Report by India Education bureau, New Delhi: The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT-Delhi) today announced the results of ASME HPVC (Human Powered Vehicle Challenge) Contest. Under the aegis of ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers), this contest was held in India for the first time. Delhi Technological University (DTU) partnered with IIT Delhi in organizing this event.

Team Wheelism from ISM Dhanbad won this year’s championship. Winners in individual categories are as follows:

- Design Event won by Chandigarh Group of Colleges
- Endurance Race won by Rajarambapu Institute of Technology
- Drag Race won by Jamia Milia Islamia

This year’s design event was sponsored by Dassault Systems, the 3DEXPERIENCE Company.

Over the years, ASME HPVC event has attracted a large number of college students from various parts of the world. This year’s event acted as a platform for students from various parts of India to showcase their technological and engineering prowess by engineering and realizing a human powered vehicle as per the given requirements. The event is also a medium to promote environmental sustainability by designing viable modes of transportation for future needs. HPVC is an inter college design, fabrication and racing competition for students where teams have to conceptualise, design and fabricate a human powered vehicle to participate in a three day event comprising of design competition, endurance race and a drag race. The objective of the races is to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate the speed and reliability of their vehicles.

ASME HPVC chief Dr. Michael Moorhead said, “We are very excited to see India's inaugural ASME Human Powered Vehicle Challengehosted at IIT-Delhi with Delhi Technological University as synergetic partner. Co-curricular competition project opportunities, like HPVC, motivate engineering students to develop important skills not commonly taught in the classroom. In addition to the application of sound engineering principles, students must adhere to firm deadlines, financial constraints, and reconcile open-ended problem statements - skills which are highly valued by today's employers. We hope that this event is able to establish a lasting and meaningful presence, opening doors that were not previously open to aspiring Indian engineers.”

Commenting on the awards announcement and Dassault Systemes association with it, Dr. Chandan Chowdhury, Managing Director-India Dassault Systèmes said, “Growth of sustainable worlds is the core of the work we do at Dassault Systemes and I am extremely proud to be associated with a contest which recognises innovative work in this area. I am also delighted to see the level of creative solutions which young engineers from across the country have come up with and I congratulate everyone including the winners on this stupendous work, they make me very optimistic about the future of 3D Design in India”
The event witnessed participation of 36 teams from across the country which included IITs NITs, BITS Pilani, ISM Dhanbad.

Hindustan Times ND 21/01/2014   P-13

Data analytics emerges the new hot job for IITians

NEW DELHI: Companies including Tata Consultancy Services, Future Group, Genpact, Barclays Bank, Morgan Stanley, and Goldman Sachs are recruiting engineering students to do the math for them.

Post the consultancy boom, data analytics has emerged the new hot sector for most engineers, especially Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) graduates.

Data analytics refers to examining raw data with the purpose of drawing conclusions such as spotting trends.

India produces over 500,000 engineers every year and 25,000 of them are employed in analytics, according to Ma Foi Analytics, a company which services clients such as GE, HSBC and Genpact.

And it’s paying off as well. The average salary of a fresher is about ₹6 lakh per annum, whereas the average salary for an analytics professional is over ₹10 lakh.

“About 50,000 engineers in India are qualified to work on the subject and demand is five times higher,” said Shobhit Bahadur, assistant vice-president, Ma Foi Analytics.

Last year, 5% of IIT Delhi students took up analytics jobs whereas 3% of such placements were held at IIT Madras.

“27 companies have made over 94 offers for analytics jobs in IIT Bombay’s placements for 2014,” said Bahadur.

“Analytics firms pay starting salaries that are 40-50% higher than other sectors,” said Kapil Tyagi, director, Edureka, a training provider.

Indian companies have also started leveraging data analytics to lure consumer.

“We design our promotion strategies, growth plans, store designs after analysing data,” said ex-IITian Sandip Tarkas, president, customer strategy Future Group, who also handles its data analytics section.

“The benefits of data analytics are huge,” said Vinay Bhatia, senior vice-president, marketing, Shoppers Stop.

