Cornell, IIT submit bids for Science Campus in New York

Bloomberg
March 19

Cornell and Stanford universities and the Indian Institute of Technology were among 27 institutions that offered plans to open an applied-science campus in New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said on Friday.

The mayor asked for proposals to open a research facility to attract engineers from around the world in December.

The offer is part of an economic strategy that promises a potential $100 million capital contribution by the city and possibly a municipally owned site.

“We were enormously optimistic that this once-in-a-generation opportunity would draw the interest of top caliber universities,” Bloomberg said in a statement.

Among them, the institutions produced 18 proposals describing possible concentrations from environmental studies to neuro-engineering, the press release said. The city aims to choose one by the end of this year.

The mayor is founder and majority owner of Bloomberg News parent Bloomberg LP.

The list of solo and collaborative responses included also from: Amity University, India; the City University of New York, the University of Toronto and IBM; and Carnegie Mellon University with Steiner Studios.
If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it

Instead of maximising resources, AICTE is hell-bent on destroying it

SHOK KUMAR (name changed) is a dynamic, high-profile executive with a leading multinational company in the capital. He is the epitome of the successful corporate executive and is regarded as something of a legend within his company, having overseen its transformation from a small representative office to become one of the biggest foreign companies in India. Those who meet him are invariably impressed by his drive and commitment. Ah, another of those go-getting MBAs from the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), you think. Not quite!

Few outside a close circle of friends know, but Ashok has come up the hard way. Forced to become the sole breadwinner of his family after his father died when Ashok had just completed his graduation, he’d had taken up the first job that came his way. Then through dint of hardwork, he cleared a tough entrance examination and joined the part-time MBA programme at one of the country’s top-rated MBA institutes, where needless to say, he outshone many of his classmates from far more privileged backgrounds.

Picked up by a MNC that was hesitantly testing the waters in India, he’d been instrumental in opening his overseas bosses’ eyes to the promise of the Indian market. Along with the company, his career, too, prospered.

Great story? By all counts! But the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) that oversees technical education (and the MBA for some reason is regarded as ‘technical’) in India is not impressed. The council has declared it will not approve new part-time MBA programmes or allow fresh admissions in existing ones from the next academic year. Why? The reason given by the AICTE is that ‘Many B-schools are misusing the facility and running other programmes on the pretext of a part-time MBA programme. They are not working within the regulated framework.’

But if that is so, who is responsible? The B-schools the AICTE claims are found wanting? Or the body (AICTE) that has certified them and is charged with regulating them? More importantly, is it right to penalise all B-schools, good and bad, merely because there are a few black sheep amongst them? Is it not akin to imposing a ban on driving because there are a few rash drivers when the right approach would be to make licencing norms and stringent and punish rash drivers who cause accidents?

There are presently around 2,500 AICTE-approved management schools in the country, most of which offer part-time courses as well. In one fell move, the AICTE has scotched the dreams of thousands of Ashoks.

In a country where there is a crying need for skills and a serious dearth of them, the attempt should be to maximise the available infrastructure to add to the talent pool. Instead of which the AICTE seems hell-bent on doing exactly the opposite. Remember part-time MBA programmes are cheaper than regular MBAs. A three-year part-time management programme will, typically, cost around ₹5 lakh spread over three years while a full time two-year management programme puts a student back by anywhere between ₹10 to ₹15 lakh. Moreover, doing a part-time course does not entail giving up one’s current job; a major benefit for vast numbers from the not-so-privileged lower middle class for whom an MBA degree would always remain a dream.

There are a number of shady management institutes and medical and engineering colleges that have been approved by the AICTE. But the solution is not to cramp their functioning but to lay down high standards and pull up those that don’t comply.

Ironically, the AICTE is itself under a cloud. Not only is it reputed to be a hotbed of corruption the CBI has found former Chairman, RA Yadav in possession of assets much in excess of his known sources of income—it has often been in the news for granting recognition to institutes that don’t meet minimum standards.

Strangely, these drastic policy changes have been made though it is presently functioning under an Acting Chairman. It is one of the basic tenets of public administration that a person who is ‘officiating’ does not take major policy decisions. Instead of which the AICTE under the present dispensation seems set on a collision course. Its philosophy should be, ‘If it ain’t broke, don’t try to fix it’.

