Newspaper Clips
April 6-7, 2013

April 6

Rashtrya Sahara ND 06/04/2014 P-16

आईआईटी ने बनाया हीमोग्लोबिन मापक यंत्र

नई दिल्ली। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) दिल्ली की टैक्निकल बिजनेस इनक्यूबेटर इकाई स्थित नई कंपनी 'रिग नैनो सिस्टम्स' ने खून में हीमोग्लोबिन मापने का अपनी किस्म का पहला यंत्र तैयार किया है।

कंपनी के संस्थापक और प्रबंध निदेशक अंबर श्रीवास्तव ने कहा, 'दुनियाभर में खून की जांच सुविधाओं की उपलब्धता और उन तक सरल पहुंच आज भी चुनौती है। हमारा इरादा प्रारम्भिक चिकित्सा देखभाल को सशक्त बनाना है। इसके लिए हमने पहला उत्पाद, जेब में रखने लायक रक्त परीक्षण उपकरण 'टू एचबी हीमोमीटर' पेश किया है।'

कंपनी की यहां जारी विज्ञप्ति के अनुसार हीमोमीटर बेहतर सुविधाजनक और पोर्टेबल उपकरण है। यह रिचार्जेबल है और स्पष्ट परिणाम उपलब्ध कराता है। एक बार चार्ज होने पर इससे 200 टेस्ट किए जा सकते हैं और यह 1000 रीडिंग स्टोर कर सकता है। श्रीवास्तव ने बताया कि यह उपकरण एक-दो महीने में बाजार में आ जाएगा। अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान भी इसका परीक्षण कर चुका है और उसने इसे उपयुक्त पाया है। (भाषा)

- 'टू एचबी हीमोमीटर' बेहद सुविधाजनक है इसको जेब में आसानी से रख सकते हैं
- हीमोमीटर रिचार्जेबल है और स्पष्ट परिणाम उपलब्ध कराता है
- एक बार चार्ज होने पर इससे 200 टेस्ट किए जा सकते हैं
- यह 1000 रीडिंग स्टोर कर सकता है
- बाजार में यह उपकरण एक-दो महीने में उपलब्ध हो जाएगा

Veer Arjun ND 06/04/2014 P-11

आईआईटी दिल्ली स्थित कंपनी ने बनाया हीमोग्लोबिन मापने का यंत्र

नई दिल्ली, (भाषा)। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान :आईआईटी: दिल्ली की टैक्निकल बिजनेस इनक्यूबेटर इकाई स्थित नई कंपनी 'रिग नैनो सिस्टम्स' ने खून में हीमोग्लोबिन मापने का अपनी किस्म का पहला यंत्र तैयार किया है। कंपनी के संस्थापक और प्रबंध निदेशक अंबर श्रीवास्तव ने कहा, ''दुनियाभर में खून की जांच सुविधाओं की उपलब्धता और उन तक सरल पहुंच आज भी चुनौती है। हमारा इरादा प्रारम्भिक चिकित्सा देखभाल को सशक्त बनाना है। इसके लिये हमने पहला उत्पाद --जेब में रखने लायक रक्त परीक्षण उपकरण --'द्रू एचबी हीमोमीटर' पेश किया है।''कंपनी की यहां जारी विज्ञप्ति के अनुसार हीमोमीटर बेहतर सुविधाजनक और पोर्टेबल उपकरण है। यह रिचार्जेबल है और स्पष्ट परिणाम उपलब्ध कराता है। एक बार चार्ज होने पर इससे 200 टेस्ट किये जा सकते है और।,000 रीडिंग स्टोर कर सकता है। श्रीवास्तव ने बताया कि उपकरण एक--दो महीने में बाजार में आ जायेगा। अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान भी इसका परीक्षण कर चुका है और उसने इसे उपयुक्त पाया है।

Rashtrya Sahara ND 06/04/2014
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अब आईआईटी ने बनाया हीमोग्लोबिन मापने का यंत्र

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) दिल्ली की टेक्निकल बिजनेस इनक्यूबेटर इकाई की रिंग नैनो सिस्टम्स ने खून में हीमोग्लोबिन मापने का अपनी किस्म का पहला यंत्र तैयार किया है। कंपनी के प्रबंध निदेशक अंबर श्रीवास्तव ने कहा दुनियाभर में खून की जांच सुविधाओं की उपलब्धता और उन तक सरल पहुंच आज भी चुनौती है। हमारा इरादा प्रारम्भिक चिकित्सा देखभाल को सशक्त बनाना है। इसके लिए हमने पहला उत्पाद जेब में रखने लायक रक्त परीक्षण उपकरण 'टू एचबी हीमोमीटर' पेश किया है। हीमोमीटर बेहतर सुविधाजनक और पोर्टेबल उपकरण है। यह रिचार्जेबल है और स्पष्ट परिणाम उपलब्ध कराता है। एक बार चार्ज होने पर इससे 200 टेस्ट किए जा सकते हैं और एक हजार रीडिंग स्टोर कर सकता है। श्रीवास्तव ने बताया कि उपकरण एक-दो महीने में बाजार में आ जाएगा। अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान भी इसका परीक्षण कर चुका है और उसनें इसे उपयुक्त पाया है।

