

Newspaper Clips

January 2, 2012

Times of India ND 2/01/2012 P-8

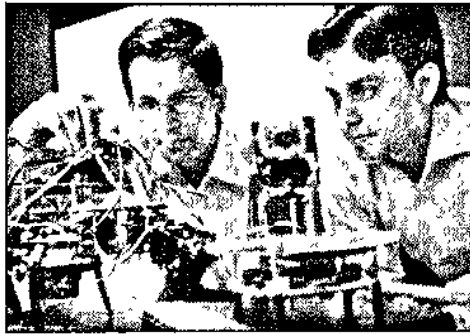
Now, classroom content of IITs can be accessed by MIT students

Hemali Chhappia | TNN

Mumbai: The Indian Institutes of Technology have agreed to a proposal by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to join their OpenCourseWare community. This move will enable MIT students to access classroom content of the IITs online at a click of the mouse.

However, this is not the only way by which the IITs are opening their doors to the world; lectures from IIT classrooms will soon be available on Apple's multi-media platform iTunes. YouTube already has a separate channel for IIT courses, which, as of December 2011, had 63.64 lakh viewers.

When MIT had first invited the IITs to join the OpenCourseWare community in 2007, the IITs felt their initiatives were too young to join the world of open source learning. But four years on, the IITs feel that they have caught up with the other members of the open source community, who had started making their course material public a



GOING GLOBAL

long time ago.

"We have finally decided to join the Open Education Resource Consortium. This move will help us share open source tools. It's an academic enhancement exercise," said Mangala Sunder Krishnan, NPTEL coordinator from IIT-Madras.

Several other universities like Yale, Peking, Harvard Law School, Notre Dame, Tufts, UC Irvine and Utah State have allowed MIT to host links to their courseware. The Indian Institute of

Management, Bangalore, is also a member of MIT's OpenCourseWare.

The IITs have their own initiative on similar lines, the National Programme for Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), which seven of the old IITs and the Indian Institute of Science had jointly launched. The NPTEL has over a thousand courses in technology and the humanities. But there is an elementary difference between the efforts put in by the American universities into open courses and the NPTEL. While the former is an enriching exercise, not completely substituting class work, the NPTEL encompasses all topics in every course, from their introduction to the end, allowing students to sit at home and study.

More than 500 Indian engineering colleges have been given the NPTEL content, and students can access it through the college intranet. The number of visitors on the NPTEL website has also increased from over 9.37 lakh in 2008 to 44.39 lakh in December 2011.

आईआईटी दिल्ली से स्नातक की पढ़ाई कर चुके रोहित पांडेय ने नए टैबलेट क्लासपैड को किया लॉन्च

टैबलेट की दुनिया में 'आकाश' को टक्कर देने आया 'क्लासपैड'

नई दिल्ली | एजेसी

'आकाश' टैबलेट को लॉन्च हुए अभी ज्यादा वक्त भी नहीं बीता था कि बाजार में एक ऐसा टैबलेट आ गया जो खूबियों के मामले में आकाश को जबरदस्त टक्कर देने के लिए तैयार है। इस टैबलेट का नाम है 'क्लासपैड'। आईआईटी दिल्ली और



आईआईएम कोलकाता से स्नातक की पढ़ाई कर चुके रोहित पांडेय ने इस एजुकेशन टैबलेट को तैयार किया है। यह क्लासपैड तीन मॉडलों में उपलब्ध है—क्लासपैड 7, क्लासपैड 8 और क्लासपैड 10।

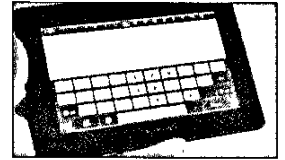
अगर टैबलेट के बैटरी बैकअप की तुलना आकाश से की जाए तो जहां आकाश का बैकअप तकरीबन डेढ़ घंटे का है वहीं इस नए टैबलेट का बैकअप छह घंटे से भी ज्यादा है। अक्टूबर 2011 में सरकार ने 'आकाश' को लॉन्च किया गया था ताकि स्कूली बच्चों को टैबलेट के जरिए शिक्षा का अनुभव अनुभव दिया जा सके। बाजार में जहां आकाश का दाम 2500 रुपए है वहीं

