Newspaper Clips
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IIT Delhi director RK Shevgaonkar quits over demand for Subramanian Swamy's dues

Akshaya Mukul, TNN | Dec 28, 2014, 01.02AM IST

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/IIT-Delhi-director-RK-Shevgaonkar-quits-over-demand-for-Sachins-academy-Subramanian-Swamys-dues/articleshow/45663599.cms

Subramanian Swamy had been seeking his "salary dues" between 1972 and 1991 but IIT Delhi director R K Shevgaonkar was against an out-of-court settlement.

NEW DELHI: IIT Delhi director Raghunath K Shevgaonkar has quit more than two years before the end of his term. A senior IIT official confirmed the news on Saturday though human resource development ministry officials claimed they were unaware of it.

Shevgaonkar has been under tremendous pressure from the ministry to reportedly release pay of nearly Rs 70 lakh to former IIT D faculty and now BJP functionary Subramanian Swamy as his "salary dues" between 1972 and 1991.

IIT Delhi has been maintaining that Swamy has not provided it with an information it first needs: the details of his earnings from the time of his termination as a professor in 1972 to March 1991, when he was reinstated following a court order.

Swamy had been demanding his salary dues during the period along with an 18% interest, which both IIT and the HRD ministry initially rejected. Swamy then went to the Delhi high court, and last year, it dismissed IIT's plea that his petition should not be entertained.

The ministry changed its stance after the Modi government assumed office this year. Recently, it sought the advice of the department of personnel & training on whether Swamy's case came under the government's general financial rules and service rules and if he could be granted 'extraordinary leave' between 1972 and 1991.

(IIT Delhi director Raghunath K Shevgaonkar has quit more than two years before the end of his term.)

The ministry even organized a meeting between Shevgaonkar and other senior IIT officials with Swamy. But Shevgaonkar, the sources said, wasn't in favour of an out-of-court settlement and wanted to pursue the legal battle. "The director was of the view that such a settlement will create a bad precedent. He also felt that the case had political overtones," the senior IIT official said.

Oops. A clarification:-

IIT sources had told TOI that there was pressure on the director to give land for SachinTendulkar's cricket academy. However, Tendulkar has strongly denied that this is the case. In fact, he has said he has no plans for a cricket academy. We are sorry to have carried the news on the basis of sources which have been reliable in the past and didn't check with Tendulkar. We are sorry for this. We are also removing all mentions of this from the story.

Brain drain from IITs down

TNN | Dec 28, 2014, 02.18AM IST

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/Brain-drain-from-IITs-down/articleshow/45663859.cms

CHENNAI: For decades, IITians have been faulted for leaving the country in search of greener pastures. But now, contrary to public perception, the brain drain from the premier technical institutions to foreign shores is declining.

According to faculty members, the number of students from IIT-Madras going overseas for higher studies and jobs has dropped from around 50% in the 1980s to around 15% in the last couple of years. Of the 800 BTech and dual degree students graduating from IIT-Madras in 2015, only 10% are likely to leave the country, said placement advisor Babu Viswanathan.

Of the 661 BTech and dual degree candidates who passed out in 2013-14, 100 left for foreign shores, including 88 to the US and two to Canada. In the 2012-13 academic year, only 40 of the 640 graduates went overseas for jobs or higher studies.

"The number of students going overseas for higher education is declining. The brain drain has almost stopped. This year, around 10% have signed up to go abroad, but note that an equal number is staying back to start their own ventures. It's a positive trend because we can retain talent," said dean, international and alumni relations, IIT-Madras, R Nagarajan. "There is a bigger drain of students from core branches to non-core companies during placements," he added.

He said this was one area that the IITs were seen as lacking when compared to foreign universities. But, with support for entrepreneurship in the institute - ranging from minors courses, an MS in Entrepreneurship, deferred placements, and offers to incubate startups with potential - students are rethinking their plans.

Professor Viswanathan said the emergence of institutes such as the Indian Institute of Management within the country contributed to the decrease in numbers. "In recent years, 50% of those who choose higher studies choose the IIMs. They have seen that there is good value in doing MBA here after IIT," he said.

Faculty members, however, added that a little overseas experience was not a bad thing. For international exposure, students find the institute's many MoUs with foreign institutions come in handy.

