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circular

Covering developments in the area of training and education on economic policy issues



Marching Ahead

The Global Antitrust Weekly (June 2006) reported that in Mexico, several judges had pointed out their lack of knowledge regarding the economic theory and legal analysis underlying antitrust and competition cases. The judges were concerned particularly about the risk of being manipulated by companies and the risk of issuing judgements that could negatively influence the country's economic development. In another instance, the Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Indonesia has urged the importance of having a competition law system with judges that have an understanding of complex business transactions. Many of the current judges did not understand the basic principles of competition law and that such requirements were necessary to effectively implement competition law.

These are not isolated instances. A cursory look across the world would reveal many such cases calling for skills upgradation on competition laws. It is against such felt needs that the inception of CUTS Institute for Regulation & Competition (CIRC) bears significant importance and implications. The aim of evolving this initiative is to bridge the gap between the need and utilisation of training programmes on Economic Regulation, Competition Policy and Law, and Commercial Diplomacy, catering to the developing world. Since its inception, CIRC is pacing well and evolving rapidly.

CIRC became operational with the successful conduct of a host of training workshops and public lectures on the three streams that it offers. It has successfully organised four training workshops on Competition Policy & Law, one workshop on Commercial Diplomacy and four public lectures. The rich tapestry of intellectual resources has always been an integral part of these workshops and public lectures. Highly qualified, expert professionals in the subject streams that comprise the Visiting Faculty of CIRC partook in these workshops and lectures.

CIRC has also organised a customised workshop on Competition Law for lawyers in law offices, business houses and regulatory agencies. The Institute further plans to organise tailor-made training events for the electricity, railways, and pharmaceutical sectors. Besides, the Institute will offer short online courses, and gradually plans at offering regular/full time courses. CIRC also aims to facilitate research to enhance understanding and explore inter-disciplinary linkages among the identified subjects.

While organising various events, the Institute has pioneered several associations and collaborations, which acted as a spinal support enabling it to grow and flourish better as compared to its solitary existence. The various collaborations include:

- Institute for Trade and Commercial Diplomacy, US (ITCD)
- British Institute of International and Comparative Law, UK (BIICL)
- American Antitrust Institute, US (AAI)

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What's Happening – An Overview

Expertise Everywhere!

With globalisation, education too has taken a different shape. There is a need for experts, all the time and everywhere.

In this context, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has allowed the Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT) to train private players in defence products.

Previously, this kind of training was only imparted to defence personnel, but now it would also do so for the private sector. More and more companies are now approaching DIAT for designing a customised training programme for their organisation. (FE, 08.06.06)



Pre-vocational Training

Having only vocational education is not just enough these days. Organisations are on the lookout for professionals who are not only experts in their field, but also those who have a hands-on experience. Finishing schools are coming up with this new concept. Before absorption by big business houses, the students are trained and made to work for some time and then they are absorbed.

A project of the Andhra Pradesh government, Jawahar Knowledge Centres (JKC) is one such finishing school where engineering graduates, mostly women from semi-urban and rural background have been transformed and absorbed by multinational corporations like IBM, Satyam etc.

These students are better placed than those who are among the toppers in their engineering colleges. These centres serve as hubs where students converge to both learn and work on live projects, and several states are now looking to replicate this model. (BL, 29.05.06)

Techno-trained Labour

Big companies are opening up their own technical institutes to overcome the problem of untrained manpower. With globalisation and expansion, companies are hunting and hiring labour that is technically trained to increase productivity and performance of the company.

The giant in motor manufacturing, Toyota, plans to open a technical institute in India, so that it does not confront the obstacle of untrained staff. The institute will train people regularly so that Toyota's factories can absorb them, thereby saving time.

The training institute would be a joint venture between Toyota and Kirloskar. (BL, 26.05.06)

Race for Excellence!

With competition high on the run, the world is drifting towards perfection, be it manpower, technology, infrastructure. Excellence is being sought by all.

Realising the immense potential of the large number of graduates from India, Britain is reported to collaborate in 'world-class' research under a new major initiative launched to boost higher education between India and UK.

The UK-India Education and Research initiative, would work towards a better quality education. Britain would offer fellowship to Indian students in partnership with universities in UK.

India has a huge potential in terms of workforce, which has attracted several nations to invite them for more and advanced knowledge. The research initiative will link centres of academic excellence in both countries. (TH, 19.04.06)

Professional Proprietorship

The government is planning to set up an Indian Institute for Intellectual Property Rights Management, which would create human resources required for management of patents.

