



HIGHER EDUCATION *Review*

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THEHER.IN

University Of The Year 2015

The year 1995 has witnessed India's first private university - Sikkim Manipal University of Health, Medical & Technological Science. Thereafter the number of private universities increased up to 226 offering a multi-disciplinary podium of learning. Although the system of education has been open to varied subject interests, yet it was not widely open to every part of the country and students have faced many hardships in terms of caste, race, marginalization and such social differences. Over the years, the education system of India has accepted these differences and evolved into a much liberal factor in today's developments. However, this liberal approach was not enough. Recently, at the Times Higher Education BRICS and Emerging Economies Universities Summit, key point for discussion was that the higher education scenario of India could have been much improved till now if the capital for funding universities would have been forwarded, which are unlikely addressed as unavailable. To counterpoint this, students are seen to have availed higher education in the country instead of rushing to enroll in foreign universities these days. This shift of choices by the students

directs that there has been effort to develop the education system by the government.

To have ranked among top 100 universities in the world, Indian Universities need to be Research Universities instead of being teaching universities to achieve high growth and inclusive development on a sustainable basis as told by Prof Lawrence Summers, President Emeritus of Harvard University on a recent talk delivered in Mumbai University. However, the higher education sector in the country has transformed into employability based learning from knowledge based learning. To inculcate the students to cope up with professional challenges is much more important for these institutions than to merely provide certificates and thereby, the students are trained well for jobs. To support these discussions on universities in the country, we bring you some of the top universities across the country selected by our panel of experts as the 'University of the Year 2015.' The institutes have been selected on the basis of their performance in pedagogy, placements, research and the quality of education they deliver, which implies their performance to bring in quality to the education system.



Name of the University:
Maharaja Agrasen University

Key Person:
Prof. S. P. Bansal,
Vice Chancellor

Description:
The University provides an experiential learning platform where students get a real head start in their professions by training in state-of-the-art simulated environments

Website:
mau.ac.in

Maharaja Agrasen University: Setting Benchmark of Quality Education

Higher education is about equipping the students with in-depth knowledge about the subjects they choose and to provide them with the guidance to select the path they want to tread in future. With unemployment more prevalent among educated than the illiterate masses, there is an urgent need of the quality management in higher education. To increase the quality of education, an educational institution needs, inter-alia, requisite modern infrastructure, qualified and highly skilled faculty, curriculum in tandem with the current trends of the industry and an excellent management. By constantly updating the curriculum receptive to the changes in the market trends, understanding the requirements of the students in a comprehensive manner and providing faculty development training, Maharaja Agrasen University is coping up with the changing contemporary trends in higher education in India.

Maharaja Agrasen University was founded in 2012 by Maharaja Agrasen Technical Education Society a charitable non- profit organization with more than 200 trustees, actively engaged in giving impetus to the furtherance of high quality professional education since 1998.

Recently the university has started the novel tradition of setting up of Academic and Industry Audit Cell that has so far not been adopted by other universities. The Academic Audit Committee of the Cell comprise 11 members, all of them being Vice Chancellors from reputed universities and the Industry Audit Committee of the Cell comprise Managing Directors of reputed industrial



Prof.S.P Bansal,
Vice Chancellor



corporations. The Cell has been set up as an endeavor to bring the industry and academia together at common platform where they can discuss diverse issues related to the industry and university and evolve suitable curriculum, after considering all the relevant important aspects with emphasis on the employability of fresh graduates.

Located near the industrial town of Baddi, Himachal Pradesh, the University maintains a good relation with Baddi - Barotiwala - Nalagarh Industries Association (BBNIA), Axis Bank, Star Health Insurance Ltd. and many more. It also maintains academic collaboration with IIM Ahmadabad and Indian School of Business. Another unique feature of this university is that in a short span of two years, it has entered into the academic collaborations with international universities like Leicester University (UK), University of Colombo, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Manila and European University of Italia. These academic collaborations are highly beneficial for students as they envisage faculty/student exchange and joint research programmes.

Research and development is very crucial for higher education, which gives the students the freedom to do what they like and the way they like. The university has introduced its own international peer reviewed journals in most fields. To encourage the research environment,

the university organizes regular workshops. Majority of the faculty members are Ph.Ds who can guide students in their research endeavors. Last year alone, the faculty has published 120 papers in reputed national and international journals. There are many research projects from both government and private organizations going on in the university campus. The University recently bagged a prestigious project from Association of Indian University (AIU) to study the good practices adopted by the different universities situated in northern India, which is a comprehensive comparative study of private and government universities.

Training and Skill Development of the students is gaining enormous importance, the competition in the market being very stiff and the potential employer look for corporate/industry ready graduates who are quick to adept to their needs. For any student, scoring high marks in the examinations is as important as the knowledge of work environment and being equipped with the

practical knowledge of the job. To prepare students for the industry, the university has put in place an Inter-Disciplinary Development Center which focuses mainly on giving training to the students and enhancing their skills to make them employable. Industry experts are invited to deliver lectures and have effective interaction with the students on a regular basis. The University has also engaged an expert trainer who acts as a bridge between the students and the industry. Giving training to the students on life skills is a part of the university's curriculum but the responsibility of the institution does not end there, because, according to WHO, life skills mean "abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". Accordingly, to achieve this objective, after the training is over the university provides the students with lots of job opportunities of their choice through campus placement. With many companies visiting the campus

every year, the Placement Cell of the university maintains a record of nearly 100 percent placements.

For the existing students the university has set up an Incubation Center, where students focus on specific industry related projects. The university plans to introduce Dual Degree Programmes in collaboration with the foreign universities with



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which it connected through MoUs. Creating a conducive environment for the overall development of every student is one of the biggest challenges which the professional educational institutions face today. The institutions have to make persistent efforts in learning more about the students' requirement in order to equip them with quality education that is compatible with their level of understanding. Having mutually beneficial and productive relationship with the industries and reputed national and international universities, Maharaja Agrasen University plans on raising the benchmark of quality education provided by the private universities in the country in the coming years. [HER](#)



Student experimenting in lab