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Apr 6, 2014;Section: Times Nation;Page: 11;

Smart tech helps them see

Shoes that tell you when to make a turn, a cane that senses all obstacles, — technology is starting to make life simpler for the visually challenged

Parakram Rautela | TNN

KEEP WALKING: A user tries out the Smart Cane (above) and Krispian Lawrence launches the Le Chal shoe

It started as a lark. Krispian Lawrence and Anirudh Sharma — MIT graduates who run a company called Ducere Technologies out of Secunderabad which makes wearable technologies — thought it would be fun to hook shoes up to the Google Maps app. That way you could programme a destination into your smartphone, slip the phone into your pocket and let the shoes guide you on your way. When the left shoe vibrates, turn left, and vice versa.

It was only later that it struck the two that the shoes might help the visually impaired. Le Chal (take me there), as the shoes are called, were formally launched in Mumbai early last month. Ducere started taking orders on March 7 and so far, says Lawrence, they have got orders for 2,000 pairs from around the world.

Alongside, a number of other very exciting technologies for the visually impaired are being birthed right here in India. Last Monday, IIT Delhi's Assistech Lab launched its Smart Cane, a device that clasps on to the top end of the traditional white cane. Unlike the old cane, this one also alerts you to obstacles that lie above the knee.

"The old cane only told you what lay along the ground," says Rohan Paul, an IIT alumnus himself and a key contributor to the development of the Smart Cane. "This is why the visually impaired were always bumping into protruding ACs, parked trucks, desert coolers placed on stands, and low-hanging tree branches." Using a public toilet was tough too. The only way to check if a urinal was free was to use your cane as a probe, and that usually caused serious offence.

The Smart Cane begins to vibrate at a distance of three metres from an obstacle with the vibrations getting more persistent as the user gets closer to the object. The vibrations peter out as the user moves away.

An in-house study conducted by IIT found that the collision rate on an obstacle course with chest-height obstacles (railings, suspended plastic pipes) came down from 95.2% to 6.7% when users moved from the old white cane to the Smart Cane, which has been developed in conjunction with the NGO Saksham, which offers technology-based solutions to the visually impaired, and Phoenix Medical Systems.

In May this year, NID Bangalore graduate and human machine interface designer Sumit Dagar plans to launch his smartphone app for the visually impaired. Simpleye will be available on Android and will allow the visually impaired to use almost all of a smartphone's functions. Today, a user gets little help dialling a number or typing out a message. "The keypad phones are on their way out," says Dagar. "And even the visually impaired will have to move to smartphones."

Dagar is working on such a device for the visually impaired. The screen area of the smartphone will be covered with Braille cells, or little groupings of pins that move up and down to form letters and numbers. But, for the moment, that project is stuck because "it is difficult to fit so many moving parts into so small an area."

According to the 2011 Census, India has 12 million blind people. And according to Dipendra Manocha, who runs Saksham, the solutions that are available have so far reached only about 4 to 5 lakh people.

But the trouble with technology is that it can be expensive. The Smart Cane will sell for Rs 3,000, including training charges, while the old cane costs Rs 350. Le Chal will retail at Rs 6,000, and Dagar's app at Rs 1,000.

So, is the extra cost worth it?

Yes, says Manocha, who is visually impaired. "Even after I graduated from Delhi University," he says, "I couldn't use a computer — I would sit there getting so frustrated — until computers began to accept voice commands." Bharti Kalra, 24, who's doing her Master's in English from Delhi University and was one of the users involved in the Smart Cane trials, agrees. After she once bumped into a parked truck, she recalls her mortification at being told by bystanders: "What are you doing here? You should be sitting at home."

> **Using a public toilet was tough. The only way to check if a urinal was free was to use your cane as a probe, and that usually caused serious offence**

And there is the fact that the developers of the technologies are doing what they can to keep costs low. Paul says they were determined not to price the Smart Cane over Rs 3,000. "And we stuck to it, despite inflation." Plus, they've partnered with 20 NGOs in 10 states to distribute the device. The NGOs and Saksham have been asked to collect funds so that they — and not the visually impaired — pay the bulk of the cost. This means that when the canes are finally handed out, they will cost the user only Rs 400.

As for Le Chal, Lawrence says that each time a sighted person buys a pair of his shoes, money from that sale will be used to cross-subsidise the product for a visually impaired person. His aim is to sell the shoes to the visually impaired for about Rs 60 (1$) a pair. But will the sighted want his shoes? "Why not?" says Lawrence. "They look good. And not having to look at your smartphone is liberating. Imagine you're on a motorcycle. You tell your phone where you want to go, slip it into your pocket and then every time you have to turn left, your left shoe vibrates."

