Newspaper Clips

February 10-11, 2013

February 10

Times of India Ahmedabad 09-02-2013 P-2

IITians begin bid to find supermodel

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Twenty one students from Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IIT-Gn) are participating in 'Mathematical Contest in Modelling' (MCM), a worldwide competition where teams of undergraduates use mathematical modelling to solve real life problems.

"This will enable our students to think out of the box for solutions to social issues," said professor Raj Srinivasan, the head of the department of mathematics and statistics at University of Saskatchewan in Canada, and currently visiting faculty for mathematics at IIT-Gn.

Organized by Consortium for Mathematics and Its Applications (COMAP), a US based non-profit organization, MCM is held in the first week of February annually. As a part of the competition, three problems are released at a specific time on a specific date, throughout the world.

The participants get a total of 4 days to choose a problems, work on it, do research, devise a mathematical description of the problem and finally compile the work into a report.

Around one thousand international teams of three undergraduates each take part in the competition every year. Initially participation was primarily from the USA, but in recent years international participation has grown significantly.

TOI

APPLYING MATHEMATICS SOLUTIONS

The problems thrown to the competing students this year include The Ultimate Brownie Pan, where the students must design a brownie pan which is better and more effective than those already existing. Second is water, water, everywhere, in which student teams are required to come up with an innovative model to solve water woes.

Third is network modeling of earth's health where students are required to build a dynamic global network model of some aspect of Earth's health by identifying local elements of the condition and connecting them appropriately to track relationship and attribute effects.

Hindustan Times ND 10/02/2013
P-14

PMO intervenes, seeks common skills framework

SKILL DEVELOPMENT HRD and labour ministry have got their own frameworks approved, thus creating confusion

Chetan Chauhan
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

PROBLEM AREAS

- Companies not willing to hire trainees because of inadequate training
- Not enough jobs in the areas of training resulting in low placements
- No framework to recognise certificates awarded by the training centres for industry recognition
- Stringent rules of state governments in providing skill development a difficult task in some states
- Few takers for long duration courses as placement is not guaranteed
- Industry-academia collaboration poor, becomes a hindrance in skill development work
- Archaic Apprentice Act has also not helped in pushing for skill training in the private sector
- The private sector has not agreed to 50% reservation for apprentices in jobs.

NEW DELHI: Two frameworks for one mission — skill qualification certification — has flabbergasted the Prime Minister's Office which has asked the respective ministries, HRD and labour, to come out with a common document for the same.

The HRD ministry had already taken Cabinet's approval for National Vocational Education Qualification Framework stipulating certification for different levels of education depending on the skill upgradation.

For a two-year programme, one could get secondary degree and for five years, a graduation level certification with a flexibility to enter and exit the programme for small periods. The All India Council for Technical Education was asked to implement the framework in collaboration with the industry.

The ministry of labour also circulated its own National Vocational Qualification Framework for approval which primarily focuses on training the school dropouts for the labour intensive market. The ministry's framework was also approved by an inter-ministerial group and was ready for Cabinet approval when the PMO intervened.

"The PMO believed that the HRD ministry's framework was the only one but was surprised to see the second one," a senior government official said, adding that the two ministries were not willing to recede from their turfs even a bit.

As a result, an inter-ministerial committee was formed to harmonise the two frameworks and suggest a National Skills Qualification Framework (NSDF).

To prevent any more wrangling between the two ministries, the government has decided that the Cabinet note on the new framework would be prepared by advisor to Prime Minister on skill development S Ramadorai and piloted by the Planning Commission, whose deputy chairperson Montek Singh Ahluwalia also heads NSDC.

"The Cabinet's approval for the new framework would soon be sought," an official said.

Such turf wars and state governments not fully coming on board were said to be a reason for the Centre's skill development mission not taking off in five years since its inception.

Just one-fifth of the target for providing skills to the youth in 2012-13 would be met. The placement of trainees from NSDC recognised centres are on the decline. In north-east, where the Youth Affairs ministry launched skill training programme, the placement has been bare minimum with trainees not willing to work outside the region, officials said.

Another shortcoming of the programme highlighted at a recent meeting in Planning Commission was stress on number of trainees rather than the quality of training. Also, the training is not based on job demand surveys in the region resulting in declining placement.

The Planning Commission wants to revamp the council by turning into an authority.