Times Of India ND 21/01/2014   P-17

Missing IITian’s body found in AP

Mumbai/Visakhapatnam: M Siva Theja, a 26-year-old PhD student from IIT-Bombay who had gone missing last week, was found dead under mysterious circumstances at a lodge in Visakhapatnam on Saturday.

Police found his body in a decomposed state in the bathroom of one of the lodge rooms, his face covered with a thick polythene sheet taped at the neck. All his fingers had also been taped, and a roll of plastic tape was found lying near the body.

Theja’s parents, residents of Hyderabad, had gone to Mumbai last Wednesday after he went missing. They went to Visakhapatnam after receiving a call from police on Saturday, an IIT official said. The family has a couple of relatives in Visakhapatnam, the official said. Though the police are probing the suicide angle, they have not ruled out the possibility of murder.

Sources said the death may have been caused by suffocation, and the post-mortem report did not indicate poisoning. But the viscera have been sent for analysis.

(With inputs from Sujogna Mehta and VNarayan)
IIT PROF JOINS AS THAPAR UNIVERSITY DIRECTOR

PATIALA: Thapar University has appointed Prof Prakash Gopalan, former dean of student affairs at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, as its new director.

Prof Gopalan was associated with IIT Bombay as a professor in the department of metallurgical engineering and material science for over two decades.

Articulating his vision for the university, Gopalan said, “One of the great strengths of Thapar University is research, and we will further leverage it to develop our scientific and R&D capabilities and take this institution to the next level.”
आईआईटीयन्स का ‘गो ग्रीन’

जोधपुर कुद्रत के लिए साइस व तकनीकी खुद फल-फूल रखती है। वह हमें नैसर्गिक खिचना है, जिसके हार के जाने के बाद बिखरे जाते हैं। जरूरत है तो सिर्फ कुदरत के संरक्षण और रख-रखाव की।

आम आदमी में ‘गो ग्रीन’ की भावना जगाने का बीड़ा आईआईटी-जोधपुर के छात्रों ने उठाया है। सामाजिक जागरूकता कार्यक्रम ‘प्रकृति’ के तहत आईआईटीयन्स ने पर्यावरण संरक्षण की एक अन्तर्गत पहल की है। आईआईटी जोधपुर के वार्षिक फेस्टिवल ‘इन्स’ के अंतर्गत ‘प्रकृति’ का आयोजन किया जा रहा है।

सामाजिक जागरूकता की पहल

‘इन्स-14’ के मार्चिंग हेड और आईआईटी-जोधपुर के छात्रों के लिए भारी वृज्यन के साथ, ‘इन्स’ आईआईटी जोधपुर का सामाजिक, तकनीकी और सार्वजनिकता के लिए पेश किया। जिसका आयोजन 27 फरवरी से 2 मार्च तक किया जाएगा। ये है कार्यक्रम।

प्रकृति ने बताया कि ‘प्रकृति’ के अंतर्गत शहर के बिजनेस स्क्वॉर्ड में जो कर पर्यावरण सर्वेक्षण मुद्दों पर जारी फैलायी जाती है। पुरे शहर में 500 पौधों की खेती है जिसकी शुरुआत हो चुकी है। इस पहल के अंतर्गत आईआईटी के छात्र लोगों को ‘प्लास्टिक प्लास्टिक फ्री डे’ और ‘नो प्लास्टिक वाले वर्ल्ड डे’ मानने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किए।

पर्यावरण संरक्षण के अंतर्गत इस बार प्रकृति की ओर से निश्चित नेट्रल जांच पीपल्स का आयोजन किया जाएगा, जिसमें विभिन्न छात्रों और लोगों की मिलाकर केवल 1000 की आंखों की जांच की जाएगी।
25 तक अपलोड करें फोटो सिग्नेचर और थंब इंप्रेशन

नई दिल्ली (ब्यूरो)। ज्वाइंट एंड्रूज एज्जाम (जेईई-मेन-2014) के ऑनलाइन रजिस्त्रेशन में अधूरा या ठीक से फॉर्म न भरने वाले छात्रों को सीबीएसई ने एक और मौका दिया है। यह सुविधा जेईई मेन की वेबसाइट (jeemain.nic.in) पर एक से 15 फरवरी तक मिलेगी। वहाँ उम्मीदवार फोटोग्राफ, सिग्नेचर और थंब इंप्रेशन (अंगूठे का निशान) की सही इमेज 25 जनवरी तक भेज सकते हैं।

