IIT-Hyderabad eyes 6,000 students by 2018


HYDERABAD: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Hyderabad aims to increase students' strength up to 6,000 by 2018 and 9,000 by 2021, a top official of the premier institution said. Currently, the student strength of the institute stood at 1,650, of which 759 are doing BTech in eight engineering departments, said U B Desai Directors IITH.

"Our expansion plan is that we want to be around 5,800-6,000 students by 2018 and by 2021, we want to be 9,000 students. Subsequently, it should be 20,000 by 2030. Most of the funding will come from the ministry (Ministry of HRD)," Desai said on the sidelines of third convocation of the institute.

Earlier in his address, he said the IIT-H has close to Rs 125 crore research funding, of which, Rs 10 crore is from industrial research and consultancy.

Currently, IIT-H is engaged in large project with Japanese collaboration- Disanet- information network for natural disaster mitigation and recovery. "The project, which involves two Japanese universities, four Indian research organisations, so far discovered new seismic fault that was not know earlier," he said.

Under the project, strong motion sensors supplied by Japan have been installed in the lower Himalayan region to monitor seismic activity, Desai said. R Seshasayee, executive vice chairman of Hinduja Group India and BVR Mohan Reddy chairman, Board of Governors of IIT-H also spoke in the function. Reddy said IIT Hyderabad is contributing substantially to research with 43 per cent of the 265 students graduating today being post-graduates.

This is a reflection of IIT Hyderabad's emphasis on research in addition to under-graduate programs and contribution to nation building. Research in application of technology to socio-economic challenges will go a long way towards sustained economic development and inclusiveness in our nation.
IIT-M roped in for reservoir project

With the project to create a reservoir at Thervoy Kandigai approaching a significant stage, the Water Resources Department (WRD) has sought recommendations from IIT-Madras for the design of a bund.

Work is under way to form the fifth reservoir by merging water bodies in Thervoy Kandigai and Kannan Kottai in Tiruvallur district, at a cost of Rs. 330 crore.

Construction of the 7.1-km-long bund is the primary part of work to create the reservoir to meet the city’s growing water needs, said officials of WRD.

In a bid to ensure strength of the bund, the department has roped in a three-member team of the Geotechnical Engineering Division, IIT-M, to explore various options for its construction.

A WRD official said the team from IIT-M was being consulted for measures to be provided to control seepage from the earthen bund and also for reviewing the data of soil tests that are being conducted.

R.G. Robinson, who is part of the IIT-M team, said the soil condition in the area would be studied to provide recommendations on the depth and materials to be used to result in a stable bund.

The team is set to submit a report in a few days to enable the bund to be built in five months.

About 30 per cent of the work, including construction of a canal to bring water from Kandaleru Poondi canal, and bridges, has been completed so far. The entire project is set to be completed in mid-2015.

Many IIT students struggle in first year

Chennai: IIT aspirants may secure top marks in Class 12 and in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) to get admission in a IIT. However, a few seem to fail in main subjects like Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.

Data provided by IIT-Madras reveal that of the 840 students, 6.89 per cent failed in Mathematics (first semester), 9.95% failed to clear Maths in second semester, 10.46% in Chemistry, 5.3 per cent in Physics (first semester), 1.3 per cent in Physics (second semester), Thermodynamics (10.73 per cent) and engineering drawing (2.4 per cent).

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, former deputy director and professor emeritus at IIT-M's ocean engineering department Prof V.G. Idichandy says that students don't take IIT system seriously in the first year as they had spent all their childhood in coaching centres so they want to relax in the first year.

“Considering the high calibre of students at IITs, the numbers are not alarming as all technical institutions in the country have a similar story. They think JEE is the end of life and they don't realise there is a life beyond it at IITs. It is also not possible in IITs to provide individual care given the large size of classes,” he said.

Prof Idichandy, who had also served the institute as dean (students) points out that the teaching methodology in coaching centres and IIT's differ, which makes transition difficult for the student in first year.
Asked about the steps IIT-M administration had done to help students, a senior faculty at the institute said that shifting workshop courses to summer the institute had reduced the course load of students in the first year.

