

Newspaper Clips

April 24, 2012

FINANCIAL EXPRESS
ND 24/04/2012

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IIT Bombay to enter New York in six-member consortium

Express News Service

Mumbai, Apr 23: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, plans to set up a Centre for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) in Brooklyn, New York City, in a consortium mode. The centre will be set up jointly by IIT Bombay and five other institutions that include New York University, University of Toronto, University of Warwick (UK), City University of New York and Carnegie Mellon University.

The New York City Economic Development Corporation had launched an initiative in December 2010, which sought a university, institution or consortium to develop and operate a new or expanded campus in NYC, USA. The six-member consortium was declared the second winner of this initiative on Monday.

The consortium proposes to create an applied science institute which will focus on researching and developing solutions to complex urban challenges, locally and even globally. "It will be the first such entity by an Indian institution in the US in a consortium mode," said AQ Contractor, dean of alumni and corporate relations, IIT Bombay.

■ **Continued on Page 2**

IIT Bombay...

Even as NYC will be used as a real-life setting for research and development work, they aim to work with municipal agencies in partner cities by focusing on actual problems, while simultaneously applying solutions to real settings. A similar centre will be set up at IIT Bombay to look at problems of Indian mega-cities in particular.

"The CUSP will look at all areas like health, sanitation, communication, water, schools, transportation among others. The centre will have 50 faculty members, equal number of post-doctorates and 100-200 students in the first year. The number of students will go up to 500-600 in five years," said professor S Chaudhuri, dean of international relations at IIT Bombay. It will be located at 370 Jay Street in Brooklyn, in an already existing building, opposite the Brooklyn Poly. The centre will offer a master's programme, an executive programme and interdisciplinary PhD programme, all in the area of urban science and engineering. The New York University is leading the consortium.

"The centre presents a great new opportunity to address the challenges of megacities by the generation of new knowledge using New York City as its laboratory and by imparting education with a focus on the planning, building and managing megacities. The centre's work will benefit New York City directly and will provide a template to address many issues of megacities, in general. The issues of our home city, Mumbai, will provide unique new insights and will be a source of ideas for the work of the Center," said IIT Bombay director Devang Khakhar.

Times Of India ND 24/04/2012 p-13

IIT-B to set up campus in NY, study infra issues

Mumbai: The Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B), along with five other universities, will establish a centre for urban science and progress (CUSP) in Brooklyn, New York (NY). New York will be the laboratory as the six institutes develop solutions for 'regenerating' the city's infrastructure — the buildings and services dating back to the 17th century.

The consortium, comprising IIT-B, New York Universi-

ty (NYU), City University, NY, Warwick University, UK, Toronto University and Carnegie Mellon, will set up an applied science institute offering a full-time master's programme, executive programmes and PhD, all in the area of urban science.

The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), which had invited universities from around the world to come to NY to fuel research for exist-

ing industries, declared CUSP as second runner-up on Monday out of all the entries it received. The Cornell/Technion Consortium was the winner and it will set up a campus on Roosevelt Island.

IIT-B director Devang Khakhar said, "The centre presents a new opportunity to address the challenges of megacities. The work of the centre will also provide a template to address issues of megacities in general." **TNN**

Business Standard ND 24/04/2012

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IIT-B, partners to set up US institute

The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-B) has formed a consortium with other universities in the US, to create an applied science institute in New York. IIT-B in a press statement said the applied science institute would be created by a consortium of universities led by New York University. Carnegie Mellon University, City University of New York, University of Toronto and University of Warwick will be academic partners. IBM, Cisco and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority will also join in as industry partners. The consortium has forged a partnership to establish the Center for Urban Science and Progress in downtown Brooklyn.

BS REPORTER

Times Of India ND 24/04/2012

p-15

Decks cleared for building IIT Indore campus: The land row for the proposed IIT Indore's campus has been settled now, thus paving the way for the institution to have its own campus with an estimated cost of Rs 2,000 cr.

out to oppn leaders - 24 Apr 20...

<http://paper.hindustantimes.com/epaper/serv>

Sibal reaches out to oppn leaders

HT Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: At the receiving end of the opposition's ire against his legislative agenda, HRD minister Kapil Sibal is reaching out to key parties to iron out the differences.

