

Newspaper Clips July 16, 2014

IIT-style excellence should define Indian technical education



A file photo of Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. (PTI photo)

<http://www.niticentral.com/2014/07/16/iit-style-excellence-should-define-indian-technical-education-233322.html>

The easiest thing I can do in my life is to find a job with a 10 lakh plus CTC! This is what any Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) alumni roams around wearing and this attitude of theirs has certainly kept them success hungry, forcing the recruiters to camp in their campuses. Being a part of nation's start-up community, I too was invited to participate in an event organised by NASSCOM under their unique initiative called 10,000 start-ups, astonishingly, though it was an event meant for aspiring entrepreneurs, the vicinity was looking very young and enthusiastic, just like an under22 cricket team's dressing room. I happened to shake hands with a few of the participants and was not surprised to hear, final year IIT Kharagpur, 3rd year IIT Bombay, just out of IIT Madras sort of introductions. As on date, we proudly have 16 IIT's nationwide which can produce not more than 9,985 engineering geniuses across different verticals annually, five more are lined up to add on to the list. The spirit and confidence, found in them cannot be easily found in most of non-IIT students and this is the barrier which has to be broken.

But, for what and how?

No complex against the IIT's or with its alumni's but the reason behind my argument is quite simple, IIT's are the best technology institutes and are producing quality Indian ambassadors year on year; this is nothing but a proven fact. Sighting this reason alone, it's impossible and not correct for the Government to setup an IIT in

each district of the nation. But it's also more about those million odd aspiring engineers who get admitted with nearly 3,300 technical institutes across the country annually, just for not cracking the JEE or for a reason, is it justice for them not to get a top quality graduation? There's a 100 per cent campus placement guarantee for an IITan and a 99.9 per cent guarantee for a NIT an, but what about the rest? A few reports published on this issue have stated that nearly a generation of engineers are unemployed and about half a million plus frustrated engineers have taken jobs for which they are overqualified and, therefore, underpaid. These engineers are the ones who hail from the non-IIT's, non-NIT's and the non-top 50 institutes of India. All the 16 IIT's are placed among top 50 technical institutes of the nation. Only three Indian institutes have managed to find a place in the list of 'Top 300 institutes of the world' and all three are obviously the IIT's. So, where are the others! Present scenario proves that the IIT's are the master institutes who don't have an academic competition from outside, if this is continued they'll certainly manage to retain the numero-uno brand but the fate of lakhs of other students will be at stake. This is where the Government has to poke in and deal with, if creating more IIT's is hard then at least regulating the existing private and Government managed institutes to perform up to standards is the only valid choice.

JEE manages to get the best of the best Indian talent into the IIT's where only two per cent of the applicants get admitted, agreed, but do this make others that uncompetitive, certainly not, the difference also lies in the careless attitude of most of the other institutes. Regulations should be mandated in such a way that every faculty on board of an institution should carry a strong industry experience, most of them who teach today are paper tigers who broadcast good academic background but fail to present the actual value in practice, who are practically outdated. Disastrously most of the industry rejects get into teaching! What could they offer is best answered by those students who are underemployed and unemployed. It's high time that all the poor performing institutes are directed to consider their college environment as not just a campus but an ecosystem which could offer its students a concrete network, industry exposure, a true research which is not just meant to get marks but enlighten with some real stuff, ignition to innovation and much more.

An ambition and the confidence level of a student can be boosted by this, if the college ecosystem is evolving, the thought process of a student is also evolved; the IIT again has a distinction in this. We hear private managements who edge reasons of Government spending hundreds of crores on IIT's and NIIT's on their infrastructure and stuff. We'll, a valid reason to point a difference but they have failed to learn that the present day Indian corporates are so social minded that they have set aside a fund which collectively adds up to many times more than what the Government parks for technology, one should have the will to reach, present and get that to improvise. For building top laboratories, a will is more essential, money comes second. It's also a prime time for the Government to consider a national level policy for technical education.

“To be the fountainhead of new ideas and innovations in science and technology and continue to be a source of pride for all Indians”, the slogan of IIT-Roorkee. Let this be the source of inspiration to all “just another engineering institutions” across India. Its time you inspire from an IIT and aspire to become one.

