THE UNDERAGE OPTIMIST

CHETAN BHAGAT

It's been weeks since I saw the amazing film “The Social Network” and it still hasn’t left me. The movie tells a semi-fictional story about the creation of Facebook (based on the book “The Accidental Billionaires”). While the film is extraordinarily well made, the story it tells is even more amazing. Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, at 22, is the youngest billionaire in the world. Six years ago, Mark started Facebook from his college dorm. Today, the privately held company could be worth $200 billion ($239,000 crore). The movie is pathbreaking in that it is about talent, made by talented people and for a country that celebrates talent.

For, only in the USA, can a boy in his 22s, coming from nowhere, create a company worth billions in six years, and the country celebrates him by making a movie on him. Ironically, Mark never cared about making money when he founded Facebook. His main motivation was to do something innovative, entrepreneurial, and most importantly – cool. To one point, he states, “Money, or the ability to make money, doesn’t impress anyone around here.”

Compare this to India’s celebrated businessmen. The corporate emirs we celebrate (with some exceptions) are second- or third-generation tycoons who run huge empires comprising dozens of unrelated businesses. Traditional management theory will wonder how a company can be so fast, so lean, so efficient. But the young minds behind Facebook understand something: creating something new is more important than creating something big. They are churning on Facebook’s path of success.

In reality, they are hardly alone. They have inhabited an unfair system for their personal benefit, asking opportunities that belonged to the young on a level playing field.

Indian companies make money from rent-seeking behavior, creating artificial barriers to regulation, they do not innovate, they exploit opportunities to help themselves. None of these technologies have changed the world and created wealth – telecom, computers, aviation – have only risen in India. Yet, our entrepreneurs have figured out a way to make money from them by bulldozing their way into taking their share of the pie, investing in the technology, putting up attractions, and forming an underdog demography. In reality, they are not heroes. They are the opposite of cool, and despite their billions, they are, in what is known in youthful parlance as “losers.”

Do they have enough talent, or have they never realized their voice against government corruption? Our companies don’t think twice before creating a carpool to fleece customers. Yet, they never have a car to take them to social events without a driver’s place. None of our techies have the capacity to invent technology like the cell phones, but if they are given a chance, they will be the ones jumping at the chance of making money in spectrum allocation.

Innovation investors already know that they are seeing a trend they cannot beat, that the Indian corporate political nexus is actually keeping Indian poor, not making it rich.

This can be fixed. Quite frankly, it has to be fixed if we want India to be the great nation our forefathers dreamed of. The success of Facebook is a shining example of how the business of startups in India, vital to the trendline growth of any economy. If we want to see this growth, there is a role to be played by corporates, the government and individuals.

First, the few corporates that really care, have to form a cartel against corruption and nepotism. If promoters take a public stand that their business group will not bribe, it will send a strong message. Complainers innovate, the ability to do anything that is cool. Meanwhile, the existing billionaires should stop flaunting their money and consider the middle-class billionaires of America who have pledged to give away more than half their wealth to charity (yes, Mark Zuckerberg included).

Second, our government has to understand the meaning of protecting Indian industry. It isn’t to protect the established few, who can simply afford to do a deal with healthy competition. Protecting Indian industry means policies that help new Indian companies thrive, an environment where startups are glorified and inspired people are not put on a pedestal. Innovation is considered cool, not inheritance.

Third, we as individuals have to stop admiring and glorifying the parasitic billionaires of India. They may not be technically doing anything illegal, but they are definitely not doing anything legal. Their success is nothing cool about using connections to get something that you couldn’t have if there were fair competition. We should be celebrating money, entrepreneurship and power. We should be celebrating innovation and entrepreneurship.

Yes, these businessmen employ some of us, and we have seen increased affluence amongst some Indians. Maybe we have a million rich Indians now. It isn’t enough. With the right business environment, India can be a dramatically different place, offering a better future for the better half of all of us. After all, to modify a dialogue from the film, “You know what’s cooler than a million rich Indians? A billion rich Indians.”

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Parents view TV, internet in the same light: Survey

No TV for a week, the time-honoured punishment for misbehaving children, has been enhanced. Now, parents are also withholding Internet access to punish their kids, further sign that the Web has become as important to families as television.

As the two mediums converge, parents are quickly coming to see the TV and Internet in similar ways and are seeking to limit their kids’ access to both, according to a report out this week from researchers at the University of Southern California. The survey from the USC Annenberg Centre for the Digital Future found that two-thirds of parents say they restrict their kids’ access to TV as punishment, a number that has barely budged over the past 10 years.