परीक्षा के लिए आवेदन प्रक्रिया जनवरी के पहले सप्ताह में समाप्त हो चुकी है। आवेदन प्रक्रिया में देखा गया कि उम्मीदवारों ने अपने फोटोग्राफ, हस्ताक्षर और अंगूठे के निशान की इमेज को अपलोड ही नहीं किया है। ऐसे अभ्यर्थियों को एसएमएस और ईमेल के माध्यम से सूचना भेजी गई है। जेईई मेन की वेबसाइट पर जल्द ही उम्मीदवारों के ब्यूरो को अपलोड किया जाएगा। सुधार करने की सुविधा एक ही बार दी जाएगी।

सीबीएसई को यह जानकारी भी मिली है कि बोर्ड परीक्षा की कुछ तिथियां जेईई मेन के ऑनलाइन एग्जाम से टकरा रही हैं। लिहाजा ऐसे ऐसे छात्रों को ऑनलाइन एग्जाम की तिथियां अलग से आविर्भत की जाएगी।
AUSTRALIA CONTINUES TO ATTRACT INDIAN STUDENTS

OFFSHORE Australia grants instant student visa approvals to meet increased demand coming from India

HT Correspondent

There has been a sharp increase in the number of Indians applying for student visas to Australia, according to the latest student visa programme quarterly report. The latest immigration figures show 4148 Indians made offshore applications for student visas between July and September last year - more than double the figure for the same period in 2012.

More than 90 per cent of Indians who applied for student visas were successful, compared with 74% in 2012.

Welcoming this, Australia's High Commissioner to India, Patrick Suckling said: "These figures show that an increasing number of Indian students are being drawn to Australia's world class higher education system."

"Australia welcomes Indian students, who make a vital contribution to both academic life and the communities in which they live. "Just as important, they show that far fewer Indian students are being refused visas, and that recent changes designed to enhance the competitiveness and integrity of Australia's international education sector are working."

The student visa program quarterly report also demonstrates that Australian Government officials are dealing effectively with increased demand.

A still of the University of Sydney

STATISTICS CLAIM

India has become the second largest source of overseas students in Australia after China.

75% of offshore applications by Indians were processed within 29 days, and 50% were processed within 20 days.

More than 10% of all student visas granted in the three month period went to Indian nationals. India remains the second largest source of overseas students in Australia after China.

"Australia provides an academic environment that has been internationally recognised as secure, culturally diverse and intellectually rewarding," Suckling said.

75% of applications by Indians were processed within 29 days
50% within 20 days
10% of all student visas granted in the 3 month period went to Indian nationals.
Formula for success

A group of IITians is helping students understand mathematics better and has started a new free of cost social campaign “Stress Buster”

SANA YASEEN

Studying hard for the upcoming class X board exams, Saurabh Sharma struggles with a geometry problem. Nervousness, anxiety, parental and peer pressures would have given Saurabh another sleepless night had he not WhatsApped his problem to Unlearn Formulae, an initiative to help students understand mathematics better. Within minutes he got the answer on his mobile and heaved a sigh of relief.

An initiative by IITians, Unlearn Formulae has been running successfully for the last three years. Keeping in mind the panic that grips students around this time of the year, Unlearn Formulae has started a new free of cost social campaign “Stress Buster” from January 18 at DLF Phase I, Gurgaon.

“Having been students ourselves, we know the fear that grips students in January and February. Our experts from IITs and IIMs will help students revise the entire syllabus. Moreover, we are also running the first of its kind helpline to answer any queries at any point of the day — and it’s completely free. Our only motivation is to help students understand mathematics better and turn the stress into success,” informs Rahul Khandelwal, from IIT Delhi, who is heading the initiative in the city.

The group, which has 5-6 researchers and several IITian members in the city, has designed its own novel approach to math. During the two-month Stress Buster course, they focus on de-stressing the students before exams and covering every aspect of the syllabus. It includes lectures on weekends, supplemented by regular practice and doubt clearing sessions.

