Now, ombudsman for higher education institutions

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 16
Students attending higher education institutions run by the Centre and recognised by academic regulators will now have a platform to register their grievances and seek redress.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development today passed an executive order to mandate all central higher educational institutions like the central universities, the IITs, IIMs and NITs, among others, to appoint an ombudsman to redress grievances of students by the start of the next academic session.

The order will be equally applicable to all technical and management institutions recognised by regulators such as the UGC, the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the National Council for Teacher Education. It will also apply to deemed universities recognised by the Centre and the non-degree granting institutions approved by the academic regulators.

The move comes in the wake of persistent resistance that the ministry's ambitious Bill on establishment of educational tribunals met with in the Rajya Sabha where the Bill remains in a limbo.

"We can't keep waiting. We have to move," HRD Minister Kapil Sibal today said, adding that the ombudsman would be responsible for addressing students' grievances related to denial of admission, non-observance of declared merit in admissions, non-observance of applicable regulations for reservation, withholding of documents and non-refund of fees in case of withdrawal of admission, discrimination and matters concerning students in pursuit of studies in the institution.

In matters concerning weaker sections such as SCs, STs, OBCs or minorities, the ombudsman can co-opt a person of eminence from the area from a weaker section to assist him.

The ombudsman will have to deliver his judgment in a month and though his order would not be binding on the institution, the institution can lose recognition from the regulator in case of repeated violations and non-compliance with the orders of the ombudsman.

"Non-compliance can lead to withdrawal of recognition," Sibal explained.

The ombudsman will have to be a person with a judicial or legal background. The institute would have to appoint him from a panel suggested by the affiliating university in case of technical and management institutions and the Central Government in case of deemed universities.

The suggestion of instituting an ombudsman was made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on HRD when it was looking at the Bill on Prevention of Unfair Practices in Technical and Management Institutions.

"The committee made this suggestion and we are going to implement it. Although the idea was to set up a grievance redress mechanism through the Educational Tribunals Bill, but if the Bill does not come, I am not going to wait," Sibal said.

The proposed ombudsman would not cover grievances related to teachers.
Ombudsman for Central educational institutions now

Aarti Dhar

NEW DELHI: The Union Government on Monday announced grievance redressal mechanisms for higher educational institutions. All institutions affiliated to the University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and the National Council for Teachers Education will now be required to establish a grievance redressal mechanism for students and applicants before the start of the admission season this academic year.

All government-run Central educational institutions, institutions deemed to be universities, deemed-to-be-universities, technical and management institutions and teacher education institutions would be required to constitute an Ombudsman—person with judicial or legal experience to be appointed from a panel suggested by the affiliating university for technical and management institutions and by the regulator for non-degree granting institutions. The concerned regulators would issue the detailed instructions to the educational institutions shortly.

Grievances galore

Talking to reporters here on Monday, Human resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal said there were several grievances that arose relating to students and applicants for admission in higher educational institutions. These grievances required prompt redressal in order to provide timely succour to aggrieved students and applicants.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee, while examining the Bill to prohibit and punish unfair practices, had recommended that proactive steps be taken to constitute grievance redressal mechanisms in higher education institutions, he said.

Applicants for admission and students can apply to the Ombudsman for redressal of grievances and the Ombudsman shall deliver his/her order within one month. Although the order would not be binding on the institution, the regulator would rely on the frequency of non-observance to decide on continued recognition to such institutions.

Issues under ambit

The Ombudsman will have the jurisdiction to hear grievances concerning denial of admission, non-observance of declared merit in admission, non-observance of applicable regulations for reservation, withholding of documents and non-refund of fees in case of withdrawal of admission, discrimination and other such matters concerning students in pursuit of studies in the institution. In case of matters concerning weaker sections such as Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes or minorities, the Ombudsman can co-opt a person of eminence from the area coming from the weaker section to assist him/her in arriving at a decision, Mr. Sibal said.
Sibal’s ombudsman set to be in place next session

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: With a host of higher education reform bills still to get Parliament’s nod, the HRD ministry has decided to implement part of its reform agenda through executive order from the next academic session.

HRD minister Kapil Sibal on Monday said a grievance redressal mechanism for students and applicants for admission in higher educational institutions is being put in place. It would be implemented in all central universities, IITs, IIIMs, NITs, II-ITs, private and government-run deemed universities and all higher educational institutions under various Central government ministries.

Regulatory bodies like University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education and experience. In case the grievance relates to SCs/STs/OBCs or minorities, ombudsman can co-opt a person of eminence from the weaker section to assist him in taking a decision.

Applicants for admission and students can apply to the ombudsman for redressal of grievances and he/she would have to give the order within a month. Sibal said students have several grievances at the time of applying for admission that needs immediate redressal.

