JNU reverts to old admission policy, fills only 15.9 pc OBC seats

Deepu Sebastian Edmond
New Delhi September 5

AFTER a last-minute flip-flop that saw the reinstatement of its controversial tailor-made admission process, the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has managed to fill only 15.9 per cent of its allotted 27 per cent OBC seats this year.

In other words, the university managed to fill only 396 of its 683 OBC seats. Many of the vacant seats have already been allotted to general category candidates.

Though this year’s figure of 15.9 per cent is a tad better than last year’s 14.2, it may be noted that the quota was only 18 per cent of the intake back then. Consequently, 390 of the 413 OBC seats had been filled last year.

Newline had reported last year’s admission statistics on January 4, 2010. The analysis of the data showed that JNU was not struggling to find suitable OBC candidates; instead, they were being kept out by the peculiar way in which the institution has designed its admission procedure.

The university has filled 24.1 per cent of its OBC seats in its BA courses. However, in MA courses, it has managed to fill only 13.6 per cent of the 27 per cent OBC seats. The corresponding number of M Phil courses offered for the Social Sciences is 14.3 per cent. Sciences usually tend to perform better than courses in social sciences, as far as admissions are concerned. In MA Economics, 29 of the 35 OBC seats allotted have gone vacant, while it was 24 of 25 in MA Political Science, 22 of 23 in MA Sociology and 18 of 19 in MA Arts and Aesthetics.

On the other hand, all the 16 allotted seats were filled in MCA, while the number for MS: Life Sciences was two more than the 14 allotted seats. The 11 allotted OBC seats were filled in M Tech Computer Science as well as M Phil Life Sciences.

As per the recommendations made by the Aditya Mukherjee-chaired committee in 2009, the university had put in place two criteria for the selection of OBC students. There was a “cut-off” mark fixed at 10 marks below the JNU entrance exam score secured by the last selected general category student and a “qualifying mark”, which is the minimum eligibility mark acquired in the entrance exam.

JNU students have long been campaigning against this procedure, calling for the “cut-off” of the University to be made the same as the “qualifying mark.” Convinced by the logic in their argument, several senior faculty members had expressed their support for them.

Intense lobbying by students using admission data from the first two years of OBC reservations led to the Academic Council meeting of March 18 scrapping the Aditya Mukherjee committee’s model.

The AC called for the adoption of the Hyderabad Central University’s reservation policy, with pre-fixed cut-offs, and referred the matter to the Deans’ Committee. The Mukherjee committee was defied for fundamentally altering the fate of OBC candidates to that of the last reserved category student.

Then, on June 17, the Deans’ Committee decided to set the minimum qualifying mark in the entrance examination at the cut-off. Youth For Equality, the organization that has been campaigning against OBC reservations, decided to throw a spanner in the works.

On June 27, the YFE’s lawyer sent a legal notice to the JNU, threatening action — including contempt proceedings — for contravening the Supreme Court’s orders. Following this, on July 9, the JNU administration obtained legal opinions from two lawyers — advising the university to revert to the controversial method.

On July 12, just a day before the BA/MA results were announced, JNU reverted to the OBC admission policy recommended by the Mukherjee committee.
UGC breather for DU teachers

RESpite 300 teachers to benefit from UGC directive, get two years to be NET/SLET-qualified

NEW DELHI: Around 300 ad hoc teachers of Delhi University (DU) have got a breather.

The teachers were on the verge of losing their jobs, for not having met the minimum qualifications set by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

In a letter addressed to the Deputy Registrar (Colleges) of DU, dated August 31, 2010, the UGC has allowed colleges to re-appoint lecturers who worked in the last academic year, even if they do not meet the minimum required qualification.

The letter mentions, “Those presently working as teachers in ad-hoc capacity but not National Eligibility Test (NET) qualified, shall be given a time period of two years (i.e., four attempts at NET) to qualify in the NET/SLET (State Level Eligibility Test) and during this period of time of two years, colleges and universities may not fill teaching posts presently held by them on ad-hoc or regular basis.”

This letter upholds the earlier time period granted to the ad hoc teachers to meet the minimum qualifications.

A letter issued by the UGC to the vice chancellors of universities on August 29, 2009 had mentioned, in a similar manner as narrated earlier that, “Those presently working as teachers in ad-hoc capacity but not NET-qualified, shall be given a time period of two years to qualify in the NET/SLET and during this period of time of two years, colleges, and universities may not fill teaching posts presently held by them on an ad hoc or regular basis.”

This means the ad hoc teachers have time till August 2011 to clear the NET/SLET, which, as per the UGC’s (Minimum Standards And Procedure for Awards of M.Phil, Ph.D degree) Regulation 2009, has been made mandatory for appointment of ad hoc lecturers in universities. The new regulation came into effect from July 16, 2010.

In compliance with the UGC regulations, Delhi University on April 20, 2009 had sent a letter to principals of colleges, asking them to abide by the above guidelines.

The All India Researchers’ Coordination Committee had pointed out that this order of DU was in violation of the earlier letter issued by UGC on August 29, 2008.

The varsity authorities had written to the UGC on June 22, 2010 about shortage of candidates who meet the UGC norms for the post of ad hoc teachers.

In reports published on July 15 and 25, HT had first reported that ad hoc teachers may lose their jobs since they had not cleared the NET/SLET.
‘Give reason in writing for rejecting selection’

COURT RULES SC rejects Centre’s plea; says appointments panel has to record reason

Satya Prakash

NEW DELHI: Ruling in favour of transparency in high-level bureaucratic appointments, the Supreme Court has said the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) must give reasons in writing for its decision rejecting recommendations for a bureaucrat’s appointment to a particular post.

A bench headed by Justice H.S. Bedi turned down the Centre’s plea that there was no rule requiring reasons to be recorded by the ACC for such decisions. The apex court upheld the verdict of the Delhi High Court, which asked the Centre to reconsider the case of Bhaskar Datta Majumdar for appointment as Director, Marketing in the State Trading Corporation (STC).

The verdict comes as an embarrassment to the government that had contended that the ACC was the final authority to make the selection and appointment and “it alone had the jurisdiction to determine the suitability of an officer”.

The government also claimed that ACC decisions were not open to challenge except on grounds of mala fide or other exceptional reasons. The court, however, emphasised that this authority was not absolute.

If the government was not accepting the recommendations of the departmental promotion committee, the SC ruled citing a 1995 case, “it must give reasons for so differing to ward off any attack of arbitrariness. Those reasons will have to be recorded in the file”.

Majumdar, who joined STC as Executive Secretary to the chairman-cum-managing Director in April 2001, was chief general manager when he applied for the post of Director (Marketing) in December 2005.

In March 2006, the Public Sector Enterprises Board shortlisted Majumdar and Neeraj Mishra. The Department of Commerce forwarded Majumdar’s name to the ACC for approval with his vigilance clearance.