February 11

Hindustan Times , ND 11/02/2013
p-11

$1 lakh per year pay for faculty of Indian origin

Chetan Chauhan
■ chetan@hindustantimes.com

BRAIN GAIN

- The model for the scheme adopted is similar to one in China, where hundreds of foreign faculty of Chinese origin has joined in mainland institutes in the last couple of years
- The money India would be offering — $1 lakh a year — would be still less than what China gives but the policymakers are confident that it would attack teachers.

NEW DELHI: An annual salary of $1 lakh per annum is in the offing for foreign faculty of the Indian origin to work in some of the leading science institutes.

The department of science and technology and the planning commission has finalised a package to attract some of the well-known names in the world of science to Indian institutes as part of its new "brain-gain" policy expected to be unveiled by finance minister P Chidambaram in this year's budget.

"We want to hire at least 15 faculty members from best universities in the coming year," said a senior planning commission official. A provision of R15 crore would be made in the department's budget for the financial year 2013-14.

The official said role of the foreign faculty would not only be teach but also to mentor the institutions in a bid to inculcate new concepts of science education and research. "The aim is to bring a culture change," the official said.

Getting the proposal through was not easy as similar bids of the Indian Institutes of Technology had failed to take off because of resistance from the ministry of home affairs. The IITs wanted a work visa for five-years, which the home ministry was not willing to issue.

The government has been able to get around this technical issue with the Plan panel deputy chairperson Montek Singh Ahluwalia getting the home ministry on board.

The package to be offered would be for a year and extendable by another four years. "The ministry has no objection in granting teaching visa for a year," an official said. The package would also provide for accommodation within the campus and personal staff.

Economic Times , ND 11/02/2013 P-1

Muted Start to IIM-A Placements

Consulting firms made the biggest catch again, but euphoria missing

Low-Key Show

Cluster 1: Report Card

Job offers fewer than last year | **Consulting pay** packets higher by **10-15%**

Barclays, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank and Goldman Sachs offered roles in trading and investment banking divisions

BCG top recruiter in consulting, makes highest number of offers

Goldman Sachs also hired for roles in quantitative strategy

PARAG DAVE & SHRAMANA GANGULY
AHMEDABAD

Consulting dominated the first cluster of the final placements at IIM-Ahmedabad, scooping up the crème de la crème of talent, even though there was a conspicuous absence of euphoria. Among investment banks, Goldman Sachs made three offers, including one at around ₹60 lakh with a fixed component of ₹35 lakh, to a student for its Bangalore office, according to campus sources.

Among the consulting firms, Boston Consulting Group (BCG) hired five grads on Sunday, becoming the top recruiter so far on the campus with a total of 15 offers, including pre-placement offers (PPOs), against 17 last year. McKinsey & Co recruited four students. Monitor Group hired five students; AT Kearney and Oliver Wymen three each; and Bain & Co picked up two. Accenture also hired, though the numbers were not available. These firms offered higher salaries compared with last year, with most offering a 10-15% increase. The packages in the consulting sector are in the range of ₹20-25 lakh for domestic locations. A senior IIM-A faculty said consulting will dominate this year's placements like last year.

"We have continued to hire students in double digits from IIM-A. We made offers for Mumbai, Chennai and Delhi in roles like management consultants to students in sectors like automotives and financial services. We have hiked salaries compared with last year," said a BCG official without divulging the details of the hikes.

According to sources, investment banks hired in small numbers at less than three offers each, with some hiring just one student each. Deutsche Bank Global Markets Centre also hired grads from IIM-A. As reported earlier, IIM-A has received at least two PPOs exceeding ₹1 crore.

The campus had more investment banks making offers this time around than last year.

Offers in Line with Last Year ▸▸ 10

Offers in Line with Last Year

▸▸ From Page 1

While it was JPMorgan, Credit Suisse, HSBC and RBS last year, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank, Morgan Stanley and Barclays have made offers this year. According to sources, the offers were more or less in line with last year.

The number of PPOs from the finance sector is less than last year and that will have an impact on the total number of offers, said a source.

Close to 20 companies from finance and consulting participated in the first cluster on Saturday and Sunday. In the first cluster, some 50-60 students got placed against 70-odd last year, mainly because of lower number of offers from consulting firms.

Around 380 students from the 2011-13 batch of the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) are participating in the placement process spread over four weekends. The companies that visited the campus as part of cluster 1 comprised four cohorts — global strategy consulting, international investment banks, general management leadership programs and investment management firms — said an IIM-A release.

