

Newspaper Clips

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IIT admissions: 92 seats vacant after round 6

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MUMBAI: After the last round of admissions, 92 seats in IITs across the country still remain unclaimed. This is after 293 seats were allotted in the sixth round of IIT admissions by the Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSAA) on July 19 and by July 20, the last day for students to confirm their admissions with the respective institutes. Only 201 had finished the process.

At the end of five rounds of admissions at the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) and National Institutes of Technology (NIT), 427 students have withdrawn admissions. JoSAA officials revealed that even though all the seats were allotted once again by the sixth round of admissions, there was no clarity on how many students would finally accept the seats. JoSAA officials told HT that most of the NIT seats which had no takers were due to the location of the institutes. "There is very little demand for the institutes in the Northeast. Similarly, in the case of the two seats at IITRoorkee, both fall under a quota and no student has qualified for the seat," said Dr K V Krishna, JoSAA chairperson.

"All seats from which students withdrew were allotted to new students in every round and the number of withdrawals are still increasing. In the fifth round alone, 243 students withdrew their admissions," said a JoSAA official.

JoSAA decided to conduct six rounds of admissions this year in order to ensure that all seats at IITs, NITs, Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) and other government funded technical institutes could be filled. By the end of sixth round of admissions, over 180 seats in NITs have no takers while 4,000 seats were allocated in the last round. Wednesday was the last date for students to confirm their admissions to these institutes.

"The final seat count will be released by the IITs over the next couple of weeks," said a senior JEE official.

CHURNING OUT ENTREPRENEURS

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EVENT IIT Kharagpur's annual global business model competition will identify, guide and fund viable startups

EACH OF THE ENTRIES GETS EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO WIN THE PRIZE AND INCUBATION MONEY TO THE TUNE OF RS 2.5 CR

If you have a business plan that is bound to deliver, then head for IIT Kharagpur this season. There is an attractive prize money for winners of IIT Kharagpur's Empresario, a competition for startups.

The institute is hosting Empresario, a competition, where the winners will not only bag Rs 25 lakh as startup fund but also get guidance to take it forward. This year, the entrepreneurship cell of IIT Kharagpur and IBM are presenting Empresario 2016 in association with the prestigious International Business Model Competition (IBMC), which is cohosted by Stanford, Harvard and Brigham Young universities.

The best entries in all categories will get an opportunity to participate directly in the semifinal rounds of IBMC 2016, which will be conducted abroad. (Visit www.ecelliitkgp.org/empresario for more details).

The shortlisted entries will be provided immense help in terms of mentorship and the winners also get a much sought after chance to pitch their ideas in front of some of India's biggest venture capitalists and investors.

Empresario participants are mentored and supported by organisations like global entrepreneurship organization TiE and National Entrepreneurship Network (NEN), among others. Startup services like legal advice, taxation, financial and technical help, coworking space, HR needs as well as incubation opportunities are provided.

"The entrepreneurship cell, IIT Kharagpur, is a student organisation established with the aim of fostering the spirit of entrepreneurship among college students in India. We are one of the most successful entrepreneurial organisations in the country with over 50 startups incubated within eight years of our inception. We are playing a vital role in developing the upcoming startups into successful companies by taking an initiative of conducting flagship competition namely Empresario, our annual and India's only global business model competition," said Shivam Kankani, associate member of the entrepreneurship cell of IIT KGP.

"It has been observed that startups with static business plans fail miserably since reality does not conform to assumptions. Hence, there is a need for a more dynamic methodology while starting up and this is why the entrepreneurship cell, IIT Kharagpur, sought to undertake a business model competition, which was entitled 'Empresario'," Kankani added.

Empresario accepts business ideas in all fields, which include product and service, product design and social aspects. Each of the entries gets equal opportunity to win the prize and incubation money to the tune of Rs 2.5 crore. Previously, Empresario has been launched in association with TiE, Kolkata, Mahindra Spark the Rise and Dell Social Innovation Challenge.

Empresario is about recognising that any new venture is just a guess at a problem or solution and the only way to test whether those guesses are correct is to "get outside the building" and validate the idea with customer feedback. A business model is designed to change rapidly to reflect what you find outside the building in talking to customers. It's more visual, dynamic and reflects the reality that startups face.

For the first round of Empresario, IIT will require participants to fill up a questionnaire asking in brief about their business idea. This questionnaire can be found on website www.ecelliitkgp.org/empresario. If participants register now, they can avail the early bird privileges, which include extended mentoring and offline mentoring session.

One of the winners of Empresario'14, BetaGlide also secured the largest funding among all startups present at the Rice Business Plan Competition. It was around \$1 million. Some of the past student startups that were winners of Empresario were: BetaGlide, a startup by students of IIT Kharagpur, which is a mobile app testing platform, allows developers to gather information in real time about the system usage and the behavior of their app to improve stability and performance. It has recently won the tech transfer prize (Mercury Fund Prize) at the Rice Business Plan Competition and became popular internationally. Roof for Two, a startup by a team from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which is a unique concept that can help solve the age old problem of twowheeler riders who ride daily through rain, sun and the cold. Roof for Two eliminates travel irritation with an affordable and stylish riding canopy. COEO Labs, an IIT Kharagpurbased startup focused on developing innovative and low cost medical technology products. The device Saans catapulted this group to winning Empresario, with Social Track of IIM, Ahmedabad, and there was no stopping them following that. After winning the Tata Social Enterprise Challenge and Master Plan, Social Track also went on to the finals of the IBMC.

