Students, professors band together to protest ‘repressive’ DU authorities

TANUSHREE BHASIN

Universities are meant to be places where ideas are proliferated and young minds are nurtured to shape the future. But according to students, over the past few years, the three universities in Delhi, each among the top in the country, are falling prey to draconian politics. Private security guards troll the campuses while CCTV cameras record everything. In the modern campuses of Delhi, it is not a spirit of questioning that is top currency — instead one is encouraged to fear, to comply and to never question.

While DU has been in controversy lately for its introduction of the semester system, Jamia Millia Islamia has been bringing in changes over the past few years that have not gone down well with students or teachers. A recent conference at Urdu Ghar saw the students of the university come together to protest the stifling of democratic space within the university.

Protesting a massive fee hike introduced in different courses at the university, students, activists and teachers participated in this conference.

How is this justified?” said one student at the conference.

The fee hike comes in the wake of another controversial development in the university. Hamidur Rahman, a student of political science at Jamia who had earlier this year filed a PIL asking the court why student elections had not been held at Jamia in six years, was present at the conference to talk about his nightmarish experience with the administration. “I had applied to seven different departments for admission, and was denied a seat in all even though I had cleared all entrances,” said Rahman.

In addition, a character certificate was soon issued to him that read as follows: “Mr. Rahman is litigious and has been argumentative in his three years as an undergraduate student in Jamia Millia Islamia. He has done nothing that has been in the interest of university and has not been actively participating in the campus.” Rahman had been a college topper and extremely involved in extra-curricular activities. “The sense that we get is that if we are too curious or insatiable and we raise uncomfortable questions, we will immediately be reprimanded. There is no scope for a discussion,” said Rahman.

There seems to be a universal attempt on the part of colleges to disengage students from politics and have them conform to decisions that are often taken without their consent. “We must understand what is happening at Jamia today in the larger context of an overall regression and stifling of liberties in all Delhi universities,” suggested activist Gautam Navlakha.
India Inc’s CHOICE

The new top opens all corporate doors. The institute claims pole position in this year’s B-school rankings with a bouquet of courses specifically designed for the market.

By Devika Chaturvedi

I was a graduate of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad till a year ago. The IIM opens many corporate doors in India and across the world — and with a good reason. It is the undisputed leader of management education in the country. It regularly scores top positions in the top IIM rankings, offering two places from last year. What explains this success? It has a sharp sense of what corporate India wants. Sample some of the new electives in the 2012-13 postgraduate diploma programme. One flagship course: real estate management, sports marketing, coaching and counseling skills for teams and leadership effectiveness (coaching), media measurement management and marketing management in high technology and innovation.

The institute has also rolled out an elective course called ‘Introduction to Contemporary Film Industry’. A recent prospectus of 2009 in which this year’s focus is unlike the 160-exempt club of mishaps and the rule-except media players in promoting a film.

The market-ready course structure — the full-time two-year MBA course costs Rs 15.5 lakh — brings in dividends. “There has been a phenomenal increase in co-ex collaborations with foreign universities. From four in 1990s to 60 at present,” says Anil Kacker, the institute’s manager, global partnerships and corporate affairs. More than 100 students opt for the student exchange programme every year. As for recruitment, no one is a consultant of the industry’s preferred destination for new hands. At the

2012 campus placements, an IIM student got an offer of Rs 39.41 lakh annually with the average salary of the batch was Rs 14.44 lakh. IBM emerged as the top recruiter among 129 companies that came to campus to pick up 12 students.

Says Vice-Chancellor Sanjiv Bora, 51, who has a taste for going before his five-year stint ends: “The quality of the academic process in the institute was maintained despite the unprecedented increase in the batch size due to its expansion from 314 in 1999 to 361. The criterion for selection at IIM has never been based entirely on IIT scores; it’s always multi-dimensional.”