The institute will organise the second cluster over the next weekend where FMCG companies would pick up students for roles in sales and marketing. Sales and marketing are expected to dominate placements, second to consulting, say sources.

Mail Today ND 11/02/2013 P-8

Super 30 goes global

Anand's model being duplicated in Japan varsities

By **Giridhar Jha** In Patna

BIHAR'S acclaimed mathematician Anand Kumar of Super 30 fame arrived to a hero's welcome in Japan on Sunday sweeping young students and others off their feet with his unassuming demeanour in Tokyo.

Anand on Sunday met internationally-acclaimed scientist Kiyoshi Kurokawa, professor at National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies and science advisor to the Japanese cabinet.

During the meeting he requested Kurokawa, the man behind the conceptualisation of the Global 30 programme being launched in Japanese universities on the lines of Super 30, to give opportunity to underprivileged students from India for higher education. He said Global 30 could emerge as a great motivator for the students from India.

"Today, America, Europe and Australia attract students from India whose parents can afford the cost. But for talented ones from poor families, the doors are closed. If these students get a chance, their success stories could make the world stop and take note of what Japan has in store for students," he said.

"Once Indian students get to know what Japan has to offer, it will draw them here. The need is to encourage talent not only among the rich but also those from the poor sections," he added.

Appreciating Anand's efforts, Kurokawa said: "Education holds the key to the future of any nation. What Super 30 is doing is quite outstanding."

Last year, Yoshino Hiroshi, director (India operation) of University of Tokyo had called on Anand and discussed the 'Global 30' initiative being launched in his country for poor students.

During the next few days, Anand will deliver lectures and appear on premier TV channels. Japan was among the first few countries, which noticed Super 30's journey and Anand's presence in Japan has left his fans thrilled.

Shotaro Asai, an IT engineer from Tokyo, said he was happy to meet Anand in person since he had so far seen him on Japanese TV channels only.

"Students have every facility in Japan. But finding jobs is still not easy... It is inspiring to know Anand shapes students from the poorest sections that finding jobs becomes easy for them," he said.

Student Ryosuke Sato said giving opportunities to the underprivileged sections and preparing them was the biggest achievement of Super 30.

Anand on the phone from Tokyo said he was overwhelmed by the love showered on him by the Japanese people in general and students in particular.

MAIL TODAY

FAN FOLLOWING: Anand Kumar (right) with Japanese scientist Kiyoshi Kurokawa; with his student admirers in Tokyo.

JOURNEY OF BIHAR SUPERMAN

- In 2002, Anand Kumar ran a modest coaching centre in Patna. He met Abhayanand, a 1977-batch IPS officer with an academic bent. They set up Super 30 in 2003 to impart free coaching to 30 students from the deprived sections of society
- The first year was a success. Out of the 30 students 18 made it to the IITs
- So far 263 students have made it to the IITs from Super 30

Hailed by his fans during visit to Tokyo

Millennium Post Nd11/02/2013

P-10

Super 30 mentor urges Japan to help poor students from India

Anand Kumar says country should give scholarships to attract students

TOKYO: Japan should take steps to attract Indian students by giving them scholarships to pursue higher education and research in the country, Indian educationist Anand Kumar has said.

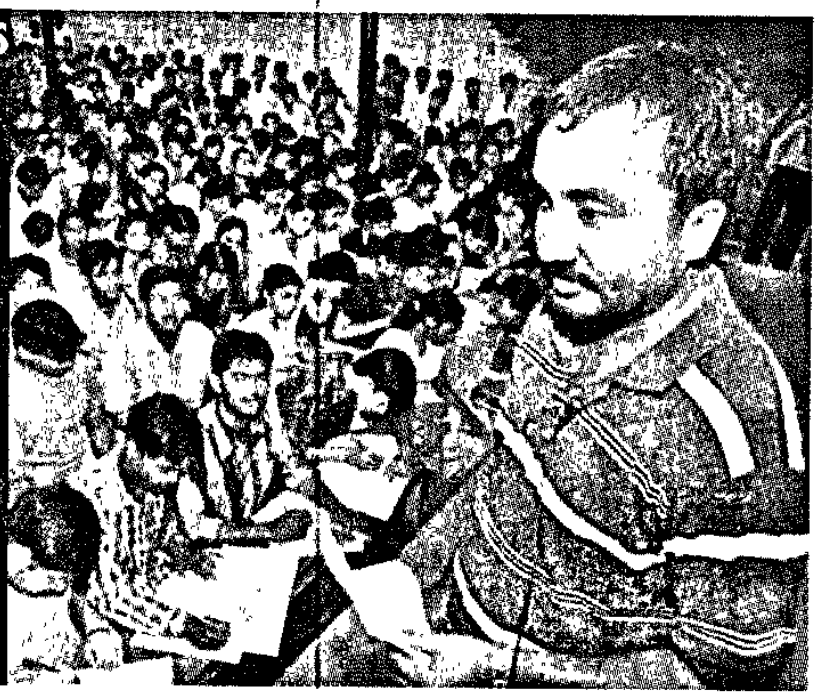
'It is important to make Japan an education hub for Indian students with a basket of courses, backed by scholarships and other incentives,' Kumar said during a meeting with science adviser to the Japanese Cabinet, Kiyoshi Kurokawa.

