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FROM CHAIRMAN'S DESK



NEP-2020: An Overarching Body Likely for Higher Education

I am delighted, as Chairman of BITES, to place the 74th newsletter in your hands. I would be highly obliged, as ever, to receive your valuable feedback.

Government of India, couple of years back, initiated a significant exercise to formulate the new National Education Policy (NEP) under the chairmanship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan with eminent educationists as members. The committee held widespread and nationwide consultations on

Prof K N Balasubramanya Murthy
Chairman, BITES & VC, DSU

continuation of policy architecture and framework originally set up in 1986 and decided on bringing in sweeping changes. Among them, access to high-quality education with higher level of investments to achieve expansion and to revive the legacy as well as leadership of ancient Indian higher education enjoyed during the days of Nalanda and Takshashila universities, probably first of their kind.

The final draft of the National Education Policy (NEP) - 2020 has proposed an overarching (all-encompassing) body in the form of Higher Education Promotion Commission (HEPC) with four separate verticals –

- **Regulation** (NHERC – National Higher Education Regulatory Council as a single regulator for entire higher education sector),
- **Accreditation** (NAC – National Accreditation Council as a meta accrediting body),
- **Funding** (HEGC – Higher Education Grants Council for funding and financing of higher education) and
- **Academic standards** (GEC – General Education Council to frame expected learning outcomes for higher education programs).

According to the sources, these verticals will subsume the present regulatory bodies with their functions being redistributed.

At present, there are separate regulators for different sets of institutions such as Technical institutions are under the AICTE, universities and colleges under the UGC, medical colleges under the Medical Council of India, Pharmacy colleges under Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) and Nursing Colleges under the Nursing Council of India (NCI). It is relevant to mention that each of these regulatory authorities are currently carrying out the functions of the above four verticals. However, on the ground, the present system yielded mixed results and seems to have inhibited higher educational institutions from realizing their full potential.

NEP document suggests, under the section 'Transforming the Regulatory System of Higher Education', that there is a need of a revamp in order to re-energise the higher education sector and enable it to thrive as the existing rigid inspectorial regime has a consistently poor record of weeding out outdated practices and poor quality institutions. In the proposed system, distinct functions

of regulation, accreditation, funding and setting academic standards will be performed by independent and empowered bodies irrespective of the branch of study with powers to penalise Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in cases of wilful non-conformance and dishonesty.

In line with autonomy granted to the premier IIMs, the proposed system recommends similar freedom for all HEIs with the responsibility resting with the Board of Governors. Under a dedicated section on “effective governance and leadership for higher education institutions”, it has been stated that “through a suitable system of graded accreditation as well as graded autonomy and in a phased manner, all higher educational institutions will aim to become independent self-governing institutions pursuing innovation and excellence”. Further, it is also recommended that the HEIs must make provisions to progressively award free-ships and scholarships to about 20% and 30% of the student body respectively to attract talented students.

Today, India with Gross Enrolment Ratio of 26% lags behind Egypt (35%) and China (48%). Considering the inadequate supply of higher education relative to demand in India, the private investment in higher education continues to be critical. It is high time that both academic community and the Government stop treating public and private institutions differently. Both have a role to play in national progress.

Prof K N Balasubramanya Murthy

PROF R NATARAJAN'S COLUMN



THE GLOBAL STATE OF THE ART IN ENGINEERING EDUCATION – An MIT REPORT -- Ruth Graham, 2018

This is an edited version of the Executive Summary of the Report. It is noteworthy that all the Institutions considered are those that represent new models of Engineering Education programs that show little resemblance to existing programs. It has often been critiqued that experimentation and innovation have not featured in the design and evolution of Engineering Education programs worldwide. This two-phase study serves to remedy this state of affairs.

**Former Chairman, AICTE & BITES
Former Director, IIT-Madras**

The study considered the global state of the art in engineering *undergraduate* education, which was undertaken to provide inputs to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) *New Engineering Education Transformation (NEET)*, an initiative intended to develop and deliver a world-class program of undergraduate engineering education at MIT. The study was structured in two phases, both of which used one-to-one interviews as the primary source of evidence.