Majumdar contended that the Home Minister, as the second member of the ACC, had also endorsed his name. But the then Cabinet Secretary — B.K. Chaturvedi, who had earlier been MD of STC — allegedly scuttled his appointment taking note of some serious allegations which at one point in time had been leveled against him.

This included departmental inquiries and two CBI cases involving Majumdar. But all the inquiries exonerated him. Ignoring the clean chits, the ACC did not clear his appointment.
Mumbai: Most IITians think that they are as different from their faculty members as MS-DOS is to Windows. Taking the same corollary a bit further, when it comes to their teaching assistants, the latter apparently are still stuck in the faded age of Orkut. But these gaps will soon be bridged with the launch of a novel programme, in which the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay will have senior undergraduates teaching freshers.

Bright undergraduates tutoring their juniors is common on most American campuses but this is the first time that an Indian institute is attempting this teaching model. With the number of students rising, teaching assistants are becoming all the more important in the tutorial system being conducted after lectures.

"On an experimental basis, 50 undergraduates have been appointed as UGTAs (undergraduate teaching assistants) who will help faculty members take first- and second-year core courses. These students will have similar assignments as that of regular postgraduate teaching assistants," said IIT-B dean (academic affairs) Supratim Biswas.

"We are being very careful while selecting students for the programme. Not only do they need to have brilliant academic credentials in IIT (without any backlogs) but they also should be able to handle the additional load of tutoring juniors beside completing their own studies."

Usually, IITs appoint their PG and PhD students as teaching assistants, who are also offered financial support. However, some of the schools have woken up to the fact that many of these assistants did not study their UG courses at an Indian Institute of Technology; so, their methods of teaching often differ from that of a teacher, sometimes ending up confusing a student.

"We have observed that our undergraduates can relate to their seniors who are well equipped in handling the rigour of bread-and-butter institute-level core courses both academically as well as temperamentally," said Biswas.

In fact, IIT-B has infused a catalyst — a respectable honorarium of Rs 48,000 a year — to its experiment. If the arrangement yields good results, the next year may see more third- and fourth-year students (of the dual degree programme) being selected for coaching.

With the rising student population on campus, lectures for all core courses are being held four times a year, to make up for the paucity of faculty members and classrooms. Last year, the large hall meant for convocation was used for classes, but several students and teachers said it was irrational to have a class of 380 at a time. Lab sessions and workshops are held in shifts.
'We’re launching Chandrayaan-2 for a total coverage of the moon'

On August 20, India's second unmanned scientific mission to the moon, the Rs 425-crore Chandra- yaan-2, slated for launch in 2013, in a joint Indo-Russian flight, from Sriharikota, took a definite shape with the seven scientific instruments or payloads – five on the India-built orbiter and two on the indigenous rover – being announced by ISRO. A high-level committee headed by D. R. Reddy, chairman, Advisory Committee on Space Sciences, made the choice of instruments. Senior ISRO scientist S. S. Kanwar, who was also chairman of ISRO between 1981 and 1994:

- India’s first lunar mission Chandrayaan-1 had accomplished nearly 95 per cent of its scientific objectives and is considered a success internationally. Why is India returning to the moon?

There are still a lot of outstanding issues about the moon, which have to be resolved in greater depth. Some of the experiments of Chandrayaan-1, moreover, achieved only 50 per cent to 70 per cent of their objectives. Again, due to power limitations, the Terrain Mapping Camera of Chandrayaan-1 could map only 45 per cent of the moon. We are launching Chandrayaan-2 because we need a total coverage of the moon, employ improved and new technology and obtain better quality photos.

- The orbiter with the five payloads will be flying at an altitude of 200 km above the lunar surface and we estimate that its lifespan would be for two years depending on the use of the propellant.

- A significant aspect of Chandrayaan-2 is that the orbiter, unlike in Chandrayaan-1, does not have any foreign payloads even though NASA and the European Space Agency showed interest. Is there any reason why foreign payloads have been removed?

As per the present plan we do not have any weight in the orbiter for foreign payloads. We were keen on giving an opportunity to our scientists. This is why we decided not to invite international participation this time. Keeping in view we, unlike in Chandrayaan-1, did not issue a formal announcement of Opportunity calling for international participation. Even at the last moment if we decide to have foreign payloads on Chandrayaan-2 after making weight allowances, we have to issue an Announcement of Opportunity, an elaborate exercise, which can delay the flight. The total mass of the five payloads on the orbiter is about 40 kg at the moment and we are trying to reduce it, which may be difficult.

- In Chandrayaan-1 many Indian scientists regretted that their achievements were sidelined especially with regard to the discovery of water and NASA took away the credit. Is this a reason why the committee eliminated foreign instruments on board Chandrayaan-2?

[Laughter] The instruments were chosen based purely on their scientific merit.

- The weight of Indian rover was earlier stipulated as 15 kg. Has this been finalised and what will be its lifespan?

It will be more than that. It will function only for a few days on the surface of the moon because of power limitations. It will carry its own power. The design and development of the rover is a new technology for us. For the orbiter we have selected the right altitude of 200 km above the moon’s surface for it to fly because too many corrections are not needed at this altitude. (The flight plan envisages the lander with the rover detaching from the orbiter at a certain point near the moon and soft landing on the lunar surface, the place has yet to be finalised. Thereafter, the rover will move out of the lander.)

BUSINESS STANDARD ND 06/09/2010

US dynamism makes downsizing its importance very difficult, admits Infosys

BIBHU RANJAN MISHRA
Bangalore, 5 September

Infosys has time and again expressed its desire for reducing exposure to the US market. But each time it vows to do so, the US market grows even more stronger.

S. (Kris) Gopalakrishnan, the MD and CEO, recently trotted out the same old cliché, but with a specific figure. "We are pro-actively investing in our non-US business. Today, about 65 per cent of our business comes from the US, but we want to get that ratio to 40 per cent. This is not by reducing the US business, but by growing other geographies faster," he said.

It is not as easy as it sounds. Kris himself knows that. While talking to analysts in January 2008, Infosys' top management had announced the plan to bring down the US contribution to its total revenue to around half. But the slowdown of 2008-09 changed everything. While it was the first among global economies to show signs of recovery, the US' contribution to the country's second-largest information technology (IT) service provider's overall revenue went up further after the downturn.

"It's a challenge before us. That's why we have not set a time frame for this - it's directional," says Kris. "(To keep US revenue contribution at 40 per cent) is difficult because the US is the best and the most dynamic market. In this recovery itself, the US has done better than other geographies," adds the Infosys co-founder.

Before the downturn, the contribution of the US to the Bangalore-based company's overall revenue was 60 per cent. It is now close to 66 per cent. The share of Europe has further come down, though the company attributes it to a weak euro. Infosys' Europe revenue share in the first quarter came down to 20 per cent from the earlier 29 per cent.