“Students who require hand holding are identified early, through their first quiz performance and a 'study-circle' system is arranged in the respective departments by involving senior dual degree students and a faculty mentor. They help these students by clarifying their doubts, make them work out problems with graded difficulty and provide the required academic support and confidence-building measures,” the faculty said.

A student said that he comes from a rural background and it had become difficult for him to adapt to urban conditions immediately. “I am not strong in English and even before we settle down, our first semester exam starts. The mentor system helped me a lot to come out with good scores in the second year,” he said.

**Union budget 2014: India to get five new IITs and IIMs; Four new AIIMS to begin soon!**


Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley in the union budget of 2014-15 has proposed for five new IITs and five new IIMs for India. Establishing new IITs and IIMs was expected to be announced in this budget as Prime Minister had already hinted about the same in his speeches earlier. According to Modi, every state in India will soon have its own IIT and IIM.

Millions of youngsters who had high expectations from the newly formed government regarding the reforms in educational sector can be a little relieved. Along with establishing new IITs and IIMs, Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune and SRFTI, Kolkata are going to get the status of national importance. There is also a proposal to start 12 more government medical and dental colleges.

Four new AIIMS will also be set up in Andhra, West Bengal, Vidarbha and Purvanchal. The budget of Rs. 500 crore has been set aside for the same. The six new AIIMS that have started recently are already functional.

Following are the developments in Education sector:

1. Proposal to set up 5 new IIMs and 5 new IITs
2. Four new AIIMS will be set up in Andhra, West Bengal, Vidarbha and Purvanchal
3. 12 more Govt Medical colleges will be built with dental facilities
4. FTII Pune, SRFTI Kolkata to get special status of national importance
5. 100 crore budget fixed for 'Beti padhao, beti badhao yojana'

The **BJP**'s election manifesto spoke of areas concerning girl education, e-learning, restructuring of University Grants Commission (UGC) into Higher Education Commission and setting up of National Multi-Skill Mission to name a few, besides others.
LET US BELL THE NEW CAT

MOVING ON

The new test window for CAT has been reduced from 40 to four slots

CAT '14 has incorporated many of the changes— a two-day test window with four test slots, more questions, test in early-November, etc. However, before we look at what the changes in CAT mean for your preparation, let us first understand the full magnitude of the changes. When we talk about any test, there are three important elements to consider—the test canvas, i.e., the basic details of the test, the test structure, which refers to the overall pattern of the test and, finally, the test content, which refers to the finer details of the test such as difficulty level, question types, nature of questions, etc.

CHANGES AND IMPLICATIONS

The test window has been reduced from 40 slots to just four slots spread across two days. Do note that you do not have an option of choosing your slot—a test slot will be directly allotted to you. This means that students no longer need to bother about which date to choose for their test. It is entirely possible that CAT '14 may not utilise all four slots. Depending on the number of test takers, all tests may get administered in just two slots.

Hopefully, the biggest impact of this change would be that the problems that plagued the last few CATs would not surface this time around. Issues such as common questions across tests, leakage of tests, normalisation and credibility of the test, problems with penalty for errors and weight to accuracy, etc. should be a thing of the past. For students, of course, this is welcome news.

CAT HAS SHIFTED FROM AN OCTOBER START TO A MID-NOVEMBER THIS YEAR. THIS MEANS THAT STUDENTS HAVE AN EXTRA MONTH TO PREPARE.

In the new system stamina becomes important as one needs to focus for nearly three hours

CAT will be conducted has increased from 45 to 99. This may lead to an increase in the number of test takers. Again, this means greater competition and hence, the need to prepare better for the test.

CHANGES TO THE TEST STRUCTURE

The number of questions in CAT has increased from 60 to 100. Past experience reveals that when the number of questions has increased, the level of difficulty has reduced. Further, the increase in number of questions implies that candidates have more questions to choose from. Thus, an increase in cutoffs is likely.

The duration of the test has gone up from 140 minutes to 170 minutes. This means that stamina becomes more important. You need to be able to focus and perform at your peak for nearly three hours. Hence, it becomes even more important for you to take as many mock tests as possible so that you have good practice of taking three-hour tests.

