

Newspaper Clips January 29, 2016

President Pranab Mukherjee differs with Smriti Irani over JNU Vice Chancellor's name

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/president-pranab-mukherjee-differs-with-smriti-irani-over-jnu-v-c-name/>

Although the President is under no obligation to follow the minister's recommendation, sources said there are several precedents to show that this is the norm.

Written by [Ritika Chopra](#) | New Delhi | Updated: January 29, 2016 8:24 am

President Pranab Mukherjee is learnt to have ignored Union HRD Minister [Smriti Irani](#)'s recommendation while appointing Prof M Jagadesh Kumar as the Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

According to sources, Irani had communicated her preference for scientist V S Chauhan to the President, out of the four finalists shortlisted by the selection committee for the post of V-C. But Mukherjee chose IIT-Delhi's Prof Kumar. JNU professors R N K Bamezai and Ramakrishna Ramaswamy were the other contenders.

[The Indian Express](#) has learnt that this is the second time in the last four months that the minister's suggestion for appointing a central university V-C was not accepted by the President. Mukherjee had also ignored Irani's choice for Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) in Hyderabad. Mohammed Aslam Parvaiz was appointed as MANUU's head in October 2015.

Although the President is under no obligation to follow the minister's recommendation, sources said there are several precedents to show that this is the norm.

Chauhan is a leader in malaria research and his contributions are in the field of malaria vaccine and drug development. He was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award, by the UPA-II in 2012.

Kumar, who assumed office in JNU on Wednesday, has completed his Masters and PhD from IIT-Madras. He has worked in the field of nanoelectronic devices, nanoscale device modelling and simulation, innovative device design and power semi-conductor devices.

When contacted, President Mukherjee's Press Secretary Venu Rajamony declined to comment. The HRD Ministry's spokesperson Ghanshyam Goel did not respond to questions e-mailed by this newspaper on Wednesday seeking comment on the JNU appointment.

The appointment assumes significance against the backdrop of the HRD Ministry and the Rashtrapati Bhawan disagreeing over the sacking of Visva Bharati University Vice-Chancellor Sushanta Datta Gupta.

On September 22, 2015, the government had recommended Datta Gupta's removal to Mukherjee as a probe found the V-C guilty of "gross misconduct" and "dereliction of duty". The President's Office, however, is learnt to have informally conveyed its unwillingness to do so. It wants the ministry to accept Datta Gupta's resignation which he had e-mailed on September 30.

Mukherjee's office had returned the file twice questioning the legality of the ministry's recommendation. Irani's department has sought the law ministry's opinion again on the matter.

President and HRD ministry at loggerheads again: JNU VC appointment is the latest source of dispute

http://www.firstpost.com/india/president-and-hrd-ministry-at-loggerheads-again-jnu-vc-appointment-is-the-latest-source-of-dispute-2603574.html?utm_source=FP_CAT_LATEST_NEWS

It seems there is a divide between President [Pranab Mukherjee](#) and Union Human Resources Minister Smriti Irani. The two have differed over appointments at three Central universities — the latest being over Jawaharlal Nehru University, [according to *The Indian Express*](#).

There were four finalists for the position of JNU's vice-chancellor and Irani made it clear that she prefers VS Chauhan, a scientist, but the president chose M Jagadesh Kumar from IIT-Delhi instead, reported *The Indian Express*. The two universities over which the two leaders previously butted heads are Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Hyderabad and Visva Bharati University in West Bengal.



Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani. PTI

This is not the first time that appointment of college heads by Irani's HRD ministry has been mired in controversy. There was speculation in September 2015, that the [HRD ministry had spoken to Subramanian Swamy](#) about taking over the JNU vice-chancellor position. Swamy even tweeted about it, saying he has preconditions that needed to be met before the ministry could make an offer.

In January 2015, [Zafar Sareshwala was appointed](#) the chancellor of Maulana Azad National Urdu University. Sareshwala, who owns a Ahmedabad-based business identified as Parsoli Corp and is said to be an expert in Islamic finance, beat others shortlisted by the university's executive council. Allegations of favouritism were made as he was one of the most prominent faces of Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#)'s campaign team in the run up to the 2014 General Election, and frequently appeared on news channel debates to defend government policy.

