

Newspaper Clips

July 16, 2013

HT Kolkata

IIT-Kharagpur's faculty and alumni to sit on hunger strike

GATHERING STORM They will go on a stir on July 17 to protest against absence of a full-time director

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KOLKATA: In an unprecedented show of solidarity, IIT-Kharagpur students, faculty and alumni are launching a nationwide protest against the absence of a full-time director for the past one year. They will go on a hunger strike on July 17. Students would wear black in protest. The alumni of the institute are organising simultaneous protests in Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata on July 20 at India Gate, Freedom Park and Park Street respectively.

The protests centre on the inordinate delay in confirming Prof. Partha Pratim Chakrabarti as the next director. On July 2012, MHRD constituted search-cum-selection committee, which selected Chakrabarti to be IIT-Kharagpur's director. The appointment is pending Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) clearance. IIT-Kharagpur's board of governors has cleared Chakrabarti once in March 2012 and again in March 2013 of any wrongdoing.

CVC is still holding on to the clearance due to unknown reasons, even though rules specify cases must be resolved within two months of filing a defence statement (CVC Guideline No. 000/VGL/18, dated 23rd May 2000).

Arjun Malhotra (1970 batch), the co-founder of HCL and Headstrong Inc, is chairing the alumni protest. "We are disappointed at the excessive delay in appointing Prof. Chakrabarti as the next director. We have tried everything, knocked every door, filed RTIs but to no avail," he said.

Since July 1, 2012, the last working day of Prof. Damodar Acharya,

ACTION PLAN

- On July 17 and 18, students will wear black in protest
- The alumni of the institute are organising simultaneous protests in Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata on July 20 at India Gate, Freedom Park and Park Street respectively
- They are also planning to meet the President if nothing works out by the end of this month

the outgoing director IIT-KGP does not have a permanent director. The position of deputy director too is lying vacant. Officiating director SK Som is heading the IIT. "The institute has been suffering since the officiating director cannot take several decisions. No progress has been made for upgrading the institute as per the Vision 2020 document unveiled last year. It is a huge frustration for us. If we do not get a clear picture by the end of this month we would be meeting the President of India," Malhotra added.

One of the notable projects suffering is the setting up of the medical school, for which the Centre has sanctioned ₹250 crore.

In a general body meeting of the IIT Teachers Association held on July 11, 2013, a resolution was passed calling for a hunger strike on July 17 and a silent procession during the convocation on July 27 where Pallam Raju, the cabinet minister in charge of HRD is expected to attend.

"All faculty members will participate in the hunger strike, on July 17 which is the last day of the summer vacation. Hence no academic day will be lost. It is a pain

to see how the government is playing with the future of an institution of national importance. This is a matter of prestige for us now," said Rajendra Singh, general secretary of IIT-KGP teachers association and professor of agricultural and food engineering.

As a mark of solidarity over 25 alumni from all over the country would reach IIT-KGP on July 17 and participate in the hunger strike. PPC for Director; a grass roots alumni movement that is closely working with faculty members and students, is focused on clearing Chakrabarti's name and appointing him as the next Director of IIT Kharagpur on or before July 29.

"An institution like IIT cannot run without a director for over a year. The brand is taking a beating and are not getting the best students. We may get all the IITs together and plan to go to the President if nothing works out," said Rammath Mani, president, Pan IIT India Chapter and chairman of Emerson Electric.

Chakrabarti is an exceptional scholar and a President Gold Medallist of IIT Kharagpur in 1985. "He is an inspiring teacher loved and respected by an entire generation of IIT Kharagpur students and researchers, outstanding researcher and one of the youngest winners of the SS Bhatnagar award. He has also published papers in internationally acclaimed journals, which are also widely cited, and an able administrator, who worked as dean of sponsored research and industrial consultancy, IIT Kharagpur from 2004 to 2012. We want him to be our director," said a student of IIT-KGP.

Filter for village schools



• Schoolchildren pose with the Kharagpur filter.

HT PHOTO

Vanita Srivastava

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NEW DELHI: A team of researchers of IIT Kharagpur have devised a filter called 'Kharagpur filter' for providing clean water to children of village schools, where students mostly rely on well water for drinking.

"This filter is economical in design and requires no maintenance. It does not need any electricity," says Dr Jayanta Bhattacharya, the lead researcher.

The idea of having such a filter for the villages was mooted four years ago, after seeing flood in West Midnapore where people,

particularly children, could be seen standing on water, yet not being able to drink. After several tests this model was devised. The filter is being initially tried in 3 villages where children used to drink water from wells. The filtered water in these schools is also used for cooking midday meals. After testing for a month the filter will be tried in slum areas.

The micro level tests on the filtered water has shown that the bacterial level reduces by nearly 50% and the dissolved oxygen level is improved by 30-50%," Dr Bhattacharya said.

