

EDITORIAL***BEWARE ! A SILENT INVASION IS ON***

Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation have come to stay, though their impact is yet to be felt in many fields of activity. Industry in India has experienced its full impact and is facing the situation / consequences to the best of its ability & strength. Though not much notice has been taken so far, it is seen that as a consequence of globalisation, a silent invasion is on, on the higher Education System in India.

From 1980's onwards, foreign Universities from Australia, UK & USA have undertaken a regular campaign in India to attract Indian students to their Universities by offering them easily available visas, simple admission procedures, permission to work upto 20 hours / week to supplement educational costs, a flexible educational system with relevant curriculum consistent with the market needs & forces, large research funds and excellent infrastructure. It will be worthwhile and interesting to know, how successful these attempts were.

Probably encouraged by these results, they have now gone a step further by trying to export education to India. They arrange campus interviews in collaboration with local organisations, enrol students, arrange for instructions, hold examinations at various centres in India & award Diplomas & Degrees. As usual, foreign Diplomas & Degrees are rated higher in Indian market, even today, after 50 years of independence. This export of higher education due to globalisation almost amounts to a silent invasion. If so, are we aware of it; Have we taken notice of this and do we have any plans / strategy to meet this challenging situation ?

Fortunetely, this situation has been taken note of, not by AICTE, UGC or the Universities who should have been alert & watchful, but by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). They called a meeting of the officials of the apex

educational bodies and are trying to evolve a strategy to counter this educational invasion. MHRD & the apex organisations will have to display all their skill, competence and capability to convert this threat into an opportunity. It is reported that the MHRD is planning to market "Indian Education" as a "brand" in "the booming international market" and is chalking out a strategy to increase the intake of foreign students on the one hand and to encourage our institutions to open campuses abroad. MHRD sees this as an opportunity to generate additional resources for this cash starved sector. Besides generating foreign exchange, MHRD officials claim, this strategy can also boost quality of Indian Education. MHRD is also planning to constitute a committee for promotion of Indian Education abroad.

So far so good. The MHRD seems to have failed to notice the danger in the attempt by foreign countries to export education to India, which is a sort of an invasion. Also they expect quality to grow as a result of this strategy. But one should note that Quality does not happen. It has to be planned & inducted. Unless we focus on Quality & put it at the top of our agenda, all this strategy to earn foreign exchange will fail.

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