"Europe is expected to grow much slower than the US in the next few years, and it's because of the way they reacted to this downturn. The US has reacted more aggressively, so they are starting to recover much faster," explains Kris.

Infosys agrees the US market continues to remain at centre stage for most Indian IT service providers, despite the new wave of protectionism measures. There are still a lot more untapped opportunities in the US market for Indian IT services' providers.

Infosys, for example, serves about 130-old Fortune 500 companies in the US. "So, there are still a lot of opportunities to grow in the US market," says Kris.

Adding: "The US continues to be the best market for technology-related services. The US also adopts new practices fast. When offshore was introduced, US was the first to adopt that and use that model. That's the reason why the US will continue to be the largest and one of the important markets for us."
Boeing offers Isro tech help for 2016 manned space trip

Prashanth G N | TNN

Bangalore: The Indian Space Research Organisation has an offer too tempting to resist: Boeing has said it is ready to collaborate and offer technological know-how to Isro for its human space flight programme, scheduled tentatively for 2016.

This will include construction of a crew vehicle to the International Space Station (ISS), journey to the station and re-entry into earth’s atmosphere, which is the most crucial aspect of the programme. Dr Vivek Lall, vice-president and India country head, Boeing Defense, Space and Security told TOI: “Boeing has initiated discussions with Isro to offer our support to India’s human space flight programme. With our legacy in space exploration design, development and integration, we believe we can provide value-added assistance to India’s national programme.”

Lall added: “We plan to submit a formal request to the US Department of State to enable us to proceed down this path should our services be accepted.” The senior Boeing official pointed out that Nasa had offered a Commercial Crew Development (CCDev) contract to Boeing with Bigelow Aerospace as a key team mate to initiate the design and development architecture of commercial transport to and from ISS. “This programme opens the door for collaboration between Boeing and Isro in areas of commercial crew transportation.”

Boeing has offered collaboration in four specific areas, one of them in which Isro has already begun work.
Is supply of software a sale or a service?

In a very recent and interesting judgment, the Bombay High Court has held that the electronic data in a computer software is not a right to use the software but a possession of the software, the copyright of which the owner of the software has in his hand. The Court has held that the software is not a product but a service and the sale of software is not a sale of a product but a service.
ALUMNI PLEDGE TO SERVE ALMA MATER

Raising funds for scholarships, faculty bonus and expansion

PROUD OF OUR PAST, BUILDING THE FUTURE

KALPANA PATHAK
& VINAY LAMKARI
Mumbai/ Ahmedabad

The alumni associations at premier B-schools and engineering institutes are going beyond handing out an annual donation cheque to their alma mater. They are contributing at every level and helping the institutes build their brand, both nationally and internationally.

"It's a moral calling towards our alma mater. We are together to support our institute. It's our responsibility to see that our institute stays on top," said Balesh Godhwani, head, IIM Banga
dores, alumni association.

Godhwani, who joined IIM-B three years ago, said the B-school has put in a lot of ef
tort in institutionalising alumni involvement. "We made a professional secretariat at the office by making the alumni association a legal entity. Earlier, it was a problem reaching out to the alumni with their various yahoos and google groups," said Godhwani.

Every year, IIM-B is increasing its alumni base by 1,000 students. From 1,500 members in 2007 the institute now has over 5,500 members. The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A) has set a target of raising ₹250 crore by the end of next year through alumni contributions. According to officials, the pre
erior B-school is aiming not only to replenish its dwindling corpus, but being self-sufficient and attract better faculty and research.

So far, IIM-A has raised ₹18 crore through alumni contribu
tions. One of the former students of the 1989 batch has donated ₹2.3 crore. The alumni includes some prominent names like Rashid Shesh, chairman of Edelweiss, Sanjeev Bikhchandani, founder of Nauroz.com, Nirmal Jain, chief executive officer of India Infor
tel and Rahul Bhatia, managing partner for Bearing Pri
date Equity.

At Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI) in Jamshedpur, alumni members are helping the institute decide on how to use their financial contributions. They have decided to use the funds either for student scholarships, recruiting inter
national faculty or improving the infrastructure.

The institute has also developed an interactive alumni portal that has already seen around 5,000 registrations. XLRI has developed a database to keep track of the alumni and allow better interaction between stu
dents and the alumni members. "Both B-schools and the alumni are now realising the need to bridge the gap further. Even as XLRI, we are involving alumni more and more to improve various areas of the institute. For instance, we have created an "XLRI Endowment Fund" that is aimed at alumni contributions. Most of the members on the board of the endowment fund are XLRI alumni," said E Abraham, director, XLRI Jamshedpur.

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT-B) has found an innovative way to increase alumni participation on the campus—a new fund rais
ing drive called 'Give one for IIT Bombay'. Every alumni, who is part of the voluntary movement, pledges one per cent of his or her salary to IIT-B every month.

So far, more than 700 students out of the 1,000 in the graduating class of 2010 have signed up for the initiative.

An IIT-B graduate earns an average annual salary of ₹7 lakh. This means the institute will be able to generate over ₹1 lakh (₹7,000 per student per annum) when these students start contributing in the first year.

"The aim is to engage our alumni early. We would be using the funds to meet various needs like infrastructure, join
ing bonus for faculty, green initia
tives on the campus or benefic
cent fund for the faculty mem
ers and IIT-B staff," Bakul De

All these institutes have decided to keep an account of the contributing members and provide them a timely update on how the funds are being used. The former students can suggest to the as
ciation if they wish to divert the fund to a specific ven
ture on the campus.
AIMA OFFERS E-PG DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT

The All India Management Association's Center for Management Education (AIMA-CME) has launched an e-Post Graduate Diploma in Management (e-PGDM) programme on the e-Learning platform in collaboration with Hughes Communications India. There will be four modules in the programme. The first, second and fourth modules are common to all students. The third module offers specialisation modules on marketing, finance, human resource and operation management. Students can opt for either of these fields. HYPERLINK: "http://www.hugheseducation.com"

IIT-Bombay launches Eureka!

The Entrepreneurship Cell, IIT-Bombay launched Eureka! — its business plan competition this month. With a total prize money of ₹21 lakh ($50,000), top 50 shortlisted teams will be provided free financial and legal consultancy. The winners of Eureka! 2010 will get a chance to pitch their idea before a panel of investors and venture capitalists from Indian Angel Network and Mumbai Angels. Participants will also get access to the knowledge library of Mentor Square. HYPERLINK: "http://www.ecell.in/eureka"
Carleton sets up India Centre of Excellence

Canada-based Carleton University has set up a Canada-India Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology, Trade and Policy at Carleton. The centre will look at joint research projects, exchange of faculty and students and internship opportunities for engineering students in Canada and India. The centre is also looking at creating international job opportunities for students.

