

By Sidharth Mishra



In a few years from now, if a historian was to recall takeaway from the centenary year of the prestigious Delhi University, it would be a very gloomy picture. Despite normalcy having returned post-Covid, Delhi University this year is going to set a records sorts for delaying the start of academic session by almost four months.

Till some years ago, July 15 was day when the session would start at the prestigious university, come what may. Even when there were changes from annual to semester system or from three year to four-year-degree programme and the reverse, the session was not known to have been disrupted the way it has happened this time.

The university authorities would put the blame at the door of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the National Testing Agency (NTA) for the delay in the conduct of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET). The delay has largely been there because the UGC decided to expand the scope of the erstwhile Central Universities Common Entrance Test (CUCET).

Was it a prudent decision by the UGC to rush into the reforms even as the country was still to recover fully from the after-effects of pandemic? This is something which would also need to be examined. But why did the Delhi University decide to join the CUET in the year of its launch? May be the university administration led by Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh did not want to figure as leader of a recalcitrant university.

With endless delay in admissions, DU in a state of gloom

Written by Administrator

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May be the Vice Chancellor is also not be blamed for the mess the admission process at DU is right now. Singh never studied at Delhi University, never taught at Delhi University. He came to head DU with the limited exposure of leading state universities. This has given him little understanding as to how sacrosanct are the cultures and traditions of a university. He would not know why the date July 15 so important in the university calendar.

Moreover, there are questions of autonomy specially in the fields of curriculum and pedagogy. Can a centralized entrance examination be apt for deciding on admission into a university which in the past 100 years has established itself to be a notch above the other varsities in the country. In an era when most of the universities are giving marks by plenty, getting a first division (60%) in DU is considered to be very prestigious.

Delhi University is passing through a bad phase, odd and even semesters are running parallel. Somewhere the university management has not been able to grapple with the challenges which the Covid posed to the education system.

The mismanagement at Delhi University stands out as a sore thumb especially when the other universities in the town have taken definite steps towards normalization of the situation. Guru Gobind Singh Indra Prastha University (GGSIPU), which also is Yogesh Singh's parent university, has almost concluded its admission process, whatever the delay it's because of the cascading effect of the deferment by Delhi University.

Professor Yogesh Singh came to take charge of the country's premier university in its centenary year enjoying the trust of the Prime Minister and the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS). If the functioning of the university gets derailed under his stewardship, history would blame the regime which reposed trust in his abilities.

More than the regime which appointed the Vice Chancellor, the University also owes it to the trust of its students and their parents. This trust has been built over a period of 100 years. There could not be anything sadder than this trust being blown to smithereens in the matter of a few years.

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

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