Ombudsman would have the jurisdiction to hear grievances concerning denial of admission, non-observance of declared merit in admission and non-refund of fees in case of withdrawal of admission, discrimination and other such matters concerning students in pursuit of studies in the institution.

FAST TRACK

National Council for Teacher Education would ask educational institutions to set up grievance redressal mechanism. Although the order would not be binding on the institution, the regulator would rely on the frequency of non-observance to decide on continued recognition to these institutions.

As part of the initiative, every institution would be required to appoint an ombudsman who would be a person with judicial or legal
Learning disability
Schools policy focuses on inputs, not quality of education

Only the wilfully self-delusional are likely to be surprised by the findings of OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which has ranked India second last among 73 countries in maths, reading and science abilities, being ahead only of Kyrgyzstan. The findings should be a wake-up call for policy makers who may be congratulating themselves on the higher enrolments achieved under the massive Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and the passage of the Right to Education Act. That’s because the dismal showing has come from students from Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh, two states hand-picked by the government as showpieces for education and development. Yet 15-year-old students from these states managed to consistently lag on almost every parameter. In reading English texts, for instance, Indian students bested only Kyrgyzstan. India’s soft power marketers have long perpetuated the notion that its schoolchildren enjoy a natural affinity for, and prowess at, maths and science; it is flaunted as the very basis of the country’s global success in information technology. How did Indian mid-schoolers fare in these two subjects vis-à-vis their global peers? Again, in the same trough as Kyrgyzstan: in science Himachal came last, while Tamil Nadu “improved” its position inasmuch as it was ranked third last. Overall, India lagged a substantial 200 points behind China — which, equally unsurprisingly perhaps, logged the top spot on all three parameters.

The PISA findings provide a shaming, global corroboration of what field studies in India have long discovered — that government programmes may have ensured that well over 90 per cent of children in the age group 6-14 years are enrolled in school, but the focus on delivering physical infrastructure in the form of schoolrooms and teachers has detracted from the quality of education imparted. Pratham’s Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for 2010 study found that “even after five years in school, close to half of all children are not even at the level expected of them after two years in school”. For instance, just over half the students of standard four could read a standard-two text. The ASER study also showed that maths ability was declining. In the space of just one year, the study found, the proportion of standard-one students who could recognise numbers from one to nine declined from 69.3 per cent in 2009 to 65.8 per cent.

The question is whether policy makers are up to drawing the correct lessons from this dismal showing and whether they will focus on the quality of education being imparted, instead of just on school buildings and teacher salaries. Any solutions will require lateral, creative thinking. More than half of India’s population is in the 15-59 age-group, the “working-age” population. If most are inadequately educated, India’s supposed “demographic dividend” can become as big a liability as ageing populations are for the West.
Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology to be upgraded

Govt plans women's tech varsity in city

ABHISHEK ANAND | NEW DELHI, JAN. 16

The Delhi government on Monday decided to set up an exclusive women's technical university in the city. "In order to focus on participation of women engineers in nation building, encouraging technical education among women and to meet the growing needs of industry for relevant technology and product innovation, it is necessary to establish institutions and universities exclusively for women. The Cabinet has given its approval to the draft of the Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University Bill-2012 which will be introduced in the Legislative Assembly," chief minister Sheila Dikshit told reporters after a Cabinet meeting on Monday.

Ms Dikshit said that Delhi will become the first state to have an exclusive technological university for women. "To make this university functional the existing Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology will be upgraded. The upgradation will provide the opportunity for accelerated growth of women in technical education, technology incubation and product innovation vital for women empowerment and the growth of industries in the NCR and the country at large. It will also facilitate enrolment of women in technological courses as parents are often reluctant to send their daughters outside Delhi for higher education," she added.

The government has also approved certain amendments in guidelines for allotment of flats constructed under JNNURM Scheme for eligible slum-dwellers in the city to facilitate grant of ownership rights to the allottees.

The Delhi Cabinet has also given its approval to extension of financial assistance for purchase of stationery to SC/ST/OBC/Minorities students in primary classes and enhancement of monthly financial assistance to students from Classes 6 to 12.

The decisions were taken in a Cabinet meeting presided over by chief minister Sheila Dikshit.
IIT Favours Rain and Shockproof Aakash 2 Tab, Datawind Disagrees

HRD ministry to intervene between IIT and Datawind on Aakash 2 specifications

OUR BUREAU
NEW DELHI

Maker of world’s cheapest tablet Datawind has declined IIT Rajasthan’s specifications such as shock and water-resistance features for the next version of its Aakash device. The company said these features will raise the cost of the tablet over $1,000, negating its price advantage. "We are hopeful that the IIT will reconsider its new test specifications," says Suneet Singh Tuli, CEO of Datawind.

