New Delhi: Are rising temperatures and increased ultraviolet radiation making life more difficult for us Delhiites? Read on.

A large-scale first-of-its-kind study being spearheaded by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences will soon find out. Funded by the Indian Council of Medical Research, the study will look at the impact of global warming and ultraviolet radiation (UVR) exposure on eye health in India.

Recent studies have quantified the effects of environmental factors and temperature changes like UVR radiation, suspended particulates, and aerosols on the prevalence and severity of eye diseases like cataract, dry eye, and keratoconus.

Prof Badiha Toor from AIIMS’s Dr R P Centre for Ophthalmology says, "The study will look at the effect of environmental factors and global warming on the prevalence of eye diseases in India. The study will also estimate the difference in cataract prevalence between states and the corresponding change in UVR in Delhi and the northeastern region, the study will later also cover coastal cities like Chennai, Goa, and Vishakapatnam."

The study will later also cover coastal cities like Chennai, Goa, and Vishakapatnam. Tandon said that ultra-violet B radiation is known to play a major role in diseases like cataract and cornea, dry eye, pterygium, and dry eye syndrome.

A large-scale study will be conducted to find and assess the impact of global warming on our eyes.

Glossary:
- **Cataract**: A clouding of the lens of the eye that can cause vision problems.
- **Dry Eye**: A condition where the eyes do not make enough tears or the tears do not spread properly over the eye.
- **Keratoconus**: A serious eye condition where the cornea has a cone-shaped bulge.

**Back to the Past**: Jamia Millia Islamia vice-chancellor Najeeb Jung plays Akbar in the play 'Anarkali-Akbar-Salim' at Ansari Auditorium on the varsity campus on Sunday.

Times of India ND 28/02/2011

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**Actress Jung makes an impact**

**Times News Network**

New Delhi: It was a rare treat for theatre lovers in the city on Sunday evening when the vice-chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia took centre stage on the university campus and this time a hidden face of his came to the fore. He played the role of Akbar in the play 'Anarkali-Akbar-Salim' enacted at the Ansari Auditorium. The play was organized by Outreach Programme, Jamia and Indian People’s Theatre Association, Delhi.

While the other actors were from IPTA, Akbar was played by Najeeb Jung, and he drew the loudest applause for his acting skills. "The play attempts to understand why and how Salim the lover forgets his Akbarl; then becomes a demanding husband; and finally Akbar the patriarch," said Aziz Quraishi, IPTA secretary-general and director of the play.
Minority tag for Jamia set to be challenged

New Delhi: The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutes' order to declare Jamia Milia Islamia as a minority institution is set to be challenged in Delhi HC. The petition, being filed by a teacher-activist, will challenge the basis on which NCMEI declared the university a minority institution.

The petitioner pointed out that the university was governed since 1968 by a law — Jamia Milia Islamia Act — specifically legislated to administer the university as it did not fall into the criteria laid down for according minority status.

The petition will argue that the university was never governed by Muslims even before the Act was brought into force. Jamia Milia Islamia Society, which was registered in 1939 in Delhi, ran and controlled the university before the law was enacted.

The petitioner, Firoz Bakht Ahmed, contends that unlike Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia was set up to assimilate Muslims in the mainstream, allow them to intermingle and compete for merit rather than be secluded or isolated. He also pointed out in his petition that Jamia Milia Islamia was a central university financed by public funds and a 'public institution' could not be granted a 'Muslim' or a 'non-Muslim' label.
A cellphone app that spots cancer more accurately

**London:** Scientists have developed a mobile phone-based system which they say can detect cancer more accurately than the techniques routinely used in hospitals.

Developed by a team at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, the device is claimed to be up to 100% accurate at telling the difference between benign tumours and their malignant counterparts.

It also takes just an hour to make the diagnosis, meaning patients don’t have to spend days or weeks anxiously waiting for test results, the researchers said. The gadget, they believe, could “transform cancer care” by also making it easier for doctors to track how well drugs are fighting the disease in a patient’s body, the Daily Mail reported. The researchers found that in initial tests, the device was 88 per cent accurate in distinguishing cancerous stomach tumours from benign growths.