स्कूलों में इसे 1700 रुपए में बांटा गया। जबकि क्लासपैड का मूल्य आकाश से कहीं ज्यादा है। ज्यादा एप्लिकेशन, बेहतरीन टच स्क्रीन, 1.3 गीगा हर्ड की स्पीड, 4 जीबी की स्टोरेज मेमोरी और ज्यादा सिलेबस स्टोरेज की वजह से इसका मूल्य 7500-14000 रुपए के बीच है। कक्षा तीन से 12 तक के लिए तैयार किए गए क्लासपैड में दर्जनों किताबों के सिलेबस को स्टोर किया जा सकता है। रोहित पांडेय कहते हैं कि इस क्लास पैड पर वह करीब चार साल से काम कर रहे थे। वह एक ऐसा डिजाइन तैयार करना चाहते थे जो सरल हो और बच्चों को पढ़ाई का एक अलग अनुभव दे सके।

आधी कीमत पर एक हफ्ता और मिलेगी ब्लैकबेरी प्लेबुक

नई दिल्ली | एजेसी

ब्लैकबेरी फोन बनाने वाली कंपनी रिसर्च इन मोशन (रिम) द्वारा प्लेबुक टैबलेट पीसी की कीमत घटाकर करीब आधा करने के कुछ दिनों के भीतर देशभर में यह टैबलेट पीसी हाथोंहाथ बिक गया जिससे कंपनी ने त्यौहारी पेशकश की अवधि एक सप्ताह बढ़ा दी है। रिम ने अपने प्लेबुक के 16जीबी संस्करण की कीमत आधी से अधिक घटाकर



13,490 रुपये की है। कंपनी के प्रबंध निदेशक (भारत) सुनील दत्त ने कहा कि हम ब्लैकबेरी प्लेबुक पर सीमित त्यौहारी सीजन पेशकश के प्रति ग्राहकों की उत्साहजनक प्रतिक्रिया से काफी खुश हैं।

Blooper on site leaves CIC red-faced

Information Watchdog Hears Five RTI Appeals On IITs Only After A Year

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: The Central Information Commission's (CIC) inordinate delay has come to light in the five appeals filed between October and December 2010, which were heard together on September 30 last year. While the order in one appeal was given on the day of hearing, for the other four appeals the order was dispatched to appellant only in December-end.

The four orders, however, still show September 30 as the date when it was passed. On the CIC website, none of the five orders is listed in, the



While the CIC order in one appeal was given on Sept 30, 2011 (one year after it was filed), for the other four appeals it was dispatched in December-end. But the four still show Sept 30, 2011 as the date when it was passed

name of IIT respondents, but the HRD ministry's department of school education and literacy. The ministry was not even party to the case. CIC's website lists the case as Rajeew Kumar vs. department of school education and literacy.

The first appeal related to information in all cases of admissions in IIT-Kanpur of the wards of faculty members/scientific officers since 2000. The CIC ordered IIT-Kanpur to provide the information. The second appeal was about

information regarding number of students who have answered correctly, wrongly and did not attempt each question of papers I and II of JEE, 2010. The CIC told IIT-Madras that conducted JEE in 2010 to provide the records just the way IIT-Kanpur did for JEE, 2011.

Kumar's third appeal sought details of IIT-Kharagpur faculty members involved in consultancy along with the honorarium paid to them. The CIC asked IIT-Kharagpur to give the information. It said in case IIT-Kharagpur feels information is scattered and cannot be eas-

ily gathered without committing huge resources, then supporting affidavit should be filed in the commission.

Kumar had also asked IIT-Madras to give names and details of all candidates, who appeared in both papers of JEE, 2010, in mathematics, physics and chemistry along with two ways of evaluation that was undertaken as a corrective measure. IIT-Madras told CIC that names of candidates, parents' name are available on the website but that of SC/ST categorization is not uploaded. CIC asked IIT-Madras to file an affidavit to the commission that no intermediate data is generated.

IT'S A LONG QUEUE TO EDUCATION, JOBS

With little growth in private jobs, government employment remained the only option. Skills the youth possess are not what the industry needs, and private higher education is beyond the rural students' reach. Result: rampant unemployment, drug addiction

RUCHIKA M. KHANNA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

India pins much hope on its young demographic profile, expecting to take on the world with cutting-edge human resource, but Punjab — once at the forefront of development in the country — has failed to capitalise this asset.

In fact, the condition of the youth has become a blot of sorts on the state, which has earned the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of unemployment and drug addiction in the country, besides witnessing mass migration of youth to greener pastures abroad.

