पर्यावरण संरक्षण की राह पर आईआईटी

हरिभूमि ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली

पर्यावरण संरक्षण को लेकर देश में केवल पर्यावरण मंत्रालय और इससे जुड़े विभाग ही सत्ता नहीं है। बल्कि अब देश के प्रमुख प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थानों (आईआईटी) ने इस दिशा में गंभीरता से काम करने का मन बुझाया है। इसके लिए आगामी सात जनवरी को होने वाली आईआईटी काउंसिल की बैठक में ग्रीन ऑडिट नामक एक प्रस्ताव मानव संसाधन मंत्रालय की मंजूरी के लिए पेश किया जाएगा।

आईआईटी अपने सभी 16 संस्थानों में अनवरथ प्र के रूप से इस योजना को लागू करवाना चाहती है। अभी 13 संस्थान इसे लेकर सहमत हैं। आईआईटी में पर्यावरण संरक्षण और इसे हर-भरा बनाए रखने के लिए सभी को कुछ न कुछ कदम उठाने होंगे। मसलन कोई बारिश के पांव को एक्सट्रिट कर सकता है, कोई फूड रज नियोजन का गर्मी ऊजां को इकट्ठा करने के लिए स्पेक्ट्रल पैनल लगा सकता है। कोई अपने कॉप्स में ग्रीन बिल्डिंग का निर्माण कर सकता है तो कोई पेड़-पौधों की संख्या में इनकाम कर सकता है।
मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय के प्रोजेक्ट पर हुआ रिसर्च
हमारी आईआइटी ने बनाए शिक्षा के लिए रोबोट

आवाज से चलनेवी कॉलेजर

आईआइटी की वीडियो में पेपर हैडन की शिक्षा विश्वविद्यालय बिहार की है जो विद्यार
यो योगदान के बारे में कहते हैं। वह विश्वविद्यालय के माध्यम से लोकत्र
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BITS Pilani
Lines up New Research Focus

ANUMEHA CHATURVEDI
NEW DELHI

Much like its prestigious rival — the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) — Birla Institute of Technology & Science (BITS Pilani) has chalked out a plan to focus on gaining recognition as a research-driven institute.

“Over time, the IITs have grown in research and have transformed into research and innovation universities. We are also working to transform ourselves into a research-led university,” says professor Bijendra Nath Jain, vice chancellor of the institute.

Professor Jain says the institute has set growth targets towards the objective, which include a six-fold growth in the number of PhD students and a 200% growth in the number of post-graduate students over the next eight years. He adds the institute is also increasingly focusing on growing sponsored research projects.

BITS has tied up with the University of Southern California for exchange programmes for its R&D faculty members by 2020. The most important way for us to secure funds is through competitive research funding and sponsored research projects,” he says.

BITS has also tied up with the University of Southern California for exchange programmes for its R&D faculty members and is also looking at tying up with the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of San Diego. In the next year, the institute hopes to sponsor 10-12 R&D faculty members to travel to other universities and also encourage the faculty members to spend their summer in the industry to bring back the issues and knowledge gained to the BITS classrooms.

The institute has also undertaken a mission of benchmarking its undergraduate and post-graduate programmes among the best in the world, and has revamped the curriculum and pedagogy for the undergraduate programme in August 2011 towards that end, says professor Jain.

In the coming year, the institute hopes to expand the number of centres for its undergraduate BITSAT entrance exam to about 35 centres from 32 in 2012.
UGC NET: Whose ‘eligibility’ is at stake, after all?

Rana Nayar

The latest edition of the University Grants Commission National Eligibility Test (UGC NET) — held biannually — was conducted on Sunday. This may be a good time to question the rationale of this test. Over the years, the UGC has displayed callous disregard for ground realities, especially in the way in which the NET has been perceived or conceptualised, and is being conducted.

The mandarins in the UGC seem to be living in a bubble of callousness if they think that by devising the NET, they have stumbled upon the ultimate antidote for everything that ails our system of higher education. So much is wrong with our modes of recruitment, right from the way interviews are prefixed or rigged to the bias against merit and so much more that it needs to be recast on priority.