Talking about restructing the education system in the country, Rahul adds, “Maths is all about learning logic and analytical skills. But it has become a topic of fear for students who are not really learning it but trying to mug up the formulae in order to just pass the exams.”

He points out how school teachers are also helpless in managing a class of 25-30 kids where they get only 30 minutes to teach. “Even parents don’t have the time. There is a blame game going on — parents blame teachers, teachers blame kids, and kids blame their tutors. The problem we fail to address is the educational structure in the country.”

“So we have reorganised the whole syllabus and divided mathematics into seven domains such as geometry, algebra, etc. In each domain we have incorporated all the concepts from class IX to XII. So a student can clearly make out at which level he needs to improve in a particular domain, something that our report cards fail to do,” Rahul adds.

The group is also working towards building an aptitude for competitive exams like IIT-JEE, AIEEE, SAT etc. and creative thinking in math from the early years of education. “After all, even the kids should see how fun and simple math can be,” says Rahul.
How an MBA adds value to a person’s career

Ashitwary Pravat

Quite often you see business schools promoting their MBA programmes as something that will help a person become a leader and get one started in a fast-growing corporate career with top salary. The picture may be true but only partially, because not all business schools are capable of driving the change that they promise.

If you are a student planning to go for an MBA, you should go deeper than just reading the promises made by a business school. To be on the safer side, go for a business school that features among top 100 in the country.

You should also be reasonable in your choice. If you are a student with top grades then it is good to aim for a top 20 or top 50 B-schools. But if your scores are not very high, take a pick from among the business schools that are not top of the list but are reasonably good.

For Indian MBA aspirants who take CAT (common admission test), results are already out. Based on your scores, shortlist five business schools to make sure that you do not miss getting into a good MBA programme.

Globally, the business school selection process is different from what it is in India. Global B-schools use test scores, essays and work experience to select candidates. Majority of Indian B-schools rely on test, group discussion and personal interview. Foreign MBA are also usually more expensive than the ones in India. So if you have MBA dreams and don’t have any work experience, an Indian MBA is your best bet and if you have money to spare and also rich experience then aim for a global MBA.

Assuming that you have made the right choice for your MBAs, the question remains: “Is doing an MBA a good career choice?” Short answer is yes.

Let us look into detail, how an MBA adds value to a person’s career.

INCREASE IN PERCEIVED VALUE

For a young person, it is a great feeling to be acknowledged as an MBA. When you are fresh out of college and your friends are still thinking about different career options like further studies or a job, getting into a good MBA programme adds to your persona.

This increase in perceived value is not only limited to family or society. Employers also think that an MBA from a reputed B-school gets a graduate or postgraduate person ready for the corporate world and are willing to pay better salaries to those MBAs.

This Why every year lakhs of students apply to join B-schools across India:

A GOOD CHANCE TO CHANGE YOUR CAREER PATH

Major B-schools provide students with an option to specialise in different fields like marketing, finance, HR and systems during second year of MBA programme. Even if you are a sociology student, you can specialise in marketing or human resource (HR) and get a job in a totally different field than what you studied as an undergraduate student.

If you have a year’s experience in sales and do not like it much, you can do an MBA, specialise in HR and get a job in that field. During your MBA, you can also intelligently plan your internships to show focus on a new industry that you want to switch to.

LEARN ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO MANAGE YOUR CAREER

At the core, MBA (Master of Business Administration) teaches skills to manage different parts of a business and exposes a person to real world business situations using case studies and industry tips. So it is a good training ground for budding managers and entrepreneurs.

If you want to become an entrepreneur, you can get into an MBA programme and learn the basics of sales, marketing, business planning, finance and get started as an entrepreneur. An MBA is not essential to become an entrepreneur but it surely helps.

In the business world, college dropouts like Bill Gates, Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg are famous. But there are a disproportionately large number of entrepreneurs, who go on that path after finishing their degree. In a recent meeting with a select group of journalists even Bill Gates said that he is hardly a college dropout. This means that education certainly helps.

To get started as an entrepreneur, you get an MBA with a major in entrepreneurship. A programme like the ones at Babson and ESADE will be a good bet.

