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Chances Of Pitching Bangalore As Prime Education Destination Are Bleak, Feel Educationists

We've lost a golden chance: experts

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: The city's educationists have always been pitching for Bangalore as a centre for premier educational institutions. But on the ground, the scene is rather bleak. After losing out on the chance to be home to prestigious institutions like the Indian Institute of Technology and Indian School of Business, now it's the Bangalore School of Economics which has had a premature death.

After the Jindal Group decided to pull out of the project, TOI asked some educationists about the fallout.

"We missed a good opportunity with the Bangalore School of Economics. Sadly, it's not the first time we have let go of a world-class educational institution. Karnataka failed to get

BETTER NOT TO HAVE IT IN BU
If a university doesn't have a great administration and isn't in good shape in terms of reputation, how can you set up a school within that university and expect it to be better than the university? If it's felt that BU cannot provide good administration, then it's better not to have the school of economics within it, although it would be ideal to have such an institute within a university set-up, like the Delhi School of Economics being part of Delhi University. If it doesn't work, then an independent institutional space would have to be explored.

CNR Rao | CHAIRMAN, SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE PRIME MINISTER

its own IIT. We also missed the ISB ten years ago when the then CM of Andhra Pradesh Chandrababu Naidu acted faster than us. Despite being the most deserving city to have an IIT, we're still craving for one. In the case of IIT, pressure at the Centre was not there. There was a severe lack of continuity. As far

as BSE is concerned, I feel there were ideological differences between university members. I sense a lack of communication. We've lost a golden opportunity," R Chenraj Jain, chairman, Jain Group of Institutions.

Some educationists feel people who decide on these issues should be blamed for this. "A similar issue cropped up when Bangalore tried to get an IIT. While we were still contemplating over different aspects, Chennai came up with a fantastic proposal. It offered free land and power supply but we were mute spectators. In the BSE case, issues related to land and ownership should have been made clear in the beginning. It's a great loss," K Balaveera Reddy, former VC, VTU told TOI.

Experts also believe the process should be more transparent and the project started after meeting guidelines. "We have never offered land to any private player. Getting a school of excellence is a great honour, but this shouldn't come at the cost of autonomy. They should have trusted the university more," said MS Thimmappa, former VC, BU.

Economics school was VC's dream



Photo by representational/Getty

DIG AFTER DIG

● If you wanted the public to decide the issue, why are syndicate members being called for a discussion?

— N Ramachandra Swamy

● Are we saying the university cannot do it on its own? Is BSE within the purview of the university? I feel the so-called school of excellence should be incorporated into the university framework. We have no issues with BSE and will welcome it with open arms, but only after these issues are clarified.

— R Karunanidhi

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not available for comment.

Bangalore: A Bangalore School of Economics (BSE) – which died a premature death when the Jindals withdrew their offer of a Rs 100-crore grant – was vice-chancellor's N Prabhu Dev's most ambitious project. Billed to meet global standards, it was accepted by the academic council in May 2011. A study group was formulated later that month with the VC and Mohandas Pai as chairman. The committee met seven times before submitting a 52-page report to the governor in November 2011.

Despite TOI's repeated efforts to contact him, Prabhu Dev was

Taking a dig at the Jindals, one academic council member had said at Friday's meeting: "The important aspect missing here is whether protocol has been followed or not. We could have also looked at others who may have been interested in investing and picked the best deal. Why only Jindals?" "Let all those wise men in the council answer posterity for their act of killing a project which would have been otherwise unique and wonderful, and would have gone a long way to further enhance the prestige and stature of the university. Our best wishes for them," the Jindal letter signed off.

HOW CAN GOVT MAKE UP FOR BSE LOSS?

The Bangalore School of Economics has run into rough weather with the Jindal Group withdrawing its Rs 100-crore grant. It's definitely not good news for the state which is yet to get an IIT but is projected as a sought-after destination for private investors.



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