"It’s the only centre in the world for science & technology and policy. In the university, we are educating the future generation, who will need science and technology to solve present and future problems. This initiative will look at joint research projects, exchanges, conferences of interest to India and Canada," said Rosanne O’Reilly, president and vice-chancellor, Carleton University (CU). The centre will create a network of select universities for research. Carleton, for instance, has established relations with Delhi University, Kolkata University and Mumbai University among others.

"We are also working with labs of many companies and we are announcing an agreement with the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in the area of computation. This will run for a period of five years," said Runts.

"The centre encourages joint research projects, faculty and student exchange programmes and internship opportunities for engineering students. Internships and joint research projects are especially in international health and engineering. The centre will share campuses with the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, the School of Public Policy and Administration and the Sprott School of Business. The centre will provide opportunities for many co-operative ventures.

Research will be carried out in nano-science, computer science, aero engineering, robotics and networks. India and Canada have complimentary situations. In both countries, we have extra-ordinary researchers. Together they can be a powerhouse. Both countries have committed to environment and sustainability issues and researchers are looking at innovative forms of energy. The interest in health care is very strong in both countries," Runts said.

Finance Express ND 06/09/2010 p1

Computer-based system shines as active fund managers underperform

Ashley Coutinho

Mumbai, Sept 3: It appears the time has come for the Investment Management’s (IM’s) fund to exceed expectations, as the market was gaining while many mutual funds were proving whether between 22-24% in April to 2011. However, after several inquiries, IM’s recently launched high-yield fixed income fund has seen an initial increase of about 20% in the market.

The strategy paid off. On May 1, the Secret tax law points when it became certain the government would appeal the tax. While most fixed funds lost their IM’s grant portfolio was not a loss.

Unlike some of the other managed-to-gained players experimenting with new models of managing money through automated, computer-powered/quants, IM’s fixed-income fund managers' Trustmark track record of active fund managers has been very high net worth Individuals (HNIs) to give those passions, managing assets to move to the next level.

Confused on the Investment process

Rather than a short term outcome, we see the significant long term growth of the stock market, says Mr. Sudhir Gupta, director and one of the founding members of Forest Capital Management, a bootstrap project. To be sure, $3.7 billion has been invested for more than two decades globally. In India, though, it’s a growth phenomenon.

Forest Capital Management (FPM) Fund currently offers a single product in the portfolio management space.

"Our model of Mentor Plus Fund, Metalink (a new NSE E-Exchange Trustee Fund) and Reliance Agili Fund are among the existing fund products in mutual fund space. Preston Asset Management and IDBI AMC are also looking at launching mutual funds."

**Confused on Page 2**

"Quantum is relatively new to India. We have 95% of investors, including HNIs, invested into tradable products," says Nishat Majid, chief executive of Quantum Investment Management, which has been the country’s new fund manager in portfolio, where it has 50% of the market share (till April).

Quantum serves in numerical and statistical parameters based on company’s historical data such as earnings, profit, valuation and macroeconomic data in such a way that he moves along the trend of the stock market. It can take advantage over six months and then has particular formation (till April).

Typically, the minimum investment required is Rs 1 lakh, with fixed charges of Rs 1,000 per annum, which includes subscription.

Derivatives and risk management are the two primary benefits of a Quantum fund. The popular margin in a limited allocation where the corpus is a variable asset like stocks, cash and bank deposits. "Today, in ventures are essential in the markets. In Switzerland, Quantum’s approach to value managers are the best in the world," says Mr. Ashish Gupta, MD and CEO, Preston Asset Management (PAM), unlike other managers, quantum analytes a wider spectrum of growth competitors well and not necessarily similar.

Interestingly, the global demand for quants has increased due to the sudden collapse in 2008 of an investor report of billions of dollars from several companies. According to a recent New York Times article, the combined assets of a data science and investment risk manager is less than 5% of an index fund’s value.

Quantum, which is about 20% of the investment corpus in a quantum fund, has a few months for back-checking. It has the advantage of being a new fund manager in portfolio, with fixed charges of Rs 1,000 per annum, which includes subscription.

Derivatives and risk management are the two primary benefits of a Quantum fund. The popular margin in a limited allocation where the corpus is a variable asset like stocks, cash and bank deposits. "Today, in
Financial Express ND 06/09/2010

CAMPUS ROUNDDUP

IML Lucknow students to head to foreign universities

This year 53 students from IIM Lucknow (IML) are heading to foreign universities as part of the Student Exchange Programme, 2010. The international student exchange is at the forefront of IML’s efforts towards international exposure and recognition. IML has alliances with prestigious institutions across the globe, spread across 4 continents and 22 universities. IML will also play host to 30 foreign students from other countries. The students proceeding to the foreign partner universities will leave as ‘ambassadors’ of the country and their institute. In addition to acting as brand ambassadors of IML, these students promote the Indian culture, ethos and values in the respective partner institutes.

JIM’s new campus at Indore

JIM-D established

Jaipuria Institute of Management (JIM) has launched its new campus in Indore—which is now being recognised on the national map as a hub for professional education with the presence of IIM and JIM—by announcing admissions open to its PGDM programme with a focus to take traditional organisation management functions as well as business to the ‘e’ platform. JIM has been operating for the past 15 years with campuses in Lucknow, Kanpur and Jaipur. JIM’s campus is spread over an area of 10 acres and plans to have two academic blocks with a covered area of 60,000 sq ft each.

We invite colleges and universities to send in information—on new faculty, courses, alliances, projects and other events—for this section.

Email: fecampusroundup@expressindia.com

DESIGN PLAY

IN SOCIAL MEDIA

COMES ALIVE

Social networking in India is not just about Facebook and Twitter anymore. Sites such as Minglebox, Pafretree and CommonFloor are making waves with their unique offerings. Though they are still no match for the giants of social networking, they have been able to attract eyeballs nevertheless. Their future is still a guessing game with analysts doubting their engagement models. But they have decided to make the most of it when the going is good.

Top social networking sites in India

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**Growth of top 10 social networking markets worldwide**

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We are fighting an ideology, not a movement

Approach

The Maoist problem is more than a law and order issue—the tribal area actually feels targeted and alienated. So, we need to focus on making the area safe for development. But how to achieve such a violent territory which even the security forces find difficult to enter?

Maoists and intellectuals have always exacerbated their narrative by moving against an oppositional government. But the doctrine of war says—judge the真正 remedy seeks—by wars is also waging war against yourselves, by what was said and done, what was believed and interpreted, by the culture recovered from Maoist leaders through the flawed and partial processes.

THREAT TO THE STATE

Terrorism through strategic weakness of national integration has been exposed in the recent anti-CAA protests. Armed with lethal weapons, they need to be contained in all functions of civilian combat—through state-of-the-art operational planning, coordinated execution, net, blocking, and intelligence collection, and surveillance.

In view of all provocations, we should avoid a direct confrontation. Any involvement of the army in a conflict area will allow Maoists to strengthen their base through a mix of terror and politics. A strong political dialogue with the Maoists is the need of the hour.