Phase 1 was conducted between September and November 2016, and “provided a snapshot of the cutting edge of global engineering education” and of how the state of the art was likely to develop in the future”. The analysis was based on interviews with fifty global thought leaders in engineering education and identified the most reputed current and emerging university leaders in the area.

Phase 2 was conducted between March and November 2017, and involved case studies of four selected institutions identified during Phase 1 as being ‘emerging leaders’ in engineering education:

- Singapore University of Technology and Design (Singapore),
- University College London (UK),
- Charles Sturt University (Australia) and
- TU Delft (Netherlands).

Taken together, the two phases of the study involved interviews with 178 individuals having in-depth knowledge and experience of world-class engineering programs. They provide “a rich and diverse picture of the state of the art in engineering education as well as the opportunities and constraints facing the sector”

The Report addresses five key questions:

- i. “Which institutions are considered to be the ‘*current leaders*’ in engineering education? “

Olin College of Engineering and *MIT* were both cited by the majority of thought leaders consulted in Phase 1 to be the ‘current leaders’ in engineering education. Other highly-rated universities included Stanford University, Aalborg University and TU Delft. The interviews also indicated that the “engineering education sector was entering a period of rapid change, which might result in “considerable movement in global leadership in the coming years”.

ii. Which institutions are considered to be *'emerging leaders'* in engineering education?

A number of institutions – including Singapore University of Technology and Design, Olin College of Engineering, University College London, the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and Iron Range Engineering – were consistently cited by Phase 1 thought leaders as global *'emerging leaders'* in engineering education.

iii. What features distinguish the *'current leaders'* and *'emerging leaders'* in engineering education?

Institutions identified as *'current leaders'* in engineering education tended to be well-established US and European *research-led universities* catering to large student cohorts. Good educational practices highlighted at these institutions included:

- user-centered design,
- technology-driven entrepreneurship,
- active project-based learning and
- a focus on rigor in the engineering 'fundamentals'.

"The group of *'emerging leaders'* represented a new generation of engineering programs, many of which were developed from a clean slate or the product of systemic educational reform, and were often shaped by specific regional needs and constraints. Distinctive academic features of the *'emerging leaders'* included:

- work-based learning,
- multidisciplinary programs and
- a dual emphasis on engineering design and student self-reflection.

Case study evaluations suggested that the *'emerging leader'* programs have benefitted from:

- strong and visionary academic leadership,
- a faculty culture of educational innovation and
- new tools that support educational exploration and student assessment.

iv. What key challenges are likely to constrain the progress of engineering education in the future?

A range of barriers that continue to constrain positive change in engineering education worldwide was identified in this study. These include:

- aligning government and higher education goals,
- the challenge of delivering student-centered active learning to large student cohorts,
- the siloed monodisciplinary structure of many engineering schools, and
- "Faculty appointment and promotion systems that are not perceived as rewarding teaching achievement".

v. *'What is the future direction for the engineering education sector?'*

Drawing on evidence from both phases of work, a horizon scanning approach was used to anticipate both the future trajectory of the engineering education sector and the profile of the leading engineering programs in the decades to come. It pointed to three defining trends:

- i. The first anticipated trend is a "tilting of the global axis of engineering education leadership." Evidence from the study pointed to a shift in the center of gravity of the world's leading engineering programs from north to south and from high-income countries to the emerging economic 'powerhouses' in Asia and South America." Many among this new generation of world leaders will be propelled by strategic government investment in engineering education as an incubator for the technology-based entrepreneurial talent that will drive national economic growth".
- ii. The second anticipated trend is a move towards socially-relevant and outward-oriented engineering curricula. Such curricula emphasize:
 - student choice,
 - multidisciplinary learning
 - societal impact,
 - a breadth of student experience outside the classroom,
 - outside traditional engineering disciplines and
 - across the world.

While many of these educational features appear within engineering programs at the *'current leader'* institutions, they are often "added-on activities" and are isolated within the curriculum." As a result, much of the benefit of these experiences remains unexploited because they are unconnected with other curricular components and students are not encouraged to reflect upon and apply what they have learned in other areas of the degree program". In contrast to the *'current leaders'*, "many institutions identified as *'emerging leaders'* in engineering education typically deliver distinctive, student-centered curricular experiences within an integrated and unified educational approach."

