

Newspaper Clips

February 27, 2013

Fun, fury and furore over IIT-M's Facebook 'confessions' page

Staff Reporter

CHENNAI: For Indian Institute of Technology-Madras students, what began as a fun medium to vent amidst a stressful exam season, has acquired a life of its own, attracting quite a bit of scrutiny even outside the institution.

IIT Madras Confessions, a Facebook page is the in thing just now, with over 500 'confessions' made by students on various experiences they have had on campus.

From pranks played on professors and experiences of staying away from home

to a range of comments, some of them unpleasant, on women students, the page is a melting pot of posts.

But since all of them are anonymous, students say it is difficult to tell the fakes ones from the genuine ones. "They are not meant to be taken seriously. The page allows students to submit anonymously, stories they needed to get off their chests, but don't want to be judged for. Our confessions page was an offshoot of the IIT confessions Facebook page started a week ago. The likes for that page went from 20 to 20,000 in just about a



day, and soon, each IIT had its own pages," explains an IIT-M student.

Most well-known universities abroad too have their own confession pages. IIT-

ly sexist remarks about girls, but now that the page is being moderated, it is better. Also, you can take back a confession if you feel it is creating an unwanted furore," said another student.

But the page is not just a collection of quirky, awkward, and funny anecdotes. A post by a student claiming to belong to the reserved category painted a stark picture of the discrimination many students like him face on campus.

The post says, "When I got the seat my family celebrated. I was unaware of the repercussions I'll be facing

once I cross the IIT gates. Some of my batch mates debated how they couldn't get a better branch but a reserved guy got it because of this unequal system."

The post sparked off a lively discussion on issues such as reservation and merit. A few posts on experiences of gay students too were liked and shared by many.

"Some of the posts are very good because we seldom talk about a lot of issues here," said a student.

He, however also pointed out that there was 'darker side' to this activity too, as many of the posts that dealt

with issues of unrequited love, proposals and sex were embarrassing and even, threatening to many.

"Some posts were very open and the person mentioned in them was identifiable too. That made many students uncomfortable. This has also paved way for an IIT-M 'proposals' page which is far more invasive of students' privacy," he said.

The constant demand for success and the resultant pressure is another commonly-discussed subject.

A post on how students "crammed a lot to crack JEE and are still cramming to

satisfy their recruiters' expectations," typified the issue. With over 500 confessions and in all likelihood, even more submissions, the page, say students is bound to grow and gain more of a following. But there are also those who don't really take it seriously.

"It is addictive but it is just entertainment. Also, we think it is a fad that will die soon. We have had such interesting pages earlier too — IIT tips and IIT memes for instance. But people soon lose interest and move on to the next rage," said another student.

Times of India Kochi 26-02-2013 P-6

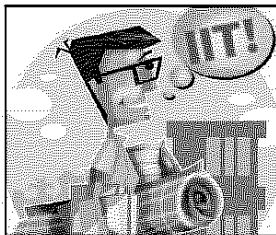
No IIT for state in 12th five year plan

Setting Up New Institutes Not Feasible, Says Planning Commission

Sudha Nambudiri | TNN

Kochi: The state plan division of planning commission has informed that there was no proposal pending with the commission to establish an IIT in Kerala during the 12th Five Year Plan.

Replying to a Right to Information (RTI) query seeking the commission's view on setting up new institutions, H P Sharma, di-



The thrust of the 12th Plan would be on expansion of higher education institutions mainly by enhancing the capacity of existing ones

rector (NE) said that the planning commission was of the view that considering the resource position,

it may not be feasible to set up new central institutions everywhere. "The thrust of the 12th Five Year

Plan for expansion of higher education institutions would be mainly through enhancing the capacity of existing institutions so as to ensure capacity expansion at low cost while quality of HE is maintained and approved," it was said in the reply.

Interestingly, the RTI communication was issued almost two months after the prime minister had announced in Kochi on

September 12, while inaugurating the Emerging Kerala investors meet, that the Centre was considering the proposal of the state government to set up an IIT in Kerala in the 12th Plan.

The commission also maintained that there was no plan to convert the Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat) into an engineering institute by the name IEST.

Hindustan Times ND 27/02/2013 P5

More Indians can benefit from the LSE advantage

The London School of Economics announces new scholarships for Indians and a tie-up with TISS

Aysha Banerjee
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The London School of Economics will be giving out 50 new scholarships for postgraduate Indian students. A tie-up on gender equality research with the prestigious Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) has also been announced.