"One major way this filter differs from the domestic water filter is that while in the latter

there is a continuous water column, in this we have broken the column so that water mixes with air and oxygen gets enhanced. This reduces the pathogenic microbes."

Dr Bhattacharya said he was open to partnering with an agency to market the product. "But more than commercialisation, I would like that it is used in more places where there is no continuous flow of water."

"The children of our schools drink water from the well which is unhygienic. The filter has been very helpful to us. We would find this very useful on a long term basis," says Rakhi Biswas of a primary school.

HT Kolkata

IIT-Guwahati to host techno management fest

IIT-Guwahati is all set to organise the 15th chapter of its annual techno-management festival

Techniche 2013. Techniche, scheduled to be held from August 29 to September 1, hosts lectures, workshops, social works and most importantly competitions. Held in collaboration with the Entrepreneurial Development Cell of IIT-G, the corporate module of Techniche will be organizing

various management events. A few events are listed below. For more details, contact +91 8876406180 or +91 8011241189. Mail your queries to management@techniche.org



Indian Express ND 16-Jul-13 P-2

Varsities eye EU rankings to improve standing

ANUBHUTI VISHNOI
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

THEY may have fared poorly in most global higher education rankings, but Indian universities are determined to prove their standing - in a new ranking platform funded by the European Commission.

And since U-Multirank claims to capture "diversity of institutional profiles" through its "multi-dimensional indicators" better than established rankings such as Quacquarelli Symonds, Times Higher Edu-

cation Rankings and Shanghai Rankings, it holds the promise of giving Indian universities a more respectable standing than they have so far managed, and, thus, help them gain global acclaim.

India's University Grants Commission, the higher education regulator, and indeed the government have often blamed unfriendly ranking parameters for India's dismal show in academic rankings.

The UGC, which has been pushing for a new ranking system since 2010, has written to

all universities to actively participate in U-Multirank in the hope that this ranking platform would help showcase Indian higher education globally - at a time when it is faced with quality deficit, faculty crunch and employability issues.

The European Union had proposed that Indian institutes take part in U-Multirank at a meeting of the India-EU Policy Dialogue on Education and Multilingualism in April. The first rankings for 500 institutions from Europe and elsewhere will be published in

early 2014.

But how is the new ranking platform different? "Existing rankings have created an arms race to become a 'world class university', which means world class in research performance. This is a threat to the diversity of higher education and it devalues other institutional profiles. If a ranking includes a wider range of profiles it has to assure that it provides meaningful comparisons. It does not make much sense to compare a small regional undergraduate teach-

ing institution with Oxford University or to compare an arts school with MIT. Based on a number of profile indicators, U-Multirank will compare institutions with similar profiles," the U-Multirank website explains.

The ranking platform is run by a consortium of partners from nine countries led by the CHE Centre for Higher Education in Gütersloh, Germany, and the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies at the University of Twente, the Netherlands.

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2 national varsities to come up in Rae Bareilly

The cabinet has given a go ahead for one university exclusively for women and the other for aviation industry



RAHUL SIDDHU

Two Central Universities, one exclusively for women and another for aviation, are to come up at Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh. The Union Cabinet gave the approval for setting up the Indira Gandhi National University for Women (IGNUW) and the Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University. Information and Broadcasting Minister Manish Tewari said that the IGNUW will get Rs.500 crore funding during the 12th plan.

A skilled and competent workforce is essential to create a safe and efficient aviation industry. Despite existence of a large number of private insti-

tutions in India that provide aviation education and training, there is general consensus amongst stakeholders that the number of programmes offered, depth of course content and infrastructure facilities available with them are not sufficient to meet the industry requirements. It is, therefore, necessary to establish National Aviation University to cater to the growing educational and training requirements of the civil aviation sector.

The National Aviation University aims to facilitate and promote aviation studies, teaching, training and research with fo-

cus on emerging areas of studies such as aviation management, aviation regulation and policy, aviation history, aviation science and engineering, aviation law, aviation safety and security, aviation medicine, search and rescue, transportation of dangerous goods, environmental studies and other related fields, and also to achieve excellence in these and connected fields in

emerging areas and such areas as may emerge in future. The University will also be a knowledge partner to safety and security regulators by providing required academic inputs to help them execute their enforcement responsibility better.

The Cabinet also approved the proposal to introduce the Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University Bill, 2013 in the Parliament; to create a post of Vice Chancellor by selection through a Search and Selection Committee headed by Cabinet Secretary

with members representing Ministries of Civil Aviation, Personnel & Training and Human Resource Development and for creation of a temporary post in the grade of Joint Secretary to Government of India for the position of Project Director which would be

filled up on deputation basis.