Though the unemployment or underemployment has more to do with the near collapse of the once-robust economy of Punjab, successive governments in the state have also failed to provide any fresh avenues for jobs by attracting large industrial investment.

The only jobs on offer for the young in recent years have been in the government sector, where the numbers are too few to count.

With the education system in the state — school, college, technical as well as university education — failing to keep pace with the needs of the industry, most big industrial houses in Ludhiana

SAD MANIFESTO CHECK PROMISES KEPT

- Vacancies in government sector filled.
- Opening of higher-education institutes such Indian Institute of Technology (Ropar) and Indian School of Business (Mohali) facilitated.
- Promotion of sports by building stadiums, encouraging games such as kabaddi to keep youth off drugs.
- Colleges opened in rural and backward areas.

IGNORED

- Foreign collaborations for quality education for joint degrees in various courses.
- Education for employment in the IT sector through bridge courses in rural areas.
- Training in latest skills to semi-employed workers and youth.

and Jalandhar have been unable to find the required skill sets among Punjabi youth. The majority of them thus hire their workforce from outside the state. It is not uncommon to find Punjabi youth with degrees in engineering or business management accepting clerical jobs in private companies.

Though not sufficient, the government did make efforts towards developing the education sector, facilitating the opening of three new universities. It set up 13 new colleges in backward and rural areas, besides other institutes.

Several welfare schemes, such as the Mai Bhago Vidya Scheme, were also introduced to promote education among girls, who were also

given bicycles in Classes XI and XII to contain their dropout rate. However, not much was done to improve the course curriculum either in schools or colleges.

While there are no verified figures available, it is estimated that nearly 70 per cent of the youth in the state are unemployed or underemployed. The number of unemployed youth is put at 25 lakh. There is also a large population of people who are past the age of being called "youth", but are still unemployed.

This huge chunk of young and restless unemployed population is also considered to be a factor behind social ills such as drug addiction and the practice of seeking dowry.



Gave 1.5 lakh jobs

“During the past five years, we have provided government jobs to 1.15 lakh people in various state government departments. The previous Congress government had failed to address this issue, and had banned all recruitment.”

— Parkash Singh Badal, Chief Minister



Create jobs in agro-industry

“All efforts by my government to generate 10 lakh jobs went down the drain after the SAD-BJP took over, as they shooed away private investors. Besides making agriculture more remunerative, we need to plan massive development of agro-industry in villages.”

— Capt Amarinder Singh, state Congress president



Beggars can't be choosers

“After struggling for two years to get a job as per qualifications, I have accepted a job as a part-time teacher in a private school for 5,000 per month. What else could I have done? After remaining dependent on my family's limited income to get higher education, I had no option but to take any job that came my way. I now want to migrate to Canada or Europe for a better life and job.”

— Kulwinder Kaur, MA, B.Ed (Nurpur Bedi)

Recruit nurses

“Despite hundreds of vacancies of nurse in government hospitals, the present government undertook no recruitment. We are forced to take up jobs in private hospitals, which pay very little and the positions there are also very few. The other option is to look for opportunities to migrate to western countries, where healthcare workers get a decent salary.”

— Harjeet Kaur, qualified nurse (Ropar)

Selling land

“Drug addiction has become rampant because of two factors — large-scale unemployment and political patronage to drug suppliers. Very few jobs are available, and those too require low skill levels. Not willing to take up such jobs, the youth are selling off family assets. Since they also do not want to take up farming, they are selling off land too, which gives finances for some time.”

— Deepak Thakur, student in Hoshiarpur (Amipur village, Gurdaspur)

Higher education out of reach

“Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal's attempt to wean the youth off drugs by promoting kabaddi is queer. It is politicians who provide patronage to drug dealers. One factor that has hurt the youth is commercialisation of higher education. Education has become a “booming industry”. But this comes at the cost of hundreds of rural youth, who cannot afford the high fees.”

— Baldev Singh Sandhu (Daimir Khera village, Abohar)

Literacy vs education

“Children in villages are still dependent on government schools, which hardly have any teachers. Even the course curriculum there is redundant. Government schools are just looking for literacy, rather than education. When these children pass out, they will not be fit for good college, and that will add to unemployment. Basic education can improve only with concerted political will.”

— Harwinder Dhillon, schoolteacher (Bagha Purana, Moga)

Farming no longer viable

“I doubt just setting up agro-industry in rural areas would be able to contain migration of unemployed youth from villages. Agriculture is no longer economically viable, because the size of land holdings has become too small. The government has to focus on job creation in the services sector, where a large number of educated youth can get employment.”

