

# Newspaper Clips

## January 9, 2014

Indian Express ND 09/01/2014P-4

# India urged to set up IIT in Malaysia

Heading for better times, PM assures Indian diaspora

NAVEED IQBAL

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

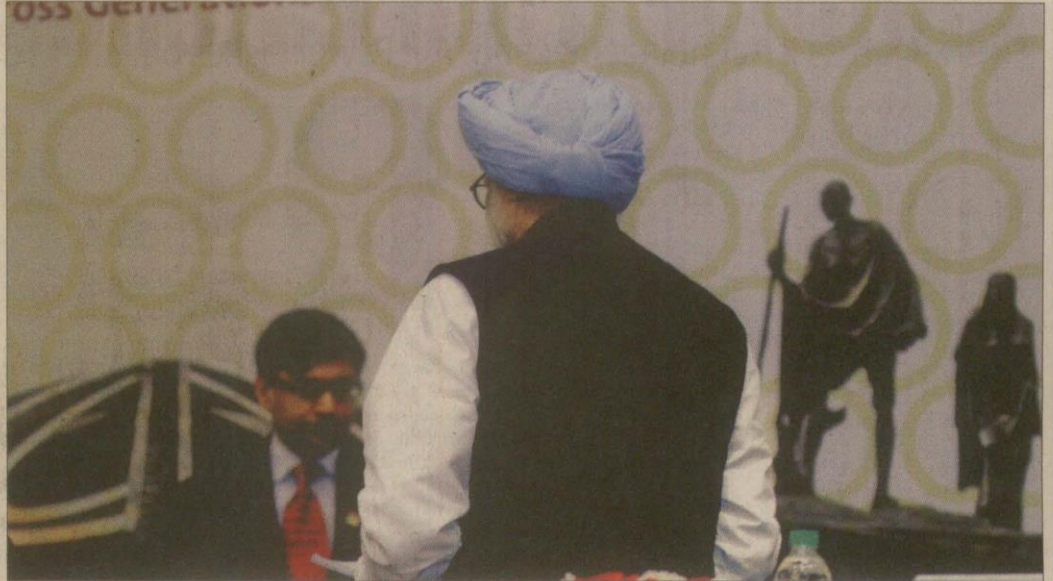
Malaysia has extended an invitation to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) to set up a branch campus in the country. Datuk Seri G Palanivel, Federal Minister for Natural Resources & Environment of the Republic of Malaysia, made the announcement in the Capital on Wednesday.

"Several students from Malaysia come to India to get degrees in dentistry, engineering and medicine and some of the Indian educational institutions have already set up centres there. We also invite the IITs to set up a branch campus in Malaysia," he said, adding that Malaysia would also like to work closely with India in the area of biodiversity. Of Indian origin, Palanivel is also the President of the Malaysian Indian Congress.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who inaugurated the 12th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in the Capital, meanwhile assured the Indian diaspora of the country's continued support to them and said there is no reason to despair about India's present or worry about its future.

"There is a perception in some quarters outside India that the country is losing its momentum of the past decade. This is also amplified by the political contestations here in India, which are inevitably louder in the election season that is now on the horizon," the PM said.

He added that the country is "heading towards better times" and urged the non-resident Indian community to remain engaged in the future of the country with confidence and optimism. Quoting an average growth rate of 7.9 per cent per annum since 2004, Singh said, "There has been no doubt a slowdown in the recent past, and we will probably end this year at the same level as last year with 5% growth. A number of international as well as domestic factors have contributed to this situation. Despite these challenges, our economic fundamentals remain strong."



Manmohan Singh at Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, in New Delhi Wednesday.

PREM NATH PANDEY

## 'Everybody praising AAP in Britain'

VIJAITA SINGH

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THE Aam Aadmi Party's success in the Delhi Assembly elections got a special mention at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on Wednesday when one of Britain's youngest peers, Lord Karan Bilimoria, lauded the party's achievement during a session attended by four Cabinet ministers of the UPA-II.

Praising the Indian democracy, Bilimoria said,

"This is a place where anyone can start from nothing and within a year come to power."