Hindustan Times ND 06/04/2014P-12

More than 12 lakh candidates to take JEE (Mains) today

HT Correspondent
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NEW DELHI: Nearly 12 lakh candidates will appear for the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) Mains on Sunday.

A total of 13.56 lakh students, including 3.16 lakh girls, have registered for the exam, of which, 11.84 lakh will take the paper and pen based offline test spread across 2,173 centers.

Close to 1.72 lakh students will take the online test on April 9, 11, 12 and 19.

The Joint Entrance Exam scores are used for admission to undergraduate engineering programmes in National Institute of Technology (NITs), Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) and other centrally funded technical institutions in India.

The top 1.5 lakh students will be allowed to appear for the JEE (Advanced) exam, the gateway for entrance to the 16 IITs.

The rest will seek admission on the basis of merit in National Institute of Technology, state engineering colleges and other centrally-funded institutes.

This would be the second year of JEE (Mains) exam, since the new system was brought into force in 2013.

Students in Gujarat and Maharashtra will have the choice of taking the exam in Gujarati, Marathi or Urdu apart from Hindi and English.

STUDENTS IN GUJARAT AND MAHARASHTRA WILL HAVE THE CHOICE OF TAKING THE EXAM IN GUJARATI, MARATHI OR URDU. IT WILL BENEFIT 66,000 STUDENTS OF THESE STATES

The move will benefit 66,000 students of these states.

Though the provision of writing in Marathi and Urdu has been introduced for the first time, Gujarati was introduced last year itself as Gujarat had agreed to use the result for admissions to its state engineering colleges.

This year, for the first time, an answer key of the papers will be uploaded on the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) website from April 25 to 27.

In 2013, only Gujarat had agreed to adopt the result of JEE (Mains) for admission to its technical institutes.

However, this year, the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha have also joined the system.

Times Of India ND 06/04/2014 P-18

More and more IITians switching streams midway

Hemali Chhapia-Shah | TNN

Mumbai: As you take the gruelling JEE aiming desperately to get into IITs, it must be kept in mind that your final rank will not be the eventual determinant of what you end up graduating as. More and more freshmen are changing their branches as they advance into their sophomore year than ever before. At IIT-B, the number of students who changed their branches has doubled. It has risen from 32 in 2010 to 68 in 2013.

The trend is prevalent across all IITs. At IIT-Kanpur, the migration has risen from about 10 last year to close to 40 this time around. But the race to move to a popular branch is no less than the fierce preparation put in for the JEE. At IIT-Madras, the move takes place a bit earlier, after the first semester. Dean academics K Ramamurthy said, "We allow 10% of total class strength to change branches. And many do so too."

"Many students do try for this option to get a branch of their choice, last year more than 140 students applied for change in branch and 68 of them got to do so," said Narayan Rangaraj, dean academic programmes (IIT-B).

In the current system, because the entry is so competitive, there is a linear ranking of students based on their performance in advanced JEE and institutes and branches within those institutes are allotted based on that. Even with all that, there are some vacancies due to some students leaving. "To to allow students to find a better match to their interests, we allow students based on performance in the first year to change branch in a limited manner," added Rangaraj.

For the full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com

THE RIGHT MOVE

- At **IIT-Bombay**, the number of students who changed streams doubled from **32 in 2010 to 68 in 2013**
- **IIT-Kanpur** saw migration rise from **10 in 2012** to about **40** the next year
- **IIT-Madras** allows 10% of the total class strength to change branches
- The institutes say allowing the choice leads to **positive motivation** for the students to do well in their studies

HT Jaipur

■ Students await the arrival of Kota-Jaipur exam special train in Kota.
HT FILE PHOTO

Kota to host IIT-JEE Mains after 5-yr gap

Aabshar H Quazi
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KOTA: After a gap of five years, the city will host the Indian Institute of Technology - Joint Entrance Examination (IIT-JEE) Mains, 2014, on Sunday.

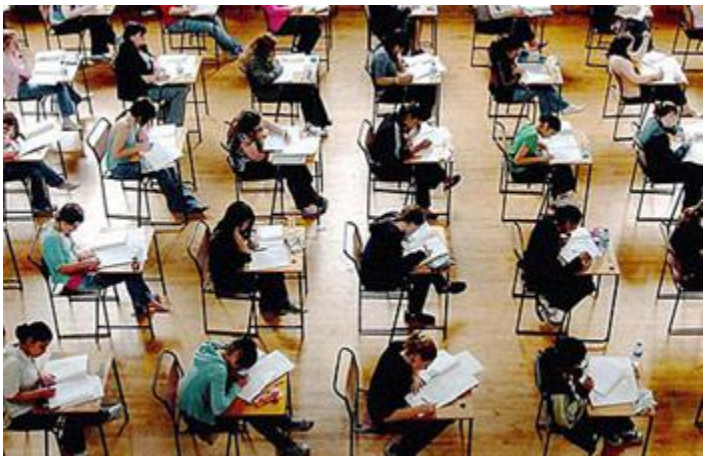
The students of Kota preparing for the IIT-JEE had been facing difficulty in reaching to the examination centres in other cities since 2010 when the city was dropped from the list of 'offline' and 'online' examination centers for IIT-JEE. Though the online examination centre of IIT-JEE was revived in Kota in 2012, but the city was kept out of the offline test centres.