However, as Mohammad Sajjad, a historian at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) [told *Firstpost*](#), "Without going into the merits of this argument, I must say there is a section which feels that Zafar Sareshwala may do something good for the university and the community. And if not Sareshwala, then who? There is a total vacuum."

In April 2015, IIT-Kanpur professor Dheeraj Sanghi called into question the HRD ministry's selection process for the directors of IIT-Bhubaneswar, IIT-Patna and IIT-Ropar, [Telegraph India reported](#). The ministry had earlier claimed that they had interviewed 36 candidates for the three posts in six hours on a Sunday, which, according to Sanghi, meant each candidate was interviewed for 10 minutes. He alleged to *Telegraph India* that the only way a selection panel could make a decision in 10 minutes was if they already knew the candidate previously, which meant that other candidates didn't have much of a chance to prove their competency.

Irani admitted that she has been accused of saffronising education institutions but [she dismissed the charge](#) in June 2015 saying, "I never ask students about their religion as we do not discriminate against the rights of a student to education on the basis of caste or religion."

To buttress the point that discrimination on religious lines was not being conducted, Irani referred to the appointment of the vice-chancellor of the Central University of Gujarat, Syed Bari.

She also asserted at an education conclave in July 2015 that she is actually in the process of depoliticising her ministry's functioning. Her goal was to serve in the best interests of the students, [India Today quoted](#) her as saying.

Alzheimer's: IISc research gives hope

SEETHALAKSHMI S & Sunita Rao R | TNN | Jan 28, 2016, 10.13 AM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/Alzheimers-IISc-research-gives-hope/articleshow/50751951.cms>

Highlights

- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) is in the midst of a path-breaking research using ashwagandha that offers a hope for people suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's: IISc research gives hope (Getty Images)

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) is in the midst of a path-breaking research using ashwagandha that offers a hope for people suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Dr Vijayalakshmi Ravindranath, chairperson at Centre for Neuro Sciences at IISc, is using an extract of the ashwagandha root (an ayurvedic plant extract) on mice with Alzheimer's disease.

Her preliminary finding is that it can reverse memory loss.

The Tatas have pledged an Rs 75 crore grant for the research being done on the IISc campus.

"Research worldwide both in pharmaceutical companies and academia have failed to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease. There is far less optimism as most drugs have failed in clinical trials. We need to leverage the knowledge base of the traditional system of medicine, such as Ayurveda, which have been practised for more than 2,000 years. Understanding the knowledge base of these systems of medicine and using it effectively in the modern context is essential as we are set to see a large increase in cases of disorders of the ageing brain," she told TOI.

"We are now purifying the mixture and reducing the effective dose. What is interesting is the way the ashwagandha worked in the mice. The extract did not work directly on the brain. Instead it enhanced a protein in the liver that is broken down and released into the blood to act as a sink for the amyloid and helps pull out the amyloid from the brain," she added.

The 2015 Nobel Prize for medicine was won by Chinese scientist Tu Youyou's for her discovery of artemisinin, a drug based on traditional Chinese herbal medicine. The drug is now part of standard anti-malarial regimens.

Govin Capital signs MoU with IIT-M Incubation Cell

U Tejonmayam | TNN | Jan 28, 2016, 03.28 PM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Govin-Capital-signs-MoU-with-IIT-M-Incubation-Cell/articleshow/50756640.cms>

CHENNAI: Singapore-based Govin Capital signed an MoU with IIT-Madras Incubation Cell (or IITMIC, Chennai) on Thursday to offer bio-entrepreneurial education and accelerate med-tech and life-sciences startups from the wider IIT-M community.

Govin Capital will also be mentoring startups at IIT-M's Bio-Incubator and MedTech Incubator and organize events such as boot camps in Venture Financing and Private Equity.

Anand Govindaluri, CEO & MD, Govin Capital, said the collaboration would provide the IIT-M community access to the Singapore innovation ecosystem in Medtech and Life Sciences.

"We are excited that the MoU with IITMIC is being signed at a time when India is shaping its vision for an entrepreneurial economy and is in line with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Startup India, Standup India'."

S&T students must become entrepreneurship by starting their own business for solving employment problem in our nation. A Siva

Prof Guhan Jayaraman, head, IITM Bio-Incubator commented, "Entrepreneurship training is a critical part of a startup ecosystem. We are excited to partner with Govin Capital for their specialized course, which will cater to startup companies in the healthcare and biotechnology sectors."