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Reduce extensive outside control on Central institutions: HRD panel

URMI A GOSWAMI
NEW DELHI

IN A bid to carry forward the reforms agenda in higher education, a human resource development ministry-appointed committee has called for reducing extensive control from outside to ensure autonomy for central education institutions.

The committee headed by NR Madhav Menon was set up last year to chalk out a policy for autonomy of central educational institutions. It has attempted to provide a solution to the problems of constraints to access and autonomy by suggesting that established colleges with good track record be upgraded to universities.

The suggestion for upgrading comes even as the government is yet to resolve the situation over deemed universities. The logic of upgrading established colleges with good track record to the status of universities appears to mirror the rationale of the deemed to be university scheme. As a safeguard, the committee suggests the upgrade be done in a phased manner to give institutions time to address the ensuing challenges of becoming a university. Another suggestion given to ease access constraint looks at jointly upgrading a cluster of institutions to the status of a university for giving them autonomy in academic and administrative matters.

On the autonomy issue, the committee has suggested doing away with the office of the visitor in central universities. At present, the President is the visitor to all central universities. The committee has recommended that the powers of the visitor be transferred to the Chancellor. The powers of the visitor include appointing the vice-chancellor, certain members of the court, executive council, finance committee, selection committees. The visitor also has the power to order enquiries and institute inspections, give or withhold assent to the statutes, arbitrate disputes between selection committees and executive councils on the appointment of teachers and annul any proceeding of the universities which is not in conformity with the laws and regulations.

It has suggested that the practice of posting civil service officials to university positions be discontinued. Instead, the universities should create a pool of education administrators with expertise in managing educational and research institutions. It has also recommended establishing an office of ombudsman in each central university to intervene in crisis situations.

"There is a need to free universities and central educational institutions from extensive control from outside for which statutes establishing them have to be revisited.

Clauses subversive to institutional autonomy need to be repealed or modified to enable institutions to function with freedom and accountability. In this process, it is desirable to ensure that the membership of academic bodies is strictly restricted to eminent academicians and independent experts," the committee states in its report to human resource development minister Kapil Sibal. In order to pave the way for creating a Central Universities Council, on lines of the IIT Council, the committee has suggested a single legal instrument for all central universities.

Barring the 14 universities set up under the Central Universities Act, 2009, each of the remaining central universities has been set up under separate Acts of Parliament. While there are historical reasons for this, the committee is of the view that it is now time to bring in some uniformity in the legal framework and subsume all these separate legislations into one. It has suggested changes in the legislation for IIMs to give the institutes the power to confer degrees.

To ensure autonomy in academic matters, the committee suggested that all central universities adopt a system of choice-based credit courses along with semester system. This would help promote flexibility in the academic structure and promote student mobility.

In a longer term, the committee has suggested switching over to complete internal evaluation of students with faculty members having full autonomy in evaluation matters. In the transition period, it has suggested a mix of internal and external evaluation. The committee has said all faculty members shall be subjected to a review once every five years by a review committee appointed by the executive council.
Lessons from Japan’s tsunami warning system

Churu Sudun Kasturi
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NEW DELHI: Experts say Japan’s tsunami warning system won a seemingly impossible race against giant ocean waves, offering possible lessons to countries like India.

The Japan Meteorological Agency put out its first tsunami warning with details of which prefectures were likely to face the most dangerous waves, at 2:49pm just three minutes after the quake on March 11.

A detailed warning listing the height of waves likely to strike each prefecture and the time of arrival of the tsunami at each place followed a minute later at 2:50pm. The warnings were too late for Iwate prefecture, where the tsunami struck first at 2:49 PM, but beat the waves to all other prefectures.

"...This is the best timing I have seen for a tsunami warning system, and is an example for all of us," Sri Lankan tsunami expert Rohan Samarajiva said.

Japan’s timing is significant for countries such as India and Sri Lanka because the nearest fault-line in the Indian Ocean lies near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. While Japan is forced to face tsunamis—generated just off its coast—India has up to 120 minutes before a tele-tsunami (long-distance tsunami) hits the Tamil Nadu coast.

India’s tsunami warning system is how much better than it was in 2004. But there are things to learn from the Japanese.

PK Bhaskaran
IIT-Kharagpur professor

Reducing the time needed for issuing warnings increases the time available for evacuations, experts said. Indonesia took 14 minutes to issue warnings about the 2004 tsunami off Sumatra.