How we need to replace our existing, archaic method of selecting/rejecting a candidate on the basis of a few ‘staged questions’ with a more effective and practical mode of assessing him on the basis of his performance in an actual classroom situation is perhaps a matter for another article. Though there is no denying the fact that this exam is needed as a filter to identify the suitable candidates for lectureship, it is an equally important fact that its present design/model has made it into a poor, if not a completely porous and an ineffective, filter.

First of all, how did UGC mandarins come to this fallacious conclusion that Paper I, which is mainly ‘a test of reasoning’, should be made compulsory for all? Instead, wouldn't it have been much better if they had devised an aptitude test of some kind to evaluate the suitability of the candidates for the job? What we need to know is whether the candidates love teaching, and have the right kind of an attitude towards the students and are psychologically prepared to undertake the multiple challenges of teaching. By insisting upon ‘a test of reasoning’, UGC mandarins have only displayed their own poverty, if not total bankruptcy of thought, which, in any case, is reflected in virtually every decision they take. Theirs is a typical case of ‘decide in hurry, and regret at leisure.’

The test of reasoning makes the choice of selection/rejection of prospective teachers extremely mechanical, and for that reason, very callous and inhuman. In fact, it is the absence of 'human agency' in most of the decisions of the UGC that often appals one. For that reason, I make a strong plea for replacing the test of reasoning with a more humanistic idea of an 'aptitude test' to be prepared by some of the best psychologists in the country. Or we may also borrow a model for this purpose from the West. Don’t we work with borrowed models in other matters, too?

Now that the UGC has introduced objective type in Paper III, there is no justification, whatsoever, for continuing with Paper II (which is again objective type). Tell me, how will you, in that case, effectively differentiate between Paper II and Paper III? So it's time to dispense with Paper II completely. Paper I, provided it is designed effectively, should be made the basis of elimination in the first round. Only in case of those candidates, Paper II (which should be the only objective type paper) be evaluated, who manage to secure minimum 60 per cent marks in Paper I. Paper I should be of two hours duration and have 60 questions (which should be real brain teasers so that the candidates are made to think and reflect. Somehow, this factor of critical thinking is absent in the current dispensation), consisting of 120 marks.

While one may argue against the basic wisdom of introducing an objective type test at this level (given the nature of some subjects, especially in social sciences and languages), now, that it is there, let’s talk of how it could be improved upon. Paper II (objective type) should be of three hours duration and have 90 questions of two marks each, with a total of 180 marks. The total score in both the papers should not exceed 300. Only if a candidate secures 72 marks out of 120 (that is 60 per cent) in Paper I should his Paper II be evaluated and if he secures 55 per cent (which is the minimum eligibility condition for lecturership at the Masters level, too). After all, there has to be some internal consistency in the way in which we devise the minimum eligibility condition for lecturership, he should be declared pass in the NET.

In its present form, this particular examination has become a way of keeping a majority of the aspirants out of the charmed circle. Of the cases, even good students (who manage to secure more than 60 per cent marks in their Masters) fail to qualify the NET. Are our mandarins in the UGC trying to tell us that our system of evaluation in the universities is so completely faulty that those who get more than 60 per cent in Masters don’t actually deserve to clear the NET? The idea is not to eliminate potentially good candidates but to sift the potential teachers from those who lack potential for teaching completely. Let us not make total mockery of the system. Let us not act in a whimsical and arbitrary manner (in which the rest of the system works in our country), and let us inject some element of 'human agency' into our callous and inhuman practices.

Let us be prepared to change our mode of evaluation. We can’t fail our next generation just because we don’t have the right kind of ideas or we are not prepared to try out new ideas. Let’s be prepared for the overhaul and let’s do it sensibly. Let us not become a laughing stock of all by merely flaunting our own poverty of thought.

If we make no efforts to bring about the necessary changes in the current model of the NET, then perhaps, it’s not the candidates but the ‘eligibility’ of the UGC itself that shall be at stake. Let us not forget that it is a body, tethering on the brink of collapse. Aren’t there efforts afoot to replace it with the Knowledge Commission (of whatever kind)?

