Education Jagat

VOL. 11 ISSUE 15
NCR Edition - *Globally Circulated*

"India's Independent Education Voice, Connecting the World"

1 > 15 November 2026, PAGES > 6 ₹5/-
>FORTNIGHTLY<

INDIA International Column'



Olha P. Enzelt
Educationist
Ternopil - **Ukraine**

A Major Test of the Credibility of India's Examination System



Focus on the reforms proposed by the task force chaired by Nandan Nilekani, as students seek secure, transparent and fair examinations

EJ - *Ravi Arya*

India's examination system stands at a critical juncture. A task force constituted by the central government to strengthen the security, transparency and credibility of public examinations is considering reforms. Its findings could shape the future of the country's major entrance examinations, including NEET-UG.

A six-member high-level task force chaired by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani was formed in July 2026 following controversies related to the fairness and credibility of examinations. The committee had held around 18 meetings and 40 consultation sessions and received more than 50,000 suggestions from various stakeholders. Its final report was expected by the end of October.

Key areas under discussion include examination security, the use of technology, the management of examination centres, institutional accountability and a clear division of responsibilities among examination-conducting agencies. Proposals under consideration include expanding computer-based examinations, strengthening digital security and ensuring better access to secure examination centres.

For students, the importance of these reforms extends beyond arrangements on the day of the examination. Competitive examinations determine access to medical colleges, universities, scholarships and future careers. Any shortcomings in examination security or transparency can expose students and their families to uncertainty, financial pressure and mental distress.

However, technological changes alone will not be sufficient. Reliable internet connectivity, adequate computers, trained staff and secure examination centres are also essential in rural and economically disadvantaged areas. Clear rules, timely information, effective grievance redressal and accountability for irregularities must also be ensured.

The real test of the reforms will lie in their implementation. Students and parents will assess the changes not by the number of announcements, but by how fair, secure and reliable the examinations actually become.

As India prepares for its next examination cycle, restoring public trust should be the most important objective of these reforms.

Gujarat's Govt. Schools Face Basic Infrastructure Crisis: 2,258 Schools Lack Functional Girls' Toilets, 6,230 Have no Playgrounds



EJ News - *Mahesh Sharma*

While India continues to focus on modernising its education system through digital classrooms, smart schools and technology-driven learning, government data from Gujarat highlights persistent gaps in basic school infrastructure. Thousands of students continue to study in institutions where essential facilities, including functional toilets and playgrounds, remain unavailable.

According to the Ministry of Education's UDISE+ 2025–26 data, out of 53,425 schools in Gujarat, 2,258 schools either do not have girls' toilets or have toilets that are non-functional. Of these, 1,932 schools reportedly have no girls' toilet facility at all. Meanwhile, 400 schools lack functional toilet facilities for boys.

These figures raise serious concerns not only about basic infra-

>> Contd. p.4..

Key Points

- *Around 6,230 government schools have no playgrounds.*
- *Poor sanitation facilities raise concerns about girls' health, dignity and attendance.*
- *Modernisation initiatives must be supported by essential infrastructure and regular maintenance.*
- *Clear timelines and accountability are needed to ensure safe and functional school facilities.*

Costly Education, Broken Dreams in India



EJ - *Yatendra Singh*

Every year, millions of students leave their homes to prepare for competitive examinations, dreaming of becoming doctors, government officers or professionals in prestigious fields. They carry with them their families' hopes, years of hard work and aspirations for a better future. However, when coaching fees, accommodation, food and study materials cost far more than their families can afford, these dreams can turn into a struggle for survival.

A media investigation concerning the financial difficulties of students preparing for examinations such as NEET and SSC in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, has brought this issue into focus. The report highlights the challenges faced by students who struggle even to arrange the money needed to continue their education. Allegations have also emerged that, in some cases, students have been driven to the point of giving blood in exchange for money.

If financial hardship forces a student to put their health at risk, the issue extends beyond individual circumstances. It raises serious

>> Contd. p.4..

- *The Economic Burden of Education*
- *Rising school and college fees.*
- *Financial pressure on poor and middle-class families.*
- *Limited educational opportunities for talented students from economically weaker backgrounds.*
- *Growing inequality in access to quality education.*

Indian Institute of School Psychology
School Counselling & Guidance
35 KPC, West Marredpally, Secunderabad- 500026, T.S. (India)



JOIN OUR Nationally & Internationally Accredited Specialist Professional Qualifications, Distance mode Studies Program in Counselling & Psychotherapists Practices

1·Masters Professional Counsellors & Psychotherapists Studies Program,
2.MSc Professional School Counsellors' Studies Program

B.PG Diplomas
1.CBT & ITs' selected Practices,
2.Understanding Mental Health & Counselling,
3.Child Psychology-Developmental Considerations (Emphasis for Parenting skills improvements / for Preschoolers/nursery / montessori Educators' Intuitive usage)
4.Counselling children & Adolescents,

Diplomas - SEN -EVIDENCE BASED Guidelines for Single -Mental Disorders
1.ADHD 2.DYSLEXIA 3.AUTISM

DIPLOMAS IN
1.Child & Adolescent Psychotherapeutic Counselling, 2.Couples & Relationship Therapy, 3.Mental health Professionals (a) Parental complaints child problematic Behavioural concerns (b) Dyslexia (a) ADHD, (c) Autism, (d) e- Learning Elderly peoples" health issues-

Contact : 040 - 27800590, 27800010, 9394323038
h.m.kulshrestha@gmail.com, vanideepi@gmail.com, www.schoolcounsellorsindia.org

Challenges of Artificial Intelligence, or New Horizons for Education?





