

NBCC enters into agreement with IIT

NBCC has entered into an agreement with IIT, Delhi for construction of various buildings at IIT Delhi campus and also at its extended campuses at Rajiv Gandhi Education Centre, Kundali and Jhajjar, Haryana. NBCC has been entrusted to do the job on project management consultancy basis at an approximate cost of Rs 250 crore. The new buildings to be constructed are Nalanda Research Scholar Accommodation & Faculty House at IIT, Delhi Campus and Faculty Development Centre at Rajiv Gandhi Education City.

IIT Roorkee student commits suicide

DEHRADUN: A second year M Tech student of IIT Roorkee — Udayraj Viradre — committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling fan inside his room on the premises at Roorkee in Haridwar. Police broke open the door of his room and recovered his body Wednesday. Yogendra Singh, Inspector of the Roorkee police station, said a suicide note written in Marathi by Varadre has been found from the room, though its contents are still unknown. **ENS**

Super30 hero seeks JEE lifelines

Press Trust of India

Buoyed by UPSC's decision to provide additional two chances to aspirants across all categories, mathematician Anand Kumar of Super 30 fame on Wednesday urged for a similar opportunity in examinations for qualifying in IITs.

"This should also be extended to Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)," he said in a statement. Kumar has been demanding more chances in JEE for students from underprivileged sections in the rural areas, saying they don't get the advantage of quality schooling

and often start their preparations late.

"More opportunities will help reduce the urban-rural divide so that bright students from rural areas come forward," he said.

"It will be injustice to IIT aspirants with just two chances," the mathematician, who has earned laurels across the world for helping students from poor families to crack IIT examination by providing free coaching and lodging, added. Kumar said he had pleaded for additional chance in JEE exams during his past meetings with Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal and also Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

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IIM-C students set up backpackers' hostels

Mou Chakraborty

Four students from IIM Calcutta has set up a hostel for backpackers in Rajasthan, which is not only winning hearts but also picking up awards in various top notch business plan competitions across the world.

Zostel is India's first chain of backpacker hostels offering secure, hygienic, centrally located and pocket-friendly accommodation for young travellers. Started by IIT-IIM graduates on August 15, 2013, currently Zostel is present in Jodhpur and Jaipur.

This year Zostel plans to come up in nine more locations in India and by 2016 they want to add up 11 more tourist destinations.

ZOSTEL IS INDIA'S FIRST CHAIN OF BACKPACKER HOSTELS OFFERING SECURE, HYGIENIC, CENTRALLY LOCATED AND POCKET-FRIENDLY ACCOMMODATION

The venture has been in the finals of business plan competition in the Richard Ivey School of Business, IIT Bombay and Wharton India Economic Forum.

Team Zostel is currently planning to come up with a third property soon. There are seven co-founders, four from Indian Institute of Management Calcutta —Akhil Malik,

Paavan Nanda, Dharamveer Singh Chouhan and Tarun Tiwari. Two are from IIT BHU Chetan Singh Chauhan and Abhishek Bhutra who are managing Zostel's properties and MDI Gurgaon alumni Siddharth Janghu.

From experience of hostels across the world, the team got inputs to come up with a top class facility that can meet the international standards of security and hygiene.

Zostel provides spacious AC dorms, common kitchen, laundry, TV, Internet, library, board games and other interactive facilities just under R500 per night. They also have private rooms in the range of R700 to 800.

"Team Zostel has bootstrapped the venture. However, we are looking for avenues to raise funds and are in the process of meeting

investors. We have already received tremendous response and have bagged number 1 rank on Tripadvisor in both cities," said Malik.

All the four partners from IIM Calcutta, who were looking at the marketing aspect of Zostel have opted out of their final placement and would be joining the business full time from March 2014.

The IIT BHU alumnis are already engaged full time and Siddharth Janghu has quit his job with JP Morgan.

Talking to Hindustan Times, Akhil Malik said, "We want to become the biggest youth brand in India. From March, all the seven co-founders would be joining the business full time."

PIL, MHRD fail to deter PSUs from IIT-IIM hirings

VINAY UMARJI & KALPANA PATHAK
Ahmedabad/Mumbai, 12 February



When it comes to recruiting the brightest minds, nothing can stop public sector companies — neither a pending order from the Madras High Court nor an informal diktat

from the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).

IITs and IIMs say, given the economic situation, students want PSUs for campus placements. PSUs, on their part, are not paying much heed to the public interest litigation in the Madras High Court.

"Though the Madras High Court vacated a stay on direct recruitments by PSUs from campuses, a final order is still pending. Besides, we have also received a circular from MHRD regarding the same. We are going slow on inviting PSUs. But today, working in a PSU is as good as working in a private firm and that is attracting graduates. Moreover, since the PSUs themselves are willing to visit our campus, we are allowing them to do so," said a placement committee member at one of the older IIMs.

