Newspaper Clips
March 25, 2011

Mail Today ND
25/03/2011 p-3

Eight new IITs approved & BHU-IT also gets the nod

THE Lok Sabha on Thursday cleared the Institutes of Technology Amendment Bill, paving the way for incorporating the eight new IITs under the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961.

The Bill also gave the go-ahead for the Institute of Technology under the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to be converted into an IIT.

The eight new IITs in Gandhinagar, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Hyderabad, Indore, Mandi, Jodhpur and Ropar were set up in 2008. Incorporating these new IITs would now confer legal status on these institutes enabling them to give degrees to students. These institutions can now be declared as those of national importance.

Even as HRD minister Kapil Sibal presented the Bill, there were protests from some BSP members that the conversion of the Institute of Technology – BHU into an IIT would diminish the character of the university.

Sibal assured the members of the House that according to the amended Bill, the BHU vice-chancellor would head the board of governors of IIT-BHU, so that there was no question of the Institute being bifurcated or diminished in importance.

Mail Today Bureau
NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

THE Lok Sabha today passed a Bill to provide status of IIT to eight new institutions and upgrade Banaras Hindu University's (BHU) Institute of Technology into IIT with Government assenting that steps were being taken to address shortage of faculty and quality of higher education.

HRD Minister Kapil Sibal, while piloting the Bill, also said the BHU would not be bifurcated in the process of giving IIT status to its Institute of Technology.

The Bill seeks to add eight new institutes at Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Indore, Jodhpur, Mandi, Patna and Ropar as IITs and integrate the Institute of Technology, BHU within the ambit of the Act. All the entities will also be declared as institutions of national importance.

The Bill was approved by voice vote amidst protest by BSP members who feared that the new legislation would distort the existing structure of the BHU, which was established by freedom fighter Madan Mohan Malviya.

Leaders from SP also demanded that the present status of the BHU should be maintained. "We will not let down Madan Mohan Malviya. We have no interest in bifurcating the BHU," Sibal said, adding that the vice-chancellor of the BHU would continue to be vice-chairman of the board of governors of the IIT. The amendments to the Act, he said, were needed to enable the new IITs to award degrees to students. Referring to the issue of shortage of faculty, the Minister said, the government proposed to introduce post-graduate courses in the IITs and connect all institutes with the National Knowledge Network to enable students to pursue courses with the help of teachers in other institutes.—PTI
Security for IIT whistleblower hangs in balance

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: B Muthuraman, chairman of IIT-Kharagpur, has written to senior lawyer Prashant Bhushan that the institute has asked West Bengal police to provide security to whistleblower Rajeev Kumar of department of computer science & engineering. Strangely, the institute challenged the February 5 order of CIC that asked the West Midnapore superintendent of police to provide security to Kumar. Calcutta high court has even stayed the CIC order.

TK Ghosal, officiating registrar of IIT-Kharagpur, told TOI that the decision to provide security for Kumar has been due to a letter from Bhushan and not because of CIC’s directive.

Despite his claims, Ghosal himself wrote to the SP on March 10, citing the CIC order while seeking security for Kumar. Ghosal, however, gave a different spin to TOI, “We have a reasonable apprehension that Kumar may engineer and attempt a self-inflicting injury to implicate IIT-Kharagpur’s faculty and administration.” Kumar, meanwhile, is yet to get security. Sources said, though CIC has got the stay order of Calcutta HC, it is yet to receive IIT-Kharagpur’s petition against CIC’s order.
Google mentor's family to fund entrepreneurial research at IIT

ANUBHIUTI VISHNOI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

HE was a mentor to Sergey Brin and Larry Page and helped co-author the Google that has become an indispensable part of millions of lives around the world.

Nearly two years after Rajeev Motwani was found dead in a pool in the backyard of his Atherton home, his family has come back to his alma mater to foster values and ideas he cherished. His wife, Asha Jadeja Motwani, has pledged $1.5 million to IIT-Kanpur on the occasion of her husband's 49th birth anniversary. The fund will go towards setting up the Motwani Building at the IIT and a centre for entrepreneurial research.

Motwani was a brilliant student who used his imagination to translate research into entrepreneurial ventures. The six-storey building to be set up in his memory will fittingly house the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, including a 200-seat classroom, 22 faculty offices and 17 laboratories, besides activities for nurturing entrepreneurship and innovation in the areas influenced by his work. That apart, the fund will mark the beginning of a collaboration between Rajeev Motwani Foundation and IIT-Kanpur to help student and faculty entrepreneurs collaborate on transforming innovative ideas and technologies into successful enterprises.