With 16 bills related to education sector pending before Parliament and hardly any movement in the past two sessions on important legislations, Sibal met Leader of Opposition of Rajya Sabha Arun Jaitley.

"I have also fixed an appointment with BSP chief Mayawati and will also meet SP chief Mulayam Singh Yadav. I was to resolve the differences, if there are any," Sibal told reporters.

While bills related to HRD ministry could be passed in the Lok Sabha, the minister is facing problems particularly in Rajya Sabha, where the UPA is in a minority. The BJP, SP and BSP have 49, 9 and 15 MPs respectively in the Upper House.

Sibal also continued his emotional appeal: "Many of these bills are related to the future of our children. I don't think parties will have any fundamental

SIBAL HAS MET ARUN JAITLEY AND IS SET TO MEET BSP, SP CHIEFS TO IRON OUT DIFFERENCES OVER VARIOUS BILLS

differences on issues that relates to the future of the country's children."

Signaling his intention to push the pending list of bills, Sibal has also listed two bills—the central educational institutions (reservation in admission) bill and amendments to Right to Education—for Tuesday, the opening day of the second half of the budget session.

"The pending bills include almost 80-90% of the recommendations of the standing committees," Sibal said, driving home the point that the government is responsive towards the wishes of different political parties.

A section of the Congress, however, feels that Sibal may have to calibrate his ministry's equation with different stakeholders and states to ensure smoother passage for the bills.

DNA Pune 23.02.2012 P-3

Lecture series on energy at IIT-I from Tuesday

● **OUR STAFF REPORTER**
Indore

The Indian Institute of Technology, Indore has organised a series of lectures on issues related to energy from April 24 to 27. The key-note speaker is Dr Ing Habil Manfred Groll, who is a professor emeritus of University Stuttgart, Germany. Dr Groll had chaired the Department of Energy Conversion and Heat Transfer at the Institute of Nuclear Technology and Energy Systems

(IKE) and had also worked for two years at NASA Ames Research Centre on the development of heat pipe technology for satellite applications.

He would deliver lecture on "Energy Supply Options for the 21st Century" on April 26.

Besides him, other speakers too would give lectures on subject related to energy.

The inaugural lecture would be given on "Energy and Society" on April 24 while subject for April

25 and April 27 are Hydrogen - Electricity Energy Economy and Heat Pipe Science & Technology.

The IIT Indore said that the lectures by eminent scientists would expose students to know the energy challenges the world in general and India in particular are facing.

The institute believes that the knowledge gained during the lecture series would encourage students to work in the field of energy generation through renewal sources.

FE New Economy

REBOOTING THE SYSTEM

Grads from top B-schools, IITs make a beeline for e-tailing cos

RAJ Kuruhuri, 24, has been working for e-commerce start-up BuyThePrice.com for over a month now. Kuruhuri, who graduated from IIM-Indore this year, opted to join the online deals site that started only in late 2010, rejecting offers from major technology players. The meteoric rise of the e-commerce segment in the last one year is driving sharp minds from the country's premier B-schools and engineering colleges to be a part of the sunrise industry.

This year, Snapdeal made over 20 offers across IIMs and 75 at IITs, e-tailer of books and electronics Flipkart hired 120 graduates from IITs and 23 from IIMs and other top B-schools. Online fashion store Myntra hired seven IIT graduates, five from ISB, and two from the IIMs this year. Naaptol, which was among the first-timers at the IIM campuses this year, made 15 offers across leading management schools, including Narsee Moonjee and ISB, all of which were accepted.

Industry experts point out that it is the prospect of bigger responsibilities and faster growth that are driving the graduates to look for opportunities in the e-commerce space. "I was looking at various sunrise sectors, but I was particularly interested in e-commerce because of the pace at which it is growing. What worried me about joining an established firm, is that I feared getting lost amongst 150,000 other employees, without ever knowing what my work was actually amounting to," says Kuruhuri.

In his one-month stint with BuyThePrice, Kuruhuri has laid his hands across departments, including sales, operations, promotions and category development. "This in a big firm would be unimaginable. Also, the people you work with drive a lot of passion into you, because their lives are built around their organisations," he says.