— Gurpiar Singh Sidhu (Bahawal Bassi village, Abohar)

Financial Express, ND 02/01/2012 p-6

'We essentially place students in internships that are relevant to them'

In 2005, Curtin University, Western Australia's largest university, opened its Sydney campus, which, since inception, has been providing diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate courses to students from across the globe. Recently, the director of Curtin University Sydney Campus, Dr Mahendra Chandra, met with FE's Vikram Chaudhary and shared the university's India plans and more. Excerpts:

While going through your website I read about the applied nature of your courses ...

Yes, we are widely recognised for the practical and applied nature of our courses, which equip graduates with essential skills through exposure to industry as well as business, and our research, which focuses on solving real world problems. Such a combination enables our graduates to play an effective role in the workplace immediately upon graduation.

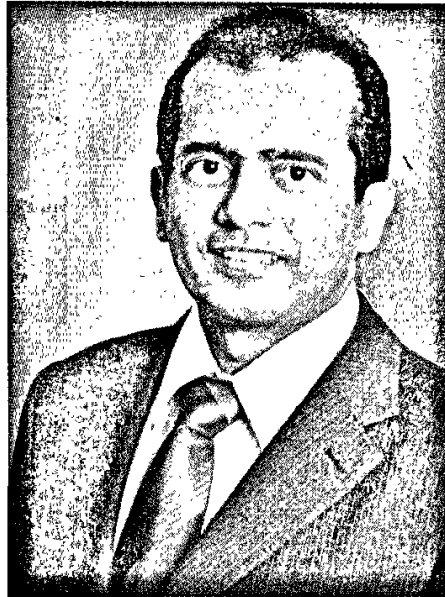
You are talking about bridging the education-employability gap ...

Certainly. A big challenge to any university is developing programmes that would ensure employment for its students. However, blending academic

studies with work experience is not an easy task. Providing an engaging education experience along with developing the employability capacity of students should be critical activities of universities.

How are you working towards that?

We have launched a 'Career Advantage' programme that develops work-ready graduates during their undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The programme consists of three components: the employability skills component, which is a series of workshops for students to develop skills in resume preparation, workplace culture and interview skills; the internship component, during which students are placed on an internship for 12 weeks; and a post-internship component, where students are assessed on gaps in their skill-set, provided career coaching and assisted in applying for



jobs. We essentially place students in internships that are relevant to them.

How is your Sydney campus like and what are your key courses?

Our Sydney campus gives students the opportunity to live and study in one of the most picturesque cities in the world. Although we have a variety of courses, I would like to share with you the key ones, such as master of finance, which is a challenging and flexible course designed to give professionals with a finance responsibility the global managerial competencies they require. Then we have master of international business, which builds on the curriculum of the graduate diploma or the post-graduate diploma to provide you with a range of specialist topics to choose from. Then we have master of accounting, which enhances your knowledge and skills in accounting and related financial management aspects of business to equip you for a career in professional accounting and related fields.

What are your views on the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill?

It is a good step forward for the development of higher education in India. But the sad part is that it is stuck for a while now. But then I will add that setting up a campus in a new country is a big commitment and so we will have to wait and watch how things unfold once clarity sets in.

Times of India ND 2/01/2012 P-13

Nasa probe on track, reaches Moon orbit

Grail, 110th Mission To Earth's Satellite, Will Help Understand Lunar Enigma Better

Pasadena, California: As planet Earth rang in the new year, a different kind of countdown was happening at the moon. After a 3½-month journey, a Nasa spacecraft flew over the Moon's south pole, fired its engine and dropped into orbit on Saturday in the first of two back-to-back arrivals over the New Year's weekend.

Mission control at the Nasa Jet Propulsion Laboratory erupted in cheers and applause after receiving confirmation that the probe was healthy and circling the moon. An engineer was seen on closed-circuit television blowing a noisemaker to



LOONY TALES

Stocktrek/Corbis

herald the New Year's Eve arrival. "Everything went just as we hoped. The burn was spot-on," chief scientist Maria Zuber of the MIT said in a post-mission interview. The team toasted sparkling cider, but the celebration was brief. Despite the successful maneuver, the work was not over. Its twin still had to enter lunar orbit on New Year's Day.