"We conduct our flagship event Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES), the largest collegiate entrepreneurial summit in India every year in January. The final rounds of Empresario 2017 will be held during GES'17," Kankani said.

Soon, even you can manufacture khadi

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NEW DELHI: Soon, startups, entrepreneurs and small garment manufacturers would be able to produce khadi.

To promote khadi, especially among the youth, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is set to allow any manufacturer to produce clothes made of the traditional fabric. The ministry of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) and KVIC are likely to come up with guidelines soon.

At present, manufacturers producing Khadi apparels need to be certified by the KVIC.

Those wishing to venture into khadi production can get an online khadi certificate or mark.

"How can somebody decide who should produce khadi and who should not...the new policy will boost the use of khadi and increase demand," Arun Kumar Jha, CEO, KVIC, told HT.

Khadi has been a symbol of the Indian spirit and its independence. Last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Mann ki Baat, urged every Indian to buy at least one Khadi outfit.

Besides, to increase khadi's popularity among the masses, there will be more varieties in home items, including bed spreads and pillow covers.



■ A Khadi Gramodyog Bhawan in Bhopal HT FILE

There is currently an urgent need to increase the production of khadi, Jha said. Besides, the KVIC is also focussing on improving designs while bringing out khadi in wool, linen, silk and muslin. A massive marketing drive is also being planned to boost the sale of the fabric ahead of the Independence Day. The KVIC has also given a go-ahead to ready-made apparel brands, such as Fabindia and Raymond, to sell clothes made of khadi.

Recently, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay hit the headlines after placing an order for 3,500 convocation robes made of khadi. "After Gujarat University, now khadi has also made a niche in the hearts of authorities of the premier IIT Bombay," the MSME ministry said in a statement.

Australia defends visa denial to IIT student

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

NEW DELHI: A day after the Australian Foreign Ministry cited proliferation concerns while rejecting an Indian engineer's visa application to study in Australia, the country said that the "specific" case should not be used to examine its support to India's outreach for hi-tech.

Defending its decision to keep the student out of Australia, the High Commission of Australia said, "It should be noted...Australia strongly supports India's application to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and India's admission to other export control regimes. We are strong supporters of India's peaceful use of nuclear energy..."

The High Commission's statement came after the Department of Immigration and Border Protection rejected the application of a student of IIT-Kanpur Ananth S.M. saying that his planned research in high tech ("fluid dynamics") was

against the foreign policy objectives of Australia.

In the rejection letter sent to the student, the Department of Immigration and Border Control of Australia said, "As you were determined by the Foreign Minister (or a person authorised by the Foreign Minister) to be a person whose presence in Australia may be directly or indirectly associated with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, this means that you have failed to meet PIC 4003(b). The Migration Act 1958 requires that your application be refused if the Minister (or a delegate) is not satisfied that you meet all of the criteria for the visa."

'Preposterous decision'

Mr. Ananth told *The Hindu* that the decision to deny him a visa citing proliferation concerns is "preposterous". "My research was meant to be a purely academic exercise without any other implications," Mr. Ananth said.

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IIMs looking at measures to avoid deferred job offers

IIM-B pushes placement dates for certainty of recruitment

NAVADHA PANDEY

New Delhi, July 20

The recent controversy of Flipkart deferring the joining dates of a few IIM-Ahmedabad graduates has pushed IIMs into considering measures to protect students' interests.

"IIM Bangalore has moved placement dates to March later than other IIMs and also have requested corporates to shift the joining dates earlier. Those with risky pre-placement offers will be given an opportunity to sit for interviews with other firms in March," Ganesh Prabhu, Chairperson, Career Development Services, IIM Bangalore, told *BusinessLine*.

The later the companies recruit, the greater will be their certainty of requirement, so delayed joining is less likely, Prabhu added.

IIM Ahmedabad, however, refused to comment.

A spokesperson from IIM Calcutta said, "The institution is actively discussing measures to avoid such situations altogether. Punitive steps against the firm in retrospect do not help the affected students at all. We are exploring

all options as of now, with the single aim of protecting student interest."

On whether blacklisting companies was being considered, Prabhu said: "No. We will not consider it. IIM-B students will not apply if they are not interested in such companies."

When asked whether there was an increase in instances of offers being revoked or delayed by e-commerce start-ups, IIM Calcutta said: "One placement season may be too little time to pin-point a trend, at this stage. However, with the

instances reported this year, it is definitely something to watch out for and guard against from the institution's perspective."

Even Harvard University does not get 100 per cent placement, an IIM faculty member said,

adding that deferred joining is nothing new.

"Maybe the company is not ready to make that many offers or does so to make sure competition does not get talent. But, at the institution level, any proactive reaction will be well thought out as it has long-term implications. Companies that IIMs call for placements are a function of what students want so banning does not really work. The important thing is institutional relationship has to be at the heart of it."

"We will not consider it (blacklisting firms). IIM-B students will not apply if they are not interested in such companies," said Ganesh Prabhu of IIM-B