In most cases, their curricula were designed from a clean slate or were the result of a recent systemic reform. “Experiences such as work-based learning and societally-relevant design projects are embedded into the programs in a way that provides a solid platform for student self-reflection and a pathway for students to both contextualize and apply the knowledge and skills they have gained elsewhere in the curriculum.”

” However, many of these ‘emerging leader’ exemplars – such as at Olin College of Engineering and Iron Range Engineering – cater to relatively small cohort sizes”. “The key innovations that are likely to define the next phase for engineering education are the mechanisms by which such features can be integrated across the curriculum at scale: delivered to large student cohorts under constrained budgets.”

In the words of one thought leader: “The next phase in the evolution of engineering education is for the rest of us to figure out how we can offer this type of quality of education at scale.”

- iii. The third anticipated trend for the sector is therefore the emergence of a new generation of leaders in engineering education that “delivers integrated student-centered curricula at scale.”

The case studies considered in Phase 2 point to a number of institutions that have developed such a model, where this “curricular coherence and integration is delivered through a connective spine of design projects.” For example, the Singapore University of Technology and Design curriculum is delivered through multidisciplinary design projects, which contextualize and integrate learning across courses and years of study. A second example is “the UCL Engineering curriculum which structures the first two years of study in five-week cycles, where students spend four weeks acquiring a range of knowledge and skills that they subsequently contextualize and apply in a one-week intensive design project.”

Interviewees also suggested that, “in the longer term, some of the world’s leading engineering programs would increasingly deliver student-centered learning to large student cohorts through a blend of off-campus personalized online learning and on-campus hands-on experiential learning.” This is particularly relevant and meaningful in the current pandemic situation. “This is the future of the field, where you put the student at the center and use the resources to facilitate team projects and authentic experiences, and then put the taught curriculum online.”

A number of institutions are already moving forward with such an educational model. “Most notable is one of the case study institutions, CSU Engineering in Australia. This newly established five-and-a-half year program combines an 18-month on-campus education, designed around a series of project-based challenges, with four years of off-campus, work-based learning.” Almost all ‘technical engineering content’ – including both knowledge and skills – is delivered online and accessed independently by students, as and when they need it.” This program was described as “completely rethinking what engineering education ought to look like” with the potential to be “very influential, if they can pull it off.”

Taken together, the study feedback suggested that the engineering education sector is entering a period of rapid and fundamental change, where the world’s most highly rated programs would no longer be confined to global research leaders and small boutique programs. This sets the scene for the emergence of new players from across the globe that will set the future *benchmark for excellence* in engineering education.

Prof R Natarajan

ABOUT OUR MEMBER INSTITUTION

R V College of Engineering, Bengaluru



Incubation Centre



Centre of Excellence in Macroelectronics

RV College of Engineering (RVCE) established in 1963 is one of the earliest self-financing engineering colleges in the country. The institution is run by Rashtreeya Sikshana Samithi Trust (RSST) a not for profit Trust. RVCE is an Autonomous college. Currently, the institution offers 12 Bachelor, 16 Master Programs and all the departments have Research Centres, affiliated to Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) Belagavi. The institution has set itself a Vision “*Leadership in Quality Technical Education, Interdisciplinary Research & Innovation, With a Focus on Sustainable and Inclusive Technology*”. The institution has a faculty strength of over 350, staff strength of 237 and over 6000 students.

Recent awards and achievements includes - Ranked 70th in the Country by National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)–2019-20, “Engineering College of the Year-2019” by the Higher Education Review Magazine, Ranked 38th in the country by The Week Magazine-2019, Ranked 6th among the top 10 of 100 Pvt. Engg. Colleges in the Country by Education World Magazine. The institution is accredited by NAAC. Out of 28 programs, 11 undergraduate and 14 Post-graduate programs have been accredited by the NBA multiple times. The institution has been granted extension of autonomy by the UGC for 5 years from 2019-2024.