An alumni of courses such as the Government’s Chief Economist, Aseem Trivedi, sports commentator Harshad Bhogle, popular author Chetan Bhagat and KVIC Non-Executive Chairman and Infosys Chairman K.V. Kamath accedes to the rigour and quality of programmes at IIMs. Deena Mallick, Ahmedabad, an alumnus of the 1974 batch, whose father V.K. Malik was behind the institute’s foundation in 1964, feels there is a huge demand in working ethics and social commitment. “My father’s dream was to create a self-reliant India. I have succeeded in creating social entrepreneurs,” she says. It’s something that is visible to all. It will continue to thrive in 2013. A new course titled ‘Investigating Corporate Social Responsibility’ in the executive education programme where students will be taught about links between corporate social responsibility and social responsibility, and between consumption and environmental degradation, the Buminium of industrial agriculture, land acquisition and rehabilitation measures.

The intensity on the 165-acre campus is exhilarating and the institute also has a lighter side — from a campus newspaper, the ‘IIM’, to a campus newspaper, the ‘IIM’ to a campus newspaper, the ‘IIM’. A recent prospectus of 2009 in which this year’s focus is unlike the 160-exempt club of mishaps and the rule-except media players in promoting a film.

For many, the goal is to make the maximum money. The placement process is brutal and only a few get their ‘dream job’. But looking back, you see it was all a mirage. To sum it up, most of what was taught in the classroom passed me by. Though I scraped through the exams and got the diploma. What stayed with me is the confidence that I can solve any problem that comes my way. And the ultimate gift of a great education.

Banchal Bose is a best-selling author and an ex-Client of ‘IIM graduate’
Finance is KING IN KOLKATA

The institute has had best placements for the fourth year. It's expanding its collaboration with US business schools. There's no dilution in Calcutta, from second place.

by Titus Sarkar

G

good teaching skills are enough for survival of the Indian insti-
tute of Management, Calcutta (IIM-C), but not for its growth," says Ashok Banerjee, 47, its dean, New Initiatives and External Relations. No surprise then that the IIM-C Case Research Centre, which started in June this year, appears to create a milestone in the growth of case-studies that can be utilised not just by the institute’s faculty but also by universities in India and abroad. Most case studies were hitherto from Rich-

dale (University of Western Ontario, Canada), or Harvard. Through case papers we produce here, we'll be able to look at cases from a fresh perspective, he says.

IIM-C is not alone - Ground-breaking research is a threat area, he continues, outlining future plans of the institute that completed 50 years in November 2013. Fresh faculty recruits are encouraged to teach initially so that they can concentrate on research. Already by this year more than 300 papers from IIM-C were presented at conferences or published books and peer-reviewed journals.

IIM-C retains second position in the Asia-Nikkei ranked survey for 2012. Its success is summarised by Banerjee: "We still do the 5s approach - Growth, growth and globalisation," he says. Of 7000 institutions, there have been major additions - classrooms, hotels and facili-
ty halls. In place of the new postgradu-
ate programme (we) have set up 452 students this year, large, if not the largest, in IIM-C history. Nearly 77 per cent of the students have prior work experience.

Globalisation initiatives are no lon-
ger restricted to foreign student ex-
changes. "So far, such programmes have mostly been in collaboration with European schools. Now we're looking at North America, as well," Banerjee says. The latter is a tie-up with CMU, an alliance of 25 top global business schools, which enables a handful of students to simultaneously earn a postgraduate degree in management, rated by Financial Times as one of the world's best. It will also enable stu-
dents to collaborate on research projects.

There is more on offer. Besides a string of symposiums and conferences on marketing, public policy and finance, IIM-C also initiates the annual In-
ternational B-School move, and Carpe Diem, its annual alumni fest. "With so many activities and clubs, there are no dull moments," says Jyotsna Mitra, 22, second-year MIB student.

"Academics were tough and com-
petitive. But the key thing about IIM-C was its genuinely egalitarian atmo-
sphere. Namely, pupils talk to everyone, not just placement officials," remarks another Amish Tripathi, 37, alumnus of the 1997 batch. With placements the ultimate bottom line, IIM-C has come out on top for the fourth year running. There are 95 pre-placement offers and 11 other offers. MBE (management consulting) is the lowest at 47 offers, followed by finance and tech. "IIM-C is known as the finance campus. You get better oppor-
tunities here," says second-year MIB student Pratik Datta, 22, who joined in just six months.

