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Casteist remarks against Maya a mistake, says Tikait P13

Campus face-off: Planners v politicians

IIM-A won't roll back fee hike; Plan panel advocates profits in education

Chetan Chauhan
New Delhi, April 2

A MAJOR controversy could be brewing between India's education planners, and politicians advocating a populist approach to education.

On Wednesday evening, IIM-Ahmedabad chairman Vijaypat Singhania refused to be persuaded by HRD minister Arjun Singh to roll back its proposed 150 per cent fee hike.

Hours earlier, the Planning Commission recommended that profit-making should be allowed in higher education, thus paving the way for the entry of corporates in the sector.

The Commission's proposal, sent to PM Manmohan Singh, could trigger a debate reminiscent of the controversy over OBC quotas in institutions of higher education.

The report has its genesis in a similar proposal mooted two years ago by the National Knowledge Commission. The HRD ministry had opposed it then, saying education was a 'social service'.

Two days ago, Singh had argued for making high quality education affordable for poorer students. His ministry is likely to oppose the plan panel's idea this time too — and might find support from the Left for whom private participation in education is anathema.

Those who back corporate participation in education are, however, convinced that the traditional approach has not been greatly successful either in terms of business, or in meeting the manpower requirements of India's \$400 million service sector.

Speaking to reporters after releasing the report, Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia backed Singhania over Arjun Singh on the IIM fee hike. Costlier education in the IIMs and IITs can be made affordable through easy loans for students, Ahluwalia said.

Emerging from his meeting with the minister, Singhania said IIM-A's total scholarship amount was being upped from Rs 40 lakh to Rs 8.5 crore, covering 62% of all new students.

"The fee hike is not to make profit," he said. "The cost of the course has to be met. Our students get into jobs immediately with an annual package of Rs 25 lakh or more," Singhania said. "Students will be able to repay their loans before leaving the institute as employers are ready to meet the cost of their education." Singhania said IIM-A would not roll back the hike but would put in place a system to assess students' family incomes to offer scholarships. chetan@hindustantimes.com

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HYDERABAD B-SCHOOL HITS A HIGH, P16



COURSES IN THE UNITED STATES ARE THE SAME AS OURS, ONLY THE TEACHING METHODOLOGY IS DIFFERENT

VARUN THAKUR,
Chemistry (Honours), Sri Venkateswara College



I FEEL CONFIDENT WHEN I SUCCESSFULLY CLEAR STUDENTS' DOUBTS IN CHEMISTRY, MY FAVOURITE SUBJECT

RUNIT MANI,
Final year, MSc, IIT-Delhi

Student e-tutors make easy bucks

Swaha Sahoo
New Delhi, April 2

THERE'S A new way to earn as you learn. If you are a student of math or science and have decent communication skills, you can make upto Rs 17,000 a month e-tutoring kids in America and Europe.

Educational process outsourcing is enabling over 100 Delhi students rake in handsome dividends from a few hours spent answering queries and clearing doubts. Manya Education Private Limited, an e-tutoring firm, recently began campus recruitment in IIT-Delhi, Delhi University and Jamia Millia Islamia. Academically strong students from the Sciences stream were shortlisted and subsequently trained for a month.

The e-tutoring model requires these student-teachers to log on to a chat-based software and answer queries from students in the US and Europe. For an average four-hour session, they earn between Rs 12,000 and Rs 17,000, depending on competency.

Varun Thakur, a Chemistry (Honours) student, is back from office in time for classes at Sri Venkateswara College, after four hours spent interacting with American students in grades IX to XII. "E-tutoring is exciting. I work from 3.30 am to 7.30 am and am back home before classes. The courses in the US are the same as ours. The only difference is the teaching methodology," says Thakur.

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e-tutors ride the gravy train

Continued from Page 1

BEGINNING WITH Math, Physics and Chemistry, Manya Education plans to include social sciences lessons. "We conduct a content test to evaluate the knowledge of interested candidates. Then we pick students who are good communicators," says Sachin from the firm's Human Resources department

Students-teachers can draw diagrams and figures using the software and transfer files if required. For IITian Runit Mani, a final year MSc student in Chemistry, the process has been a lot of fun. "I love the subject that teach and the timing works for me as well. Also, I feel confident when I successfully clear doubts and queries," he says.

The teaching fraternity has welcomed the initiative. "E-tutoring is a great option for bright students with a good grasp over their subjects," said Rihan Khan Suri, placement officer, Jamia Millia Islamia. "Since they are flexible, students can quit teaching during exams and then resume it again."