Olha P. Enzelt
Educationist
Ternopil **- Ukraine**

Mathematics Teacher, Highest Qualification Category; Teacher-Methodologist; Methodologist at the Ternopil Educational Center of the State Institution School of Superheroes,Finalist (Top 10) of the Global Teacher Prize Ukraine 2024; Member of the EdEra Educational Council; Author of 15 methodological guides, scholarly articles, and educational webinars; Expert in institutional audits for the State Service for Education Quality of Ukraine; Expert in evaluating mathematics teachers; practical experience during teacher certification; Active participant in the EdCamp movement.

Does it feel like time is flying faster than ever before? It certainly does to me. We are living in an era of rapid technological breakthroughs, intense reforms, and artificial intelligence. AI is already everywhere. It has swiftly woven itself into the daily life of Ukrainian schools.

Back in August 2023, during a curriculum meeting, I listened with caution to the idea that someone—or something—could create a presentation for me and even source the information for it. Yet, by August 2024, when I ranked among the top 50 teachers according to the National Global Teacher Prize Ukraine 2024, the highlight of my video introduction was an interview conducted by an AI-generated graduate of the class of 2030. Later, when I made it to the top ten, one of my tasks was to write an article on utilizing AI in the educational process.

Today is Oct. 2026, and artificial intelligence has integrated into our lives so deeply that we are no longer surprised by it. This past June, I ran into a retired colleague at a store. She is nearly 70 years old but highly tech-savvy. She was proudly sharing how she uses Gemini to its full potential, asking it about everything: from cooking recipes to new interesting facts and product price comparisons.

So, artificial intelligence is already here with us; it is no longer some distant concept. That is precisely why we can no longer deny or ban it—after all, forbidden fruit is always the sweetest. Today, nearly 1 billion users, which is roughly one in every eleven people worldwide, use ChatGPT weekly. Many of them are active participants in the education system.

In Ukraine, AI has become a standard working tool for educators over the past three years. Almost 60% of surveyed teachers use AI services weekly, and 16.62% use them daily. Therefore, our mission is to learn how to use it constructively and teach our students to do the same. Artificial intelligence helps personalize learning, quickly generate materials, save time, and unlock new formats of engagement with students.

However, hand in hand with these opportunities come challenges. Let's talk about these challenges and the opportunities—or rather, the new paths and horizons—they open up for us as educators. One of the challenges we face is that certain professions are fading into oblivion due to the rise of AI, while entirely new ones are emerging. As educators, we are forced to respond to these changes proactively, swiftly shifting the focus of our career counseling, elective courses, and specialized programs. Yet, if we tackle this far-from-simple challenge quickly and strategically, it will help us raise more than just consumers of knowledge—we will shape the architects of our country's future.

The next challenge is vital and currently sparks intense debate within the educational community: the rapid spread of AI outpaces the establishment of clear rules for its application. Today, there is an urgent need for large-scale research to develop guidelines for teachers and parents on navigating AI. Despite its active adoption, most Ukrainian schools still lack clear usage policies. Nearly 58% of students are unaware of any official AI policies in their educational institutions. Among teachers, only 10.04% work in schools with written, approved AI policies, while another 58.19% noted that they rely solely on verbal agreements.

In my opinion, such research should be conducted in every single educational institution. It must engage all participants in the educational process: teachers, parents, and students. This study would reveal exactly how Ukrainian teenagers aged 12–17 use AI. It is not just about how often or for what purpose they use it, but also about how AI impacts their emotional well-being and whether students turn to it for psychological support.

Through this research, we could also explore how educators use AI and what their stance on it is. Parents must not be left out either. Do they encourage their children to use AI, or do they forbid it? The final outcome should provide not only an analytical report but also policy recommendations—a practical toolkit for the safe and responsible use of AI by teenagers, parents, and teachers alike. It is also worth addressing academic integrity. The issue of academic integrity has existed for as long as students have. First, it was cheating from paper cheat sheets, then came calculators, graphic calculators, and finally, in recent years, artificial intelligence has completely taken over the educational space. Interestingly, back in 2022, my students had never even heard of AI. Yet, by August 2023, teachers began using AI to ease their routine workloads, and that was exactly when students spotted the potential of chatbots as well. According to my observations, the peak of AI integration in education occurred between 2024 and 2025. Every single educator was asking themselves: are students actually doing their homework on their own, or are they just cheating? Truth be told, they are cheating too.

The core issue is not the rise of ChatGPT, but rather that we continue to assign tasks that can be completed by a single line of code. If a homework assignment can be solved with just one prompt to a neural network, then that assignment is utterly meaningless. It is hollow; it doesn't teach how to think. Instead, it teaches how to simulate productivity for the sake of a grade, and how to lie to gain approval.

Today, critical thinking must become the ultimate value. This is now a teacher's primary mission: to integrate AI into lessons while simultaneously teaching children how to think critically.

Let me share a few examples of how I use AI in my classroom. My students absolutely love it when I print out a task that AI completed with errors; they have to spot those mistakes and justify their reasoning. That is where real excitement sparks! Students are also deeply engaged by another task: writing a prompt for AI to generate intriguing challenges on the topic we are currently studying. We then gather all the tasks the students bring to class, compile them into a booklet, and solve them. Another approach is printing out ChatGPT-generated problems on an A4 sheet but leaving gaps in certain places. Students have to rack their brains to fill in those blanks to achieve the correct result. When doing this, I always make sure to inform them that the foundational material was prepared by ChatGPT. It is also fascinating to give them tasks processed by different chatbots—such as ChatGPT and Gemini. The students then have to analyze the outputs, compare the explanations of both neural networks, and draw their own conclusions.

Researchers emphasize that within just three years, Ukrainian education has journeyed from a basic introduction to AI to its everyday application. Now, the main objective is to foster a shared culture of its responsible use. This involves developing academic integrity, critical thinking, and pedagogical autonomy, as well as establishing clear school policies and systemic professional development for teachers.