But Banerjee says, "IIM-C is not just about placements. We also strive to deliver students the finest education and exposure." He points to the strong college curriculum in areas not directly related to man-
gagement courses, or courses in accoun-
ting, social structure, economic and political history, and in creativity.

For now, students and teachers are looking forward to November, when the golden jubilee batch comes to an end with the release of a corporate film by director Gourang Grover.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Amish Tripathi

My wish list as IIM-C DIRECTOR

Industry interaction with students needs to be improved. This is a huge challenge for us, Calcutta, since most large companies are headquartered in Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore. But we've got to find a way to bridge that gap. No amount of theoretical inputs can match the strength of hands-on practical experience.

Moreover, I would emphasise on training more entrepre-
nurs and helping them through incubation. Our institute, like Stanford, Cambridge and Mau-
cher of Technologies, is this very well and looks like we should also work harder in this area. If we can create an entrepreneur incubation hub, not only will we open up opportunities for our students, we will also succeed in placing back our great country in large enterprises.

I wish, as the director I will explore the college can introduce courses that can help those students who may have a creative bent of mind. Very few parts of our formal education prepare me for a career in the arts. I did a B Tech in mathematics from Xavier's, Mumbai, and then did an MBA in Calcutta. A setting career happened more as an accident rather than through a plan. Though I wish that I knew about this, I was happy with the courses I had taken, and would not change a thing. I wish many other students could be exposed to courses in creative fields. Can our institute have elective courses to help such people? I say, why not?
Business with Ethics

BY AMITABH SRIVASTAVA

Ariana Nikolai, 23, a human resource management (HRM) student from France, Paris, had the chance to study at “better known business schools in the US to culturally easier-to-acclimate social settings”. It was part of a student exchange programme. She chose XIM and calls it “the right decision”. “My experience at XIM has been amazing. I would have never understood the economy and market sentiment of developing nations had I not come here,” she says.

“Such teaching methodology is essentially interactive. It helps students build and augment understanding to successfully control real-life management issues,” says Ignatius Fakunle, 39, the dean, academic, XIM, Ahmedabad.

Set up in 1949, XIM was placed fourth in India by the Business Today-BSE Schools Survey. For xim, 2012 has been a defining year. The institute has undergone a rebranding process this year. In addition to the logo, there is also a new descriptor: Xavier School of Management, and a new tagline: ‘For the Greater Good’.

“XIM is continuously evolving to attract the best students, the most accomplished faculty, and also the most reputed organizations for placement,” says Sudhir Varghese, chief brand and sustainability officer. This year, 71 companies, including Coca-Cola, Deutsche Bank, Google, McKinsey & Co and IIMC, main 264 job offers to xim students.

XIM is also in the process of setting up a new campus in the national capital region of Delhi by 2015 and a second campus in Jamshedpur by 2013. The second campus in Jamshedpur will create an additional 120 seats. The Delhi campus will also have an intake of 120 students. At present, xim accommodates 240 students.

From the next academic session, xim will also launch a global partnership in collaboration with Weatherhead School of Management of Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, US, and School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University in Beijing, China. XIM started its international programme in 2001 in collaboration with Allahabad Institute of Technology in Indore. It has since developed academic collaborations and exchange partnerships with institutions around the world.

In 2010, xim also started a customised postgraduate course in collaboration with Apollo Pholocude Group to enhance managerial skills of health-care professionals. The institute has been continuously evolving. The faculty keeps updating their pedagogy and course content, and the curriculum is updated every second or third year, with input from the business world.

But the institute has remained wedded to its core values of business ethics, says Ray. “We don’t just create business leaders for tomorrow; we create leaders with high-business ethics. Managerial ethics is a translucency subject. A three-day workshop exposes students to the concept of business ethics. The programme is a must for students. Creating values of ethics, integrity and honor; exceeds our hallmark,” says the dean.

These values are indelibly engraved in the minds of students. Second-year postgraduate student Kartikya Chaturvedi, 21, interned in Mumbai to help an xim student run a night school for poor children. Ankshul Jain, 21, a second-year postgraduate student, spearheaded the efforts of xim students to create a food bank for poor children, and the students collected Rs 2.30 lakh to fund the studies of 53 tribal children.