The director of IIT-Kanpur, S G Dhande, remembered the student who enrolled for his first class at the institution.

"He was in the first batch of B Tech Computer Science in 1983. I taught him two courses. The unique bit about his personality was that while he researched on the theoretical side of algorithms, he also had the imagination to turn it into entrepreneurial ventures. He was in a way the godfather of Google, a mentor to Sergey and, in fact, to scores of companies set up in the Silicon valley...IIT-Kanpur is very proud of Rajeev Motwani and his accomplishments and we accept the donation by his family to further our commitment to excellence in computer education," said Dhande.

Incidentally, Motwani was planning a trip to IIT-Kanpur days before his fatal accident on June 5, 2009.

Asha said that she was only following her husband's dreams. "Whenever he visited India and the IITs, he felt that the entrepreneurial spirit so characteristic of the US was missing here and this was one of the things he always wanted to work on, starting with IIT-Kanpur," she said over the telephone.

Google's Sergey Brin described Rajeev as his "friend and teacher" and said, "Today, whenever you use a piece of technology, there is a good chance a little bit of Rajeev Motwani is behind it... If Rajeev had not been there, chances are, there would be no Google today."
Privatising the IIMs

The HRD ministry's move to change the institutional character of IIMs is ill-informed and misconceived.

PRODRIP KUMAR SENGupta
PROFESSOR, IIM CALCUTTA

Behind the public view that without any public debate, the Union HRD minister is trying to reshape the public institutional character of IIMs. In recent meetings with chairpersons and directors of IIMs, he took a series of interlinked decisions which, if implemented, would effectively transfer the control of these institutions to private donors. These decisions are ostensibly aimed at shaping the IIMs to meet the competitive challenges from foreign players once the sector is opened up. They are based on the reports of three committees that the minister constituted in early 2010.

Intriguingly, all the three committees comprised existing chairpersons or directors of various IIMs who themselves were appointed by the minister. They had no representatives from the academia, industry bodies or the civil society. None of these committees held any consultation with major stakeholders: IIM faculty, the industry or the alumni. Neither did they collect any ground data, or record the views of past chairpersons/directors or IIM or eminent educationists to substantiate their findings. Yet, interestingly, the three reports converge to support the virtual privatisation of IIMs by altering the basic structure of their existing memorandum of association (MoA).

Report of the committee on new governance structure sets the stage by proposing that the society of each IIM should be reconstituted so that it can run the institute as an "enlightened" owner (equivalent to a person having an equity stake in the company) and by suggesting that "the most effective way of bringing this about is by making the payment of a substantial donation to the IIM as a condition for becoming a member of the society." The reconstituted society would exercise all powers and ratify the appointments of the chairman and members of the board of governors (BoG) as also the director of the Institute. The BoG would manage the institute on behalf of the society and the director should be "the chief executive officer (CEO)." As regards the composition of the BoG, the report states: "The practice of board members representing different interests should be given up."

Obviously, implementing these changes would require some major changes in the existing MoAs of the IIMs. The committee, however, provides no justification for how the recommended dispensation (payment of donations) make the reconstituted societies more "enlightened" than the existing ones. The fallacious nature of its argument is quite obvious. The argument can be turned on its head by contending that such an "equity stake" is more likely to lead to commercialisation of IIMs and destroy their public character and role. Similarly, changing the multiple stakeholder representation and of the BoG suggest that: the committee is downgrading theBoG (BoG) by putting it at the very root of the concept of public institutions.

The second committee on faculty and research deals with a number of issues: meeting faculty shortages; use of technology to leverage faculty resources; faculty productivity, etc. Most of the recommendations are in the nature of subjective views without any cogent argument or supporting data; some are misconceived. For example, the report suggests introduction of a system of annual work plan to be prepared by every faculty member at the beginning of an academic year based on a set of standard parameters (irrespective of his/her aptitude or academic interests) and submitted to the BoG for approval. At the end of the year, the BoG would review the plan's actual performance.