The available time per question has reduced from 140 seconds to 102 seconds. This implies that a higher reading speed and greater efficiency in calculation will be very important. These will ensure that you are able to attempt the maximum number of questions possible.

Sectional-time limits are no longer applicable. The test will have two sections: Section I comprising Quantitative Ability and Data Interpretation and Section II comprising Reading Comprehension, Verbal Logic, English Usage and Logical Reasoning. This implies that CAT will no longer be a subject proficiency test. It will be a genuine aptitude test. All candidates need have a fixed number of questions to attempt in predetermined amounts of time. The important elements of a good test taking strategy are:

1) the amount of time to allocate to different sections
2) the amount of time that you can afford to spend on any one question
3) question selection— which questions to attempt and which to leave
4) the sequence of attempting different sections and different question types.

In order to fine-tune these and perform well in the actual test, you need to practise a lot of mock tests so that you can identify what works best for you.

Compiled by HT Education and Career Launcher
IIM-A placements: Highest international salaries up by 28%, domestic by 10%

BS REPORTER
Ahmedabad, 8 August

Indian Institute of Management–Ahmedabad (IIM-A) saw the highest international and domestic salaries rise by 28 per cent and 10 per cent respectively, available data for the final placements of its postgraduate programme in management (PGP) show.

Accenture Strategy emerged as the top recruiter with 18 offers, even as consulting and BFSI (banking, financial services & insurance) led recruitment at IIM-A final placements. The Institute released its audited final placements report under the Indian Placement Reporting Standards (IPRS) for 2014.

According to the IPRS norms, these reports have been audited by CRISIL, an independent third-party auditor.

The highest domestic salary packages that the report projects as “the maximum earning potential cash component” (MEP) rose by 10.8 per cent to ₹41 lakh in 2014 from ₹37 lakh in 2013, based on the 99.2 per cent data points compiled by the institute under the IPRS. The minimum domestic MEP too increased to ₹10 lakh from last year’s ₹6.5 lakh. The median MEP too rose to ₹18 lakh from ₹16.8 lakh. The highest international MEP stood at $192,581 in 2014, up by 28.4 per cent from last year’s $150,000. The minimum and median international MEP rose to $34,323 and $74,562, compared to last year’s $26,140 and $46,243, respectively.

According to the institute, data for compensation packages were not available from all recruiters. MEP is the sum of fixed yearly component, total one-time cash benefits and maximum possible performance-linked compensation during first year of performance, and other components of salary that are a part of the offer.

IISc Latest on List of Institutes Fighting FYUP Fire

A-lister Bangalore body is considering situation after HRD minister says UGC asked it to shut down four-year course

OUR BUREAU
NEW DELHI

Human resource development minister Smriti Irani’s championing of the rights of students in Delhi University may put at risk the careers of four batches of students in the prestigious Indian Institute of Science’s research-focused, four-year undergraduate science programme.

On Wednesday, Irani told Parliament that IISc, Bangalore, was among the three institutes that had been asked by the University Grants Commission to discontinue their four-year undergraduate programmes as per notification on specification of degree. Times Higher Education Supplement’s World Reputation Rankings 2014 ranked IISc as the top Indian education institution.

IISc is now trying to decide the next course of action. “We have received a letter from UGC and have responded to it,” said Anurag Kumar, who took over as IISc director last week. “We are trying to understand the UGC’s concerns and hope to resolve the situation in a manner that the students are not inconvenienced or adversely affected.”

Academics and administrators point out that the situation at IISc is different from that at Delhi University. Unlike Delhi University, there is no demand by either students or faculty to scrap the programme. “Most of the students in this programme will move on to higher studies and research. They are selected through a rigorous process,” Kumar said.

UGC member MM Ansari said the decision to scrap all four-year programmes had not been assessed properly. “The Kothari Commission had recommended increasing the duration of the undergraduate programme from two to three years. That was in 1984-85. Given the knowledge growth, a four-year programme would appear to be the next logical step,”

Ansari argued that the ministry and the UGC failed to assess implications of pushing a rollback of all four-year undergraduate science programmes.

