

Newspaper Clips

July 30, 2013

Pioneer ND 30.07.2013 P-5

IIT-Delhi to study crashes on Jaipur-Gurgaon highway

JAYA SHROFF BHALLA ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has instituted a team of engineers from the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi to study the serious road crashes on the 200-km Jaipur-Gurgaon highway, which saw close to 3,000 road accidents in 2011.

On Monday, MoRTH Minister Oscar Fernandes flagged off a crash investigation vehicle, deployed by the National Automotive Testing research and Development Infrastructure Project (NATRIP), for scientific investigation of serious road accidents on this stretch by a team headed by IIT Professor Anoop Chawla.

"The idea was first conceived under a project sanctioned by Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises in association with NATRIP. The data that we finally get from study will be further used for enhancing mechanical safety of vehicles, improving road geometry and designing driving training courses," said Fernandes, who also launched the pilot project for cashless treatment of accident

THIS STUDY WILL ALSO HELP ESTIMATE THE COLLISION SEQUENCES, ESTABLISH PARAMETERS THAT BEST FIT THE DAMAGED VEHICLES, DATA FOUND AT THE SCENE AS WELL AS RECORD WITNESS STATEMENTS AND DEPOSITIONS

victims on the stretch, where victims will receive a maximum amount of Rs 30,000 for free treatment.

"It is extremely essential to establish a safe environment system to reduce road crashes. Before that, it is essential to track and study the vehicle crashes happening on the road," said Vijay Chhibber, secretary, MoRTH.

"By doing crash reconstruction and an up-close study, these IIT engineers will try and analyze the causes of accident occurrence, and the mechanism of vehicle damage as well as human injury. This will help them propose safer designs to vehicle manufacturers, improve safety

devices on vehicles, and also give us ideas to improve road conditions," he said.

According to officials, this study will also help estimate the collision sequences, establish parameters that best fit the damaged vehicles, data found at the scene as well as record witness statements and depositions. "The crash data collection and reconstruction by the IIT engineers will be used to improve vehicle crashworthiness and improve safety of road users," said another senior official from MoRTH.

The Minister also launched a toll-free number 1033 to report accidents across the country. Further, he announced the setting up of a 24X7 call centre to receive information about accidents and deploy the nearest ambulance by tracking through GPS device. "The development of the National Ambulance Code and cashless treatment of road accident victims would make a major impact on the road safety scenario of the country," said Fernandes.

He expressed concern over the high incidence of road accidents and resultant fatalities on the stretch.

Times of India ND 30.07.2013 P-8

Yes JEE, School Matters

Despite teething troubles, the new engineering admission process represents much-needed reforms

Ashok Thakur



The JEE 2013 results have occasioned many stories about students suffering as a result of the new entrance system. But we should not lose sight of the big picture and why it was important to reform the old admission process.

First, let's remember what the previous system meant for students and parents. At a personal level, my first realisation of the devaluation of school education came more than a decade ago when my son asked me if he could stop attending school classes and instead concentrate on coaching classes for the IIT-JEE exam.

The situation since then has only worsened. In many states it is a common practice for parents to wean their children from schools as early as in class VII to put them onto the coaching assembly line. Seamless tie-ups between coaching outfits and schools tackle mundane issues like attendance. All this appears worthwhile because entry into IITs is seen as a fortune-turner for the family, a dream helped along by flashy headlines about pay packets offered to graduates. But this middle-class dream comes at a huge cost to students and society at large.

Traditionally, most of the boys and girls who crack JEE lack adaptability and depth of knowledge. Many of them may not have seen a lab, nor attended

any humanities or language classes or participated in sports. Further, with expensive coaching classes becoming almost a necessity, the decks get really loaded against those who can't afford such classes - like those from rural areas and girls (who are often not considered worth the extra expense of coaching classes). A recent Assocham survey points out that a majority of middle-class parents have been spending one-third of their monthly income on private tuitions and coaching classes! Further, the size of India's private coaching industry is likely to touch Rs 2.39 lakh crore annually by 2015, which is more than

Already the percentage of rural candidates among the top 10,000 in JEE Main has risen from 15.79% to 19.02%, and the percentage of girl students from 12.28% to 17.09%

double the Plan allocation for higher education for the whole of the 12th five-year Plan!!

Alarm bells about the ineffectiveness of the previous admission system were first raised by the IITs themselves. IIT Madras, for example, underlined a poor connect between the performance of students in the IITs and their rank in the JEE, as compared to a positive correlation with the performance of students in the school boards.



The big picture - schools are central to the learning process

Not really a case of "Don't fix it if it ain't broke."

Secondly, there was the nightmare of students having to appear in up to a dozen different tests for admission to various engineering colleges. For institutions perpetuating such a system, profits rolled in, in the form of fees for tests etc. With each institution having its own test and there being no transparent way of choosing an institution or taking admission, cases of overcharging of capitation fee and commercialising of education were on the increase.

The decision to reform the system was taken after extended consultations, involving more than five years of countless meetings with all the stakeholders including state governments, IITs, NITs, AICTE, UGC, deemed universities, CBSE, state boards, COBSE and the

Indian Statistical Institute. An online public opinion survey was also conducted, in which more than 70% participants supported the idea of a single test that gave weightage to class XII school board marks. Practically all the directors of IITs supported the idea. This culminated in the IITs deciding in their September 2011 council meeting to have a single test in engineering, giving weightage to school board marks. This was also endorsed 'in principle' by the state education ministers in February 2012.

The idea behind the new IIT entrance system was not to let the school education system be weakened and to adopt a student-centric approach. This included the vision of having a common exam for the entire country by 2015, which would also cover the IITs. We also need to work

towards an online admission testing system offering students a second chance to improve their scores (like SAT does), aligning the syllabi of JEE and school boards, moving towards aptitude testing rather than rote learning, etc.