But the percentage of parents who limit Internet access as a form of punishment has nearly doubled in the last decade. Among parents surveyed this spring, 57% said they withheld Web access to punish their kids. That’s up from 32% in 2000. Michael Gilbert, a senior fellow at the centre, said parents are starting to see not to see a big distinction between TV watching and Internet use. Even so, parents are still more comfortable with the amount of time kids spend on the Internet, 71% said it “just about right” compared with just 51% for TV.

Earlier surveys by the center have shown that families are spending less time together than they used to, a decline that has coincided with the explosive growth of social networking sites in the past few years. AP

Does a touch of positive energy heal and cure?

Yes it does, believe those who swear by new-age alternative therapies like craniosacral balancing and aura readings

Akhil Seth | The Times of India

It is said that a healthy body and mind are the foundation of a healthy life, and that positive energy is the key to living a fulfilling life. The practice of craniosacral balancing and aura readings is one such alternative therapy that claims to harness the power of positive energy to heal and cure.

Craniosacral therapy is a type of bodywork that focuses on the craniosacral system, which is believed to be an energy system that flows through the body. This system is thought to be responsible for the body’s ability to heal and maintain balance. The craniosacral system is also said to be connected to the body’s immune system and is believed to be involved in a wide range of health issues, including pain, stress, and disease.

Aura readings, on the other hand, are a form of energetic scanning that is used to detect the energy field around a person. This energy field is said to be a reflection of a person’s emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. By detecting imbalances in the aura, a practitioner can identify areas of the body that may be diseased or in need of healing.

Both craniosacral therapy and aura readings are said to be effective in healing physical, emotional, and spiritual problems. The craniosacral system is thought to be involved in a wide range of health issues, and by using craniosacral therapy, practitioners can help to balance and restore this system to promote health and healing.

Similarly, by detecting imbalances in the aura, practitioners can help to identify areas of emotional and mental health that may need attention. By addressing these issues, it is believed that positive energy can be brought into the body, leading to a more balanced and healthy state.

So, whether you are seeking physical healing or emotional balance, craniosacral therapy and aura readings may be worth exploring as alternative forms of therapy.
Mumbai: There are all kinds of informal segregation seen on college campuses: freshers versus settlers, top graders who sneer at canteen crawlers, book club members who won't come within a hockey sticks length of a ball player, and what have you. But for a change, students at the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) will now draw a distinction among faculty members and decide their cool quotient based on the decision each professor takes on attendance rules.

Till date, students who did not have a minimum of 80% attendance were awarded an XX grade and failed in that course. Students had to repeat the course before they were allowed to take the semester exam.

But with IIT-B reviewing its attendance policy through a senate committee convened by Abhiram Ranade, a professor in the department of computer science and engineering, faculty now have the freedom to take a call on either penalizing students for bunking class or letting it pass. The policy was broadly cleared by the senate recently and will soon come into effect.

While faculty members can choose their own attendance plan, they would be required to declare the same at the start of the academic session. There are three plans a teacher can pick from. It has to be made clear here that the benefits of attending a class will be extolled. Every faculty member will apprise students of the benefits of attending. But there could be faculty members who could choose not to penalize students for the lack of attendance, said associate dean (academic programmes) Vikram Gadre.

Teachers could either continue with the current practice of awarding the humiliating XX grade, or ignore the class strength completely or penalize students by depreciating their grade. The undergraduate and postgraduate programmes committees would work out the modalities for the last option before the scheme is implemented.
Medvedev to visit IIT Bombay

Russia wants to reinforce education ties

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NEW DELHI: Russian President Dmitry Medvedev will visit the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay during his trip next week, as Russia looks to reinforce traditional educational ties at a time when the world is eyeing India's fast-growing education market.

IIT Bombay was set up in 1958 with financial and technical assistance from the Soviet Union and UNESCO, and Medvedev specifically wanted to visit the Institute during his India trip, sources privy to development said. Top USSR professors, researchers, and universities helped hand-hold IIT Bombay in its initial days.

The Russians appear keen to reinforce the traditionally strong educational ties between them and India, the sources said, pointing out: "Half a century back, we depended on assistance from Russia and other foreign countries to start our top higher educational institutions like the IITs. Today, Russia and the rest of the world are competing for India's education market," a diplomatic source said.

India and Russia mutually recognise each other's degrees in science and engineering subjects and the two countries are engaged in extending the mutual recognition of degrees to medicine and related subjects, sources said.