The decision by the HRD ministry and the UGC to scrap all four-year undergraduate programmes could end up inconveniencing as many as 500 students at IISc alone.

The two other universities that have been served notices are Shiv Nadar University, Noida, and Symbiosis International University, Pune.
UGC orders supporting ad hoc teachers fall on deaf ears

NO RESPITE Despite official notification to re-hire all of them, colleges maintain status quo

NEW DELHI: The struggle for ad hoc teachers in Delhi University continues despite supportive orders from the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The UGC, in May, had directed university colleges to re-hire all ad hoc teachers who were working on the last day of the previous session but in a number of colleges, fresh interviews are being conducted for these posts.

“The university administration is like an absent parent and all we have are the UGC directions. In a number of colleges, teachers are being appointed as per the administration’s convenience. The UGC guideline is not being followed,” said a teacher on condition of anonymity.

Delhi University has an inordinate number of ad hoc teachers as nearly 4,000 permanent positions are still lying vacant. These are filled by ad hoc teachers, who are hired each semester according to the need.

In some cases, ad hoc teachers have been teaching the same subject in the same college for over a decade, raising questions about why they have not been hired permanently and why the position has been lying vacant for so long.

The UGC’s notification came after a delegation of teachers approached it and put forth their problems.

Nearly 4,000 permanent positions in Delhi University remain vacant and are filled in by ad hoc teachers as and when required.

Some ad hoc teachers have been teaching subjects in a college for over 10 years.

In many colleges, ad hoc teachers aren’t paid the salary during summer vacations.

“There are teachers who have been teaching as ad hocs for the last 15 years and have not been hired for permanent positions. There are a number of areas where ad hoc teachers don’t have the same privileges as a permanent teacher despite doing the same job. The system is very unfair,” said another teacher.

The protests against the colleges have not been silent either.

On Thursday, chaos was seen when a Delhi University Teachers’ Association (DUTA) delegation was stopped from meeting the Principal at Kalindi College over the issue of appointment of new ad hoc teachers.
Proliferating Indian B-Schools trail emerging nation peers

BY PRASHANT K. NANDA
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NEW DELHI

Indian business schools are proliferating rapidly—seats on offer have quadrupled in the last seven years—but trail emerging nation peers in quality, says a national federation of education providers. A drastic cut in the number of schools in order to address issues of jobs and skills.

"Indian management education is in crisis," the Education Promotion Society for India and MBA Universe, a management education think-tank said in a white paper released at a management conclave on Friday.

It said India’s top tier B-schools are lagging behind not just western B-schools, but also late entrant China, where MBA education was first offered in 1991. Today, China beats India on all quality dimensions in management education, the report titled Vision 2025 said.

“Our mid-tier B-schools are fighting for their survival. Five hundred PGDM B-schools (institutes offering post graduate diploma in management, or PGDM) have closed down during the last seven years. The bottom tier of management programmes, largely 3000+ low-cost MBAs offered by affiliated colleges of public universities, have little direction and relevance,” it said.

Indian B-Schools have mushroomed. Currently, there are some 3,900 management schools in India as against 1,682 in China, 240 in South Korea, 108 in Thailand and five in Singapore.

The total number of seats in B-schools has increased by four fold in the last seven years—from 94,704 seats in 2006-07 to 385,008 in 2012-13, according to the All India Council for Technical Education, the apex technical education regulator.

However, the Indian schools lag behind in terms of research, ranking and accreditation, said the white paper. Of the total number of B-schools in India, just two are accredited by the The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, or AACSB, the best-known accrediting global agency, as against 16 in China. Only three Indian schools—Indian Institutes of Management in Ahmedabad and Bangalore and the Indian School of Business—feature in the Financial Times Top 100 B-School ranking. The best ranked India school was IIM-A ranked at 30.

“It is certainly an introspection on the challenges at hand and to develop a road map for the future,” said Harivansh Chaturvedi, alternate president of education promotion society of India and director of Birla Institute of Management and Technology.

