Uncertainty continues over IIT-D Director’s resignation

Shevgaonkar continues to attend work as the government is yet to take a decision on either accepting or rejecting it.


More than a month after he submitted his resignation, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi’s director Raghunath K. Shevgaonkar, continues to attend work as the government is yet to take a decision on either accepting or rejecting it.

“In his resignation, he had asked to be relieved on January 1. But he has not requested for any notice period and as things stand, he will continue as director until the President decides or his term expires, whichever is earlier,” an HRD official said. After his term expires in 2016 or he is relieved, he is expected to be repatriated to IITB. Another senior official clarified that no action is being contemplated on the Mauritius issue as the director has not been found guilty of any impropriety so far.

IITD Chairman VP Bhatkar told this paper that he had tried to convince Mr. Shevgaonkar to withdraw his resignation. “We requested him to reconsider when he put in his papers. He didn’t say anything. He just smiled,” he told *The Hindu*.

On December 22, Mr. Shevgaonkar had submitted his resignation to the IIT’s Board of Governors, which was forwarded through the Human Resource Development Ministry to President Pranab Mukherjee who holds the post of Visitor to IITD. Mr. Mukherjee has neither accepted nor rejected his resignation yet, official sources said.
The Director resigned a month after the HRD Ministry asked him to explain his role in the International Institute of Technology Research Academy (IITRA) in Mauritius, which was set up with Indian collaboration in 2013. When he resigned, the Ministry had clarified that neither did it pressurise him to pay back wages to BJP leader and former IITD teacher Subramanian Swamy nor did it ask him to allow a private cricket academy to be started on campus.

Mr. Shevgaonkar, an electrical engineering scientist on lien from IIT Bombay, has been attending work ever since he returned from leave on January 11. “When we asked him what’s happening, he said that he has put in his papers and now it is up to the government,” a senior IITD professor told this paper. The director has refused to speak to the press.

Currently, IITs in Bhubaneswar and Patna have acting heads and the director of IIT Ropar is on extension as the ministry is yet to appoint new directors for these institutes.
GROWING FOCUS

IIT-B helps hone entrepreneurial skills, foster technology innovation

IIT-B’s Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship has incubated 55 firms since its inception

BY LESLIE D’MONTE & ASHIMA AMERE

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are renowned for their engineering and scientific excellence. These institutions have played a pivotal role in India’s technological advancement and entrepreneurship landscape. Among the IITs, IIT Bombay (IIT-B) holds a special place for its initiatives that support innovation and entrepreneurship. In this article, we explore how IIT-B has been fostering entrepreneurship and technology innovation through its various programs and services.

IIT-B has a long-standing tradition of promoting entrepreneurship and innovation. It has been instrumental in incubating several startups and fostering a culture of innovation among its students and faculty. One of the ways IIT-B supports entrepreneurship is through the Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE).

SINE was established to provide a platform for students and faculty to translate their research and ideas into viable businesses. By connecting academic research with practical applications, SINE aims to create new ventures that contribute to the economic growth of the country. The society has been successful in incubating a wide range of startups, many of which have achieved significant milestones.

To further enhance its entrepreneurial ecosystem, IIT-B has introduced several initiatives. For instance, the Startup Challenge is an annual event that encourages students and faculty to develop innovative ideas and start new businesses. The赢者 are awarded grants and mentoring support to help them grow their ventures.

In addition to these initiatives, IIT-B also offers a range of courses and programs that are designed to equip students with the skills they need to succeed in the entrepreneurial world. These programs cover areas such as technology entrepreneurship, business strategy, and market analysis.

IIT-B’s efforts in fostering entrepreneurship and technology innovation have not gone unnoticed. The university has received recognition for its contributions to the startup ecosystem. It has also collaborated with various organizations and institutions to create a network of support for entrepreneurs.

Overall, IIT-B’s commitment to promoting entrepreneurship and technology innovation is a positive development for India. By providing a conducive environment for startups to thrive, the university is playing a crucial role in India’s quest to become a major player in the global technology landscape.