Already the quick data from CBSE this year indicates some positive change. The percentage of rural candidates among the top 10,000 in JEE Main which was 15.97% and 15.79% in 2011 and 2012 respectively has increased to 19.02% in 2013. Similarly, the figures for girl students were 11.58% and 12.28% in the previous two years, but have increased to 17.09% this year.

One has to differentiate between teething troubles and the larger objectives of reforms. While the disturbed reaction of students who could not make it to the IITs due to the new top-20 percentile condition or to the NITs due to 40% weightage to school marks is understandable, it needs to be kept in mind that this was part of the design and applied to all uniformly. The situation of 40-odd students from a particular state was unfortunate and avoidable as it occurred due to a different calculation of percentile by the concerned state board; this was not the calculation approved by JEE.

Still, we need to keep the big picture in mind and ask ourselves what is better in the long run - for students, the educational system and the nation.

The writer is education secretary, Union ministry of human resource development.

C-DAC hits back at IIT Delhi

Monday, Jul 29, 2013, 23:55 IST | Agency: DNA

After its portal to coordinate admissions to IITs and NITs could not be utilised this year, the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) has accused the IIT Delhi of sabotaging its plan to alleviate the problem of vacant seats in these institutions.

The C-DAC was developing a common portal to host data of all rounds of seat allocation of IITs and NITs that would help prevent engineering aspirants from holding seats in both the institutions, simultaneously, at the time of admission.

The director of C-DAC has written to the chairman of the board of governors of IIT Delhi and the union HRD ministry protesting the statement made by IIT Delhi's HC Gupta who held C-DAC partially responsible for the plan falling through.

dna has reported earlier this month that the IITs had decided to drop the proposed exercise because of the C-DAC's delay in developing a fool-proof software. Professor Gupta, who is the organising chairman of JEE-Advance this year, had said that the software was not prepared with enough time to test it, which is one of the reasons why the proposal was dropped.

In a strongly worded letter sent to the chairman of the board of governors of IIT Delhi, C-DAC director Rajat Moona has held Gupta's non-cooperation responsible for the failure of the plan. In the letter, a copy of which is with *dna*, Moona said the organising chairman of JEE Advance was not forthcoming on giving any inputs to the common portal, both on its design and other feedback.

According to Moona, the common portal, being developed by C-DAC, was ready by July 2, which was almost a week before the deadline, but the software could not be tested because of Gupta's refusal to provide seat allotment data.

In his defence, Gupta said he was just following what had been decided by the Joint Admission Board of the IITs. "The JAB had said that the first round of the counselling for the NITs would only begin after the IIT's first round is over. How could I share any material before July 8 (when the first round was scheduled to get over)?" he said.

Intel selects IIT Delhi for 5G project worth Rs 16 crore

<http://www.indiancolleges.com/education-news/Intel-selects-IIT-Delhi-for-5G-project-worth-Rs-16-crore/4655>

Intel has chosen Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) as one of the universities to develop 5G or Fifth Generation Technology.

IIT Delhi was the only university from Asia that was chosen.

It's estimated that Intel is pumping around USD 3 million (approximately Rs 16.30 crore) into the project. Verizon is the industry partner for the venture.

As it takes around 10 years for each generation, chances are that you will only be able to use 5G on devices in around 2020.

What will 5G mean for you?

There's no fixed concept of what 5G actually but it will result in higher speeds with better coverage for you.

Battery life is expected to last longer than it does with 4G and a higher number of devices will be supported.

The other universities in the project include:

University of Southern California
 New York University
 Princeton
 Stanford
 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
 University of Texas at Austin
 University Fabra Pompeu
 Purdue University
 Cornell
 University of California at Los Angeles
 Rice University
 Macquarie University

IIT-Bombay to urge college students to kick the butt

Toi Mumbai

MUMBAI: To encourage youth to quit smoking, Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay's annual technical festival has launched a no-smoking campaign-'ISmoke-I support the movement to kill cancer'-in association with the Indian [Cancer](#) Society. The pan-India drive will visit 50 colleges in 12 cities and involve a signature campaign from January 3-5, 2014.

College students will be asked to write something about the drive. Two dummies will be used -a pink pair of lungs and the other a black cigarette, signifying that it is burnt. Sticky notes will be pasted on the cigarette. Students will have to peel it off, turn it over to the white side and sign on it. They will then be told to stick the note on the cigarette with the white side on display. Gradually, it will turn white as if unused, conveying that if cigarette is not burnt, lungs stay healthy.

"Smoking is like a chain reaction and it will get bigger and harmful if it is persistent. Fortunately, the same goes with an anti-smoking or quit [smoking](#) attitude, it is passed on to others and will spread if right measures are taken," said Divyam Bansal, techfest manager (media and marketing). A lecture will be delivered in each of the 50 colleges by a doctor on the harmful effects of smoking.

An [android](#) application is also developed to provide information on cancer hospitals of India, medication reminder and will have an "ask a query" feature, wherein the Indian Cancer Society will answer questions.

The campaign will also be popularized via 'Doodle'. Students will be photographed with a message and the picture will be circulated on social networking sites. "This will also have a great impact as nowadays social networking has become a must and such things can be made viral very quickly," said Bansal.

IIT B LAUNCHES ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGN

HT Correspondent

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MUMBAI: IIT Bombay's annual technical festival Techfest, patronised by UNESCO and UNICEF, has launched its campaign 'ISMOKE - I Support the movement to kill cancer' in association with ICS (Indian Cancer Society), with a vision to get youngsters to quit smoking. The campaign was inaugurated by Amrita Rao on Monday at IIT Bombay during the freshmen orientation.