It is difficult to get xim students. About 40,000 students apply every year. Based on their Xavier Admission Test (XAT), about 90 students are selected. For the first, about 240 are selected. For the students, the xim experience is worth the labour.
World at its FEET

au, Bangalore, is shining old ideas and opening up to new ones. Encouraging innovations, it is looking to compete with the best B-schools in the world.

By Sowmya Ali

H ow did South Korea, with a gdp of $69 in the 1950s, manage to hit it to $32,200 now? Students of the one-year executive postgraduate programme (EPP) at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore (IIM-B) have studied just that. They went on a two-week tour to South Korea on an “innovation project” to compare two economies, rather than two companies or two industries. Each, which has been placed the fifth best business school in India, but shifted in focus to international on all fronts, including the programme, the research and the students. And the South Korea tour seems to have succeeded in “creating value”, as Strategy Professor P. Venkatraman, 42, puts it.

Student Kazi Fadil, 42, a former Navy commander, points out that 97 per cent of cars on Korean roads are made there, boosting local economy. Fellow student Vinesh Bhatia, 32, who grew up studying at University of California, Berkeley, in study at IIM-B says, “The Koreans left the old idea of imitation of the West to focus on innovation, which is what India should do.”

Namrata Jhalakshetra, 34, has taken a sabbatical after 12 years in the IT industry. The two course and the N.S. Raghavan Entrepreneurship Cell at IIM-B have pushed her into plans of being an independent consultant for the food industry. “We have to draw up a business model as a project, so my first step is already done,” she says.

Today, IIM-B is focusing on increasing its international presence in research. The right price to pay for an mba was the subject of business analytics research with Professor P. Venkatraman and an academic intern, Shibani Banerjee, a case study paper that was published in Harvard Business Publishing. Another study was published on the business model of a safe water manufacturer in England, which pumps the profits from the sales of bottled water to improve the condition of water bodies in Africa.

For each study of paper published by our facility in one of the world’s top 33 journals, we give cash incentives of Rs 1 lakh and $10,000 respectively. We give competitive research grants of Rs 1 crore, and a seed grant of Rs 3 lakh for exploratory research. We aim to be the best B-school in the world,” Kumar told Reuters.

The B-school has been taking part in six fairs in London, San Francisco, New York and Singapore to attract international students. “We are still scoring places in the top 50,” they have a record of success. What is the new Harvard in the quality of education and at least 30 per cent of our students have been placed abroad,” says Chetan Subramaniam, director, Office of International Affairs.

The school has a 100 per cent placement record. Investment banks, healthcare and e-commerce firms come with pre-placement power programmes. “About 130 firms make presentations to each batch of 280 students,” said Arup Agarwal, head, Career Development Services.

Students, however, point to the social action encouraged in the programme. Through a committee called Pragya, 50 students voluntarily pay for daily nutrition supplements and milk to 55 poor children at Mallik town outside Bangalore, while a free medical camp is annually arranged for the public. The same feasts the board members of IIM-B.

The IIM-B is the ITB School in India, with the Rs 15 lakh tuition fee of the postgraduate programme of students working for the salaries in the social sector for three years. A treat that should perhaps be initiated by other business schools.

Why B is BETTER THAN A

One trend is to seek out those with diverse interests. But more than the better B-school, it is the students’ initiatives that make all the difference.

I n an era of a “never-ending battle” and a very healthy one! To me, the question is which is more appropriate for the aspirant. Based on my experience at B-school and whatever I know about B, there was one key difference—the focus of both colleges; we give a lot of emphasis to academics while those at A had a well-rounded focus. In the first year, while we had compulsory attendance and a heavy course load, those in A had some leeway.

Also, I think B seeks out academically inclined and driven people. On the other hand, we tend to seek out those with diverse interests. In my group, we had many students with all interests—not just entrepreneurs but also those who have made different choices in 3D.

Moreover, being in Bangalore gives us the advantage of being in a closer access to the industry, especially the software sector. I also think our international exposure was higher. Though exchange programmes, seminars and an event that included a business trip to Southeast Asian countries, the college ensured that each student got a global perspective, a definite plus.

Today, IIM-B has a very progressive director, with a strong focus on research, alumni engagement as well as international linkages. Its specialized programmes in public policy (eco) and software focus create opportunities to build networks and interact with people from diverse fields.