This year, of the total 423 offers at IIM-Bangalore, 4% were from the e-commerce firms. The first-timers among the e-commerce companies this year at IIM campuses include RedBus, Valyoo Technologies, Via, and Naaptol.

"We went to the IIMs for the first time this year. A total of 15 offers were made across the top-tier B-schools, all of which were accepted. Average salaries for IIM grads was ₹12 lakh, others were ₹6-9 lakh. We hired 10 IIT graduates with a package of about ₹6-9 lakh as well," says



The meteoric rise of the e-commerce segment in the last one year is driving sharp minds from the country's premier B-schools and engineering colleges to be a part of the sunrise industry

Naaptol.com e-commerce head Sachin Singhal. The company has a staff strength of 1,500 and is adding 70 people every month.

According to an IIM-B report, the e-commerce sector this year was represented by Flipkart, InfoEdge, Snapdeal and Amazon. Flipkart recruited six students offering senior manager profile in sales and marketing, and supply chain. Companies feel that there aren't many experienced people in the e-commerce space yet, and supply and demand are not proportionate. "The obvious place to look for is these colleges, where they may not be experienced in the field, but are definitely bright enough to work in it," adds Sachin.

Recruiters point out that the age profile of the candidates from top B-schools are between 25-30 years and they look for jobs that offer areas to explore. They have a huge appetite for learning and start-ups give them that opportunity.

Notwithstanding the global recessionary trends, 2011 witnessed a resurgence of the e-commerce sector. The largest investments in the space till date came last year when Snapdeal.com raised \$40 million from Bessemer Venture Partners and Fashionandyou.com raised \$40 million from a group of investors led by Norwest Venture Partners and Intel Capital. In all, in 2011, this space saw 32 investments.

"In the last one year, the sector was successful in attracting a lot of funding from major VC/PE players that equipped the e-commerce players to pay heavy cheques to get talents from top management and engineering institutes. Money, and at the same time chance to do something new and exciting attracts these

candidates," said Sangeeta Lala, senior vice-president (sourcing), of staffing company TeamLease Services.

Average salary offered by an e-commerce company to an IIM graduate varies between ₹12-15 lakh. While at IITs it is between ₹7-10 lakh. "Salaries for tech and management freshers have been in the range of ₹12-15 lakh annually plus ESOPs and other benefits. For laterals, compensation was adjusted accordingly. At ISB it was in the range of ₹20-25 lakh because of lateral hires," says Myntra.

"This year, we have made about 20 offers across IIMs and 75 in IITs. We have hired from top-tier schools for functions across marketing, sales, operations, product management, and vendor management. This year for the first time we visited IIM campuses," said head of marketing at Snapdeal.com Sandeep Komarvelley. Snapdeal, which currently has 1,200 people, started its operations in February 2010.

However, some are of the opinion that it is not always that start-ups can match the offers of other big players but try to match them with benefits like ESOPs. "Start-ups can't always match salaries quoted by the biggies, but we do tend to make up with perks like ESOPs. This has more to do than providing a monetary value. It instills a sense of entitlement, and ownership, and in many ways makes people want to do better," says Buytheprice.com founder and CEO Ranjith Boyanapalli. The firm made two offers in IIM, Indore and Ahmedabad this year and both were accepted. Operational for two years now, the company currently has about 70 employees.

— Debojyoti Ghosh & Shreya Roy

EXPERTSPEAK

MUKESH BANSAL,
founder and CEO,
Myntra.com



The e-commerce market has started growing exponentially since 2010 creating a demand for qualified talent. Competitive salaries, ESOPs and faster growth opportunities in the sector have attracted a lot of talent across premium institutes to opt for e-commerce jobs by giving traditional recruiters a miss

SANDEEP KOMARVELLEY,
head of marketing,
Snapdeal.com



This year we have made about 20 offers across IIMs and 75 in IITs. The phenomenal growth in e-commerce is driving young B-school grads to want a piece of the pie. It is the prospect of having bigger responsibilities and faster growth that make these graduates look towards e-commerce start-ups

SACHIN SINGHAL,
head of e-commerce,
Naaptol.com

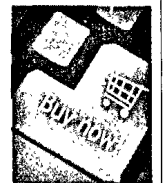


There aren't many experienced people in the e-commerce space yet, and supply and demand are not proportionate. The obvious place to look for is these colleges, where they may not be experienced but are definitely bright enough to work in it. We went to the IIMs for the first time this year.