According to the festival's organisers, the campaign will span the whole country covering around 50 colleges in 12 cities - Mumbai, Pune, Surat, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi, Jaipur, Nagpur, Indore and Nashik. It will involve a signature campaign and a 'doodle' project.

Times of India ND 30.07.2013 P-13

HRD ministry wants NET to be outsourced

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: The HRD ministry wants UGC's prestigious National Eligibility Test (NET) — in the news for wrong reasons ranging from mismanagement to asking sexist questions — for lecturer's job to be outsourced.

On Wednesday, the UGC would consider the ministry's proposal in its full commission meeting. Sources said, "The ministry wants a serious review of NET. Every year more and more complaints are coming. Moreover, there is a need to review the entire system and outsource the test to a professional body." The UGC has already constituted a two-member panel to carry out a comprehensive review of the NET, including formatting of examination and support system.

But what could turn acrimonious in the UGC meet-

The UGC has constituted a two-member panel to carry out a comprehensive review of the NET

ing is Delhi University's four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) and possibility of it being adopted by other universities from the next academic year. "FYUP is not only about DU. It's a big policy intervention and cannot be extended to other universities without proper discussion," one member said.

At least three UGC members told TOI they would ask as to why the Commission did not let members raise the issue in the last meeting but within a few days later appointed a panel to oversee FYUP in DU. What has irked one member is that despite his written request to con-

sider FYUP the minutes of Commission's meeting did not reflect it. The member had protested to UGC chairperson Ved Prakash, asking him as to why his request was not placed before the commission. "Is it appropriate?" he asked, adding that in case the UGC decided not to accede to the request should that not been made part of the minutes. He had also asked what purpose setting up of a committee by the UGC would serve.

Another member M M Ansari had also written a letter to Prakash stating that setting up of a committee "tantamounts to interfering in the internal functioning of the university." He had also said UGC's action of setting up a committee could be interpreted that in future the Commission without due deliberation can approve the launch of degree/diploma programmes of any duration.

Indian Express ND 30.07.2013 P-10

Canadian firm takes IIT to SC over Aakash deal

UTKARSH ANAND

NEW DELHI, JULY 29

THE battle between Datawind and IIT-Jodhpur over the Aakash tablet has reached the Supreme Court.

Datawind has alleged that the IIT “illegally” encashed the Rs 50 lakh bank guarantee as compensation for damages it suffered due to the Canadian firm’s failure to deliver the tablets on time, and pleaded with the court to appoint an arbitrator to resolve the dispute.

Justice S S Nijjar admitted Datawind’s petition and issued a notice to the IIT to re-

spond to it within four weeks.

The firm claimed in its petition that “no losses were sustained by the IIT and that the petitioner was not even paid its dues for supply of LCADS already supplied to them. Invocation of the bank guarantee was totally fraudulent and illegal. It was the respondent whose omission and actions delayed the entire project.”

The company also contended that it had sent a notice to the IIT in December to appoint a retired high court judge as an arbitrator, in accordance with their agreement of April 4, 2011, but the institute did not even care to respond.

Datawind asserted that since it was incorporated under British law, arbitration with the IIT would be international commercial arbitration and, thus, require the Chief Justice or his nominee to appoint a high court judge or a retired SC judge as an arbitrator.

The dispute dates back to April 2011 when the IIT placed a Rs 4,772 lakh order for 100,000 Low Cost Access-com-Computing Devices — better known as Aakash - with Datawind.

However, soon after the firm supplied the first 500 tablets, the IIT rejected them as defective - in the quality of sound, ability to hang and

swing them from charger port cable, loose flap and other such.

Datawind termed the rejection as arbitrary and claimed that the IIT’s role was limited to procuring the tablet and there was no input in terms of design, creation or manufacture of the tablet.

This triggered a conflict that not only forced the HRD ministry to intervene several times but ultimately led to the Aakash project being transferred to IIT-Bombay.

IIT Jodhpur and Datawind, meanwhile, are also slugging it out in a Jodhpur court over the institution’s civil suit for damages.

Times of India ND 30.-7.2013 P-8

Tharoor plays safe, lets VC face bouncers

Medha Roy Prakasam | TNN

New Delhi: Shashi Tharoor, minister of state for human resource development, attended the first Vidyarthi Panchayat held at Delhi University. Meant as a platform for students and parents to express their grievances and have them addressed by authorities, the meet threw up few questions that Tharoor could answer.

Re-emphasizing his position on the autonomy of universities by saying, "Details of how universities function should be left to the universities," he left most of the talking to the vice-chancellor of Delhi University, Dinesh Singh.

Apart from Tharoor, the university was represented by Singh, JMKhurana (dean, students' welfare) and the proctor, Satwanti Kapoor. Most queries, however, had to do with DU'S internal matters. A student from the law faculty wanted to know why some students were misinformed about the final practical exams. Singh said that students are often unaware of the rules of the university and guaranteed it would change soon. The 'panchayat', held at the conference centre in North Campus, was attended by about 300.

Another student, Saurabh, spoke about how the election campaigns are very "disap-



Shashi Tharoor with DU vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh

pointing" and have become more about contestants "throwing pamphlets out of their BMW's" and offering free

food to buy votes. Tharoor agreed this was an "outrageous way of campaigning." "When I campaigned, I had no

budget," he said.

Tharoor also refused to answer a question on students from the northeast being made to study Hindi, saying, "These questions are regarding university level policies" and "the ministry should not interfere in academic prerogatives." Singh, said that there is an additional course called Indian Literature which can be taken in place of Hindi and that it might have "passed her by".