ET has learnt that the human resource development ministry has called for a meeting on Tuesday, to be chaired by a special secretary Ashok Thakur, to sort the issues between IIT Rajasthan and Datawind.

The IIT specifications demand that the upgraded device be able to operate at -20 degrees, can withstand sudden drops, and be waterproof in heavy rains.

"The price point at which Aakash is being made cannot be compared to rugged military tablets which may cost over $1,500. US military specifications for an educational tablet will not make sense for Indian students," Tuli said.

A HRD ministry official said the ministry was keen on making the cheap tablets reach all 220 million students, and problems if any would be sorted out. Tuli also told ET his company was excited by the tablet, commercial bookings of which have crossed 21 lakh units.

IIT Rajasthan refused to comment on the story. IIT Rajasthan is responsible for procuring the Aakash tablets for ₹2,276 each, under the billion dollar National Mission on Education. The first 5-year phase of the mission is ending in March 2012, and funds allocated have to be spent or returned to the government by the deadline.
For students: Faster Aakash at no extra cost

Chetan Chaushan

NEW DELHI: College students across India will get an enhanced version of Aakash tablet without the government having to pay a penny extra.

The Aakash 2 tablet will three times faster than Aakash 1 and will have 50% more battery life. The latest version will have to pass a new quality protocol prepared on basis of inputs received from around 600 students of IITs and engineering colleges.

"All issues have been resolved. We will receive 70,000 improved Aakash tablets from Datawind (the company supplying the tablets) by January-end," said HRD minister Kapil Sibal, after reports of the ministry planning to put its pact with Datawind on hold.

Ministry officials said Datawind may not get order in future as it had violated the contract condition of providing the tablets first to the government before selling it in open market.

The HRD ministry had asked Datawind of Montreal-based Sunet S Tuli to supply one lakh Aakash tablets for around $50 each. In the initial lot, 600 tablets were given to students for testing.

IIT, Rajasthan, which had prepared the Aakash prototype cited several deficiencies in the tablet including short battery life, processor unable to handle multiple operations at a time and poor picture quality.

Datawind has already supplied 30,000 tablets by the time the report by the IIT came. The ministry held back the order and asked the firm to fix the deficiencies. Ministry sources said the company was initially reluctant to upgrade the tablet without increasing the cost. However, it agreed when ministry threatened to cancel the order.

Tuli was not available for comments. A company spokesperson said the remaining 70,000 tablets would be supplied as per the pact. "Not only Aakash from Datawind but all future tablets will have minimum Aakash 2 specifications," said N K Sinha, additional secretary, HRD ministry.
Google: India can’t act like ‘totalitarian’ China regime

New Delhi: Reeling under pressure from the government, which has sanctioned prosecution, Google India on Monday argued before Delhi High Court that blocking certain websites was not an option as democratic India isn’t a “totalitarian” regime like China.

To make its point how blocking a website might deprive users from a lot of useful information, the company demonstrated to HC how an online search for a word like “virgin” has 82.30 crore search results within 0.33 seconds. It said the idea of blocking a word like this would deprive net-users the required information, which could relate to Virgin Airlines or ‘virgin areas for inventions’, lawyer appearing for the website argued.

On its part Facebook argued the company acts immediately once it receives information that an offensive content has been posted, even as it has adequate checks in place to prevent it.

Google and Facebook are amongst 20 websites facing criminal proceedings for allegedly hosting objectionable materials. “The issue relates to a constitutional issue of freedom of speech and expression and suppressing it was not possible as the right to freedom of speech in democratic India separates us from a totalitarian regime like China,” senior advocate NK Kaul, appearing for Google India told Justice Suresh Kait. TNN
While matrimonial ads make no bones about wanting a match from the IITs or IIMs, now those having highly specific requirements about what their girlfriend-boyfriend’s mental abilities should be, can take help from this website that promises to find you a date from IIT. e-Dil IITians is touted as a ‘unique platform’ for social dating with the world’s most intelligent lot. Are IITians interested?

IT’S RIDICULOUS

“IT’s a very nebulous thing, it’s funnier rather ridiculous,” I’m surprised, Whose a guy from IIT will necessarily look for a girl from IIT or IIM to date? We’re caught in such stereotypes very much,” says Ashishwar Sarin, a final year student at IIT Delhi, says another IIT student, “Is anyone. I’d rather not look for an IITian to date, she can be boring and unbearable toge. Look, most of my friends in IIT have girlfriends from Delhi University, who are not into professional courses at all. That’s how the preferences vary.”