One thing that most Indian B-schools can learn more on is the social responsibility angle. I have received support from professors in both B and C for my work in the social sector, but I am sure much more can be done on this front. Our international visibility is also less compared to the calibres of our students, faculty and course quality—those need to be boosted. The B-schools in the country are being praised in different ways and the Government should not interfere in their functioning.

Finally, everyone will say if you are a part of B-school, it is the initiative the students take up that makes all the difference. If you sit on the sidelines, you get the same, and if you get some shallow water, but for the pearls and treasures, you need to take a plunge into the deep sea.

So go ahead, immerse yourself in the entire B-school experience—interact with faculty, network within the industry, participate in extracurricular activities and help your friend school shine a little better.
Lighter Side of Business

When they’re not attending back-to-back lectures, B-school whizkids are off visiting vineyards, painting graffiti, star gazing or learning Japanese dining etiquette.

By Somali Acharjee

Since 2003, 25-year old aspiring connoisseurs have been out of the comfort of their Institute of Management, Bangalore (IM-B) campus to meet the street. Their survival diet: A banana for breakfast, a dish of plantain for lunch and masala for dinner. The aim is to live on Rs 20 a day and experience the life of people they’ve only read about—India’s millions who live below the poverty line.

B-school whizkids at premier management schools in India now know much more than how to crack greasing exams. When they’re not attending back-to-back lectures, they’re off visiting vineyards, painting graffiti on kites, star gazing or learning Japanese dining etiquette. As the Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi, students of the Finance Club get to participate in workshops conducted by some of the world’s biggest private banks such as HSBC, Citibank and Deutsche Bank. At these workshops, it’s not just corporate slide shows and marketing manuals that’s on the agenda; there’s a real emphasis on enhancing soft skills, be it how to shake hands after a meeting or choosing the right business attire for an interview.

"One must not think like a manager but also look, speak and act like one. This means learning global languages, accepted etiquettes, city-dwelling expectations and job profiles," says Sudhanshu Solanki, 26, president of the club. At Mumbai’s National Business School (NBS), one frequently finds groups of students sitting and brainstorming around the 40-acre campus. The task at hand is to set up a profitable business in two months with a budget of Rs 50,000 as seed money.

Entrepreneurship cannot be taught but must be learned on the job. That is why we lay emphasis on practical work and interactive activities. That way, even the tiniest level of leadership is developed," says the Nitin Seth, senior manager, IM-B.

The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IM-A), is set up to have seven clubs in 2003. Conclave, events, music, parties and travel are topics of discussion for the 17-member club. The club’s activities include star gazing sessions, local planetarium trips, an online magazine called Conclave, astronomy quizzes and online story-writing competitions. "We also have a talent show," says Tanuj Gupta Kohli, 25, the club’s co-ordinator. The fun at IM-A doesn’t end there. Their wine (Maden A Day) club, set up in NBS, has a movie crew and even collects the club’s coffee to popular Bollywood flicks.

We recently screened a Bollywood film, Desi, for the students," says club co-ordinator Ashutosh Sachdev, who also organizes a special movie screening annually for the children of Prayaa, the on-campus social club for the underprivileged.

With the growing industry demand for in-house corporate social responsibility managers, corporate social initiatives such as Prayaa not only provide students a break from the classroom, but also strengthen resumes. The Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow (IM-L), has given a sports sweat to it. Its Bhubaneswar Club started the "Shraman Cup" in 2007. It holds cricket tournament annually to raise funds for social causes. The 2011 edition had public-spirited banking between Slavica Bank of India and its main sponsor, "Funday". Last year’s event was held at the library in Prakshab Hall, Vidyut Mandir, a government school in Gomti Nagar, and a holding for a school run by an NGO, Bharat ki Dastaan, in Ganjaupara.

Pranali Bharti, 22, a first-year student and member of Bhubaneswar.

The new campus of the Indian School of Business (ISB) at Mohali values creativity. One of the best student societies started here was the Art Appreciation Club.

