

// No VCs in 37 private universities!

How are they still running?

If it hadn't been for a news report it would have been hard to believe that almost half of all private universities do not have any VC and are being run with mostly acting VCs. This is unheard of as it is a given that a VC's post is crucial to maintain the quality of education in an institution and to ensure smooth operations of its administration. According to the University Grants Commission (UGC) private universities are legally obligated to ensure appointments of VC, pro VC and treasurer. But a report in this paper says around 25 universities do not have any of these posts filled while 37 have no VCs.

It is shocking that these universities have been enrolling students, taking fees from them without complying with such basic requirements. It is also surprising that they have been allowed to operate for so long by the governing authorities, namely the UGC.

There seems to be myriad reasons for such glaring gaps. These include - ambiguity regarding the time limit stipulated in the relevant law, disregard for the law by university authorities, impunity of institutions because of political clout, trustee boards wanting greater control of the university administration and alleged indifference of the education ministry (which approves appointments of VCs) and the UGC.

Around 5 lakh students study in private universities and pay the high tuition fees thinking they will get high quality education. But if almost half of these universities are operating without fulfilling a basic criterion as having a fulltime VC, how can we possibly expect them to achieve the academic excellence they claim to provide? The education ministry and UGC must strictly enforce the basic rules of running a university.

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