This institute will train people in multifarious areas to patent knowledge, particularly in the field of biotechnology, biosciences, medicine, etc.

According to sources, a number of patents require multi-disciplinary knowledge, absence of which creates a vacuum. The course would thus aim at filling the gap and prescribing a roadmap for future.

Further, there will be roadmaps for law institutions so that they are allowed to have multi-disciplinary courses. (ET, 22.04.06)

Regulation in Education

To regulate educational institutes mushrooming across the country, the government plans to introduce a grading system. This plan has been thought of due to the need being felt of providing quality education to all.

As per the grading system to be implemented by the government, the universities will have to seek registration and accreditation, which initially would have to be done every year and then reduced to a periodical basis.

Further, global universities with 'A' grades would be allowed entry but low-grade universities would be restricted.

Sources opine that the plan would help in better regulation and ensure quality-based educational system. (BS, 21.04.06)

Deeper Dive

To promote maritime education at the highest level and to give impetus to advanced research in the sector, the government has announced to set up the Indian Maritime University.

This would work towards reducing the gap between the needs of the industry and academic community. This measure has been taken to generate awareness and importance of maritime education.

For this purpose, scientists have been called upon to identify important challenges facing the maritime institutions and take them up for viable solutions. (BL, 16.05.06)

Trained Skills

Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has planned a series of training programmes for independent directors.

The training programmes would mainly focus on tuning the efficiency of the participants and sharpen the competitive edge to serve as independent directors.

It would also aim to build the brand image of chartered accountants and portray them as independent directors as to their wide range of experience in finance, management, accountancy, law, public policy and corporate strategy.

These programmes will be conducted by the Committee on Corporate Governance of ICAI. (BL, 17.04.06)

Going back to B-school

“The purpose of an organisation is to enable common men to do uncommon things. No organisation can depend on genius; the supply is always scarce and unreliable...”

— Peter Drucker

Traditional organisations are changing as globalisation has created global markets and global supply sources. This is having an impact on organisations — both large and small — irrespective of the nature of their business.

Therefore, in today's dynamic environment, it is not enough to be good in your current environment, but you must have a vision of the future. Everybody knows the world is changing and changing fast. What is new is that predicting change is becoming more and more difficult.

In order to succeed in this fast changing world, forward-looking organisations will need to update and improve the skills of employees, whether management or staff, on a continuous basis.

Management Development Programmes (MDPs) are one such tool available to organisations to update and improve employee skills. MDPs can either be long-term or short-term, and the long-term programmes can be for as long as two years. Typically, these programmes lead to a post-graduate diploma in business management.

These programmes are ideal for middle level management personnel with five to ten years work experience, who have had no formal exposure to management studies. MDPs will help employees take up future positions not only in their areas of expertise, but also in other departments of the organisation. Such programmes are ideal for personnel who cannot take time off from work for a typical two-year MBA programme.

Value Addition

The organisation gains not only by upgrading the skills of its personnel, but also by forging a sense of belonging among employees as typically either a portion or the full tuition costs are borne by the organisation.

Significantly, the trainers themselves learn a lot because of the maturity of the students, and the questions they ask are from real experiences in the workplace. There is also a great deal of participation and trainers really enjoy taking these classes.

There are also medium-term MDPs where the study period can be from three to six months. These programmes typically concentrate on a particular subject that is studied in depth. These programmes are tailored for specific organisations and also for the general public. Short duration programmes can range from half-a-day to 10 or 15 days.

Distance Education

A recent development in MDPs is distance education. By this I do not mean postal education, but fascinating new uses of communication technology.

The advantage of this type of distance education is that the programme is not specifically tailor-made for any organisation and, therefore, any member of the public can enroll for this programme.

Also, though it is a distance programme, it is highly participative, as the students and faculty can interact in real time like in a lecture hall.

Another key advantage is that even if the student is travelling and is not in his home city, he can access the tutorial in whichever city he happens to be by checking into a classroom in that city using his unique identity number. These programmes are usually conducted over a period of 14-15 months, with classes being held two-three days a week for a duration of two to three hours per session.

In order to succeed in today's fast changing world, forward-looking organisations will need to update and improve the skills of employees, whether management or staff, on a continuous basis. Management Development Programmes (MDPs) are one such tool available to organisations to update and improve employee skills.



Virtual University

Another new development is the concept of a virtual university, where students participate in a classroom via the Internet. They are taught by some of the top professors and have access to a large bank of quality case studies. They have assignments and exams via the Internet, followed by weekend workshops-cum-lectures at the institute.