Artificial intelligence should amplify the work of teachers, not replace them. Encouragement, motivation, mentorship, and the human connection between student and educator remain the bedrock of quality education.

No Job, No Experience? Start Building It Now

How Students and Fresh Graduates Can Develop Practical Skills, Build Confidence and Improve Their Employability





Dr. Smitha Shine
Head, D.M
Hyderabad **- India**

Every fresher knows the trap. You apply for a job and it asks for experience. You have none, because no one has hired you yet. A CV full of marks and course certificates suddenly looks thin. But having no job title doesn't mean having no experience. It usually means you haven't looked for it yet.

The gap is real. Mercer | Mettl's India's Graduate Skill Index 2025 found that only 42.6% of the graduates it assessed in 2024 were employable, down from 44.3% in 2023. Degrees alone, in other words, aren't enough. Deloitte India's Campus Workforce Trends 2026 adds another perspective: 86% of surveyed organisations said AI or agentic AI is transforming their recruitment, and internship-to-offer conversions are improving across degree programmes. These findings highlight the importance of demonstrating relevant abilities and gaining practical exposure. Employers want proof that you can do the work.

Start with what you already have

Organising a college event involves planning, coordination, and teamwork. Managing a student club's social media page develops communication and digital marketing skills. Conducting a survey builds research and analytical abilities. Teaching a classmate requires subject knowledge and clear communication.Such activities become valuable when you can explain your responsibilities, decisions, and results. None of it counts unless you can articulate what you did, what you decided, and what the outcome was. Simply writing "Committee member" or listing participation tells a recruiter nothing.

Build one project that resembles real work.

Instead of collecting certificates without applying the knowledge, complete one meaningful, job-related project. An HR aspirant could prepare a recruitment tracker; a marketing student could develop a campaign for a local business; a finance student could analyse a company's financial performance; and a business analytics student could examine a public dataset and present the findings.

Each project should answer five questions: What problem did I address? What did I do? Which tools did I use? What was the outcome? What did I learn?

Preserve your reports, presentations, spreadsheets, or other work samples as evidence of your capabilities.

Look beyond the usual routes

Internships remain valuable, but they are not the only route to practical exposure. Volunteering, freelance assignments, part-time work, college responsibilities and industry-based projects can also help students understand professional expectations.

Small businesses, start-ups and non-governmental organisations may need assistance with research, social media, documentation, surveys or basic data management. Students can approach them with a specific, realistic offer rather than simply asking for an opportunity.

Before accepting an assignment, clarify the scope of work, deadlines, supervision and whether the arrangement is paid, unpaid or voluntary. Students should avoid organisations that demand unreasonable unpaid labour or promise employment in exchange for inappropriate fees. Any work undertaken should respect confidentiality, professional ethics and applicable rules.

Even a modest, genuine assignment can build confidence, provide useful references and help students explain their capabilities during interviews.

Track your progress, not your certificates:

Set a monthly goal: complete one practical project, gain one real-world experience, record one measurable achievement, and develop one relevant skill. Describe your work honestly, without presenting classroom exercises as professional employment or exaggerating results.

The goal isn't to make your CV look good. It's to be ready for the work itself. Your first job will give you formal experience, but the habits behind it — learning, solving problems, and taking responsibility — can start today. So stop asking where you'll get experience, and ask what useful thing you can do this week.

School Education vs Coaching Culture



EJ - *Ashu Tyagi*

Focus:

- ***The Growing Dependence on Private Coaching.***
- ***The increasing influence of coaching institutes over school education.***
- ***Students' growing dependence on coaching for IIT-JEE and NEET preparation.***
- ***Whether schools are losing their importance as centres of effective learning.***
- ***The commercialisation of competitive exam preparation.***
- ***The impact of coaching culture on students' academic pressure, creativity and overall development.***

India's competitive examination system is facing an important question: are students being rewarded for genuine understanding of school subjects, or for mastering the shortcuts and repeated question patterns taught by private coaching centres?

The issue has gained renewed attention following the 382nd Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, presented on October 9, 2026. The report on reforms and strengthening of the National Testing Agency (NTA) raises concerns about the growing influence of coaching institutions on preparation for major entrance examinations, including NEET-UG, JEE (Main) and CUET. <Cite refs={["turn147436search0"]}/>

A Parallel Curriculum Outside the Classroom

The committee observed that the coaching industry has effectively created a parallel curriculum that can become more influential than the official school syllabus. According to the report, when entrance examinations test material beyond the NCERT or state-board curriculum, or reward rapid recall and pattern recognition developed through repetitive practice, students who receive specialised coaching may gain an advantage over those who depend primarily on school education.

This raises fundamental questions about the purpose of schooling. If students must attend separate coaching classes to feel adequately prepared for high-stakes entrance examinations, can the school system alone provide the academic foundation they need?

The concern is not that all coaching is unnecessary or harmful. Additional academic support can help students strengthen difficult concepts and prepare systematically. The challenge arises when coaching becomes an expected requirement rather than an optional source of support.

The Financial Burden on Families

The coaching-dependent model also raises questions of educational equality. The parliamentary committee highlighted the structural advantage enjoyed by students whose families can afford expensive coaching, study materials, accommodation and repeated mock examinations.

Students from economically weaker and lower-middle-income households may have comparable ability and determination but lack access to the same resources. When success depends heavily on access to private preparation, family income can influence educational opportunity.

For parents, the pressure is both financial and emotional. Families may divert substantial savings towards coaching in the hope of securing admission to a medical or engineering institution. Students, meanwhile, must balance school attendance, homework, coaching schedules and competitive examinations.

What the Parliamentary Committee Recommends

The committee recommended that the Ministry of Education establish specific and measurable standards to ensure that NEET-UG, JEE (Main) and CUET assess conceptual understanding based on the official school curriculum rather than rewarding techniques associated with coaching centres.