In fact, Tharoor seemed to have little to say about most of the issues. After the end of the session he said, "This is not the right place for the ministry to poke its nose, but I am happy to hear your problems".

Indian Express ND 30.07.2013 P-2

Sky high cut-offs a problem for DU: Tharoor

MEETING STUDENTS | Says unidimensional selection process damaging spirit of colleges, but varsity can't change process

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 29

EXPRESSING concern over the sky-high cut-offs for admission to undergraduate courses in Delhi University, Minister of State for Human Resource Development Shashi Tharoor on Wednesday said "the prevalence of cut-offs" was one of the issues which afflicts the university.

Tharoor said this "unidimensional" selection process "is damaging the spirit" of colleges. "In my time, there was no such policy. In fact, most of the outstanding students had third division, but they were outstanding musicians, writers and sportspersons... All-round quality was what the college was looking for."

However, Tharoor also spoke about the helplessness of the university and the colleges in bringing about a change in the admission policy based on cut-offs.

"Personally, I am not a fan of cut-offs. But the courts have mandated this policy of cut-offs. Today, colleges have no flexibility on the matter. The hands of the colleges and the university are tied by the court ruling," he said.

Tharoor was addressing students of Delhi University in North Campus during an event organised by Delhi University's Students' Union and National Students' Union of India.

When asked about the need for opening more colleges, Tharoor said while the number of colleges have increased over the years, "every initiative was being taken" on the issue. There are 14 new universities for research and innovation, which will be established if the pending Education Bills are passed in the Parliament, he said on the sidelines of the event.

The event also saw the minis-

ter and DU Vice-Chancellor Dinesh Singh answering parents' and students' questions. A student of Campus Law Centre expressed displeasure at the manner in which electoral campaigns were carried out in the university — with "pamphlets being thrown from BMWs".

Talking about the time when he was the president of St Stephen's College students' union, Tharoor said, "When I contested an election for St. Stephen's College, we had no budget, we used to campaign from door to door..."

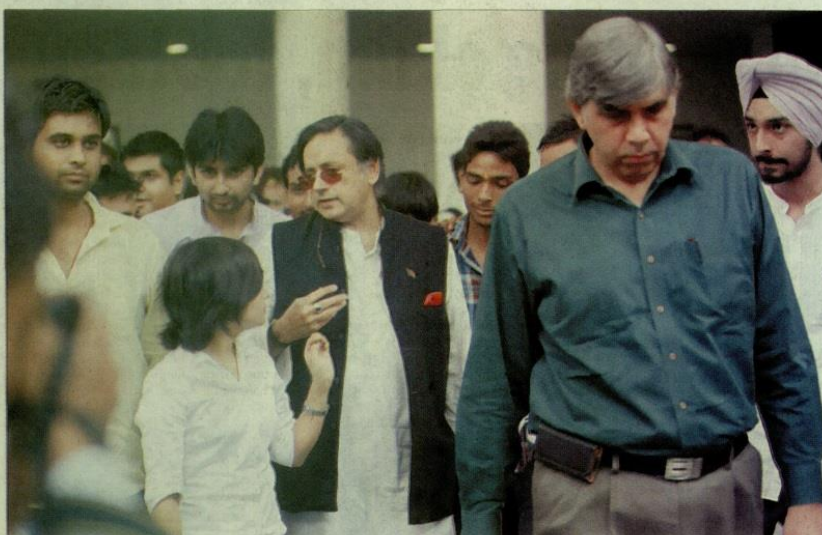
Adding that the instances of students throwing pamphlets from BMWs were outrageous, Tharoor said it also marked a violation of the Lyngdoh Committee guidelines.

Most queries at the event were directed at the university administration. The queries were regarding problems in seeking admission and examination-related issues.

According to a parent, his daughter, despite securing admission at DU's Central Institute of Education, might have to forgo her seat as her graduation results had not been declared. "There are at least 50 students from Delhi University, many from School of Open Learning, who are facing problems in getting a postgraduate seat in Delhi University because the university has not declared their admission result.

The last date for submitting the marksheets at CIE is July 31," Shri Kishan, a parent, said.

Answering another query about colleges denying admission to students even though they made the cut-offs and met the additional eligibility criteria, DU V-C Dinesh Singh said, "We have received complaints against five of the 65 colleges in the university. An inquiry committee has been set up to look into the matter."



“IN MY TIME... MOST OF THE OUTSTANDING STUDENTS HAD THIRD DIVISION, BUT THEY WERE OUTSTANDING MUSICIANS, WRITERS AND SPORTSPERSONS... ALL-ROUND QUALITY WAS WHAT THE COLLEGE WAS LOOKING FOR **”**

SHASHI THAROOR
Minister of State for Human Resource Development

MoS HRD Shashi Tharoor (centre) and DU V-C Dinesh Singh (right) after attending a programme organised by the DU students' union on Monday.

TASHI TOBROYAL

Medical post-grad entrance: Delhi state quota valid for DU, IP varsity students, says HC

ANEESHA MATHUR
NEW DELHI, JULY 29

THE Delhi High Court has ordered that the Delhi state quota seats in the postgraduate courses in both Delhi University and IP university will be open to students who have studied MBBS from either university and obtained adequate rank in the merit list in the National Eligible-cum-Entrance, Test for Post-Graduate Courses (NEET-PG), 2012, conducted by the Na-

tional Board of Examinations. The court of Justice V K Jain issued the order on a plea by a student who had completed MBBS from a medical college under the DU, against a policy of both DU and the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIU) to admit their own students into the postgraduate courses under the Delhi state quota.