Refining the technique boosted accuracy to 100%. The device, which is likely to cost about £60 or so, consists of a smartphone connected to a miniature MRI machine. In tests, patients with suspected stomach cancer had tiny samples of their growths removed using a fine needle. The researchers then added in antibodies designed to bind to proteins found in stomach tumours and tiny magnetic particles designed to latch onto the antibodies. They then used the magnet in the MRI machine to excite the molecules in the sample, making them vibrate. The more the molecules vibrate, the more likely the sample is cancerous, the researchers found.
This car stops on its own to let pedestrians cross

London: Swedish car manufacturer Volvo has developed a new pedestrian detection system which it says can bring a car to a halt automatically whenever someone steps out in front of it. The “support function”, which works by using radar and camera technology to watch out for vehicles and pedestrians ahead of the car, is designed to save lives on urban streets, said the company.

The system kicks in at speeds of up to 35kmph, although the technology “is active at all speeds”, according to Volvo.

In case a collision is imminent, the system sends an audio warning to alert the driver, and if there is no response the car is immediately brought to an emergency stop, the Daily Mail reported. However, the technology that “is active at all speeds” doesn’t work at night or in poor weather. But Volvo pointed out that “it is always the driver that is responsible for driving safely”.

Fourteen per cent of all those killed in car accidents in Europe are pedestrians; this figure stands at 11 per cent in the US.

Volvo estimates that its detection system would reduce the number of pedestrians killed by more than 20%, while the number of those seriously injured would fall by almost 30 per cent.

In a further 30% of incidents, a collision would be entirely avoided, Volvo said. The collision warning system is also programmed to react if the vehicle in front is at a standstill or is moving in the same direction. The system is an optional extra in the Volvo XC60, S60 and V60.
Tired? A cup of hot tea will perk you up, boost brain power

London: Feeling exhausted? Just sip a cup of hot tea, for a study has claimed that drinking the beverage not only gives human brain a lift, but also reduces tiredness.

Tea drinking has already been linked with lowering the risk of heart disease, cancer and Parkinson’s. Other research has shown that drinking tea on a regular basis for ten or more years may help improve bone density.

Now, Dutch researchers have carried out the study and found that it’s the natural ingredients in tea which improve brain power and increase alertness, the latest edition of the ‘Nutritional Neuroscience’ journal reported.

For the study, the researchers looked at the effect of key chemicals found in tea on the mental performance of 44 young volunteers.

The effects of these ingredients, an amino acid called L-theanine — which is also found in green tea — and caffeine at levels typically found in a cup of tea, were compared with a dummy treatment.

The active ingredients significantly improved accuracy across a number of switching tasks for those who drank the tea after 20 and 70 minutes, compared with the placebo. The tea drinkers’ alertness was also heightened, the study found.

Tea was also found to reduced tiredness among the subjects, who were aged under 40, say the researchers. “The results suggest the combination helps to focus attention during a demanding cognitive task,” they were quoted by the ‘Daily Mail’ as saying.

Dr Tim Bond, of the industry-backed Tea Advisory Panel, said the latest findings backed a previous study which showed drinking two cups of black tea “improves the ability to react to stimuli and to focus attention on the task in hand.”
New Delhi/ Hyderabad: Seven people were arrested for allegedly leaking question papers of a recruitment examination conducted by LIC on Sunday. The exam has not been cancelled yet.

EdCIL, a public sector organization that conducts the exam, said it would await the police report. EdCIL chairman and managing director Anju Banerjee told TOI, "We decided to go with the exam. Any decision on cancellation would be taken only after the police report comes. So far, I have come to know that all the papers reached in sealed packets at all the centres"

Kumar, a 33-year-old geography graduate from Delhi University's Shivaji College, was arrested on Saturday night from Naraina village in west Delhi. He revealed the names of candidates who he got the papers from him. Kumar hails from Bihar and has been in the trade since 2005, police said.

In Hyderabad, police arrested five persons and seized copies of the question paper, six mobiles and some cash from them. They too confirmed that the copies matched with the actual question paper.