The session, called India's Soft Power, was chaired by External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid and attended by Bilimoria, Law Minister Kapil Sibal, Minister of Culture Chandresh Kumar Katoch and Tourism Minister K Chiranjeevi.

Asked if AAP was emerging as an alternative to the mainstream political par-

ties like the BJP and Congress, Bilimoria told The Indian Express, "AAP is not a protest party anymore. Everyone in Britain is saying fantastic things about the new party. Nobody can predict what will happen during the general elections in the next few months."

Sibal, meanwhile, tried to highlight the government's tough stand on corruption, saying there have been instances when "ministers were asked to resign merely on al-

legations of corruption". He also said the Finance Ministry had been asked for extra funds so the number of judges could be increased.

Defending his government on the issue of corruption, Sibal said that "not all ministers and all bureaucrats are corrupt". "We got the Lokpal Bill and there are six important anti-corruption legislations to be passed in the Parliament. We have been honest in dealing with the issue," he said.

# IIT invited to open centre in Malaysia

M POST BUREAU



**NEW DELHI:** Malaysia on Wednesday invited the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) to set up a branch in the south-east Asian country which has nearly two million people of Indian origin. Addressing the 12th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas here, Malaysian Federal Minister for natural resources and environment Datu Seri G Palanivel invited IIT to open a branch in that country.

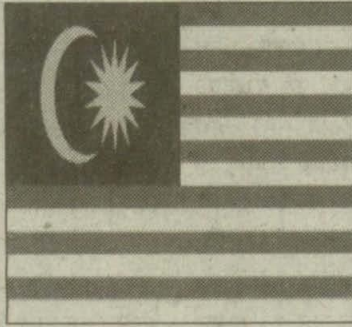
He said several students from Malaysia come to India to get degrees in dentistry, engineering and medicine and some of the Indian educational institutions have already set up centres there.

Palanivel, who is the chief guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, is also the president of Malaysian Indian Congress. He said his country would like to work closely with India in the area of biodiversity.

# IIT को मलेशिया में ब्रांच खोलने का न्योता

एजेंसी

नई दिल्ली। मलेशिया ने शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में भारत के योगदान की ओर इशारा करते हुए बुधवार को कहा कि भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) को इस एशियाई देश में अपनी शाखा खोलनी चाहिए जहां करीब 20 लाख भारतीय मूल के लोग रहते हैं। मलेशिया के प्राकृतिक संसाधन और पर्यावरण मंत्री डी सेरी जी पलानिवेल ने बुधवार को 12वें प्रवासी भारतीय दिवस सम्मेलन में आईआईटी को अपने यहां



शाखा खोलने का न्योता दिया। उन्होंने कहा कि मलेशिया तेजी से 'शिक्षा हब' के तौर पर उभर रहा है और भारत के अनेक शिक्षण संस्थानों ने वहां अपने

केंद्र खोले हैं। 12वें प्रवासी भारतीय दिवस समारोह के उद्घाटन समारोह के मुख्य अतिथि के तौर पर शामिल हुए मलेशियाई इंडियन कांग्रेस के अध्यक्ष पलानिवेल ने कहा कि उनका देश जैवविविधता के क्षेत्र में भारत के साथ मिलकर काम करना चाहता है। मलेशिया में राष्ट्रीय जैवविविधता केंद्र खोलने की योजना है। भारत के साथ द्विपक्षीय व्यापार के संबंध में मलेशियाई मंत्री ने कहा कि उनका देश भारत में निवेश करने वाला 19वां सबसे बड़ा देश है। उन्होंने कहा कि 1998 में

द्विपक्षीय व्यापार जहां 2.3 अरब डॉलर था वहीं 2012 में यह 13.32 अरब डॉलर के स्तर पर पहुंच गया और 2013 में इसके 14.4 अरब डॉलर पर पहुंच जाने की उम्मीद है। पलानिवेल ने कहा कि प्रधानमंत्री मनमोहन सिंह की कुछ महीने पहले हुई मलेशिया यात्रा में दोनों पक्षों ने 6 एमओयू पर दस्तखत किए थे। उन्होंने कहा कि मलेशियाई भारतीय कारोबारियों की ओर से मैं भारत के नेताओं और उद्यमियों से अपेक्षा करता हूं कि वे समय-समय पर हमारे देश की यात्रा करते रहें।■

## IIT invited to open centre in Malaysia

By PTI | 8 Jan, 2014, 02.41PM IST

NEW DELHI: Malaysia today invited the [Indian Institute of Technology](#) (IIT) to set up a branch in the south-east Asian country which has nearly two million people of Indian origin.

