Newspaper Clips
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IIT Incubation Plans on Fast Track to Boost Startup Ideas

CULTURE SHIFT New incubator IIT Mandi Catalyst may be registered as a Section 8 company

Rica Bhattacharyya & Prachi Verma Dadhwal

Mumbai | New Delhi: In January, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi, was selected as one of 18 sites across the country for setting up technology business incubators under the government's 'Start-Up India' initiative. The premier institute is now working on its new technology business incubator, named IIT Mandi Catalyst.

IIT Patna recently received a total ₹47.1 crore from the central government's department of electronics and information technology and the Bihar government to set up an incubation centre for electronics system design and manufacturing (ESDM). The institute is approaching the ministry of human resource development and department of science and technology to set up another technology business incubator (₹5 crore) that will focus on agriculture, among other areas.

At a time when the government is pushing for startup incubation, a culture shift is underway at the new IITs, which have put their incubation plans on fast track. Several of the new IITs, including the ones in Patna, Ropar, Mandi, Gandhinagar and Hyderabad, are in the process of setting up new incubators and strengthening the existing ones.

"The government is giving so much importance to incubators that no one can ignore. The govern-

Gearing Up

IIT Patna setting up an incubation centre for Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM)

PLANNING AN INCUBATOR FOCUSING IN AGRICULTURE

IIT Ropar has reserved **10,000 square feet** for a technology business incubator

IIT Gandhinagar strengthening its existing **incubation facility**

"The govt is giving so much importance to incubators that no one can ignore. The government push definitely forms a background for the new culture of incubation at the new IITs"

MAYANK TIWARI
Associate Dean, Research & Development, IIT Patna

ment push definitely forms a background for the new culture of incubation at the new IITs," said Mayank Tiwari, associate dean, research and development, at IIT Patna. The institute is setting up the infrastructure for the incubators. Students have already started coming up with ideas and the institute is open to anyone from India who would like to incubate an idea.

"The promised funding for the incubator is encouraging the faculty and students towards a culture of incubation, said Bhavender Paul, professor-in-charge at IIT Mandi Catalyst. "They have begun to expect that they may receive support for any ventures they may start."

Paul said, "With the expectation that DST funding shall become avai-

lable soon for IIT Mandi Catalyst, our incubator expects to begin offering support to innovative ventures in a not too distant future." The facility at IIT Mandi, of about 11,000 sq ft, is expected to become operational this year. It will facilitate administrative and technical support for innovative startups.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the 'Start-Up India' initiative on Independence Day last year, and the action plan for it was rolled out in January. Among the many plans under the initiative, one is to set up 35 incubators in institutions.

"The idea is to push for more innovation among all IITs, including the newer ones. This will help generate confidence among students and faculty alike around innovation," said

SK Jain, director of IIT Gandhinagar. IIT Gandhinagar, which already has one incubation facility in place, will use the ₹5 crore it has received from the government to strengthen the existing centre.

"The one that is running currently is on a low key due to lack of funds, but now, with the grant from the government, we will be able operate on a larger scale," Jain said.

Meanwhile, IIT Mandi Catalyst is in the process of being registered as a Section 8 company. Initial funding is being provided by IIT Mandi and the National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board of the department of science & technology. In addition, the technology institute itself has been increasing awareness about startups through its entrepreneurship cell (E-Cell) and its entrepreneurship course. IIT Mandi already has had an E-Cell and has been offering an entrepreneurship course to nurture innovative ideas. Also, there is drive among the students to have their own startups. While some students are running their own startups in the 3rd and 4th year of their undergraduate degree, several faculty members too are exploring the possibility of their own startup.

Several of the new IITs, including the ones in Patna, Ropar and Hyderabad, are in the process of setting up new incubators

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Sanskrit only as elective subject in IITs, says Irani

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Union human resource development minister Smriti Irani on Thursday clarified that Sanskrit had been offered as an elective language subject in IITs to those who want to study it.

In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, Irani said that it was being done as per the recommendations of N Gopalawami committee report on reviving Sanskrit. The committee had suggested that IITs may facilitate study of science and technology as reflected in Sanskrit literature, along with inter-disciplinary study of Sanskrit and modern subjects.

"In consonance with the recommendations, IITs have been requested to offer Sanskrit as an elective subject or as a language course for students who wish to study the language," Irani said. To another question related to IITs, Irani said although 2,463 teaching positions in these institutes were vacant as on September 1, 2015, research scholars, contract adjuncts and visiting faculty more than adequately compensated for these vacancies.