Tamaswati Ghosh, CEO of IITMIC, said, "This is a novel initiative undertaken by our sector specific incubators at IIT-M to educate and better prepare our young students/scientists working in biosciences/biomedical areas, and impart skills necessary to translate cutting edge innovations from the Laboratory to the field

India's biggest student entrepreneurship summit set to kick off at IIT Bombay

[Sharika Nair](#)

<http://yourstory.com/2016/01/iit-bombay-esummit-2016/>

The tenth edition of the Entrepreneurship Summit organised by IIT Bombay is all set to rock the scene this weekend. The two-day annual summit promises to be an amazing meeting ground for industry experts, business leaders, investors and entrepreneurs and of course, students, many of whom are aspiring entrepreneurs. It's also the first ever event of its kind to receive patronage from the 'Make in India' initiative, as well as UNESCO.

The E-Summit is also the largest such event that is organised by a student body, and its theme this year is 'The Global Mélange' given that it will showcase the entrepreneurial ecosystems of Israel, the US, the UK,

Singapore, and Australia – quite apt given that the entrepreneurial spirit is never tethered by geographical boundaries.

Adding to the excitement this year at E-Summit is [TVF Pitchers](#), who will be hosting a unique talk show at the summit. Bringing entrepreneurial sparkle and investor energy are the likes of Rana Kapoor of Yes Bank, Sachin Bansal of Flipkart, Kunal Shah of Freecharge and Vani Kola from Kalaari Capital.

Another major highlight is the second edition of ‘[The Ten minute million Challenge](#)’. Up to 10 shortlisted startups will get a chance to make a 10-minute pitch in front of a panel of 12 of India’s best angel investors, which will be followed by an on-the-spot decision on financial backing; the unique feature here is that all 10 startups have a chance to secure a backing of Rs 15 lakh each. Last year, a startup was able to raise Rs 63 lakh!

Other crowd-puller events within the ambit of the E-Summit include the Job and Internship Fair which is open to all college students, and the Start-up Expo. There’s also the finals of Asia’s largest Business Model competition on Day 1. Finalists have been chosen from more than 7,000 entries, and will set their sights on prizes worth Rs 50 lakh.

Entrepreneurs can match skills at competitions like Crowd Pitch, Ideablaze, National BizQuiz, Apocalypse Management and Hackathon, all of which have already created quite a buzz. Teen Tycoons will be a pitching platform for teenagers and school students. It’s a revolutionary event, aimed at encouraging start-up ideas from all age groups. After all, Mark Zuckerberg was just 19 when he launched Facebook.

The Innovation Conclave will witness participation from India’s top innovators and will comprise 15-minute long interactions. Anil Gupta, founder of the National Innovation Foundation, and Ramesh Raskar, Head of MIT Media Labs, are among those who will give insights into their ideation styles, work strategies and success stories.

15,000 attendees, 500+ startups, 80+ events and 100+ speakers – [register today to attend most innovative E-Summit of the country](#). Registrations close at midnight on 29 January.

Business Buzz at IIT Madras Research Park

By Jonathan Ananda | ENS

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/Business-Buzz-at-IIT-Madras-Research-Park/2016/01/29/article3248727.ece>

CHENNAI: Almost six years after the first phase of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras’s Research Park took off, its much larger second phase is set to throw open its doors for business.

Among the project’s salient features are a number of independent research facilities, a large expansion in space for its incubator cell and a brand new incubator for MedTech start-ups.

According to Bhaskar Ramamurthi, director, IIT-Madras, the second phase involved a total capital expenditure of Rs 420 crore so far, with Rs 100 crore obtained as grant from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, and the rest funded through debt and contributions.

Phase I of the IIT Madras research park | Martin Louis While the official launch date for the second phase is not yet decided, Saint Gobain, which has reportedly taken up nearly 140,000 sq ft in the project, is set to inaugurate its India

R&D facility on January 29. But Saint Gobain and its large installation are not the only ones the second phase will boast of.

According to Ramamurthi, phase 2 was also likely have a brand new incubator for Medical Technology start-ups, overseen by IIT-Madras's highly successful Health Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC).