PSUs have been, since the Lehman Brothers crisis in 2008, been frequenting IITs and IIMs to



Organisations like C-DAC, C-DOT, Garden Ridge Shipbuilders, Goa Shipyards, DRDO, Indian Navy, PowerGrid, and Coal India had visited IIT-Kharagpur campus for recruitments this year.

recruit. The IITs and IIMs also, given the vagaries of the job market, are welcoming PSUs with open arms.

"There was an informal notification from the MHRD after the petition not to encourage PSUs on campus for placements. But that has not stopped students from opting to work with them. In fact, many PSUs who not been invited are visiting campuses to recruit," said a placement committee member at IIT-Guwahati, where PSUs like Oil India Ltd and ONGC, among others had come for recruitments. MHRD officials did not return the phone calls made.

IIT-Bombay said given many of its students want PSU companies

to be on campus for placements, it has allowed to companies to participate in the placement process. The institute has, however, informed the students about a pending PIL in the high court and put in a disclaimer on any consequences there of.

A senior HR head of a PSU company, on the condition of anonymity, said, "We want to recruit engineers and management students and will continue to do so from IITs and IIMs irrespective of the PIL."

At IIT-Kharagpur, organisations like C-DAC, C-DOT, Garden Ridge Shipbuilders, Goa Shipyards, DRDO, Indian Navy, PowerGrid, and Coal India had visited campus for recruitments this year.

More students may opt out of B-school placements this year

VINAY UMARJI & M SARASWATHY
Ahmedabad/Mumbai, 12 February

The entrepreneurial bug continues to bite students at Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) this placement season. While IIM-Ahmedabad (IIM-A) is expected to see students opting out of placements to start entrepreneurial ventures to double this year compared to the last, other IIMs are hopeful of seeing at least the same as last year, if not more.

Although the placement process is yet to be completed at most of the top B-schools including IIMs, campuses are expected to witness a rise by 20-50 per cent in the number of students opting out of placements to start their entrepreneurial ventures.

"For the past couple of years, a lot of start-ups have also begun hiring at IIMs and other B-schools rolling out interesting job profiles and faster growth. Add to that, the economy is expected to get better in the near future. Hence, the numbers could be encouraging this year since students see a sense to venture out," said Bhavya Kapoor, placement officer at IIM Indore. As against three students opting out of placements last year, IIM Indore is likely to see the number rise to around five.

In order to encourage students to take up entrepreneurship, the institute is exclusively offering the deferred placement option to those opting out of place-

ments only to start their own ventures. Deferred placements is an option offered by the likes of IIM-A, IIM-Bangalore, IIM-Calcutta and IIM-Indore, among others, wherein students can opt out of placements process and can come back to re-participate after two years in case their ventures do not succeed.

At IIM-A, five students had chosen to walk the entrepreneurial path last year; according to institute sources, the number could be eight to 10 this year. An email questionnaire sent to IIM-A's placement committee remained unanswered at the time of going to press. Other B-schools, such as Xavier's Institute of Management -Bhubaneswar (XIMB), too, expect the numbers to rise marginally.

"Though so far the number of students opting out of placements is similar to last year at four-to-five, one could expect a marginal rise in the numbers. This is because after the general elections, the economy may revive and support entrepreneurial ventures with considerable growth potential," said Sabita Mohanty, faculty co-ordinator (placements) at XIMB. On the other hand, IIM-Lucknow, which has completed its placements saw a few students opting out in favour of entrepreneurship opportunities. Officials from IIM-Lucknow said some students opted out of the placement process wanting to get into start-ups. The institute does not have deferred placements.

Pbi varsity to have own DTH channel

Punjabi University's Media Centre comprising the Centre for Advanced Media Studies (CAMS) and the Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMRC) will have its own independent direct to home (DTH) channel.

Director of the media centre, Prof Gurmeet Singh Maan, said that the decision was recently given a final shape at a coordination committee of the media centres held at Calicut under the aegis of the Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC) an Inter- University Centre of the University Grants Commission and the ministry of human resource development (MHRD).

"The decision was the culmination of memorandum of understanding signed between the MHRD authorities and Prasar Bharti to install the DTH channels at various media centres, wherein the Prasar Bharti 'would provide an umbrella to MHRD's flagship programme allowing it to uplink the educational video, e-content and enrichment programmes", Maan informed.

Giving details of the project, Maan said that the project had been visualized by the central government keeping in mind the utility of the information and communication technology (ICT) in making deep inroads into our education system with TV being most widely available ICT platform at homes and its delivery the most cost-effective way to reach the masses at their doorsteps'.

"The university at its media centre will make three sets of studios and studio spaces and control rooms and national knowledge networking (NKN) connectivity on a fibre node with sufficient bandwidth available for the project, while civil modification, re-electrification of studios, audio/video and streaming equipment and the required operational manpower and payment to subject experts would be arranged by the MHRD", he said.

He added that the infrastructure required as a precondition to set up the DTH channel was already available with the centre.