STATFACTS

RETAIL DEAL:

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- Flipkart hired 120 graduates from IITs and 23 from IIMs and other top B-schools
- Average salary offered to an IIM graduate is between ₹12-15 lakh, while for IITs ₹7-10 lakh
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Hindustan Times ND 24/04/2012

p-15

'Ved Prakash can apply again for UGC post'

HT Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: University Grants Commission (UGC) vice-chairman and acting head Ved Prakash is entitled to re-apply for the post, which is in the process of being filled, say UGC officials.

"There can be no restriction on the part of an academician such as our present head of the institution to offer his candidature for the post," said a senior UGC official. A section of the academic opinion had alleged that a bid is being made to to re-appoint him to the post through questionable means, but these charges are rubbished by UGC officials.

Alleging that Prakash's three-year tenure had lapsed on March 3, 2012, and his date of joining (May 8, 2012) had been "forged", the Society for Values and Ethics in Education had complained to the Prime Minister that the advertisement

for the post had been made in a hushed manner on the website on April 4 to re-appoint him.

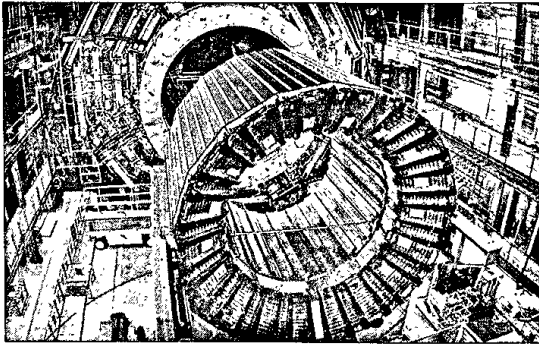
However, UGC officials point out that Ved Prakash, then Vice-Chancellor of NUEPA, had just been given additional charge as UGC vice-chairman in February-end, 2009, and that he had taken the additional charge on March 2, 2009.

It was months later, on May 8, 2009 that the government appointed him UGC vice-chairman for a period of three years and he was relieved from NUEPA the same day to do so. In other words, his three-year term hasn't lapsed yet.

As for the charge that there is a 'bid' to re-appoint him surreptitiously, sources in the Human Resource Development Ministry rubbished them, saying that the re-appointment process is transparent and all prominent higher institutions have been informed about it so that eligible candidates may apply.

Economic Times, ND
24/04/2012 P-4

Search & Science are Set to Collide at CERN Now



The Hadron Collider at CERN

OLGA KHARIF
BLOOMBERG

As a physicist for the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, or CERN, Andrei Golutvin spends his days smashing subatomic particles into one another at the Large Hadron Collider, a 16.8-mile ring of superconducting magnets buried 328 feet under Switzerland and France. The high-energy collisions of his experiment, one of four currently under way at the LHC, hint at the answers to some of nature's greatest mysteries — and generate about 20 billion data points each year. Searching the enormous archive for collisions that match specific criteria can take hours.

Golutvin got weary of waiting. A few months ago he asked for help from Yandex, the dominant Web search company in his native Russia, and on April 10 the two organisations unveiled the result of their collaboration. The custom-built search engine lets more than 700 physicists working on Golutvin's experiment instantly sift through about one-twentieth of the data they produce, and tailor searches by 600 criteria, such as time of collision. The Yandex software also produces QR codes to embed into scientific papers so that other scientists can easily access the underlying data with their smartphones. The tech "can shorten the chain from idea to realisation" of an experiment, says Golutvin.

Yandex is helping the research group for free and even lending the scientists server capacity: About 13% of the computing power for Golutvin's experiment is supplied by the Moscow-based company. Andrey Ustyuzhanin, a Yandex researcher, headed the search company's five-person team, which created the CERN tool in three months. The software crawled tens of thousands of files spread across CERN's servers, working at night while the scientists slept.