Giving details, Craig Calhoun, director of LSE, said expanding scholarships reflected the institute's goal of making LSE education available to the best and brightest students, and making sure that financial circumstance was not an obstacle. "We launched this new pool of scholarships for students from India to coincide

with the British PM's visit and his clarification of better visa policies, and to make clear that we are serious about opportunities for Indians," he said. At one time, India produced the largest number of international applications to LSE, "but now China has overtaken them." LSE has a long relationship with India, starting with an

important gift from the Tata family in 1912 (funding for research). On average, LSE receives almost 1500 applications from each year from Indian students and about 30% are accepted. Applications were down last year due to visa uncertainties in the UK, something that's "happily now corrected."

The criteria for undergrad-

uate admissions have also been changed. "Indian applicants will be glad to know that for undergraduate admissions (BSE and ICSE qualifications are now accepted as well as IB. In all cases, applicants must meet the usual stringent admissions criteria of LSE, one of Britain's most competitive universities. These criteria

focus centrally on academic performance. The scholarships will be awarded to admitted applicants based on financial need," Calhoun said. The scholarships will pay from £3000 to £32,000 based on financial need. The funds can cover fees for coursework and living expenses in connection with any LSE masters programme. The

LSE also offers undergraduate financial assistance and fully funded PhD programmes. On the TISS agreement, Calhoun said LSE had collaborated for some years with the Tata Institute for Social Sciences. The next phase of this work will address the crucial issues of women's equality and gender relations.

Hindustan Times ND 27/02/2013 P3

Capital to get medical univ

Atul Mathur

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NEW DELHI: The national Capital will soon have its own medical university.

With the demand for good doctors, nurses and paramedics in Delhi government's own hospitals constantly increasing, the state government is mulling setting up its own university and producing medical staff to bridge the gap.

The Delhi government currently runs more than 30 hospitals in the city. Senior Delhi government officials said the draft proposal to set up University of Medical Sciences is almost ready and is likely to be tabled in the budget session of the Delhi assembly in March this year.

"If the bill is not ready to be tabled, the chief minister can at least make the announcement

THE DRAFT PROPOSAL TO SET UP THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY IS READY AND IS LIKELY TO BE TABLED IN THE BUDGET SESSION SOON

of setting up the university in her budget speech," a senior government official said.

Though there are seven medical, dental and Ayurvedic colleges being run in the Capital, these colleges are affiliated with different universities and there is an urgent need to set up Delhi's own medical university.

While Maulana Azad Medical College, Maulana Azad Institute of Medical Sciences, Lady Hardinge Medical College and University College of Medical Sciences are a part of Delhi

University, Vardhman Mahavir Medical College and Chaudhary Brahmprakash Ayurvedic Charak Sansthan are affiliated with Indraprastha University. All India Institute of Medical Sciences was set up by a special act of Parliament.

Senior Delhi government officials said medical institutions set up under the new university will provide Delhi students with an opportunity to study medicine.

There will be separate colleges for courses in medicine, nursing and paramedics.

"The added advantage is that we will be able to make changes in the curriculum in accordance with technological advancements in the field of medicine in the world. We can have courses and papers in accordance with the current demand," the official said.

Private excellence in higher education

The HT Campus 'Survey of Private Institutes in Delhi NCR' aims to improve the quality of education by encouraging competition

HT Campus Correspondent

To become a knowledge economy in the true sense of the term our country needs many more quality higher education institutes (over and above the ones that already exist) in the private sector. This is because the government aided higher education colleges in the league of the IITs and IIMs manage to accommodate only a very small percentage of meritorious candidates every year.

The top ranked government colleges score high on the credibility factor owing to their history and lineage of funding. However, this is not quite the case in the private education turf. There are some graduate and postgraduate colleges in the private sector that impart professional courses which are at par with the reputed government colleges. But these colleges somehow do not command the same reckoning as their government counterparts. "This translates to a huge

challenge for students as they are often at a loss in terms of choosing the right institute. The need of the hour is simple - the benchmarks of quality need to be formally established in the private sector and this can be done through incisive assessment by objective bodies," says Premchand Paley, chief executive of Cfore a research organisation that conducted the HT Campus Survey of Private Institutes in Delhi NCR.

Elaborating on the objectives of the survey, he says, "This survey was envisaged to raise the standards of private institutes by promoting healthy competition. Further, this survey is intended to be a source of credible information."

The perceptual and objective survey in Delhi/NCR was conducted to identify top professional colleges in six areas, namely engineering, management, animation, fashion technology, hotel management and media and mass communication. The perceptual survey was con-

ducted among 8016 faculty members, recruiters and final year students using a structured questionnaire. Respondents were asked to rate the institutes that they were familiar with on a ten point scale against four broad parameters, namely intellectual capital, industry interface, infrastructure and facilities and placements. Questionnaires for objective data were sent to 201 colleges, out of which 104 responded. "The validation exercise was carried by the Cfore team which cross-checked the data by visiting the campuses. Veracity of information was also checked by mystery auditing method," explains Paley.

