NEW DELHI: The students of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Delhi will take up the task of illuminating the slums in Munirka, south Delhi, through a solar lighting project, an official statement said on Monday.

IIT-Delhi is working on the project in collaboration with My Sister Foundation of India, a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

The project titled "Liber of Light" has already provided 53W light to three households in the slums.

"The plastic coke and water bottles are filled with water and suspended from the roof of the house. With the simple concept of refraction of light from denser to rarer medium, the light is generated through the light from the sun," Revant Soni, a student working on the project said.

In the slums, shanties are so close to each other that hardly any sunlight reaches there forcing dwellers to keep the lights on even in daytime.

With these bottles, it helps cut down a lot on the electricity consumption.

The project has been put into implementation following the research undertaken for three months.

"The first three installations were done by the students but now we have explained the procedure of installation to the community members and they would be completing the project," added Soni.

Around 25 students, including volunteers of IIT-Delhi, have worked for the development of the project.
Popular eateries under green lens

DPCC Compiling Data On Licences Obtained

Jayashree Nandi | TNN

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal’s closure order to 34 restaurants in Hauz Khas Village has cast the spotlight on a thousand others which may also be discharging untreated waste water and grease into city sewers.

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee has no count of how many restaurants have obtained its consent. “We are in process of compiling the data,” said an official. But restaurant owners and trader associations say few restaurants have taken consent or installed effluent treatment plants.

Every restaurant needs a “consent to establish” and a “consent to operate” from DPCC. “The consent to operate involves some paperwork and effluent parameters are tested. Restaurants need to pay a fee to DPCC for the analysis and often for monitoring of effluents for the next five years. DPCC issues a licence after that,” says Prakul Kumar, secretary general, National Restaurant Association of India.

As per DPCC rules, any restaurant with fewer than 36 seats has to have a grease trap and one with more than 36 seats needs to install an effluent treatment plant. “I am not sure how many restaurants in Delhi have taken consent from DPCC but our association has been telling all members to comply,” Kumar said. NRAI has approached MoEF and DPCC to raise the size criterion for ETPs from 36-seater restaurants to 100-seater ones.

“DPCC’s permission is a must and we know that. Many of our restaurants are on the first floor where installing an ETP is difficult. We are quite worried and want to make sure we comply with all requirements. The plan of constructing ETPs is also linked to the Khan Market redevelopment plan,” said Sanjiv Mehra, president of Khan Market Traders Association.

NOT THE SOLE OFFENDER: Several restaurants in the capital are flouting pollution norms, say trader associations

Aseem Grover, a restaurant owner in Khan Market and member of KMTA, added that DPCC staff has briefed them and NDMC is trying to integrate these aspects in the Khan Market redevelopment plan. “Most of the restaurants here have grease traps and ETPs and our larger plan is to make the sewers lines bigger and increase their carrying capacity,” he said.

“We mainly have fast food joints here, so they don’t need ETPs. Most have grease traps,” said Pramod Sharma of Sarojini Nagar Market Association.

Scientists and water experts said that discharging untreated waste water can have a serious impact on both sewers and lake or river water: “Grease has a clogging effect in sewers. Food waste will further block them. Some restaurants also discharge chemicals which can have a harmful effect. So there can be no question of discharging water without treating it,” AK Gosain, professor of civil engineering, IIT Delhi, said. Discharge from restaurants also has a lot of organic matter which increases the biochemical oxygen demand in water. It also releases nitrogen which can be very bad for lakes, AK Mittal, associate professor, IIT Delhi, said.
BYPL-IITD collaboration till 2016

Continuing with its industry-academia collaboration to foster cutting edge research in the realm of power distribution, BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) has renewed its agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. The duration of the agreement is for a period of three years.
IIT-Kanpur opens office in New York

Press Trust of India
Kanpur, Sept. 23
With an aim to hunt for qualified and capable faculty abroad, IIT-Kanpur has set up an office in New York with alumnus Sanjeev Khosla designated as the overseas brand ambassador of the institute.