'Today, USA, Europe and Australia attract maximum number of students from India. These are students whose parents can afford the cost. But for the vastly talented ones from the poor families, the door are closed. If these students get a chance, their success stories could make the world stop and take note of what Japan has in store for students,' Kumar said.

Earlier, Kurokawa praised Kumar for his Super 30 programme, which grooms students from the underprivileged sections of society for the prestigious IITs.

KUMAR SPEAKS

- Today, USA, Europe and Australia attract maximum number of students from India. These are students whose parents can afford the cost. But for the vastly talented ones from the poor families, the door are closed. If these students get a chance, their success stories could make the world stop and take note of what Japan has in store for students



Kurokawa, the man behind the conceptualisation of Japanese Global 30 programme, is a professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies.

Anand is on a week-long visit on the invitation of Japanese government to explore the emerging prospects for Indian students in Japan.

In November last year, Yoshino Hiroshi, director of the University of Tokyo of India operation, had called on Anand in Patna and discussed the 'Global 30' programme, an initiative to attract foreign students to Japan.

Out of 1.4 lakh foreign students annually coming to Japan, India's contribution is only 600. Japan wishes to increase the number of foreign students to three lakh by 2020, which can be achieved by raising flow of talented students from India. AGENCIES

Times Of India ND 11/02/2013 (Education Times) p-1

In a popular trend, colleges/ universities from across the world are signing MoUs with Indian institutes of higher education. Jude Sannith S finds out what kind of an agreement is most beneficial for students

'SIGNS' OF THE TIMES

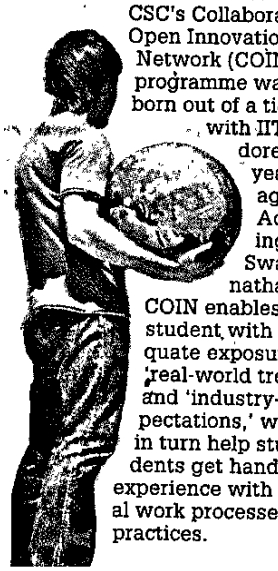
ILLUSTRATION: SACHIN VARADKAR

It has become a popular trend for universities and institutes to tie-up to achieve common goals and to widen their academic scope. On a macro-level, there are two kinds of memorandums of understanding (MoUs) — between universities and institutes; between universities and industry.

"In a university-university MoU, factors like university-ranking, similarity in terms of academic strengths and areas of improvement are taken into consideration," explains TV Gopal, dean of international relations, SRM University, Chennai.

While an MoU begins with student-exchange programmes, it could also include introduction of collaborative programmes like dual degree courses. At its highest level, an MoU would entail research collaborations between universities. "However, it is important that 'University A' and 'University B' match their strengths and areas of improvement. This is a formula that can go a long way in making an MoU work," adds Gopal. SRM University, for example, has exchange programmes with students of Carnegie Mellon University, Warwick University and Lancaster University, to name a few.

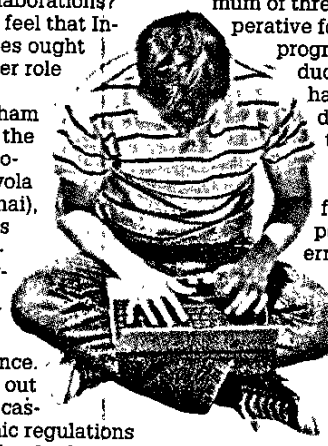
University-industry tie-ups also play a role in student development. "It provides industry-exposure to students, allowing them to interact with corporate leadership. Also, students gain insight into the daily functioning of a company," says Ganesh Swaminathan, director, management and office of innovation, CSC, whose India operations is based in Noida.