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IIT-K INTRODUCES FOUR-TIER ANTI-RAGGING SYSTEM

Hindustan Times (Lucknow)

KANPUR: The Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) has introduced a four-tier system to check ragging menace on the campus.



Under the plan, the students and their parents would have to submit an undertaking against ragging. The institute will have about 870 new admissions to the B Tech course. The new session would begin from July 27.

Dean, students, Dr AR Harish said though he was confident that senior students would not indulge in ragging, as precautionary measures stern initiatives were being taken to avoid the least possibility of ragging on the campus.

Under the four-tier system, an institute-level anti-ragging committee and anti-ragging squads at institute level and hostel level have been constituted.

Besides, senior students have been appointed as guardians of 10-20 new students who would ensure protection to the students at the hostels and also in the classrooms. The senior student guardians would also see that the new students were not humiliated or put to embarrassing situation by senior students while on their way to classroom or to hostel. Dr Harish said that counselling committees would comprise of senior students and professors, it would guide seniors and new students in their behaviour. Besides, the posters and notices would be placed at the conspicuous places informing the students about the severe punishment they could get if found involved in ragging cases.

Dr Harish said parents have also been asked to participate in the students' orientation programme slated from July 17 to July 22. Students would be asked to submit an undertaking that they have never been found or charged for their involvement in ragging of any kind in the past nor would they resort to ragging.

Hospital, IIT to work on low-cost helmet

TNN | Jul 16, 2014, 12.34 AM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/City/Bhubaneswar/Hospital-IIT-to-work-on-low-cost-helmet/articleshow/38441778.cms>

BHUBANESWAR: City-based AIIMS and IIT are jointly working on a 'low cost high quality' helmet for motorcycle riders.

It would be light weight and with adequate air passage to make it popular among riders, who generally have tendency to avoid heavy headgears, AIIMS faculty in-charge of research cell Dilip Kumar Parida told TOI on Tuesday.

Parida said AIIMS and IIT authorities have already held preliminary meetings and agreed in principle to go ahead with the project. The mechanical engineering department of IIT and a team of neurosurgeons led by AIIMS director A K Mahapatra would undertake research for the proposed headgear. IIT dean Sujit Roy confirmed the collaboration. "Talks are on with AIIMS for such a project," Roy said.

Carbon fibre would be used to develop the high-tensile helmet. Some of the key factors the researchers would keep in mind would be to ensure that the helmet's point of contact with the head should be such that there is less sweating and enough air passage for comfort, Parida said.

He said though wearing helmets would significantly reduce number of road accident deaths, still helmet is not very popular among motorcycle riders. The reasons may be its costs, comfort and mindset. "The new research would keep in mind these shortcomings to make helmet wearing more popular. However, there will be no compromise on quality," Parida said.

IITs working on new cement blend to cut down carbon footprint

TNN | Jul 16, 2014, 02.29 AM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/IITs-working-on-new-cement-blend-to-cut-down-carbon-footprint/articleshow/38447040.cms>

CHENNAI: In an effort to reduce the carbon footprint of cement by 40%, three Indian Institutes of Technology are working on a new blend that will substitute up to half of the Portland cement normally used to make concrete. Researchers from IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay and IIT-Madras are collaborating in the project with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne and the Central University of Las Villas in Cuba.

The production of each tonne of cement releases more than 800kg equivalent of carbon dioxide. Substituting a fraction of the Portland cement used to make concrete with alternative material is a well-established way of cutting emissions. But existing alternative material that allows substituting a large fraction of cement is hard to find. Commonly used industrial waste products - slag from steel industry or fly ash from coal power plants - are not available in large enough quantities to meet the demand.

The new blend, a combination of calcined clay and ground limestone, is expected to replace half of the Portland cement. Using LC3 (Limestone Calcined Clay Cement) will mean lower carbon dioxide emission, lower cost because the substitution material is abundantly available, and lower capital because no change of equipment or additional training of construction workers is required. The researchers also expect it to be energy efficient as lesser energy will be required to manufacture and manage industrial waste as there is a possibility of using existing mining and other wastes. It will also extend the life of limestone reserves.