Only a portion of CERN's existing records have been crawled, but Ustyuzhanin wants to index all of the 20 billion or so particle collisions recorded this year—a number that exceeds the total volume of indexed Web pages.

The pro bono work could help Yandex hold its ground against Google, which has slowly but steadily gained market share in Russia and now controls 26% of searches. (Yandex accounts for 60%.) Giving away technology to CERN — where a young Tim Berners-Lee wrote the paper that laid the groundwork for the World Wide Web in 1989 — is a great marketing move, says Ram Akella, a professor of information systems and technology management at the University of California at Santa Cruz. Consumers might think, "If those smart people are using Yandex, maybe we should, too," he says. "It's about branding." It could help Yandex abroad, too. Since its \$1.3 billion US IPO in May 2011, Yandex has opened two offices in Switzerland and launched in Turkey.

Yandex's Ustyuzhanin says the company hasn't decided whether to undertake similar science projects in the future. There's definitely demand for it. As research becomes more computational, especially in fields such as genomics and biomedicine, scientists "are drowning in data, and they don't know how to find what they want," says Akella. Customised search for scientists "is the Holy Grail," he says. Google offers a tool called Fusion Tables that helps scientists collect, crunch, and share data. The company also donates some of its server capacity to run computations for select researchers.

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Hindustan Times ND p-15
24/04/2012

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LAUNCHING TWO FELLOWSHIPS FOR INDIAN STUDENTS

Prasad Nichenametla

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NEW DELHI: Imperial College London, one of the oldest and renowned UK institution, is launching two India specific fellowships this year.

The Imperial College India Foundation PhD Scholarships (ICIFS) would be announced in a few days and would be jointly funded by the Imperial College and its illustrious Indian alumni.

Cyrus Mistry, the successor at the vast Tata group, is one among the over 650 Indian alumnus (Civil Engineering, 1990) of the College. Over 220 students are pursuing various courses, at present.

The PhD fellowships will be in the field of engineering and business. It will be of three years duration, during which £ 40, 000 will be paid annually.

"There is a good response from the alumni to the idea of these fellowships. In fact, I learnt, it was a collective decision of the College and Indian alumni," Dr Simon Buckle, pro-rector for international relations, Imperial College told HT on sidelines of the UK-India Education and Research Initiative conference on skills development here.

"We plan to increase the number next year," Buckle added.

The Imperial College Business School had recently announced the Rajiv Gandhi Centre Scholarships (post graduate level) for Indian citizens to pursue the Imperial MBA. It will start from October 2012.

In 2007, it had established the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Hindu ND 24/04/2012 p-2

DU to decentralise SC/ST admissions

Vijetha S.N

NEW DELHI: Delhi University will be decentralising its admission process for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates for the upcoming academic year, making each college responsible for allotment of seats to SC/ST students instead of one centre at the University.

"The whole process used to be very unfair to these students; there was no question of choice regarding their course or college. It was decided instead by the central cell in the University which randomly allotted students to whichever course or college it felt like," said Academic Council member Sanjay Ku-

mar. "More often than not, the SC/ST students were usually allotted a course he or she did not want and it had become predictable for them to fare badly and eventually give up the course."

Special centre

According to the new set-up, each college will be required to set up a special centre to deal with allotment of seats for the SC/ST students. These centres will then be overseen by a central monitoring committee made up of the Executive Council and Academic Council members.

Several members from the two Councils had earlier recommended decentralisation to the Vice-Chancellor who

had agreed in-principle to the idea, but a positive decision sealing the issue is yet to be made. "The V-C said that we had his complete support and that great injustice had been done to the SC/ST candidates. He also said that the decentralisation was an attempt by the university to rectify past mistakes and that these poor students had suffered greatly only because of the rigid structure of the university's admission process," said another Academic Council member, adding that help-lines, facilitation centres and other methods of keeping a check on the issue were still being chalked out.

"There is a provision that unfilled SC/ST and OBC seats

can be converted into general seats if they remain vacant. Several colleges were alleged to have been taking advantage of this by not allotting the reserved seats and then converting them into the general category. There were also allegations of foul play by some colleges which said that there was no basis for the allotment of seats and that there could be some understanding between the central cell and the colleges....these are all allegations but they have to be taken seriously," he added.