As per the objective survey, marks were allotted to individual colleges on specific sub parameters by considering the topper for that parameter. "For instance if marks for median salary is 25 and the highest median salary offered is ₹10 lakh per annum, then marks allotted to an institute where median

salary offered was ₹5 lakh per annum would be 12.5," says Paley.

The aggregate of perceptual and objective scores were added to achieve final scores for each institute.

The top five institutes in engineering and management and top institutes each in animation, hotel management, fashion technology and mass communication were thus filtered for awards.

An interesting trend that emerged was that there is a huge gap between the top colleges and the others. Also in private institutes the systems and processes to create new knowledge is lacking.

Another disturbing trend that emerged is that institutes imparting vocational courses (particularly animation) do not have full fledged faculty.

"Further, owing to sluggish economic growth in the last quarter of 2012 there has been a gradual decline in placements of private colleges by 20 to 30 %," sums Paley.

HT CAMPUS-C FORE SURVEY: THE BEST INSTITUTES IN NCR

Top b-schools

IMI, Delhi

IMT, Ghazalabad

BIMTECH, Greater Noida

Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, Dwarka

Fore School of Management, Delhi

Top animation institutes

BIT, Mesra, Noida Centre

MAAC

Top fashion technology institutes

Pearl Academy

Apeejay Institute of Design

Top hotel management institutes

Oberoi Centre for Learning & Development

Banarsidas Chandiwala Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology

Top engineering colleges

Jaypee Institute of Information Technology University

ITM Gurgaon

J S S Academy of Technical Education

Krishna Institute of Engg & Technology

Galgotia's College of Engineering

Top mass communication institutes

Apeejay Institute of Mass Communication

Jagan Institute of Management and Mass Communication

METHODOLOGY

Research organisation Cfore conducted the perceptual and objective survey in Delhi/NCR to identify top professional colleges in six areas, namely engineering, management, animation, fashion technology, hotel management and media & mass communication.

Perceptual survey was conducted among 3016 faculty members, recruiters and final year students using structured questionnaires. Respondents were asked to rate the institutes that they were familiar with on ten-point scale against four broad parameters, namely intellectual capital, industry interface, infrastructure and facilities and placements. Questionnaires for objective data were sent to 201 colleges and 104 of them responded. The validation exercise was carried by the Cfore team which cross-checked the data by vis-

iting the campuses. Veracity of information was also checked by mystery auditing method.

The objective scores the marks were allotted to a B-school against a particular sub parameter by normalising against the topper for that parameter. Eg, if marks for median salary were 25 and the highest median salary offered was ₹10 lakh per annum, then marks allotted to an institute where median salary offered was ₹5 lakh per annum would be $5/10 \times 25 = 12.5$.

The aggregate of perceptual and objective scores was added to arrive at the final score for an institute. The top five institutes in engineering and management and top institute each in animation, hotel management, fashion technology and media and mass communication were thus filtered for awards.



Times of India
27/02/2013 P-22

NRI prof wins \$1m TED prize for edu initiative

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Long Beach, California: Sometimes, a hole-in-the-wall is all you need to get a deep insight into education and — attain worldwide recognition. When professor Sugata Mitra installed a computer in a slum in Kalkaji, New Delhi, in 1999 in what came to be known as a “hole-in-the-wall” experiment, it led to a fundamental reappraisal on his part of the formal education system.

Surreptitious monitoring of what followed showed the power of what he would later call “Minimally Invasive Education”.

Left to themselves, kids anywhere, even without knowing English, seamlessly learn to use computers and the internet. Particularly if they are working in groups, they can figure out complex subjects such as DNA sequencing, trigonometry, and avionics, as Mitra found in similar experiments.

For his revolutionary work in this area, TED, the multidisciplinary conference of brainiacs, on Tuesday awarded him its \$1 million prize at its annual mindfest here in Long Beach, California. Cheered with gusto by some of the cream of world intelligentsia and geek power, Mitra later told TOI that the money would go to further research in non-formal, minimally invasive education “that should rid us of a system that is fast becoming obsolete.”