The author is a Master of Management from IIM-Kashipur.

Enriching higher education

There is a need to include a course on domestic and global economic environment

Shubhade Sabade

It’s both amusing and interesting to note the similarity between a free forest and an economic system. Like the roots of the tree spread across vast expanses of land and draw on every possible inch of the soil, worldwide education takes the children through the spectrum of subjects from drawing to math, and from sports to history. Like the roots, once the ground, irrespective of the narrow tree trunk and move the nourishment upwards in a more focused manner, undergraduate college education specialists in students in their chosen area. Like the branches and leaves of the tree spread across vast spaces in the air, drawing from sunlight, atmosphere and clouds, so should higher education at post-graduate level. This article emphasizes the need to include a course on domestic and global economic environment in higher education of all streams. To exemplify, it elaborates on why better knowledge about trade, policies, and future career opportunities would further enrich higher education.

Trade cycles, or business cycles, are the ups and downs in economic activity, and are marked by periods of growth and depression and inflation. Trade cycles are a necessary evil of any market economy and as the world converges towards an economy of integrated market forces, the incidence of trade cycles is inevitable and measurable, the need to understand their growth and their effect on the economy is necessary.

ECONOMIC POLICIES IN RECESSION CAN BE LIKE THROWING MONEY INTO A BOTTOMLESS PIT. NOT REGULATIONS, BUT UNDERSTANDING OF SUCH ECONOMIC PHENOMENA BY THE YOUTH CAN CURE THIS

Once a policy is in place, the only effective thing can be a cut in tariffs. The obvious policy to the government is to implement an across-the-board rate cut, and establish communist dictatorship. Any effective response to this threat cannot be derived without recognizing this fact. Maoist strategic weakness of national integration has been exposed in the recent anti-CAA protests. Armed with lethal weapons, they need to be contained in all functions of civilian combat—through state-of-the-art operational planning, coordinated execution, net, blocking, and intelligence collection, and surveillance.

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Financial Express ND 06/09/2010

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Living room is Apple’s focus

Alex Dobuzinskis
LOS ANGELES

Sept 5: Critics hoping for more from Apple Inc’s Web-to-TV plans — a device, say, that would revolutionise living room entertainment the way the iPad changed tablet computing — may just need to wait a bit longer.

Shortly after Apple unveiled its latest Apple TV product on Wednesday, complaints surfaced from some circles that the company had failed to live up to its own high standards. The device is smaller and cheaper than the one it brought out in 2006, but it also has shortcomings.

Kaufman Brothers analyst Mr Shaw Wu, for instance, called the Apple TV product “underwhelming” and said some innovative applications, such as those on the iPad, would have helped. “It seems it’s strictly more of a rental machine,” Wu said.

But most expect that Apple has more ground-breaking plans for a future version of Apple TV, and for marrying the Web to the television, up its sleeve.

“Longer term, I do think they have more ambitions in the living room,” said Mr Ashok Kumar, an analyst with Rodman & Renshaw LLC.

“They didn’t announce it today, but we’re talking literally about an Apple TV, not a gateway product, which integrates a TV and a Mac. That's a 2011 event. I'm sure which other features it could have,” Mr Kumar said.

Analysts said the ability to run applications on a TV-connected device would be a key development down the line for Apple.

As it tackles the TV frontier, Apple will increasingly battle with the likes of Google Inc, Microsoft Corp and Amazon.com Inc, which have all sought to forge ties with Hollywood studios to distribute movies and shows online.

That has been a minefield for technology companies because of the rights issues involved. Hollywood studios and cable operators have pushed back with Google encountering some resistance to its Internet-connected Google TV, which would allow users to search for content on the Web.

Apple co-founder, Mr Steve Jobs, gave an indication of the company’s overall strategy by announcing Apple TV will stream content from iPhones and iPads through its AirPlay wireless technology. “The most important hint of Apple’s real ambitions in the living room come from AirPlay, which puts iPhones and iPads in the driver’s seat and makes the TV just an output device for the Apple ecosystem,” said Forrester Research analyst, Mr James McQuivey. “Expect Apple to gradually push more and more in that direction, but as of this moment in 2010, Apple has not yet made a significant play for control of the TV,” he said.

Only 12 per cent of US adults who use the Internet are familiar with the original Apple TV, according to Forrester Research. Analysts said that the new $99 price point for Apple TV, down from $299 before, could give it wider adoption.

Meanwhile, consumers already have access to a “broad range of devices that connect TVs to the Internet media players, from Blu-ray players to video game consoles like Microsoft’s Xbox and the PlayStation.

And then there are stand-alone media players such as those from Roku Inc, which CEO Anthony Wood said is closing in on 1 million unit sales in three years.

Wood said of Apple TV’s relaunch, “I was initially worried it would be better than it was but it’s not something we couldn’t compete with.” — Reuters

Economic Times ND 06-Sep-10

Indian IT funding cash-strapped client projects

Infy, Wipro Invest Up Front In Building Systems For Customers & Offer Them On Pay-As-You-Go Basis

Pankaj Mishra & Shruti Kher
BANGALORE

Indian software companies such as Infosys Technologies and Wipro are entering the uncharted area of vendor financing, at the urging of cash-strapped US customers, by using reserves accumulated over years to invest in so-called software platforms that run activities like payroll processing.

The country’s $50 billion outsourcing industry has stretched for close to two decades by maintaining IT systems of US companies at sharply lower costs by writing software application codes in India. But as customers such as IBM, Morgan, Philips and Cubain attempt to cope with lower IT budgets by avoiding expensive in-licensed software, they are asking vendors to invest in building systems and to link payment to the number of transactions.

“We will have to hire the bullet now — if we wait, there may be no option left for us to have such conversations with customers later,” said Srikumar Pillai, Infosys’ global head of sales and marketing and a member of the company’s executive council.

“All said and done, if you look at all the industries, tech is looking pretty okay from all the way from chip to software companies, they are looking good, so why not?” asked Mr Pillai, referring to the demands of customers that software companies invest their own money to build platforms or what the industry refers to as software solutions.

This sort of investment is different from traditional vendor financing because companies like Infosys are not offering credit to their customers. Nonetheless, it is a distinct shift from selling software to users and, at least to some extent, similar to that of companies like IBM, which bundle computer hardware, software and services together in large outsourcing contracts, according to a consultant.

“The IBM base was really around tie-up cash during hard times, and the overall value to the company was getting cash while over the long term, IBM probably made a return on the financing they did for that specific customer,” said Rodney Keljeksten, an independent research director at US-based TowerGroup. Mr Keljeksten, who consults with top vendors and customers about their new outsourcing strategies, said the Indias were doing it a little differently.

Investments are not large: P.17

We will have to bite the bullet now; if we wait, there may be no option left for us to have such conversations with customers later.