It also called for a regulatory framework for the coaching industry, with attention to fee transparency, safety standards and students' mental health. These are recommendations for policy action; their publication does not mean that the proposed measures have already been implemented.

Can Schools Become the Primary Place of Preparation?

The larger challenge is to strengthen classroom teaching so that students develop sound conceptual understanding before they begin intensive entrance-examination preparation. Teachers need appropriate training, updated learning resources and sufficient classroom time to explain concepts rather than merely complete the syllabus.

Examination authorities also need to ensure that question papers are aligned with published syllabi and test the application of knowledge fairly. A student should not have to depend on expensive coaching merely to understand the expected style of questions.

A meaningful reform would require cooperation among school boards, the NCERT, state education departments, examination authorities and higher-education institutions. Regular comparisons between examination papers and prescribed syllabi could help identify gaps and improve transparency.

The Question India Must Answer

The debate is not simply about whether coaching centres should exist. It is about whether quality school education can once again become the principal foundation for competitive success.

If students receive strong teaching in their classrooms, entrance examinations follow transparent syllabi, and coaching remains supplementary rather than indispensable, families may face less pressure to purchase expensive preparation packages.

The parliamentary committee has placed this issue firmly before policymakers. The next test will be implementation: whether examination design, school teaching and coaching regulation can be aligned to reward understanding, merit and equal opportunity.

KIET Organizes SEMICONCLAVE 2026 on "Silicon Bharat: India's Semiconductor Decade"



EJ- *Ghaziabad*

KIET Deemed to be University, organized SEMICONCLAVE 2026 under the theme "Silicon Bharat: India's Semiconductor Decade." Organized by the ECE VLSI Design Club (EVDC), in association with KIET Technology Business Incubator (KIET TBI), the event brought together industry experts, academic leaders, faculty members, and approximately 500 students to discuss semiconductor technologies, career opportunities, and India's expanding semiconductor ecosystem.

The inaugural session was graced by Prof. Nagaraj Ramrao, Vice-Chancellor; Dr. Manoj Goel, Pro-Vice-Chancellor; and Dr. Adesh Pandey, Director Academics. Dr. Rajendra Pratap, Vice President, Vervesemi Microelectronics Pvt. Ltd., attended as the chief guest.

Prof. Nagaraj Ramrao highlighted the semiconductor manufacturing process and the growing demand for VLSI technologies in India. Dr. Rajendra Pratap shared insights into semiconductor innovation and the importance of industry engagement.

The event was organized under the guidance of Dr. Vibhav Kumar Sachan, Dean, ECE and ECE (VLSI Design & Technology), with support from Mr. Saurav Kumar, General Manager, KIET TBI. Dr. Praveen Kumar, Associate Professor, ECE (VLSI Design & Technology), outlined the event's objectives, emphasizing industry–academia collaboration, practical skills, research, and indigenous innovation.

Experts associated with Synopsys Inc., Cadence Design Systems, STMicroelectronics, NXP Semiconductors, Qualcomm, Vervesemi Microelectronics, and AsicGuru Ventures participated in keynote sessions and panel discussions. Brain Domain Pte Ltd. sponsored the event.

Key sessions explored India's changing semiconductor landscape, the role of semiconductors in the AI revolution, and the application of Agentic AI in custom design. A panel discussion on industry-ready graduates highlighted employers' expectations, technical competencies, and practical skills.

Industry experts also interacted with EVDC students and visited KIET's Centre of Advanced VLSI Design, encouraging professional engagement and technical learning.

SEMICONCLAVE 2026 reinforced KIET's commitment to innovation, industry–academia collaboration, and developing skilled engineers to support India's semiconductor ambitions.

Five compulsory subjects, optional skill paper as a safety net in the CBSE Exam

EJ- *New Delhi*

Students taking up the Class 10 CBSE board exams in 2028 will have five compulsory subjects with the option of an additional skill paper, which will help them clear the examination even if they fail in subjects like mathematics, science or social science, said the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Thursday, while clarifiying its Scheme of Studies.

The clarification applies specifically to students studying in Class 9 in 2026-27, who will appear for their Class 10 board examinations in 2028. It does not affect the current batch. The board also said that interdisciplinary area and CT and AI modules will not be included in its Scheme of Studies.

"To align the introduction of this curricular area with the implementation schedule, the subject 'Individuals in Society' and the 'Modules of CT and AI' in Class 9 (2026-27) and the subject 'Environmental Education' in Class 10 (2027-28) shall not be part of the curriculum for these batches," Praggya M Singh, Director



(Academics), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), said in a communique to school principals.

"Vocational education shall continue to be a compulsory curricular area for students of Class 10 (2028 batch). To fulfil this requirement, students may opt for either the subject 'Kaushal Vikas' or any one of the 22 skill subjects notified by the board," she said.

"Our foremost priority is to safeguard students' interests by clearly communicating the academic and examination-related provisions well in advance. The emphasis is on encouraging students to focus on meaningful learning rather than solely on examinations," a source said.

Under the scheme, the five compulsory board-exam subjects will be two languages, mathematics, science and social science.

Students opting for any of the 22 skill subjects shall have to appear in the board examination in the respective skill subject in Class 10. The grades for that subject will be reflected in the marksheet issued by the Board, as per existing practice. Those opting for 'Kaushal Vikas' will undergo school-based internal assessment.



August 15 vs October 21: Historical Remembrance or a New Interpretation of Independence Day?



Subharti University's event and the demand to recognise October 21 as Independence Day raise questions; the distinction between historical recognition and national identity deserves scrutiny.

