



**Confederation of Indian Industry**

**CII - Stanford Center for International  
Development**

**Conference on  
“Future of Higher Education in India”**

13 October 2011: Mumbai

**Press Coverage**

## Mumbai Press Coverage

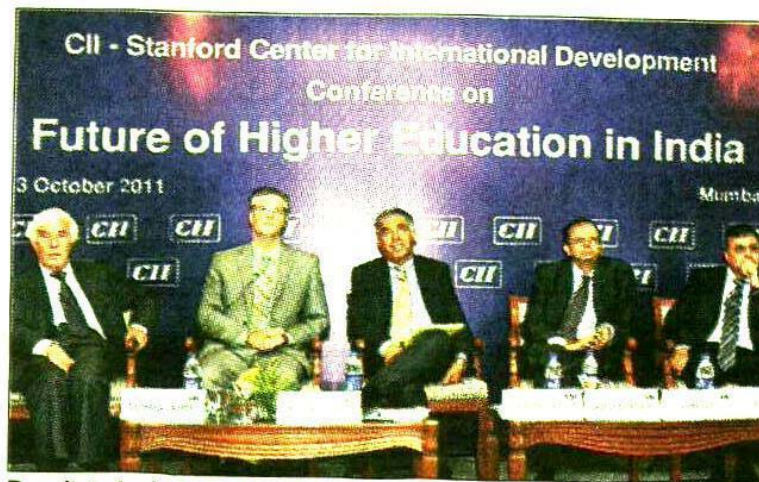


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# Educational reforms



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## Autonomy, teachers quality control and distance learning-related reforms were discussed at a conference last week

Educationists and industry professionals gathered last week for a conference on the future of higher education in India, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry and Stanford University's Centre for International Development. Several suggestions were made during the panel discussions to improve the country's higher education system. The panelists included professors from Stanford, too.

### Autonomy

"Autonomy, in the absence of many other things, doesn't produce a great product," said Roger Noll, professor of economics, emeritus, Stanford University. "However, it enables the faculty to innovate on their own. In such a large educational system with so many institutions, a top-down approach where the central university makes decisions for individual colleges is not effective." The panelists agreed unanimously that autonomy gives faculty the power to respond to the changing needs of the subject.

### Faculty productivity control

Noll also suggested that the faculty should be rewarded as per their productivity - this can apply to not just individual faculty members, but

departments or groups, too.

### Intellectual property rights

According to Dr HK Abhyankar, vice president of the Vishwakarma Institute of Technology, Pune, each student should be taught about intellectual property rights and filing patents. "The entire knowledge bank is within the scope of intellectual property," he said. "After applying this system, we filed eight patents at our institute in a year, thus encouraging research."

### Distance learning

Ashank Desai, founder and former chairman, Mastek Limited, suggested better remote learning programmes, which have a mix of online and offline training. "For instance, we could offer MBA degrees where students do one semester offline, then one year online while gaining work experience, then come back for one semester offline," he said. "This will create a teaching-learning efficiency model of remote learning and the challenge will be to account for the same level of efficiency as offline learning."

### Less red tape

The present system is rigid, according to the panelists, which increases processes and costs to implement changes.