TOP UNIVERSITIES FOR VC-BACKED ENTREPRENEURS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>ENTREPRENEURS</th>
<th>COMPANIES</th>
<th>CAPITAL RAISED (in $m)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>326</td>
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<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IIT-B Alumni who made a difference

Shahid Rehman, founder of Syntel Inc.
Nandini Nikalan, founder of Infosys
Pramod Prajapati, VP, research, Samsung Electronics
Millind Borate, co-founder, Druck, a software solutions company
Abhijit Kulkarni, assistant professor, IIT Guwahati, founder of the Indian startup community
Shashikant Desai, founder, GQ3i Inc.

Knowledge to wealth

“Students at the institute learn not only technology but also the importance of customer satisfaction, marketing, and business management,” said Milind D. Atrey, professor in charge of SINE. “The incubator helps them translate their research into practical applications and provide valuable feedback to students.”

Knowledge to wealth

SINE has incubated 15 companies that have raised over $10 million in investment from venture capitalists and angel investors. These companies include tendencies such as Syntel, Infosys, and GQ3i Inc.

SINE’s success is evident in the growth of its incubated companies. Many of these startups have gone on to generate significant revenue and create new jobs. Some of the notable startups include:

- Syntel Inc., founded by Shahid Rehman, has grown to become a leading provider of business process outsourcing services.
- Infosys, founded by Shashikant Desai, is a multinational technology consulting and outsourcing company.
- GQ3i Inc., founded by Shashikant Desai, is a leading provider of technology and social media services.

Entrepreneurship in the IITs

IITs have a long history of fostering entrepreneurship. Many of India’s technology leaders have come from these institutions. The IITs have set up various initiatives to support entrepreneurship and innovation. These initiatives range from seed funding to mentorship programs.

One of the ways IITs support entrepreneurship is through startup competitions. IIT-Delhi, for example, hosts the Delta Innovation Challenge (DIC), which is a competition for students to develop and pitch their startup ideas. The winners of the competition receive funding and mentorship to help them grow their ventures.

IITs also have startup incubators and accelerators. These programs provide mentoring, funding, and other resources to help startups grow. For example, IIT-Madras has a startup incubator called IIT-M Incubation Cell. This incubator has incubated several startups, some of which have gone on to become successful businesses.

In conclusion, the IITs play a crucial role in India’s startup ecosystem. By providing a supportive environment for startups, these institutions are helping to create a new generation of entrepreneurs who will drive India’s technological advancement. As India continues to grow as a technological powerhouse, the IITs will continue to play a key role in shaping the future of the country’s startup landscape.
IIM-A, ISB improve position, IIM-B slips

KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai, 27 January

The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A), and Indian School of Business, Hyderabad (ISB), have improved their performance in the Financial Times Global MBA Rankings, 2015.

IIM-A has secured 26th position among 100 B-schools across the world. ISB is 33rd. For IIM-A, this is an improvement from 30th in 2014. ISB has climbed three places, from 36th spot last year.

IIM Bangalore which debuted on the rankings last year, securing 68th position, has slipped to 82nd this year.

Harvard Business School retains the top spot, third year in a row, with London Business School bagging the second position and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania bagging the third. Stanford Graduate School of Business, which stood second last year, slipped to fourth position, sharing the space with Insead.

China’s Fudan University School of Management and the UK’s Lancaster University Management School recorded the strongest progress, climbing 28 and 27 places, respectively, to 55th and 50th. China has six institutions in the ranking.

On weighted salary, while an IIM-A student is paid $167,676 (88 per cent rise on 2014), an ISB student is paid $126,544 (131 per cent rise). For an IIM-B student, the weighted salary was $134,538, an increase of 75 per cent on last year.

The ranking is based on surveys of the business schools and their graduates of 2011.

IIM-A concludes summer placement

The Indian Institute of Management–Ahmedabad (IIM–A) has completed the summer placement process for its post graduate programme in management (PGP) and PGP in agri-business management (PGP–ABM) of the batch of 2014–16. In its summer placement report for 2014–15, prepared in line with the Indian Placement Reporting Standards, IIM–A said as many as 110 companies participated in the summer placement process in 2014 for the PGP batch.