EJ - *Amit Tyagi*

India's history of independence is shaped by numerous movements, ideologies, sacrifices and struggles. From the mass movements led by Mahatma Gandhi to the armed struggle of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army (INA), the story of India's freedom is a convergence of diverse historical streams. While giving special recognition to a historical event is understandable, when an institution advocates recognising October 21 as Independence Day, its historical and national implications deserve careful examination.

Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut, organised the Akhand Bharat Independence Day Mahaparv on October 21, 2026. According to media reports, Dr. Atul Krishna, founder of the Subharti Group and a key figure behind the event, called for October 21 to be recognised as India's Independence Day. Students, educational institutions and representatives of various social organisations participated in the programme.

The Historical Significance of October 21

On October 21, 1943, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose established the Provisional Government of Azad Hind in Singapore. This was a significant event in the history of India's freedom struggle. The government proclaimed India's independence from British rule and provided a political foundation for the struggle of the Indian National Army. Official publications of the Government of India also recognise the importance of this event in the history of the independence movement.

However, historical significance and official recognition as a national Independence Day are two distinct matters. According to the official Government of India portal, August 15, 1947, marks the date when India gained independence from British rule. Therefore, acknowledging the historical contribution of October 21 and demanding its declaration as the national Independence Day are two different propositions.

Could Giving Special Importance to One Date Overshadow Other Strands of History?

The most important question arising from this event is whether the effort to highlight October 21 aims to give equal recognition to the diverse historical streams of India's freedom struggle or whether it seeks to introduce a new interpretation of the country's established national remembrance.

This question cannot be answered solely on the basis of the event's title or the statements of its organisers. An impartial assessment requires examining the programme's content, official statements and the organisers' stated objectives.

It would also be inappropriate to describe a university event, without evidence, as an alleged propaganda campaign or an attempt by an individual to improve their public image. Any such allegation would require concrete documentation, verified statements and evidence relating to the institution's activities.

A University's Responsibility Goes Beyond Organising Events

Universities are not merely institutions that organise ceremonies. They are expected to develop students' historical understanding, critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on evidence. Any event related to national history should clearly distinguish between established historical facts, the organisers' interpretations and demands that remain subjects of public debate.

Wider recognition of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army is important. At the same time, the contributions of Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and other figures and movements associated with the freedom struggle should also be understood within their proper historical contexts.

Questions That Deserve Answers

In the context of Subharti University's event, several questions merit public discussion:

Is the demand to recognise October 21 as Independence Day solely an effort to commemorate history, or does it also have a broader policy objective?

Will the organisers publicly clarify the historical and constitutional basis of this demand?

Are students being taught the differences and significance of August 15, 1947, and October 21, 1943, within a balanced historical framework?

Raising these questions does not amount to opposing an institution or an individual. Rather, it reflects the expectation of transparency on matters concerning history and education.

Conclusion

Honouring the contribution of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is an important part of understanding Indian history. At the same time, discussions about the official date of Independence Day and established national historical narratives must be grounded in facts.

Any university initiative should be evaluated on the basis of its documented objectives, public statements and educational contribution—not merely the title of its event or unverified allegations concerning an individual.

JEE Main 2027: Free Online Platforms to Boost Preparation

EJ - *New Delhi*

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has started the application process for the forthcoming Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main 2027 session 1. The exam will be conducted offline on January 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 28 in computer-based test (CBT) mode at various exam centres across India and abroad.

Every year, over a million students appear for the JEE Main to clinch a BTech seat in a top engineering institute in India. With less than three months remaining for the exam, students should now look to gear up their preparation with efficient study plans and personal guidance.

Candidates who are preparing for the JEE Main 2027 session 1 can take help from the online platforms mentioned below to further strengthen their preparation:

National Test Abhyas

Developed by NTA, the National Test Abhyas app offers free mock tests with an examination interface similar to the actual JEE Main. Students can download tests and attempt them offline, making preparation convenient even without internet access. Details are available at nta.ac.in.

Sathee

Launched by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with IIT Kanpur, SATHEE provides free video lectures, doubt-clearing sessions, mock tests and crash courses for JEE Main and Advanced aspirants. Students can access these resources at sathee.iitk.ac.in.

IIT-PAL

The IIT-Professor Assisted Learning initiative offers free lectures by IIT professors and subject experts. It covers Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology for Classes 11 and 12. Lectures are also available through Swayam Prabha channels. Visit iitpal.iitd.ac.in. The classes and live sessions are available online at IIT-PAL official portal, iitpal.iitd.ac.in.

Incorporating AI tools to accelerate JEE Main 2027 prep

The advancement of AI and the vast knowledge of how to use it among students these days give them an edge over candidates who appeared for the exam, say, five years ago. Whether you are stuck with a doubt late at night or struggling to follow your prepared study plan, AI tools can help you overcome these challenges.

As the debate over the 100% accuracy of AI tools continues, it is suggested not to rely wholly on their output. However, keeping AI tools as a friend that can cater to your doubts on occasion is not a bad idea either.

Aspirants can use these tools efficiently to draw up a structured study plan, create mnemonics for easy memorisation and even offer practice questions.

The JEE Main is a national-level engineering entrance exam conducted by NTA on behalf of the MoE for students seeking admission to undergraduate programs offered by the top NITs, IIITs, GFTIs, and other colleges which accept the exam scores.

Costly Education...

questions about equal access to education and the effectiveness of student welfare measures.

The Cost of Coaching: Is Financial Capacity Being Tested Before Talent?

Private coaching plays a significant role in the preparation of many competitive examination aspirants. Students preparing for examinations such as NEET may need to study for extended periods. In addition to coaching fees, they must pay for accommodation, food, books, test series and transportation.

For families with limited incomes, meeting all these expenses is difficult. Children from farming and daily-wage labourer families often depend on their parents' savings, loans or financial assistance from relatives to continue their preparation. When these resources become insufficient, students may face pressure to discontinue their studies or seek alternative ways to arrange money.