Addressing the 12th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas here, Malaysian Federal Minister for Natural Resources and Environment Datu Seri G Palanivel invited IIT to open a branch in that country.

He said several students from Malaysia come to India to get degrees in dentistry, engineering and medicine and some of the Indian educational institutions have already set up centres there.

Palanivel, who is the chief guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, is also the president of Malaysian Indian Congress.

He said his country would like to work closely with India in the area of biodiversity.

While finalising a draft bill for natural resources and benefit sharing, the [Malaysian government](#) learnt from the Indian experience on implementation of national biological diversity bill, he noted.

Delivering the welcome address, Overseas Indian Affairs Minister [Vayalar Ravi](#) said the celebrations help people of Indian origin to connect with the land of their ancestors.

He recalled that the programme is held every year on January 9 to mark the return of [Mahatma Gandhi](#) from [South Africa](#) this day in 1915.

[Post a Comment](#)




*Addressing the 12th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas here, Malaysian Federal Minister for Natural Resources and Environment Datu Seri G Palanivel invited IIT to open a branch in that country.*

### ET SPECIAL:

Save precious time tracking your investments

## Parental pressure ‘killing’ IIT students

R. Ravikanth Reddy

<b>TOO MUCH IS TOO BAD</b>	<p><b>“</b> Students from no other State face such huge pressure, and my experience over the years shows that most A.P. students experience it [parental pressure]. It’s unfortunate that some of these students take the extreme step unable to bear with the pressure.</p> <p><b>SANJAY G. DHANDE,</b> Former Director, IIT-Kanpur</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Middle class expects huge rewards for their wards once they pass out from IITs</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intellectual capacity expected from IITians is missing in majority of Andhra Pradesh students</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● IIT coaching culture seeping to schools cannot be considered as a healthy trend</li> </ul>	

*Middle class expects huge rewards from their wards, which is an unhealthy trend*

Parental pressure is more to blame than the rigorous curriculum and competition from peers for the increasing number of suicides among Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) students from Andhra Pradesh, former IIT-Kanpur Director and University Grants Commission (UGC) Member Sanjay G. Dhande has said.

“Students from no other State face such huge pressure, and my experience over the years shows that most Andhra Pradesh students experience it,” he adds.

The reason, according to him, is that the middle class expects huge rewards for their wards, once they pass out from IITs.

### Sincerity lauded

This huge expectation from parents is unique, exclaims Prof. Dhande. At the same time, he was all praise for the “sincerity and hard work” put in by students from the State even as the “intellectual capacity” expected from IITians was “unfortunately missing in a majority of them”.

Prof. Dhande attributes the phenomenon to the coaching culture where the focus is more on mugging up and less on problem solving.

### Freedom

Moreover, the freedom the students get at IITs after four or five years of “literal caging in schools in the name of coaching” is also a factor.

“It’s unfortunate that some of these students take the extreme step unable to stand the pressure,” he says.

Prof. Dhande, who was honoured with the Padma Shri last year, also ridiculed the IIT coaching culture seeping to schools.

“Surely, IIT coaching can’t start from the sixth class”, he points out, adding that it is misleading parents who, in turn, start pressurising their wards from that age, which is a bad trend.

While coaching does assist in cracking the IIT entrance, it is the “lateral thinking that they pick up in school and college that keeps them going,” is his refrain.