Subhash Dhar
GLOBAL HEAD OF SALES & MARKETING, INFOSYS
Learn from the mistakes of others
Small IT firms are targetting the small and medium enterprises market to bring in the numbers

They are not trying to reinvent the wheel. Instead, these small IT companies are trying to learn from the mistakes larger companies have made in the past. If they are successful, they could be the next Oracle or McAfee.

For a number of these companies, the winning strategy is simple—to tap the huge SME population out in the market and provide products and services to them. The SME market is hugely underserved and there is big opportunity waiting to be tapped there.

Kolkata-based Coral Softwares sees the SMB segment in India as its main driver for growth. The company builds customised ERP solutions for small companies, which currently do not have an option beyond large, unwieldy enterprise packages. Prem Chand Kankanji, managing director, says that they key is understanding local requirements. "Our software encompasses things like excise, service tax, and VAT," says Kankanji, pointing out that Coral has an edge over more generic packages.

The firm has also developed products like X-ise, which they claim is India’s first central excise software to manage records related to, as the name suggests, central excise. Apart from SME clients, some large companies such as Amul, Glaxo SmithKline, Kodak and Lafarge have also implemented it.

For the company, though, the recession last year got sweeter tidings. Earlier, he had customers who wanted to implement ERP without really knowing much about it. Today when purses strings are tighter, he sees customers having a more focused approach and are informed about what they want.

In the complex world of financial software, InfrasoftTech has made inroads in selling its solutions to top Indian banks. For this company, the good news is that SMEs in the sector have lapped it up.

Hanyuman Tripathi, CEO of the company says that most international product companies are very risk averse when it comes to making changes to their product and bringing out new upgrades. "Because of this, maintenance of international software products becomes difficult for companies," he says. In comparison, Indian software product companies keep upgrading their products. A fifth of InfrasoftTech’s business comes from the Indian market and it has seen consistent growth there, though slower than in its international markets. "People buy international products because of the strong branding. These companies have worked very hard on brand recall. We have done the same," says Mr Tripathi.

Branding is something that security solutions firm MicroWorld has been conscious of since its inception. This Mumbai-based SME has a range of web and computer security solutions and boasts of having names like Godrej, Crompton Greaves, Essel Packaging, etc in its customer list. MicroWorld became the first Indian anti-virus security company to start retail operations in India two years ago. Govind Rammurthy, CEO & MD, MicroWorld says, "Indian product companies are very strong technically and there is no doubt the stage is set for a fight in the online security market between local and international players. International security software like McAfee and Norton are difficult to deploy and upgrade. Our nimbleness is what separates us from the competition."

A VINAYA GHOSH

Banks may base education loans on placement track

YOU education loan application has a better chance of getting a favourable response from banks if the institute you propose to study in has a good placement record. "Faced with rising bad debts in their education loan portfolio that are not backed by collateral, banks are looking at the placement record of institutes to judge the repayment capacity of students seeking loans. The college may enjoy the government recognition, but if placement record is poor, how can you expect a student to get a job and repay?" said an official in the country's largest lender State Bank of India.

The government rules do not allow banks to demand collateral or security for education loans up to Rs 4 lakh, a measure to ensure funds are easily available to needy students.

This unsecured lending, according to bankers, has seen a sharp spurt in instances of non-payment. They want to now tie up these loans through other qualitative measures. So far banks have sanctioned 34,192 crees towards education loan.

Instead of sanctioning loans merely on the basis of the student’s educational track record and whether the course and the educational institute was approved by the government, banks are also looking at the minimum and maximum package offered to the students at the institute to assess repayment capacity, though the Indian Banking Association has not yet said anything on the issue. "It's up to the sanctioning officer to take additional measures if he's not convinced with the application. However, due care is taken not to unnecessarily harass the student," said an Indian Bank official.

One major public sector lender is asking for life insurance cover from its student applicants. "The policy is assigned in the favour of the bank and works as a double check," said a senior official with Punjab National Bank. The insurance policy helps to keep a track of the student and if there is an unfortunate event it protects the bank’s investment. The annual premium is paid by the student himself, or by the co-applicants, but the premium is generally very low. "In case the loan turns bad, there is some limited amount which can be recovered by surrendering that policy," explained an official with Bank of Baroda.

Banks are also looking to structure education loans that have gone sour. Indian Bank is exploring the option of giving one-year relaxation to students for repayment towards their loans.

Generally banks give a payment moratorium period of six months from the time a student completes his course. Banks have found that most loans turned bad in cases where students are unable to find jobs.
BrahMos cruise missile successfully test-fired

SUCCESS STORY: Brahmos Missiles

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI

INDIA on Sunday test-fired the supersonic BrahMos cruise missile, which has a range of 290 kms, from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur off the Orissa coast.

The missile did a steep dive while flying at a speed nearly thrice that of sound. A DRDO official said it was a user's trial by the defence forces, as part of the fine-tuning exercise.

The BrahMos-II, a result of the Indo-Russian joint venture, can be potentially used for surgical strikes, including at terror camps, without causing collateral damage. It can carry conventional warheads up to 360 kg and effectively engage ground targets from an altitude of just 10 metres. The missile is named after rivers in India and Russia—the Brahmaputra and the Volga.

It can be launched from multiple platforms—submarines, ships, aircraft and land-based Mobile Autonomous Launchers (MAL). However, the focus is on the development of its air-launched and the submarine-launched versions.

"The technical evaluation requirements. It was a 100% fantastic launch," director of the test range S P Dash quoted by a news agency as saying after the test.

The BrahMos Block-II variant has been developed to take out a specific small target, with a low radar cross-section, in a multi-target environment.

A regiment of the BrahMos-B Block-I variant, consisting of 67 missiles, five mobile autonomous launchers on 12×12 Tata vehicles and two mobile command posts, among other equipment, is already operational in the Army. The Navy has begun inducting the first version of BrahMos missiles system in all its frontline war ships since 2005, the agency quoting defence sources said.

The Army is set to induct two more regiments of the BrahMos Block-II land-attack cruise missiles (LACMs) designed as "precision strike weapons" capable of hitting small targets in cluttered urban environments, it said.

CIVIL SERVANTS: NOTHING CALLED RETIREMENT

Do they have a tag, 'recycle after use'?

It's difficult to see them without a white Ambassador car

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI

Old soldiers never die, they just fade away. General MacArthur had said upon his retirement after World War II. India's retired bureaucrats, on the other hand, are showered with critical jobs that entitle them to perks of office, including a bungalow in Lutyens Delhi, the red-beamed white Ambassador and a retired servant.

The latest to join the army of such appointees is telecom secretary P J Thomas, who has been named the next Chief Vigilance Commissioner, a post that he will occupy for at least four years. He pipped at least four other senior bureaucrats in the fray for the job.