Now, Kota, along with Jaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Bikaner and Udaipur, has been once again chosen as the host for offline IIT-JEE.

Meanwhile, a special Kota-Jaipur-Kota train for IIT-JEE aspirants is being run for the Sunday examination. Appreciating the CBSE decision to conduct the offline IIT-JEE Mains in Kota, Pramod Maheshwari, chairman and executive officer, Career Point Coaching Institute, told HT that revival of the examination centre "is a big relief for the IIT-JEE aspirants of Kota".

India Today Online New Delhi, April 6, 2014 | UPDATED 11:33 IST

JEE Mains 2014: Answer keys to be released on April 25



The Joint Entrance Examination Board will publish the JEE Mains 2014 exam answer keys from April 25 to April 27. The exams kick started today i.e April 6 in the offline paper mode. The final results will be declared on May 3. The Board will declare the All India ranks tentatively on July 7 and the students can get hold of their rank cards, the day onwards.

Nearly 12 lakh (1.2 million) candidates will appear for the Joint Entrance Exam (Mains) today. A total of 13.56 lakh students, including 3.16 lakh girls, have registered for the exam. Of which, 11.84 lakh will take the paper and pen exam at 2,173 centres on April 6.

Nearly 1.72 lakh students will take the online version of the test on April 9, 11, 12 and 19.

Students who clear the exam will be eligible to take admission in the undergraduate engineering programmes in NITs, IIITs and other centrally funded technical institutes in India.

The online examination will be held on April 9, April 11 and April 12.

The candidates who qualify in JEE Mains 2014 and are in the Top-20 percentile of various state intermediate boards will be selected for JEE advanced. They have to register their names from May 3 to 9. JEE Advanced exam will be held on May 25. Results will be announced on June 19. Architecture aptitude test will be held on June 26 and results are scheduled to be released on June 29.

Immense exam and peer pressure was noticed among the candidates and their parents who thronged the exam centers. The first slot of exam was scheduled from 9.30 A.M onwards. Many students expressed doubts about the normalization process accepted by the JEE Board 2013 onwards according to which a method will be brought in to compare the marking system of different boards that carry 40 per cent weightage in preparation of the final merit list.

Cities with exam centers have recorded 80 - 85 per cent occupancy in hotels.

JEE Mains is conducted to provide admissions to undergraduate engineering programmes in NITs, IIITs and other centrally funded technical institutions in India.

Supercomputing facility at NIT Silchar

Correspondent
http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr0714/state06
SILCHAR, April 6 – Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor, Ministry of Human Resource development Yogendra Tripathy inaugurated the Centre for Excellence in High Performance Computing and Research at the National Institute of Technology Silchar on Saturday.

In his address, Tripathy said that such an initiative will inspire people to get involved in more complex research. Lauding the efforts of NIT Silchar, Tripathy said NITs are some kind of IITs only and the challenge before them is to come up to the expectations of more innovative research work. "With the way this institute is forging ahead, it will surely give the IITs a run for their money," Tripathy was quoted as saying.

This is the first centre of supercomputing among all the NITs in the country and would add fillip to the efforts taking the study of computer science in the superlative stage, claimed Prof NV Deshpande, director NIT Silchar. He said that this is a project of Rs 4 crore and is made in association with the C-DAC centre here and Netweb Technologies.

Prof Lalit M Patnaik, senior professor, IIS Bangalore said the HPC centre is a boon for the NIT students as they can have access to such improved facilities and the institute can also develop its R&D output. But he was quick to say that when it comes to ranking, people these days look at the research activities and publications. The quality of journals and impact factor thus becomes very important.

The former vice chancellor of Defence Institute for Advanced Technologies (DIAT) underscored the fact that there is global competitiveness everywhere. Higher technical education cannot be a satisfying factor any more. There is no room to be complacent and [producing routine graduates is not enough. Institutes like the NIT must throw challenges to the best of the international institutes.

Expressing his concerns on why the institutions are not figuring in the top 100 institutions globally despite having IITs NITs and Universities, Prof Patnaik said "producing routine graduates will not help achieve that goal. The good old excuses of non-availability of resources and geophysical lacunas are longer accepted. In today's academic parlance, the kind of high end research is done and publications have been generated."