According to the bulletins of information for admissions released by the two universities, students who passed final MBBS or BDS examination from IP University are not eligible for admission to the postgraduate medical courses in Delhi University. Similarly, IP University stipulates that only medical graduates of IP University are eligible for admission to its postgraduate courses.

The two students had studied MBBS under DU and had cleared NEET; then failed to get admission into IP University.

In their plea, the students

had claimed that the exclusion was "unconstitutional, being violative of Article 14 of the Constitution since it defeats the principle of meritocracy and excludes persons who are similarly situated and have passed MBBS from the same state — Delhi".

IP University had claimed that institutional preference had been allowed by the Supreme Court through various decisions. The High Court noted that the same conditions did not exist in Delhi.

"I am of the view that 50 per cent of the total seats for PG medical course available in IP University, under the state quota, should be filled purely on the basis of the ranks obtained by the candidates, who passed their qualifying examinations either from DU or from IP University and the remaining seats should be filled from amongst the medical graduates of IP University alone. This direction would apply to reserved and unreserved seats," the court said.

Indian Express ND 30.07.13 P-10

Coaching centres: SC to examine PIL

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JULY 29

THE SUPREME Court Monday decided to examine a PIL demanding strict regulation of “unrecognised” private coaching centres that have mushroomed across the country.

A Bench, led by Justice KS Radhakrishnan, asked advocate Deepak Prakash, appearing for PIL petitioner Students Federation of India, to give a copy of the petition to the Centre’s counsel for a response, and posted the matter for hearing after three weeks.

In its PIL, the CPM’s student wing claimed unregulated coaching centres caused financial burden on students and parents, and also created psychological pressures, besides violating the CBSE and Right to Education guidelines.

It highlighted that the Rs 35,000-crore coaching business

was expected to grow by more than Rs 75,000 crore by 2014-15, as per the Crisil Report. The fee charged by coaching centres is arbitrary, causing huge financial burden on parents, said the petition, adding that private coaching institutes issue false and misleading advertisements, using the names and photographs of successful students without their permission. At times, one topper is claimed to have been trained by more than one institute. The PIL stated that 50 students committed suicide in 2011 in Kota, Rajasthan, which is now a hub.

Seeking an explanation on the government’s reluctance to regulate coaching centres, the PIL questioned whether the syllabus prepared by the Central and state education boards were not good enough to meet the standards of entrance examinations conducted for IITs and medical colleges.

Economic Times ND 30.07.2013 P-6

B-Schools Tighten Security for Entrance Tests

IIM Indore sets up team to launch website for results; other institutes to follow rigorous screening procedures, double-check identities at the time of admission

SHREYA BISWAS
KOLKATA

Business schools across the country are tightening their admission systems and double-checking student identity in the wake of two recent scandals involving rigging of Common Admission Test (CAT) scores and entrance test process of the Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS).

To begin with, the IIM-CAT results announcement will no longer be outsourced, according to convenor Rohit Kapoor. IIM Indore, which will conduct CAT this year, has put in place a team which launched a website for the purpose just two days ago. "Our main concern is to host the scores securely. We have burnt our fingers once but will not let that happen again," says Kapoor.

The third-party host has been identified as the most vulnerable point in the system — non-IIMs used CAT 2012 scores published online by Web Weavers, a

Lucknow-based web management company. A company employee and three CAT examinees are key suspects in the tampering of results.

NMIMS plans to ask students to upload their photographs while registering for the entrance test, besides looking at technological upgrades and biometric identification that could make the system stronger.

Birla Institute of Management Technology, on the other hand, will re-visit its admission system. "We can't specify what changes we will make at this point of time but we will review it in August," says director Harivansh Chaturvedi. It already has a system of matching photographs on forms with that of students to weed out fraudulent candidates, besides cancelling admission of candidates who are unable to submit originals within a prescribed time.

The IIMs recently reported 80 students' CAT scores being inflated for admission in top colleges. The case came close on the heels of the NMIMS admission fraud last month, where 87 candidates forged identi-

ties for places on the final list for admission to various management programmes offered by the Mumbai-based institute.

Other top B-schools follow a rigorous process to avoid such incidents. At IIFT, Delhi, three agencies are involved in the admission process — the centre head, an external agency and faculty members. Faculty is present at all test centres to monitor invigilation, and even attend an internal training session before the tests.

The institute also tried to make its screening process foolproof. At every centre, it asks for photo IDs and signatures, and matches it with the database. If students say they have not received admission cards and try to bring online copies, the institute insists on affidavits or an undertaking from them with their photo ID and signature. "We have a control room in Delhi which has the details of candidates. It helps us in case there are doubts about the candidates' authenticity," says Munish Bhargava, corporate and placement advisor and member of the admission



process team at IIFT, Delhi.

Besides, the institute does not have an online test at all. A written exam is followed by essay writing, group interviews and personal interviews.

TAPMI takes CAT scores, but students are asked to bring their original scorecards

and mark sheets. "We prod a lot and there is a designated staff member who goes through all documents to check for any discrepancy in scorecards," says Chowdari Prasad, dean (branding & promotions) and chairperson-admissions. Also, if there are major gaps or sudden changes in marks, the institute keeps a tab on those as well for further questioning the student, he adds.

XLRI follows a policy of strict internal control. "All critical processes attached to the XAT examination are not outsourced. These examinations have a lot of logistical issues and we keep processes under check," says Vishwa Ballabh — chairperson, admissions. At XIM Bhubaneswar, which accepts both CAT and XAT scores, acting dean BS Misra says the admissions team does a thorough check of all candidates.

ISB Hyderabad is confident about its system. "We accept GMAT scores to admit students. It is very well protected. They need to carry their passports at the time of the test," says VK Menon, senior director, career and admissions.