Keywords: [IIT](#), [parental pressure](#), [peer pressure](#), [coaching institute](#), [entrance examination](#), [engineering college](#), [IIT Kanpur](#), [UGC](#), [psychology](#)

Printable version | Jan 8, 2014 1:47:13 PM | <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/parental-pressure-killing-iit-students/article5550136.ece>

© The Hindu

---

## IIT Student's Copter Limca-bound

Author: Pearl H Mohankumar

- Published Date: Jan 9, 2014 9:33 AM
- Last Updated: Jan 9, 2014 9:33 AM

**"This bad boy can take a 300g payload and fly for 42 minutes," said Ganesh Ram as he proudly displayed the quadrotor system that he had fabricated.**

"This bad boy can take a 300g payload and fly for 42 minutes," said Ganesh Ram as he proudly displayed the quadrotor system that he had fabricated. This PhD student at the IIT Madras has made this copter with four 'wings', to put it in layman's terms, in an attempt to enter the Limca Book of Records. Ram's machine remained in the air for 42 minutes in the endurance challenge to become the first quadrotor to do so.

Ram's quadrotor was not the only innovation to attempt an entry into the record books. Many such techno-entertainment gadgets made by a team of students were put to test at the recently concluded IIT Shaastra, the tech fest conducted by the IIT-M students. Three students created the largest hologram with an arrangement of reflective surfaces in the form of a pyramid, to form a 3D view inside the pyramid. Onlookers were awestruck as they looked into the object inside the pyramid as it seemed very real to them.

Another team of students created the first band of virtual instruments, where the information transfer is completely wireless. These virtual instruments are built on the lines of conventional ones. The instrument player has various sensors attached to his body in the form of gloves, and the output of these is sent through bluetooth to the computer, which is pre-programmed to produce a particular music depending upon the action.

"Many people cannot enjoy technology. Entertainment is something that can engage the audience as well as showcase cutting-edge technology to them," says Ravikiran Bobba, a student. Bobba and his team of peers presented 'Envisage,' a technical show that displayed all these technologies made for entertainment. Technology and creativity converged in this show as the audience watched these innovations with much enthusiasm.

**RASHTRIYA UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA ABHIYAN****HRD Ministry sanctions  
₹1L crore for 8 States**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The HRD Ministry on Wednesday approved the guidelines and sanctioned grants for eight States under the Centre's ambitious ₹1 lakh crore 'Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan' (RUSA) programme.

The Mission Authority RUSA approved the guidelines including programmatic norms of the various components of the scheme and the equalisation formula based on which the funding support would be determined.

It also gave its approval to consider the applications of Goa, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand and West Bengal to participate in RUSA. These States had responded after the cut-off date of October 31, 2013. This was decided in the first meeting of the Mission Authority of RUSA on Wednesday presided by HRD Minister MM Pallam Raju.

"Since immediately after the approval of RUSA in October, 2013 some of the States went to polls, they were requested by the Centre to indicate their willingness to participate in RUSA. The Mission Authority gave its approval to consider the applications of Mizoram and Chhattisgarh who had responded to the Centre's request. The Mission Authority also discussed the logo for RUSA, which would be finalized soon and adopted for the Scheme," said a HRD official.

Dr Narendra Jadhav, Member Planning Commission, Ministers of Higher Education in the States, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen

**THE MISSION  
AUTHORITY RUSA  
APPROVED THE  
GUIDELINES —  
INCLUDING  
PROGRAMMATIC  
NORMS OF THE  
VARIOUS  
COMPONENTS OF THE  
SCHEME AND THE  
EQUALISATION  
FORMULA BASED ON  
WHICH THE FUNDING  
SUPPORT WOULD BE  
DETERMINED**

of State Higher Education Councils and Principal Secretaries of Higher Education in the States. Ashok Thakur, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Dr. Keshav Desiraju, Secretary, Department of Health & Family Welfare and Vice Chairpersons of UGC and AICTE also attended.

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) made presentations to cater to the requirements of institutions to undergo assessment and accreditation besides outlining the strategy programme design, content creation and delivery mechanisms to be adopted under RUSA for creating a pool of potential leaders.

The Mission Authority also examined the progress made so far under RUSA and expressed its pleasure on the pace of its implementation, said the official.