The writer is a Professor in the Department of English and Cultural Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh.
कम आय वालों को फीस में पूरी छूट

वाई दिल्ली | जदन जैन

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थाओं (आईआईटी) में अपने सत्र से आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर छात्रों को फीस में पूरी तरह से छूट मिल सकती है। जिन अभिभाषकों की वार्ता आय सबसे चार लाख रुपये से कम है, उनके आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर मानने हुए आईआईटी उनकी पूरी फीस माफ करने की तैयारी में है। ऐसे छात्रों के लिए नेशनल आईआईटी स्कॉलरशिप प्रोग्राम शुरू किया जाएगा।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री फ़िलाम राजू की अभ्यस्तता में सात जनवरी को होने वाली आईआईटी कार्यक्रम की बैठक में इस प्रस्ताव का अंतिम रूप दिया जाने की संभावना है। इसी बैठक में आईआईटी की फीस को 50 से बढ़ाकर 90 हजार किया जाना है। वैज्ञानिक डॉ. अनिल काकोडकर ने यह स्कॉलरशिप शुरू करने की सिफारिश की थी। इसमें अनुसूचित जातियों एवं जनजातियों के उम्मीदवारों को भी शामिल किया जाएगा। इसके अलावा 25 फीसदी सीटें उन छात्रों के लिए रखी जाएंगी जिनके अभियोजकों की वार्ता आय सबसे चार लाख रुपये से कम है। इस प्रकार 47.5 पीसदी छात्रों को इस स्कॉलरशिप योजना के तहत लाभ लाया जाएगा। यह योजना लागू होती है निर्देश आईआईटी में सिर्फ 52.5 पीसदी छात्रों को ही पूरी फीस चुकानी होगी। अंतिम फैसला बोर्ड ऑफ गवर्नर्स को करना है।
आईआईटी केंद्रों में डिफेंस रिसर्च फैकल्टी स्थापित करने पर विचार

संजय सिंह/एसएनबी

नई दिल्ली। देश के सभी आईआईटी (भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान) परिसरों में रक्षा अनुसंधान एवं विकास संगठन (डीआरडीओ) के संयुक्तत्र तत्त्वात्मक में डिफेंस रिसर्च फैकल्टी स्थापित करने पर विवाद-विवाद चल रहा है। देश की रक्षा और सैन्य जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए विदेश पर निर्भरता खत्म करने को डीआरडीओ के रक्षा वैज्ञानिक और आईआईटी के छात्र अंतर भी रक्षा और सैन्य संबंधी अन्य रिसर्च करते हैं।

इसलिए, डीआरडीओ प्रमुख राजु मंत्री के वैज्ञानिक सलाहकार डॉ. चेंके सारस्वत को आईआईटी कार्यालय के साथ 7 जनवरी को एक बैठक का आयोजन किया गया है, जिसमें महावर्ती मै.सी.सी स्थापना करने वाली बैठक में महावर्ती एडवर्ड पर चर्चा होगी। कार्यालय की बैठक के बाद डीआरडीओ प्रमुख डॉ. सारस्वत के साथ हस्तियों पर अलग से बैठक होगी। उनके साथ डीआरडीओ के छात्र और रक्षा वैज्ञानिक भी होंगे।

► डीआरडीओ के रक्षा वैज्ञानिक और आईआईटी के छात्र मिल कर करेगे 'डिफेंस रिसर्च'

► 7 जनवरी को आईआईटी कार्यालय की बैठक के बाद, डीआरडीओ प्रमुख के साथ हस्तियों महावर्ती एडवर्ड

► बैठक में उन्हें रक्षा वैज्ञानिक डीआरडीओ के कुछ और रक्षा वैज्ञानिक

रक्षा मंत्रिलय के अध्यक्ष कार्यालय यह संगठन देश की तीनों सेनाओं की जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए रक्षा उपकरण, सैन्य हथियार, अस-शस्त्र और जीवन रक्षक वस्तुओं का विकास और नियामक करता है। सरकार चाहती है कि इन सामानों के लिए विदेशी निर्माता पूरी तरह खत्म हो। बैठक में इस बात महावर्ती निर्माण लिए जाने की पूरी संभावना है। ऐसे में रक्षा और सैन्य शोध को और ठंडार व काराग बनाने के लिए डीआरडीओ को देश की अकादमिक संस्थाओं के साथ मिल कर रिसर्च फैकल्टी खोलने की विज्ञापन कर रहा है।