The white paper suggests categorizing management education providers into three segments with specific roles to integrate their programmes with the skills development agenda of the government. “Vision 2025 recommends a consolidation in the number of MBA programmes from 3,900 now to roughly 2,500. Of these, the top 50 should aspire to become global institutions, the next 500 as national B-schools and rest skill-focused B-schools. These three separate sets of B-schools need to be given incentives and the right policy framework to overcome their challenges,” said Amit Agnihotri, who co-wrote the paper.

Anirban Sengupta, dean, College of Management and Economic Studies at the Dehradun-based University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, said that skill-focused or industry need-focused education by a segment of schools will benefit both the institutes and students. "If you can give specific skills that industry requires it will solve the employability problem," he said.

The report said slowing demand for management education can be gauged from the dwindling number of applicants for entrance tests like the IIM-conducted Common Admission Test (CAT)—from nearly 280,000 in 2008 to 195,000 in 2013.

It said that mid-tier management schools are "facing the brunt" of the unplanned expansion, and the tier-III schools have contributed to the commodification of the MBA degree, leading to credibility and employability issues.

“Our bottom-tier of MBA programmes have little direction and contribution. With the regulator being only approving authority and having little interference on academic quality pursued by the B-schools, the majority of B-schools have failed to impress industry with their MBA products,” said the white paper.

It said the consolidation that has already started in the management education space with the closure of many institutes in the last five years was set to continue. "A definitive framework is needed to help the consolidation of management education providers,” it suggested. To cope with collective challenges, there "can be possibilities of similar set of players merging together to form a larger entity," it said.

However, current policy framework doesn’t allow this.

N.R. Parasuraman, director at SDM Institute for Management Development at Mysore, said that India does not need so many institutes and consolidation is a requirement, but the issue is how to do it. He said the problem is that the requirement of industry is diverse and it would be tough to focus on specific skills in a B-school without assurances on placements from industries.

"The government, B-Schools and industries have to work in tandem to better the management landscape of the country, which is facing difficult questions at times,” said Chaturvedi, who is also a co-author of the paper.
Scientists studying birth of the Sun

Melbourne: Researchers have investigated the solar system’s prehistoric phase to understand the events that led to the birth of the Sun. A team led by Dr Maria Lugaro and Professor Alexander Heger, from Monash University, used radioactivity to find the last time that heavy elements such as gold, silver, platinum, lead and rare-earth elements were added to the solar system matter by the stars that produced them.

“The final 1% of lead and rare-earth elements was added at most 30 million years before the birth of the Sun,” Lugaro said. Some time after this, the solar system matter went into an ‘incubation’ period, during which time the stellar nursery formed.

“We now know this incubation period could not have lasted more than 30 million years. This offers us the chance to determine the lifespan of the nursery where the Sun was born, how massive it was and how many stars were born there together,” Lugaro said. PTI
‘Astronauts are sleep-deprived’

Kounteya.Sinha@timesgroup.com

London: Astronauts suffer considerable sleep deficiency in the weeks leading up to and during spaceflight, says the most extensive study of sleep in spaceflight.

NASA expects astronauts to catch up to 8.5 hours of sleep per night. But the study — by researchers from Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Harvard Medical School and the University of Colorado — has revealed that crew members on an average get over 2.5 hours less sleep every day. The duration of sleep during spaceflight was just under six (5.96) hours on shuttle missions and just over six hours (6.09) on International Space Station (ISS) missions.

Around 12% of sleep episodes on shuttle missions and 24% on ISS missions lasted seven hours or more, as compared with 42% and 50%, respectively, in a post-flight data collection interval when most astronauts slept at home.

Moreover, the results suggest that astronauts’ build-up of sleep deficiency begins long before launch, as they averaged less than 6.5 hours of sleep per night during training. The researchers studied sleep patterns of 64 astronauts on 80 shuttle missions and 21 astronauts onboard ISS missions before, during and after spaceflight.

The research also highlights widespread use of sleeping medication. It was reported by three quarters of ISS crew membres, and 78% of shuttle-mission crew members.

