



THE HIGHER EDUCATION CHALLENGE

HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA IS FRAUGHT WITH CHALLENGES AND THE COUNTRY NEEDS TO UP ITS ANTE AS FAR AS REGAINING AN EDGE IS CONCERNED. **BY BINDU GOPAL RAO**

A few years ago when my niece decided to do her under-graduation abroad I asked her why she took this decision and her immediate reaction was the lack of subject combinations of her choice in India. Indian students in fact are the largest community of expat students in universities abroad and the primary reason is the lack of higher education options within the country.

Higher education is a broad category comprising diploma/degree courses provided at college, university, academies, seminaries, and institutes of technology level. India is the third largest higher education provider in the world after United States and China. In India, the University Grants Commission (UGC Act 1956) under MHRD determines and maintains the standards of higher education.

The Indian Higher Education System is itself complex and challenging. "As per the World Bank, Gross Enrolment Ratio is the ratio of total enrollment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown. GER in higher education (for age group 18-23) is 25.2% in India, which is half compared to countries such as US and Australia.