डीआरडीओ ने कलकाता विश्वविद्यालय के साथ मिल कर इसकी शुरुआत भी कर दी है, जहां विश्वविद्यालय डीआरडीओ के लिए 'हाई पावर-माइक्रोवेव' को भविष्य का हमारा बनाने के मददकर शोध कर रहा है।

हालांकि, सरकार रक्षा वैज्ञानिक डीआरडीओ के शुरुआत की है, जहां डीआरडीओ के एक अलग लेख को स्थापना भी कर दी है। बताता जाता है कि वहाँ मानवविज्ञान युद्धक्षेत्र (अन्यमेंड बैंटलफिल्ड) से संबंधित चीजों पर रिसर्च किया जा रहा है।
इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेजों की मदद करे आइआइटी

पीएम की वैज्ञानिक सलाहकार परिषद के अध्यक्ष प्रो. राज का सुझाव

* पद्यकम व पद्धति के साथ में सुधार हो सकता है। देश ने भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा व शैक्षणिक संसाधन (आइआइसईआर) खोलने का अद्यावधि नीतियों के अनुसार। लिंकिंग, एक-एक आइआइसईआर पर भी पहले के कम से कम फाइन साइंस शॉलोजी का समाप्त मॉडल देखने के पश्चात में सकारात्मक चरण के सही दिशानिर्देश रहेंगे। इससे सरकार के कोई नया खतरा भी नहीं आएगा। यह काम महत्वपूर्ण संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय की तरह से हो सकता है। इसके लिए हम देश में कम से कम तीन और आइआइसईआर खोलने पर जोर दिया है। सूचना की नीतियों के साथ हमारी यह वास्तव में संसाधन विकास मंत्री को प्रतिभापूर्वक दिया। उनके नेतृत्व से 1970 के दशक में इस तरह के प्रयोग किये गए थे। पूर्व में मंत्रालय भी इस पर सहमत रहा है। यह वास्तव में आगे नहीं करता है जिसके क्रम ही दिशाएं में मृदु भी नहीं। अब इसकी अन्यत्र की जा शकती है। प्रो. राज की नीतियों के लिए केंद्र को राज्यों के शिक्षा मंत्रियों के साथ दर्शन मानने ने एक बैठक करने का भी सुझाव दिया है।

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Aakash-3 tablet is the next project for IIT-Bombay

Aarti Dhar

Mumbai: Encouraged by the overwhelming response to Aakash-2 — India’s low-cost device for higher education — the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay is already planning the next edition of the tablet that will work on a SIM. A global tender is expected to be put out next month for producing 50 lakh units of Aakash-3.

The proposed upgraded tablet will also have a faster processor, a higher memory capacity and will function on both the Android operating system and Linux. The challenge now is to ensure that improved facilities do not increase the price.

As of now, Aakash-2 is being purchased by the government at Rs. 2,263 per unit, while the price for students and institutions is Rs. 1,130. The Aakash-2 has been distributed to 250 engineering colleges across the country so far. The target is to train 1 lakh teachers once every college and institution gets the device. “Our ultimate aim is to imbibe the usage of tablets in the education system and create an ecosystem for this,” said Deepak B. Phatak, Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering at IIT-Bombay and member of the Standing Committee of the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology. Over 1 lakh tablets have already been procured by the Ministry of Human Resource Development for distribution to educational institutions.

According to Prof. Phatak, it was likely that there would be multiple vendors for the tablets instead of just one to deliver such a huge number.

“The companies that had scoffed at us when we had suggested a low-cost device now want to be associated with it,” Prof. Phatak said, adding that international companies such as Samsung and Intel, too, had shown keen interest in the project, in addition to several Indian manufacturers. Indian manufacturing for such a project was a must, he explained.

Dismissing controversies over the use of Chinese components for the current version, Prof. Phatak explained that only a few countries such as China, Korea and Taiwan produced computer hardware and even American manufacturers “used those components. “Where are Apple’s iphone manufacturers,” he sought to know.