The office will also try to amass funds through the alumni based there, IIT-Kanpur Director Indranil Manna said.

The office will help in connecting foreign faculty with IIT-K. More than a dozen teachers teaching in foreign institutions have expressed an interest in associating with IIT-K, Manna said.

Also, ex-IITians posted at good positions in various American cities are willing to help IIT-K. They are also collecting funds to do the same, he said.

They are also in talks with international level technical educational institutes and universities about research and other issues. A system to invite the students and faculty of foreign institutes to IIT-K is also being formulated, he added.

Sanjeev Khosla has been associated with many educational institutions. His tenure is for three years, having commenced on September 1, 2013. He will act as a link between IIT-K, the alumni of the institute who are living abroad and foreign educational institutions, Manna said.

The office on 62, William Street is on lease for five years, he said.

In the backdrop of IITs failing to make it to the top in the QS rankings of the world's leading universities, IIT-Kanpur Director Indranil Manna had yesterday alleged corruption in the ranking process of various such agencies and said it was more of a "money game".

Manna alleged that the ranking process by such agencies was based on the paying capabilities of the institutions.

"The standard of teaching, research and job placement are not the criteria for the ranking, instead it is based on the paying capabilities of the institutions. An amount of $1,50,000 needs to be paid to get a good ranking in such lists," he claimed.

"These global rankings are more of a business rather than based on academic performance of institutions," he said.

Manna said a five-member committee of IIT directors has been constituted, of which he is part of, to look into the issue and understand the methodology of the ranking agencies.

The report by this committee will be submitted to the IIT council, he said.

On IIT-Kanpur ranking at 295 in the 'QS World University Rankings', Manna said the institute was placed on the position based on old information provided on its website.

"The ranking should have been after a team would have come to IIT-Kanpur and seen how the institute works. There have been so many students of IIT-Kanpur who have achieved so much on the world stage," he said.
IIT-K opens office in New York to hunt for faculty

KANPUR, PTI: With an aim to hunt for qualified and capable faculty abroad, IIT-Kanpur has set up an office in New York with alumnus Sanjeev Khosla designated as the institute’s overseas brand ambassador.

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The list released on September 10 was dominated by US universities, with MIT grabbing the top slot and Harvard being at No. 2, pushing Britain’s Cambridge University to No. 3. The 11 Indian institutions that featured in the list included IIT-Delhi at 222, IIT-Bombay at 233, IIT-Kanpur at 295, IIT-Madras at 313 and IIT-Kharagpur at 346.
बहते कदम
आईआईटी कानपुर का न्यूयॉर्क कार्यालय खुला

कानपुर में एअरप्लेन के आईआईटी कानपुर ने विद्यार्थियों में योग्य शिक्षा की खोज करने के साथ-साथ संस्थान के पूर्व छात्रों से कोष जुटाने और अनुसंधान को महत्वपूर्ण बनाने के लिए, अमेरिका के न्यूयॉर्क में अपनी कार्यालय खोली है।

संस्थान के एक पूर्व छात्र संगठन ने उसके लिए 62 बिलियन डॉलर में पंच साल के पट्टे के जमा रखे हैं और आईआईटी कानपुर ने खोलने के ही ओवरसीज ब्राउं्ड एंबेस्डर बनाया है। आईआईटी के निदेशक प्रोफेसर इन्डियन मन्ना ने समाचार का बताया कि न्यूयॉर्क में कार्यालय खोलने का मकसद विदेशी संस्थान का आईआईटी कानपुर से जोड़ना है और इसमें सक्कियत भी ली जाएगी। अतः विदेशी संस्थानों में पहले विद्यार्थी आईआईटी कानपुर ने जुड़ना चाहते हैं और अब तक करीब एक दर्जन से अधिक विद्यार्थी इससे जुड़ने की इच्छा जताते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि इसके लिए आईआईटी के अनेक पूर्व छात्र जो अब अमेरिका के विविध शहरों में उच्च पदों पर आसान हैं, वे गुरू दक्षिणा के कारण आईआईटी कानपुर की मदद करने के लिए कोष भी जुटा रहे हैं।