A Hyderabad task force team raided the house of P Ashok Kumar, a car driver from Gandhinagar, and apprehended him along with Yogesh Kumar Rao, a teacher from Uttar Pradesh, B Anna Rao, a supervisor at a club in Begumpet, P Srinivas, a technician at a car workshop and G Srinivas, a sales officer in bio fertilizers.

Ashok and Srinivas were earlier arrested by CBI sleuths in the Railway Recruitment Board question paper leak. They had recently got bail and went back into the trade.

According to task force DCP V B Kamalasan Reddy, Yogesh managed to get a photocopy of the question paper on February 23 from his childhood friend Lal Bahadur of Lucknow, who in turn secured it from his relative Dindayal, an employee of a printing press in Noida where the papers were printed.

Yogesh landed in Hyderabad on February 25 and handed the papers Ashok, his agent who had already selected prospective customers from coaching centres across the state. Police said the gang's usual practice was to gather the aspirants at a secret location a day before the test and give them the question paper after collecting their original degree certificates.

If the leaked paper matched the original, the candidate paid Rs 1 lakh after appearing for the test and Rs 6 lakh if he got selected.

This time, however, they called the aspirants a few hours before the exam.

The Delhi Police raided three Kendriya Vidyalaya centres – Andrews Ganj, Janakpuri and R K Puram. Main accused Pawan Kumar's associate, Arun Parashar, was also arrested. Parashar is from Aligarh. The four candidates who bought the papers from them – Inderjit, Rahul Kumar, Praveen and Dharamvir – are from Delhi and Bihar.

The crime branch had got hold of copies of two sets of question papers, one each for the morning and afternoon sessions, from Kumar on Saturday evening.

"Kumar was earlier arrested for impersonation in Delhi's Pre-Medical Entrance Test in 2005," said DCP Ashok Chand.

A candidate, who appeared for the exam at Andrews Ganj centre, said, "I was not aware of the police raids. It was an opportunity and it should not be cancelled."
Parents offer body parts to pay off kids' education loan

Houston: A Boston couple have offered to sell their own body parts to pay off their children's $2,000,000 student loan.

"Use my body for anything legal, or medically experimental. Simply pay off all of my children's student loans and you can use me anyway you need," an advertisement said asking "Do you need a live 'cadaver'?" posted on Craigslist Boston in the "jobs wanted" section of the website.

It added, "I am 5'10" 200lbs and have all my organs in working order. Take my blood, take my plasma. Drill into my brain, my leg, my arm. Tap my heart, my liver, my kidney. If you eliminate my children's student loans, I will give you my life!" The poster, which did not include their name, exact location or gender, said the children's student loans total $200,000.
Hindustan Times ND 28/02/2011

LEARNING CURVE

DU’s Life Long Learning Institute to be decentralised

Joyeeta Ghosh
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NEW DELHI: Delhi University’s Institute of Life Long Learning (ILL) is all set to be decentralised. The smaller versions of the learning centre will be located in 12 colleges. This is a step towards making learning a more interactive process between students and teachers. The ILL presently has two centres—one in north campus and the other in south campus.

ILL, which was started in 2007, is meant to provide additional study materials and tools to the students of the university. It has a portal which hosts e-content such as e-lectures, e-quizzes, e-lessons, e-labs for around 12 subjects.

"Setting up smaller versions of the ILL in colleges will mean using connectivity in every way, be it connecting minds or institutions. It is will be a two-way learning process where the students too will give their inputs on providing learning material," said vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh.

The 12 colleges which are still in the process of being finalised will be chosen based on their competence on information and communication technology and also their ability to provide additional inputs to ILL.

DEGREE OF CHANGE

- Decentralisation of ILLL will make learning a more interactive process.
- DU will identify 12 colleges for its learning centres. Right now, the ILLL has only two centres.
- Computer Science students will be roped in to help upload the material on its portal and will be paid for their work.
- There are also plans to make DU degrees available online by uploading material on the Net.

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

The choice of these colleges will also be instrumental in integrating the students in the process of content creation.