By providing a SIM card slot, Prof. Phatak said, the tablet could be converted into a communication device. “The dream is to increase tablet education usage in the country in the next 10 years,” he said.
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Anand Kumar
hindu education@hindustantimes.com

One thing that remains unchanged in the new Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) is that an aspirant needs to have in-depth knowledge of all subjects. That is the key to success. By now, you would need to cover the full syllabus and get into revision mode by solving a lot of practice tests. You should prepare small notes related to important formulae and results.

Since Paper 1 of JEE Main is likely to be objective-type, the level of questions asked in physics, chemistry and mathematics is not likely to be very high. The emphasis will now be on what you have studied in school because the syllabus for paper 1 of the new JEE will be based on the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum. The responsibility of setting questions will be on experts from the CBSE, though the team will also have professors from the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

Knowing the IITs, however, one can expect brain-teasers, which will require you to get your concepts clear for different subjects. The papers will test not only your knowledge, but your aptitude, speed as well as accuracy. So, for excellence, a good command over subjects will be necessary.

Ensure that you revise the chapters given in the NCERT books first to be able to get your concepts clear. With school board marks also getting weightage, school teaching can really help. Regular practice of single-choice questions asked in previous examinations really helps. Make sure you understand what you are doing. Mere ticking of options may not be the right way. Attempting single-choice questions from previous years’ JEE-SEE will also help you crack paper 1.

Your focus should always be on getting your concepts clear and understanding the topics well. There are times when students try to be thorough only with important topics from the point of view of the JEE, but that is not the right way. Total focus on a particular topic can be problematic, as you never know which topic will have more questions. The best way is to give equal importance to all topics. For instance, a student who decides to skip probability and gives more importance to quadratic equation, can repent later. In the new JEE, it is difficult to ascertain what trend will be set.

Finally, confidence holds the key. And for building confidence, regular practice is the only way. Still, if you come across difficult questions while writing the exam, there is no need to get nervous. There may be a few questions that will be difficult for most candidates. Keep your confidence high, for cut-off in the JEE can really fluctuate.

The author is founder, Super 30
Consolidation continues in India's coaching industry

By Prashant K Nanda
prashant.nigam@mint.com

The consolidation in India's fragmented and unregulated test preparation industry continues with smaller local entities getting acquired by bigger ones. The latest is listed coaching company MT Educare Ltd acquiring a majority stake in Laksybus, a chain that prepares aspirants for admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

The trend has picked up largely because of three reasons—a change in education policy, the modification of exam formats and efforts by leading test-prep companies to expand their portfolio. For smaller companies it's a question of survival as a merger or partnership with a bigger entity allows them to be competitive in a changing environment.

In the last three years, the Common Admission Test (CAT) conducted by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) has gone online. The civil service exams have become more like CAT by adopting an aptitude test. In May, the government decided to give 40% weightage to school board marks in engineering college admissions.

The implementation of a single, online entrance system for selection into all engineering colleges including IITs has made it difficult for smaller coaching centres without the capability of delivering national-level tests. Adding to this is the stress on English language capability in both CAT and the civil service exams and the growth of a blended tutoring format that combines elements of the classroom with distance education.

"The education scenario has changed and you just cannot have the same mindset you used to have seven or eight years back," said Saryu Narayan, chairman of CL Educate (formerly Career Launchers), a leading coaching chain. "Now, all the key exams need expertise and not all have that. So consolidation is happening. People with different expertise are coming together to fulfill the demand."

CL Educate has made at least three acquisitions in the last five years, the most recent having been in December 2011, when it took over G.K. Publications, a Noida-based publisher of competitive exam books. The acquisition has helped CL expand distance-mode tutoring, in which books from the institute are an integral part. Before that it had acquired Arun Roy Classes, an IIT test-prep chain in Maharashtra, and Law School Tutorial in north India.

"Two who thought organized classroom tutoring is a choice in a portal tutoring era, missed out on market share," the CL Educate chairman said. "Now, those who are thinking classroom the old mode will miss out too. You have to think of the digital mode too."

For instance, Brilliant Tutorials, once a market leader, is not as dominant. Brilliant uses the CL platform for classes in north and east India. The change in education policy makes it imperative for smaller companies like Laksybus to tie up with a bigger organization.

"MT is a leader in school preparation and we are for IIT-JEE (joint entrance examination)," said Varasi Krishna, co-founder, Laksybus, started in 2006 by four IIT graduates and having built up a presence in Punjab. "With the change in education policy, joining hands [with MT] will provide complete training to aspirants—from schools to IIT."