IIMs already have peer reviewed faculty performance appraisal systems. What is new in the committee's proposal is that the academic work of the faculty is to be submitted for review to the BoG, a non-academic body having no competence. Nowhere in the world do non-academics sit in judgement over academic work of the faculty. However, in the committee's own words such an "external review" is necessary "as a control system."

This reflects an efficiency-oriented corporate mindset that pervades the whole report. It seeks to treat the faculty as 'employees' who need to be controlled for attaining 'optimum performance'. This is totally repugnant to the idea of academic freedom necessary for any institution of higher learning. Ill-effects of such corporatisation of higher education elsewhere in the world are well-documented; they are also very much visible among the private educational institutions in India. Such corporatisation affects not only the academic culture of the campus but also the very content of curriculum, which increasingly tends to get commoditised through efficiency seeking standardisation. Thus, the idea put forward by the committee to model the IIMs on the lines of a business firm is completely misconceived.

The third committee suggests measures for fund-raising by the IIMs on the lines of the US business schools. These recommendations are nothing wrong in themselves, but they sound ominous when read in the context of other two reports.

The shared mental model that underlies the three reports is that the decisions of the HRD minister is as follows: hand over the control of IIMs to private donors (or those with pockets of 25 crores or less for individuals) and allow them to run the institutes "efficiently" as 'enlightened owners'. It suits the government, as it is relieved of the fiscal burden of running the new IIMs (older IIMs may become financially self-sufficient more than a decade back) and it also suits the 'enlightened owners' as they 'own' the prestigious IIM brand at a ridiculously low price and are granted the licence to run the IIMs in their best 'enlightened interests'. The public at large only has to stand and watch the demise of a great icon of modern India — if the HRD minister has his way.
India to get diarrhoea vaccine soon

Labs Set To Begin Final Trials Of First Indigenously Developed Oral Drops

Koumliya Singh JAIN

New Delhi: India is at the final stages of developing the country's first indigenous oral vaccine against rotavirus — the major cause of diarrhoea deaths among children.

The final phase-III confirmatory multicentric clinical trial on 3,000 children, who are six weeks old, started last week at Society for Applied Studies in the capital. Around 1,500 children were administered three drops of “Rotakid”, who were aged six, 10 and 14 weeks, respectively.

The other centres are: KEM hospital (Pune) and Christian Medical College (Vellore) — will start their trials in another two weeks.

All children in Pune and Vellore and another 3,099 in Delhi — will be observed for more than two years to assess the vaccine's efficacy against severe diarrhoea. The phase-II trials showed 80% protection, or “immunogenicity rate”.

This live attenuated oral vaccine based on the rotavirus strain HSV-1, which was discovered by the present secretary of the department of biotechnology (DBT): Dr M K Bhan in the 1980s, is being developed by Bharat Biotech International Limited, Hyderabad. Both DBT and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are funding the project, Bill Gates to HT.

“Are we finding phase-III trials of the rotavirus vaccine with around $80 million,” Dr Bhan added, “DBT is funding nearly Rs 20 crore for the study. This will be the most extensive trial in India. We have provided full insurance for all of those in the trial, and are also covering all hospital treatment costs if needed.”

Dr Siva Ram, chief coordinator of the trials from Society for Applied Studies, said the virus was discovered in 1962 under DBT's Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Indian Institute of Sciences, Stanford University and National Institute of Immunology in New Delhi were all part of the vaccine's development over the last decade.

“The vaccine is similar to the oral polio drops. It will be given earlier than the same regimen. There are two vaccines against the rotavirus in the market, but both are developed by Western companies. This will be the first vaccine developed by Indian researchers, and manufactured by an Indian vaccine firm,” Dr Bhan said.

Rotavirus infections are the leading cause of diarrhoea-associated mortality in developing countries. In India, it is the leading cause of dehydration and accounts for 156,000 deaths of children annually. World Health Organization and Global Initiative for Vaccines and Immunization have recommended the accelerated development and introduction of rotavirus vaccines as a priority. Each year, estimated 1.8 million children die from severe diarrhoea and the most common cause is rotavirus.
Believer in power of vaccines

Kounjya Sinha

New Delhi: “The anti-vaccine lobby in India is strong. But it is outrageous. India hasn’t tided a single new vaccine since 1985,” billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates told TOI in an interview.

“I am a great believer in the power of vaccines. Thankfully, there is progress taking place in India now. The Union health ministry is planning to introduce the Hepatitis B vaccine, the second dose of measles vaccine and the pentavalent vaccine in two states. That for me is a glass half full,” Gates said.

