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INDIA'S BEST COLLEGES

# Outlook

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## DEGREES OF SEPARATION

The great American Dream turns into a nightmare for foreign students with policing dissent in campuses, deportations, surveillance, fading job prospects and the politics of othering



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# Learning Curveball

**T**HE great American Dream for Indian students is souring. The Trump administration's cracking down on Ivy League colleges for political reasons, cutting down of funding of billions of dollars for major universities, and a college life hostile for foreign students have made the United States for higher studies fraught with uncertainty. Indian students' visas have been revoked on grounds like traffic violations for their political views, participation in the Gaza war. Any support to the Palestinian cause is seen as treason and labelled anti-Semitic.

Presidents and vice-chancellors of some universities have resigned, or have been asked to go, over their refusal to tow the administration's line. Funding to Harvard has been cut by \$2.2 billion. But Harvard at least fought back, taking the administration to court. "Harvard University would not be the same without its international students, who contribute significantly to its academic and cultural environment," it said in a statement. But many other prestigious American universities caved without showing any spine.

Some 1.3 million Indian students go abroad to study every year. Most of them are from middle-class families who take hefty students loans. What does the future hold for them in a country where dissent is being policed and foreign students are labelled? What are the other options for them? Are there comparable courses in various disciplines available in countries other than the US, or even within India?

Within the country too, the academic atmosphere is hardly peaceful. Professors are hounded for their political views, syllabi are being rewritten with a certain slant and dissent and protests by students are heavily dealt with. In this scenario, *Outlook's* annual definitive India's Best Colleges issue in collaboration with ICARE assumes even more importance, for students, parents and teachers. 📌

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