Newspaper Clips
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Govt's hire-expat professor scheme a hit with varsities

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NEW DELHI: IIT Jodhpur scholar Poonam Sharma often craved to meet international experts in nanomaterial synthesis after studying their research papers.

So, when Prof Timothy Fisher from Purdue University in the US, whose work in the field is well known, arrived at her institute under the HRD ministry's Global Initiative for Academic Network (GIAN) programme on a week-long lecture tour, the chemistry PhD student was ecstatic.

Sharma says her interaction with Fisher broadened her horizons on the subject and she is excited about possible collaborations with the professor and his university.

Prof Fisher is among 300 foreign academicians hired under the GIAN initiative, which allows higher-education institutes such as the IITs, IIMs and central universities to bring them to their campuses with the government picking up the cost ranging from $8,000 to $12,000 for courses that last a week or two.

Judging by the response of students and institutes to GIAN, the programme that was launched in November has taken off well.

As many as 224 institutes expressed interest in inviting

WHO WANTS WHAT

224 Institutes that applied for foreign faculty

160 Institutes given approval

297 Total number of courses

13 Number of disciplines

300 Foreign faculty hired so far

foreign teachers for short-term courses and of these 160 have already got the human resource development ministry's consent.

Among these institutes, 19 are IITs, 25 NITs, six management schools, 57 universities and 48 AICTE colleges.

"Every institute wants to bring the best faculty available in the field to interact with its students, but the cost of hiring them was a big stumbling block," said IIT Kharagpur director Prof Partha Chakrabarti. "So, as soon as GIAN was launched, institutes such as IIT Mumbai, Mizoram University and Bhopal's School of Planning and Architecture sought foreign faculties and the list will grow further."

Scholars from premier inter-national schools including MIT, Cambridge University, University of Leeds and Imperial College have been hired to teach Indian students, officials said.

"In the programme at IIT-J, we held thirteen one-hour lectures, delivered by myself and several other esteemed colleagues, as well as a laboratory tutorial, an examination session, and many informal discussions with participants," Prof Fisher said.

An expert panel of the ministry has approved 297 courses spread over 13 disciplines, including mathematical and computer sciences, mechanical sciences and infrastructure, humanities and liberal arts, architecture, law and social sciences.

Times Of India ND 15/02/2016   P-10

In '15, foreign student numbers jumped 50%

Opting For UG Courses, Not Research: Report

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Bengaluru: The number of foreign students coming to India increased by 50% in 2015 compared with 2014, according to Union home ministry statistics. While the number of French students more than tripled (214% increase), the number of those from Germany and Japan increased 124% and 123%, respectively.

As many as 66,885 foreign students came to India in 2015, up from 44,620 in 2014. Traditional incomers from Bangladesh and Afghanistan posted a high increase — 670% and 112%. The two countries accounted for 11,000 students. The number of students from the UK increased by only 1.8%, while of those from the US dipped by 12%. The number of Chinese students increased by 123% and of South Korean students by 43%.

"This is an indication that at least some of our institutions are of global standards," said Professor Anup Lal, sociology and industrial relations department, St Joseph's College of Arts and Science. He said there was, however, concern that most of the foreign students come to India for UG courses and

While the number of students from France, Germany and Japan shows considerable increase, those from the US has dipped by 12%

did not continue to pursue research. Also, the latest numbers are no match for those from 2013, when India saw 93,693 such students.

Experts like Prof S Sadagopan, IIIT-Bangalore founder-director, have argued that India needs to understand the soft power that higher education can fetch and the need to attract foreign students, especially at master's and PhD levels.

Former Planning Commission member K Kasturirangan has said that it is not just enough to attract foreign students and the larger goal must be to engage in a partnership with global institutes. The Indian Institute of

Science, Bangalore, for example, just like some other top institutes like the IIMs and IITs, has an exclusive cell dealing with such matters.

The International Centre for Theoretical Sciences, a centre of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, is another example of an institute working on international projects — many of their faculty and students are already part of the LIGO project that detected gravitational waves last week.

Experts said the increase in students coming from developed countries such as France and Germany, where many Indian students opt to go for studies, is a good sign.