He sees a little difference between his entrepreneurial instincts and philanthropy.

“During my Microsoft career, I used to talk about the magic of software. Now, I spend my time talking about the magic of vaccines. Vaccines are the most effective and cost-effective health tool ever invented. Just a few doses of vaccine can protect a child from debilitating and deadly diseases for a lifetime. And most vaccines are extremely inexpensive,” he explained.

When it comes to family planning programmes, what surprises Gates most is that while sterilization is controversial in most countries, it is well accepted in India. On the other hand, injectable contraceptives are a taboo in India.

So, how different is making money and giving it away in charity? “Giving and making money are a lot similar. My Microsoft experience taught me well for the Foundation work. In MS, we would get smart people and address tough problems, some of which we thought we could never solve. We would work for five-to-10 years to find an answer,” Gates said, who is on a four-day visit to India. On Thursday, he visited IRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases.

India needs an educated population, inclined to innovate

Poul V Jensen came here six years ago as a management consultant and switched jobs to stay on. Now director of the European Business and Technology Centre (EBTC), he speaks about EU initiatives to further develop an environmentally responsible business with Deepak Dutta Ray.

What do EBTC operations say about the EU’s attitude towards India?

Our operations suggest the contours and scope of EU interest. Though a pilot initiative, our funding is (US$1.5 million) because the EU wants to establish something substantial. Our remit is business and research related to climate change, an issue recognised by the EU as global and paramount.

In India, it is a bit different per capita, but is on the way to becoming one. And, we have the technology to help manage pollutants as you modernise. We focus on sunrise industries: biotechnology, environment, energy and transport. They’re commercially interesting and dependent on accessing the most efficient technologies and processes. So these are the perfect fit for an commercial value added, on environmentalism. We enable such joint ventures, on saying Indian requirements are served precisely: the net benefit is everyone’s. Indian’s development and the world is preserved - a win-win!

Q&A

In other words, you further globalisation, but isn’t that best left to those most versed at it - MNCs?

The MNC globalisation model is about selling products here manufactured elsewhere. That’s the traditional European view of India. We’re trying to change it by helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) establish themselves here permanently. Not just sell, but to their R&D, develop products here. An additional difference is that our products are predictable but tailored to safeguarding the environment. Furthermore, we help SMEs because, often, theofe research companies can meet Indian requirements most effectively. We help them by engaging with the Indian government and furnishing requirements and finding the best fit. So, we do globalisation but not the homogenous corporate model type.

We’re focused on high-technology services liberalised in India. One sure doesn’t fit all, especially not a country as big and diverse as India.

Telecommunications exemplifies India’s ability to cut and paste foreign technology but can India become an R&D hub?

The telecommunications transformation illustrates India’s requirements and ability to absorb technology. To keep with revolutions happening, as India moves up the value chain - what we’re encouraging by focussing on R&D - what is needed is not only an educated population, but one inclined to innovate. That’s going beyond knowledge to having the confidence to think about how knowledge can be used to solve real problems or create opportunities. In terms of business, it could be encouraged by more participative management style. It requires independent thinking. That needs fostering.

Our contribution is to help India gain exposure to the specifics of how Europe created and sustains an innovation co-culture. There are annual meetings and if realised in a specific sector, that’s good because even in a closed loop, a sector becomes innovative and may infect others.

What are the main investment concerns in your sectors?

As the route of opportunities in high-value sectors, we deal with businesses whose only mention of technology is highly trained people. They’re concerned about intellectual property rights because of local experiences in China. We tell them that India is different, has a well-established judiciary, but a case in court could take 15 years. In the meantime the person you’re fighting is producing your product and selling it in your country! Thankfully these are exceptional cases.
Are we all descendants of Martians? Device to tell

Gadget to Look For Microbial Samples in Red Planet's Soil

Boston: A team of researchers at Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are developing a device that will study whether life on Earth descended from organisms that were originated on Mars and carried to our planet aboard meteorites - a theory that would make all humans of Martian descent.

A team from MIT and Harvard University are working on the proposed instrument called the 'Search for Extra-Terrestrial Genomes' (SETG). The device, which could be carried on future missions to Mars, would take samples of Martian soil and isolate any living microbes that might be present or microbial remnants, which can be preserved for about up to a million years and still contain viable DNA.