FMS BHU, a victim of the CAT scam, is yet to take preventive measures. The institute had a list of students whose scores were inflated and found out that four of them had applied. "We identified them and also figured out that their performance in the group discussion/personal interview was poor. We immediately barred them from the process," says RK Pandey, director.

The Union ministry of human resource development has set up a committee to figure out how the lapses occurred in the IIM case. Its members comprise IIM Trichy board of governors' chairman M Damodaran; Ajay Pandey, director-in-charge, IIM-A and Devanath Tirupati, dean, IIM Bangalore. "If due diligence is not done, people can take advantage of loopholes," says Pandey. Clearly, no one is taking any chances.

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(With inputs from Anumeha Chaturvedi, Divina Saragupta & Swaradha D Basu)

Tribune ND 30.07.2013 P-12

Banishing 'class war' from higher education

Both the public and private sectors should learn not only to co-exist but also to complement each other's capabilities

R. S. GREWAL

THE University Grants Commission (UGC) has constituted a committee to prepare fresh regulations for the maintenance of standards in private universities. The committee comprises eight members, with a dominant majority from state-owned universities or bureaucrats. Prima facie, the guiding belief behind the constitution of the committee is that all is well with state-owned universities and that it is basically the private universities that are required to be reined in. Such approach is not in the national interest.

Politicisation, nepotism, a work culture dominated by lack of accountability, bureaucratic apathy towards education and foregoing the interests of students are some of the maladies afflicting our state-owned universities. Despite infusion of huge financial resources, none of these universities figures amongst the top 200 in the world. The quality of Ph.Ds produced by these and the lack of faith shown by the industry in the capabilities of their graduates are pointers that need to be taken note of. It seems that the endeavour of the powers that be is to deflect the attention from the disorder prevailing in the state-owned universities rather than improving the standards of education in the country.

Inability of the Central and state governments to cope with the massive expansion of the higher education sector has resulted in large-scale emergence of private education providers. Some suspect that it is the fear of growing power of the private sector that has prompted the public sector to exploit our social milieu and start a 'class war' in the higher education sector. The requirement, on the other hand, is to identify the strengths of the two sectors and to leverage those for the benefit of higher education.

However, the approach of doyens from the public sector is, "I cannot cultivate the field, but I will create conditions that you cannot cultivate it either". A short-sighted policy, bordering on the concept of 'scorched earth approach', being followed by the state players would finally single all stakeholders. Any policy should aim to create a level-playing field for all the participants. That is not to say that all private education providers are ethical and totally dedicated to the cause of education, but there are many private universities that are doing a good job. The universities, state-owned and private included, face numerous problems. The need of the hour is to identify the problems and to join hands to overcome those. The national interests, not those of a narrow segment that has already failed to deliver, should prevail.

The process of dialogue between the regulators, which are mostly dominated by erstwhile public sector employees, and private universities has taken a back seat. Buoyed by its own success, the private sector has been asserting its claims more assertively, prompting the public sector helping frame regulations to curb its growth. In the absence of mutual trust both sides are dissipating resources that could otherwise be gainfully utilised. The number of court cases related to the higher education sector bear testimony to this new phenomenon. Today the environment in the higher education sector has reached a critical juncture and a new type of public-private relationship is needed.

The higher education sector in the recent years has changed enormously, but our regulators still believe



Research can be undertaken by public universities more easily due to ready access to funds and other resources, while the private sector can cater to the numbers to ensure bridging the skill-set gap to meet the requirements of the industry. — Thinkstockphotos

that regulation basically implies 'fault finding'. Their efforts are solely directed towards equipping students with certificates and degrees. There is no overall vision of what the imparting education must accomplish. On the other hand, buoyed by the advent of technology, remoulding pedagogy in consonance with the requirements of the 21st century and dedicated to establish their credentials, many private universities are beginning to emerge at the national level in their own right. Some of these have even opened campuses abroad that are doing well. Self-regulation is slowly being ushered in but the system struggles to contain the 'socialist onslaught' unleashed unfairly on it. Many organisations from the industry, like FICCI and EPSI, have taken up cudgels to improve the standards of higher education. The message is quite clear — public and private sectors have to learn not only to co-exist but to complement each other's capabilities.

In some ways the assertiveness and competitive spirit of the private sector makes co-operation harder. Its professional approach, concept of accountability and emphasis on deliverables strengthens the feeling of insecurity in the state-owned universities and by extension in the regulators. All sorts of regulations, fair and unfair, are unleashed that act as stumbling blocks to the growth of the private sector. Even the Association of Indian Universities, which is dominated by public universities, has framed rules that debar private universities from becoming its members till they complete five years of existence. There is more to be gained from cooperation than engaging in conflict.

Our education leaders need to show farsightedness and start by confronting the immediate causes of mistrust between the public and private sectors. There are some private players who have resorted to unethical means purely for the sake of profit. Similarly, one cannot ignore the sordid saga, where two public universities were engaged in mudslinging, involving claim to overall sports championship, due to fudging of uni-

versity records. One can well imagine the state of academic affairs, involving teaching and research with access to colossal funds, in the public universities if a minor aspect like claim to sports championship could trigger fudging of records. As per a recent report, there are 450 colleges in a state-owned university running without principals, some since as far back as 2008. The report says that some of the departments of the same university are without their heads and requisite faculty. The same university allowed 161 colleges to run without affiliation, some for over three years.

There are black sheep in both sectors but their conduct should not dictate the overall relations between the public and private universities. The commitment to get to know each other better must extend to more co-operation rather than regulation. As far as their operations are concerned, the government and the regulators should treat both sectors on a par. Our national interests demand educating our youth, so that we can reap the fruits of our demographic dividend. That involves the policy of give and take, irrespective of the origin of universities.