The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services took eight minutes to put out its first bulletin on the Japan quake last Friday. The key to the Japanese success appears to lie in pre-analysed models that allowed a fully automated warning system to make near-immediate announcements, the experts said.

"India’s tsunami warning system is now much better than it was in 2004. But there are things to learn from the Japanese..." IIT Kharagpur professor PK Bhaskaran said.

The process of warnings involves sensors on the ocean bed picking up wave signals, transmitting them to land stations, evaluating the wave height and time before the tsunami hits land, and obtaining clearances for evacuation.
Dr Manika Khanna has granted Archana, 25, and Manttu Charan Jana, 30, what nature denied. It’s because of her medical expertise that the childless couple are expecting a baby later this week.

Infertility affects one in 10 couples worldwide, of which 12-20 million live in India, says the World Health Organisation. Through in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) techniques — popularly referred to as test-tube babies — still does not promise 100 per cent success, advances ensure childless couples have a greater chance of conceiving today than ever before. Some clinics in India show 50 per cent success, compared to the global average of 40 per cent.

The IVF procedure involves extracting an egg from a woman and fertilising it in a lab-dish using the husband’s or donated sperm. When the egg divides and develops into an early-stage embryo, it is inserted into the uterus where it develops into a baby.

“About 10-15 per cent of our clients have age-related infertility. Urban working women want to have children late, little realising that fertility starts declining after 33 years,” says Dr. Snehal Sinha, senior consultant, IVF at Indira Pratibha Apollo Hospital.

“When each passing year after 33, the graph of success rate for IVF goes down. And beyond 40 years, it is only 6-7 per cent,” says Dr Khanna. Other common causes for infertility are blocked fallopian tubes due to tuberculosi, male infertility (contributing to up to 45 per cent), hormonal imbalance and, in some cases, fibroids in the uterus.

With most couples thinking of starting a family after the age of 35, infertility clinics are generally the place to start.

But IVF centres require physical and emotional rigour that can test the toughest of couples.

Soma Sharma, a housewife from Shastri Nagar in Delhi, had twin sons in February after undergoing IVF treatment. “There were no side effects whatsoever due to injections, but waiting for the results of the treatment has been harrowing. I was so desperate for a baby after undergoing weeks of injections,” says Sharma.

“Also, though the hormone being injected will be a problem growning till my pregnancy was confirmed. Then, nothing mattered,” she says.

Says Dr Khanna, practising IVF specialist for the last eight years, “Every single step (see box), from taking out a woman’s eggs to introducing the embryos into her womb is crucial. We just cannot afford any mistake.”

And it is not just the procedural part that is important. Equally important is the counselling for both the husband and the wife.

Says Jara, a jewellery designer from Trichipur, who is expecting his first child this week, “The period immediately after the first cycle, which did not yield results, was bad. We were heartbroken, but counselling saw us through,” he says.

With the cost ranging between Rs 60,000 to 2 lakh per cycle, everyone cannot afford treatment. Only two government hospitals — All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Maulana Azad Medical College — offer IVF services, which cost between Rs 30,000 to 60,000 per cycle. “The easiest option remains hoping at least one child before 30 and if you have trouble conceiving after that age, visit an IVF specialist as early as possible,” says Dr Khanna.

(Names of patients changed to protect their privacy)
How Quake-Resistant Are Our Skyscrapers?

Vertical growth helps economies, says some urban planners. But do we have proper building codes in place? Ravi Teja Sharma finds out

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HE BEST of some of the tallest buildings in Delhi are slowly shaking violently during the recent earthquakes. It is a reminder of how far ahead earthquake engineering has come. None of them fell. These buildings were designed to sway, but not collapse. Considering the number of earthquakes that have hit Delhi and the kind of premium there is on verticality in that small country, engineers have tried hard to perfect the art of earthquake engineering and have put in very high standards to be followed.

As India urbanises, similar pressures will come into play on our cities as well as the pressure of going vertical. In fact, in many cities it has already started to happen. Mumbai already has a few 10-storey buildings. There is talk of a 100-floor building in Hyderabad. Gurgaon, near Delhi, is already a city of skyscrapers of all sizes. So, what is the kind of high-quality code for earthquake-resistant structures?