Bad management

Why the draft Bill on IIMs is a problem

HITESH ARORA

Recently, the Centre has launched several initiatives to make India a manufacturing hub, while making economic growth more inclusive. These initiatives have increased the demand for professional managers significantly, making management education more important than ever.

In India, management education is imparted by various players such as universities, autonomous, affiliated and unaffiliated institutes besides open universities offering distance learning courses. And then there are the Indian Institutes of Management.

Bill of contention

The human resource development ministry has prepared a draft Bill seeking to form a 'coordination forum' for the 19 IIMs; its contents have triggered a debate.

The debate is being led by three major players in management education — old, reputed IIMs (IIM-A, IIM-B and IIM-C), new IIMs and private institutes. The Bill proposes to allow the IIMs to grant degrees instead of diplomas. As a result, programmes offered by the IIMs would be called MBA (in place of PGDM) and PhD (in place of fellowship).

This proposal is being appreciated by the new IIMs as they feel a degree would help boost their brand in the market and would make their courses more attractive.

On the other hand, the reputed IIMs believe they already have an excellent brand due to better quality and granting a degree or diploma has no relevance for them.

At present, IIMs enjoy freedom regarding appointment of chairpersons, directors and faculty members, fixing of fees and remuneration, changes in curriculum and decisions on the institute's infrastructure.

The new Bill will snatch away this freedom by making all these subject to the approval of the HRD ministry in addition to remaining under the Right to Information (RTI) Act and audit by Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

At the same time, the private institutes are also opposing the Bill since they are the worst-hit because such a move would impact their popularity due to their inability to grant degrees.

Some private institutes even rank above the new IIMs. They have quality infrastructure, admirable course curriculum and faculty, affordable fee structure and location, and above all remarkable placements.

Need a level-playing field

With the new IIMs being able to grant MBA degrees instead of diplomas, it is probable that students will make their preferences based on the nature of certification rather than institute rankings. The courses run by private institutes will lose their sheen once the IIMs begin to award degrees.

The arguments put forth by the old and reputed IIMs seem untenable for the simple fact that if a universal policy is being framed for the IIMs, all ought to be put under the same umbrella. Allowing IIMs to grant degrees would compromise the position of these institutions. It is strongly felt that there must be a level-playing field for everyone. In fact, the government should draft a 'Management Education Bill' rather than an 'IIM Bill' to approve all management institutes.

The future of management education in the country ought to focus on re-orienting itself to meet the increasing demand for professional managers.

The writer teaches at FORE School of Management, New Delhi

IIT pupil held as Raj busts exam racket

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur/Udaipur: A student believed to be from IIT-Roorkee was remanded in police custody for five days after he was caught taking the Rajasthan patwari exam for someone else in Udaipur on Saturday. He was reportedly paid Rs 15,000 for the job.

The Rajasthan Police on Saturday caught several proxy examinees during the exam, many of them reportedly flown in from across India. One such proxy, Dappi Kumar, took a flight to Jaipur from Patna, and was reportedly paid Rs 5 lakh to take the exam.

Nagaur resident Choudhary was taking the exam for Bhilwara's Avdesh Kumar Kotwal, who remains at large. "If he had cracked the exam, Choudhary was to get another Rs 50,000," investigating officer Bhanwar Nath said. Nearly 10 other proxies were arrested from Sawaimadhopur, Karauli and Bharatpur districts.

आईआईटी खड़गपुर के छात्र ने बनाया 'टिकट जुगाड़'

■ कन्फर्म्ड टिकट नहीं मिलने से परेशान लोगों की मदद करेगा नया एप्प

कोलकाता (भाषा)। दो छात्रों ने एक ऐसा मोबाइल एप्प शुरू किया है जो ट्रेन का कन्फर्म्ड टिकट पाने में आपकी मदद करेगा। अपनी अनूठी प्रोग्रामिंग के चलते यह सीट के लिए वैकल्पिक मार्गों की तलाश करता है।