There is a tinge of irony in the selection of Mr Thomas as India's top anti-corruption watchdog. His name figured in Kerala's infamous palmolein scandal of 1991-92. Mr Thomas was secretary of the state food department when it signed a controversial deal for importing palmolen. The Congress-led UDF government withdrew the case when it came to power in the state.

Opposition leader Susanna Swaraj, who was part of the team to select the next CVC, raised this issue at the meeting that cleared Mr Thomas' name. She had told the meeting that it will not be proper to appoint a person whose name figured in a vigilance case as CVC. If they feel that Mr Thomas merits a post-retirement job, they should have considered him for some other assignment," Ms Swaraj said.

But what could make his tenure more controversial is that one of the major tasks of the CVC is to unravel the 2G spectrum scandal. There have been reports of the telecom department under Mr Thomas trying to place handles on a CVC probe. In a recent note to the law department, telecom department's legal advisor Santosh Singh had said bodies like CVC have no power to challenge policy decisions of the department. This stand had invited adverse reaction from the law ministry.

At a meeting of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, home minister P Chidambaram and Ms Swaraj on Friday, the government maintained that Mr Thomas was the right choice as CVC when Ms Swaraj pointed out that he cannot be expected to conduct a credible probe into the 2G spectrum allocation. Ms Swaraj alleged that the government had virtually presented a one-man panel as it was not willing to consider anyone else.

Meanwhile, 'friendly' bureaucrats are waiting for the next biggest appointment spree—six members of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) including that of the vice-chairman. NDMA, formed after the 2004 tsunami disaster, had shown how bureaucrats convert even national tragedies into opportunity for post-retirement jobs.

Hectic lobbying is already on for the job of vice-chairman of the organisation headed by the prime minister. It's a tough race as three between three officials—Mr N Madhavan Nambiar, Mr M Ramachandran and T Nanda Kumar. Sources say that Mr Nambiar is the front-runner.
‘In the event of a nuclear incident, victims must get prompt compensation’

Interview with Dr. Srikumar Banerjee, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission.

While the Lok Sabha passed the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Bill, 2010, on August 25, the Rajya Sabha passed it five days later. In this context, Srikumar Banerjee, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), spoke to T.S. Subramanian on September 2 in Chennai. Dr. Banerjee answered questions about the Bill, India’s nuclear-powered submarine programme, the uranium enrichment capability and so on. Excerpts.

It is a year since India’s nuclear-powered submarine, Arihant, was launched. Has the Light Water Reactor (LWR), using enriched uranium as fuel, on board the submarine been started up?

Our nuclear steam supply system is ready 100 per cent. From our (DAE) side, everything is ready. We are only waiting for other systems to become operational so that we can start the commissioning activity of the reactor. I really do not know when the harbour trials will be done.

The Navy will need three or four nuclear-powered submarines for this arm to be a viable force. Will you build more LWRs for these submarines?

We are already doing that. I will not be able to tell you the number, but it is a fact that we are in that game. The next nuclear steam generating plants are getting ready for future applications.

Where will the enriched uranium for these submarines come from? There is only one Rare Materials Plant at Ratnagiri, near Mumbai, to produce enriched uranium. Will the proposed Special Material Enrichment Facility in Chittoor district in Karnataka be helpful?

Chittoor will come a little later, not immediately. Our Ratnagiri plant capacity has been enhanced. But more than that, there is significant improvement in our technology. Usually, a term called Separating Work Units (SWUs) defines the technology level that we have achieved in this, and I can assure you that there has been considerable improvement in SWUs of our next generation centrifuges. The separating capacity of our centrifuges has improved. So total capacity enhancement at Ratnagiri has been done. We are confident of supplying the entire fuel for the set of...

You cannot say anymore that India does not have enrichment technology. India has its own technology and we can produce [enriched uranium]. We have not started doing it for large-scale commercial nuclear power stations, which require a much larger quantity of enriched uranium. We will be able to do that once we go to Chittoor.

There is an impression that the

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) were scaringmongering that the American companies would not give India nuclear reactors and that the Indian companies would not provide components and equipment to them in clause 17(a) of the Civil Liability for the Nuclear Damage Bill, 2010, remained in the legislation. Clause 17(a) says that “the operator of the nuclear installation, after paying the compensation for nuclear damage in accordance with section 6, shall have a right of recourse where - (a) such right is expressly provided for in a contract in writing; (b) the nuclear incident has resulted as a consequence of an act of supplier or his employee, which incurs supply of equipment or material with patent or latent defects or sub-standard services; (c) the nuclear incident has resulted from the act of commission or omission of an individual done with the intent to cause nuclear damage”. Top officials of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) went on record that clause 17(a) would deter the suppliers from engaging in nuclear commerce with India. Why are the DAE/the NPCIL ratting for the American suppliers?

No. Before discussing the right of recourse of the operator, let me tell you about the basic purpose behind the introduction of the nuclear liability Bill. In the very unlikely event of a nuclear incident, we do not want the victims to go for an extended process of litigation to claim compensation. The victims must get prompt and no-fault compensation. Prompt in terms of time, and no-fault meaning that you don’t have to prove the fault of the operator or anyone to get the compensation.

The Bill identifies clearly who takes the liability. It is clear that the liability is taken by the operator. There are many unique apprehensions that all this is being done for the private sector’s entry into the Indian nuclear business. Private participation even today is very high. If you look at the nuclear industry in India, all the major manufacturers of equipment and components are in the private sector. However, for this Bill, there is a specific requirement that the nuclear power plant operator will be either the Government itself or a Government company, as defined in the Atomic Energy Act. So this apprehension that this is only a precursor to allowing the private sector to come in as operators of nuclear power plants is totally dispelled.

The second point is the supplier’s liability. What is the meaning of the phrase, “the right of recourse of the operator”? It means the operator first takes his own liability to compensate the victims and after the compensations are paid, he has the right of recourse to sue the suppliers, provided he has definite proof of faulty supply (in the equipment) which has been the primary cause of the incident. The Bill establishes prompt compensation from the operator to the victim.

This whole Bill is between the victims and the operators. It creates a new legal authority called the Claims Commission or the Claims Commissioner. That authority will determine, depending on the scale of the event, how much compensation should be given. The Bill also mentions that the Indian laws, whatever is available today, are in no way affected by the introduction of this new Act. The right of recourse in case this is available to the operator through other Acts also.

Tort law?

Tort is there. Defect liability is there. Only in this Act, it has been mentioned that they have the right of recourse [the DAE] are not taking sides. We just want to make a victim-friendly legislation and make the operator liable. One of the points is that you are inculcating safety-consciousness in the operator because you are introducing a heavy liability in case any incident occurs which affects the people. We sincerely believe that no situation will arise where it will be necessary to invoke this law.

There was an attempt in June to delete clause 17(b). There was a DAE internal note to that effect.

It was not an attempt.

The rationale is that there was pressure on the DAE from the Prime Minister’s Office to delete the clause.

