

**ALOK KUMAR RAI, V-C, University of Lucknow**

## ‘LU will have robust system to ensure regular classes’



■ Alok Kumar Rai, vice-chancellor, University of Lucknow.

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**LUCKNOW:** Alok Kumar Rai, vice-chancellor, University of Lucknow, will turn 45 on January 20. He is perhaps the youngest to be appointed as V-C of this varsity that is set to celebrate its centenary in November 2020. In conversation with **Rajeev Mullick and Chandan Kumar**, Rai, a professor of management, spoke on issues that confront the institution, his vision for the next three years and the centennial year celebrations plan of the university.

**What fundamental changes you intend bringing in the university system?**

My foremost priority is to set up student-centric institutionalised structural system that will address the long-term need of the university. Vice-chancellor is not an inspector wherein he alone takes all the important deci-

sions. The individualistic approach should come to an end and structural system of functioning should find precedence. It is better to have a decentralised system so that even if one or two individuals are not around, the system does not collapse.

**What steps are you taking for betterment of students?**

Just like KYC (know your customers) for different services, LU will start something similar like know your student (KYS).

The university will prepare a database of its students and keep a track till such time they get placement. We are strengthening our placement cell so that students get better jobs.

The university will soon establish entrepreneurship development cell and university industry partnership

cell.

The second campus of LU needs serious attention given its poor state.

**How do you plan to streamline the administration?**

During my first visit to the second campus on January 2, I sensed that there was a sense of dejection. I am thinking of appointing a professor in-charge for the second campus of the university at the earliest. The dean (law) may focus on academic pursuit while professor in-charge will sit on the new campus and look into administrative part. The professor in-charge will address administrative issues. We will have to work together for regeneration, channelisation and good utilisation of all our students, teaching and non-teaching staff to take this institution to greater heights.

**What is your view about LU?**

LU is a good institution with exemplary history. It must get the place it truly deserves. But the institution is yet to get its due. It has all the ingredients of becoming a top notch university, given the fact that it has produced President, many chief ministers, justices, scientists, civil servants, journalists etc.

The university has 18 centres of excellence and nearly 375 permanent teaching posts. We can do far better on the academic front with this pool of manpower. We have to bring in cultural and attitudinal changes in our approach.

**How are you going to address problems that LU faces?**

To address student diversity, the university will start remedial classes. This will probably start from the new

academic session beginning from July. We have students coming from diverse areas and economic backgrounds. Some may be good in academics but others may lag because they are not well versed with English.

Remedial classes are aimed at helping below par students catch up with other students of their class on the academic front. While bridge course is like that if an undergraduate student of Mathematics wants to pursue post graduation with statistics and bridge course is helpful to help that transition.

The strength of a university lies in the quality of education and research.

**What are your plans to improve the varsity?**

LU will have a robust system to ensure regular classes. I have taken upon myself to

bring in an attitude change in senior faculty, which is required to promote development. Facilities at the library will also be improved so that students have easy access to the resources, physically and digitally. We are open for making a separate arrangement at the library for students preparing for civil services exams.

**How you plan to celebrate centenary year of the university?**

Centenary celebrations will be most befitting to the university.

We have ample time to plan and execute it. Once we finalise everything, we will tell the media about it. We will tap various agencies for resources at the same time resources for various development works will be generated through crowd-funding.