Manu Santhanam, professor of civil engineering at IIT-M, said, "We expect LC3 to score over flyash in early compressive strength properties. Most construction projects need to achieve strength early."

The first phase of the project is expected to be completed in three years. The researchers will also be working with Technology and Action for Rural Advancement (TARA), a social enterprise that works to create sustainable livelihoods by providing development solutions, in association with some cement companies. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation has granted more than 4 million Swiss Francs for developing and testing of LC3.

Applied globally, LC3 could help bring down future emissions by several notches, researchers feel, having a major impact on global climate change. "If we want to have a real impact on the sustainability of concrete - its cost, its availability, and its environmental footprint - we have to act before demand explodes in the emerging and developing world," said Soumen Maity of TARA.

Hindustan Times, ND 16/07/2014
Education Times P-10

Apply by October 1 for next edition of GATE

HT Education Correspondent

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The Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) will be held in January and February 2015. GATE is an all-India examination that primarily tests the comprehensive understanding of the candidate in various undergraduate subjects in engineering/technology/architecture and postgraduate level subjects in



science.

The GATE score of a candidate reflects a relative performance level in a particular subject in the exam across several years. The score is used for admissions to postgraduate programmes (eg, ME, MTech, direct PhD) in Indian institutes of higher education with financial assistance provided by the ministry of human resource development and other government agencies. The score may also be used by public and private sector undertakings for employment screening purposes.

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) at Bombay, Delhi, Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Madras and Roorkee) jointly administer the conduct of GATE. The organising institute is responsible for the end-to-end process and coordination amongst the administering institutes. The organising institute for GATE 2015 is IIT Kanpur. Examinations for all the 22 papers will be conducted by a computer-based test.

The deadline for submitting online applications is October 1, 2014. Visit <http://gate.iitk.ac.in/GATE2015/docs/ib.pdf> for details.

Financial Express, ND 16/07/2014 P-19

Govt urges UPSC to postpone Civil Services prelim exam

New Delhi, July 15: Amid demands by Civil Service aspirants for scrapping the CSAT test, government on Tuesday urged the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to postpone the preliminary exam scheduled next month till there is clarity on the syllabus and exam pattern.

"We are also urging upon the UPSC and the committee that was constituted to look into the matter that not only report be constituted at the earliest, considering the urgency of the matter and the concern of all sections of the society...they should also con-

sider postponing the date of the preliminary examination," Union minister Jitendra Singh told reporters outside Parliament.

The prelims entrance exam is scheduled to to be held on August 24.

ABVP activists had staged protests outside the UPSC office on Monday demanding scrapping of Civil Services Aptitude Tests (CSAT), saying such a pattern was putting Hindi language aspirants at a disadvantage.

Singh, who is also minister of state for department of personnel and training and Prime Minister's Office,

said, "Till the report about the final conclusions in the matter is out, these young guys and girls would not be able to make out the kind of preparation they have to do for the exam.

"Therefore, till there is a clarity over the syllabus and exam pattern they should be given sufficient time. It is quite legitimate on their part that we are suggesting to concerned authorities to consider postponement of the preliminary examination of IAS (UPSC) exams," he said.

A group of students also met Singh over the issue on Tuesday. PTI

HT.COM ND, 16.07.2014, P-6

INSTITUTES CANNOT OUTSOURCE COURSES

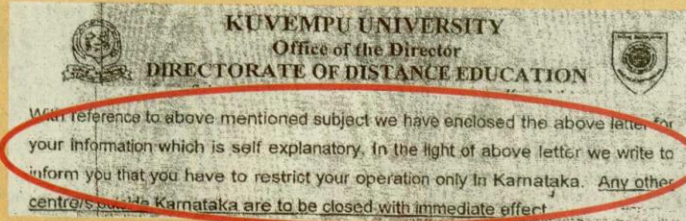
NOTE A Delhi college is barred from giving distance learning degrees

Jeevan Prakash Sharma

A fashion institute in Delhi has been barred from offering distance learning degree courses from a state university in Karnataka it is affiliated to.