Millenium Post ND 09/01/2014 P-5

# Mission authority approves higher education mission's guidelines

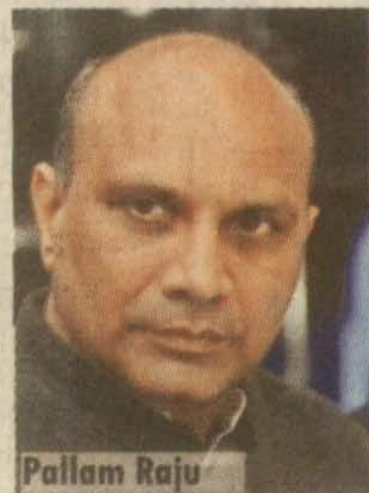
## OUR CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI:** The mission authority of the Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) on Wednesday, approved the guidelines, including programmatic norms of the various components of the scheme, and the equalisation formula based on which the funding support would be determined.

The meeting was presided over by union minister for human resource development MM Pallam Raju and was attended by, among others, Narendra Jadhav, member Planning Commission, ministers of higher education in the states, chairmen and vice-chairmen of state higher education councils and principal secretaries of higher education in the states.

The Mission Authority has given its nod to consider the applications of the states of Goa, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand and West

Bengal to participate in RUSA. These states had responded after the cut-off date of 31 October, 2013, the HRD ministry release said.



Since immediately after the approval of RUSA in October, 2013 some of the states went to polls, they were requested by the Centre to indicate their willingness to participate in RUSA. The nodal body of the National Higher Education Mission also gave its approval to consider the applications of Mizoram and Chhattisgarh who had responded to the Centre's request.

The mission authority also examined the progress made so far under RUSA and expressed its pleasure on the pace of its implementation, the release stated.



# Business Standard

---

---

## First meeting of higher education mission held

IANS | New Delhi January 08, 2014 Last Updated at 22:36 IST

Funding pattern and quality of education in higher educational institutions were among the issues discussed at the first meeting of the national mission on higher education Wednesday.

Human Resource Development Minister M.M. Pallam Raju presided over the meeting of the mission authority of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

Planning Commission member Narendra Jadhav, Health Secretary K. Desiraju and higher education minister of various states attended. Chairpersons of the University Grants Commission and the All India Committee for Technical Education were also present.

The RUSA is a scheme of the central government which envisages strengthening of the higher education system.

The mission authority approved the RUSA guidelines, including programmatic norms of the various components of the scheme and the equalisation formula, based on which the funding support would be determined, an official release said.

It also gave its approval to consider the applications of Goa, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand and West Bengal to participate in the RUSA.

The mission authority also discussed the logo for RUSA, which would be finalised soon and adopted.

# Need for egalitarianism in higher education: Meira

Staff Reporter

**JAIPUR:** Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar stressed the need to build an egalitarian higher education system in the country during her speech at the 68th Foundation Day celebrations of the Rajasthan University here on Wednesday.

Ms. Kumar, an alumna of the Maharani Gayatri Devi Girls' School in Jaipur and the Banasthali Vidyapeeth in Tonk, exhorted the youth to come forward fearlessly and help build a new society.

Addressing students, faculty and guests gathered for the university's Foundation Day celebrations, Ms. Kumar asked students to pledge three things: break the caste system - for it violated human rights, refrain from giving or taking dowry - for it was an insult to women, and take care of their parents during old age.

During her interactive speech, Ms. Kumar reminisced about her association with the Pink City and Rajasthan.

"I have a special relationship with Rajasthan...my parents sent me to study at the Banasthali Vidyapeeth and the MGD school...I have



*Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar at the 68th Foundation Day celebrations of the Rajasthan University in Jaipur on Wednesday. - PHOTO: ROHIT JAIN PARAS*

learned a lot from the people of Rajasthan...and it still helps me in dealing with adverse circumstances," said Ms. Kumar.

There were two types of education systems running parallel in the country today, she said, referring to the low quality education available to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and high quality education accessible to the wards of the rich and

the privileged.

"Till class 7th, I studied at a municipal school in Delhi's Gol Market area. The daughter of our driver also used to study in the same school with me...it seldom happens that the daughter of a Union Minister studies in a government school...but if something like that starts happening more often...it will lead to positive change," she said.