This 50-member club is into everything from modern art, kite-making, mural painting and photography to digital design. Reputed artists who have visited the campus include Karl Antoni, Balam Pandian, Shyamala Sheteshwar Kipper, photographer Ashok Kalra, and Karajipadi dancer Shilpa Naol. "Art Appreciation Club is a social club that encourages students to think creatively. A whole new thought process is opened up when one immerses oneself in an appreciation of arts and culture," says Pallavi Harshe, 28, president of the club.

At IIM-Shahabad campus, students uphold their creativity through art. Ruhul Amin, 28, president of the Wine Club, says the club is not just a social bonding experience but a way to explore varying recipes and flavors that go into the making of different wines. So far, the club has held wine-tasting and wine-tasting seminars and is planning a trip to vineyards in Nashik. "We try to bring in experts on wine appreciation. Since formal events have become increasingly common in the industry, who knowledge is in a simple way to impress colleagues," says Amin. The glass is certainly half full in this case.

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Change is IN THE AIR

With a new campus in the works, improved programmes and modified curriculum, FMS leaps seven places from last year.

Says Amit Mehra, 36, general secretary of FMS: With an annual fee of Rs 10,000 and 100 per cent placement records for the full-time MBA programme in 2012, it certainly holds its own in the competitive world of B-schools.

Established in 1954, the school has since occupied the same two-storey red brick building and delivered the same curriculum, but that's all set to change. Raj S. Dhankar, 52, dean of men, took over in 2011 and has already set in motion a series of new initiatives aimed at improving both the quality of students and the quality of teaching at the institute. "The best business schools are all part of a university. Universities expose students in different fields of study as engaged to stand-alone institutes where only one subject is taught," says Dhankar. "At the micro level, my goal is to revamp the school in accordance with industry demands." Dhankar's plans are already showing results.

In 2011, for the first time, the institute submitted students based on CAT results and not BCOM admission test. "Our proviso is that students who have the best IB scores will be considered," says Raji Burman, director, Microsoft India. "FMS has introduced some changes in individual courses as well. The covering part-time MBA now requires a minimum of five years of work experience instead of three. The course curriculum has also been modified and offers a second-year specialisation in finance, marketing, healthcare or international business. These changes have sparked a 30 per cent increase in applications for the course this year."

Additionally, a new consultancy course, new workshop schedule and weekend lectures have been introduced for full-time MBA. "We now have access to a lab network which allows us to use live trading channels and stock markets. We can host, study portfolios and engage with the practical side of finance in real time," says Sajay Dutta, 26, a second-year student.

FMS has the largest number of doctoral management students among B-schools in India. Over 15 PhDs are awarded every year. Research papers presented in 2011 ranged from studies on management to the development of trauma care systems. "We plan to provide our 130 research students with the best facilities and support next year. First is a conducive working environment with individual working desks, computers and book cabinets. We'll also create a platform where students from other schools can come and share their research," says Dhankar.

In July 2013, the institute will launch its new part-time Executive MBA programme in International Business, the first in the country focused on more than 80 per cent of students with over eight years of work experience will be eligible. "The programme will include a seminar abroad and a seminar working in their own company. Having experienced professionals from different industries interacting with such professionals from different companies is a benefit," says Dhankar.

"The biggest project on the agenda is the construction of a new campus. Our present building was not big enough to house 1,300 students," says Dhankar. "We have sanctioned Rs 20 crores for a B school in South Campus, which will be four times larger than the current campus. Even after the new campus is ready next year, the institute will have no immediate plans to significantly increase size that currently stands at 220 for full-time MBA course."

I come from a Khera grill, where we had nearly 600 students. I chose it because of the small size. Competition is not the most important thing, but the quality of the school. As the school started expanding, they diversified in terms of size. And that's better for the student. The institute has a unique system that helps students get better grades in terms of industry expectations. Many of us were under-performed, but what we take is to get started on our own. A greater exposure on campus would have probably helped us to understand several possibilities into executable projects as well as address comprehensively various facets of the industry."

Another key area where FMS has significant exposure is the relationship between the corporate world and FMS. Dhankar says, "FMS has been a leader in the policy of giving real-time exposure to students. Being in possession of the Finance Society, we are definitely beneficial in this case."

Ajay Mehra is the founder & CEO, FICCI Capital, a financial advisory firm.