The institution has implemented Outcome Based Education (OBE) with a focus on ICT and project based learning. The institution has introduced experiential learning to motivate students to innovate, bring in teamwork and lifelong learning & encourage students to form multidisciplinary groups for major projects, leading to securing funded projects. The programs are designed with requisite number of foundation courses, advanced courses–SWEBOK, MOOCS, NPTEL, QEEE, industry-based electives and laboratories to facilitate enhancement of competence of the students in all the relevant domains and render them employable, prepare them for higher studies, entrepreneurship and public service.

Faculties are conducting the online classes through various online platforms/ tools like Zoom, Google (meet / Class), Google Drive, WhatsApp, YouTube Lite, Email, Quiklrn, WebEx and Virtual Labs (Software). RVCE conducted more than 7,800 online sessions benefiting over 6000 students, during COVID-19 pandemic period. Courses were delivered through online mode, shared Lecture Notes / Presentations / Assignments / Seminars/ Projects/ video lectures / online discussions / course content. In addition to the online classes, online assessment, open book online Quizzes and tests using Quiklrn Platform. This has given a new dimension in teaching-learning process and it will be New Normal in the ensuing years.

Last year, over 240 companies visited the campus for recruitment process and offered 1290 offers. Two students offered a salary package of Rs. 53 LPA and another three students got Rs. 49.5 LPA. CISCO alone has taken 50 students for Rs. 30 LPA. For the academic year 2020-21, the institute has already received 62 offers with a highest package of Rs. 45 LPA and the numbers are still counting. The average packages ranged between Rs. 8-10 LPA.

The institution has to its credit over 1400 National and International Journal publications, filed over 45 patents, 39 published patents and one patent granted by the Indian Patent Office, completed sponsored research and consultancy projects worth Rs. 30.0 crores in the last three years. The institution has signed more than 85 companies / institutions for joint academic and research collaborations The institution has established Incubation Centre, Centre of Excellence in Macroelectronics, Cisco sponsored Centre of Excellence in Internet of Things, RVCE-Mercedes Benz Centre for Automotive Mechatronics, Toyota Kirloskar Motors sponsored Automotive workshop, Centre for Smart Antenna Systems, Centre for Computational Genomics, RV-Bosch Rexroth Centre for Automation and Greaves Cotton sponsored Centre of Excellence in e-Mobility. The students have won awards and accolades in national and international competitions.

The institution has already reached out to over 25 villages in the vicinity, helping the villagers to overcome many challenges including infrastructural issues, education, employ-ability and many more. Last year, AICTE introduced Activity Points, where every engineering student in his four years is supposed to get 100 points by doing something for society. This is being done to help them become successful professionals, which needs excellent soft skills, entrepreneurial and leadership abilities, team spirit and societal commitment, besides expertise in their chosen fields.

RVCE has signed MoUs with four International universities to have student-faculty exchange programmes. The institute provide facilities for faculty members to visit countries like Germany and the college too hosted a few students from them in the campus. The institution has signed MoUs with over 90 companies across the world to help students to get internships and find research and consultancy projects for its faculty members. Majority of the faculty are involved in funded projects with the industry.

RVCE has more than 15 innovative teams including Hybrid automobile vehicle, Unmanned Aviation Vehicles (UAV), Drones, Robots and Racing Cars. Students were encouraged to participate in various competitions. The list of innovative clubs include Ashwa Racing (Formula Style Hybrid & Combustion Race Cars), Helios Racing (All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)), Chimera (Hybrid Vehicles), Garuda (Super Mileage Cars), Vyoma (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)), Jatayu (Autonomous Aerial Vehicles), Solar Car and Ashtra Robotics (Robotics), Antariksh, HAM Club (Amateur Radio). They have consistently won many awards at the Regional, University, National and International level competitions. These teams are mentored by faculty and industry executives.

Faculty Development Program on “IOT and its Applications”

Resource: Prof. H. S. Jamadagni, Former Professor, IISc

Venue: NMAM Institute of Technology, Nitte

Date: May 27, 2020

BITES organized a 1-hour FDP on “IOT and its applications” by Prof. H. S. Jamadagni conducted on May 27, 2020 for 93 faculty of NMAM Institute of Technology, Nitte and other engineering colleges in the state of Karnataka. The FDP was handled in an interactive mode covering origin of IOT and its applications. Prof. Jamadagni also mentioned about the kind of work in the domain of IOT carried out at Department of Electronics Systems Engineering (formerly CEDT) of IISc which was well appreciated by the participants. The faculty requested for organizing more of such programs.