“It is likely we will be adding to the list of specialised incubators that will work from the research park during this expansion. The MedTech incubator will be overseen by HTIC, since they have shown that they have expertise in this sector and will join our Rural Technology and Business Incubator and the BioTech incubator that are currently working from there,” said Ramamurthi.

The HTIC has actually clubbed its budget for the incubator and a planned MedTech core facility to come up for Rs 20 crore.

The expansion is expected to add around 100,000 sqft to the 30,000 sqft available at the research park to the IIT-Madras Incubator Cell.

“This should fit in quite well with our expectations. Even planning for an addition of 25 start-ups a year, factoring in that they would stay for three to four years each, we would need a lot more than what the first phase will provide us,” said Ramamurthi.

The second phase is also likely to add nearly 100 firms to the 50 odd now at the park.

Against UGC stand, HRD ministry writes to CAG for audit of deemed universities

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/against-ugc-stand-hrd-ministry-writes-to-cag-for-audit-of-deemed-universities/articleshow/50764258.cms>

NEW DELHI: Going against the advice and stand taken by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the human resources development ministry has written to the Comptroller and Auditor General asking if it can audit 85 privately run institutions that are deemed to be universities.

The ministry and the UGC are caught in a tussle over the legality of auditing private deemed varsities that receive no government funding. The HRD ministry is now learnt to have taken the matter up itself with the CAG, citing the provisions in the UGC regulations and seeking to know if it is possible to conduct the audit. Of the 120-odd deemed universities, the Centre fully funds three government-run varsities and partially funds about 20 private ones. About 85 are completely privately run. The CAG usually runs its scrutiny on the finances of those institutions that receive big government funding.

The HRD ministry claims that the move towards auditing is in keeping with the 2010 Deemed University Regulations, which provide for a CAG audit of all deemed to be universities. The ministry has argued that the 2010 regulations do not make any distinction between private and government-funded deemed universities and hence all of them uniformly attract its provisions.

The move is also aimed at ensuring greater quality control and checking unfair financial practices at private varsities. However, attempting a CAG audit is viewed by some quarters as the government excessively tightening its control and influence. The ministry had last year written to the UGC recommending an audit of all 120 institutions deemed to be universities.

Financial Chronicle ND 29/01/2016 P-09



JPC team likely to visit Hyderabad university

Voicing concern over the suicide of Rohith Vemula, a dalit scholar in Hyderabad University, a Parliamentary panel has favoured sending a delegation to the institution and also IIT-Chennai, to look into complaints of injustice against dalit students.

UGC asks central varsities to set up counselling system

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: In the wake of outrage over suicide committed by a Dalit student in Hyderabad University, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has written to all central universities to put in place a 'Students counselling system' for redressal of problems and challenges faced by them.

"I should be a unique, interactive and target-oriented system involving students, teachers and parents to address common student concerns ranging from anxiety, stress, fear of change and failure to homesickness and other academic worries," UGC secretary Jaspal Singh Sandhu said in a letter to the vice-chancellors of all universities.

Pointing to University Grants Commission guidelines on safety of students on and off campuses, Sandhu in the letter said that according to them all higher education institutions have to "mandatorily" put in place a broad-based 'Students counselling system'.

The UGC letter said that the Counselling system should bridge formal as well as communicative gaps between the students and the institution at large.

JNU students detained outside MHRD

<http://www.thestatesman.com/news/delhi/jnu-students-detained-outside-mhrd/119723.html>

The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) students were detained outside the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) when they arrived there for an indefinite hunger strike demanding justice for the 26-year-old research scholar of Hyderabad Central University (HCU) Rohith Vemula, who allegedly committed suicide.

Among those detained were JNUSU president Kanahiya Kumar, vice president Shehla Rashid Shora and more than three dozen others who were taken to Parliament Street police station.

The students were arrested on Wednesday also when they held a protest march outside MHRD, only got released in the evening.

However, the students who sat on dharna inside the police station premises decided to sit on indefinite hunger strike outside the MHRD next day.

IITs want more foreign students to crack their entrance

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-iits-want-more-foreign-students-to-crack-their-entrance-2171357>

Focus on SAARC countries * 10% quota for foreign nationals largely vacant now

To promote brand IIT more aggressively among South Asian and African countries, the premier institutes have decided to seek help from the external affairs ministry to promote the 10% supernumerary quota for foreign nationals, which has largely remained vacant till now.