एप्प के विकास में साझीदार रुणाल जाजू ने बताया, 'टिकट बुकिंग के लिए स्टेशन-वार कुछ कोटा है। मिसाल की तौर पर आप स्टेशन 'क' से टिकट बुक कर रहे हैं, यह वेटिंग लिस्ट दिखा सकता है, लेकिन जब किसी पिछले स्टेशन से बुक कराते हैं तो हो सकता है कि आपको टिकट मिल जाए। अगर आप ऐसे स्टेशन को खुद से खोजना चाहें तो यह मुश्किल होगा, लेकिन हमारा एप्प इसे स्वतः कर देता है।' 'टिकट जुगाड़' नाम के इस एप्प का विकास आईआईटी खड़गपुर के दूसरे वर्ष के छात्र रुणाल जाजू और उनके चचेरे भाई शुभम बलदावा ने किया है।

बलदावा जमशेदपुर एनआईटी के छात्र हैं। आईआईटी के उद्यमशीलता प्रकोष्ठ ने इस एप्प को समर्थन दिया है और इस स्टार्ट अप को आईआईटी खड़गपुर के वार्षिक ग्लोबल बिजनेस माडल कंपटीशन में डेढ़ लाख रु का इनाम मिला है। यह एप्प प्रस्थान स्टेशन से पहले या बाद के स्टेशनों के हिसाब से उपलब्ध टिकट खोज देता है और किसी कन्फर्म्ड टिकट से पूरा होने वाले अधिकतम मार्ग की जानकारी देता है।

उल्लेखनीय है कि रेल विभाग यात्रियों को बुकिंग स्टेशन के बाद वाले स्टेशनों से रेलगाड़ी पर सवार होने की इजाजत देता है। जाजू ने बताया कि कुछ टिकट एजेंट बिना किसी एप्प की मदद से खुद से इस तरह की गणना कर सकते हैं और वे कन्फर्म्ड टिकट उपलब्ध कराते हैं, लेकिन इसके लिए वे बेतहाशा पैसा वसूलते हैं। मजे की बात है कि छात्रों का यह ऐप्प मुफ्त में डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। साथ ही, यह सेवा प्रदान करने के लिए कोई शुल्क नहीं लेता।

Financial Express ND 15/02/2016   P-12

The retailing of online education courses in India

Given the uniqueness of the retail sector and its inherent challenges, the 'retailing' of online education courses will be a tough nut to crack for companies

ROHIN KAPOOR

E-commerce is an industry which, over the course of last few years, has changed the way we shop, eat, travel, network and, possibly very soon, learn. India is a young nation with more than 65% of its population below 35 years of age. The demand-supply mismatch for quality education in the country has reached massive proportions, with thousands of applications being received for a few college seats. Further, the quality of education imparted in most of our institutions has been found lacking in various national and international surveys.

As a result, the use of technology has now become inevitable to address the aspirations of our youth. In recent times, online education courses seem to have caught the attention of our student and professional community. The ever-increasing internet and smartphone penetration in the country is expected to further fuel this growth. Indians constituting the second-largest student community on Coursera, the US-based Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) aggregator, vindicates the growing appetite for online courses.

The current scenario

According to various estimates, the size of the e-learning industry in India is currently pegged at $2-3 billion. To meet the sudden spurt in demand, a number of education technology companies and start-ups have come up in recent times, offering online courses.

As the industry is still at a nascent stage, there are certain companies which are currently operating across the three service categories identified in the accompanying chart. Over time, we expect specialised companies bucketed in each of these categories.

In order to capitalise on the huge traffic generated on their websites and apps, some large e-commerce companies have already started testing waters. The initial service offerings of these companies include online professional certificate courses which are aimed at up-skilling or re-skilling students in streams such as technology, finance, engineering, banking, management, among others. They are also offering vanilla training courses without any certification. Recently, Flipkart collaborated with TCYonline, an India-based testing platform, to offer test preparation tools and coaching materials for over 90 examination categories. Interestingly, consistent with their discount strategy, certificate courses are also being offered at massive discounts ranging up to 90%.

Advantages and challenges

There is no doubt that online courses offer a wide array of benefits to students. These benefits include cost, convenience, customised pace of progress, anywhere/anytime access, benchmarked quality of course material, unrestricted reach to faculty/mentors online, amongst others. On the other hand, the list of challenges include lack of recognition of online certificates by employers/educational institutions, no accrediting/certifying agency to stamp quality on certifying company, dearth of options for cost benchmarking and comparing various programmes, and absence of personal touch. The retailers are also aware that students are wary to spend on such programmes due to loads of freely available information on the internet.

