

# Newspaper Clips

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## US in talks with India for freedom of expression in cyberworld

Washington: Asserting that freedom of expression applies equally to the internet as it does in the real world, the United States has said that it is in talks with Indian government over the regulatory mechanism on Internet.

"We believe that freedom of expression applies equally to the internet as it does in the real world," the US state department spokesman Mark Toner told reporters when asked about the efforts of the Indian government to regulate or monitor content postings on the internet and social networking websites such as Facebook.

The US state department spokesman, however, clarified twice that its position on internet freedom is not necessarily India specific, but in general globally. "We are concerned about any effort to curtail freedom of expression on net," Toner said.



Union telecom minister Kapil Sibal had on Wednesday said that the government has asked companies, including Google and Facebook, to block offensive material, especially content that could hurt religious sentiments.

With India, Toner acknowledged that it is indeed one of the topics of discussion with the Indian government and is part of the strategic dialogue. "In terms of India, we do have a working group on information and communication technology between the US and India, and it's part of our overall strategic dialogue.

"Of course, within that working group, we do talk about issues on information technology, discuss approaches our governments can take to create investment, for example, on regulatory environments that maximize the development of these sectors," the spokesman said. PTI

Business Standard, ND 9/12/2011 P-1

# IIM-G takes Drucker to babudom

## IIM grads within govt try for some synergy in reforming the rust frame

DISHA KANWAR  
New Delhi, 8 December

Can tried precepts from business schools on effective management be applied to governance in India? Not only in processes of work but also in the structures of bureaucracy?

Theoretically, yes, but... Well, the news is that a group of senior officers within the Central government have been banding for some time to remove that 'but' from the proposition. They are about 100-odd, with a shared background, of having an MBA degree from one or the other Indian Institute of Management (IIM).

Calling themselves IIM-G, or IIM graduates in government services, these 100-odd officers had let go of lucrative corporate careers in return for the power and security of the senior civil service.

Most serve in the upper echelons of the coveted alphabet soup that comprises the government backbone — IAS, IFS, IRS, IRAS, PMO, etc. They still believe government can — and should — be reinvented on more idealistic lines, of the sort that ensure reform in both accountability and outcomes.

Here's a sample from their monthly meetings. Open senior posts to the private sector. Re-advertise jobs at mid term; let incumbents compete to retain these. Base pay on the need of the job, not on the seniority of the person appointed. Have independent field reports to measure the outcome of public spending.

That sort of thinking has arisen from the way they go about their forum chats. That is once every month, at least, on an issue connected with governance.

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## Why leave Drucker to...

There is a presentation by members, following a 7-7 code (seven slides of seven minutes each). It's been armchair stuff so far, and they now want to move ahead from the closed-door sessions. For a start, get seniors, policy makers, other influential luminaries to come, listen and react.

### Only academic?

It's not a utopia, they insist; there's much appetite for meaningful work within the bureaucracy. "It is a myth that the government mindlessly flings you around to different postings, says Ajay Bisaria (IIM-C, IFS batch 1987), joint secretary, ministry of external affairs. He has already been an advisor in the World Bank and private secretary to the Prime Minister. "Political interference

is hugely overstated. By and large, officials who are dedicated and competent are given recognition."

Sudhir Rajpal (IIM-A, IAS 1990), municipal commissioner, Gurgaon, agrees. "The job satisfaction I enjoy," he says, "has never once made me miss the higher corporate pay packages over these 20 years." In other words, the system can be made to deliver if one is serious. Why not take the momentum forward?

It's relevant to note here that the Sixth Pay Commission report of 2008 had actually proposed some of the things the IIM-G lot are pushing. It wanted, for instance, senior administrative posts to be filled by a much wider selection than from a single service. In fact, it wanted posts requir-

ing technical or specialised knowledge to be filled after going through a pool from both within or outside the Central services.

There has also since been much more experience in using and entrenching laws such as the right to information, with a groundswell of public opinion for powerful ombudsmen-like institutions such as the Lok Pal to check on outcomes and enforce accountability. To have people from senior levels within the system to take these ideas on is welcome. The onus is on them to show they're capable of doing so.

Bharat Salhotra (IIM-C and MIT Sloan, 1985 IRAS batch), currently general manager in the railways' Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation, says they're also keen on energising B-school students to join in improving the state and its

services. "Most students at these B-schools have inaccurate perceptions about government service. We'd like to provide guidance and clear doubts in this direction," he said. Why not, he argues, get that talent, with all the management exposure, interested in getting to grips with public service?

