI Higher Education Committee, gave the concluding remarks and vote of thanks, respectively.

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