Although Indians constitute the second highest student community on Coursera, over 90% do not complete the course in which they have enrolled out of choice. This may be a matter of concern for the entire retailing industry as students do not seem to attach a lot of value to online certifications. Enrolment in online programmes seem to be for reference purposes (probably to complete projects/assignments) or temporary knowledge attainment.

The way forward

Given the uniqueness of this sector and the inherent challenges it faces, we believe that retailing of online education courses will be a tough nut to crack for retailing companies. Although with a huge student population translating into a multi-billion dollar industry, the opportunity seems to be too large to ignore. A well-articulated and focused strategy to understand and effectively meet the current demands of the market is required.

The need of the hour is a uniform recognised accrediting agency which rates the various online certification programmes so that students can easily compare and choose the most suited learning option. This will also lend credibility to such programmes, increasing the chance of acceptance by the employers and educational institutions. We believe that the online certification market is here to stay and we foresee the market evolving with the changing demands of the industry.

Rohin Kapoor is a director with Deloitte in India

Broad structure of eLearning industry

Course creation & development companies
- Developing course material
- Providing online/ offline teaching support
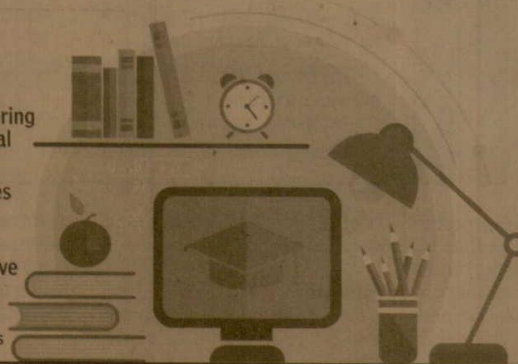- Provide student support & other allied services

Certification & assessment companies
- Conducting tests/ assessments for certification
- Setting standards & benchmarks
- Issue certificates to students

Retailers/ aggregators of online courses
- Platform for offering various educational courses
- Marketing & sales channel
- Obtain student feedback to improve online courses

Source: Deloitte Analysis

In order to capitalise on the huge traffic generated on their websites and apps, some large e-commerce companies have already started testing waters. Flipkart, for example, has collaborated with TCYonline to offer test preparation tools and coaching materials for over 90 exam categories. Interestingly, consistent with its discount strategy, certificate courses are also being offered at massive discounts ranging up to 90%

राजस्थान में स्टार्टअप के लिए विशेष कंपनी

बीएस संवाददाता
जयपुर, 14 फरवरी

राजस्थान देश का प्रथम राज्य बन गया है जिसने स्टार्टअप के लिए विशेष उद्देश्य कंपनी (एसपीवी) शुरू की है। यह एसपीवी राजस्थान स्टेट इंडस्ट्रियल डेवलपमेंट ऐंड इन्वेस्टमेंट कॉर्पोरेशन (रीको) के सहायक के रूप में कार्य करेगी। इनसे स्टार्टअप को फंडिंग व क्रियान्वयन के सरलीकरण में मदद मिलेगी और सभी प्रक्रियाओं के लिए एक केंद्र के रूप में कार्य करेगा।

उद्यमशीलता के लिए राजस्थान पोषण स्थल है और गत कुछ वर्षों में इसने अनेक सफल उद्यमी प्रदान किए हैं। आईआईटी, आईआईएम, एनआईएफटी, केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय जैसे प्रतिष्ठित संस्थानों की स्थापना के साथ राजस्थान तकनीकी एवं प्रबंधन शिक्षा के लिए एक प्रमुख गंतव्य बन गया है।

जयपुर के सीतापुरा में शुरू किए गए रीको के इन्क्यूबेशन सेंटर स्टार्टअप ओएसिस में पहले से ही उच्च स्तरीय की इंटरनेट सुविधाओं के साथ अन्य बेहतरीन सुविधाएं हैं। उम्मीद है कि अगले 3 वर्षों में इस इन्क्यूबेटर द्वारा 60 से अधिक