"I wanted to get an overseas experience to find out how research is done there. But, I decided to take up a PhD in IIT because there was a good chance of forging a tie with academics working on similar projects so I can spend six months overseas and return with the advantage of having spent some time in a foreign institution abroad," said a research scholar at IIT-Madras.

Google's Sridhar Ramaswamy joins list of IIT-Madras alumni to help university feature in top 50 by 2020

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-12-27/news/57441238_1_sridhar-ramaswamy-sundar-pichai-indian-institute

CHENNAI: Top Google executive Sridhar Ramaswamy on Friday said he wants to "give back" to his alma mater, the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, joining a growing list of alumni who are keen on helping the institute achieve its goal of becoming one of the world's top 50 universities by 2020.

"I'm trying to figure out how best to contribute to IIT Madras or to Brown (University) where I went to graduate school," Ramaswamy, senior vice-president of ads & commerce at the $60-billion search giant said. The executive, who is visiting the institute on the 25th year reunion of his batch (1989), said consulting with the Centre for Innovation at IIT-M could be one of the ways in which he could contribute. "There are many ways to give back. Helping them think about their facilities, cloud computing could be another," said Ramaswamy, one of the three Indians who report to Larry Page, the cofounder & CEO of Google. Page's team, famously known as the L-team, has two other Indians — Sundar Pichai, who heads products, and Amit Singhal, who heads search.

Ramaswamy has been discussing with the institute on how to bring in more top-quality professors. "It's difficult to bring top computer science professors to an institute focused solely on undergraduates," said Ramaswamy. IIT-Madras, founded in 1959, is also seeking to increase the intake of postgraduate students while trying to improve its global ranking among universities.

Infosys cofounder Kris Gopalakrishnan, another IIT-M alumnus, recently donated Rs 10 crore to the institution to set up the 'Prof. Mahabala Distinguished Chair in Computational Brain Research'. This year, the institution has nearly doubled the amount of private funding it has raised to Rs 25 crore.

R Nagarajan, dean for international & alumni relations at IIT-M, said, "Government funding is generous and it is enough for us to run operations.

But for aspirational things, we need help from the outside as well." Ramaswamy termed the Indian ecommerce industry's growth as "incredibly exciting" but did not say if Google wanted to enter the space in India, like it did in the US. Comparing with China, he said India is a much more "open market".

"There's lot of structural difficulties in China for a lot of companies, including Google and Facebook. In that sense, India is a lot more open market and a lot of us can relate to because of our Indian origin," he said. Google recently announced major initiatives focused on emerging markets like India. Its ambitious Android One program, which supplied a reference design to hardware manufacturers, was launched in India first. The company announced offline YouTube to improve video consumption and set up a coalition to promote Indic content on the web.

IIT Guwahati suicide case: Mug up race takes a toll

DC | Amar Tejaswi | December 27, 2014, 07.12 am IST

http://www.deccanchronicle.com/141227/nation-education/article/mug-race-takes-toll

Hyderabad: The alleged suicide of K. Parameswara Rao from Visakhapatnam at the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, on Thursday has ignited the debate on the competitive environment in IITs and the rising suicide rate.

Experts say that the difference in learning at coaching classes (before the Joint Entrance Exam) and at the IIT, demotivates a lot of students, driving them to suicide.

While academic pressure is most often blamed, the alumni of IITs say the skewed expectations of students themselves are a common reason for suicide.

The exact cause of Parameswara Rao's death is yet to be ascertained, but it is thought that low grades pushed him to suicide.

Dr P. Anand Raman, mentor-director at FIITJEE, Hyderabad, said that the transition from learning in JEE coaching classes to learning at IITs is quite precarious though the environment in IITs is not the most vigorous.

"With the predictable format and questions of JEE now, students are encouraged to rote learn. But when they go to IITs, they find it requires the individual application of one's mind.

That's what happened with the topper of IIT JEE 2010. When he passed out of IIT-Bombay his CGPA, was only 7. Teaching systems are different and so they get de-motivated."

Experts rue the fact that while Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State send the most students to IITs, students from these two states also have the highest suicide rate.