Pradeep K Sinha, Senior Director Corporate Strategy and R&D C-DAC said that supercomputing is the tool for third dimension of computational research and needs a new breed of people to propagate this domain. This new breed of people must know how to make use of the super computers to carry out state of the art work. Prof Nityanand Pande from the department of Education Assam University congratulated NIT Silchar for its giant initiative and said that this institute is repeating the benefits of its constructive endeavours thus far. Dr Virendra Singh, Director NIT Manipur also attended the inaugural ceremony. Dr TR Lenka, coordinator HPC NIT Silchar gave the vote of thanks.

IITs back ‘marriage’ between students and their interests

Hemali Chhapia Shah, TNN | Apr 6, 2014, 06.17AM IST

MUMBAI: IITians are increasingly opting to change their branches midway through their course. Dean, academics, IIT-Madras, K Ramamurthy said, "We allow 10% of the total class strength to change branches. And many do so too."

In the current system, because the entry is so competitive, there is a linear ranking of students based on their performance in the advanced JEE. Institutes and branches within those institutes are allotted based on the scores. Despite the norms, there are vacancies due to some students leaving. "To make use of this capacity and to allow students to find a better match to their interests, we allow them to change branches in a limited manner based on their performance in the first year," Rangaraj said.

IIT-Kanpur goes a step further and allows candidates to shift at the end of the first and second years. Not only does the institute allow students to also pursue a minor (pick 3 to 4 courses in another stream), it also has a scheme of a second major under which 10 courses for another stream can be chosen. At IIT-Kanpur, computer science, mechanical and electrical engineering, economics and math are the most popular branches that freshmen shift to.

"We have noticed that many students take up a stream due to family and peer pressure, but after they join they realize where their interests lay. All the schemes we have allow a perfect marriage between the student and the stream where his/her heart is. We are liberal because we see our undergraduate programme as the one that should broaden the mind," IIT-Kanpur dean (academic affairs) Dheeraj Sanghi said.

JEE board takes steps to stop impersonation

TNN | Apr 6, 2014, 03.37AM IST
KOLKATA: For the first time, the West Bengal Joint Entrance Examination (WBJEE) board has decided to match the thumb impression of candidates with the data recorded during e-counselling. The decision was taken to prevent impersonation at the time of admission.

"During e-counselling, thumb impression of candidates will be matched with the data that is present in the data base. The examination form that the candidates submit to the board bear their thumb impression. Not only will the thumb impression be checked in the examination hall but also during the e-counselling. This is the first time we are matching the data during admissions," said Bhaskar Gupta, Chairman of the WBJEE board.

"It has happened sometimes that instead of the examinee, another person forged identity and took admission. The exam is at times taken by someone else by smudging the picture with a lookalike. We have also instructed invigilators that in case there is even the slightest blurriness in the picture or lack of clarity, the student will not be allowed to take the exam," he added.

April 7

Times of India ND 07/04/2014 P-8

Errors, time constraint trip up JEE candidates

Yogita Rao | TNN

Mumbai: The second edition of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Mains was not a smooth affair for many who attempted the offline exam on Sunday. While students in some city centres claimed that they got 15-25 minutes less to attempt the paper, some perceived errors in the physics section stumped the students.

Teachers from coaching institutes claimed that none of the choices given for at least one question each in physics and mathematics were right. Two questions in the physics section reportedly had the wrong units, claimed students and coaching institutes.

Praveen Tyagi from IITians Pace, said, "In another question all options given had positive values but the correct answer is a negative value."

CBSE chairman Vineet Joshi said, "Students who have queries can write to us and we will look into it," said Joshi.

Several students at a couple of centres in Mumbai claimed that the invigilator gave 15-25 minutes less to complete the paper.

Business Standard ND 07/04/2014 P-6

JEE results on May 3

BS REPORTER
Mumbai, 6 April

The Joint Entrance Examination (Main) for admission to undergraduate courses at the Indian Institutes of Information Technology, National Institutes of Technology and other Centre-funded technical institutes 2014 was held on Sunday. Organised by the Central Board of Secondary Education, the offline multiple-choice test had 90 questions — 30 each from physics, chemistry and mathematics — for 360 marks . The online examination will be held on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The results will be declared on May 3. Those who clear the test will also be eligible to appear for the advanced test for admission to the 15 Indian Institutes of Technology.

HT.Com ND 07.04.2014 P-6

IIM-Calcutta hikes tuition fee to ₹16.2 lakh

HT Correspondent

Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIM-C) has decided to hike its tuition fee from ₹13.5 lakh to ₹16.2 lakh for its two-year post graduate diploma in management (PGDM) and post graduate diploma in computer aided management (PGDCM) courses.