The University is also expected to overhaul other admission procedures like re-introducing centralised application forms which were done away with last year.

Business Bhaskar ND 24/04/2012

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एईसीटीई ने पिछले वित्त वर्ष में तकनीकी व प्रबंधन कोर्सेज के संस्थानों पर गाज गिराई

कई वजहें

इन संस्थानों की मान्यता रद्द करने में कई अलग-अलग कारण रहे। किसी संस्थान के पास जमीन कम थी, तो किसी के पास फैकल्टी कम थी, किसी का इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर अच्छा नहीं था, तो कोई अवैध तरीके से चलाया जा रहा था।

सत्रह तकनीकी संस्थानों की मान्यता रद्द



अस्तित्व खत्म

किसी संस्थान की मान्यता रद्द होने के बाद राज्य सरकार और संबंधित विश्वविद्यालय को विद्यार्थियों को किसी दूसरे संस्थान में लेने के लिए पत्र लिखा जाता है। एआईसीटीई के लिए मान्यता रद्द होने वाले संस्थानों का अस्तित्व ही खत्म हो जाता है।

सबसे ज्यादा संस्थान
महाराष्ट्र व आंध्र प्रदेश के
प्रिंसी शर्मा • नई दिल्ली

निर्धारित मानकों को पूरा न कर पाने के कारण तकनीकी शिक्षा नियामक-ऑल इंडिया काउंसिल फॉर टेक्निकल एजुकेशन (एआईसीटीई) ने वर्ष 2011-12 में तकनीकी और प्रबंधन कोर्सेज की पढ़ाई कराने वाले 17 संस्थानों की मान्यता रद्द कर दी थी। इनमें देश के अलग-अलग राज्यों के संस्थान शामिल हैं। सबसे ज्यादा संस्थान महाराष्ट्र और आंध्र प्रदेश से हैं। इनमें से ज्यादातर संस्थानों के मामले कोर्ट में अभी लंबित हैं। सूत्रों के मुताबिक इन संस्थानों की मान्यता रद्द करने में कई अलग-अलग

कारण रहे। किसी संस्थान के पास जमीन कम थी, तो किसी के पास फैकल्टी कम थी, किसी का इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर अच्छा नहीं था, तो कोई अवैध तरीके से चलाया जा रहा था। इसके अलावा इनमें से कुछ पर सीबीआई के मामले भी चल रहे थे और इनकी मान्यता रद्द करने की सिफारिश सीबीआई ने की थी।

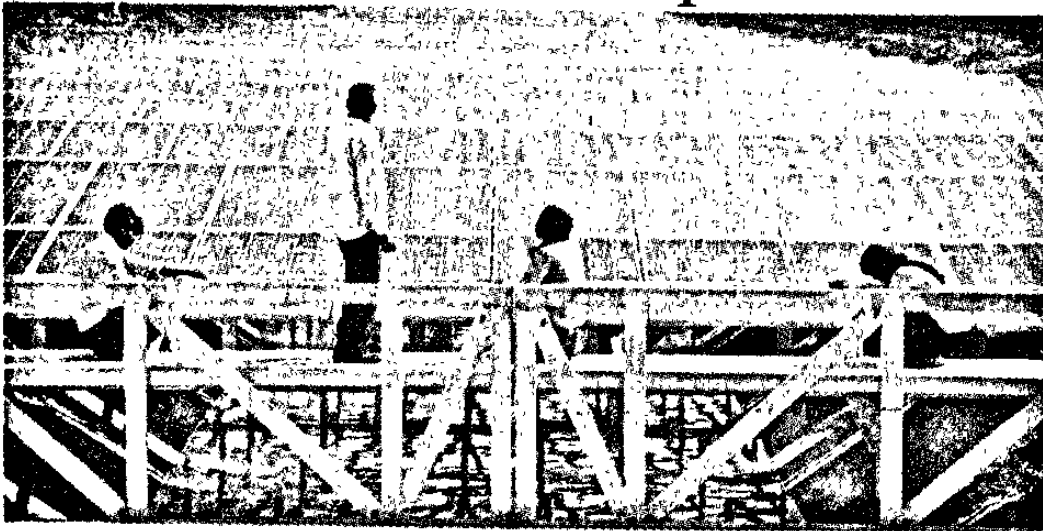
सूत्रों द्वारा दी गई जानकारी के मुताबिक ऐसे संस्थानों में सबसे ज्यादा पांच महाराष्ट्र और पांच आंध्र प्रदेश से हैं। उसके बाद दो हरियाणा, दो तमिलनाडु और दो ही झारखंड से हैं। इनमें पश्चिमी बंगाल का एक संस्थान भी शामिल है। मान्यता रद्द किए जाने के बाद की जाने वाली कार्रवाई पर एआईसीटीई के एक अधिकारी ने बताया कि किसी संस्थान की मान्यता रद्द होने के बाद राज्य सरकार