They would separate out the genetic material in order to use biochemical techniques to analyse their genetic sequences. The team would search for DNA or RNA in the Martian soil, separating any possible organisms using the techniques used for forensic DNA testing on Earth.

Biochemical markers would be used to search for signs of particular genetic sequences that are nearly universal among all known life forms. “If we go to Mars and find life that is related to us, we could have originated on Mars. Or if it started here, it could have been transferred to Mars,” MIT researcher Christopher Carr said.
Leap forward: A continuous-flow artificial heart

Houston: Two Houston surgeons successfully implanted the world's first continuous-flow artificial heart in a 55-year-old patient, a significant advance that promises a smaller and much more durable alternative to existing artificial hearts.

Drs Bzd Frazier and Billy Cohn took out the dead heart of Craig A Lewis on March 10 at the Texas Heart Institute. After harmful proteins built up in his heart to the point it could no longer work, Lewis lived only with the aid of external breathing, dialysis and heart support machines.

The Houston man had maybe a day to live when Frazier and Cohn were given the opportunity to test their device—a pair of turbines cobbled together to mimic the function of the heart's left and right ventricles—that had been implanted only in 37 calves. So far Lewis is recovering well, doctors say. "It was time to take this leap forward," Frazier said. The leap is an evolution away from devices that push blood into the body in pulses, like the natural heart.

Frazier was one of the earliest and probably most outspoken evangelists for a new approach, that of pumps using a tiny turbine spinning thousands of times per minute to provide a continuous flow of blood. In 1988, he implanted the world's first left-ventricular assist device with a continuous-flow pump, and the next-generation HeartMate II pump he helped develop has now been put into 11,000 patients.

Continuous flow pumps are smaller and more durable. Pulsatile pumps must beat 100,000 times a day. Pumps and artificial hearts with this pumping action break down in months or a few years.
Business Line
ND 25-Mar-11
p-4
France woos
Indian students

Divya Trivedi
New Delhi, March 24
France is looking to double the number of Indian students going to the country for higher education in the next few years by making travel and living there easier and more accessible.

“We have nine officers in India talking to universities about studying in France. We have also simplified our visa procedures so that it is easier for students,” Mr Jerome Bonnafont, Ambassador of France to India, told Business Line.

Around four years ago, the number of Indian students in France was 400, while at present it is 2,000. Most Indian students going to France prefer courses in business management, engineering, science, medicine and humanities, he said.

Representatives of the country are speaking to various universities in India to be able to design and provide precise and fine-tuned courses especially for Indian students.

“Currently, 100 memoranda of understanding between French universities and their Indian counterparts are in place and we are trying to activate them,” said Mr Bonnafont.

France allows a graduate student to stay on for six months and look for a job. If the student is able to find a job within the stipulated period of time, then a job permit is automatically generated, he explained.

MEET ON ASTRONOMY
He was speaking on the sidelines of a conference on astronomy where Dr Sylvain Bourbey, Vice-President, Uranoscope de France, presented a CII telescope to the BM Birla Science Centre in Hyderabad.

A dedicated public observatory is coming up in Hyderabad for the first time in India that will allow lay persons to walk in and explore, said Dr B.G. Sidharth, Director, International Institute of Applied and Information Sciences, Hyderabad and Udine, Italy.

An observatory outside the city limits in a rural area is on the cards for astronomical research, he added.

STRESS ON INNOVATION
“We need innovation in all fields of education, health, governance, infrastructure to beat the challenges we face. India is going to invest close to $20 billion in the next five to seven years to build new public infrastructure in communications. It is one thing to explore the skies and quite another to use that to explore opportunities here on the ground below,” said Mr Srim Pitroda, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Public Information Infrastructure and Innovations.
Baidu to launch anti-piracy technology for online library

Dow Jones
March 24

Chinese online search provider Baidu Inc said on Thursday it plans to start using new copyright recognition technology on its online document sharing platform in May, to prevent sharing of pirated content.

The move addresses concerns about Baidu's approach to copyright issues. The company has been at odds with the music industry for years over an MP3 search service that includes links to unlicensed copies of songs available for free download.

Late last month, a consortium of four Japanese publishing associations requested that Baidu take steps to prevent illegal uploads of copyrighted material on Baidu Library, the document platform, alleging pirated copies of Japanese manga and other content were common on the version of the platform operated by Baidu's Japan unit.