Maan said the major objective of setting up of the DTH channel was to reach out to those students, especially those who can't afford regular classroom teaching or even the traditional distance education system.

Vice-chancellor Dr Jaspal Singh congratulated officials of university's media centre.

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Michael Appleton, New Zealand's acting high commissioner to India, says, "Education is a growing and exciting component of our bilateral relationship, with the number of Indian students in New Zealand increasing almost 200% since 2007. I'm delighted that this new initiative will see Kiwi and Indian researchers working side-by-side and contributing to knowledge creation in both our countries."

In order to encourage more Indian students, New Zealand has also made changes to its work and visa policies for international students. According to Nathanael Mackay, area manager, Immigration New Zealand, "We have increased the number of work hours our international students are entitled to. All tertiary level international students enrolled in a course with at least one academic year will be allowed to work up to 20 hours per week during each semester break/vacation."

For more details on research proposals, visit <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/centres/new-zealand-india-research-institute> or http://www.ugc.ac.in/ugc_ic.aspx

I'm delighted that this new initiative will bring Kiwi and Indian researchers together and help in knowledge creation --Michael appleton, new zealand's acting high commissioner to india

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India and New Zealand pledge NZ\$500,000 each for research

New Zealand is more than just its willowing mountains and captivating landscape. And if you have been dreaming of studying in the country, after watching the Lord Of The Rings trilogy on loop, read on. To encourage education ties between India and New Zealand, a joint call for research proposals for Indian and New Zealand academics has been made by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and Education New Zealand (ENZ), a government agency that promotes education in New Zealand.

This is the first time that ENZ is working on a joint research grant. Under the India New Zealand Education Council (INZEC) framework, both countries have agreed to commit NZ\$500,000 (over ₹25 crore) each.

The announcement made on the occasion of Waitangi Day, New Zealand's national day that was celebrated recently, seeks to increase research collaboration across a range of areas including food security and agriculture, community development and innovation, health, environment and sustainability, to name a few.

Applications are open to research students and academic staff employed in a tertiary education institution or recognised centre of academic research in New Zealand, and all public education institutions in India which are eligible to be funded by UGC. The maximum funding available for each project from each funding body is the equivalent of NZ\$50,000 and this may cover expenses for project-related consumables (up to a maximum of 15% of the total project budget), equipment (up to a maximum of NZ\$2000), travel, accommodation, etc.

Applications should be submitted on or before 5pm, March 28, 2014. Send an email attachment to india@enz.govt.nz and ugcic2@gmail.com. The project starting date must be on or before June 1, 2014 and the project must be completed within 18 months.

As Ziena Jalil, regional director, ENZ, points out, "This call for proposals is part of the activity we undertake in India through the INZEC initiative which was announced by both our prime ministers in 2011. All New Zealand universities feature in the top 500 globally, and as a country, we are highly regarded internationally in areas such as agriculture and food processing, tourism, etc."

New Zealand is emerging as a much sought-after higher education destination and India is the second largest contributor of international students to New Zealand (after China) with more than 11,000 students from India studying in New Zealand. Student visas issued to Indian nationals seeking to study in New Zealand increased by more than 10% last year, and more than doubled in the month of December 2013, making India one of the fastest growing student markets for New Zealand. It is also not an expensive option, with the cost of living for students around NZ\$15,000 a year.

Panel to UGC: Set up gender sensitisation unit

Anita Joshua

The task force set up by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to review measures for gender sensitisation of campuses has recommended that the Commission itself set up a gender sensitisation unit (GSU) and make gender audit an essential component of the assessment and accreditation of higher educational institutions.

The report of the task force – chaired by UGC member Meenakshi Gopinath – was presented to the Union Human Resource Development Minister M. M. Pallam Raju on Wednesday.

Briefing mediapersons, Ms. Gopinath said a GSU within the UGC would act as a nodal division to give effect to the policy of zero tolerance of gender-based violence on college and university campuses.

While stressing on the need to make infrastructural improvements to make campuses secure for women, the task force cautions against introducing discriminatory rules for women in hostels in the name of safety. “Campus safety policies should not result in securitisation, over monitoring or policing or curtailing the freedom of movement, especially for women.”

Besides making gender audit a mandatory component for assessment and accreditation, the task force has also suggested that potential employees of higher educational institutions be asked about their understanding of gender issues at the recruitment stage.

According to Ms. Gopinath, the recent expansion of higher education had made campuses more heterogeneous and diverse. “The closing gender gap hides the inequalities,” she said, adding that 1,500 institutions from across the country responded to the questionnaire sent out by the task force. “By and large, they were either in denial or ignorant about the widespread prevalence of gender discrimination on the campuses.”

Further, it came to light that few had set up Gender Sensitisation Committees against Sexual Harassment as was mandated by the Visakha Judgement. In fact, the biggest culprits in this regard were the girls’ colleges, who were under the impression that they did not require one because they did not have male students.

Keywords: [UGC](#), [Sexual Harassment](#), [gender sensitisation unit](#)

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