

# All univ's asked to make room for gym

**UGC guidelines instructs all varsities to dedicate space and time for gymnasiums on campus to promote campaign for fitness**

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In a pursuit to promote a campaign for fitness in Higher Educational Institutions (HEI), the University Grants Commission (UGC) has framed guidelines to be followed in all institutions. The guideline instructs colleges to start a gymnasium, have a dedicate a space in the campus for cycles and seek voluntary participation of ex-servicemen and physical instructors to train the students.

Not just in schools, the ministry now wants the colleges and universities to start physical education hours and engage in sports activities. The UGC has said that the universities and colleges should adopt policies and practices towards fitness and well-being of both the students and staff.

The guidelines say that the institution should prepare 'fitness leaders' to mentor students for physical fitness. It stated, "Services of student volunteers from the institutions, faculty members, instructors, ex-servicemen, and other volunteers may be obtained on voluntary basis. Health icons and motivational speakers on health and fitness to address students in campus should be invited."

The commission also said



that the top-managements should involve themselves in fitness activities like cycling, running, aerobics, walkathon, marathon, meditation etc. on a periodic basis to lead by example.

The institutions have also been instructed to utilize existing infrastructure, "Encouraging students to climb stairs, walk at least 10,000 steps a day, use cycles within campus by creating cycling zones, availing gymnasium facilities, etc," the guidelines stated.

Like schools, the higher educational institutions are also asked to allot time for physical fitness period into the academic calendar of the institution. The students, staff and teachers are also asked to devote minimum one hour per day on fitness activities such as exercise, yoga, meditation, walking, cycling, aerobics, dance, traditional regional martial arts, etc.

Additionally, the UGC

along with these guidelines has said that the HEIs should address the emotional concerns of students to promote mental health. The institutions should create awareness or sensitisation workshops on depression, anxiety and stress management for students and faculty.

Other tasks include conducting annual health check-ups by volunteer health doctors or voluntary organisations to monitor health and fitness of both the students and staff.

A senior official from Bangalore University said, "Recently when we celebrated the 'Fit India Movement' the Vice-Chancellor himself participated in aerobics activities amongst hundreds of students. We are always encouraging students to keep up with these kinds of activities. Only thing is that we need to start promoting cycling activities as our campus is a lush-green campus with wide roads."