CSC's Collaborative Open Innovation Network (COIN) programme was born out of a tie-up with IIT Indore, five years ago. According to Swaminathan, COIN enables a student with adequate exposure to 'real-world trends' and 'industry-expectations,' which in turn help students get hands-on experience with global work processes and practices.

WHAT STUDENTS WANT

Mutual branding and collaborative measures apart, major beneficiaries of MoUs are the learners. What do students expect from these collaborations? Most students feel that Indian universities ought to play a greater role in MoUs.



Amman Locham is a student of the BBA France programme at Loyola College (Chennai), where students pursue four semesters at Loyola, and two semesters in Lille Catholic University, France. Locham points out that in several cases, the academic regulations are mostly set by the foreign university with little regard to the academic patterns that Indian students are used to.

Nearly 2000 kilometers up north, Pankaj Sharma, a Lucknow-based mechanical engineering student, agrees, adding that cost is also a factor, "In an attempt to attract competent students, a higher fee structure is set. That needs to change."

A common concern among students is the duration of exchange programmes. Most students complain that in university-university MoUs, the exchange programmes are too short to be of any use. "A minimum of three semesters is imperative for an exchange programme to be productive," says Mohammed Iqbal, a Hyderabad-based automobile engineering major.

Many experts feel that greater dependence on Western academic patterns may not necessarily be a bad idea in exchange programmes. "You are not spoon-fed abroad, you take the initiative to get your work done and your courses are not totally exam-oriented," says Chennai-based career counsellor, Kalavathi Amarachelvam, adding that this is perhaps one of the best advantages of being part of an exchange programme abroad.

Besides, MoUs between universities and industries work in favour of students in terms of hands-on industry experience. For instance, in a partnership between Nissan and IIT Madras, a select number of meritorious students are granted a scholarship so that they can pay industrial visits to Nissan's manufacturing plant in Japan.

"The scholarship, followed by the visit, inspires students to become leaders in the automotive industry," says Hiroki Sasaki, vice-president, Renault-Nissan Technology and Business Centre, India.

INDUSTRY READY

It isn't just students who benefit from MoUs. The industry, too, through a range of programmes and initiatives, is able to identify skill gaps and train students accordingly to make them industry-ready. Information technology giant Cisco's Networking Academy is such an initiative. It trains students — through partnerships with their institutes — to be industry-ready.

As Bina Raj Debur, manager, corporate responsibility, Cisco Systems, which has its India operations in Bangalore, says, "Skill training also encourages students to establish their own enterprises after college as opposed to scouting for opportunities. In addition to imparting IT knowledge and networking skills, the 'digital divide' is also bridged since the programme takes technical education to rural India."

Clearly, industry-centric MoUs are the way forward. However, Amarachelvam believes that the onus is on industry to train and nurture students of today into workforce for tomorrow. "Like corporate social responsibility, corporate enterprises must deem it their duty to make our students industry-ready," she says, adding that training and mentoring, however, isn't easy. It requires skill and passion. That is the game-changer — the recipe to making MoUs between academia and industry, a sure route to success.

6 MoUs between universities and industries work in favour of students in terms of hands-on industry experience. The industry, too, benefits as they train students to become ready for the job market