"Following the Delhi gang-rape incident...I met the parents of the victim...it was heartening to hear that they had sold their farm for their daughter's education...till then I had heard farms being sold only for education of a son or for a daughter's dowry," said Ms. Kumar.

Rajasthan governor Margaret Alva, in a strong message, said market demand had led to

the mushrooming of "shops of higher education" in the country but such institutions fell short of providing quality education to all and must be closed. "Born on January 8, 1947, around the time India emerged as an independent nation, the University of Rajasthan has crossed many hurdles to emerge as a premier university of Rajasthan," said Ms. Alva.

"(But) today, you have reasons to be concerned. As Chancellor of the University, while I laud you for your successes, it is also my duty to flag the fault lines which, as many of you are aware, are in the public domain," she said.

"Over the last three decades, hardly any appointments were made on the faculty. The University had fallen on a bad patch which...stretched for far too long. This trend has to be reversed. The dynamic new Vice-Chancellor of the University has initiated many bold measures to put things right...However, in your quest for excellence, you cannot simply replicate the past. You need to adopt some broad new principles for the rejuvenation of this Institution," said Ms. Alva.

# IIM-Calcutta a step away from global accreditations

[Jhimli Mukherjee Pandey](#), TNN Jan 8, 2014, 04.06AM IST

KOLKATA: The Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta (IIM-C) is all set to become the country's first business school to be recognized by two of the world's top B-school accreditation bodies -- Europe-based Association of MBAs (AMBA) and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). An inspection team from AMBA will visit the Joka campus on January 14-15 before giving it a final stamp of approval. The AACSB team is likely to visit the campus in June.

No other IIM enjoys an AACSB accreditation and an additional AMBA certification will make it a "dual crown" for IIM-C. Almost a year ago, the board of governors of the B-school had decided to vie for these accreditations for greater global acceptance of the institute. Thereafter, the two bodies were approached for specifications. Great details about the institute's achievements and regular activities were furnished. The AMBA team is now coming to the campus to cross-check these details and interact with faculty members as well as students.

Right from information on curriculum to new teaching initiatives, quality of faculty and research, steps that have been taken to bring in foreign students, student feedback on teachers, placement records and employer feedback, reams of details were sent to AMBA for the assessment.

Earlier, IIM-Ahmedabad and IIM-Bangalore beat Calcutta and managed to get an accreditation from EQUIS, another top accreditation agency. However, none has managed to get a double accreditation yet and all eyes of the IIM community are on IIM-C now because it would mean setting a benchmark that other two big IIMs are yet to reach.

"We are extremely excited at the prospect of having four experts on our campus for two days next week. Apart from assessing information that we have furnished, AMBA experts might also give us directions on how to position ourselves as a global institute so that we can attract more foreign students. We will become more acceptable in the global market with these two accreditations," said Anindya Sen, IIM-C dean (academic).

IIM-C director Saibal Chattopadhyay added that the institute has a slew of plans for a global positioning and AMBA-AACSB recognition is the first step towards it.

# A seeing eye app for indoor use

**BAT VISION** A team of IITians in Delhi, led by a hearing-impaired youth, have developed a device and a mobile app that can help blind people negotiate buildings and even streets – a first step that can lead towards making places such as government offices disabled-friendly. It can also help normal people negotiate dark places such as cinema halls



■ The parts of Roshni: the wall sensor (right) and the wearable device (centre)

Manu P Toms  
manu.toms@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** Dhruv Jain dreams of making systems and devices that enhance mobility and communication for people with disabilities. And it is not an idle dream, he is well on his way to realising it.

Hearing impaired himself, 23-year-old Dhruv is an IITian and a trekker, and was a competitive swimmer in his school years. Born in a family of doctors, he successfully fought against the odds to make it to the IIT. But he well knows that many others with disabilities fall to wade through myriad challenges of life. Little wonder, then, that he chose to be part of an assistive technology group in IIT Delhi after his graduation.