और संबंधित विश्वविद्यालय को छात्रों को किसी दूसरे संस्थान में स्थानांतरित करने के लिए पत्र लिखा जाता है और उस संस्थान में दाखिले बंद हो जाते हैं। एआईसीटीई के लिए उन संस्थानों का अस्तित्व ही नहीं होता।

इसके अलावा देश भर के 28 संस्थानों के एडमिशन कोटा को भी कम किया गया। इसमें से सबसे ज्यादा आठ मध्य प्रदेश के, उसके बाद चार महाराष्ट्र के और चार कर्नाटक के, तीन केरल के, दो पंजाब के और दो ही उत्तर प्रदेश के, एक राजस्थान का, एक दिल्ली का, एक आंध्र प्रदेश का, एक पश्चिमी बंगाल का और एक गुजरात का संस्थान शामिल है। एआईसीटीई के फैसले द्वारा निर्धारित मानकों को पूरा न कर पाने वाले संस्थानों पर इस तरह की कार्रवाई की जाती है।

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Now, Gujarat to cover Narmada canals with solar panels!



Canal solar power: Gujarat has attracted investments of Rs 9,000 crore so far on solar energy projects.

Virendra Pandit

Gandhinagar, April 23

Close on heels of commencing use of wastelands in northern districts and rooftops in towns and cities, Gujarat is set to potentially use the existing 19,000 km-long network of Narmada canals across the State for setting up solar panels to generate power.

The Chief Minister, Mr Narendra Modi, will inaugurate the first of a series of this project, known as Canal Solar Power Project, when he launches a 1 megawatt (mw) pilot project, which is already commissioned, on Narmada branch canal near Chandrasan village of Kadi taluka in Mehsana district on Tuesday.

Last week, he inaugurated a 600-MW solar power project spread across 11 districts. This included a 214MW Solar Power Park, the largest such generation centre at a single location in Asia. Also, Azure Power, leading independent power

producer in solar sector, announced a 2.5 MW rooftops project in Gandhinagar.

Gujarat, which invests nearly Rs 2,000 crore an year on renewable energy, has attracted investments of Rs 9,000 crore so far on solar energy projects.

The pilot project has been developed on a 750-m stretch of the canal by Gujarat State Electricity Corporation (GSECL) with support from Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd (SSNNL), which owns and maintains the canal network.

ENERGY, WATER SECURITY

The pilot project will generate 16 lakh units of clean energy per annum and also prevent evaporation of 90 lakh litres of water annually from the canal, an official told *Business Line* here on Monday. The concept will, therefore, tackle two of the challenges simultaneously by providing energy and water security.

The cost of per megawatt of

solar power, in this case, is likely to be much less than the estimated Rs 10-11 crore, as the two banks of the canal will be used to cover the canal by installing solar power panel and the government will not have to spend much on creating basic infrastructure, including land acquisition.

Today, Gujarat has about 458 km of open Main Canal, while the total canal length, including sub-branches, is about 19,000 km at present.

When completed, the SSNNL's canal network will be about 85,000 km long.

Assuming a utilisation of only 10 per cent of the existing canal network of 19,000 km, it is estimated that 2,200 MW of solar power generating capacity can be installed by covering the canals with solar panels.

This also implies that 11,000 acres of land can be potentially conserved along with about 2,000 crore litres of water saved per annum.