Roles in consulting were offered by global strategy consulting and niche consulting firms, including Accenture Strategy, Alvarez & Marsal, A T Kearney, Bain & Company and The Boston Consulting Group, among others. The Boston Consulting Group with 16 offers emerged the largest recruiter. The total batch strength is 399 students, including five students who have come from international universities to pursue education at IIM–A. For its PGP–ABM programme, 46 students were placed from a batch size of 49.
Visakhapatnam, Ajmer and Allahabad to be developed as smart cities
US to support and collaborate with one IIT

VIJAITA SINGH & RUHI TEWARI
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

INDIA and the US on Tuesday decided to set up three task forces to jointly develop Visakhapatnam, Ajmer and Allahabad as smart cities.

While Ajmer was chosen for its large Muslim population, Allahabad was picked for being a Hindu pilgrimage centre. Visakhapatnam was chosen as the state government was unable to reconstruct it after last year’s Hud Hud cyclone, said officials.

After MoUs were signed between the US and the governments of Rajasthan, UP and Andhra Pradesh on Sunday, the two countries on Tuesday set up task forces for each city. They will submit reports in three months. Officials said the initiative was fast-tracked although the Centre’s plan to develop 100 smart cities is yet to be finalised.

On Tuesday, issues relating to development of these cities were discussed at a 45-minute meeting between Naidu and visiting US Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker. Each task force team will consist of three representatives each from central and state governments and the US Trade and Development Agency. Each task force will discuss city-specific features, project requirements and appropriate revenue models for enabling flow of investments before suggesting action plan to develop them as smart cities.

Referring to her meetings with Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu and Rajasthan’s Vasundhara Raje, Pritzker said she found them to be “go-getters” and was confident of making a success of the smart city plan.

Meanwhile, the two countries signed a Joint Declaration of Intent for collaborating in providing support to the Indian Institutes of Technology on Friday, furthering bilateral ties in higher education.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) will support “at least one IIT in India with the broad aim of intensifying collaborations in Research and Development and entrepreneurship”. The first IIT likely to be picked the collaboration is the relatively new IIT-Gandhinagar.
‘UGC imposing the 3-yr system on varsities’

Gauri Kohli

Even when Delhi and Mumbai universities have the semester system in place, academicians in other universities feel there are challenges in the UGC recommendations on the Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS).

Mumbai University started the CBCS system three years ago and the system is in place across the university except the law faculty. University officials believe that the UGC’s move to bring in the credit system is aimed at benefitting the students, bringing the system at par with international education standards, and boosting the mobility of students within the university and outside.

“However, there are challenges such as drafting the entire new syllabus, defining the credit system, motivating and training staff for smoother implementation, encouraging students to stay involved throughout the term and improving attendance, and continuous evaluation. Our academic board has to play an important role to overcome these challenges and help in preparing the new syllabus in a definite time,” says MA Khan, registrar, Mumbai University.

Down south, Bangalore University has introduced a similar scheme at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, on the lines of the UGC notification.

Professor B Thimmegowda, vice-chancellor of the university says the scheme they have introduced enables undergraduate students to earn up to 104 credits with 100 credits being the minimum requirement. There are also courses based on co-curricular, cultural activities, sports subjects, etc. Papers on skill development allow students to earn credits.

“Though we are on track when it comes to implementing the UGC notification, I feel the UGC could have allowed an exit option to students after three years with the fourth year being similar to the first year of the master’s programme. Universities should have been given the freedom to have their own degree structure. The UGC is virtually imposing a three-year degree system on us. Other challenges include transfer of the credits across universities, calculating grade point averages, modifying course content, short age of faculty etc. The government is not giving us the permission to fill up vacancies and the finance department is not giving us the clearance to hire more teachers. The UGC should have worked this out,” he adds.

The university had proposed to offer a four-year undergraduate programme with CBCS last year. Implementing the UGC notification is also likely to pose problems for Calcutta University (CU) which has 170 affiliated colleges, some in remote locations.
Russia may create orbital station with India, China

Moscow: Russia is exploring the possibility of a joint manned orbital station with India and China as part of a common strategy to create technological alliances and may take up the matter with the two Asian space giants in July. “Moscow could propose to China and India to create a joint manned orbital station at the summit of the BRICS emerging economies in Russia’s Ufa in July,” a document drafted by the expert council at Russia’s military and industrial commission said.

The experts recommend “working out the possibilities of an international manned project with BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries as part of a common strategy of creating technological alliances”, Itar Tass reported. PTI

Invisibility cloaks may soon be reality

Washington, Jan. 27: New metamaterials may take engineers one step closer to building invisibility cloaks or even shields that can conceal military aeroplanes, scientists say.