The test-prep industry is becoming organized and some are now professionally run companies, he said.

Yagnesh Sanghrajka, chief financial officer of MT, described their deal as a "backward-forward integration of business. Earlier, we were serving students for four years [in school board preparation] and now they will stay with us for seven to eight years."

If a coaching institute has a good reputation in school preparation, their students will feel comfortable staying with it when he or she seeks to get into engineering or medical school, said Dilip Nayak, a Class XII student in south Delhi. "I don't understand their business but for a student it's more about trust and comfort," he said.

A school education system that is patchy in quality and unable to keep up with growing aspirations among Indians will fuel growth in the coaching industry, according to experts and the industry.

The tutorial business is expected to grow to $75,629 crore in 2014-15 from $43,187 crore in 2010-11, according to a Crisil Research report. Sensing that the business was set to expand, Edecomp Solutions Ltd acquired Vidyamandir Classes in 2010 and Triumphant Enterprises of Con- solidation Education Pvt. Ltd (TIME) took a majority stake in VISTA, an English language training chain in south India.

The acquisition made Educomp, a complete education company catering to students from school to higher education and finally the job market. For TIME, the acquisition was aimed at making its MBA coaching more robust.

"India is a young country and the demand for education will grow. So it's natural that coaching as a sub segment will grow," said Soumya Raut, chief executive of Educomp Global at Educomp Solutions. "We as an education company want to get involved with students from pre-school to getting job ready."

While some are already part of the consolidation process, others are looking to see whether there are any opportunities.

"The coaching industry is now getting corporated." Consolidation is in sight," said Ashish Chaudhary, director, Educomp Solutions, a leading engineering and medical tutorial chain. "We have a complete education passing through a critical phase that is good for students."

As Ashish seeks to expand its presence from north to south India, it is too ready to "shake hands" with regional players. "We will look at vertical integration—if we are in the under-graduate space, maybe we can go for synergy in the post-graduate space," he said.

TIME was in an email that while the company is achieving "credible organic growth", it is "actively pursuing acquisition opportunities in the field of education and training".

Learning curve: The test-prep industry is becoming organized and some are now professionally run firms, say experts.
Israel grants scholarships to 66 Indian scholars

Each awardee to receive about ₹14.7 lakh a year for three years

Vandana Ramnani
vandana.ramnani@hindustantimes.com

As many as 66 Indian postdoctoral scholars will travel to Israel in the coming months to pursue research at top universities. The researchers will benefit from three-year scholarships granted by the government of Israel.

In the framework of the scholarship programme, fellows from IIT Delhi, Osmania University, universities in Delhi, Lucknow, Kolkata, Mumbai and other leading academic institutions in India will conduct research in a wide variety of fields, including immunology, genetics, neurobiology, bioinformatics, computer sciences, law and economics. The research will be undertaken at leading universities in Israel, namely, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology, Tel Aviv University, Haifa University, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Weizmann Institute of Science and the Open University of Israel.

"The annual amount per scholar is 100,000 shekel (NIS) that is equivalent to about ₹14.7 lakh a year, for three years. Of this sum, two thirds are given directly by the government and one third by the university (which is also government supported). The criteria for selection are academic excellence of the candidate, academic value of the research proposal and interest of the concerned university department in the subject matter," officials from the Israeli Embassy said.

This postdoctoral scholarship initiative was conceived during the visit of Israel's finance minister Yuval Steinitz to India in December 2011. Steinitz had met then HRD minister Kapil Sibal and the two pledged their support to bolster Indo-Israel academic cooperation.

A call for research proposals for yet another round of this postdoctoral scholarship programme has already been announced. Applications can be submitted through Israeli universities. "The second round means that in addition to those who have already received the scholarships, Indian researchers can apply for another round of scholarships (potentially up to 100 in number)," the officials said.
Change is in the air

Major institutions ring in the New Year with a host of fresh features from hostels and labs to more fellowships

including a bio-incubator and "the country's only university-based Research Park fully occupied with 90 plus companies collaborating with students and faculty" says Ramamurthi.

There are also 40 new members of the faculty recruited from top universities in the world.