The 'Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University' will be established as a Central University and as an autonomous body under the administrative control of Ministry of Civil Aviation in Rae Bareilly with an estimated Central Govern-

ment's funding of Rs. 202 crore in Phase-I (2013-14 to 2018-19) on the land available with Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udan Academy (IGRUA), a society set up as an autonomous body under Ministry of Civil Aviation in Rae Bareilly. About 26.35 acres of land available with IGRUA has been identified for setting up of NAU in its first phase.

For Indi-

ra Gandhi National University for Women at Rae Bareilly, a bill will be introduced in the coming Monsoon Session of Parliament. After the passage of the Bill, steps will be taken to set up the University. The cost involved is Rs.500 crore during the 12th Plan period. This would set the pace for all round growth and development

of women in the country and supplement the efforts of the government for women's empowerment by giving them an increased access to employment oriented basic courses and high end research. Of the total population of the country at 121 crore, there are 58.6 crore women of which 9.5 crore are in Uttar Pradesh.

EducationTimes



Centres of excellence

Most of the states in the northern part of India are gradually but steadily becoming centres of quality education

SANJAY GUPTA

The North Indian states like Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, have established themselves as centres of excellence in the world of education. The universities and institutions based in these states are busy creating a pool of knowledge-based human capital, bringing in economic prosperity in the country.

After independence India has witnessed a sea change in its education system, starting from elementary to secondary to higher and even adult education. Though, vocational and technical education were not that prominent in the country in the beginning, today India has one of the largest education sectors in the world even in these areas.

These states have changed the education scenario, especially after the economic liberalization of the 1990s. Centres of excellence in the field of education are evolving in these states and, to an extent, today higher education aspirants of four-year professional degree courses have started seeking admissions in colleges based in North India. Earlier this group of knowledge seekers, numbering thousands, every year used to head for colleges and universities based in the states of South and West India like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Only a few students used to get admissions in IIMs and IITs. Indian Civil Services aspirants flocked to Delhi, which was and is the home of institutions known for their best teaching methodologies.

Says Sarvesh, Associate Professor, based in Uttarakhand, "Even in hilly areas, the colleges are offering many curriculum and options related to higher education, which will lead to creation of a workforce capable of laying a foundation of modern India." Out of total 570 universities (central, state, deemed, private, technical, agriculture, IGNOU regional centres, IIT and IIM) 194 are now in these states. These states are home to more than 60 medical colleges and more than 1000 colleges for general studies. In addition to these there are hundreds of IITs, polytechnics and premier institutes like IIMs, IITs, NITs and others. The list is indeed exhaustive. Not only in studies, some of these institutes like Manav Rachna International University, are doing well in the area of sports also. Olympic medallists Gagan Narang and Vijay Kumar are students of Manav Rachna and have done the country proud. The university also has to its credit 25 filed patents, 2500 published research papers in international and national journals.

Also franchisee schools, under-graduate, post-graduate and engineering colleges, B.Ed., M.Ed., MBA, BBA, BCA, MCA, B.Com., fine arts, textile technology, aviation and furthermore, each probable branch of engineering right up to nanotechnology, besides routine courses of mechanical, information technology, computer sciences, environmental studies, et.al., up to research level covering innumerable educational streams, are driving the education sector in North Indian states.

Haryana has become the first state in the coun-

try to have set up a medical college for women in government sector at Khanpur Kalan. The general notion vis-a-vis education is to combine general education and specialisation. Professor Ashwani K. Bansal, Dean of Delhi University's Faculty of Law says, "Education in Indian Constitution is on the concurrent list, which makes it both a central and a state subject. Aim of education providers and seekers shall be more towards service based and knowledge-driven human capital. More and more international solicitors firms and multi-national law firms are hiring intellectual young minds for their operations in India."

Good quality education helps in achieving labour productivity and GDP of the country. Since, North India has attained the high degree of education many hubs followed by spooks are visible. According to Anil P. Gupta, former president as well Country Head, Honeywell, and former president, Reliance Infrastructure, "BPOs have also grown and helped in turning the economy of the country. And it entirely has happened because of quality education, thus not only creating economic wealth but also propelling economic growth and putting the spotlight on human capital as a knowledge driven and service based economy, especially in emerging scenario of North India education."

Cornell of the USA is on the verge of establishing its centre for imparting on-line hotel management course in Delhi. The Delhi government has decided to grant the Netaji Subhas Institute of Technology, based in Dwarka, the status of a university now. This institute offers six under-graduate programmes in emerging technologies and three post-graduate programmes. The cabinet has given in-principle approval and a draft bill and operations details are being finalized.

"Due to reasonable quality options available, the exodus of students from North India to South India has nearly stopped. The traditional courses like B.A., B.Sc. and others are still in great demand. But high marks achieved by students of various school education boards conducted examinations will leave many students, who have not scored good percentage, sweating, especially, when they start applying for admission to various government-aided institu-

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