The inadequacy is not in our building codes. It's more to do with the implementation," says Shy Sheth, managing director, Stilts Consultants, which provides consulting services in structural and civil engineering.

The need for high-rises seems to have been recognised by various states across the country with new master plans en- fowtoring it. Cities are also going more liberal in floor area ratio (FAR), which will certainly promote high-rises. An example is the Delhi master plan 2021 that talks about increasing population density in existing areas of the city by increasing floor area.

New developments in the city will be high-rises.

Noida, too, is getting ready to grow vertically. Increasing the FAR due to the ratio between total built-up area and area on which the building is constructed from 2.5 to 3, according to a given plot. For green buildings, FAR is up from 2.7 to 3.2.

The great shortage of land in the country. We have 17 percent of the world's population but only 2 percent of the world's land," says Arun Maira, member, Planning Commission, who looks at urban affairs. We need land for agriculture, housing, regional transportation and for people to live. In cities, high-rises could accommodate the need for housing and workplaces.

"Despite these high-rise buildings, the building code of Indian Standard (IS) 1893 in place, which prescribes the optimal standards that need to be used on buildings in different seismic zones across the country. The country is divided into four zones: Zone 3, with 5 being the highest risk zone. Delhi and Noida fall in Zone 4, Mumbai in Zone 3, Bangalore in Zone 2 and Gurgaon in Zone 1.

The National Building Code 2015 incorporates all these practices," says Mrinalini Surendra, additional director general at BIS. In fact, the code is under constant review by BIS, taking into account new research findings and learning from earthquakes in other parts of the world. The earthquake engineering section contains that has members from IIT, NITC, tall buildings and other stakeholders, whose every year in relook the earthquake codes.

Our code is considered to be one of the better codes internationally. Every few years we have been studying and modifying them to come at par with the international standards," says Arun Maira, chairman of the BIS sectional committee and national seismic advisor, home ministry.

But these codes are not enforceable themselves. They are recommendations by the BIS. The building codes of every city govern how construction happens and it is in these bylaws that the earthquake codes find their legal sanction.

"While most developers will not risk their reputation by following these codes, smaller developers in the IT, IT parks and even in some big cities might not take them seriously. You cannot penalise everyone. That culture is present in India," says Sheth.

Before constructing, a developer, big or small has to get the structural design cleared by the municipal authorities.

There are mechanisms in place in many cities that require builders to get certification from registered structural engineers. Municipalities themselves might not have the resources to check if you are following the code. In many smaller cities though, there is no mechanism for code compliance. "Many municipalities have not made these guidelines mandatory," says Shy Sheth, managing director of Taylor Dresner India, which sets earthquake protection devices for high-rises.

The gap areas are implementation and the legal regime. "We don't have a regime in which we say that those who don't comply, they should be punished," says Gagan Singh, CEO, project developer firm, Shree Lala Sanand India. For them, a 10-15 percent difference in cost of building an earthquake-resistant structure versus a regular structure would make a lot of difference.

As the recently announced 40-storeyed tower in Mumbai, developers are getting in structural design cleared by Noida Authority and have also got a clearance from India. Though Noida falls in seismic zone 4, the company is planning to build according to zone 3 specifications. But there are additional requirements. We have now sent our designs to BIS for vetting, which is now in Zone 4," says RB Arora, managing director of Supertech.

Now we are concerned about the safety of high-rises during an earthquake is very well placed, low-rise is more highly thought of while talking about earthquake hazards.

"It is a myth that smaller buildings are safer. Smaller buildings are usually designed very badly even for just gravity loads," says Sheth. So in the event of an earthquake, smaller buildings are usually more severe hit as was seen in Bhuj and Akhnoor.

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Why business schools were jittery

While the government favours more regulations, management institutes say nothing should dilute their autonomy

A COURT verdict may have put into pause mode the government's efforts to do away with one-year management courses and to bring in more transparency in the running of autonomous management institutes in India. But it has brought to the fore the crying need for a mechanism, self-regulatory or otherwise, to check malpractices in such institutes.

On March 17, the Supreme Court stayed a notification issued a few months ago by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) that envisaged greater government role in autonomous business schools following appeals by such institutes. They contended that AICTE, the federal body that governs technical education in the country, took decisions on some controversial provisions of the notification when enough members were not present.