JUMP TO THE CORPORATE LADDER

If you have been working in the industry for a few years and have CED dreams or are not happy with the salary you are getting, an MBA may just be the boost you need. MBA can help you move from junior to middle and from middle to senior management.

With a good MBA degree your senior manager designation can be turned into a CM profile in less than half the time which otherwise takes good five to eight years.

An MBA also helps in commanding a higher starting salary as compared to a non-MBA with same experience.

Not having an MBA can prove to be an obstacle in certain industries or organisations where the culture is to promote MBAs into important positions, not all being equal.

A LARGE NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES AND INCREASED EARNING

Most of the good jobs advertised want MBA listed as an essential qualification to apply. People who hold an MBA degree find different types of employment opportunities, both domestically and internationally.

It is estimated that 70 per cent of the senior managers or lowest directors worldwide are MBAs. So you get higher salaries as MBA. It is relevant to know that this growth mostly comes with longer work hours.

ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE

An MBA programme is a great way to acquire diverse set of knowledge in a short period of time. When you put the knowledge to work and share with others, your growth becomes faster. So if you want knowledge for the sake of knowledge or want to acquire it to grow faster, a B-school is the place for it.

A B-school is the place where you can learn and experiment with different hypotheses and keep the ones that work with you. If you go into an MBA with an open mind, you will come out a better person. Apply and push yourself and your MBA will prepare you for just about anything and push you to continuously improve.

So, put it all, an MBA is your ticket to a fast grow career and worthy success if you are willing to work for it.
Re-engineering higher learning in states

BS Gehani

The mandate of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) — a flagship programme of the MEHRD — is to promote access, equity and excellence in higher education by converting leading state universities into research entities.

RUSA would cover 300 state universities and 8,500 colleges. Its relevance is more pronounced in the context of the MEHRD, UGC and Planning Commission efforts to enhance higher education and improve the quality of teaching and research. RUSA would cover 300 state universities and 8,500 colleges. Its relevance is more pronounced in the context of the MEHRD, UGC and Planning Commission efforts to enhance higher education and improve the quality of teaching and research. RUSA would cover 300 state universities and 8,500 colleges. Its relevance is more pronounced in the context of the MEHRD, UGC and Planning Commission efforts to enhance higher education and improve the quality of teaching and research.

The coverage

**Setting up new universities and upgrading the best of them to world-class research institutes**

**Improving the status of existing autonomous colleges to universities**

**Vocationalisation of higher education and conversion of colleges to universities**

**Infrastructure grants to universities and colleges, and setting up model colleges and upgrading select degree colleges to model colleges**

**Opening new profession of colleges and promoting research, innovations and quality improvement**

**Taking bold equity initiatives and leadership development of educational administrators**

**Adopting management information system for maintaining a reliable database.**

(Government of India, UGC)

Higher education suffers from many ills like inequitable access to all, cash crunch and limited research. There is a large gap in the transfer of funds from one administrative layer to another, especially at the top-equal of the financial year, was also reported. Non-utilization of released funds was also found. The experience of Centre-sponsored schemes also shows that at some states do not release their share on time. Also a couple of states and institutions were very slow in undertaking administrative reforms. The Planning Commission study reports that in case of SBA, seven states did not constitute state-level monitoring committees. In some states, norms were not adhered to while constituting the committees. Weak coordination between various bodies also constrained the outcome. Lack of a comprehensive policy in the EMIB in some cases hampered quality. The successful strategy is to immediately accord statutory status to SBA, prepare state plan, initiate administrative reforms and follow the time schedule for the release of funds. The benefit-sharing scheme of RUSA is the institutions. They should promptly constitute the Board of Governors and project management unit as per RUSA guidelines. An orientation programme for the state and institutional officials should also be organized to acquaint them with RUSA. It is also in the interest of states and institutions to keep the promotion in access, equity and excellence at the centre. They should use funds as means rather than ends of the scheme.

Vigilant stakeholders, especially teachers, students, parents, civil society and media, can play an important role in creating quality teaching and research. At present, the National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC) and National Board of Accreditation (NBA) undertake accreditation and assessment of universities, including general colleges and professional institutions. In fact, the NAAC, was a voluntary exercise. According to NAAC, only one-third of the total universities and 13 per cent of colleges had gone through the process of accreditation by August 2013. RUSA’s compulsory regulatory compliance for funding would compel all institutions to undergo the process.

