

“Reforms” for Whom? VC bent on destroying Delhi University

The VC is in a hurry to introduce all kinds of “reforms”. He has announced them to the media but not discussed them with representatives of teachers or students. Just last year he introduced the semester system without proper discussion, procedures or preparation. Now he has announced a 4-year graduation programme to be implemented from 2013. He has already hurriedly pushed through the concepts of Meta University and Meta College in emergency meetings of the AC and EC on 22 and 23 July 2012. The 4-year graduation is modeled on the US Community Colleges which are at the bottom of accreditation rankings. At the India-US Higher Education Dialogue in Washington in June, Kapil Sibal promised to open 100 Community Colleges by June end! These “reforms” are part of the plan to devalue public funded Higher Education and facilitate entry of foreign and private universities to sell higher education for the highest profits. This is also the aim of the six Bills on Higher Education pending before Parliament.

Why 4-year graduation? Why Meta University and Meta College?

The VC claims that they will increase choices for students. What is the reality? In the 4-year undergraduate programme with multiple exit points a student will only get an honours degree after 4 years. The mass of students will have to exit after the second and third years with a diploma or degree of lesser value. In the Meta College students may only do two semesters in one college and will be forced to go to other colleges for the remaining semesters. In the Meta University students may have to move between universities even within one semester. How will these “reforms” benefit students? How will reservation be implemented? Why are they being pushed in such a hurry?

What have we got from the “reforms” so far?

We welcomed the OBC expansion which brought in many more students to DU. Though funds were given to appoint more teachers and develop infrastructure for the increased student strength, 4000 teaching posts are yet to be filled on a regular basis and DU has failed to expand infrastructure. Today we have overcrowded classrooms and labs, shortage of classrooms, underequipped labs and many teachers working on a short-term basis who may be teaching in one semester and unemployed in the next.

The VC has no time for these issues, his only interest is in bulldozing “reforms”. The semester system was imposed despite protests by teachers. It has diluted the Honours courses. It leaves no scope for in-depth study. Teachers and students are in a perpetual hurry to cover the syllabi for the exams at the cost of genuine learning. It has left no time for sports, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. Study material is inadequate, particularly in Hindi and in accessible format for the visually disabled. The double load of examinations has led to breakdowns. Many mistakes were committed in the conduct of exams last semester. The results of most courses could be declared only in August. The marks of the UG semester results declared in January 2012 were arbitrarily inflated to create the illusion that the semester system is working well. However, in several PG courses the failure rate has gone up jeopardizing the career of many. Students are therefore unable to understand any logic when they get high marks and when they get low marks. The fee for revaluation has also been increased and the revaluation system will be withdrawn from next year.

Is this the way to improve quality and increase choices for students? Students come to DU with hopes of a good education that will help them to get a good job. The VC's “reforms” threaten the quality of education and the hopes of its students. We appeal to students and teachers to fight back.

JOIN PROTEST RALLY ON FRIDAY, 24 AUGUST!

Assemble at 12 noon at Vivekanand Statue, Arts Faculty

AIDSO	AISA	AISF	CTF	DTF	FDS	JSM
KYS	LDTF	MSAD	SAMBHAVANA	SFI		YFSJ