Russian is also taught as an optional language subject in Central Board of Secondary Education schools. "We are still building our relationship in education with several other countries, but our ties with Russia are old and strong already," a source said.

The Russians, however, are concerned about India's increasing proximity to the US and Europe in educational and research ties, other sources said. The visit to IIT Bombay is symbolic, and the Russians possibly hope to emphasise how they stood by India at a time when this country was still emerging out of two centuries of Colonial rule, and was struggling to establish its institutions, sources said.
Copy CAT, army plans to computerise exam system

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NEW DELHI: The army has kicked off a drive to streamline its in-house promotion examinations, modelling it on the Common Admission Test (CAT).

It has launched a pilot project to computerise exams, called Part B and Part D in service parlance, which have to be cracked before officers can be promoted to the rank of major and lieutenant colonel.

An officer said the existing testing model was cumbersome and required officers to be away from their units for extended periods. Crippled by a shortage of more than 11,250 officers, the force can hardly afford to keep more of them away from regular duties on the frontlines.

"It is no secret that infantry battalions with an authorised strength of around 21 officers are somehow making do with half that number. The officer said computer-based tests would ensure greater availability of manpower, solve logistics problems such as transportation and accommodation and provide a more flexible option to officers.

Plans are afoot to set up 50 to 60 centres across the nation. The new model is expected to be functional by next year. More than 10,000 officers take promotion exams annually. While Part B has to be cleared before completing six years of service, to avoid loss of seniority, the deadline for Part D is 13 years. The exams are designed to test the knowledge of officers in military history, current affairs, law, administration and tactics.

The computerised model will also benefit officers who fail to clear these exams in the first attempt and have to give it another shot.
NEW frontiers of science will have to be conquered to overcome challenges posed to humans in the 21st century and nations will have to collaborate to achieve the goal, Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal today said.

"The solutions of the past cannot resolve the challenges of the present...If we have to succeed and conquer these challenges, we will need to break new barriers of science," Sibal said. He was addressing a meet on Building Communities, Bridging Continents here.

Sibal said the challenges of the present century were very complex and related to the basic needs of individuals such as eradication of hunger, right to food, water, education, employment and global warming. Giving the example of how water shortage was going to increase in future, he said the existing population of the global community at 6.2 billion consumes 19 billion tonnes of water annually, more than what the planet generates.

"By 2050 when the population is set to touch 8.9-9.2 billion, we will be in the midst of a crisis," he said. "We are short of food, water and energy and the way we are plundering earth, we will disturb the delicate balance of nature," Sibal said. Stating that water-intensive agricultural activities are unsustainable, the HRD minister said there is need for new technology to encourage farming with the use of less water. "We have to realise that we cannot afford to continue producing agricultural commodities the way we have been doing over the years," he said, giving the example of how rice and wheat crops guzzle a lot of water.

"What then is the solution? Obviously, we have to cross and conquer new frontiers of science," he said, adding that we will need to produce seeds that will consume less water and have new technology to increase productivity.

Sibal also gave the example of how humans had, over the last 300 years, consumed a limited resource like coal which takes millions of years to form. "Now nature will not accept such things...the root cause and genesis of global warming is the result of this delicate balance getting disturbed," he said. The minister stressed that the global community will have to collaborate to meet the challenge of depleting natural resources which are very essential for the survival of inhabitants of the earth.
VENKATRAMAN RAMAKRISHNAN
NOBEL, LAUREATE

Give 20 yrs to Indian institutes

Venkatarman Ramakrishnan, who shared the Nobel prize for Chemistry in 1998, is currently a visit to India.

Is there a lack of research in the curricula of Indian universities, leading to people of Indian origin doing well when they go abroad? There is a lot of excitement and exciting things happening in Indian science. The government is funding science in a big way and setting up new institutes. Besides, I am the wrong person to ask questions about Indian curriculum or systems because I left India at the age of 19.

But what are the results? There isn't a single Nobel working in the country...

There are no results today because there is a lot of nurturing needed by the Indian scientific community. It takes twenty years for sustainable results. Our generation fails to do well... then there is need for continuity. Institutes have to become sustainable. So, give them at least another twenty years.

Institutes and local scientific community complain about lack of funding...

"The government began to invest in science after 1990, when the Indian economy was opened up. Before this, the investments were low. Give is some time—a generation maybe. The sustainability and continuity of research institutes is mandatory because there may be a good person at the head of an institute but what if he quits early? Research needs continuity. There are some remarkably fine traditional institutes in India such as the Tata Fundamental Research Institute, the Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology and National Centre for Biological Sciences. They have been working for a long time and doing good work. There is a misconception about their contribution and there are no few such institutes."