This raises an important question: should a student's success depend primarily on talent and hard work, or should the financial condition of their family continue to determine the opportunities available to them?

Allegations of Financially Motivated Blood Donation Raise Concerns

A media investigation concerning Prayagraj refers to the account of a NEET aspirant whose financial difficulties were linked to the fear of losing an educational opportunity. The report also raises allegations involving intermediaries who allegedly offered money in exchange for arranging blood, along with claims concerning the use of documents. These allegations require independent verification and responses from the parties concerned. No individual or institution should be held guilty without an appropriate investigation. Nevertheless, such allegations raise an important question: how effectively are existing support systems identifying and assisting students facing severe financial distress?

Blood donation and all procedures involving blood must comply with established medical standards. Undertaking unsafe procedures because of financial pressure can expose students to serious health risks.

Government Schemes and Student Support: How Effective Are They?

Scholarships, government educational initiatives and free coaching programmes are important tools for supporting students from economically weaker backgrounds. In Uttar Pradesh, the Chief Minister Abhyudaya Scheme has also been introduced to help aspirants prepare for competitive examinations.

However, the success of a scheme cannot be measured merely by its existence. Its real effectiveness depends on whether the students who need it most can actually access its benefits.

Particular attention is needed to ensure timely financial assistance, simpler application procedures, clear eligibility criteria and support for basic necessities such as accommodation and food.

Coaching Institutes Also Have a Responsibility

Private coaching institutes provide academic guidance to students, but they also have an important social responsibility. Their fees, additional charges and course durations should be communicated transparently. Scholarships and fee concessions for deserving students from economically weaker backgrounds could provide meaningful relief. Educational organisations, social groups and former students could also develop transparent support programmes for financially disadvantaged aspirants. Students should be able to communicate their financial difficulties without embarrassment and receive assistance without compromising their dignity or health.

True Success Means No Dream Should Be Lost Because of Money

Competitive examinations remain an important route to social and economic advancement for millions of young Indians. However, when the cost of preparation becomes unaffordable for disadvantaged students, the objective of equal opportunity can be undermined.

Alongside an impartial investigation into the allegations emerging from Prayagraj, there is a need for a broader assessment of the support required by economically weaker students and the extent to which existing schemes are meeting those needs.

Education Jagat's Perspective:

The purpose of education is not merely to help students pass examinations; it is also to ensure that every deserving student has the opportunity to develop their potential. No student should be forced to choose between continuing their education and protecting their health because of financial hardship. The responsibility of the education system is to create opportunities for talent and ensure that poverty does not become a barrier to a student's future.

Gujarat's Govt. ...

Questions over school infrastructure amid smart education claims; thousands of students still await essential facilities

structure but also about the dignity, hygiene, health and regular attendance of students, particularly adolescent girls.

6,230 Schools Without Playgrounds

According to UDISE+ 2024–25 data, Gujarat had 53,355 schools, of which 47,125 had playground facilities. This means approximately 6,230 schools were without playgrounds.

Sports and physical activities are essential components of a child's overall development. They contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being, discipline, teamwork and social skills. The absence of playgrounds in thousands of schools may therefore limit opportunities for children's holistic development.

Smart Schools Versus Basic Infrastructure

Gujarat has undertaken initiatives such as the Mission Schools of Excellence project to modernise its education system. Efforts are being made to promote digital learning, technological facilities and improved teaching infrastructure.

However, modernisation must go hand in hand with ensuring that every school has a safe building, clean and functional toilets, drinking water, adequate classrooms and proper sports facilities.

Girls' Education and Safety Need Greater Attention

The absence of girls' toilets or the presence of non-functional facilities is a particularly serious concern. During adolescence, access to clean and safe sanitation facilities is essential for girls' health, dignity and continued participation in education.

Government data also highlights that constructing facilities alone is not enough. Regular maintenance and ensuring that these facilities remain functional are equally important.

Accountability: Questions for the Government

The figures from Gujarat underline the need to give equal priority to basic infrastructure alongside educational modernisation.

How much time will it take to provide functional toilets in schools where these facilities are missing? What concrete plans are in place to address the shortage of playgrounds? Who will be held accountable for the maintenance of essential school facilities?

The quality of education cannot be measured merely by smart boards, computers and digital classrooms. A truly effective education system must ensure that every child has access to a safe learning environment, clean toilets, adequate teachers and equal opportunities for overall development.

Microsoft offers...

four countries. These internal job grades cover employees at different levels of seniority.

The initiative is intended to give employees considering opportunities outside Microsoft an option to leave with financial and professional support, while allowing participating business units to adjust their workforce in response to changing requirements.

Coleman said the programme would not apply uniformly across the company. Participation will depend on individual business priori ties, customer commitments and workforce needs. Eligible employees will receive emails outlining the specific terms of their offers.

"The Voluntary Exit Offer is new for us. We'll learn from it," Coleman said, adding that Microsoft would continue sup porting employees through skills development and internal career opportunities where appropriate.

Separately, a Microsoft spokesperson said the company remained committed to expanding its presence in India's technology ecosys tem and supporting the country's artificial intelligence ambitions.

Microsoft has commit ted $20.5 billion in investment between 2025 and 2029 across cloud and AI infrastructure, skilling and operations in India, the spokesperson said. The company is also work ing towards its commitment to equip 20 million people in India with AI skills by 2030.

The voluntary exit programme comes as Microsoft seeks to give participating teams greater flexibility in managing workforce requirements while offering eligible employees a supported route to opportunities beyond the company.

UK raises student visa financial requirement from November 30



EJ - *Agency*

Indian students planning to pursue higher education in the United Kingdom will need to demonstrate higher funds for living expenses from November 30, 2026, following an increase in the student visa financial requirement.