Amar Ujala ND 29/04/2016
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अब आईआईटी में एडमिशन की दौड़

कानपुर (ब्यूरो)। ज्वाइंट एंट्रेंस एग्जाम (जेईई) मेन 2016 में सफल स्टूडेंट शुक्रवार से जेईई एडवांस 2016 के लिए ऑनलाइन रजिस्ट्रेशन करा सकेंगे। यह प्रक्रिया 4 मई तक चलेगी। इसका ब्योरा वेबसाइट www.jeeadv.ac.in पर उपलब्ध है। यह एग्जाम सिर्फ आईआईटी और आईएसएम धनबाद में एडमिशन के लिए कराया जाएगा। एनआईटी, ट्रिपल आईटी और सीएफटी की सीटें जेईई मेन की मेरिट से भरी जाती हैं। एग्जाम कराने की जिम्मेदारी आईआईटी गुवाहाटी की है लेकिन आईआईटी कानपुर नोडल सेंटर है। आईआईटी कानपुर परिक्षेत्र के जेईई चेयरमैन प्रो. एसएन सिंह ने बताया कि यूपी, उत्तराखंड और मध्य प्रदेश के अलग-अलग शहरों में एग्जाम होंगे। इसकी तैयारी पूरी कर ली गई है।

Irani unveils web platform for inclusive higher edu

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Irani-unveils-web-platform-for-inclusive-higher-edu/articleshow/52033876.cms

NEW DELHI: The HRD ministry has unveiled an ambitious plan to facilitate web-based learning, involving applying for courses and accessing material online, to increase the reach and quality of higher education.

HRD minister Smriti Irani in a tweet outlined the structure of Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (Swayam) which promises linkages and assistance for web-enabled learning.

The massive open online courses (MOOCS) platform will aim to create a student experience that begins with creating learning plans and providing information to prospective students about the courses that are available. The Swayam flow chart will allow students to check their eligibility and then proceed for preview and availability of teaching in fields of their interest.

The next step is contact with course coordinators for more detailed information. Application and successful registration lead to access to course materials as the learning process gets under way and now, as students begin following schedules, they can network with other learners to set up a shared workspace. These workspaces can be homes or any available public space and the interaction can go up with online communication with other course-takers.

Mid-module assessments and guidance from supervisors are intended to keep students on track and up to the mark in their academic work that includes self-assessment. Successful course completion will lead to earning credits followed by a course review exercise and the next level of learning in the programme will get under way. Completion of requisite number of modules will lead to qualification at par with regular learning.

The e-learning programme has been structured to deliver results and improve inclusion as the admission processes to colleges and schools are unable to accommodate a growing number of applicants.

Ghaziabad girl clears JEE, jumps to death in Kota

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/noida/Ghaziabad-girl-clears-JEE-jumps-to-death-in-Kota/articleshow/52034280.cms

JAIPUR: A day after JEE (Mains) results were announced, a 17-year-old IIT aspirant from Ghaziabad ended her life by jumping from the fifth floor of her apartment building in Kota on Thursday. In her suicide note, Kriti Tiwari said she was taking the extreme step as she wasn't satisfied with the results.

Kriti's death takes the total number of stress-related suicides this year by coaching students in the educational hub to five.

"Kriti has implied in the note that she didn't want to pursue engineering, but Bachelor of Science (BSc). She wanted to become an astrophysicist. It's strange because one can also become an astrophysicist after graduating from an IIT," said SHO of Jawahar Nagar police station Harshit Bharati, who is investigating the case. In her suicide note, written in English, Kriti apologized to her parents.

"Her JEE (Mains) results came out on Wednesday. Though the cut-off marks were 100, she scored 144. As per the coaching officials, it was a decent score and she had a good chance of cracking IIT," the SHO said. Her Class XII results are yet to be announced.

Bharati said Kriti had moved to Kota two years ago and was staying in the apartment in Ashirwad Angan near Om Tower. Though her father, who runs a travel agency, is based in Ghaziabad, her parents had arranged for one of them to stay with her at any time. "The girl took admission in a senior secondary school. She joined a coaching institute to prepare for IITsimultaneously," said the SHO. "When she took the extreme step on Thursday, her father was in Kota while the mother was in Ghaziabad," Bharati said. The family lives in Konark Enclave, Sector 17, Vasundhara.

How to clean Delhi's air

The task doesn't need another Odd-Even Scheme, but political will

PP SANGAL

THE Delhi government, earlier this year, started a road-rationing programme called the Odd-Even scheme. Phase-1 was from January 1-15, and phase-2 is going on (April 15-30). The scheme has been implemented with the hope that it would significantly reduce the city's air pollution. The moot question is, whether it has?