**Winning strategies**

RUSA has the potential of becoming a game changer. Now the onus is on state governments and institutions to take full advantage of this programme. For preparing states to adopt RUSA, the Project Approved Board (PAB) has approved initial grant to 13 states and four Union Territories. The states include Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Mahasatra, Manipur, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the Union Territories are Anamanar and Nicobar, Chandigarh, Darma and Nagar hati and Jammu and Di. The PAB has also approved 50 new model degree colleges with a funding of Rs 627 crores. Out of these, 20 in Uttar Pradesh, eight each in Karnataka and Odisha, seven in Andhra Pradesh and four in Kerala. The board has also approved funds for 31 existing model degree colleges of Assam, Karnataka, Mahasatra and Punjab. In the post-eligibility phase, funds would strictly be on the basis of performances and outcomes. Therefore in the long run, only those states and institutions which follow the prerequisites of RUSA will be financially beneficial. While formulating winning strategies, the states and institutions must not allow the weaknesses of SBA and RUSA to creep in the execution of RUSA. Evaluation and research studies on the SBA and EMIB by the NCERP Planning Commission, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, state government and research, reveal that in a number of cases the major emphasis remained on money allocated and spent; and in the process the quality improvement was a casualty. A little gap in the transfer of funds from one administrative layer to another, especially at the top-equal of the financial year, was also reported. Non-utilization of released funds was also found. The experience of Centre-sponsored schemes also shows that at some states do not release their share on time. Also a couple of states and institutions were very slow in undertaking administrative reforms. The Planning Commission study reports that in case of SBA, seven states did not constitute state-level monitoring committees. In some states, norms were not adhered to while constituting the committees. Weak coordination between various bodies also constrained the outcome. Lack of a comprehensive policy in the EMIB in some cases hampered quality. The successful strategy is to immediately accord statutory status to SBA, prepare state plan, initiate administrative reforms and follow the time schedule for the release of funds. The benefit-sharing scheme of RUSA is the institutions. They should promptly constitute the Board of Governors and project management unit as per RUSA guidelines. An orientation programme for the state and institutional officials should also be organized to acquaint them with RUSA. It is also in the interest of states and institutions to keep the promotion in access, equity and excellence at the centre. They should use funds as means rather than ends of the scheme.

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Welcome to 'Powai Valley', India's new start-up hub

Samidha Sharma & Hemali Chhapia, TNN | Jan 21, 2014, 01.51AM IST

MUMBAI: Having spent a couple of years clocking airline miles as a consultant in New York and London, Zishaan Hayath, returned to India to start something of his own. Hayath picked Powai, an eastern suburb of Mumbai, hired a few fresh graduates from his alma mater IIT-Bombay (IIT-B) and began Toppr.com, an online preparation portal for engineering exams, from his spiffy looking apartment earlier this year. The 32-year-old is also part of Powai Lake Ventures, a group of angel investors who focus on startups from the area.

Thanks to the combination of an engineering school that is as brutally difficult to get into as any in the world, Mumbai's famed spirit of 'dhanda', and relatively low rentals, a new breed of risk-taking, entrepreneurial talent is turning Powai - which once lay sleepily around a picturesque lake - into India's new hotspot for start-ups. It already houses more than 50 start-ups, and there are many others lining up to enter. (In a nod to its emergence as a business hotspot, a bunch of new upmarket pubs and restaurants have sprung up.)

While some of these ventures are bootstrapping, others are flush with funds but together they fuel an ecosystem which, venture capitalists say could, possibly be India's answer to Silicon Valley and London's Silicon Roundabout. What is brewing in Powai Valley, a moniker given by VCs, is unlike Bangalore and the NCR, largely because most of the start-ups in Powai are in the consumer space whether it's internet or mobile. Also, the Mumbai suburb is supported by talent coming from IIT-B, giving it an edge over other cities, in the long run.