According to the UK govern ment's revised Immigration Rules, the minimum monthly maintenance requirement will rise from £1,529 to £1,570 for students studying in London and from £1,171 to £1,203 for those studying outside the capital. The revised amounts apply for a maximum of nine months.

Under the new rules, students studying in London will need to show up to £14,130 for living expenses, compared with the existing requirement of £13,761. For students studying outside London, the maximum amount will increase from £10,539 to £10,827.

The financial requirement is separate from tuition fees. Applicants must also demonstrate that they have sufficient funds to cover any outstanding course fees for one academic year, as specified in their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS).

Indian applicants should account for the revised maintenance requirement when planning their finances and preparing visa applications. The amount they need to demonstrate will depend on where their university is located and how much of their tuition fee remains unpaid.

Students must generally hold the required funds for at least 28 consecutive days, with the end of that period falling within 31 days of their visa application. The funds can be held in an eligible bank account, or applicants can meet the requirement through qualifying student loans or official financial sponsorship.

India is not included in the list of nationalities covered by the UK's differential evidence requirement. Indian applicants should therefore be prepared to provide financial evidence as part of their visa application, unless an applicable exemption applies.

The UK Home Office said the annual increase aligns the student visa maintenance requirement with the maintenance loans available to domestic students for the 2026-27 academic year. The government said the requirement would continue to be reviewed annually.

The revised amounts will apply to Student visa applications made from November 30, 2026. Students applying before that date will remain subject to the existing maintenance figures, according to the published guidance.

The proposed new OPT fee would decimate the International talent pipeline



EJ - *Agency*

On October 7th the Trump administration proposed charging colleges and universities $70,000 before recommending an international student for Optional Practical Training, or OPT, and $30,000 for subsequent recommendations.

OPT allows students to apply their education in the workplace through temporary professional training and experiences directly related to their field of study. These fees would put that opportunity beyond reach for most students, institutions, and employers.

If implemented, the rule would harm not only international students and campuses, but also domestic students, employers, and US global competitiveness. Preventing that harm requires all hands on deck — from higher education and business leaders to local communities and members of Congress.

There is immediate action to take. Institutions, students, employers, and members of the public can submit comments until November 9 documenting the harms to educational opportunities, research projects, administrative functions, and economic contributions the proposal would cause.

The administration claims the change is necessary to prevent fraud, but its own explanation reveals its broader goal: far fewer students participating in OPT — or potentially no program at all. The DHS explicitly states in the text of the rule that the fees would reduce the pool of participants.

It also states that, without these egregiously high "fees" — or tax as some analysts argue — it may shut down OPT entirely. Ultimately ,either path threatens to dismantle a crucial educational opportunity and talent pipeline. Any possible case of fraud should be investigated and violations addressed, but this proposal would create a "pay-to-play" system. It would split students into two groups: the few who can participate because they, their employer, or their institutions can afford the fees, and those excluded despite meeting the same eligibility requirements.

DHS argues that the substantial financial stake would encourage schools to exercise greater oversight and selectivity when recommending students for OPT.

Yet the proposed rule ignores existing institutional processes and does not establish how the ability to pay is related to a student's eligibility to participate in OPT or the value of practical training. Two students could meet the same requirements and have equally valuable opportunities, while only the one whose institution, family, or employer can finance the charge could participate.

Institutions already facing financial pressures cannot simply absorb these costs and DHS can't assume employers will cover them. Small businesses, startups, arts groups, religious organizations, and other nonprofit employers may have valuable training opportunities to offer without tens of thousands of dollars available to secure a graduate's participation.

UK international students to generate £40.4 billion for the economy



EJ - *Agency*

The 404,500 international students who began higher education courses in the United Kingdom in the 2024-25 academic year are expected to generate £45.1 billion in economic benefits, against estimated public costs of £4.7 billion, according to a report by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) and Kaplan International Pathways. London Economics conducted the study.

The report, titled The Benefits and Costs of International Higher Education Students to the UK Economy, estimates that every 10 international students generate approximately £1 million in net economic benefits over the duration of their studies. The estimated benefit-to-cost ratio is 9.7 to 1, with the average net contribution per student standing at around £100,000.

The economic activity generated by the 2024-25 cohort is also estimated to support approximately 287,300 full-time equivalent jobs across the UK. The findings come amid ongoing debate over immigration policy and the country's efforts to attract international students in an increasingly competitive global higher education market.

Despite the economic contribution, the number of international students starting higher education courses in the UK has declined since reaching its peak in 2022-23. The report estimates that the number of new international students fell by approximately 54,500, or 12%, by 2024-25.

Had student numbers remained at their 2022-23 level, the net economic contribution of the 2024-25 cohort would have been around £2.9 billion higher, the report said. On a comparable, inflation-adjusted basis, the net economic impact increased from £36.3 billion for the 2021-22 cohort to £40.4 billion for the 2024-25 cohort.

The report also highlights the geographical spread of the benefits. International students are estimated to contribute an average of £62 million in net economic value to each UK parliamentary constituency over the duration of their studies, equivalent to approximately £580 per resident. For the first time, the analysis used detailed data on students' term-time addresses to provide a more precise assessment of their local economic impact.

Rose Stephenson, director of policy and strategy at HEPI, said: "The findings highlighted the economic implications of policies aimed at reducing international student numbers. She said international students generate substantial economic benefits and support the financial sustainability of many universities, adding that policymakers should consider the economic costs alongside the potential political benefits of restrictions.
Maike Halterbeck, partner at London Economics, said the research provided updated evidence of the value international students bring to the UK economy. She also warned that the decline in new student numbers, alongside forthcoming policy changes, including the proposed international student levy, could affect the sector's future contribution.

The report was published on July 9, 2026, and examines the economic benefits and public costs associated with international students who began higher education qualifications in the UK in 2024-25.