Research is a capital-intensive activity that can be undertaken by public universities more easily due to ready access to funds and other resources. On the other hand, the private sector can cater to the numbers to ensure bridging the skill-set gap to meet the requirements of the industry. Between the two they could even share resources to promote research in private universities and to usher in new pedagogical practises. There are plenty of reasons for creating an environment of mistrust and rivalry, but the lesson learnt from history is that everybody loses if the stakeholders allow legitimate worries to get out of hand. The public and private sectors in higher education must learn to cooperate.

The writer is a former Vice-Chancellor of Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh

This group of Facebook engineers from its US headquarters spent a week in India to crack three big questions facing the company: how to hook its next one billion users, how to keep them there and how to master the mobile?
Shelley Singh reports

What these 7 Facebook Engineers Did in India

WHEN it comes to his own communication needs, Greg Marra likes to keep pace—an Apple iPhone 5 and a Nexus 4 Android phone are constant companions. But earlier this month, on his second visit to India, Marra's preoccupation was phones that go away, way back in technology time. His shopping bag had about a dozen handsets, priced from ₹1,300 to ₹4,500, from the very basic to an entry-level smartphone. There was a Lava Iris 349, a Micromax X272, an LG E90, a Nokia 297, a Micromax Bolt A51... A dissection of these handsets was part of the classwork for Marra and his six fellow Facebook engineers when they spent a week in India earlier this month. This group of seven engineers from the company's headquarters in Menlo Park in California—all American, male, 23-28 years, product managers—stopped at Hyderabad, Gurgaon, Mathura and Agra, and a few villages enroute the last two towns.

The engineers struck random conversations with random people: what phone they had, what all did they do on this phone and what would they like to do; how many pictures do they click in a day and what kind of pictures; how do they use keypads; what kind of connectivity they had; how did they socialise; where did technology fit in their lives; and, that prejudiced question, were they on Facebook?

Ultimately, for Marra and his team, it came down to this: if these people were not on Facebook, how could they bring them there? And if they were on Facebook, how could they make them spend more time on it? They were looking to identify real-world problems and give technological answers. It all revolved around the dozen handsets they had picked up at the start of their week, from Hyderabad. "Across the world, the number of users on desktop is close to saturated," says Marra. "Mobile is where the next billion new users are going to come from."



"We are starting to divide the experience—what you get on a Lava will be different from what you get on a Samsung or Apple. We overcome these challenges by having different versions of Facebook"

GREG MARRA
 Product Manager, Facebook

Last Wednesday, when Facebook announced its results for the second quarter, increasing user traffic and advertising on the mobile was the talking point. Revenues from mobiles spiked 75% in the quarter and accounted for 41% of the company's revenues, against 14% a year ago. "Mobile will soon account for more than half the advertising dollars," Facebook co-founder, chairman & CEO Mark Zuckerberg said in a conference call after the results.

Since it went public in May 2012, Facebook had struggled to demonstrate that it could pull people to the mobile, and monetise that presence, contributing to a 35% decline in its share price since listing. If some of that scepticism lies buried in the recesses of a quarter gone by, the work that Marra and team are doing is the future.

They are looking for the code to crack three big questions facing the world's largest social-networking company, with \$5.1 billion in annual revenues and 1.1 billion users: how to hook its next billion users and how to keep them there? In their scheme of things, the centrepiece for the answers to those questions is India—which is on pace to become its biggest user base within two years—and the mobile. That's why the point of collecting those dozen handsets from India.

Eight Versions Of Facebook

Even as the mobile replaces the computer as preferred hardware, Facebook believes a generation of users will leapfrog the computer to the mobile. In its first-quarter results, for example, 199 million of its 1.1 billion users—or 17% of its users—accessed Facebook only on mobile.

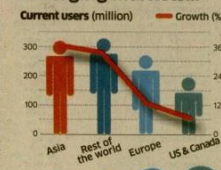
Interestingly, an increasing number of these mobile-only users are coming from emerging markets, like India. They don't have iPhones or BlackBerrys. They are logging on using varying grades of basic phones, but at an entry-level smartphone. "The big technical challenge is what a \$400 Android phone can do and what a \$40 Android device can do," says Marra, who left Google to join Facebook about a year ago. "Processing capability, memory and carriers—all impact the Facebook experience."

On a top-of-the-line phone, with a fast processor and a large screen, a user can download, easily, see high-resolution images and multi-task. But at the lower end, downloads are slow, images are a non-starter and multi-tasking least possible. Between those two extremes, there's a whole lot.

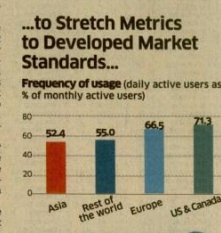
Facebook is trying to be relevant to all three sets—by offering each of them a different Facebook. "We are starting to divide the experience," says Marra. "What you get on a Lava phone will be different from what you get on Samsung or Apple."

For example, on an iPhone or a Samsung Galaxy Note, a full feature-rich Facebook site, complete with location services and video capability, is available. However, on sub-€5,000 phones, like a Lava Iris 349 or Micromax X272, ads don't appear, news feeds are limited, and the location feature, videos and list of friends on chat are all missing.

Facebook is Targeting Emerging Markets...



...to Stretch Metrics to Developed Market Standards...