हम नंस्थानों के छात्रों और शिक्षकों को आईआईटी बुलाने और उनके छात्रों और शिक्षकों को वहाँ भेजने की प्रक्रिया पर भी काम किया जा रहा है। उन्होंने बताया कि आईआईटी के ओवरसीज ब्राउं्ड एंबेस्डर संगठन कई संस्थाओं और शिक्षण संस्थाओं से जुड़े रहे हैं। उनका कार्यकाल एक सितंबर 2013 से शुरू हुआ है जो तीन साल के लिए है। वह आईआईटी कानपुर व विदेशों के पूर्व छात्रों और विद्यार्थियों की बीच एक कड़ी का काम करेगी।

विदेशी संस्थान के लिए खुले आईआईटी, कानपुर के दरवाजे

कानपुर, 23 सितंबर (भारत). आईआईटी कानपुर ने विद्यार्थियों में योग्य शिक्षा की खोज करने के साथ-साथ संस्थान के पूर्व छात्रों से कोष जुटाने और अनुसंधान को महत्वपूर्ण बनाने के लिए, अमेरिका के न्यूयॉर्क में अपनी कार्यालय खोली है।

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विदेशी संस्थान के पूर्व छात्र ने दी जगह

उन्होंने कहा कि इसके लिए पहले विद्यार्थी आईआईटी कानपुर से जुड़ने के साथ-साथ अनेक पूर्व छात्र जो अब अमेरिका के विविध शहरों में उच्च पदों पर आसान हैं, वे गुरू दक्षिणा के कारण आईआईटी कानपुर की मदद करने के लिए कोष भी जुटा रहे हैं।

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Let's Cheer this Latest UGC Move

Nish Acharya

Last week marked an important turning point for higher education in India. At the Chief Learning Officers Summit in Mumbai, we heard clearly from corporate India's leading human resources managers about the need to boost the scale and quality of talent it is producing. Additionally, the University Grants Commission of India announced that foreign universities would be allowed to set up in India. This opens up huge opportunities for the world's greatest and most influential universities to bring a broad set of programs to the Indian market. There will be some restrictions, such as the ridiculous notion that only universities ranked (by a random third party) in the top 500 globally can enter, and that they must be non-profit in nature.

The reality is that this policy will only be a positive for India. India's leaders have already identified higher education has an area where the nation must scale and improve.

The Next Five Years

American universities can play a critical role in this growth. First, America's colleges and universities have a variety of programs—undergraduate, graduates, professionals, part-time students, executives, researchers, online students and distance learners. Second, the vast majority of American colleges are nonprofit. They were set up by private trusts or by religious groups and are not for profit. They share a tradition of excellence with universities, launched with US government funds.

Furthermore, in the United States, the availability of a college degree has grown over the last century. Rather than being something for society's elites, a college education has become something that the middle class and working class can attain. Colleges and universities exist for all types of students, and financial aid is arranged by the US government and guaranteed for any student. Lastly, a broad array of American universities have launched programs in India. Several leading American universities, including the Ivy League, University of California system and others, have undergraduate exchange programs with various IITs and IIMs. The American Association of Universities (AAU) represents the 60 largest research universities in America and they are all keen to conduct more research with their Indian colleagues, and build the capacity of Indian institutions to conduct research.

Indian universities can shorten the learning curve by collaborating with US counterparts.

Higher education reforms ready for roll-out

By Prashant K. Nanda & Asit Ranjan Mishra

NEW DELHI

A marquee education scheme that aims to restructure India's higher education system, enhance enrolment and substantially change the funding pattern to higher education institutions in states is poised to be introduced after the finance ministry signed off on its funding.

The initial approval of Rs 23,000 crore for the programme comes after the human resource development (HRD) ministry agreed to rework some of the objectives in line with the recommendations made by the finance ministry. The HRD ministry will now approach the cabinet for approval to implement the project in the current fiscal year.