The evaluation studies done by several reputed organisations—Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), SAFAR, IIT Kanpur, Teri, CSE and IIT Delhi—are conflicting and, thus, confusing. It has not been proved conclusively that the scheme did reduce air pollution. Different weather conditions on different days made the impact more difficult to gauge. Our inference is not going to be any different at the end of phase-2, according to research institutions. So, what should be the right strategy to combat air pollution?

Researchers have found that the entire fleet of vehicular traffic in Delhi is responsible for emitting only 9% of PM2.5 and 20% of PM10 particles, in addition to 36% nitrogen oxide. The major portion of 36% PM2.5 and 66% PM10 comes from dust produced by construction activities, road cleaning and by burning biomass in and around Delhi. The industrial stack emits a significant 10% each of PM2.5 and PM10, and 52% nitrogen oxide. Passenger cars contribute only 9% of total vehicular emissions while two-wheelers—exempted from the scheme—contribute 60% to air pollution. It has been estimated by CPCB that reduction in PM2.5, PM10 and nitrogen oxide were 0.28%, 0.65% and 1.86%, respectively, after phase-1, which is modest.

Analysis of data during phase-1 shows there was a reduction of about 20% in the number of cars on roads, but this slight advantage has been offset by the increase of up to 26% per hour flow in two-wheelers and up to 16% increase in buses. It is interesting to note that the reduction in the number of cars on the roads during phase-2 is less as compared to phase-1, and people are in the process of buying a second car. This suggests that Odd-Even did not serve the cause of either reducing air pollution or decongestion. Delhi government can, at best, be credited for creating awareness about the city's deadly air.

It is evident that the government has to adopt a different strategy to combat air pollution. We can learn from global examples—such as Beijing (where closest comparison can be made), Mexico City and Bogota (Columbia).

First, the surface public transport system need to be augmented to 12-13,000 buses; currently it is 5,000. This would require a large funding, but sources have to be found out. Beijing, for instance, has increased its expenditure on public transport from 18% to 59% over the years. Buses should be more comfortable and well-maintained, to attract the well-heeled Delhiites. This need be done in about three years, with all urgency. Simultaneously, there has to be an increase in metro-rail network. The government should promote car pooling by taxi aggregators by providing suitable incentives in matter of fixing fares. To encourage the use of bicycles, dedicated tracks are needed. Our footpaths have to be properly paved and kept free from encroachments. It should be made mandatory for all schoolchildren to use only school buses and not cars; currently, about 50% schoolchildren in Delhi commute via private cars. Mexico City has started a 'Scholar Bus' campaign, making it compulsory for students to use school buses. Such steps would automatically reduce the use of private cars/taxis and two- and three-wheelers. Since we are laying great emphasis on the use of public transport, it is essential that the central government ensures the availability of BS-5 or BS-6 norms compliant buses and other vehicles within the stipulated time-frame.

Considering the success of Bogota's 112-km-long BRTS, the same can be adopted in Delhi, provided the three basic features of a BRTS—flexibility, accessibility and cost-effectiveness—are fulfilled. The Delhi government is thinking of an elevated BRTS corridor, which clearly can't meet these requirements. The government must get its concept right, as the memories of our failed BRTS still haunts us.

> Delhi needs over 12,000 buses; currently there are 5,000. Construction activity produces a lot of dust; violators must be fined. At the same time, vacuum-cleaning of roads should begin. Potholes need to be repaired as they lead to traffic jams and hence more pollution

Second, DPCC should impose heavy fines, say ₹50,000 per day, on construction companies for non-compliance of dust control measures as recommended by NGT, and order closure of such activities if violations continue.

Simultaneously, vacuum-cleaning of all PWD roads should be started. It has been seen that plantation around footpaths and roads can also mitigate dust.

Third, biomass burning should be stopped. We can develop an app for complaints against waste burning and polluting vehicles.

Fourth, all MCD parking lots made on PWD roads should be removed and the government should seek land from DDA at nominal rates for parking trucks/buses. Bus lanes need to be properly demarcated and cleared of all encroachments. At the same time, potholes need to be repaired as they lead to traffic jams and hence more pollution.

Fifth, although Rajghat Power Station has been closed, but there has to be action on closure of Dadri plant. Flyash from Badarpur plant has to be managed.

Sixth, industrial units in and around Delhi have failed to control their emissions. They should be fined for violating environmental laws.

The objective of cleaning Delhi's toxic air can only be realised by expeditiously implementing all the measures suggested above and not by resorting to Odd-Even scheme again. The task is doable, given the desired political will.

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