Again, the great advantage of this medium of education is that the student can access his classroom from wherever he happens to be.

Another advantage of this methodology of teaching is a disparate group of people from different working and educational backgrounds can take part. MDPs are essential for any organisation to survive profitably in a fast changing world where technological innovation and globalised markets are the norm.

In this new dynamic scenario, learning continuously is essential. However, the focus has changed from just teaching new skills to individuals, to the organisation itself. Continuous upgrading of skills will give a distinct advantage to an organisation over its competitors.

Abridged from an article by **T. M. Gopal**, that appeared in Business Line on April 3, 2006. The author is the Director, Management Development Centre, Loyola Institute of Business Administration, Chennai.

News & Views

Feedback

In a short while, CIRC has come a long way and this is indicative of the commitment to the cause of enhancing knowledge and strengthening capacity in the areas of regulation and competition.

Sunil Arora

Principal Secretary to Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Jaipur

I congratulate for setting up CIRC. There is a tremendous gap at all levels to understand the new economic order. I am sure under the able guidance of the high level Governing Council, CIRC would be able to achieve the objectives which has been set for itself.

B.K. Keayla

National Working Group on Patent Laws, New Delhi

Forum

In today's scenario, there is a pressing need for finer knowledge, better negotiating skills, and improved capacity of understanding competition laws, economic regulations and commercial aspects of diplomacy. But, there is severe shortage of institutional capacity to facilitate the spread of knowledge on regulatory matters in developing countries.

In this backdrop, CIRC takes immense pleasure in announcing the creation of its e-outreach forum which would serve as a tool for gaining recognition and spreading awareness about CIRC and its initiatives. So far, 121 members have been added to the forum.

The CIRC-Forum would be a means of creating this awareness and spreading knowledge on the three issues of Competition Policy & Law, Economic Regulation and Commercial Diplomacy and why it is important to know more about them.

Drawing from real life examples, the forum offers a platform to inform various clients about the relevance of the capacity building solutions offered by CIRC.

A request could be sent to register in the group at:

CIRC-Forum-subscribe@yahoo.com

Recent Events

- First Training Workshop on Commercial Diplomacy (CDS.01) June 28-July 1, 2006, New Delhi, India
- Fourth Training Workshop on Competition Policy & Law (CPS.04) June 29-July 1, 2006, Bangkok, Thailand
- Fourth Academic Lecture (ALS.04) on "Trade policy making and multistakeholder diplomacy" by Raymond Saner and Lichia Yiu July 4, 2006, New Delhi, India
- Academic Lecture on 'Evolution of Competition Law with respect to India' by Pradeep S. Mehta (ALS.05) August 26, 2006, Kolkata, India

(For more: www.circ.in/event-calendar.htm)

Event Archives

Third Training Workshop on Competition Policy and Law (CPS.03)

CIRC organised an Interactive Seminar on Competition Law in New Delhi on May 13, 2006. The event had Richard Whish, Professor of Law, King's College, and Non Executive Director at the Office of Fair Trading, UK and Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International address the issue 'Competition Law of India with focus on International Cartels' from an international and national perspective, respectively.

Participation was mainly from lawyers in law offices. The papers and presentation are available on the web site and can be accessed at the given link: www.circ.in/fe13may06.htm

Second Academic Lecture (ALS.02)

ALS.02 - May 15, 2006, New Delhi on "Relationship of Competition Regulation Policy and Administration" by Professor Allan Fels, Dean, Australia & New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), Australia. Though, Alan Fels missed his flight, he could not be physically present for the lecture but the papers and presentation are available on the web site at the given link: www.circ.in/er_ALS02.htm

Third Academic Lecture (ALS.03)



Professor Richard Whish (third from left) at the event

The third Academic Lecture was organised in collaboration with Intellectual Property Law Practitioners Association (IPLPA) and Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal's Institute of Intellectual Property Studies (IIPS) in Mumbai on 'Intellectual Property and Competition Law' by Professor Richard Whish, Law Professor, King's College, London, UK.

Professor Whish gave a better understanding about intellectual property and competition laws and perceived conflict between the two. He also maintained that while the two cross paths occasionally, they both stand to serve the same cause i.e. consumer welfare.

There were 150 participants comprising of lawyers, corporate personnels and academicians. The papers and presentation of this event can be read on the website using the link below.

www.circ.in/er15may06.htm