कारोबार को गति

उपक्रमों को इन्क्यूबेट किया जाएगा और पांचवें वर्ष के अंत तक लगभग 100 उपक्रमों को इन्क्यूबेट किया जाएगा। वर्ष 2013 में रीको ने राजस्थान पर फोकस इन्क्यूबेशन सेंटर 'स्टार्टअप ओएसिस' की स्थापना करने के लिए आईआईएम अहमदाबाद के सेंटर फॉर इनोवेशन, इन्क्यूबेशन ऐंड एंटरप्रेन्योरशिप (सीआईआईई) के साथ एक एमओयू पर हस्ताक्षर किया था। तब से स्टार्टअप ओएसिस ने क्लीनटेक, ई-कॉमर्स, ट्रैवल एवं टूरिज्म और शिक्षा जैसे क्षेत्रों में 58 स्टार्टअप को इन्क्यूबेट किया है। 18 स्टार्टअप ने संयुक्त रूप से 4.25 करोड़ रुपये का फंड सफलतापूर्वक जुटाया है। अक्टूबर 2015 में स्टार्टअप ओएसिस और रीको द्वारा राष्ट्रीय स्तर का 'राजस्थान स्टार्टअप फेस्ट' आयोजित किया गया था। दो दिवसीय इस फेस्ट के दौरान इंटरेक्शन एवं नेटवर्किंग में 1,200 विद्यार्थियों, स्टार्टअप, मेंटर्स और निवेशकों की उपस्थिति दर्ज की गई थी। इसकी अगली कड़ी के रूप में उदयपुर में 6 फरवरी को उदयपुर स्टार्टअप फेस्ट हुआ था।

February 14

Sunday Standard ND 14-20 Feb 2016 P-6

NORTH EAST WEST SOUTH

Quota Course Correction in Higher Education

Govt orders profiling of reserved category students in Central varsities, IITs and IIMs

By CITHARA PAUL

New Delhi: BJP as a political party may still be grappling with its stand on the reservation policy, but the Narendra Modi government has swung into action after singeing its fingers over the recent suicide of Dalit student Rohit Vemula in Hyderabad and the following unrest in the universities across the country.

Determined not to let the issue be "hijacked" by the Opposition, the government is on a course correction drive and has ordered the first-ever profiling of all reserved category students in Central universities, IITs and IIMs. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has asked the institutions to furnish details of the percentage of reserved category students and details of the procedure adopted for their admission.

"There was no serious monitoring of whether the affirmative policies of the government are being carried out, hence there were no accurate details with the government," a ministry official told *The Sunday Standard*. He added that the move—being carried out by National Commission for Backward Castes (NCBC) under the ministry—is expected to gather all information about reservation category students, including their socio-economic

Rohit Vemula

The Modi govt has swung into action after singeing its fingers over Dalit student Vemula's suicide

CRISIS OF CATEGORY

A recent Human Resource Development data found that most of universities and IITs fell short of the requisite 27 per cent of reservation for OBCs

5.24%: Uttarakhand's HNB Garhwal University

4.40%: Central University of Kashmir

19.19%: Central University of Tamil Nadu

20.13%: Central University of Punjab

22.45%: Vishwa Bharati University, West Bengal

■ In IITs under-graduate engineering programmes, OBC admissions did not cross 25%.

*Figures for 2014-15

and family backgrounds. Though the official did not want to connect Vemula's suicide to these developments, he did not deny that the process got priority after it.

Vemula had become a rallying point for the Opposition, with Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi attacking the Modi government. The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), a constituent in the Congress-led UDF government in Kerala, which is known not to have caste sensitivity, had invited Vemula's mother and brother to attend its political rally in Thiruvanathapuram this week. In the rally, many speakers cited the suicide to attack BJP. IUML state president Panakkad Hyderali Shihab Thangal said that the "Sangh Parivar agenda has become a threat to Dalits too, just like it is to several other sections of society".