Shilpa Muduy, an alumnus of IIT-Kharagpur, said, "The curriculum in IITs doesn't put pressure on students but the environment does.

The pressure of excelling at everything you do makes you emotionally weak. More emphasis should be laid on support and guidance."

While parents, whose wards have committed suicides in IITs always assert that their children were academically brilliant, low grades are the most common reason.

Sky-high expectations are another reason. "The biggest problem is skewed expectations from all quarters, including the students themselves.

At that age, everything feels like the end of the world. They require counselling. Colleges must set up units to address issues ranging from academic, monetary and relationships to internships and placements," said Sri Nitya A., an alumnus of IIT-Kharagpur. Alumni also suggest setting up of anonymous hotlines like in the United States.

Students from economically weaker sections face a steeper climb, and if they miss a step, it adds to the emotional pressure. "Students from economically weaker sections face the lack of emotional support from parents, which affluent students get.

They also have a lot of responsibilities. They feel they have to get a good job to support their parents," an IIT-Hyderabad professor said.

Students also get distracted and obsessed with new-found freedom, sitcoms, movies, gaming and relationships.

"In school, many believe that getting into an IIT and landing a job is the final milestone of their life and it will be a smooth ride post that.

When their grades suffer and the axe looms, they get depressed and frustrated," Sumit Kumar, an alumnus of IIT Madras said.

WORRYING FACTS

- Experts rue the fact that while AP and TS send the most students to IITs, students from these two states have the highest suicide rate.
- Students also sometimes get distracted and obsessed with the new-found freedom, sitcoms, movies, gaming and relationships
- A Task Force report of the HRD ministry on suicides in higher education institutions had said that the most common reasons were relationship issues, personal problems, stress, and family problems.

6 IIT STUDENTS FROM AP AND TS ENDED THEIR LIVES IN 2014

"With the predictable format and questions of JEE now, students are encouraged to rote learn. But when they go to IITs, they find it requires the individual application of one's mind.

— DR P. ANAND RAMAN, Mentor-director, FIIT-JEE, Hyderabad

"A grim mood has gripped the institute. Students are shocked as Rao never showed any signs of being in depression. He was very active. He played cricket with his friends just the day before — RAO'S BATCHMATE

IIT-K passouts have achieved success in different fields

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kanpur/IIT-K-passouts-have-achieved-success-in-different-fields/articleshow/45662393.cms

The 1990-batch of IIT-Kanpur, which is celebrating its silver jubilee reunion on the institute campus, is the biggest batch so far in the past several years. Its more than 120 ex-students who have come to the institute are occupying top positions both in India and abroad.

The ex-IITians, accompanied with their spouses and children, had a good time at the institute campus on the second day of the reunion on Saturday where they sang songs, delivered dialogues, recalled days of their student life and did mimicry of their favourites ones. TOI spoke to some of the ex-IITians.

Vivek Bhatt, a gold medallist of the 1990 batch and a mechanical engineering passout, has been working as a Chief Technology Officer in GE Healthcare in Milwaukee, US. On being asked about what is new at GE Healthcare, Vivek said that the GE's technical team in collaboration with US team at Bangalore Technology Centre successfully developed PET/CT technology which can diagnose a tumor or cancer in a human being at an early stage.

He said that it was for the first time that PET/CT equipment had been developed (partially) in India otherwise, it was imported by big hospital chains. This equipment, he said, has been installed at Tata Memorial in Bangalore and it is giving very clear images. He said he had come to his alma mater after 18 years and has noticed a sea change in the institute.

Amitabh Gupta, Inspector General, Konkan Range, Maharashtra, was seen surrounded by his old buddies during the lunch hours. Amitabh said that he was lured towards the civil services and got selected as an IPS officer in 1992. He also served in the Anti-Terrorist Squad of Maharashtra police and investigated the infamous rape case involving Bollywood actor Shiney Ahuja. He informed that his son had also joined IIT but his choice was IIT-Bombay. "The education imparted in IIT-Kanpur is such that a person passing out from here can face any challenge coming his way, and this made him crack the civil services examination", he said.