IIM-C had last hiked its fee in 2010 by 50% from ₹9 lakh to ₹13.5 lakh. Chairman of the institute's board of governors (BOG) said, "This year we decided to match our tuition fee with that of IIM-A and IIM-B. With the rise in inflation, it is high time the course fee is increased to maintain the quality of our teaching."

At ₹17 lakh, IIM-B now has the steepest tuition fee closely followed by IIM-A at ₹16.6 lakh. "We would use this excess amount in giving more scholarships. Currently, we spend about Rs. 5 crore in scholarships, we want to add some more amount to that," he added.

IIM-Ranchi has also hiked its fee from ₹9 lakh to ₹10.5 lakh for the 2014-2016 academic session. IIM-Udaipur that currently charges ₹8 lakh will hike its fee by ₹1 lakh.

IIMS GET COSTLIER

- Within a time span of 4 years IIM-C has hiked its tuition fee twice FILE PHOTO

- IIM-C has hiked its tuition fee from **₹13.5 lakh** to **₹16.2 lakh** for PGDM and PGDCM
- IIM-C had last hiked its fee in 2010 from **₹9 lakh** to **₹13.5 lakh**
- At **₹17 lakh,** IIM-B now has the steepest tuition fee closely followed by IIM-A at **₹16.6 lakh**
- IIM-Ranchi has also hiked its fee from **₹9 lakh** to **₹10.5 lakh**

Amar Ujala ND 07/04/2014 P-15

इलेक्शन वार रूम में आईआईटी ब्रिगेड की धूम

अजीत सिंह

नई दिल्ली। मोदी की चाय पर चर्चा हो या फिर सरदार पटेल की प्रतिमा के लिए देश भर में छिड़ा अभियान, इनमें मोदी के अलावा एक चीज और कॉमन है। इन दोनों के पीछे आईआईटी ब्रिगेड का दिमाग है। अखिल हांडा, अनंत तिवारी, अनुज गुप्ता और हिमांशु सिंह जैसे नाम राजनीति में भले ही अनसुने लगते हैं, लेकिन आईआईटी के ये इंजीनियर नरेंद्र मोदी के चुनाव अभियान को धार दे रहे हैं।

दुनिया में भारत का डंका बजाने वाले आईआईटी के छात्र न केवल राजनीतिक दलों में तेजी से जगह बना रहे हैं, बल्कि इन्होंने चुनाव अभियान के तौर-तरीकों पर भी असर डाला है। इलेक्शन वार रूम में

आईआईटीयंस बदल रहे हैं पार्टी दफ्तरों का माहौल और चुनाव अभियान के तौर-तरीके

आईआईटी ब्रिगेड का रुतबा कांग्रेस, भाजपा से लेकर आम आदमी पार्टी तक में साफ देखा जा सकता है। आप के संयोजक अरविंद केजरीवाल खुद आईआईटी खड़गपुर के इंजीनियर हैं। लोकपाल आंदोलन से लेकर दिल्ली विधानसभा चुनाव तक उन्हें आईआईटी के छात्रों का भरपूर समर्थन मिला। आप ने आईआईटी के कई पुराने छात्रों को टिकट दिए हैं। अधिकांश संस्थानों में आप की यूनिट खुल चुकी है। राजनीतिक दलों में पहुंचे आईआईटी के छात्र कई ऐसी चीजें कर रहे हैं जो पुराने नेताओं के लिए बिल्कुल नई है। आईआईटी के मौजूदा छात्रों में भले कांग्रेस का ज्यादा क्रेज न दिखता हो, लेकिन पार्टी के इलेक्शन वार रूम की कमान भी आईआईटी बांबे से मेकैनिकल इंजीनियरिंग कर चुके जयराम रमेश संभाल रहे हैं। इसी संस्थान के इलेक्ट्रीकल इंजीनियर नंदन नीलेकणी भी कांग्रेस में अहम जगह बना चुके हैं। मोदी के ऑनलाइन अभियान में आईआईटी से निकले उद्यमी राजेश जैन बड़ी भूमिका में हैं। जैन की कंपनी नेटकोर ने इंडिया अगेंस्ट करप्शन के अभियान में भी अपनी सेवाएं दी थी।

हर क्षेत्र में कारगर आईआईटी की सीख

पार्टी दफ्तरों में आईआईटी-आईआईएम जैसे संस्थानों से आए लोगों केबढ़ते रुतबे से खांटी कार्यकर्ता जरूर असहज महसूस करने लगे हैं। लैपटॉप वाली इस जमात पर अक्सर जमीनी हकीकत को नजरअंदाज करने और हवा-हवाई राजनीति के आरोप लगते हैं। लेकिन आईआईटी कानपुर के पूर्व निदेशक संजय धांडे आईआईटी छात्रों की राजनीति में बढ़ती दिलचस्पी को एक अच्छा संकेत मानते हैं।