Copyright problems "became an issue" for Baidu Library when it officially launched last year, and literary works accounted for about 8 per cent of the data on the service, Baidu spokesman, Mr Kaiser Kuo, said.

Baidu expects to launch a test run of the new technology in April before its official release on May 1, Mr Kuo said.

"The technology will not only enable Baidu Library to systematically eliminate copyright infringing content already uploaded on its platform, but will also enable automatic rejection of future problematic uploads and control the spread of copyright infringing content," Mr Kuo said. Baidu is likely to use other methods to prevent piracy on its music platform, Mr Kuo said.
Bill Opens Gates for Indian Scientists to Team up With Foundation

Invites researchers to work on developing cheaper drugs to eradicate infectious diseases like tuberculosis

OUR BUREAU
NEW DELHI
Identifying India as a key source of innovations, Microsoft founder and philanthropist Bill Gates on Thursday invited Indian scientists, technologists, and technical research institutes to partner with his foundation in developing cheaper drugs to eradicate infectious diseases like tuberculosis.

Gates and wife Melinda are touring India to review programmes funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"Heart or diabetes get over $5 billion each a year of research money as there is a private market for these. That has not been our focus," Gates said addressing the media.

"We focus on infectious diseases like TB, malaria and AIDS where there is almost no research funding coming out from the for-profit companies, simply because there is no market for these diseases large enough to justify the risks involved.

"In developing countries, these diseases are the primary cause behind reduced life expectancy, " he said. The software giant said he uses the same skills in philanthropy that he does building Microsoft into one of the world's most successful companies.

"Diagnostic tests that could help eradicate TB are too expensive at present and that is where Indian scientists and the Gates Foundation could partner to find a solution."

"I'd like the Indian scientists to take the basic idea and find a format that would be widely available," Gates said.

Union science and technology minister Pawan Kumar Bansal, who was also present at the press conference, described the government's plan to foster partnerships that aim to improve public health. India has worked closely with the Gates Foundation on nutrition and vaccination programmes, Bansal said.

The two will now expand their partnership to include agriculture and maternal and child health challenges.

Business Standard ND 25/03/2011

Engineering, B-school campuses lap up boom-time lollies

Salary hike is passe, firms offers stock options, deferred entrepreneurship and more

IN INDIA, specially start-ups are reeling off the goodies like never before in engineering and business school campuses. Salary hike is not enough anymore. It's time for stock options, deferred entrepreneurship and much more.

When not all is well in the job market, start-ups are stepping up to the plate. They are offering stock options, deferred entrepreneurship, start-up grants, operating expenses, etc. For graduates from India's premier institutes, the dream job used to mean a timely package and a stable option. Now it's not enough.

A host of graduates from India's premier institutes have opted for start-up jobs for the same reason. Amit Bajaj, CEO of Purple Leaf, a Parsons' Entrepreneur company specialising in entry-level talent management, said: "My goal is 10 percent of turnover from your top 10 sales, and you can't afford to pay salaries as high as large companies. So, they are trying to convince people to go through stock option.

Companies are also offering to let the person work on the start-up even while working as an intern at the concern. "It's a win-win situation, Bajaj said. "We have a large number of projects where they can work for five years at the firm and have their own entrepreneurship venture at the same time.

Salary increase have been over 30 percent this year after a gap of over two years. "It is the year of entrepreneurs and start-ups have been given a lot of money," said the placement head of Indian Institute of Technology-Madras.

"They have also highlighted the need for "those who are looking for a job in the current economic scenario. "Many of the junior level jobs have seen a rise in the number of applications," he added.

Students who are hired by companies such as Microsoft, Google and Visa have to draw a letter pay package. Those who are hired by research and development firms get a pay package in the range of Rs 4,000 to Rs 7,000, according to industry experts.

Students in engineering institutes began working for start-ups even before the global meltdown, high ticket firms stopped flooding to campus. For instance, in 2008, Infosys changed its recruitment strategy and started hiring students from engineering institutes.

"They have also joined hands with the National Entrepreneurship Network to organise a campus recruitment programme for start-ups, which saw a turnout of over 800 students," he added.