"Creating content for so many subjects requires a lot of manpower and at the same time it costs us a lot. A decision has been taken to rope in students from computer science to help upload the material on the portal and also be paid for it. This way they will not only utilise their skills but also earn both money and experience as they study," said Chaturvedi.

ONLINE DEGREE SOON

The ILLL is also planning to upload material for foreign students, who can obtain a Delhi University degree online. "The popularity of the university among African and southeast Asian students has grown over the years. A lot of students from this region cannot travel to India. So we are planning to make degrees available online," said Chaturvedi.

A step in this direction has been taken in the form of the School of Open Learning which runs a pan Africa e-network project. Students from six African nations can avail online lectures in two certificate programmes: accounting and communication skills. On completion of the course, these students are awarded DU certificates.
‘We firmly believe in creating value and sharing it with society’

INTERVIEW

G. Chandrashekhkar
Mumbai, Feb. 27
Researchers from the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Toronto’s York University are currently touring India on a mission to establish key partnerships and collaborations with Indian research organisations and educational institutions. The delegation of 12 researchers is visiting several top-tier universities and institutes across the country such as the IITs at Chennai and Mumbai, the Indian Space Research Organisation, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the University of Kolkata to name a few.

The key mandate for these meetings is to enable researchers from York University and from across India to establish joint bilateral research and developmental projects. York University, the third largest university in Canada is the country’s leading interdisciplinary research and teaching institution with an academic community of 50,000 students and 7,000 faculty and staff, as well as 200,000 alumni worldwide.

Leader of the delegation is Dr Janusz Kozinski, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering, and Professor, Department of Earth and Space Sciences and Engineering. Among others, Dr Kozinski’s brainchild is an anti-terrorism project evocatively called eWAR (Early Warning and Advance Response) system that seeks to detect, quantify and initiate an effective response to chemical and biological agents released in public buildings.

In a special interview to Business Line during his visit to this newspaper office in Mumbai despite a hectic schedule, Prof Kozinski shared for the benefit of readers the mission’s objectives, research priorities, funding and related matters.

Excerpts:
Welcome to Business Line office, Dr Kozinski. What’s the nature of research collaborations you are seeking with Indian Institutions?
York University focuses on science and engineering, and our special focus is on striking collaborations and partnerships. India is one of our three focal points. We want to engage in projects with practical social applications.
Specifically, we are looking at, among other areas, space science which would cover micro and nanosatellites to carry communications tools. Our focus would also be atmospheric monitoring to study global warming and climate change.
Also, we are keen to develop partnerships in the field of biotechnology for healthcare, analyse propagation of infectious diseases – their origin, spread, control and eradication through bio-sensors.
For this purpose, we have already set off talks with India’s leading institutions such as IIT Chennai and Mumbai, TIFR, ISRO and so on, and their response is absolutely positive.
Why the focus on India?
Canada and India have a long and sustained relationship. Nearly a tenth of the Canadian society comprises people of Indian origin. Also, I am enthusiastic that India has a large talent pool, with multitude of science and engineering graduates waiting for right research opportunities. There is synergy between Canada and India in the science and engineering field; and we would be glad to partner India on its way to economic success.

But let me clarify that we are not focusing just on India’s flagship educational institutions. Over time, we will go to smaller and private institutions too and seek to work with them.
What about funding?
I don’t see this as a problem, although no research can take place without adequate finance. We have set aside several million dollars for our international partnership programmes and I am confident that India will get a good share of it.
Any thoughts on how the fruits of research will be shared?
We firmly believe in creating value and sharing it with the society. Where societal benefits are involved, I am somewhat wary of creating barriers like intellectual property rights and so on. We want the society at large to benefit from our research.
Did your mission achieve any success so far?
Yes, of course. We have signed a memorandum of understanding with Chennai IIT focussing on energy including nuclear energy, medicinal chemistry as also water quality and management. With TIFR we have advanced our discussions focussing on life sciences, biology, genomics, and research relating to vaccines as also engineering projects relating to space.
What next?
On March 1, we have planned a two-day workshop in New Delhi with the Defence Research and Development Organisation and other leading national and international institutions that will bring together over 100 participants and provide a platform to discuss advances and innovations in several areas of research. I am confident that the workshop will throw up new ideas and open up collaborative opportunities for York University.
Elevating the education debate

We have been talking of making India the knowledge capital of the world. What will the Budget do today?