राजनीति वाया आईआईटी

- केजरीवाल, मेकैनिकल इंजीनियर, आईआईटी खड़गपुर
- मनोहर परिकर, मेटलर्जी इंजीनियर, आईआईटी बांबे
- नंदन नीलेकणी, इलेक्ट्रीकल इंजीनियर, आईआईटी बांबे
- अजित सिंह, कंप्यूटर इंजीनियर, आईआईटी खड़गपुर
- जयराम रमेश, मैकैनिकल इंजीनियर, आईआईटी बांबे
- प्रेमदास राय, केमिकल इंजीनियर, आईआईटी कानपुर

Financial Express ND 07/04/2014 P-12

Beyond just chalk and talk

Indian classrooms need to go beyond solutions such as "flipped classrooms", "mentor, not teacher", "collaborative learning", "learning by doing" and so on

CHETAN MAHAJAN

ILLUSTRATION: ASIT BAGCHI

Talk to people from the K-12 technology space and they will wax eloquently about how technology is going to transform the school landscape. One will hear words like 'flipped classrooms', 'mentor, not teacher', 'collaborative learning', 'learning by doing' and so on.

That said, such practices and tools are available and can be enabled by technology. That such models already exist and are being effectively used in India is also true. But the assumption that all schools in the country can successfully adopt and implement such approaches and the associated technologies is not so obvious.

New technologies are exciting. They are cool. They are fun to experiment with. Many of us want to be seen with the latest gizmos—be seen as someone who is ahead of the curve. However, the true value of technology to a school is within a framework where it is effective. Where it can deliver real benefits. An International Baccalaureate (IB) school adopting a collaborative learning technology makes sense. Class sizes are small. Basic approaches and philosophies match. The staff is skilled in using such approaches.

But assuming that a large-scale rote-learning school with 40 kids to a classroom and middle-competence teachers can adopt a collaborative, tablet-based approach is flawed. The technology needs to fit into the school's model. The school will not change its model to fit in new technology.

However, many schools do make such choices. They will go out and acquire such technologies. These technologies will then be showcased to the parents. These schools will be positioned as cutting-edge, and these technologies will be held up as evidence of a school being forward-thinking and progressive.

So far the future of the classroom has been driven by economics, i.e. by the profitability motive of schools. In the future, I sincerely hope it will be focused on benefiting the student. Then the focus can be on which technology helps the school meets its own educational goals the best.

The school needs to be clear and cognisant about its own model before it goes shopping for technology. Different sets of schools have different sets of goals. Some want to see holistic learning. Some want to create IIT toppers. Others want to create champions—in sports, theatre, art or academics. Yet others may have their principle need of getting their students (and often teachers) to speak good English.

Technology is nothing more than a means to an end. Technology, by itself, rarely solves a problem. It has to be part of a larger solution which involves people, processes and technology implementation in the right manner. Only in the presence of such an ecosystem does any technology has a hope of being effective.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES ARE EXCITING. THEY ARE COOL. THEY ARE FUN TO EXPERIMENT WITH. HOWEVER, THE TRUE VALUE OF TECHNOLOGY TO A SCHOOL IS WITHIN A FRAMEWORK WHERE IT IS EFFECTIVE AND WHERE IT CAN DELIVER REAL BENEFITS

We can look at the digital classroom industry in this light, and understand its success (assuming wide adoption can be equated to success). This technology solution is typically a set of hardware accompanied by a library of content which is meant to provide a rich in-classroom teaching aid to the teacher. In some cases it also helps buttress the ancient gaps in the Indian education system—of teacher quality. All the providers of such hardware and content are clubbed under the bucket of the education service provider (ESP) industry. An ironic name given the current state of the industry.

But the ESP model has worked because it fits in largely with the current teaching-learning model in most schools. The teacher is still the 'sage on the stage'. There is still full provision for chalk and talk, but now on a white-board. The teachers still decide the pace and content of teaching and it is still largely on-way delivery. The basic model remains unchanged.

So the technology fits with most schools' model easily. But even with ESP solutions, usage can still be erratic. This is because many teachers are not fully convinced about the value of digital content or they are just not comfortable with the change. To facilitate and enforce such change and make it systemic in nature is the job of the school administration. And it needs to be more by carrot than by stick. Now if we fast-forward to today, the learnings for implementing a new technology are simple.

It is because of flawed implementations that cloud-based ERP solutions often fail in schools. Some schools—especially more traditional ones which are set in their ways—are unable to set up the full ecosystem with processes and manpower oriented to effectively use such solutions. It requires too much change on the schools' part.

So what is the best way to go about implementing technology solutions—especially those directly impacting learning?