The eight provisions in the notification called for a much greater role of respective state governments in the running of B-schools besides setting some rules for admission tests and duration of the management courses. The council, which had received numerous complaints from many students and parents, was looking forward to regulating almost every aspect of running a management institute—fee structure, duration of the programme, curriculum and examinations.

SS Mantha, chairman, AICTE, says the notification was issued because "there is no regulation whatsoever" in autonomous management schools, much to the anguish of students who are forced to pay very high fees for pursuing studies there. "What we did was for the benefit of the public. The students and their parents. What is the problem if these institutes are governed by the state?" asks Mantha.

Sure, AICTE's decision incurred the wrath of B-schools, who charge the AICTE with trying to "dilute their autonomy". A person associated with one such school, who asked not to be named, says the AICTE had, over the years, "recklessly" given approval to "sub-standard" institutions.

Claims Harvansh Chaturvedi, director, BITS Pilani, of a "rogue" AICTE power abuse, "They tried to punish the good schools because they couldn't (or didn't) punish the bad ones."

Chaturvedi is alternative president, Education Promotion Society of India, which along with the Association of Indian Management Schools, had petitioned the apex court against the notification. He says he is in possession of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2010 when the controversial provisions were put on the table. Chaturvedi denies that the meeting was held and the crucial decision was taken "without a quorum."

Interestingly, the dearth of regulations in management education in India has been a cause for worry. According to figures provided by Career Launcher, a management test preparation company, there are approximately 3000 MBA colleges in India. "Very optimistically, only 150 of these provide quality education," says chairman and co-founder, Gunatit Pun.

FICCI general secretary Dr Rajiv Kumar proposed a self-regulatory mechanism which can be adopted by management institutions at will. "It is just a beginning of an idea; an immediate step to avoid both no regulation and over regulation," he says. However, with a wide disparity between demand and supply and countless sub-standard colleges, self-regulation doesn't actually seem to be a viable option.

Consider this. According to KPMG, the total number of seats in top 40 B-schools is around 10,500. The number of seats available in the good ones is far less than 5% of the MBA applicants. An increasing awareness and the premium commanded by management students in the job market have led to an upsurge in demand for management education in India.

The number of students who took the common admission test (CAT) conducted by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) has been steadily rising till 2009, touching almost 2.5 lakh. After the test went online, the number went down in 2010 to approximately 1.86 lakh candidates. The number of Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) applicants from India is also growing. In 2009, 30,093 Indians appeared for GMAT, a 128% increase in five years.

As is well known, the country's corporate sector wants MBA executives, even at the lower levels, to have an overall knowledge of the corporate world. But how to ensure students don't fall into another "trap"?

TV Mohandas Pai, board member and director, IIM Bangalore, offers some unique suggestions which go beyond self, over and under regulation.

"The AICTE can keep a watch on new institutions for the initial years. These and the old institutes can be regularly rated by an independent body like Credai. To tackle the menace of high fees, AICTE can come up with scholarships." Looks like a workable suggestion indeed!

Sunanda Podem
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Mr Ramanujam Sridhar (left), CEO, brand-comm; Mr Pradipta K. Mohapatra, Chairman, Coaching Foundation India; and Dr Sandhya Shekhar, CEO, IIT Madras Research Park, at the MMA women manager’s convention 2011, in Chennai on Saturday. — Bijoy Ghosh

Reward managers offering women flexibility at work

Our Bureau
Chennai, March 19

Managers who promote women to continue their career by offering them flexibility to work from home or flexi-timing must be rewarded, says Mr Ramanujam Sridhar, CEO, brand-comm, while speaking on the topic ‘Level Playing Field or Different Paths’. Mr Sridhar was addressing the Madras Management Women Manager’s Convention 2011.

Organisations usually reward only the managers who are ‘go-getters’ but companies must recognise and promote managers who manage such issues keeping the long-term perspective, he said.

Mr Ramanujam said that it was imperative for a woman to find a spouse who is supportive of her career. “Do not underestimate the power of the spouse in a women’s career development,” he said.

Talking about whether women and men were equal, Dr Sandhya Shekhar, CEO, IIT Madras Research Park, said statistics show that there is an improvement in women working at the entry level to 37 per cent in 2008 from 30 per cent in 2006. However, it dramatically fell to 2.25 per cent, implying that very few women make it to the top. “This is a serious issue,” she said.