Page 7 | International offers on the rise at BBA
Independent directors — unplugged

Rajat Gupta has offered to be relieved of his responsibilities as the chairman of the executive board of Indian School of Business. The board will meet on April 2 and take a call on his offer. Gupta, ever since the Securities Exchange Commission charged him on March 1 of leaking market-sensitive information to Raj Rajaratnam, has resigned from the boards of Procter & Gamble, Harman, American Airlines, Genport and New Silk Route. He has also exited the Public Health Foundation of India and Emergency Management & Research Institute.

The final word on Gupta is not yet out. It’s perfectly possible that he may walk out exonerated of all charges. What the episode has done is turned the spotlight on the role of independent directors on the boards of companies. The matter has been brewing for a while. A few days ago, on March 11, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) had barred three independent directors of Pyramid Saimiri from sitting on the board of any listed company for two years for giving false and misleading statements.

Rules had been laid down by Sebi stipulating that independent directors ought to make up one-half of a board led by an executive chairman and one-third of a board that has a non-executive chairman. The idea is that promoters shouldn’t enrich themselves at the cost of the business and the company should comply with all rules and regulations. The idea is noble. But rarely does one hear dissent from an independent director.

For the independent director, this is easy money. Each board meeting can fetch him up to ₹20,000. The law allows 1 percent of the profit to be distributed amongst the independent directors, and there is no cap on the stock options that can be offered. Prithvi Haldea of Prime Database had found a retired bureaucrat who had made ₹2.2 crore in 2007-08 from his directorship in ten listed companies and two foreign companies. His income from four unlisted companies was on top of that. It’s a cozy club. No promoter wants strangers on the board, and independent directors are only too happy to play along.

Anajit Singh has tried something new. Nine independent directors have been appointed on the boards of four of his companies: Max India, Max New York Life, Max Healthcare and Max Bupa. Singh claims that he didn’t know seven or eight of them. According to him, executive-search specialist Egon Zehnder helped him zero in on the attributes required for the directors and then helped him find such people. On the Max India board, though he is the chairman, Singh does not represent the interests of the family. Instead, his family has appointed Ashwini Windlass, one-time head of Max India, to represent its interests. If the family has an issue, it is raised by Windlass and Singh may have to answer it.

But such instances are few. PrimeDirectors, a website promoted by Haldea to serve as a platform for independent directors, lists no fewer than 14,797 profiles — technocrats, retired civil servants and army personnel, doctors, engineers, chartered accountants, corporate honchos and lawyers, etc. — and another 2,603 profiles are being processed. This should have been mined by all listed companies because these are highly-qualified people who are MBAs, IITs, IIMs, ITIs, ISICs, 1,157 hold doctorates and 85 percent have work experience of at least ten years. Yet, Haldea says that only 350 companies have searched the website extensively and some 700 independent directors have been picked from it. To put the number in perspective, there are 4,946 companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange that need to comply with the rules on independent directors.

Their quality too remains suspect. In a paper titled “Independent Directors, A Myth”, written in May 2009, Haldea had said that 198 independent directors were non-graduates, of which 75 percent had not gone to college, and another 3,500 were plain graduates with no additional qualification. Of course, higher education is no guarantee of good governance but qualified people on board can help. There was a time when Ranbaxy, India’s largest drug maker, didn’t have even one scientist on its board. However, several followers of the Rodha-soami Satguru, of whom the former promoter family happened to be followers, were appointed on the board. Unrelated to the whole concept of independent directors, Haldea says the work of the market regulator and auditors cannot be assigned to independent directors. Do they have the tools and expertise to detect fraud? Excessive policing hasn’t helped the cause of corporate governance. Ever since the Satyam scam broke out in January 2009, Haldea says that over 2,000 high-quality independent directors have resigned. This is not a good sign.

Satyam is a good example of what independent directors can do. The independent directors on its board drew a lot of flak because they had no clue of Raju’s misdeeds or carried out over seven long years. But directors appointed by the government did a wonderful job of holding the company together at a time when it appeared very close to implosion. Many of them worked overtime, personally called customers to hold on to Satyam and assured them of high-quality service delivery.
आईआईटी कानपुर को दिये सात करोड़ नए दिल्ली। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) कानपुर के पूर्व छात्र राजीव मोटवानी की पत्नी और पुत्रियों ने संस्थान को 15 लाख अमेरिका डॉलर यानी करीब सात करोड़ रुपये की राशि दान में दी है। गूगल के पाउडर टीम में रहे राजीव मोटवानी का 47 साल की उम्र में 27 जून 2009 को निधन हो गया था। आईआईटी कानपुर में उनकी यादों के सम्मान में उनकी पत्नी आशा जडेजा मोटवानी ने उनके 49वें जन्मदिन पर गुरुवार को यह ऐलान किया।

आईआईटी के छात्रों द्वारा अब तक 200 करोड़ रुपये से भी अधिक की राशि अपने संस्थानों को दान में दी जा चुकी है। (वि.स.)