So, what according to you is the biggest challenge faced by Indian science today?

To attract good faculty that work overseas. That is the main problem—to get young scientists to come here and fill faculty positions, giving them the freedom to work. I cannot compare the Indian system to the West since I left at 19 and have not been part of the system here. But yes, salaries are much better than they were 50 years ago, the infrastructure facilities are also a lot better now. A lot of young people are returning. I know of one young structural biologist who is coming back from the UK's Cambridge University, to IISER, Pune.
Barred from exams, fate of Jamia students uncertain

DEEPU SEBASTIAN EDMOND
NEW DELHI 1 DECEMBER 18

Even the academic council of the Jamia Millia Islamia could not clear the air on the fate of more than 200 students, who have been denied permission to write the semester exams due to attendance shortage. The exams had begun last week.

All of them are either in postgraduate or M Phil programmes. A good number of the students are in the first semester, sources said.

First semester students, who were barred from taking the exam, were initially told that they would have to seek re-admission. After the students approached university officials to complain about the harsh move, the matter was taken up in Wednesday's academic council meeting.

The issue was reportedly raised by some teachers, even though it was not part of the AC's agenda. "It has been decided that the students, whose attendance have fallen short of requirement, will be detained. They will have to repeat the semester. On the other hand, no decision has been taken as to whether first semester students will be removed from the rolls," said an AC member.

Jamia requires students to have 75 per cent attendance, and university officials said that the rules are not new. "The attendance requirement was mentioned in the prospectus. Students will have to seek readmission to their respective semesters," said Jamia's media coordinator Simi Malhotra. The university had given relaxation of up to 15 per cent on medical and sports grounds.

"I opted for specialisation in Ancient History, which was being offered for the first time. Since there was no tutor for my specialisation, by mid-September more than a month after classes began, I was asked to attend tutorials for two papers in Medieval History. It looks like they have not factored in the classes that I missed in between," said an M Phil research scholar. The student, who took a year's break after his MA, is poised to lose out on the prestigious Junior Research Fellowship (JRF), awarded in 2008. JRF rules stipulate that the awardee should have secured admission within two years of winning the Rs 15,000 per month scholarship.

Affected students say that they were not warned in advance that the university would come down hard on them.

"Teachers used to warn us in advance if our attendance was low. This time, I was called to the Director's office a few days before the exams were to begin and told that I will not be allowed to write the exam," claimed a first-year post-graduate student.
रात में आईआईटी छात्रों के लिए इंटरनेट बंद

फैसला अगले सेमेस्टर से प्रभावी होगा, डीन स्टूडेंट्स बोले, छात्रों का फायदा होगा

अनुराग मिश्र

राजस्थान प्रायोगिकी संस्थान, नई दिल्ली (आईआईटी) के छात्रों के लिए जनवरी से अगस्त तक बाद इंटरनेट कनेक्शन बंद होगा।

आईआईटी प्रशासन ने होटलों में अध्यक्ष राज से लेकर सुबह आठ बजे तक इंटरनेट कनेक्शन को प्रतिबंधित करने का फैसला किया है। यह फैसला अगले सेमेस्टर से प्रभावी होगा। आईआईटी के डीन स्टूडेंट्स, प्रोफेशनल शासन मण्डल का कहना है कि यह फैसला छात्रों के लिए सही है।

फैसला अगले सेमेस्टर से लागू होगा। ईमेल के लिए छात्रों को देना होगा। इंटरनेट को प्रतिबंधित करने के लिए देव्री बाबू के कहने पर कदम उठाना पड़ा यह कदम।

व्यक्ति उिाना पड़ा यह कदम:
- पढ़ाई होती है प्रभावी
- तनाव बढ़ाती है सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट
- नींद पूरी न होने से बढ़ने वाली शारीरिक परेशानी
- तनाव दूर करने के लिए किये गए उपाय
- कुछ आईआईटी ने खोले योग यंदेट
- कुछ आईआईटी बेससाइट के माध्यम से भी करते हैं छात्रों की फाइडलिंग
- कुछ संस्थानों ने माननिक परेशानी से जुड़े रहे छात्रों को कम पैकेज देने तक की छूट दी है

फैसला अगले सेमेस्टर से लागू होगा।
आईआईटी—रेलवे मिलकर खोलेंगे मेडिकल कॉलेज

बातचीत शुरू, दोनों पक्ष इस बाबत जल्दी एक समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर कर सकते हैं

