

AKSHAY MUNJAL, executive director, BMU

"My vision for BMU is to prepare students for life and not for exams"

Nandita Mather

• nandita.mather@times.com

BML Munjal University (BMU), founded by Hero Group and mentored by Imperial College, London offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses in business management and engineering. Under B. Tech, the university is starting specialized courses in Megatronics and Artificial Intelligence. As the Executive Director of BMU, Akshay Munjal is the driving force behind this higher education initiative. Edited excerpts:

When was BMU set up and what is the purpose behind it?

BMU was set up in 2014 by the Hero Group. We felt the need for a high-quality university in the country. If you look at the top 100 rankings, rarely does an Indian university feature on the list. There is also a significant gap between the needs of the industry and the current skills and knowledge of the students graduating from most places. At BMU we are trying to bridge this gap. Students graduate well equipped to lead either their own businesses or teams, after an education that is based on hands-on learning and industry interface.

As President of BMU, what is your vision for the university?
As the President of the university, I am responsible for the growth and improvement of the university. I like to ensure that the faculty and students get all the support



• Akshay Munjal

that they need to help BMU achieve its mission of becoming a leading university for the quality and impact of its teaching and research. My vision for BMU is to prepare students for life and not for exams.

How do you differentiate yourself from other private universities?

Students spent up to 45% of the contact hours learning outside the classroom through labs, projects, research assignments and Practice school (supervised internships). BMU students have the opportunity of exchange programmes with Imperial College London, Singapore Management University, University of Maryland, HHL in Germany and CUOA Foundation in Italy.

Are there any partnerships with industry?

BMU thrives to create a sustainable industry-academia partnership. BMU has inked an alliance with Siemens, KPMG, IBM and Axis Bank and is working closely with industry on curriculum

design, learning tools and educational technology. Guest speakers and visiting faculty from the industry give lectures on campus and conduct seminars and workshops. Industry partners like Siemens have established the Siemens Centre of Excellence to enhance lab infrastructure and upgrade faculty skill set.

What is the employability of students graduating from BMU?

To ensure students are industry ready individuals, the curriculum is designed in a manner that it gives hands-on practical experience through live projects and various internship opportunities. Students have been absorbed by brand names like ITC, Coca Cola, Aditya Birla Group, Axis Bank, Yes Bank, Siemens, KPMG among others. BMU has been maintaining 100% placements by connecting their students to potential employers.

What are your future plans as regards BMU?

BMU seeks to become a catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurship. As a research center, we want to focus on finding solutions to real-world problems and ideas for a better India. We plan to significantly grow innovation and research done on campus. In the next phase, we plan to add four more schools: School of Liberal Arts, School of Art, Architecture and Design and a School of Natural Sciences and School of Law.