VikramChaudhary

Let’s not forget that our first generation of scientists, scholars, teachers, leaders, all came from the village schooling system. If we want to see the country progressing, we must first improve our education system with the due budgetary support from the government. And this is what we are doing towards the education sector over the last few years. In the Budget for 2007, there was an increase in allocation for school education from Rs 17,138 crore to Rs 23,142 crore; there was a provision for strengthening of teaching-training institutions; mid-day meal scheme was provided Rs 7,354 crore; the provision for secondary education was doubled from Rs 1,107 crore to Rs 2,214 crore. In the Budget for 2008, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was provided Rs 13,100 crore; mid-day meal was allocated Rs 8,000 crore; secondary education was allocated Rs 5,264 crore; etc. In the Budget for 2009, Rs 827 crore was allocated for opening one new university in each undivided state. Rs 2,113 crores were allocated for ITIs and NITs, etc.

And then, in 2010, we made the modest beginnings towards educating our, millions with the Right to Education Act (RTE)—which came into effect from April 1, 2010, 6 years after the Right to Education was enshrined in our Constitution (article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy states: “The State shall endeavours to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years”). In the Budget for 2010, RTE, which promises free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-14 years, was also provided. It has been observed that in the previous Budgets, SSA—the obvious corollary in terms of realising the mandate of the RTE—did not get incremental increases in terms of money, on account of which the implementation of SSA suffered in many states. Given this understanding, the cost estimates for the implementation of RTE at a micro-level needs to be substantially revised. Also, at the higher education level, significant outlays have to be accorded towards teacher-training. The total allocation for education, thus, jumped up from Rs 30,661 crore to Rs 42,658 crore. In the same Budget, on the higher education front, Rs 4,350 crore was allocated for the University Grants Commission and Rs 4,700 crore for technical education.

Hopes from this year’s Budget

Although RTE should be one of the major priorities in today’s Budget, but for its effective execution, the focus should be on teacher-recruitment and other functionalities, phasing out the implementation plan, upgrading existing training facilities, etc. Says K. Chacko, director, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi, “The Budget should be one that stimulates growth and ensures that the fruits of such growth be channelled in such a way that they reach the needy. RTE, compared to many other statutes, has been put on a much more sounder foundation. In RTE, there seems a “will” to reach out and provide education. But that ‘will’ must be matched by the ground-level work—first, having enough schools and, second, having a large number of teachers qualified to teach. If you see what are the children in government schools are learning compared to what their counterparts in a private institution are learning, you will realise there is a huge knowledge gap, so grooming more teachers is the need of the hour. The Budget should focus more on setting up of more teachers-training institutes.”

Also, there are high hopes that this Budget will have an increased focus on higher education and research compared to last year. At the same time, there should be a focus on interlinking vocational education with mainstream education (By 2020, India will need 800 million skilled and employable graduates). According to Prashant V. Bhan, senior vice-president, Manav Rachna International University, Faridabad, “India is expected to have highest working age population over the next 20-30 years, which can propel economic growth in the country; however, India will also have the highest number of literate adults and a large number of unemployed literate people. Though the government expenditure—state and central combined—on education has grown over the years, this cannot be considered enough if we look at the actual requirements and needs of the sector.” According to Dr Dev Singh, director, Department of Management Studies, IIT Delhi, “In view of India’s growing population, we can devise the dualistic divide only if the growing population is well educated and professionally qualified. Before entering the workforce, if the youth are provided with adequate training and certification with adequate inputs on management and entrepreneurship, they can certainly become successful entrepreneurs and create enormous employment in India. I hope the minister of HRD will get sufficient fund allocation in the Budget and the visionary minister Kapil Sibal will continue on the fast track of laying strong foundations for modern educated India.”

On educational loans to students, Prof BN Jain, vice-chancellor, Birsa Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, says, “The government must recognise the significant contribution that many universities inside and outside the government sector are making towards growth in quality of manpower in India.”

