

'Internships to be made must for engineering'

From addressing under-employment among engineering graduates to handing them degrees only on completion of four months of internship, some overarching changes are in the pipeline in technical education in India, Anil Sahasrabuddhe, chairman, All India Council for Technical Education, tells Manash Pratim Gohain. Excerpts:

■ More than 60% of the engineers graduating every year remain unemployed. This is a potential loss of 20 lakh man days annually.

They are not 'unemployable' but they are 'underemployed'. The industry says 60% of our graduates are not fully prepared. So they need further training, which means to start with these students may not get the same salary as compared to 40% of their peers. Instead of starting with a salary of Rs 4-5 lakh, they are not even getting Rs 1.5 lakh per annum.

■ What is the road ahead?

We have made internships mandatory to fill the gap so that they become suitably employable. Each student is to undergo two summer internships with

the industry of two months duration each. There are over 10,000 technical education institutions in the country. AICTE alone cannot monitor the implementation of the internships. We will ask the universities to make the internships mandatory and also to make provision for it in their academic calendar. Universities should also give grades or offer credits for the same, at least as qualifying.

■ What is the status of the single National Entrance Examination for Technical Institutions?

There has been some apprehension from the states. So we are waiting for the outcome of tests like NEET.

■ HRD ministry is planning reforms like mandatory annual teacher training for approval of institutions and annual revision of curriculum. What is the status?

The curricula of our engineering institutions have not been revised for quite some time. In next 10 to 15 days our new model curriculum will be announced.

We will ask all states, universities and institutions to adopt that allowing some contextual changes if they feel necessary. A committee of professors of eminence and experts from industry will continue to work for the next five years.



Sahasrabuddhe