Microsoft offers a voluntary exit to 60,000 employees

India staff face December 1 deadline

EJ - *New Delhi*

Microsoft has introduced a voluntary exit programme for eligible employees in India, the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, offering financial assistance and career transition support to those considering leaving the company.

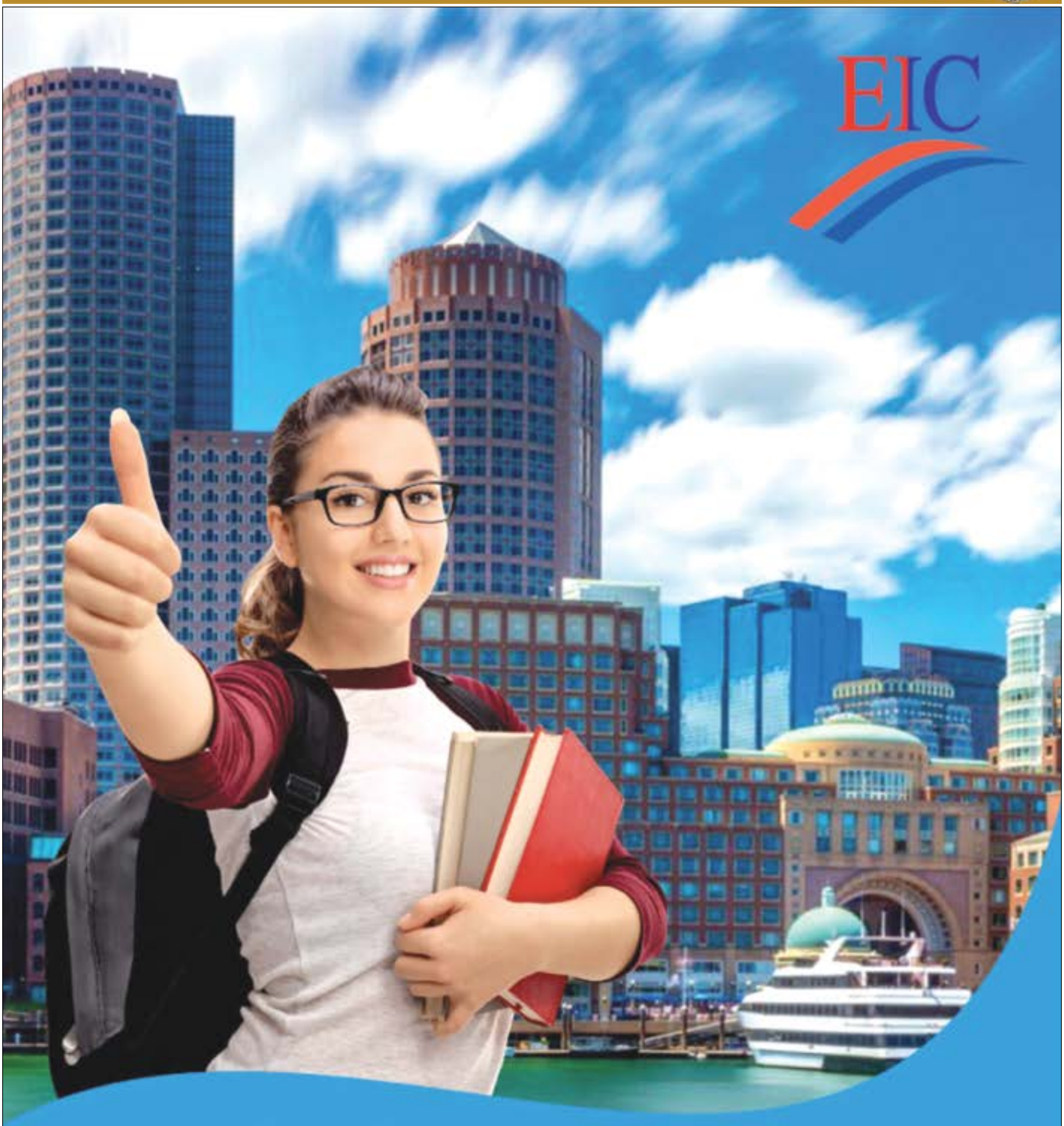
Around 60,000 employees globally are eligible for the time-limited offer, including staff at Microsoft's India operations, which employ approximately 23,000 people. The number of Indian employees eligible for the scheme remains unclear. Eligible employees in India are understood to have until December 1 to decide whether to accept the offer.

The package is under stood to include one month's base salary for every completed year of service, along with health insurance and career transition services, broadly following a standard severance arrangement.

Microsoft Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer Amy Cole man said the Voluntary Exit Offer (VEO) would be available to employees at level 70 and below in participating teams across the

>> Contd. p.4...

Education Jagat
PRINT & DIGITAL MEDIA
www.educationjagat.com
INDIA
Education Jagat *Team is happy to announce that now your own* Education Jagat *(Fortnightly) newspaper is available in your hands across the* world.
(Advance booking with normal charge)
response@educationjagat.com
+91 850 60 62 004



Finally, you can simply choose the international university you want to study in

Admissions open for
Engineering Management Medical.
In USA, UK, Canada, Russia, Australia, China, Singapore

Cont Us: +91 98 11 134715
Email : eduinternationalconsultancy@gmail.com

Published & Printed by : Mahesh Chandra on behalf of **Jagat Media Solutions** Printed at Komal Printers, Morna Sector-35, Noida U.P., Published at B-30, Sector-10, Noida (G. B. Nagar)
Editor - Dr. Ashok Sharma, **Mail-** editor@educationjagat.com,Contact us : +91 9212 092004,+91 8506 062004
RNI No. UPENG / 2016 / 67432. **Postal No. UP/GBD-254 / 2023-25**