Metamaterials are artificial materials engineered to bend electromagnetic, acoustic and other types of waves in ways not possible in nature.

Hao Xin, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Arizona, has made a discovery with these synthetic materials that may pave the way for microscopes with superlenses that see molecular level details, or shields that conceal military aeroplanes and even people.

In the UA's Millimetre Wave Circuits and Antennas Laboratory, Xin uses a 3-D printer to make metamaterials from metals, plastics and other substances.

Resembling porous plastic bowling balls and tiny copper wire circuit boards, these objects are configured in precise geometrical patterns to bend waves of energy in unnatural ways.

In particular, they exhibit a property called negative refraction, meaning they can bend a wave backwards.

Through a prism with negative refraction, a straw leaning in a glass of water would appear inverted: the piece above the water's surface would appear below the water and leaning in the opposite direction.

In a more futuristic scenario, someone looking at a person wearing a cloak with artificially designed refraction properties would see part or none of the person, depending on the cloak's refractive index distribution and whether the light bouncing off it reached the viewer's eye, researchers said.

“One of the biggest problems with metamaterials is that they produce energy loss,” Xin said.

“The waves decay as they pass through the artificial material. We have designed a metamaterial that retains negative refraction but does not diminish energy,” Xin added.

— PTI
Planet with rings 200 times bigger than Saturn found

London: Scientists have discovered a planet with a ring around it that is 200 times larger than that of Saturn.

Astronomers at the Leiden Observatory, the Netherlands, and the University of Rochester discovered the ring system 420 light years away. The system was spotted circling brown dwarf J1407b—a planet orbiting star J1407—because of the unusual, unsteady light observed during a 52-day eclipse.

The ring system likely contains roughly an Earth’s worth of mass in light-obscuring dust particles.

The light curve tells astronomers that the diameter of the ring system is nearly 120 million km, more than 200 times as large as the rings of Saturn. Astronomers estimate that the ringed companion J1407b has an orbital period roughly a decade in length. The mass of J1407b has been difficult to constrain, but it is most likely in the range of about 10 to 40 Jupiter masses. The new analysis led by Leiden’s Mathew Kenworthy shows that the ring system consists of over 30 rings, each of them tens of millions of kilometers in diameter.

For the full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com

CHEAP TRAVEL: An astronaut prepares to enter Boeing’s CST-100 spacecraft for a fit-check evaluation. The new craft being developed by Boeing and SpaceX will drastically cut the cost of flying astronauts to ISS. By 2017, it will cost NASA $58 million per seat. Currently, Russian space agency charges $70 million per seat.

An asteroid that has its own moon

The first radar images of a huge asteroid that safely flew past Earth show that the space rock has its own small moon, NASA scientists say. The asteroid 2004 BL86 made its closest approach on January 26 at a distance of about 1.2 million km, or three times the distance from Earth to the Moon. Scientists working with NASA’s 70-metre Deep Space Network antenna at Goldstone, California have released 20 images of the asteroid. The images show the primary body is approximately 325 metres across and has a small moon nearly 70 metres across. PTI
'Education not just about learning'

SHALINI SAKSENA speaks with Prof Harry Brighouse on what is the philosophy of education and why is there need to develop independent thinking among students today

What does philosophy of education mean?
Usually we see education as learning, gathering knowledge. We hardly ever pay attention to the overall development of the child when it comes to education. As parents we send our child to a school that matches with our way of thinking that is within reasonable travel distance and the child can learn so that he can get a job that his parents want to take up. Philosophy of education has a much wider connotation. It means a way of thinking that teaches one values and gives the child the ability to think independently of his surroundings so that he is able to take decisions that are his own and not based on the thought process of the others.

How does one teach a child independence of thought when the environmental influences, in his life, start even before he goes to school?
This is where the parents need to be more mature, take the back seat and let the child decide for himself what he wants to do in life. Usually parents will push their child into a particular stream or instil rigid religious views. What they should in fact do is to give the child an environment where he can learn about each and every religion so that he can respect it and become a better person. This is where the schools need to be more than just institutes which impart book knowledge. They are in the best position to teach the student values since a child spends so much time among children of his age from different background and religion. School is the only place where a child will get this kind of environment.