Dr Laura K Barger from Brigham and Women’s Hospital says, “Routine use of such medications by crew members are of concern, given the FDA warning that patients using sleeping pills should be cautioned against engaging in hazardous occupations requiring complete mental alertness... all crew members on a mission may be under the influence of a sleep-promoting medication at the same time.”

Unveiled: New chip that functions like our brain

IBM’s Processor Consists Electronic ‘Neurons’ That Work Parallelly To Identify Complex Data

John Markoff

Inspired by the architecture of the brain, scientists have developed a new kind of computer chip that uses no more power than a hearing aid and may eventually excel at calculations that stump today’s supercomputers.

The processor named TrueNorth was developed by researchers at IBM and detailed in an article published on Thursday in the journal Science. It tries to mimic the way brains recognize patterns, relying on dense interconnected webs of transistors similar to the brain’s neural networks.

The chip’s electronic “neurons” are able to signal others when data — light, for example — passes a certain threshold. Working parallel, the neurons begin to organize the data into patterns suggesting the light is growing brighter, or changing color or shape.

The processor may thus be able to recognize that a woman in a video is picking up a purse, or control a robot that is reeling into a pocket and pulling out a quarter. Humans are able to recognize these acts without conscious thought, but today’s computers and robots struggle to interpret them.

The chip contains 5.4 billion transistors, yet draws just 70 milliwatts of power. By contrast, modern Intel processors in today’s personal computers and data centers may have 1.4 billion transistors and consume 35 to 140 watts.

Today’s conventional microprocessors and graphics processors are capable of performing billions of mathematical operations a second, yet the new chip system clock makes its calculations barely a thousand times a second. But because of the vast number of circuits working in parallel, it is still capable of performing 46 billion operations a second per watt of energy consumed, according to IBM researchers.

The TrueNorth has one million “neurons” — about as complex as the brain of a bee. “It is a remarkable achievement in terms of scalability and low power consumption,” said Horst Simon, deputy director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

He compared the new design to the advent of parallel supercomputers in the 1980s.

The new approach to design, referred to variously as neuro-morphic or cognitive computing, is still in its infancy and the IBM chips are not yet commercially available. Yet the design has touched off a vigorous debate over the best approach to speeding up the neural networks increasingly used in computing.

In recent years, companies like Google, Microsoft and Apple have turned to pattern recognition driven by neural networks to vastly improve quality of some services.
Origami-inspired robot assembles self in 4 mins

London: Scientists have built the world’s first transformer robot, inspired by the ancient Japanese paper-folding art of origami. The robot, made almost entirely from parts produced by a laser cutter, takes just four minutes to assemble itself without any human intervention.

“Getting a robot to assemble itself autonomously and actually perform a function has been a milestone we’ve been chasing for many years,” said author Rob Wood from Harvard University. The team included engineers and computer scientists from the Wyss Institute, SEAS and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

“Imagine dozens of robotic satellites sandwiched together so that they could be sent up to space and then assemble themselves remotely once they get there. They could take images and collect data,” said lead author Sam Felton from SEAS.

The origami-inspired approach enabled the team to avoid the traditional “nuts and bolts” approach to assembling complex machines. They started with a flat sheet, to which they added two motors, two batteries and a microcontroller, which acts like the robot’s brain. The sheet was a composite of paper and a single flexible circuit board in the middle. It also included hinges that were programmed to fold at specific angles. Each hinge contained embedded circuits that produce heat on command from the microcontroller. The heat triggers the composite to self-fold.

When the hinges cool in about four minutes, it makes the robot stiff and the microcontroller signals the robot to crawl away at about one-tenth of a mile per hour.

THE FIRST TRANSFORMER: Scientists have created a self-folding robot out of hobby shop materials that cost about $100.
PPOs Score High at Top B-schools

Not just IIMs, but XLRI, XIM, MDI and NMIMS also witness surge in numbers by 20-100%

SREEKANTH K BABA
DEEPVA SENGUPTA

Strong indications of a turnaround in the economy coupled with a revved-up job market have fired up pre-placement offers (PPOs) at the country’s top business schools. Companies such as McKinsey & Co, The Boston Consulting Group, PepsiCo, AT Kearney, Wipro, HUL, Vodafone and Philips India have rolled out pre-placement offers, not just at the Indian Institutes of Management, but also at campuses such as XLRI, Xavier Institute of Management (XIM), Ruhmansewaj, Management Development Institute (MDI), Gurgaon, and Narsee Monje Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), all of which are witnessing a surge in numbers by 20-100% compared with the year-earlier period.