Avnish Bajaj, co-founder & MD of the US-based VC firm Matrix Partners India, says this mirrors what happened in the 80s and 90s in Silicon Valley. "There was Stanford, there was Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) and..."
then VCs started flocking to the Valley seeing the number of start-ups that were coming up there. Then a second hub got created in Boston as it had Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). I see the beginning of a trend here. Powai could be the start-up centre for India feeding into the talent coming out of IIT-B."

While internationally cities such as Dublin, Tel Aviv and Berlin have become start-up hotbeds, the Indian entrepreneurial ecosystem has not mushroomed around one city alone. Many tech and outsourcing ventures have chosen the southern city of Bangalore due to an abundance of engineering talent there. In recent years, internet and mobile-related companies have also made the National Capital Region, especially Gurgaon, their home. Vellvette.com, which was recently rechristened Fabbag.com, a subscription-based e-commerce venture dealing with beauty products, came up in Powai earlier this year. Vineeta Singh and Kaushik Mukherjee, the 31-year-old co-founders, say Powai in particular, and Mumbai in general, worked for them because it is comparatively safer for its largely female workforce, which tends to work late in the night. IIT-B is, of course, the most important reason. First-generation entrepreneurs who have gone back to their alma mater to hire find that young students lap up their offers. One of the start-ups that stirred up the campus with its meteoric rise over the last year is Housing.com, which picked up 40 IITians from the Bombay campus this hiring season. "Great companies are built with the help of talented people, and I believe it is this access which will make more start-ups opt for Powai," says Advitiya Sharma, one of the 12 founders of the start-up.

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However, unlike international start-up hubs which were well planned, Powai is happening more by chance. Sasha Mirchandani, managing partner of VC firm Kae Capital and co-founder Mumbai Angels, says this cluster effect will hopefully gain critical mass and VC firms will look to shift to this area. Mirchandani has invested in three start-ups from the Powai area— Squeakeee.com, a technology company Shopsense, and Palet.ly, a colour theme focussed e-commerce website.

What also works for Powai is the sense of familiarity it offers IIT-B grads along with a plethora of networking opportunities. The area, says Prabhkiran Singh, co-founder of Bewakoof.com, an online apparel and accessories brand born in Powai, is a perfect setting for start-ups because of the buzz that it has. "The cafes are like meeting and networking rooms. Talent from IIT is readily available even if you want to hire interns," says Singh, an IIT-B alumnus who recently moved his manufacturing to an industrial estate in Ghatkopar, but spends most of his time in Powai meeting friends from other start-ups, investors and prospective employees.
Similarly, Chef's Basket, a ready-to-cook packaged food brand, started by Nipun Katyal, Manish Tirthani and Varun Jhawar, from IIT-B is headquartered in Vikhroli, a stone's throw from Powai. "Having our office here helps us stay in touch with our alma mater."

While Powai has seen a steady stream of new start-ups come up over the past couple of years, a few ventures have chosen to move out of the area. Ola Cabs, a taxi aggregating service founded three years back by two IIT-B alumni Bhavish Aggarwal and Ankit Bhati in Powai, shifted its headquarters to Bangalore. Aggarwal, 27, says the Powai ecosystem has since improved. "It was tough because Bangalore seemed to attract most of the talent. That's changing and fast-growing start-ups can sustain themselves in Powai," he says, adding that Ola would have stayed on in Powai had it started operations now.

Incubated by IIT-Bombay's Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Purple Squirrel's founder Aditya Gandhi says being in the area has given him access to all that a start-up needs to survive. "It's the entire ecosystem which has worked for us," he says. Purple Squirrel allows students to get professional experience before they graduate from school. Although most IITs have tried to create an ecosystem with entrepreneurial cells on campus, the scale is much larger in Powai because it is not artificially created, says an investor. Call it network effect.

"There is clearly an X factor about Powai but we need to watch how things will play out," says Matrix India's Bajaj, an IIT-Kanpur and Harvard Business School graduate, who co-founded Bazee.com in the 1990s later selling it to Ebay. After all, many have tried to clone the success of Silicon Valley, the strip of land from San Francisco to San Jose that has come to symbolize all that is innovative in the world, but few have succeeded. For now, though, the investor community has its eyes set on spotting the next big idea emanating from this fledgling start-up hotbed.