If the parent is mature, what is the need for schools to give that environment to the children?
Not all parents know when is the right time to back off and let the child decide. Almost every time, it is the parent who decides the child’s schooling and what he should do or not do. What kind of friends he should make, whom he should vote for, what subject he should study and finally what profession he should take up. In such a scenario we need schools which will teach a child to have a thinking of his own. To know what is right and wrong and on the basis of that make a calculated decision.

Do you think that private schools are a better option today?
No, not at all. In fact, privitisation of education is not the solution to the problems that the education system is facing today. What we need is a overhaul of the way we teach in schools and colleges. Education of our children is not the same as other market commodities, because it involves learning and the formation of a child into a human being, and cannot be changed like a mobile phone. We need to think very carefully before handing over education to market forces, because taking it back would be difficult, if not impossible.

What do we do to make the education system better?
There is no one solution to this. It has to be changes at various levels. The parents, the schools, Government guidance, how teachers teach and teacher training programmes for them, ensuring that the teachers impart knowledge keeping in mind the skill sets that are required by the industry to make them employable.

Why is it that the industry doesn’t want to impart skill sets today?
Today, time is money. Companies want to hire people who can start working with them from day one. They don’t want to spend the time, money and energy in teaching a person skills knowing that in a few years he will leave for better prospects. However, the way we teach has yet to change at the pace with which the business houses are adapting themselves and the technology. Hence, there is a gap that needs to be filled and that too fast.
गूगल प्रतियोगिता में छाए भारतीय

लैडिंग में अवलोकन रोवर प्रोटोटाइप बनाया, टीम को मिला छह करोड़ रुपये का इनाम

टकनीक

भारत को इंडिया टीम गूगल के ओर से आयोजित लूटर एसएसएप्स कांस्ट्रक्चर अवार्ड के लिए मिला। इंडिया टीम को वर्ष 2022 के दौरान रोवर के बेहतर लैडिंग के लिए मिला। पुरस्कार के तौर पर टीम को 10 लाख डॉलर (करीब 6.1 करोड़ रुपये) का राशि दी गई है।

इंडिया टीम प्रतियोगिता में प्रवेश पाने के लिए एकमात्र भारतीय टीम थी।

इंडिया टीम ने इस प्रतियोगिता को जीतने के लिए कई मैच खेले। उन्होंने रॉयल की प्रतिकृति बनाई थी।

अल्युमिनियम से बने इस हलके ढांचे में चारमाय के साथ लॉन्च के बाद इसके सहित का क्षेत्र में बढ़ता है। डिसेंबर 2014 में करीब 8.9 लाख टीम द्वारा तैयार किया गया।

रोवर के ढांचे सहित का क्षेत्र का आकलन करने के लिए भारतीय अनुसंधान एवं अनुभव अनुसंधान सर्वेक्षण (इंडिया) में प्रवेश किया गया।

रोवर को स्पेसाइटेक (इंडिया) द्वारा रॉयल का भेजा गया।

वर्ष 2007 में प्रतियोगिता की घोषणा के बाद, इंडिया टीम ने रोवर के बेहतर लैडिंग के लिए मिला।

भारतीय मूल के अमेरिकी न्यूज़ जैन की कंपनी मूनएक्सप्लोरर द्वारा तैयार रोवर को लैडिंग, मोफिलिटा और इंजीनियरिंग की क्षेत्र में पुरस्कृत किया गया।

मून एक्सप्लोरर की एमएस 1 अंतरिक्ष यान में लगे इनजन में केरोसीन और जाइड्रोजन परमाणु इंडियन द्वारा चाली गया।

2007 में प्रतियोगिता की घोषणा के बाद, इंडिया टीम ने रोवर को बेहतर लैडिंग दिखाया।

नासा के मार्स ऑप्च्युमिनिटी ने मंगल ग्रह पर पहुंचने के लिए 11 दिनों में बनाया गया ग्रह पर पहुंचने के लिए नासा के मार्स ऑप्च्युमिनिटी रोवर ने मंगल ग्रह पर 11 दिनों में पूरे कर लिये जो अपने आप में एक बड़ी उपलब्धि है।

अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी ने कहा कि इन 11 दिनों में मंगल रोवर ने कई अवधारणाओं दिखाकर अपने तैयार रॉयल को आगे बढ़ाने दिया।