XLRI Jamshedpur has already received 25 PPOs and 15 PPIs (pre-placement interviews) this year, a 28% increase over the same period last year.

Firing Up the Job Market

At present, the overall job market has been very positive with companies hiring aggressively.

IMD Gurgaon
65 PPOs
35-40 PPIs

MDI Gurgaon
16 PPOs

IMC Calcutta
56 PPOs
20 PPIs

IM-SriCity
24 PPOs

IMC Raipur
12 PPOs
3 PPIs

XIM Bhubaneswar
12 PPOs

SOURCE: B-school placement teams

Situation Equally Upbeat at IIMs

The total number of PPOs the institute got last year was 7. At MDI Gurgaon, the number of PPOs this year has more than doubled to 16 till now, compared with seven in the same period last year.

“I am happy to report a turnaround in the economy, and a better outlook moving forward has increased the probability of companies expanding. As a result, companies are more inclined towards releasing PPOs, enabling the management to make faster decisions regarding the same while ensuring a better number in terms of PPOs,” says Karan Kapil, chairperson, placements, MDI.

XIM Bhubaneswar’s students have already bagged nearly one-third of last year’s total number of PPOs. The B-school expects the overall number to increase by at least 50%, compared with last year. NMIMS, Mumbai, and XIM have already been receiving offers from seven companies. “We are expecting an increase in salaries by 10-15%,” said Ravi Maha, chairperson, placement, XLRJ.

The situation is equally upbeat at the IIMs. According to a placement team official, IMI Indore has already received 65 pre-placement offers, more than the 50 PPOs students accepted in the whole of last year. IMI Rohtak has already received 24 PPOs, so far from such recruiters as Aditya Birla Group, Deutsche Bank, Godrej, KPMG, Hindustan Unilever, PepsiCo, Tata Administrative Services, Reliance and Vodafone.

IMC Calcutta has seen a total of 58 PPOs and 20 PPIs so far compared with 47 PPOs and 11 PPIs at the same time last year.

The new PPOs at B-schools are a welcome sign. XLRI’s 25 PPOs and three PPIs stand out as compared with last year’s 12 PPOs and three PPIs. "We are expecting nearly 10% of the batch of 192 students to get a PPO/PPI this year. As compared to last year, we are seeing an increase of 5% students, who got them last year," said Aniruddha Chatterjee, placement officer, IMI Rohri.

Based on offers received during summer placements, which usually take place at B-schools during November, students intern with companies during April-May. For the following year, 2024, companies start rolling out PPOs to students. However, even though the bulk of the offers comes in early June, some companies start hiring in September-October.

PPOs continue till beyond December and are a strong indicator of how the placement season will play out. This year, institutes have so far seen PPOs coming in from across sectors—banking, financial services and insurance, FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods), telecom, conglomerates, information technology, e-commerce and retail. Typically, after internships, consulting and FMCG companies pick up students faster than other sectors.

For an increasing number of companies, the PPO route has been gaining popularity as a better and faster informed hiring process. Goldman Sachs, for instance, recruited 68 summer interns this year from business schools across India and plans to convert the majority of them to full-time employees. At PepsiCo India, currently 70% of Future Leaders — management graduates from top B-schools for the company’s management pipeline with a focus on senior sales and marketing roles — come from summer interns.

Phillips India had 55 interns from more than 10 companies and is planning to make at least 26 PPOs. “Internships are excellent opportunities for an organisation to evaluate the interns from various perspectives over an extended period of time. The interns assess the company from a perspective if they would be happy working here in the long term,” said Kiran Shambekar, head of human resources for South Asia.

Against this backdrop, it is a campus-based selection process where the company gets a few hours to take that call and a student who has to go by his choice. This is an excellent methodology for selection,” he said.