In experiments from Karaikal in Pondicherry to Vil-

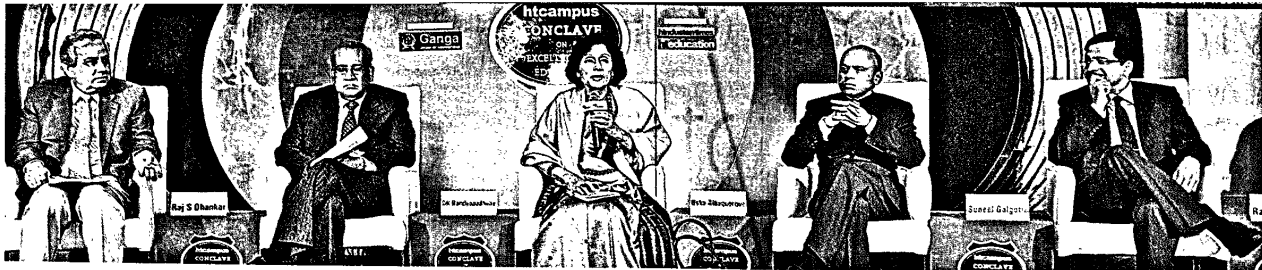


VISIONARY: Sugata Mitra

la Mercedes in Argentina, Mitra has found that left to their own devices, literally, children easily forgo what he mocks as TCPIP education, the abbreviation standing for an Internet Protocol that merely carries data without comprehension. Such learning by rote, he says, is a legacy of both Victorian and Brahmanical values, furthered by the East India Company to produce an army of clerks for the empire. Independent India has not challenged that model; instead, it has furthered it.

In the Pondicherry experiment, Mitra left a computer with some DNA replication software amid slum children who did not know any English. Yet they managed to figure out within days that improper replication of DNA causes disease. Similarly, kids in a South American village grappled with theology and geometry in understanding why human beings are born with five fingers on a limb. The best results were when children worked in groups and there was lack of adult supervision.

For the full story log on to www.timesofindia.com



From left: Raj S Dhankar, dean, Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi University; DK Bandyopadhyay, vice chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University; Usha Albuquerque, author and founder director, Careers Smart; Suneel Galgotia, chancellor, Galgotias University; and Rajeve Shory, founder president and adviser, NIIT University, at the conclave

"We wrote to 100 industrial houses, but no one replied"

Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University vice chancellor laments the lack of response from industry to jointly develop curricula

HTCampus.com Correspondent

Eminent educationists and experts from major institutes in the country got together at the HT Campus Conclave on Excellence in Education held in the Capital last week.

One of the major issues discussed at the event was how the private education sector has performed till now and what it needs to do. The keynote address was delivered by Ved Prakash, chairman, University Grants Commission, who reflected upon the contribution of private players in higher education.

UOC chairman Ved Prakash urged private institutes to focus on educating the youth and not on profits

"Currently, private education has a share of 45% in higher education. We need to ask ourselves whether we are able to achieve excellence in research and innovation. We need universities which focus on multi-disciplinarity and provide an outstanding learning and living environment. It's the responsibility of institutions to direct the students to the right sectors and disciplines. There is also a need to revisit curricula and invest more in classroom processes. The three core challenges that we need to address are equity, excellence and access."

Other speakers at the event were DK Bandyopadhyay, vice chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University; Raj S Dhankar, dean, Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi University; Rajeve Shory, founder president and adviser, NIIT University; and Suneel Galgotia, chancellor, Galgotias University.

The debate was moderated by Usha Albuquerque, author and founder director, Careers Smart. The panellists stressed upon the need for a stronger industry-academia link, which will help the students channelise their academic knowledge into skills required at the workplace. Bandyopadhyay lamented the lack of response from the industry to jointly develop curricula. "We wrote to 100 industrial houses, but no one replied." He also said that it was hard to get corporates on board the university's academic council.

Shory, on the other hand, spoke about his university's USP, which is research-based. "We have tried to fulfil our aim of being an industry-linked university by getting the best minds from companies such as IBM, Microsoft and General Motors. We also aim to be a research-based university."

Suggesting the best ways to provide quality education to students, Dhankar said, "The idea should be to get the elite into higher education. These should be students who are gifted and talented. At present, the problem is that we are exposing each and every student to higher education, which is resulting in unemployment because students are unable to identify their potential and end up taking up jobs of joining disciplines for which they are not suited."

The discussion was followed by a felicitation ceremony wherein Excellence Awards were presented to private institutions in and around Delhi NCR in categories such as engineering, management and mass communication.

And the award goes to...



Engineering: ITM University



Innovation in collaborative learning: Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad



Management: International Management Institute, New Delhi



Management: Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, New Delhi



Engineering: JSS Academy of Technical Education



Innovation in Industry Integration: Amity University, Manesar campus



Animation: Birla Institute of Technology Extension Centre, Noida



Fashion technology: Pearl Academy of Fashion



Innovation in technology: Delhi School of Business



Management: Birla Institute of Management Technology



Management: Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad



Mass communication: Apeejay Institute of Mass Communication



Engineering: Galgotias College of Engineering & Technology, Galgotias University