SOUNDS LIKE A MATRIMONIAL WEBSITE

“Am I looking for a date or a prospective partner to marry? This sounds like a matrimonial website which my parents would probably beg into when they want me to get married,” says Viraj Suri, an IIT student. The majority of his friends too, he says, “would rather go for a normal online dating website than this one, which is kind of discriminatory.”

WHAT’S THE HARM IN TRYING?

For a few of those techies, this is exciting for many reasons. “I’m interested in it, you know, because of the IITIS so another ki ladka ke baare mein, people have the sad image of us, ki [IIT] ke ladke super-gard and our gaddheels aur gadhey hain, only hooked on books,” says another student. “If this portal helps us shed that image, I’d be great,” says Rachit Gupta, general secretary of the student council affairs at IIT Delhi. While Siddharth Bhatia, adds, “We’re not, most of the guys in IIT are single so why not give it a try?”

“I’d rather not look for an IITian to date; she can be boring and unbearably geeky. My friends in IIT have girlfriends from DU”

— Dheeraj, an IIT student

People think k iit ke ladkey geeks aur gadhey hote hain. If this helps us shed that image, it’d be great.

— Rachit Gupta, General Secretary, Student Council Affairs, IIT Delhi

Names changed on request.
Reading, maths ability declining in kids: Survey

New Delhi: Pratham’s seventh Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER) of rural India released on Monday tells a familiar tale: rising enrolment but declining attendance, over-reliance on private tuitions, decline in reading and mathematical ability of children in the age group between six and 14. The report was released by HRD minister Kapil Sibal.

Use of computers is also on the rise in upper primary schools. Almost a third (30.8%) of upper primary schools had computers. The proportion was high in Kerala (78.4%) and Tamil Nadu (51.1%).

In contrast, only 7.9% government primary schools had computers. Kerala is the only exception, where 78.5% primary schools had computers.

Despite the claim by Pratham that ASER is the largest educational survey, the National University Educational Planning and Administration’s district education report is far bigger — reaching out to every school. Sibal said it would be wrong to blame the Central government alone for ills of elementary education as states carry out work at ground level.
Mumbai: The government is planning to set up a $1-billion venture fund to foster innovation, Adviser to Prime Minister and chairman, Indian Smart Grid Task Force, Sam Pitroda, said here on Monday.

"We have set up a national innovation centre that will oversee state innovation centres and 100 sectoral innovation houses. We are setting up a venture fund of $1 billion to finance innovation. Today, the ordinary person with ideas has no access to money, and we will try to change that," he said, speaking at GridWeek Asia 2012, organised by the Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers' Association (IEEMA). The proposed 'Smart Meter Task Force' will look into modernising obsolete ways of calculating power usage, he said.

"It is amazing to see how India, a superpower in information technology, lags terribly in the power sector. It is annoying to see our primitive ways of providing power, be it evacuation, grids, electricity meters or even the way we manually calculate power consumption. All this has to change and it will change," Pitroda said.

He said the government feels that India needs 100 million smart electricity meters, and towards this end, Smart Meter Task Force will be entrusted the task of introducing low cost electricity meters which cost around Rs 1,500 apiece.

"We need a two-chip electricity meter that can be connected through optical fibre enabling faster and better education, health services, public services and governance. The Government has earmarked around $6 billion for this," he added.
IIT-K GRADUATES FORM PARTY, WILL CONTEST POLL

AGE CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW, JAN. 16

They may not be the richest among the candidates for the UP Assembly elections but they are, undoubtedly, the most educated.

They decided in 2006 that they would set aside their glorious careers and take a plunge into politics because they believed in the adage that "unless good people enter politics, be prepared to be ruled by bad people."

These young groups of graduates and post graduates from IIT Kanpur have formed the Jan Rajya Party (JANPA) and will be contesting the forthcoming UP Assembly elections under its banner.

"In 2006 we formed the BPD and decided to contest polls. We had no resources to reach out to voters yet did well in terms of votes," says Omendra Bharat who is the national general secretary of the party.
खुद तय करें एआईईई की परीक्षा का दिन

ऑनलाइन परीक्षा 7, 12, 19 और 26 मई को होगी।
पहले आओ पहले पासों के तहत मिलेगी छात्रों की मौका।
परीक्षा तिथि के लिए पंजीकरण अंज र शुरू होगा।

प्रतिदिन तय करें, एआईईई की परीक्षा का दिन

मानव संसाधन विवरण संग्रह कॉलेज सिविल के कहा, जादु जाने होगी औपचारिक की नियुक्ति के आदेश
आदेश न मानने वाले कोई भी संस्था के खिलाफ करवाया का प्रायोगिक होगा।
फैसला न मानने वाले संस्थाओं की दुसरे हाल सक्ता है मान्यता