"They asked us to make some changes," said Ashok Thakur, higher education secretary. "But they have approved the initial financial requirement."

The ministry proposes to spend Rs 99,000 crore as part of the scheme over the 12th Plan.

The author is former Director of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce for the Obama Administration.

TURN TO PAGE 3
Higher education reforms ready for roll-out

(2012-17) and 13th Plan (2017-22) periods.

The new programme called Rashtriya Ucchatar Shiksha Abhiyan, aims to limit the number of colleges affiliated to a university, set up more universities, route funding through state governments to institutions, make universities more accountable, and get states to commit to spend more on higher education institutions.

The scheme was initially proposed in 2012 by then HRD minister Kapil Sibal. In July, it received a thumbs up from a parliamentary consultative committee.

A finance ministry official speaking on condition of anonymity said the expenditure finance committee has in principle approved the programme with a few riders.

“We have basically told them to focus on the quality of the institutions rather than just creating new infrastructure. Emphasis should be on student needs such as laboratories and training faculties rather than just building offices and classrooms,” he said.

Thakur said that the finance ministry has sought a rethink on creating new universities, enhancing the focus on quality of education imparted, institutions that will receive funding under the new scheme, and better outcomes. “More than physical infrastructure, the focus should be on quality of teaching and learning,” he said. “We will move the cabinet soon.”

The HRD ministry believes that enrolment in India’s higher education institutions is too low and needs to be increased from the current 19-30% in the next seven years so as to create a bigger pool of qualified professionals to fulfil the needs of a growing economy.

For this target to be achieved, the ministry was thinking of setting up dozens of new universities and increase the capacity of existing institutions.

It also sought to change the way such institutions are funded.

According to Thakur, the University Grants Commission currently funds less than 40% of the total number of higher education institutions in the country and the bulk of this allocation goes to those run by the central government.

“If you look at the figures, almost 95% of the higher education institutions are under the purview of the states and the rest are under the central government, but it’s the central government institutions that get bulk of the funding. Through this new scheme, we are trying to change that. More funds to states will lead to better infrastructure, teaching and research (in the institutions run by them),” Thakur said.

As part of the scheme, the funding to institutions in the states will be performance-linked with up to 90% of it coming from the central government.

Each state government will be required to set up a higher education council that will channel funds from the central government to colleges and universities unlike the current system where the money directly goes to a college.

“States will monitor the fund flow and will commit that their higher education spending will not shrink year after year. States have to spend at least 4% of the state GDP (gross domestic product) on higher education,” said Thakur.

The scheme emphasizes reforms in the state higher education system by facilitating the creation of a structure for planning and monitoring institutions at the state level. It will help promote autonomy in state universities and improve governance in the institutions, said another ministry official who also spoke on condition of anonymity.

The scheme will also limit the number of colleges affiliated to a university to 200, to improve governance. Some of the universities currently have a large number of colleges under them; for instance, Osmania University in Andhra Pradesh has more than 900 colleges affiliated to it.

Parthasarathi K, education minister of Andhra Pradesh, said he sees a lot of merit in the scheme and that it will benefit educational institutes at the state level.

Narayanan Ramaswamy, partner (education practice) at audit and consulting firm KPMG said the decision to focus on “existing institutions” was “good for the sector”.

“There will be some leakages in the state level, but that does not mean we should stop funding institutions to improve them. What it (the central government) needs (to do) is attach a strict accountability clause along with funding,” he added.

Ramaswamy said it was important that the central and state governments make the higher education space attractive for private institutions.

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New B-School Buzz: Sustainability Management

IIM-L plans two-year programme; others incorporate topic in regular courses

DEVIKA SENGUPTA & SREEKANTH BADASU
MUMBAI

IIM Lucknow is all set to roll out a two-year programme on sustainability in response to the demand for managers well versed in the area.