The government should continue to focus on building capacities and creating new institutions. The real work of building these institutions—these institutions will now start by the administrators and academicians alike. I am of the opinion that the real differentiator will be the government.”

On the adoption of public private partnership (PPP) model in the education sector, Prashant K. Jain, head, Department of Management Studies, IIT Delhi, “In view of India’s growing population, we can devise the dualistic divide only if the growing population is well educated and professionally qualified. Before entering the workforce, if the youth are provided with adequate training and certification with adequate inputs on management and entrepreneurship, they can certainly become successful entrepreneurs and create enormous employment in India. I hope the minister of HRD will get sufficient fund allocation in the Budget and the visionary minister Kapil Sibal will continue on the fast track of laying strong foundations for modern educated India.”

On the issue of loans to spur capital investments, BN Jain says, “Some good private institutional investors have expanded their programmes in the last 2 years, but using bank loans at market-determined interest rates. Most such institutions are now looking to consolidate their offerings by expanding their postgraduate and PhD programmes. But this can only happen if our government, whereby they underestimate the significant fraction of capital investments made in research and development and its impact on the nation’s growth.”

The mandate of several government ministries and/or departments is to fund research and postgraduate education. This is mainly done by building infrastructure for research and postgraduate education, as well as funding basic and applied research in areas that are emerging or are strategic to India’s development. Prof BN Jain adds, “While such ministries/departments do fund research and postgraduate education in independent universities (outside the government sector), we would like to see the independent universities to be treated in a manner similar to those funded by state or central government and the processes used to provide such funds be streamlined.”

“If the government wants to create 100% literacy in the country and wants to see that goal of RTE is realised, it should focus more on the primary and secondary education,” believes Prof VK Gupta, director, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon. He says, “If you see countries like the US and the UK, most of the world-class institutions are in the private sector. And since the government has been pumping a lot of money into the IIMs and IITs, it is time that some encouraging public-private partnerships are thought of by the government.”

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BPO CALLS REACH B-SCHOOL CAMPUS

Managerial and consulting roles in call centres attract IIM graduates

By SHRIJAN SHINDE & KALPATHI PARTHAK

Business process outsourcing (BPO) firms that so far hired from tier three B-schools will now haunt IIM graduates. Take the case of Delhi-based BPO firm EXL Services which has managed to hire over 10 management graduates from India’s premier Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad. The highest ever for any BPO company so far, EXL Services has hired the IIM-A graduates for general managerial and consulting roles.

“This year we have been aggressive in hiring from B-schools as we want to grow our footprint in these management schools. We have been hiring from B-schools since 2003-04, but that has always been limited to one or two students. This year we have managed to give offer letters to 10 students from IIM-A itself. Last year we hired around seven management graduates from top B-schools,” said Sanjay Gupta, Global HR Head, EXL Services. The company was targeting five to six more B-school campuses this year to meet its target of hiring 15-18 management graduates. The company is of the view that the focus on management talent is due to the shift that the industry is witnessing as well as the work that is coming to the Indian players.

BPO and IT services firms have traditionally hired large number of students from engineering colleges and graduation colleges. But hiring from top B-schools has always been a tad difficult as students prefer to work with sectors like banking, consultancy, and FMCG.

The trend to hire more management graduates is however, not limited to EXL services alone or to the third party BPO sector. Captive BPOs of IT companies are also joining the bandwagon. IT major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) plans to hire over 1,200 management students for FY11 from B-schools across the nation. Of these the company has already extended offer letters to 537 students. TCS BPO has also made 129 offers so far.

According to Pandit Rajan, Chairman of the institute MNC, this trend is prominent among the third party BPOs which need a strong marketing team.

“With higher order processing migrating to India, BPOs these days are operating like any other company. Their growth needs are as important with various departments including marketing and HR growing,” said Rajan.

Similarly, Infosys Technologies has extended 1,000 offers to B-schools students this year. This number is much higher than last years 633. For FY11 Infosys has already visited 57 B-schools.