Why not, indeed? In fact, it's happening in some ways. Former President APJ Abdul Kalam, for instance, oversees quite a few social and rural development programmes. He got four IIM-A students to take a summer internship in these last year. This year, six joined from the batch. Let's see where this goes.

# US Entrepreneurs Bet on Education

Silicon Valley  
VCs lead \$15-m  
investment  
in free learning site

## ARILEVY

Reid Hoffman and Matt Cohler, two of Silicon Valley's social-networking pioneers, are throwing their hats into the education ring.

The entrepreneurs-turned-venture capitalists today led a \$15 million investment in Edmodo, a free learning site for teachers and students that claims almost 5 million registered users. The cash pile, from Greylock Partners and Benchmark Capital, gives the management team the runway to hire developers and add products without doing the one thing they prefer not to talk about: making money.

"The platform will always be free for teachers, students and schools and we don't plan on advertising at all," says Nic Borg, founder and chief executive officer of the San Mateo, California-based company. "The purpose of this raise and the folks that are coming on board is about driving forward this grassroots movement."

A free web service with no ads? Sounds like the early days of Facebook, where Cohler was one of the first employees. But that was back in 2005. This year, the social-networking site is poised to reap more than \$2 billion in display-ad sales, according to EMarketer, thanks to brands such as Coca-Cola, Subway and Adidas.

Then there's LinkedIn, the professional-networking site founded by Hoffman, and Cohler's employer before he joined Facebook. While many of the site's 100 million plus users don't pay a cent,

they're subsidised by premium subscribers and advertisers. LinkedIn's revenue more than doubled in the third quarter to \$139.5 million. Cohler is now a partner at Benchmark and Hoffman is at Greylock.

In the press release today, Hoffman called Edmodo the "educational graph for learning," similar to Facebook's role as the connector of friends and LinkedIn's position in the workplace. Teachers at more than 60,000 schools, three-quarters of them in the US, are using the site to assign and grade homework, post educational videos, and share content with other teachers and classrooms. Edmodo works in the browser and on mobile devices such as smartphones and the iPod Touch.

Rob Hutter, the company's chairman, said the new financing gives the company "several years" to build and expand the product without worrying about generating revenue. Of course, venture capitalists don't invest in startups unless they see the opportunity to make several times their money back, and Greylock and Benchmark have been among the most successful firms in that regard.

While expectations for Edmodo are surely no different, Cohler wouldn't divulge any more than the company. "Revenue opportunities that emerge over time that we get excited about will be ones that are consistent with the mission of the business," Cohler says. As for generating revenue today? "That's not what we're focused on at this point," he says.

**Businessweek**

# JOURNEY INTO UNCHARTED VOIDS OF THE MILKY WAY

NASA's Voyager 1 spacecraft is about to become the first man-made object to leave the Solar System

**A**FTER a voyage lasting more than 34 years, a spacecraft that has travelled further than any man-made object is on the verge of leaving the Solar System and entering the mysterious region of interstellar space, where nothing terrestrial has gone before.

Scientists at the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) said the Voyager 1 space probe, which has travelled about 11 billion miles since its launch in 1977, has entered the cosmic equivalent of the doldrums, where the high-speed solar winds die down at the very edge of the Solar System.

Voyager 1, launched within weeks of its twin probe, Voyager 2, was originally designed to explore Jupiter and Saturn. After making a string of important observations, such as active volcanoes on Jupiter's moon Io and the intricacies of Saturn's rings, the mission was extended. Voyager 2 went on to explore the faraway planets of Uranus and Neptune.

However, long after the official planetary missions ended, both spacecraft continued to plough through the farthest regions of the Solar System, while maintaining radio contact with mission control through its Deep Space Network.