Understanding the fit is the first aspect of evaluating any new technology. If the school acquires technology that fits well with its model, that is a great start. Effective implementation of such technology so that the promised benefit can be delivered is the second critical step. This involves a lot of steps including restructuring the system, training the implementing team, motivating the learners, etc. Once implemented, the ongoing measurement of the effectiveness of the solution in achieving the promised results is the final step. This is critical to ensure ongoing success of any technology solution in a school. The evidence touted today is mostly anecdotal. A school installs a robotics solution, and then wins a robotics contest. The question is—was such an intervention successful in bringing about a change in the understanding of robotics across the student community of that school. If yes, then it has been a success. So the school needs to be able to measure that.

Such an academic success may or may not lead to economic success. But the goal should be considered as achieved if the targeted students have benefited. The economic success is incidental. Unfortunately, today, mostly the economic success is critical, and the student benefit is incidental. I hope that changes going forward.

The author is the CEO of HCL Learning Ltd

Financial Express ND 07/04/2014 P-12

Educating Bharat

There is a growing and urgent need for increasing the number of higher education institutions in rural India

SANTOSH KUMAR CHOUBEY

As a majority of our country's population resides in villages, the issue of quality higher education in rural India is of utmost importance. We do boast of some high quality institutions and, of late, new IITs, IIMs and NITs have come up, but the fact remains that most of these institutions remain urban-centric. If we talk about universities, though we have seen a huge growth in their number, still the country lacks the critical mass in higher education. One major reason is that most universities too are urban-centric. The rural population is, to a large extent, deprived of access to quality higher education—and we must not forget that the bulk of youth between the age group 18-22 comes out of rural India.

Higher education institutions must need to reflect the demand of a particular geographical area they are set up in. A special focus needs to be given to the selection of the courses and programmes that would be offered by these institutions as well as the development of the courser curriculum. We are talking about the advent of demand-driven universities and institutions, which would cater to the local requirements of the rural geography through skill-based and employment-oriented learning. For example, the economy of Madhya Pradesh, to a large extent, relies on its textile, mining and steel manufacturing units. Millions are employed in these industries. Thus, it is important to have higher education institutions that have textile and steel manufacturing oriented courses to cater to the growing demands of qualified professionals for senior level jobs in these sectors. Unexplored industries like agriculture, poultry, construction, rubber and plumbing have a huge requirement of manpower, but there are hardly enough number of institutions catering to this. We need to have skill-based universities that will train people appropriately; giving them employment-oriented learning.

A LOT OF COMPANIES OPERATE IN RURAL REGIONS AND THEY NEED TO HIRE SKILLED WORKFORCE FROM NEARBY AREAS

States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa don't have many good quality institutes. Thus, a large number of students from such states opt for migration. But the cost involved in leaving the hometown and migrating for higher studies results in dropouts. Thus, the presence of higher educational institutions in rural areas will prevent migration and encourage the trend of higher professional education.

One must keep in mind that a lot of companies operate in rural geography in our country, and they need to hire skilled workforce, preferably from nearby areas. The presence of good quality institutes in such regions would ensure companies don't turn to metro cities for job hunting. What we now hope is that the new government takes active steps to built new institutions in semi-urban and rural areas. What we need is a seamless connectivity between vocational education and higher education, and between rural and urban.

The author is chancellor, AISECT University, Bhopal, and CV Raman University, Bilaspur

Printed from
THE TIMES OF INDIA

Space crunch aside, NIT Goa shows the way

TNN | Apr 7, 2014, 12.56 AM IST

PANAJI: National Institute of Technology (NIT), Goa, has decided to offer new courses in MTech for 2014-15, despite operating with limited infrastructure from the Goa Engineering College campus in Farmagudi. Unmindful of the space crunch, the institute will now participate in the Direct Admission of Students Abroad (DASA) scheme of the Union government and even held its first annual student festival last week.

Admissions for foreign nationals/ persons of Indian origin (PIOs)/ non-resident Indians (NRIs) under DASA scheme of the ministry of human resource development (MHRD), government of India, for undergraduate programmes in engineering and architecture for the academic year 2014-15 to National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), Schools of Planning and Architecture (SPAs) and other premier technical Institutions in India, has been launched for the year.

MHRD has entrusted the coordination of the admission process under DASA scheme for the academic year 2014-15 to National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal, for the fifth consecutive year. Forty institutions are participating in DASA 2014-15 undergraduate admissions, which includes NIT Goa. There are 2,345 seats for BTech/BArch and BPlan programmes on offer.

Students who have secured at least 60% aggregate marks with mathematics, physics and any one of the subjects from chemistry, bio-technology, computer science, biology, in Class XI or XII and have a valid SAT subject score (mathematics II, physics and chemistry) of at least 1,440 are eligible to apply. Applications will have to be submitted online on www.dasanit.org before May 26. DASA postgraduate admissions 2014-15 will be launched on May 1.

NIT Goa proved its mettle again amidst various constraints last week when the first techno-cultural student fest of NIT Goa titled 'Spectra' was held on April 4 and 5. It was mostly orientated towards making students aware of the current scenario in different fields of science and technology, while attesting their talent through various events.