The program was hosted and coordinated by NMAM Institute of Technology, Nitte.

Virtual Student Development Program on “Enhancing Emotional Quotient”

Resource: Disha Bharat Trust

Venue: BNM Institute of Technology, Bengaluru

Date: May 27, 2020

The virtual workshop was formally inaugurated with prayer. The facilitator gave a brief introduction about Disha Barat and its activities then followed by an interactive session on the ongoing COVID – 19 crisis. Smt Rekha discussed on how the pandemic COVID-19 has caught the entire world unaware and unprepared setting a ‘**new normal world**’ universally and the need now more than ever, how it is imperative to keep the student community motivated and energized. She also said how the colleges are striving hard to cope up with the academics through online classes and remote support, Disha has recognized the importance of **emotional and mental wellbeing** of the students and their **readiness to adapt** to the change.

The students were asked various questions on different levels of stress which they are undergoing especially during the COVID crisis and lockdown by the team based on which they gave different activities that control emotions and acts like stress busters. The student were taught

- To unleash the inner potential by building self-confidence
- To make use of the student life for the benefit of the self and society
- To instil the importance of adapting and embracing the changes
- To lead a purposeful life on the strong foundation of values

The key Highlights of the Workshop were:

- Interaction
- Videos
- Stories and Anecdotes
- Activities and Games
- Experience Sharing

The students responded and interacted well during the sessions and liked the event.

Virtual Student Development Program on “Enhancing Emotional Quotient”

Resource: Disha Bharat Trust

Venue: NMAM Institute of Technology, Nitte

Date: May 28, 2020

BITES organized a 2-hour SDP on “Enhancing Emotional Quotient” by Disha Bharat Trust on May 28, 2020 for 120 students of NMAM Institute of Technology, Nitte. The SDP was handled in an interactive mode by 5 resource persons and the answers were provided to the questions / queries of students by Disha resource persons. The program was liked by the students and requested the authorities to organize more of such programs.

The program was coordinated by Dr. Sudesh Bekal, Professor of Mechanical Engineering and he also offered concluding remarks.

Virtual Faculty Development Program on “Enhancing Emotional Quotient”

Resource: Disha Bharat Trust

Venue: BNM Institute of Technology, Bengaluru

Date: May 29, 2020

The virtual workshop was formally inaugurated with prayer. The facilitator gave a brief introduction about Disha Barat and its activities then followed by an interactive session on the ongoing COVID – 19 crisis. Smt Shoba discussed the main goal of the FDP – **Prerana – The New Warriors in the New Normal World! is to value initiatives and how important is to build** the relationship between the teacher and student and to motivate teachers to inculcate teaching with **vision, passion** (for teaching), **compassion** towards students and above all, personal integrity and right conduct leaves a lasting impact on the young minds.

Smt Rekha discussed on how the pandemic COVID-19 has caught the entire world unaware and unprepared setting a ‘**new normal world**’ universally and the need now more than ever, how it is imperative to keep the student community motivated and energized, stay committed to the profession and remain loyal to the institution.. She also said how the colleges are striving hard to cope up with the academics through online classes and remote support,

The faculties were asked various questions on different levels of stress which they are undergoing especially during the COVID crisis and lockdown by the team based on which they gave different activities that control emotions and acts like stress busters. The FDP helped

- To inspire the teachers to stay self-motivated and energized
- To enhance pride and passion towards their profession
- To enthuse creation of innovative teaching pedagogies
- To empower teachers so that they become catalysts of change

The key Highlights of the Workshop were:

- Interaction
- Videos
- Stories and Anecdotes
- Activities and Games
- Experience Sharing

The faculties responded and interacted well during the sessions and liked the event.