NASA expects that within the next few months – or possibly years if margins of error are taken into account – Voy-

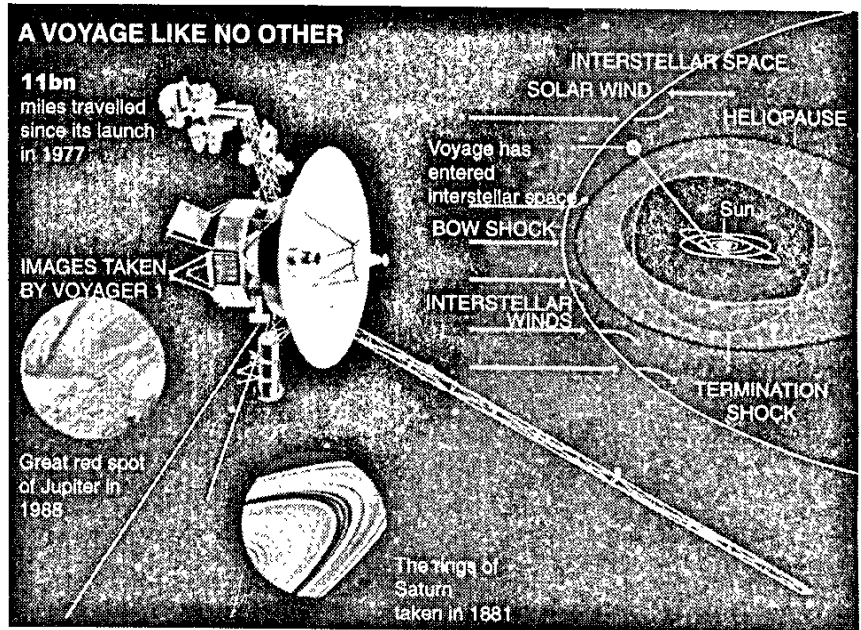
ager 1 will finally leave the Solar System for good and begin its journey through the vast void of interstellar space that comprises most of the Milky Way galaxy. Voyager 2 – travelling not far behind – will follow suit.

Scientists at NASA said that over the past year, Voyager 1 had entered a kind of "cosmic purgatory", where the wind of electrically charged particles streaming from the Sun has calmed.

Both spacecraft are now in a region known as the "heliosheath", the outermost layer of the Solar System, where the solar wind, which can travel 16 miles per second, is being slowed down by the rising pressure of interstellar gas. NASA scientists believe this indicates the imminent entry of Voyager 1 into the interstellar region, which is dominated by another kind of magnetic wind coming from a different direction of deep space.

"Voyager tells us now that we're in a stagnation region in the outermost layer of the 'bubble' around our Solar System. Voyager is showing that what is outside is pushing back. We shouldn't have long to wait to find out what the space between the stars is really like," said Ed Stone, Voyager project scientist at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

NASA changed the orientation of Voyager 1 four times this year to see whether the solar wind and magnetic field lines had switched direction.



The Voyager 1 space probe, which has travelled about 11 billion miles since its launch in 1977, has entered the cosmic equivalent of the doldrums, where the high-speed solar winds die down at the very edge of the Solar System

## THE FINAL FRONTIER: BETWEEN THE STARS

- The English philosopher Francis Bacon appears to have been the first person to attempt to describe the space between stars when he wrote in 1626 about the "interstellar skie".
- In the 19th century scientists postulated an invisible luminiferous ether between the stars that allowed the transport of light. It is now known that electromagnetic waves, whether cosmic rays or light in visible wavelengths, can travel through interstellar space without the need for a physical "ether".
- Astronomers today talk about an interstellar medium that fills the void between stars. Rather than a complete vacuum, consists of about 99 per cent dust and 1 per cent charged particles or ions, but in incredibly low densities. Cosmic rays from deep space fill the void.

Data released at the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco shows the magnetic field lines have not changed, indicating that Voyager 1 is still just within the "heliosphere", the magnetic

bubble of charged particles created by the Sun.

"We have seen the same east-west direction of the magnetic field since we launched. That's the solar magnetic field. Once we

leave the heliosphere we will enter the magnetic field of the galaxy, and all the data to date suggest that this field is orientated more north-south," Dr Stone told the meeting.

—The Independent

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## आईआईटी खड़गपुर में फेसबुक को मिले चार उम्मीदवार

फेसबुक ने आईआईटी खड़गपुर के चार छात्रों को 77 लाख रुपए प्रत्येक के सैलरी पैकेज पर नौकरी पर रखा है। इस साल यह किसी कंपनी द्वारा आईआईटी के छात्रों को दिया जाने वाला सबसे बड़ा सैलरी पैकेज है। इसके अलावा, पहली बार फेसबुक ने किसी आईआईटी से एक साथ चार उम्मीदवारों का चुनाव किया है।