The Grail probes — short for Gravity Recovery and Interior Laboratory — have been cruising independently toward their destination since launching in September aboard the same rocket on a mission to measure

lunar gravity. Hours before revealers in Times Square celebrated the New Year, Grail-A approached the moon and fired its engine for about 40 minutes to get captured into orbit. Deep space antennas in the California desert and Madrid tracked every move and fed real-time updates to ground controllers.

About 270 family members and friends of the mission team descended on the Nasa campus to watch the drama unfold on a live feed. "This is great, a big relief," deputy project scientist Sami Asmar told the jubilant crowd.

Grail is the 110th mission to

target the moon since the dawn of the Space Age including the six Apollo moon landings that put 12 astronauts on the surface. Despite the attention the moon has received, scientists don't know everything about Earth's nearest neighbour.

Grail is expected to help researchers better understand why Moon is asymmetrical and how it formed by mapping the uneven lunar gravity field that will indicate what's below the surface. Previous missions have attempted to study gravity with mixed results. Grail is the first mission devoted to this goal. AP



SCIENTIST REVEALS HOW HIV HIJACKS BODY DEFENCE

Washington: An American scientist has unravelled how the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) appropriates the body's own defences to promote AIDS, a discovery that could help curb its spread.

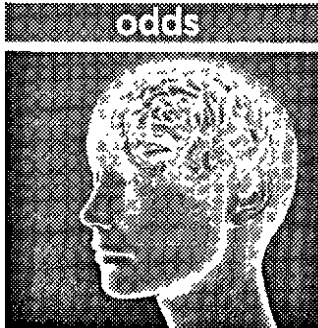
Nevin Krogan, associate professor of cellular pharmacology at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), described how HIV commandeers restriction factors, a class of proteins that have evolved to block viruses such as HIV, to weaken the body's defences and enhance the virulence of HIV infection.

"One of the keys to HIV's success is how quickly it can evolve new attack strategies — and the way in which it uses our own proteins against us is a prime example of that," said Krogan.

"However, now that we've shed light on this complex process, we are one step closer to developing new drugs that will help us pull ahead in this evolutionary arms race," said Krogan.

AIDS has killed more than 25 million people around the world since first being identified some 30 years ago. In the US alone, more than one million people live with HIV/AIDS at an annual cost of \$34 billion.

Krogan's experiments show promise for the development of more effective antiretroviral therapies for people with HIV. Further, they have laid the foundation for future research at Gladstone Institute, affiliated with UCSF. — IANS



EARLY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES CAN BE RECALLED: STUDY

Sydney: Can adults recall events they experienced before they were three or four years old — a phenomenon called childhood amnesia. A new study has found that events experienced by children as young as two can be recalled after long delays.

"Our results are consistent with theories that suggest that basic capacity for remembering our own experiences may be in place by two years of age," said University of Otago post-doctoral fellow Fiona Jack, who led the study.

To determine at what age our earliest memories occur, the researchers looked at about 50 children and their parents. The children played a unique game when they were two-to-four years of age, the journal *Child Development* reports.

Children placed a large object in a hole at the top of a machine and turned a handle on the side. When a bell rang, a small but otherwise identical object was delivered through a door at the bottom of the machine.

Six years later, the researchers interviewed the children and their parents to determine how well they remembered playing the game, according to an University of Otago statement. Only about a fifth of the children recalled the event, including two children who were under three when they played the game. About half of the parents remembered the event. Parents and children who recalled the event provided very similar reports about the game. — IANS

Times of India ND 2/01/2012

P-13

Soon, a virus to trace the source of cyber attack

Tokyo: Japan has been developing a virus that could track down the source of a cyber attack and neutralize its programme.

The weapon is the culmination of a \$2.3 million three-year project entrusted by the government to technology maker Fujitsu Ltd to develop a virus and equipment to monitor and analyse attacks, the Yomiuri Shimbun daily reported on Sunday.

The United States and China are reported to have put so-called cyber weapons into practical use, Yomiuri said.

Japan will have to make legal amendments to use a cyber weapon as it could violate the country's law against the manufacture of a computer virus, the daily said.

In November, a computer system run by about 200 Japanese local governments was struck.

In October, Japan's parliament came under cyber attack, apparently from the same emails linked to a China-based server that have already hit several lawmakers' computers.

It was also reported that Japanese computers at embassies and consulates in nine countries were infected with viruses in the summer.

Currently, the virus is being tested in a "closed environment" to examine its applicable patterns. AFP