This follows an HT Education report (on June 11, 2014) on state universities violating University Grants Commission (UGC) rules by giving affiliations to institutes outside their states and allowing them to offer distance learning programmes. Kuvempu, a state university based in Karnataka, has written a letter to the JD Institute of Fashion Technology, with a copy marked to UGC, on June 20, 2014, (just a week after HT Education highlighted the violation), which states, "We have the right to inform you that you have to restrict your operations only in Karnataka. Any other centre/s outside Karnataka are to be closed with immediate effect." A copy of the letter is with HT Education.

UGC had questioned Kuvempu about allowing an institute in Delhi to offer its courses following the HT Education report which had highlighted how private institutes in Delhi were offering distance



■ The letter issued by Kuvempu University, Karnataka, to the Delhi-based fashion institute

learning programmes. A UGC notification of June 27, 2013, had barred universities from offering courses outside their state.

After UGC's intervention, Kuvempu, wrote a letter to the Commission, saying it was not offering any course outside Karnataka to any private institute. Earlier, an official of the JD Institute of Fashion Technology, with centres all over the country, had, when questioned by HT Education, said it had the mandate to offer degree courses from Kuvempu University.

When contacted, M Venkateshawrulu, director, directorate of correspondence courses, Kuvempu University, said, "Any degree course offered by any institute, including the JD Institute of Fashion Technology, after June 27, 2013, is illegal as, according to the UGC notification of June 27, 2013, state universities (both private and government-funded) can offer programmes only within the state. We have issued a letter to JD Institute and asked them to not offer the courses outside Karnataka."

JD Institute, however, can offer its own certificate courses

A UGC source revealed that Kuvempu University had to issue the letter at the behest of UGC as the Commission was upset with the violation.

"Some students and their parents met UGC director (administration) Vikram Sahay, who was then director of Distance Education in the Commission and drew his attention to the malpractices in the distance learning programme with the newspaper report," said the source.

He adds, "Sahay said that he was aware of the issue and had already asked the university to respond. When the students, however, insisted that he expedite the matter, Sahay immediately called the M Venkateshawrulu and asked him to close down all its affiliations with institutes outside Karnataka," said the source.

However, the JD Institute of Fashion Technology refused to comment on the matter. A letter though was issued from Kuvempu which said that students were assured of the highest level of technical education at JD Institute of Fashion Technology.



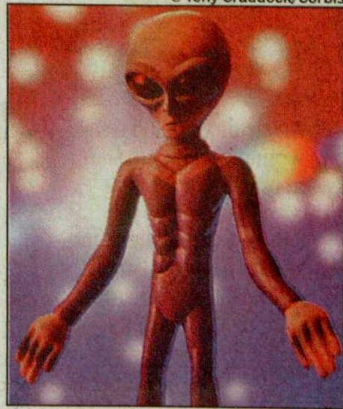
Times of India, ND 16/07/2014 P-21

Aliens will be found within 20 years: Nasa

Washington: Nasa expects to find the first traces of alien life within the next 20 years.

Experts from Nasa and its partner institutions have outlined a road-map to the search for life in the universe, an ongoing journey that involves a number of current and future telescopes.

“Just imagine the moment, when we find potential signatures of life. Imagine the world wakes up and the human race realizes that its loneliness in space may be over —



OUT-OF-THE-WORLD FRIENDS

the possibility we're no longer alone in the universe,” said Matt Mountain, director and Webb telescope scientist at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore. Mountain believes that moment is likely to be within the next 20 years, according to News.com.au.

“Sometime in the near future, people will be able to point to a star and say, ‘that star has a planet like Earth’,” said Sara Seager, professor of planetary science and physics at the Massachusetts Institute

of Technology. “Astronomers think it is very likely that every single star in our Milky Way galaxy has at least one planet,” said Seager.

The Nasa road-map will continue with the launch of the Transiting Exoplanet Surveying Satellite in 2017, the James Webb Space Telescope in 2018, and the proposed Wide Field Infrared Survey Telescope — Astrophysics Focused Telescope Assets (WFIRST-AFTA) early in the next decade. PTI