BITES-Xcelerator Students Project Awards – 2020 (BXSPA-2020)

BITES and Xcelerator have joined hands to organize BITES-Xcelerator Student Project Awards (BXSPA) as an annual event, since 2018-19. The event is designed to identify and showcase the best student projects related to IT. The Challenge / Competition is open to students, across disciplines including MCA, from all engineering colleges across Karnataka. The process of evaluation of the projects is as follows:

1. Registration with the intent of participation
2. Submission of project abstract of about 1-page
3. Scrutiny of project abstracts by experts and short listing for submission of project summary
4. Submission of Project summary of about 5 pages highlighting the objectives, methodology used, key contributions in terms of innovation and newness, application base and scope for future work, if any
5. Evaluation of project summaries by experts and selection of top 20 projects for demonstration cum exhibition
6. Evaluation of projects in the exhibition mode by the Jury panel having experts drawn from academia as well as industry and recommending the top two for prizes and a few projects for “Special Mention of the Jury Awards” if the projects are promising

For BXSPA-2020, we received over 691 registrations from more than 100 engineering colleges in the state of Karnataka. About 337 have submitted project abstracts and about 125 were shortlisted for submitting the project summaries in the areas of Aeronautical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Electronics and Communication Engineering, Information Science and Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering. Top 20 projects were selected based the marks awarded to the various components by the experts and the following Jury panel was constituted for evaluating the top 20 projects:

1. Dr. Kavi Mahesh, Director, IIIT, Dharwad
2. Dr. M. K. Banga, Dean of Research and Innovation, DayanandaSagar University
3. Dr. Ram P Rustagi, KRP, KS Institute of Technology
4. Dr. P. Punitha, Former Group Manager at IBM
5. Mr. Amit Gupta, Founder & CEO, Rapyder Cloud Solutions
6. Mr.Karthik Madhav, Founder & VP, Business Development at Lavelle Networks

7. Mr. Pugal Pannerselvam, Head, Products & Platform, Altimetrik
8. Mr.Gnana Kumara Swamy, Co-founder and CEO at Advanced Rotating Machinery and Intelligent Systems R&D Pvt Ltd.

On account of Covid-19 pandemic, the jury panel evaluated the top 20 projects virtually on June 29-30, 2020 and July 1-4, 2020 by giving about 15 to 20 minutes per batch to present the project and answer the queries. The Jury panel unanimously recommended the following three projects for award of top 3 prizes in BXSPA-2020:

Student Team	Institution	Project Title	Prize
1. Anant Raj 2. Aniket Singh 3. Zaifa Khan under the guidance of Mr.SrinidhiHiriyannaiah	MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology, Bengaluru	VIGIL	FIRST Prize (Rs.25,000 + certificate to the team and Rs.5,000 + certificate to the Faculty supervisor)
1. ArpitAgarwalla 2. PrakharChaube 3. Saket Kumar Chirania Under guidance of Mr. N. Sandeep Varma	BMS College of Engineering, Bengaluru	QR Authentication	SECOND Prize (Rs.15,000 + certificate for team and Rs.5,000 + certificate for the Faculty supervisor)
1. Shantanukumar 2. Charles Thomas 3. Monika C 4. SuseelaPriyankakamakoti	KS Institute of Technology, Bengaluru	Audio Summary Transcriber	Jury Appreciation Prize (Rs.5,000 + certificate to the team and Rs.5,000 + certificate to the Faculty supervisor)

Webinar on “Natural Language Processing”
Resource: Dr Kavi Mahesh, Director IIIT-Dharwad
Resource: Srinivas Institute of Technology, Mangaluru
Date: July 28, 2020

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Srinivas Institute of Technology-Mangaluru organized a webinar on “Natural Language Processing” in association with BITES on July 28, 2020 by **Dr. Kavi Mahesh**, Director of IIIT,Dharwad.

The Webinar began with a brief introduction about the webinar by Dr. Shivakumar G S, Head, Department of Computer Science and Engineering in presence of Dr. Shrinivasa Mayya D Principal of Srinivas Institute of Technology.

Dr. Kavi Mahesh in the first session introduced Natural Language Processing in simple terms, gave an Overview of NLP technologies, and elaborately discussed various research Problems in NLP.In the second session he explained about the nature of Natural Languages, their families, linguistics,Text Classification, Sentiment analysis and challenges.

All the participants actively participated throughout the session and expressed their views and ideas. The sessions were quite interactive with about 200 participants from various institutions attending the webinar. E-Certificates were distributed to all the Participants and the webinar was conducted through Cisco WebEx platform.

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