IT services and KPO firm SynTel agrees with this trend. “We have hired management graduates in the past. With the shift in the industry the talent required in the industry is different. You also have to remember that this sector is people intensive, you need qualified managers. You cannot just blame the students for not being interested in joining this industry,” said a placement committee member from IIM-A.

With higher order processing, third party BPOs are operating like any other company with a strong marketing team.

Other than opting for other sectors, management students, especially from tier-1 B-schools, tend to draw very high salaries. “A management student always manages to draw better salary. That also sometimes acts as hurdle for industry players to hire in large numbers as students like higher salary and perks that are generally provided by IT-banks and consultancy firms,” said Gupta. Industry experts also point out that the need to hire more management talent is also because of the work that is coming to India. “Whether it is the IT industry or BPO, they have moved on to handle high-end work for clients. For instance, BPO’s are no longer providing only voice work. Large BPO firms are managing processes like accounting, analytics and other core activities. For IT firms, consultancy is becoming core as they move away from application development and maintenance kind of work.” said an industry observer.
Education sector awaits budget goodies

KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai

The higher education sector is pinning its hopes on a few big-ticket reforms in the Budget to be unveiled on Monday.

Sector players and analysts said along with a substantial increase in budgetary allocation for both primary and higher education, the Budget should propose tax exemptions on various fronts, incentives for entrepreneurs to set up higher education institutions and support creation of specialised institutions and universities for the masses, too.

"From a direct tax standpoint, donations/endowments made to recognised educational institutions are entitled to a 50 per cent deduction from the taxable income of donor. The Budget could positively impact this process by extending the benefit to an across the board 100 per cent deduction for contribution to recognised educational institutions," said Amitabh Jhinghan, Partner, To Ernst and Young. Sector and National Sector Leader - Education, Ernst and Young.

According to Jhinghan, an increased budget allocation towards education could help in implementation of right to education (RTE) and achievement of the targeted gross enrollment ratio of 30 per cent by 2020.

The Indian higher education system is one of the largest in the world in terms of number of institutions and student enrolment. Higher education spends in India are currently estimated at ₹ 46,200 crore and are projected to grow to nearly ₹ 150,000 crore in the next decade. This would reflect an average growth rate of 12.5 per cent according to government. Analysts said the need of the hour is to provide either funding or incentives to start universities for the mass market.

"We need allocation for creation of special institutions and institutions that cater to the masses. An increased allocation would help better the industry and academic interactions. Budgeting needs to be done for upgrading curriculum through industry interaction," says Narayan Ramaswamy, Executive Director, Education service, KPMG.

Sector players however said allocation alone will not impress them. Implementation is the key.

"There is no significant expectation from the Budget. In the past two years, we have seen a lot of media hype from the Ministry of Human Resource Development. We want to see some execution now. A lot of new projects - Creation of Central universities, innovation universities and new IITs have been talked about. We wish to see the government doing some ground work for the same now," said H Chaturvedi, director, Birla Institute of Management and Technology.

Analysts are also expecting grant of income tax exemptions on faculty salaries and increase in the expense deduction on contributions and development spends at universities.

WHAT THE SECTOR WANTS...
- 100 per cent deduction for donations/endowments made to recognised educational institutions
- Allocation for creation of specialised institutions and institutions that cater to the masses
- Income tax exemptions on faculty salaries
- Increase in the expense deduction on R&D spends at universities.

"There is an active speculation the scope of taxable services in the education sector will be expanded. The budget should consider the larger impact of human resource development, skill building and the recent inflationary trends," adds Jhinghan.

It should also consider exempting organisations that render services to recognised educational institutions from the levy of service tax."
IIM campus hiring sees salaries, offers back to 2008 levels

Vinita LAMAR
Mumbai, 27 February

It's not just an increase in compensation packages that are brightening campuses of the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), but also interesting offers that firms are experimenting with this year. A student at IIM Ahmedabad (IIM-A) has apparently been offered a job wherein the student can work for the first two years at a company and then build his own entrepreneurship venture with its help, says Sanjiv Mubzeer, chairman-placements at IIM-A, refusing to divulge details.

"The numbers of offers as well as compensation packages have been increasing. One can say that placements at IIM-A could be back to the 2007-08 levels," says Mubzeer.