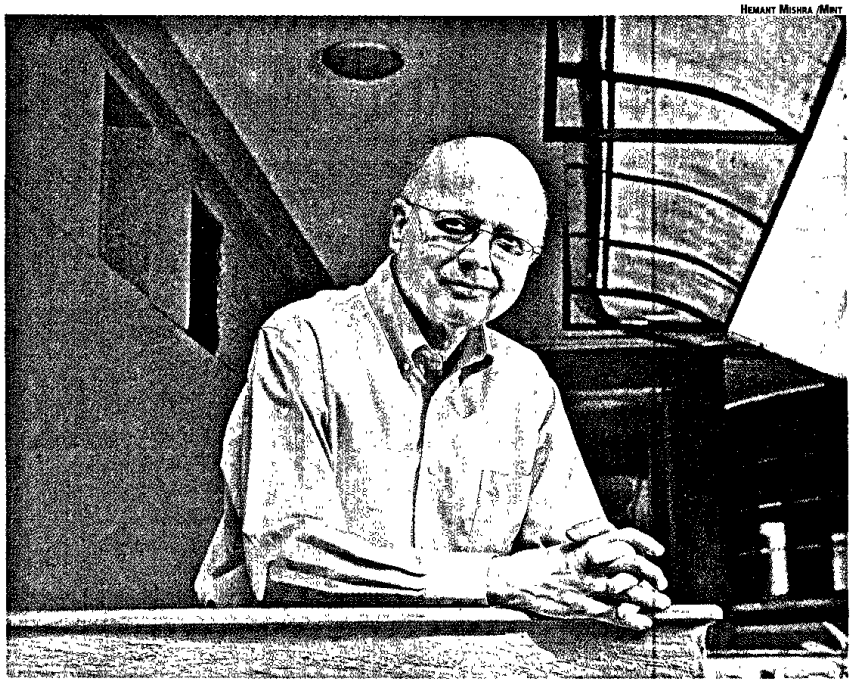
MINT ND 11/02/2013 P-4

AVINASH DIXIT/PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

A supply-side response to graft

BY PRAMIT BHATTACHARYA
pramit.b@livemint.com
MUMBAI

HEMANT MISHRA/MINT



Embedded corruption: *Multiple clearances are a problem, particularly when such clearances are complementary to each other, as such systems generate uncertainty, says Dixit.*

Corporate entities can help tackle corruption in public life by collectively refusing to pay bribes, says Avinash Kamalakar Dixit, emeritus professor of economics at Princeton University. Dixit calls his approach a supply-side response to corruption in which the traditional bribe-givers initiate reform rather than wait for the government to act. Among the foremost economic theorists today, the 68-year-old Dixit was born in Mumbai and studied in St. Xavier's College before moving to Cambridge and then to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he started researching economics. His contribution to game theory is considered to be on par with that of the likes of the polymath John von Neumann and the troubled genius John Nash. His work with Joseph Stiglitz forms the bedrock of new trade theory, and his research on institutions helped in the growth of the field of new institutional economics. Dixit is one of the two Indian economists whose names figure in the list of possible contenders for the Nobel Prize almost every year. The other is Jagdish Bhagwati.

Dixit, who spoke in an interview on the sidelines of a lecture on corruption organized by the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, argued for a graft-free union formed by business houses, in which members pledge not to pay bribes, and snap ties with any firm which does so. Edited excerpts:

Many expected economic reforms in India to greatly reduce the scope for corruption, but the actual record has belied such expectations. Some scholars argue that the reason behind this is that public officials continue to enjoy large discretionary powers since reforms in India have not been deep enough. Others argue that economic reforms in India actually underlined a pro-business rather than a pro-market shift, which allowed big businesses to gain disproportionately. What is your view?

I think both of these things are going on; it is not an either-or case. Reforms ended up being pro-business rather than pro-market competition, not just in India but in many other countries. That will remain a problem. At the same time, even though the deep basis of the license raj may be gone in the reformed situation, businesses still have to obtain a large number of permissions and licences to start operating. That leaves lot of scope for corruption.

Are the multiple layers of control and clearances the key problem?

Multiple clearances are a problem, particularly when such clearances are complementary to each other. Such systems generate uncertainty. Suppose you need 16 clearances. You may obtain 15 permits but the sixteenth guy may come and say that nothing works unless you pay me off. Also, the interaction between different departments involved tends to have a damaging impact. A nice parallel is the example of two businesses selling complementary goods such as hardware and software. If the hardware seller raises his price too much, it will depress the overall demand for computers and reduce revenues for the software seller. Something similar occurs when different bureaucracies are involved in providing multiple clearances, and each may end up asking for higher bribes, which will tend to reduce the overall number of businesses and the bribe collected.

A one-stop shop can remove such problems since the average bribe a business has to pay will be reduced, although the aggregate level of bribes paid will likely be higher because more firms will now be able to do business. To an extent, people are realizing the importance of this concept. I was told by businessmen here that on a pretty ad-hoc basis, Mr. (Narendra) Modi works on a similar model in Gujarat. Once he is convinced about the value of your business project, he will marshal all of his officials into one team that will deal with you. Maybe that team will still try to extract something from you, but that is better than having to deal with 16 departments separately. You need to institutionalize such systems.