The university aims to consolidate its current initiatives in academics and administration. "The concept of smart classrooms will be introduced across all faculties. We will also focus on making the campus more clean and hygienic. We wish to improve the quality of all programmes and curricula. Earlier, we had introduced a concept of transfer of credits at the faculty of social sciences and humanities and languages. There is a proposal to introduce it across faculties and departments from 2016-17. For instance, a student who is majoring in history will be able to transfer credits from Islamic architecture. Similarly, a civil engineering student can take credits in architecture and social sciences," says SM Sajid, registrar.

For the first time, this Central government university has advanced the admission schedule so that the academic year can begin in July, says an official. While till 2012, it used to put out the admission notification in April and hold the entrance test in the first week of June, now the advertisement is already out, the application process is online and the written competition is slated for February 21-26, 2013.

This PG and research institution is also starting a two-year master's programme in public health and a five-year integrated master's in oceanography.

In addition, as per official information, it is expected to open two new hostels which will house about 1900 male students on campus. At present, about 80% of its 8000 enrollees are hostellers.

This tech institution is all set to make a splash in the new year. An Olympic-size swimming pool for the students and faculty is expected to be ready in 2013. There will be new hostels for male (about 650) and female (about 800) students as well as for married research scholars, taking the total capacity to more than 4000 hostel seats.

Another new feature is the 90 crore High Performance Computer, currently ranked 25 in the world and an advanced Tunnelling Electron Microscope, only the third in the country, inform Bhaskar Ramamurthi, director.

Students can also look forward to a completely revamped workshop with intelligent machining centres, a new incubation centre

The University of Pune is looking at improving safety for students in and around the campus. The brutal gangrape of the 23-year-old braveheart of Delhi has necessitated renewed focus on this vital area. "We want to install CCTV cameras in strategic locations around the university campus," says Vasudeva Gade, vice chancellor.

This year, the Indian Institute of Management Shillong is going to concentrate on organising short- and long-term courses for local tribal communities at highly subsidised rates. Students are involved in designing and imparting these courses. One of the proposed courses is on microfinance. IIM Shillong has already organised many management development programmes and collaborated with different government and non-government agencies for launching different programmes on topics like entrepreneurship, capacity and skill building (marketing handicrafts, indigenous food items etc) for the local tribes, says Raja Sengupta, director.

"Strengthening safety measures for our university students, particularly women students, is a priority in the coming year," says Arun Kumar Grover, vice chancellor.

"We want our students to be suitably apprised of contemporary challenges in the domain of economics, international trade and law and politics so that they can be more effective managers. Keeping this in mind we intend to organise some conferences and seminars that will focus on real world interdisciplinary challenges," says Shekhar Chaudhari, director, IIM Calcutta.

The number of fellowships is likely to be increased in the coming year. New buildings will come up for the School of Social Sciences, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies and School of International Studies. New hostels and research labs are also likely to be set up. The university is working in association with the ministry of social justice to make the campus barrier free for the differently-abled students. Remedial classes are also being planned for maths and computer science students.
It is time to ‘switch off’ work

Co’s Wean Staff From E-Devices To Balance Job & Life

Tanya Mohn

Resolutions to change behaviour are common at this time of year, but they usually involve exercising more or smoking less. Now, some companies are adopting policies aimed at weaning employees from their electronic devices.

Atos, an international information technology company, plans to phase out all e-mails among employees by the end of 2013 and rely instead on other forms of communication. And starting in the new year, employees at Daimler, the German automaker, can have incoming e-mail automatically deleted during vacations so they do not return to a flooded in-box. An automatic message tells the sender which person is temporarily dealing with the employee’s e-mail.

No one is expected to be on call at all hours of the day and night, and “switching off” after work is important, “even if you are on a business trip,” said Sabrina Schrimpf, a Daimler spokeswoman, referring to the company’s recently released report, “Balanced! — Reconciling Employees’ Work and Private Lives.”

Disconnecting can be more challenging for business travelers who frequently work across time zones. And there is a ripple effect, said Leslie A Perlow, a professor of leadership at Harvard Business School and the author of “Sleeping With Your Smartphone.” “These guys fly in the middle of the night and send e-mails back to colleagues” who wait up, ready to respond.

