

**By Sidharth Mishra**



The much-delayed admission process of Delhi University has finally gained momentum and it's expected that the first list of admissions should be out before October 1. The chair of the admission committee has initiated dialogues with the college principals on the probable cut-off and as the past years the impractical cut-off are all set to make screaming headlines.

The annulment of examinations by the Central Board of Secondary education (CBSE) this year, has left several lakh children looking at a vacuum as far as their future progress is concerned. Their plans for stepping onto the next stage of knowledge gathering has received a setback. Scrapping of examination is now going to make the process of admissions, more tedious and circuitous at the graduate level in the both the professional and conventional courses.

In a news report recently, it was claimed that given the farcical nature of evaluations done by the Central Board of Secondary Education, the number of examinees with 95 percent plus marks has increased manifold. The increase in marks may see higher cut-off lists.

But this doesn't indicate the true health of the university. The statistics of the applications received for admission to the under-graduate courses tell a different story. From 3.53 lakh applications received last year, the numbers have come down to 2.90 lakh this year, a steep fall of about 18% percent. Why such a fall, this question should haunt the stakeholders of the prestigious university.

Pandemic and its aftermath have thrown new challenges before the education system of this country. While some centres have risen to the challenge, some have not. The migration teaching-learning community to the digital platforms has not been uniform. The digital divide and digital deficit are real time challenges facing the education sector.

## Delhi University: Fall in footfalls

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 26 September 2021 01:50

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The seekers of education from rural India, living in lodges and hostels, have been forced to return to their pastoral hearths, which are mostly out of digital networks. This may be one of the reasons for low rate of application.

There could be another reason for the decline – the falling stock of the university. In the coming week, the non-teaching employees of Delhi University would be on strike to demand release of regular salary and other related perks.

Nothing could be more unfortunate for the teachers and the students who have to go on frequent strikes and shutdowns to get their minimum due from governments -- Delhi and central, both of which talk of putting focus on education, but have seldom walked the talk. For the past few years, Delhi government on some pretext or other failed to release funds for regular disbursement of salaries.

While the teachers and employees have faced the brunt of the unjustifiable action of the Delhi Government, the fact also remains that the situation has arisen because Delhi University in past six years has remained completely leaderless and rudderless. The last Vice Chancellor Professor Yogesh K Tyagi was more conspicuous by his absence from public than delivery of any good on the campus.

The grapevine has it that name of the next Vice Chancellor has been finalized but the notification has been delayed. This has extended the rudderless state of Delhi University. It remains to be seen how soon the centre appoints the next vice-chancellor, and how good and efficient is the person nominated for the job.

The challenge before the new V-C would be to bring the colleges back on the track through a regular and efficient teaching-learning process. If that happens or not, only time would tell

(The writer is an author and President, Centre for Reforms, Development & Justice)