Manish Jhawar, another ex-IITian of the same batch, owns a software testing company named Quality Kisok with employees strength of 600. He said that though he had come from a business class family but he wanted to do something different. After a decade of passing out from IIT-Kanpur, Manish opened his software testing company in 2000. "Though I had passed out in mechanical engineering but the education imparted here was such that I had learnt the art to deal with the challenges. After working with Proctor and Gamble for a few

years, I opened a company of my own where we test the software developed for our clients before it is put in the public domain", said Manish.

He said that he had come to his alma mater after 25 years. He admitted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement `Make in India' is a good call as this would help in providing jobs to unemployed youths.

IIT-B prepares a treat for tech, science lovers at next year's fest

Sunday, 28 December 2014 - 5:20am IST Updated: Saturday, 27 December 2014 - 8:06pm IST | Agency: dna

http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-iit-b-prepares-a-treat-for-tech-science-lovers-at-next-year-s-fest-2047466

Indian Institute of Technology in Powai is gearing up to host its annual science and technology festival called Techfest.

Scheduled to be held between January 2 and 4 next year, it is expected to feature robots and technologies built in the most advanced research facilities of universities and organisations namely ETH Zurich, EPFL Switzerland, RMIT Australia, Osaka University, Aldebran robotics, and Hanson Robotics among others.

Among the main attractions in the upcoming edition are: Beach Bot, which is the world's first autonomous robot that can create large-scale sand art, developed by Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, ETH Zurich; Sepios, which is a cuttlefish-inspired marine robot, another project from ETH Zurich. Its qualities, combined with its fish-like appearance, are ideal for closing in on fish, making it the perfect device for marine life filming.

Other technology on display includes Tigers Mannheim, which are soccer playing robots, Bionico Hand, a prosthetic arm designed to assist amputees, bio-inspired flying devices by Imperial College of London, and WRO Art Centre, Poland (Digital Art).

Maintaining its legacy of the best robotics exhibits, there will also be Virtual Robot Simulation, Android Robotics and Humanoids, Dancing Robots and Lego-based Robotics among others on display.

Apart from these, there will be Sina Sim(surgery simulator machine), face recognition classes, live speed digital painting, visual interactive non-stop evolution, display of brain activity in real time by TEEGI, automated 3D chess, augmented reality by MIT Media Labs, smallest electric bike, and many other breakthroughs.

Dance, music & debate rock IIT-B fest's Day 2

TNN | Dec 28, 2014, 04.08AM IST

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Dance-music-debate-rock-IIT-B-fests-Day-2/articleshow/45664116.cms

MUMBAI: Day two of IIT-Bombay's annual cultural extravaganza, Mood Indigo, saw over 34,000 students from colleges across the country engage in various events and competitions.

Rajdeep Sardesai, who spoke at the LitFest, interacted with students and discussed politicization of media and how it was restricting the power of journalists. Day two also witnessed a grand cheese tasting session at the

food fest.

The International Music Festival kicked off with two flagship events—The Los Dorados and Barmer Boys—taking place.

"A creative thriller presented by Mood Indigo was the Los Dorados, a band known for its creativity and innovation. The Barmer Boys, the rockstar band of Rajasthan, formed in 2011 is a leading example of Rajasthani folk and sufi music with touch of boisterous jams and beat-boxing," said a coordinator.

Students from various colleges participated in large numbers in Trashion, a recycled material fashion competition, where new and novel fashion designs created with recycled materials were presented by models. Another crowd-puller was Desi Beats, a Bollywood dance competition

Day three on Sunday will see a performance by popular band Epica, a theatre fest and a cooking session with chef Vikas Khanna.

How AP,Telangana students fare in IIT post bifurcation

http://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/2014-12-27/How-APTelangana-students-fare-in-IIT-post-bifurcation-123082

How AP,Telangana Students fare in IIT Post Bifurcation: Students not only from India, but also from across the World aspire to enter into premier institutes like IIT and IIM. For many decades, students from Andhra Pradesh would figure among the top 10,100 and 1000 very easily shocking everyone.

Now, many are wondering how students from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana will perform in the IIT entrance exam after the state division. It is known that after the state division, a lot of changes are taking place with the student community most hit.

They are at their wits end as to which of the governments will conduct intermediate exams and when it will happen. Only recently, it became clear that Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will have separate exams for intermediate.