Amar Ujala 14.02.2016 P-18

आईआईटी रुड़की में छात्रों ने किया अय्यर का विरोध

रुड़की (ब्यूरो)। कांग्रेस नेता मणिशंकर अय्यर को शनिवार को आईआईटी में आयोजित एक व्याख्यान कार्यक्रम के दौरान छात्रों का विरोध झेलना पड़ा। जेएनयू में देश विरोधी नारेबाजी को लेकर पूछे गए सवाल पर उन्होंने कहा कि बोलने से कोई देशद्रोही नहीं हो जाता। अय्यर के पूरे भाषण में कश्मीर का मुद्दा हावी रहा।

सवाल जवाब के दौरान छात्र उत्तेजित नजर आए। आईआईटी रुड़की में आयोजित संकल्प-2016 कार्यक्रम में अय्यर व्याख्यान के लिए पहुंचे थे। व्याख्यान के दौरान एक छात्र ने सवाल पूछा कि क्या देश विरोधी नारेबाजी करने वालों पर कार्रवाई न करते हुए उनके बंदूक उठाने तक इंतजार करना चाहिए। इस पर अय्यर ने कहा कि अभी उन्होंने बंदूक नहीं उठाई है। उन्होंने कहा कि किसी भी तरह की अलगाववादी आवाज को दबाकर नहीं बल्कि उसे सुनकर समाधान निकाला जा सकता है। इस दौरान छात्र उत्तेजित नजर आए।

'Global Focus as Important as India Focus in Higher Education'

By BLESSY MATHEW PRASAD

Chennai: There could probably be no disagreement on the fact that education shapes minds and ideologies. But with all the recent demands for the 'Indianisation' of education, the question really is 'what does Indianisation' mean'? Should students be denied the chance to understand their history, conflicts that arose, and foundations of modern India?

"There are problems in the foundations on which you build future, what are those foundations, how did we get there, was there exploitation, injustice and violence in the past, how was it perpetrated and how was it justified. All those questions need to be answered before you can move forward. At the same time, we should also make sure that you don't get caught up in some divisive story about something that happened thousands of years ago. You have to focus on how to make education come alive in such a manner that people can relate to the world in which they live," says Rajeev Gowda, MP.

He adds, "Too often, because our higher education has not been Indianised enough, we haven't got enough of an understanding of our context, and

(Left to right) Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Gowda makes a point as Rajya Sabha MP Ritabrata Banerjee, Shankkar Aiyar and Prof Anirban Ganguly look on

conflicts. If we talk about urban planning today and don't understand that villages were built in segregated ways, that some communities had issues about not getting enough access to facilities, all that is necessary to build newer cities. So there is a need for some amount of historical knowledge."

Anirban Ganguly, Director, Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, says the problem is not when there are too many different ideas, but when one idea continues to dominate and leaves no room for other ideas to develop.

He says, "The problem is when one idea of India dominates and practises academic apartheid. And when that idea is no longer dominant, it accuses others of being intolerant." He went on to say that we cannot practise academic apartheid for decades and not allow a certain conception of India to come out and it is academic apartheid that makes for a selective reading of thinkers. Ganguly proposed setting up of centres where we study the history of the communist party in India and thinkers like Dr Syama Prasad." Chair Shankkar Aiyar ended the session with the concluding remark that "You can interrogate history, but you cannot prosecute it."

IISER team set to play greater role

http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Thiruvananthapuram/iiser-team-set-to-play-greater-role/article8235733.ece

Scientists from the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Thiruvananthapuram, who contributed to the historic discovery of gravitational waves from colliding black holes, are gearing up for a greater role in the international project that promises to open a new window onto the cosmos.

The Gravitational Wave Group at the School of Physics, IISER, Thiruvananthapuram, was part of the Indian Initiative in Gravitational-wave Observations (IndIGO) comprising scientists from nine institutions working under the LIGO Scientific Collaboration (LSC).

The team, headed by Archana Pai, was involved in analysing the data from the gravitational wave detectors in the U.S.

The group, which focuses on novel gravitational wave detection algorithms, directly contributed in testing general relativity with the black hole binary termed as GW150914. With extensive computational analysis, the study found that the emitted signal is consistent with the predictions of general relativity.

The work is relevant now in the context of the discovery and with more advanced detectors scheduled to come up in the next few years, a press note issued by IISER said.

Einstein's theory

The current LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory) network that detected gravitational waves, confirming the prediction of Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity, consists of two U.S.-based detectors designed to detect tiny vibrations from passing gravitational waves. The data from the detectors was analysed by an international team of scientists.

India is one of the countries where an advanced gravitational laboratory is slated to be established, under plans to improve the ability of the detector network to localise gravitational wave sources. The detector would be operated jointly by IndIGO and the LIGO laboratory and form part of the network covering Italy, Japan, and the US. An orbiting observatory is also on the cards.