

## Better salary for university teachers having higher market value

This is with reference to the lecture by Montek Singh Ahluvalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Govt. of India on 25 November 2004 on the eve of the 70th annual meeting of the Indian Academy of Sciences held at Varanasi. Ahluvalia suggested various means to improve the status of Indian Universities to world-class standard. He advocated for better funding, improved infrastructure and also better salary to those teachers, who have better market value. He was of the opinion that unless it is done, good teachers may not stay in universities and may move out to other private academic and research institutions, which will affect the training and teaching of students, in the long run.

He reviewed the basic concept of British system behind the establishment of a university and their mindset for an ideal university teacher, which is very common to the existing Indian system. Ahluvalia opined that the time had come to bring radical changes in the present policies, so that intellectuals could be retained in the university system by giving extra perks and financial benefits and also by recognizing their talent by other means. He observed some good aspects of the US universities in this regard.

I agree with all the suggestions, he made, but I wonder as to who is going to implement these things. Even being the Deputy

Chairman of the Planning Commission, a statutory body of the Govt of India, he expressed his inability in the existing bureaucratic system. In fact, I do not see any hope with any elected government for implementing such plans, because by doing so, 90% of the people of that institution will turn hostile to that ruling party, leading to a defeat in the next election. This is because only 10% of the employees of any organization are pro-active for its development and they have higher market value over the rest of employees.

I remember the recommendations made by R. P. Rastogi, the then Vice Chancellor of BHU and Chairman of the last pay commission, who recommended different pay scales for teachers working in a university and those working in a degree college. This recommendation was on the basis of better performance of university teachers, in terms of good research along with teaching. Although this decision was correct and a step ahead to recognize the talent of the university teachers, it was opposed from all the corners. Finally the government dropped this recommendation, because it was affecting that group of teachers who make 90% of the lot.

The question, 'Who will bell the cat?' is true in this case. The only way out to achieve this goal, is to amend the rules,

so as to allow talented teachers to earn perks by doing research in their parent institutions by using funds from private organizations. This will be a win-win policy for industries, who will get a good R&D facility, without investing much in this field and to the scientists, who will be happy to work for them in addition to their assigned responsibilities by the University administration.

This will give a chance to appreciate the market value of a teacher and will also provide a healthy competition among other teachers to raise their market value. This is similar to the US universities, where some permanent teachers get a salary for 9 months (in fact, 9 months' salary is equivalent to 12 month's salary of other regular teachers) and for the remaining 3 months, they are free to opt for research project-based salary, from industrial houses. In other words, the suggestion of Ahluvalia can be implemented if it is supported by private funding rather than by public funding.

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## Ecology in cricket

Ecological science stresses the importance of climatic, edaphic and biotic (mainly anthropic) factors. In the most popular game in India, cricket, the pitch, the ground, the outer-field and to a certain extent the grass-cover involve the edaphic component, critically influencing the game. The pitch can be prepared to favour either the spin or the speed bowling depending on the skill of the host team. The pitch led to the fall of 20 wickets in a day in the last test India vs Australia in Mumbai. On the

other hand, in the last one-day match – India vs Pakistan in Kolkata, over 580 runs were scored.

Among climatic factors, consultation of rainfall, dew-fall and fog statistics is a must. One cannot imagine a test match in Mumbai in July at the peak of monsoon. In Chennai the north-east monsoon sets in around 18 October. Had the dates of Chennai test – India vs Australia been advanced even by a day, India could have won that match and consequently not lost the se-

ries. Dew factor intervenes in no small measure and fog curtails the play by a couple of hours. Among the anthropic factors, players' tantrums and spectators' behaviour can sometimes mar the game.

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