One cannot think that students will not be affected by all these happenings which will distract their concentration. Let us hope that like in earlier years, even after state division they will crack IIT entrance with renewed vigour.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella meets PM Modi, IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad

http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/microsoft-ceo-satya-nadella-meets-pm-narendra-modi/

Global IT giant Microsoft's chief executive officer Satya Nadella Friday said the company is looking forward to partner with the Digital India and Make in India programmes of the government.

Earlier in the day Nadella met PM Narendra Modi and communications and IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

"It's always fantastic for me personally to be in India and the conversation I had with the minister was wide ranging," Nadella said after meeting communications and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

"I have an aspiration that in this mobile and cloud world, we can empower every individual citizen of India and every business organisation and institution in India to be able to try with new technology. So, I am looking forward to be a part of both the Digital India and Make in India," he added.

The Hyderabad-born Nadella said: "We are making huge investments in our data centres in particular, which we think can empower organisations in this country to be world class with the access to great technology."

"I have requested him to consider electronic manufacturing in India. I have also requested that Microsoft has a great profile in the field of social services, (and) digital literacy can be promoted. We had a very purposeful exchange. I am very happy and I warmly welcome him," Prasad told reporters after the meeting.

- See more at: http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/microsoft-ceo-satya-nadella-meets-pm-narendra-modi/#sthash.i4Lv5xxQ.dpuf

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella keen to take up 'Digital India'

Saturday, 27 December 2014 - 10:22am IST | Agency: ANI

http://www.dnaindia.com/scitech/report-microsoft-ceo-satya-nadella-keen-to-take-up-digital-india-2047343

Microsoft Corporation CEO, Satya Nadella met Communications and Information Technology (IT) Minister, Ravi Shankar Prasad, and discussed about 'Digital India'.

"I have an aspiration that in this mobile and cloud world we can empower every Indian individual, citizen of India, every business organisation and institution in India, to be able to thrive with new technology, so I am looking forward to being part of both your 'Digital India' and 'Make in India'," said Nadella.

"We are making huge investments with our data center in particular which we think can empower organisations in this country to be world class with the access to technology which is all going to be available locally. We are looking forward to partnering closely, seeing all of this come true to help every Indian business and every Indian citizen," he added.

Nadella also said that through new technology and concepts every Indian could be empowered. "I have suggested to him that we are keen if he has certain concrete suggestions to give for further improvement of digital India concept, we are quite willing to accept. We have talked about other products which are going to be launched in India including from digital locker, cloud to datacenters. I have requested him to consider electronic manufacturing," said Prasad.

During his Independence Day speech this year, Prime Minister Modi had talked about 'Digital India' and had said that the country has to use this idea to revolutionize health and education, use broadband for education for rural areas, and telemedicine for the poor.

Microsoft plans to offer its commercial and cloud services - Azure and Office 365 - from three local data centres by the end of 2015, making it the first technology company to set up cloud data centres in India, a move that experts say will help the US-based software giant compete better in the domestic market.

CAT 2014: 16 people are 100 percentilers; 1 in 47 exam takers can get into an IIM

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2014-12-27/news/57441318_1_cat-2013-cat-2014-common-admission-test

MUMBAI: The results of the Common Admission Test (CAT) 2014 have been declared today evening. Initally scheduled to be released in the third week of November, the results were delayed to sort out some back-end glitches and ensure a smooth process.

Around 1.7 lakh students sat for the CAT this year. "Of them, 16 students got a 100 percentile score," CAT convenor Rohit Kapoor of IIM Indore told ET. He declined to give any details about the students.

Out of the 1.73 lakh students who had sat for CAT 2013, eight had managed a 100 percentile score. All of them were from an engineering background; including six from the IITs.

This year, apart from the 13 existing IIMs, students will have a chance to enter six proposed IIMs that will start their first session in 2015. There will be about 3600-plus seats across IIMs available this time compared to around 3300 last time. This implies that approximately 1 in every 47 CAT takers will get into an IIM in the 2015-17 session, compared to 1 in every 52 last time.

CAT 2014 saw several changes in the test process this time including 67% more questions; 21% less time and the option of being able to switch back and forth between questions. TCS replaced Prometric as the testing agency and the exam was held on 2 days, compared to a 20-day testing window in CAT 2013.