"India Inc is looking for managers who can tackle environmental problems, social and human rights issues, developmental economics and corporate social responsibility," says Sushil Kumar, chairman centre for business sustainability.

Managers are now required to ensure a business environment wherein companies display a greater commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR). Under the new Companies Act, 2013, profitable companies with a sizeable business have to spend, every year at least 2% of three-year average profit on CSR projects.

The cut-off for IIM-L's programme will be the same as the regular management programme in terms of CAT scores, says Kumar. The first batch of 45 students will graduate in 2016 (2014-16). For the course structure, IIM-L has consulted global universities like Kellogg School of Business, IMD Business School, Switzerland and Copenhagen Business School, where sustainable management is a two-year programme. It has also exchanged notes with University of Toronto, which plans to start a similar programme in 2014.

Till date, sustainable management and related aspects have been part of the regular business management programme or covered under the one-year executive MBA. But the course has now seen an increase in demand, given the greater awareness about sustainability and environmental issues. Also, job opportunities in CSR and sustainability are now greater, says FD Jose, associate professor, corporate strategy and policy area for IIM-B.

The increased awareness is reflected in the social media launch of two indices called, 'Greenex' and 'Carbonex', evaluating several green operational parameters including carbon performance, says Dibyendu Kandar, senior associate dean—academic programmes at Indian School of Business. The institute, which started with a course in green technology in 2008, is offering three courses this year, including total quality management and lean production, sustainable business operations: value creation and environmental considerations.

Environment and development ranks among the first two courses taught in IIM Calcutta. The oldest IIM has now started an elective called Sustainability Marketing for the executive MBA batch and faculty for the course has been roped in from German B-school ESMT. Courses on corporate environmental sustainability and corporate citizenship are gaining in popularity among students.

IIM Kozhikode, on the part, teaches environment management, social transformation in India. However, not everyone is convinced about the need for an exclusive two-year MBA programme on sustainability. "One needs to be very cautious in launching such programmes. For one, it is not very clear whether a large cohort of students will find suitable career opportunities immediately," says IIM-B's Jose.

Further, it should be a part of every module, says professor Amap Sinha, the coordinator of the Centre for Development and Environment Policy, who teaches an elective course on Sustainable Development at IIM C. "It is like the issue of 'gender' – it is not a separate discipline, but is essentially about something fundamental – the relationship of human beings to nature," he says.

devika.sengupta@timesgroup.com
Scientists find ‘blueprint’ for first universal flu vaccine

Koustvya Sinha | TNN

London: A team led by a scientist of Indian origin has made a “blueprint” for a universal flu vaccine.

The influenza virus that causes flu is known to be one of the world’s most rapidly changing organisms. Flu vaccines become redundant after every season and aren’t effective against every strain causing cough, cold and other complications. So, scientists have to create new vaccines with new strains of the virus each year.

Now, a team led by professor Ajit Lalvani from the National Heart and Lung Institute at Imperial College London has used a 2009 pandemic virus strain to study why some people seem to resist severe illness, thereby stumbling upon a recipe to create the world’s first universal flu vaccine. Lalvani asked volunteers to donate blood samples just as the swine flu pandemic was getting under way and report any symptoms they experienced over the next two flu seasons.

These scientists found those who avoided severe illness had more CD8 T cells, a type of virus-killing immune cell, in their blood at the start of the pandemic.

They believe a vaccine that stimulates the body to produce more of these cells could be effective at preventing flu viruses, including new strains that cross into humans from birds and pigs, from causing serious disease.

“The immune system produces these CD8 T cells in response to usual seasonal flu,” Lalvani said. “Unlike antibodies, they target the core of the virus, which doesn’t change, even in new pandemic strains. The 2009 pandemic provided a unique natural experiment to test whether T cells could recognize, and protect us against, new strains that we haven’t encountered before and to which we lack antibodies. Our findings suggest that by making the body produce more of this specific type of CD8 T cell, you can protect people against symptomatic illness. This provides the blueprint for developing a universal flu vaccine.”