His project is Roshni, a mobile-phone-based indoor navigation system for the visually impaired. The device, funded by Korean cellphone major Samsung, is likely to hit the market in the next six months. "Our department was frequently visited by visually impaired people. We spoke to them and found that one of the major problems they faced was difficulty in independent indoor navigation. That was the trigger that started this project," Dhruv said.

After two years of work, the navigation system, which consists of wall sen-

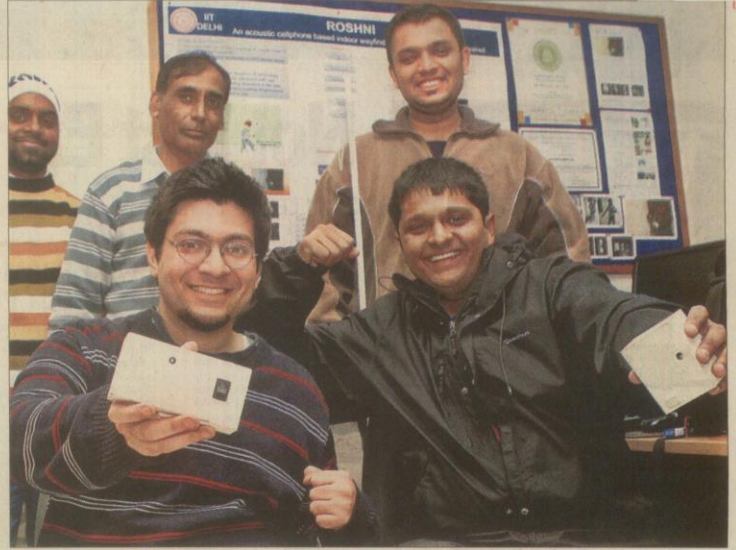
**BREAKTHROUGH INNOVATION**  
in partnership with  
**PETROTECH-2014**

sors, a waist-worn device to receive and detect signals, and a user interface in the form of a mobile application, have been installed and successfully demonstrated at Bharti, the building which houses the computer science department of IIT Delhi.

The device talks to the user with the help of the mobile handset that uses variants of the Android operating system.

Now the six-member team at Delhi IIT's computer science department, led by Dhruv and guided by Prof M Balakrishnan, is giving final touches to Roshni. With the help of the National Association for the Blind, the research group has tested the device with two dozen visually impaired persons from different age group and got satisfactory responses.

"Initially there were battery backup issues. We have now sorted that out. We hope to launch the device commercially



■ From left, seated: Shiveesh Fotedar and Dhruv Jain; and Madan Verma, SD Sharma and Krutarth Patel (standing) of IIT Delhi show off the "Roshni" system for the visually-impaired, at IIT Delhi in New Delhi on Wednesday.

ARVIND YADAV/HIT

## walk about

- Roshni is an indoor navigation system that assists the visually-impaired to move through buildings
- It consists of three parts — a waist-worn device, sensors installed on walls, and a communication application that works on Android-run smartphones
- The device has been field-tested successfully and is likely to hit commercial production this year
- The app can also prove useful for normal people to navigate in low-light areas such as museums and cinema halls, if the requisite sensors are installed

in the next six months," said Abhinav Saxena, a project associate, who handles the hardware aspects of Roshni.

"This product is meant not only for the visually challenged, but also for others. It is especially useful at places such as museums, where there is very little light," he said.

The team will soon install the updated version of the Roshni prototype at the National Science Centre in Pragati Maidan in the Capital.

"In countries such as the US, it is mandatory to make public buildings disabled-friendly. If such a law comes into force in India, this device will have

a great market," said Saxena.

Dhruv and his team are in the process of filing for a patent for the technology. "It is a little early to talk about it," he said. Besides Samsung, which funded one year of research and development, Indian Angel Network, a community of start-up funders, has shown interest in supporting the project, and the IIT team is in talks with them.

Dhruv, who wants to pursue his higher studies in assistive technology, believes that it is important to inculcate a spirit of independence so as to boost the confidence of physically challenged people.