No. Let me explain. There are two contradictory requirements. On one side, you have to look at the international practice, what are the laws available in several countries. In most of these legislations, there is no mention of the right of recourse... In some way, there is a mention and statements are similar to what is indicated in 17(a) and (g).

On the other side, we see the pressure of getting equipment and components from several suppliers, in case a fault in any of them leads to a nuclear accident, there should be some suppliers’ responsibility. This is the contradiction.

That is why this point was discussed in detail during several discussions of the Parliamentary Standing Committee. Based on its recommendations and a broad political consensus, the present language in clause 17 was evolved.

Was there no pressure at all from the American suppliers to remove 17(b)?

It is a legislation made in India. So we have to ensure that it is India-centric. It cannot be based on what you are calling pressures from other countries. In any case, there will be many things published in the press, many things expressed. But you cannot say that an Indian lobby is being created by pressure from other countries.
Check ragging, Pratibha tells teachers

"Students should be made to think in terms of welfare of humankind and progress of nation"

NEH RUNG: President Pratibha Patil on Sunday expressed concern over incidents of ragging in educational institutions and asked teachers to take steps to prevent the menace.

Speaking at a function get up to present National Awards to teachers on Teachers' Day, Ms. Patil said ragging must be strongly condemned and it should not take place in any institution of the country.

"Today, one sees the disturbing trend of ragging in our institutions of higher education. I have often said that this practice is not healthy, as it is a manifestation of intolerance on the part of senior students towards their juniors, who are new to the campus. You have a role in preventing it," she said.

Pointing out that in today's world it was all the more necessary that children understand the inter-linkages with others countries, as also the human values of love, respect and tolerance, which were essential for a peaceful world, the President said it was therefore, vital that teachers emphasised the importance of respect for people who were part of the country's ancient civilizational heritage. Students should be made to think in terms of the welfare of humankind and progress of the nation.

"I am sure all teachers, whether they teach social sciences, environmental studies, science or mathematics, subjects very important in themselves, would also instil in their students a sense of pride in our cultural heritage," she said.

Schools were the basic units of an educational system, where children spend the formative years of their lives. "It is here that the process of learning begins, and the opportunity is given to children to acquire skills and values necessary for their growth as confident and self-assured adults," she added.

"A milestone" Ms. Patil said, "The coming into force of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act is a milestone. It places greater responsibility on all stakeholders. The challenge before teachers is to ensure that children actively participate in educational activities. They, particularly in rural and remote areas, should hold classes regularly and see students to attend school every day.

They should remain in contact with parents and pay particular attention to the difficulties that their students may face."

Students should be made aware of the many hours of hard work and the reality that along with opportunities, there would invariably be obstacles and difficulties. "Challenges are a daily occurrence; we should not get intimidated by them, but rather learn to surmount them. As self-discipline is one quality that can help tide over many difficulties, due emphasis must be placed on this aspect," she said.

Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal asked the State governments to prepare enforceable rules to ensure a rational and transparent system of postings and transfers in the light of the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act.

"Domestic responsibilities" it should also be kept in mind that women teachers have demanding domestic responsibilities and their special circumstances should be given due consideration," Ms. Sibal added.

He also laid emphasis on full involvement of teachers in school management committees. The country could not afford to ignore the presence of information from daily monitoring of substitute teachers. "There should be no compromise with the errant behaviour of teachers."
Safety concerns vs privacy issues

India re-thought its cyber strategy after the Mumbai terrorist attacks and demanded more access to the electronic data that emanated from its shores. International service providers like BlackBerry, Google and Skype now have to respond to our national security concerns.

Booze Ban

Blackberry banned first, and the government gave in a 60-day reprieve to find a way to meet India's terrorist concerns first. It is still not clear how spooks have on some BlackBerry services in India. Sooner or later, the government announced that it would ban BlackBerry, but there comes the question of how they ensure that they comply with laws that require them to provide access to security agencies in India.

The genesis of the present showdown goes back to the horrific Mumbai terrorist attacks of November 26, 2008, in which cell phones, Internet phones and other electronic devices were used by terrorists to plot and carry out the attacks and their handlers. The government then decided to act in a decisive manner so that it would have access to all forms of electronic data that goes out of India. Unlike other service providers like Google Inc, Nokia and Microsoft Corp. BlackBerry uses its own servers and security software, as well as centralised data centers for its own and other companies' data. India's own spooks, working on the premise that BlackBerry is a closed system, announced that they would ban it.

Indian government says it is not possible to monitor the data in any way without physically accessing the BlackBerry devices.

The Indian government has donated to the Indian government for the last time with the help of the BlackBerry France organization. The crack down on the Blackberry services was led by the government in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

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Developer Sues

Corrupt September and one reason why the BlackBerry would have been used in Mumbai was its own servers and security software, as well as centralised data centers for its own and other companies’ data. India’s own spooks, working on the premise that BlackBerry is a closed system, announced that they would ban it.

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Indian stand

The Indian government is not ready to soften its stance on the issue of surveillance through the telecom network infrastructure in India. It states that it has no intention of giving up any of its national security concerns or the national importance of its own infrastructure. It is not sure if it will be able to have access to the data on the BlackBerry services.

Where they are based

Blackberry is headquartered in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. It is a major player in the smartphone market with devices such as the BlackBerry Bold, BlackBerry Storm, and BlackBerry Torch.

What is Skype?

Skype is a software application that allows users to make voice and video calls over the internet. It is owned by Microsoft and is available on most operating systems.
BlackBerry and national security

Different governments have different issues in relation to BlackBerry-maker RIM.

In general, the law is known as Lawful Interception (LI). In the US there is Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA). Research In Motion (RIM) was an anomaly in the past because it provided no lawful intercept capability to European Union countries. Now RIM devices in Europe and the US are already subject to lawful intercepts.

DEALING WITH BLACKBERRY
There are times when national security takes precedence over corporate security concerns. In such a scenario, RIM must either deliver what is required by India, or find other markets where it can escape with the standard slogan about BlackBerry being 'interception proof'.

A number of European governments have threatened to ban the use of BlackBerry in their country, citing threat to security. In Europe, many countries had to force RIM to provide access to information that crosses their service networks. Others decided to directly ban BlackBerry usage for high officials, because of servers located in the UK and the US.

Indian Context
We are at a critical point in national security and time is always of the essence. When the nation's security is at risk, due to RIM's system of encrypting data and retaining them in third country servers, India's Home Ministry should not grant to RIM any latitude whatsoever. BlackBerry services in India must be discontinued, till national security concerns are completely resolved and restored.

The Union Government can issue a notification under Section 70 of the Information Technology Act 2000 and declare RIM systems relating to India and their networks extended to India as a 'protected system'. The Government ought to direct RIM to discontinue its services in India until it relocates its server in India, decrypts customer data and content and subjects its systems and networks to scrutiny by the government agencies concerned.

As for the users, the days of unqualified privacy are gone forever.

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