The IIM-Kochi/loke campus

The three clusters of placement selections held so far at the IIM-A campus has seen financial and consulting biggies, apart from other sectors, with job offers in double digits. While the first cluster had companies across three sectors — international investment banks, global strategy consulting and private equity/venture capital, the second one was for Indian banks, corporate leadership programs and global consumer goods firms, and the third was for financial services and advisory sector roles.

Consultancies BCG and McKinsey gave among the highest number of offers. BCG and Vee Tech have given 11 offers each, while McKinsey, EY, Service and Product and Gantela have given 10 offers each, including pre-placement offers.

More offers, too

More, as a reflection of the improving market situation, there were a greater number of international offers this year. "Global investment banks visited the campus in greater numbers than last year. In addition to their Mumbai office, more offered roles in their Singapore and London offices. Consulting firms also offered more international firms," says Sanjiv Mubzeer, chairman-placements at IIM-A.

Seconding that is IIM Kochi (IMK), where the highest compensation package of 12 crore per annum was offered by a company.

Firms that have offered the highest compensation packages of 10.50 crore per annum include
to five, witnessed participation from almost 100 companies offering a wide array of profiles across the functions of finance, marketing, human resources, operations, strategy and information technology. Most of the 150 jobs were in banking, financial services and insurance, fast moving consumer goods, consulting, and IT, with some prominent profiles being offered in investment banking, corporate sales and management consulting.

The average compensation package this year at IIM-I is 27 per cent more than last year. The highest domestic compensation offered was 62.5 lakh per annum by an investment bank. While the top 20 per cent of the intake of 2011 secured offers at the campus in excess of 120 lakh, more than half the batch secured offers in the range of 110-120 lakh per annum.


While placements at IIM-A are continuing, its counterparts in Bangalore, Kolkata and Lucknow gear up for the process this week.
Dr Sunil Kumar, Dean of University of Chicago's Booth School of Economics, speaks about the school's courses and its plans for India in an interaction with The Indian Express staff.

**Do you see India as a destination for more and more foreign business schools to set up shop?**

India has seen excellent schools in management and business, but every indication, especially from the business leaders I have met, is that there is an increasing need for managerial talent. It is an area that needs more attention. India has made a case for foreign universities to come in, in particular in management. So I think when there is demand on the employer side and availability of raw talent, the supply of specialized institutions of the highest caliber will take care of itself.

**How do you think you attract so many Indians to Chicago?**

Entrepreneurship, where faculty have got interested, observing what's happening around them, and have created courses which are experimental in some sense, and also creating faculty who are industry leaders. For example, one of the hottest new start-ups in the US is a group of students. The two founders are teaching a course on Internet start-ups at Booth.

**You have courses in Singapore and in London. Is there a core course that is the same and then local subject, local faculty?**

We do not partner with any local institutions, nor do we recruit local faculty. As much as possible we try to use the same faculty and have a uniform experience among the programmes in Chicago, London, and Singapore. There is some amount of local customization. But it is done in the same faculty, because we want to be reasonably assured that students have the same experience as any other executive MBA that we give.

**Are those local courses open to everybody in the world? Can somebody from Delhi join the Singapore course?**

Indeed it is intended to operate that way. For the Asian region it is Singapore, for Europe it is London. Even in Chicago, in the executive programmes we have people from Latin and South America.

**You have talked about a Delhi centre too. Where does it stand?**

Part of the conversation with leaders in India has been about the Delhi centre. Last year, the University of Chicago commissioned a panel to study the feasibility of setting up a centre in India. They wrote a report that recommended that a centre be set up in India, and the board in Delhi. We are in the phase of figuring out where and how to build it. It is intended to be a broad-based centre which will serve two purposes. The first purpose is to support faculty research, so we have a lot of faculty interested in studying India as well as collaborating with Indian academics. Second, it will have some classroom facilities to provide a study-abroad component, perhaps, for our students in Chicago, as well as for us to provide education where we can deliver value to the Indian audience.

**So right now you are not looking at full-time courses for students in India?**

No, right now we don't have any plans to do that.