In your paper on corruption, you argue for businesses to launch a graft-free union, in which members refuse to pay bribes and snap ties with any firm which bribes. What are the incentives for large businesses, which can secure competitive advantages through bribing, to create, or even be a part of such unions?

There are both incentives and disincentives for large firms. To the extent a large firm is large because it is more efficient, it will win contracts on merit. Corruption only harms it by raising the possibility of an inefficient firm bagging contracts, and a large business will then favour a clean system.

To the extent that a large firm is large because it has been able to develop connections with government officials, it may have little incentive to launch such a union. But even among such firms, there will be some firms that used bribery to win contracts and become large but have developed efficiencies over time, and may now prefer a clean system.

These are very tentative ideas, of course, but what might make such a system work is the presence of a large number of clean and big businesses which come together. Once that happens, even the corrupt firm will be forced to fall in line because not doing so will send the wrong signals.

Traditional economic models tend to under-emphasize the role of institutions in economic growth and development. Do you see that changing now?

I don't even know if it was a battle in the profession, but if it was, that's over. Just about everybody recognizes the importance of all kind of supporting institutions to ensure that market economies, or any economy for that matter, functions well. Also, there is broad agreement among those who write on institutions about what good institutions are, and what they are not.

Financial Chronicle ND 11/02/2013 P-10

Nasa's Curiosity rover collects historic drill sample on Mars

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Washington

FOR the first time, Nasa's Curiosity rover has used its onboard drill to collect a sample of Martian bedrock that might offer evidence of a wet environment, which may have once hosted life on the red planet.

This is the first time any robot has drilled into a rock to collect a sample on Mars, the Washington-based National Aeronautics and Space Administration said.

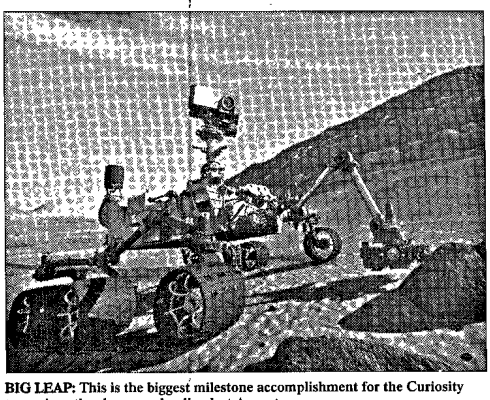
The fresh hole, about 0.63 inch wide and 2.5 inches deep in a patch of fine-grained sedimentary bedrock, can be seen in latest images and other data Curiosity beamed to Earth.

The rock is believed to hold evidence about long-gone wet environments. In pursuit of that evidence, the rover will use its laboratory instruments to analyse rock powder collected by the drill.

This is the biggest milestone accomplishment for the Curiosity team since the sky-crane landing last August, another proud day for America, said John Grunsfeld, Nasa associate administrator for Science Mission Directorate.

For the next several days, ground controllers will command the rover's arm to carry out a series of steps to process the sample, ultimately delivering portions to the instruments inside.

"We commanded the first full-depth drilling, and we believe we have collected sufficient material from the rock to meet our objectives of hardware cleaning and sample drop-off," said Avi Okon, drill cognizant engineer at Nasa.



BIG LEAP: This is the biggest milestone accomplishment for the Curiosity team since the sky-crane landing last August

Rock powder generated during drilling travels up flutes on the bit. The bit assembly has chambers to hold the powder until it can be transferred to the sample-handling mechanisms of the rover's collection and handling for In-Situ Martian Rock Analysis (CHIMRA) device.

Before the rock powder is analysed, some will be used to scour traces of material that may have been deposited onto the hardware while the rover was still on Earth, despite thorough cleaning before launch.

"We'll take the powder we acquired and swish it around to scrub the internal surfaces of the drill bit assembly, said JPL's Scott McCloskey, drill systems engineer.

"Then we'll use the arm to transfer the powder out of the drill into the scoop, which will be our first chance to see the acquired sample," said McCloskey.

"Building a tool to interact forcefully with unpredictable rocks on Mars required an ambitious development and testing program," said JPL's Louise Jandura, chief engineer for Curiosity's sample system.

To get to the point of making this hole in a rock on Mars, we made eight drills and bored more than 1,200 holes in 20 types of rock on Earth, Jandura said.