गदन जैजा

नई दिल्ली

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) खड़गपुर रेलवे के साथ मिलकर मेडिकल कॉलेज खोलने पर विचार कर रहा है। इस सिलसिले में आईआईटी और रेलवे स्वास्थ्य महकमे के बीच प्रारंभिक बातचीत शुरू हो चुकी है। रेलमंत्री ममता बनर्जी बाहरी है कि खड़गपुर में मेडिकल कॉलेज भी स्थापित हो।

आईआईटी खड़गपुर से जुड़े सूचने के अनुसार, दोनों पक्ष इस बाबत जल्दी साझा उपक्रम

■ रेलमंत्री ममता बनर्जी बाहरी हैं कि खड़गपुर में मेडिकल कॉलेज खोलने पर विचार कर रहे हैं।
■ आईआईटी को पहले ही केंद्र से मेडिकल कॉलेज की हरी झंडी दिखाने के लिए योजनाओं में यह सुझाव दिया गया है।

हालाँकि ऐसे कोर्स अभी भी आईआईटी में चल रहे हैं। आईआईटी खड़गपुर में मेडिकल स्कूल चल रहा है जो नाम 'आईएसए' काउंसलिंग केंद्र के रूप में कार्यरत है।

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खबर है कि तृणमुख कांग्रेस नेता ममता बनर्जी की हरी झंडी पर आईआईटी खड़गपुर रेलवे के साथ मिलकर मेडिकल कॉलेज खोलने की तैयारी है। अभी हालांकि दोनों पक्षों ने अभी तक किसी नहीं इसका संचालन किया है।
भारत में नौकरियों के लिए नहीं मिल रहे टैलेंटेड यouth: सिखवल

वंदे गाथा। मानव संसाधन और टेलीकम मंत्री कपिल सिखवल ने कहा कि भारत में नौकरियां तो हैं, लेकिन इसके लापक न तो यहां अच्छे इंजीनियर हैं, न अच्छे आर्टिकुलेट इंजीनियर, न अच्छे शेर, न अच्छे इंजीनियर और न ही प्रतिभाशाली डॉक्टर। दूसरी ओर अमेरिका से देश में नौकरिया नहीं है, लेकिन वहां टैलेंटेड युवा है।

इसका कारण यह है कि भारत के 22 करोड़ बच्चे स्कूल से जाते हैं, लेकिन हमें से निकल 12.4 पीसड़ी युवा ही उच्च शिक्षा प्राप्त कर पाते हैं। आम जनता बच्चे प्रति और यूनिवर्सिटी तक नहीं जा रहे हैं तो यह देश की मजबूती के लिए बड़ी समस्या है।

सिखवल शासन को टैगेट में रोटरी हॉरिसटर 3080 के सदस्यों से दिशा देने का काम में कर-कर के रहे। उन्होंने कहा कि हमारे उद्देश्य उच्च शिक्षा के लिए युवाओं को संख्या 12.4 पीसड़ी से बढ़ा कर 30 पीसड़ी करता है। कार्य ये प्रवर्धन में ड्राइवर, इंजीनियर इंजीनियरिंग में जल्द होगा। सैंडर, ड्राइवर, सेक्टियर, बच्चों के छात्रों और तकनीकी संस्थाओं के छात्रों के लिए ऐसे कोर्स आवश्यक हैं जिनके जरिए वे अपने ड्राइवर और इंजीनियरिंग में अच्छे हों। उन्होंने रोटरी क्लब में सदस्यों से कहा कि यूनिवर्सिटी और कलेज में लड़कियों की सकारात्मक

सिफ 12 पीसडी युवा ही पहुंच पाते हैं उच्च शिक्षा तक

लड़कियों की साक्षरता दर बढ़ाने के लिए पहल करना जरूरी

दर बढ़ाने के लिए आपका अभ्यास होगा। शिक्षा आधिकार के गान की भी गानेशा से लाया करना होगा। उन्होंने कहा कि यहां भी आपने बच्छे को सबसे बड़ी समस्या साक्षात्कार किया गया। वर्ष 2050 तक जब दुनिया की औसत 8.99 अंक होगी, तब यह होगा। इसलिए कहते हैं कि हम अपने संस्कारों को वैश्विक और तकनीकी शिक्षा से प्रभावित करने। सिखवल का संस्कार से उबरने के लिए इनके तरीके और बीज अपनाने होगे।