To increase the number of overseas students, IITs now want to focus on South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Maldives.

One African country, Ethiopia, and a far-east country, Singapore, would also be part of the fresh brand-building exercise.

IITs want to have more entrance examination centres in South Asian and African countries and want cooperation from embassies to promote the 10% quota created a few years ago.

IIT Bombay director Devang Khakhar, who is meeting MEA officials in Delhi on Friday to discuss the strategy, confirmed the development.

"The 10% additional seats for foreign nationals have remained largely vacant. Things can change if we can spread word through different channels and have entrance examination centres in more countries," Khakhar told dna.

"This would also help strengthen India's soft power globally, especially among neighbours," said an IIT Delhi professor.

The move also aims to position IITs better in the global rankings of universities, where the number of foreign students is a major parameter.

Despite having the best talents from India and a huge spending, none of the IITs find mention among the top 200 global institutes. This has been a cause of concern not only for the IITs but also for the ministry of human resources and development.

Foreign nationals have to appear in the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) and compete in the general category, which has 50% seats of the total capacity of 18 IITs and Indian School of Mines (ISM) Dhanbad.

The 18 IITs and ISM Dhanbad, together, offer over 10,000 seats for various undergrad programmes, admissions for which are done through a common test (JEE main and JEE Advance at present).

"We conduct entrance exams in a few centres abroad but only a handful of NRIs and students with Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) take the test and less than 50 crack it. This defies the whole purpose of having the quota and the idea of diversity," said another IIT official.

To increase diversity in the campus, IITs also offer 25% seats to foreign nationals for post-graduate and research programmes.

IIT-Indore students embark on making village free of indoor pollution

— By [Our staff reporter](#) | Jan 29, 2016 01:58 am

<http://www.freepressjournal.in/iit-indore-students-embark-on-making-village-free-of-indoor-pollution/768275>

Indore : Taking a leaf out of IIT-Delhi's book, students of Indian Institute of Technology, Indore have taken up the task of making a village near their campus in Simrol free from indoor air pollution.

As part of their Enactus initiative, students of IIT-Indore are helping the households of Nayagaon village in replacing their traditional chulha with a modern chulha which will produce lesser smoke and reduce indoor air pollution.

As per a study, nearly 140 million households in rural India cook their meals on traditional chulhas which are lit using solid fuels like wood, cow dung, charcoal or agricultural waste.

The smoke that emits from these traditional cooking stoves deteriorates the quality of air and affects the health of people, especially women, who spend a substantial amount of time cooking on it.

According to a study conducted by the Lancet Respiratory Medicine Commission, London, "Around 10 lakh people die across India every year due to pollution caused from burning solid fuels."

Moved by these stunning facts, members of IIT-Delhi Enactus launched a project called Aanch in the Bhatti mines in Delhi's Chattarpur area. They designed a low-smoke stove and employed women of Bhatti mines in the process of manufacturing it.

This stove also produces heat through burning of wood and cow dung but it emits lesser amount of smoke in comparison to a traditional chulha. Attached with a chimney to direct smoke out of the house, the stove uses about one-third of wood that a chulha consumes. The manufacturing cost of the stove is Rs 450 and its selling price is Rs 650. The profit made on each stove goes to the women manufacturing it.

“Observing the need for this kind of stove in Nayagaon, we collaborated with Enactus Team in IIT-Delhi to get the mould, training and to make them free from indoor air pollution. We started project Aanch on January 16 in Nayagaon where we got a good response for our product,” students of IIT-Indore said in a press release.

One more benefit of the project Aanch is that it helps women in becoming self-sustainable through the selling of these stoves.

“Women in Nayagaon have learnt the entire making and are ready to start their own business to make their village free from harmful smoke,” students of IIT Indore said.

In September 2015, Enactus IIT-Indore had applied for KPMG Business Ethics Grant 2015 that has helped it monetarily in this project. Several other institutes/colleges had applied for this grant and Enactus IIT Indore is amongst the winners of Rs 50,000 grant.

Started in 2014, Enactus IIT-Indore aims to make society a better place to live in, especially rural India. Enactus, which helps in achieving the United Nation’s 17 sustainable development goals, works with leaders in business and higher education to mobilize university students to make a difference in their communities while developing their skills to become socially responsible business leaders.