According to another statistics, women across the world constitute two-third of its work hours and only earn one-tenth of the world income and just own one-hundredth of world property.

While the above statistics may be grim it is also seen that women control 80 per cent of the household spending, including retail purchases and groceries. If you thought men decided on what car to buy, think again, close to 85 per cent of all automobiles purchased was influenced by women.

Dr Sandhya Shekhar said that it is not whether women and men are equal but it is about equivalence, the harmonising and synergy between the two genders.
Moon’s date
with earth
a splendid
spectacle

Shining bright
on starry night
A rare full moon was at its closest distance to earth in the last two decades.

SUPERMOON ON SHOW
Supermoons are basically the occurrence of a full moon when it is at its lunar perigee – the closest distance in its orbit to earth.

Can appear 14% wider and 30% brighter than at apogee.

CLOSEST PERIGEE FULL MOONS
1993, March 19 356,548 km
2001, February 7 356,852 km
2010, January 30 355,592 km
2013, March 19 354,077 km
2016, November 14 356,311 km
2034, November 25 356,447 km

AS YOU slept last night, the moon was closest to you than at any time in the last 18 years.

Ever since the dawn of mankind, the moon has exerted a powerful grip on our imaginations. Its proximity to our planet, its changing shape and its extraordinary beauty, have all had a profound impact on our culture.

At around 12:40 AM on Sunday, our object of fascination was closer to our planet than at any time since 1993.

The moon that appeared in the sky was much bigger and more brighter and beautiful than usual.

This phenomenon was first dubbed the ‘supermoon’ by American astrologer Richard Nolle in the 1980s.

Nolle also claimed that extreme occurrences of the supermoon can provoke tidal waves, earthquakes and storms.

“Supermoon is a situation when the moon is slightly closer to the earth in its orbit. This happens in the full moon phase after 18 years,” Mila Mitra, scientific officer and event head at the NGO Science Popularization Association of Communicators and Educators (SPACE), said.

“The moon was around 14 per cent bigger and 30 per cent brighter as compared to other full moons during the year,” an expert said.

The moon’s orbit around the earth is extremely complex, following an elliptical, or oval, pattern as opposed to a circular one. That means that at different stages, it can be significantly closer or farther away from us.

THE LUNAR MARVEL:
Earth’s only satellite was closest to it early on Sunday.

The moon was 14% bigger & 30% brighter

At a lunar perigee — the word used to describe the point when it is at its closest to the earth — the moon is about 220,000 miles away. Whereas during a lunar apogee — when it is farthest away — the distance is about 264,000 miles.

Though the gap between the perigee and apogee might not seem huge, at moments such as last night’s, the moon appears much larger, thanks to an optical illusion.

Since it is low on the horizon, the moon looks vast in comparison to other objects in the distance, such as trees, hills or buildings.

The last full moon so big and close to earth occurred in March, 1993.

While this year’s supermoon might yank on some tides, the super perigee moon won’t trigger natural disasters or werewolf uprisings, experts say.

Daily Mail and agencies
Tighter norms for inspection of med colleges

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: The days of unscrupulous assessment of medical colleges by inspectors of the Medical Council of India could soon be over.

For the first time, members of the MCI or its inspectors would not know before hand which colleges they are to assess on a particular day till the morning of the inspection.

In order to put an end to the practice of fake medical colleges being tipped off before inspection so that they can put in place fake faculty, false patients and hired infrastructure like libraries, the six-member governing body of the MCI has tied up with the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology to create a special software that will randomly choose which colleges will be inspected on a particular day and who the inspectors would be.

The procedure was given the go ahead by Union health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad a week ago and 8-10 medical colleges have already been inspected this way. Under the new procedure, the inspectors are given a sealed envelope on the morning of the inspection, while on the way to the airport or station which contains information on which college they have to inspect and which state it is in.

This way, medical colleges don’t have time in advance to prepare for the inspection and the MCI team gets the real picture of how the college is being run and whether it should be given registration or be allowed to increase undergraduate and post-graduate seats on the basis of faculty, infrastructure and patients available.

MCI governing body member Dr Ranjit Roychoudhury told TOI that 130 more inspections will be done this way. “False patients and faculty members are at present brought in hordes in buses on the morning of the inspection by event managers for those who run the colleges to show the inspection team that they have the required faculty manpower and infrastructure to run a medical college.”