Economic Times, ND
25-Mar-11 p-11

IIT गांधीनगर में डिजाइन का अनिवार्य पाठ्यक्रम

अभिभावक नवाय | परराम शेव

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, गांधीनगर से पास करते चलते हर छात्र को डिजाइन की पहली अनिवार्य तौर पर करानी होगी। संस्थान पहले साल से अंडर प्रेग्नूट पाठ्यक्रम में डिजाइन का अनिवार्य कोर्स भी लागू करने पर किया जा रहा है।

आईआईटी गांधीनगर के डायरेक्टर शुभदर कुमार चौधरी ने कहा, 'हमारी संस्था से पहले शुरुआत में ही इंजीनियरिंग की पढ़ाई के साथ डिजाइन को अनिवार्य विषय का देखा जा रहा है। हम पहले साल से ही अंडर प्रेग्नूट पाठ्यक्रम के साथ डिजाइन को अनिवार्य विषय के तौर पर शामिल करने का प्लान बना रहे हैं। इससे सभी विभागों के छात्रों डिजाइन को ईंट करने देने का नया विकास है।'

अंडर प्रेग्नूट में डिजाइन
आईआईटी गांधीनगर संस्थान के पहला ऐसा संस्थान है, जो अंडर प्रेग्नूट तत्त्व पर डिजाइन को अनिवार्य विषय के रूप में पढ़ाने का प्लान बना रहा है।
आइआइटी संशोधन विधेयक लोकसभा से पारित

तकनीकी शिक्षा

विभाग और उन के सांसदों ने किया बीएचपु ने नए आइआइटी खुलने का विवेचन

नई दिल्ली, जानवर बुधवार : उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों के देश में भारी कम है। दूसरे राज्य आइआइटी और आइआइटी जैसे हाई प्रोफाइल संस्थानों के लिए केंद्र की ओर निहार करते हैं। उत्तर ग्रेट और विभाग के सांसदों ने बीएचपु में नए आइआइटी खुलने का बुधवार विवेचन किया है। सपा, बस्का और राज्य के सदस्यों ने निहार कर संसद में केंद्र सरकार की इस प्रक्रिया के लिए उन्हें उर्दू विभाग की योजना की। इसकी विवेचन में बहुतांश तर्क था। उनके विभेद के बावजूद सांसदों ने आइआइटी संशोधन विधेयक को पारित कर दिया। अब परिषद के भवन विहार और डा. बर्लिंगन की आपत्ति इस बात का तौर पर देखा कि विभेद में आइआइटी बीएचपु को ही आपस से आइआइटी बनने का प्रवर्तन किया जा रहा है। इसके बीएचपु का पूर्ववर्तिन स्वरूप प्रभावित होगा। भवन विहार का कहना है कि अब बीएचपु से आइआइटी को अन्तर्गत आइआइटी बनाने का आयोजन है तो कल मेडिकल और फिर एयरक्रू की बात आयोजित। उन्होंने कहा कि राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर संशोधन कार्य का पता लगाना चाहिए कि देश में कहाँ कहाँ हैं जो संशोधन की जरूरत है और उस संसद पर और भी ओपन के आइआइटी खुले जाने चाहिए। बस्का सदस्यों का कहना था कि बनावट में आइआइटी बनने है तो यह बीएचपु से अलग बनवा जाए। राज्य के राज्यवर्ती प्रमुख उन्हें कहा कि बीएचपु का पहले से ऐतिहासिक महत्व रहा है। राज्य के इस कदम का अर्थ समझ से पहले है। उन्होंने पूरा किया कि सरकार को नए आइआइटी खुलने से रोकता कौन है।
आईआईटी संस्थानों का होगा बेहतर विकास
आईआईटी संस्थानों को अगले दो साल में राष्ट्रीय ज्ञान नेटवर्क से जोड़ा जाएगा : कपिल सिवाल