A study conducted last spring by the Pew Research Center found that while mobile phones were valued as a way to stay productive, there were downsides to being available at all times.

The nationwide survey of 2,264 adults found that 44% of cellphone owners had slept with their phone next to their bed and that 67% had experienced “phantom rings”, checking their phone even when it was not ringing.

Sam Chapman, chief executive of Empower Public Relations in Chicago, was one such cellphone user. He said he frequently checked email in the middle of the night and as result slept poorly, did not feel refreshed in the morning. “I wanted to make sure that what happened to me didn’t happen to my employees.”

So Chapman adopted what he called a BlackBerry blackout policy. He and his staff of about 20 turn off their BlackBerries from 6 pm to 6 am on weekdays and completely on weekends for all work-related use, with rare exceptions.

“When I’m well rested, I show up to work ready to go,” he said.

But it is not always easy. In early 2012, when Michelle Barry, Mark Jacobsen and a third partner created Centric Brand Anthropology, a Seattle-based company that advises clients on brand strategy, design and culture management, they gave serious thought to the issue.

“A huge priority for us was to have a good balance between work-life,” said Jacobsen, Centric’s vice president and creative director. “Yet we have found that very difficult to do while working with large multinational clients,” which often require international travel and constant availability.

London: The Internet, a revolutionary and cheap communications system that has transformed the lives of billions of people across the world, turns 30 on Tuesday.

The computer network officially began its technological revolution when it fully substituted previous networking systems on January 1, 1983. Known as “flag day”, it was the first time the US Department of Defense (DoD) commissioned ARPANET network fully switched to use of the Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) communications systems.


“I don’t think that anybody making that switch on the day would have realized the importance of what they were doing,” the Daily Telegraph quoted Chris Edwards, an electronics correspondent for Engineering and Technology magazine, as saying.

“But without it the Internet and the World Wide Web as we know it today could not have happened.”

Based on designs by Welsh scientist Donald Davies, the ARPAnet network began as a military project in the late 1960s.

It was developed at prestigious American universities and research laboratories, such as the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the Stanford Research Institute.
Teens’ internet usage unsafe: 31% meet ‘friends’ online

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The gap between what parents think their teenagers do online and what they actually do is alarmingly large. Most parents trust their kids to keep them informed of their activities, believe they’ll be careful enough to keep personal information to themselves and resist accessing porn sites, giving in only a few times in a year. They are wrong. A sizeable section of teens – 55% across India, 35.9% in Delhi – will minimize screens, erase browser history and circumvent or disable parental control to avoid monitoring. But they are far less careful when it comes to protecting themselves online – large numbers have shared mobile numbers, addresses, photos of themselves in “revealing clothes” and even photos of them “illegally intoxicated.” And a frighteningly large section – 31% – has met ‘friends’ they made online.

A study conducted by security firm, McAfee, sought replies from 757 teens and 700 parents across seven cities – Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune and Chennai – to get a handle on what it is exactly teens do online. They surf more porn, get into fights and explore ways of cheating at tests much more than parents are ready to believe. The study, “The Secret Life of Indian Teens Online,” was conducted in other countries as well. And one of the differences between India and Australia and the US is that a majority of teens access Net through smartphones in India. Another is that Indian teens are very active on a large number and variety of social networking sites.

The vast majority of the respondents – 97% – has access to social networking and the average age at which teens get started is 13. However, McAfee’s Indian ‘cybernunt’, Anindita Mishra, said at the release of the report, that she suspects the average age at which they start is actually lower. As part of the concealment strategy, kids have learnt to disguise their age online. “Kids change their age and sometimes parents know about this. I have received friend-requests from kids who are definitely younger than 13,” Mishra had said.

As a generation that’s always been surrounded by technology, teens are more familiar with its ways than adults – 51% parents are helped by teens. While this role-reversal may make monitoring difficult – parents are known to get their kids to install software suits meant to track their activities – it’s still better than ignoring the issue altogether. The 75% of parents who say “modern technology overwhelms them” would do well to get involved and learn the ropes, even if it is from their sons and daughters. Delhi parents, of all parents surveyed, apparently had the “lowest concern rates” about their teens sharing personal details online.
Celebrating 'flag day': Internet turns 30 quietly

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