# 'Skill-based training is vital'

In an open interview with *Namrata Tripathi*, **ASHWINI KUMAR SHARMA**, Managing Director, National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIEIT) talks about the institute's objective of capacity building, digital literacy programme, e-security and more



Ashwini Kumar Sharma PIC: NAVEEN SHARMA

**What is the main objective of NIEIT? What purpose was it set up for?**

NIEIT is basically the extended arm of Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEIT) and the purpose it was constituted was to work in the field of capacity building in the formal and informal sector. non-formal include those courses which are open to anyone and the students can opt for these courses anywhere. Formal courses include those which are recognised and approved by the AICTE, we are running some formal courses like M. tech and

MCA in places like Aurangabad, Srinagar and Calicut. We have introduced capacity building in other emerging areas too like e-governance, electronics sector design manufacturing, JIS and cloud computing. We also started conducting training for government officers in accordance with the DRPG directions at the level of directors and under-secretary. We do some research and development work too and besides that we do software consultancy jobs and undertake certain turn-key projects like National Population Register project which we recently completed.

**What kind of programmes do you offer? Are they more skill-based or knowledge based?**

We were initially conducting various formal and non-formal courses which were more knowledge based but since I have joined here I have brought skill-development into perspective, now we've started considering the component of skill-development quite important because I feel without skill-development it is very difficult to get placements anywhere these days.

**Can you tell us about the institutes' scheme of Empowering Women in Rural India through Digital Literacy?**

We are conducting a lot of courses on women empowerment and SC/ST empowerment because we are operating on those locations which are very remote or far-flung like the northeastern regions where no commercial organisation will go for a venture. When people ask me about how our organisation is different from the others then I tell them that we are a government organisation, our mandate is to provide skill development in those areas where nowhere is going like Kekadi in Ajmer, Srinagar, Leh, Srikakulam. We are planning to set up almost 22 centres in northeast. We get funding and granting from the government of India, similarly, we have received sponsored project from DEIT for empowerment of women, we recently finished one project on empowerment of 25,000 women through capacity building in the form of BPO courses and other skill-development trainings.

**Where are your main branches located, are you planning to come up with more institutions?**

We have our centres in almost

60 per cent states of the country, our main focus is north east though, we have main centres and extension centres there. We also have a centre in Delhi, Chandigarh, Ajmer, Srinagar, Jammu, Aurangabad, Calicut. New centres are coming up in Rohpat, Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh and many new extension centres in the northeast.

**Can you tell us about some major achievements of the institute?**

Yes, we are running one of the major digital literacy course called CCC (Concept on Computer), a couple of states have also made it as a mandate course and it is linked with increment, employment and bears minimum eligibility for a government job in states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh. We have conducted tests for 12 lakhs

such government employees, our main aim is digital literacy. The course which we are running is a well-known one, a number of foreign countries like Japan, Taiwan and Singapore have accredited our courses too. Last month we signed a MOU with All India Council of Technical Education where we aligned our courses with theirs. We are providing training for the places where we feel that it will be difficult for a student to opt for a regular course. We have recently started conducting recruitment exams too like commercial pilot for Civil Aviation Department.

**Considering that digital literacy is one of your primary focuses, have you taken any steps to enhance or strengthen e-security?**

Yes, definitely. Our Gorakh-

pur centre is very famous for e-security and cyber crimes, they have been conducting a lot of courses related to the cyber space there, we are trying to carry forward these courses to other centres also. We have already developed our course content in 22 different Indian languages for CCC course which is an 80 hours course and the same has been uploaded on the website of NIEIT which is available free of cost for anyone. Looking at the recent trend and demands, we have also started a new course on multimedia and we have started an e-governance course both of which are one year PG diploma programmes.

**Can you tell us about your IT Literacy programme?**

We have received three major projects from the IT department of Government of India and from the Panchayati Raj Department where we have to train almost a lakh Panchayati Raj officials, we have been taking it up further. Besides this we have received one project from the DEIT for training of the women entrepreneurs who are operating in Common Service Centres (CSC) in the remote areas, we have also created a PMU for taking other challenges in the field of digital literacy.

**We were initially conducting various formal and non-formal courses which were more knowledge based but now we've started considering the component of skill-development quite important because I feel without skill-development it is very difficult to get placements anywhere these days**