"We overcome these challenges by having different versions of Facebook," says Marra. Facebook has eight basic versions: for desktops, smart-phones, feature phones, Android, app, iPhone app, Windows app, BlackBerry and 2G phones. When a user logs on to Facebook, its backend recognises the operating system, device specs and network, and chooses one of its eight versions. For example, if a feature phone has a low-resolution screen, Facebook will not send it high-resolution graphics. "Features that don't make sense, we just remove," says Marra. So, if a feature phone does not support GPS, the user won't be offered features like 'nearby' (a map-based location search). Likewise, if a user is on a 2G or 3G network, and paying for data, the system stops downloading every thing at full resolution. "But if we see that you are at a cafe on WiFi, we can take advantage of temporary boost in connectivity to catch more information," says Marra.

Its Global Lab

Facebook is looking to recognise user choices better and slice its offerings more finely, much beyond the eight basic versions. The logic: the more finely Facebook tailors itself to a user's device and network, the better the user experience. The longer a user lingers on Facebook, the greater the company's ad revenues. Easier said than done on a mobile, more so in an emerging market like India. It's easier to tackle the technology challenges for computers, where there are two operating systems and about five web browsers, and limited hardware configurations. On mobile phones, the problem amplifies as types of devices, operating systems, browsers, memory and networks span thousands of different combinations.

For universal coverage, in India alone, Facebook has to make its service usable on about 4,000 types of phones, with numerous variations. And they are nothing like what is found in the US, which is where 90% of the Facebook staff sits, brainstroms, writes code and creates user interfaces.

The US market is about handsets that cost \$600, while India is about less than \$50 (€2,500). The new trend we are seeing (in India) is the use of in-

...and Increase Growth



All figures for Q1 of 2013; growth is year-on-year change over previous corresponding period. Current users indicate those who logged on at least once a month in Q1 of 2013; net profit is as per non-GAAP.

expensive Android phones," says Marra. The US is post-paid, India is pre-paid. The US is single-SIM, India is multiple-SIM. The US is more data and less voice, India is the other way around. The US has a higher carrier loyalty, India has little. The US has 4G networks that log speeds of 100 mbps, India is still mostly 2G.

In a sense, India is a microcosm of many emerging markets, which present Facebook with great room for expansion today. For example, in US and Canada, which accounted for 78% of the company's revenues in 2012, 47% of the population of those two countries is already on Facebook. That figure for Europe, another major market currently, is 38%.

By comparison, Asia is just 77% and the rest of the world 18%. While poverty and low levels of development is a barrier for people in these geographies to get on to Facebook and spend time there, the mobile is emerging as a powerful equaliser. Facebook is using India to see how it can harness that equalisation process. China is the world's most populous country, but Facebook is not present there for political reasons. Elsewhere,

Brazil, its third-largest user base, is a PC-driven market. "India, almost more than any other country, is a mobile-first country," says Marra.

"For Facebook, the challenge of access to the larger population is not only in India, but the whole emerging world—from Asia to Africa to Latin America," says Ashwin Velloody, partner, management consulting, KPMG India, an audit and professional services firm. "India provides an ideal research and trial ground for Internet access and managing scale with diversity."

So, those dozen handsets are headed for the Facebook Library at its US headquarters. Each handset will be kept in a container like the ones used to keep cookies—in the company, they call them 'bins'—and stacked on shelves. At any point of time, about 300 phones lie in these 'bins'.

About 2,000 engineers can access these devices. Also housed in this library are labs that simulate global network environments—1G, 2G, 3G, WiFi, 4G, LTE. "At the library, our engineers get an opportunity to know multiple devices in use, operating systems, styles, models, memory and network environments," says Marra. "Every month, we come out with a new version of the app. Things we learn help us upgrade."

Focus On Basic Phones

At a time when phones are becoming better by the day, Facebook is looking to swim in the other direction—towards basic phones and feature phones that have largely disappeared in the Western world. "Four things need to converge to make the Internet and a Facebook experience good on a phone: chip speed, number of cores, mobile networks and software," says Khalid Zamir, associate vice-president, manufacturing, Videocom Mobile Phones. "With each newer generation of phone, this convergence is improving and, by 2014, it will be possible to get a laptop kind of experiences on a phone."

According to Lalitesh Kartagadda of Google India, the market is shifting from feature phones to smart phones. "A ₹3,000 smart phone in three years will have the same competence as a ₹10,000 smart phone today," says the country head, products, Google India. "That will take care of some of the hardware challenges like clicking high-resolution photos and uploading them quickly on any site."

Marra says the rate at which Facebook is growing and the arc of its progression to mobile, the time is now. The company is adding 160 million subscribers in anything between four to seven months, including about two million new users a month in India. "With that kind of growth, each month is pretty long for us and we can't wait for devices to improve," he says. "Also, in India, people don't change phones for three to four years, so we have to focus on low-end devices as well."

That reading might have credence, given the Internet user numbers of Google in India. According to a senior marketing official of Bharti who did not want to be named, of its 48 million data users, 25 million use regular user services, 5 million use Internet on 3G networks, while the rest use 2G or basic-feature phones.

"With a focus on feature phones, Facebook is targeting the masses. Advertisers will come. They (Facebook) just need to focus on scale and that's what they are doing"

ASHESH RAJNA
 Research Analyst, Gartner India

Bharti has just rolled out 4G networks in some cities, but only a handful of devices—like iPhone 5, HTC 1 and Samsung Galaxy Note 2—support these superior Internet services.

In Hyderabad, Marra and his team—each representing some aspect of Facebook, like news feed, mobile, search and messenger, among others—spent time interacting with students at the Women's College in Hyderabad University. They met officials of handset companies (Nokia, Micromax and Lava) and mobile-service companies (Bharti Airtel).

Elsewhere, they met villagers and students in organised meetings. They struck conversations with strangers to glean insights about what Indians do with mobiles. "For instance, voice and FM radio use is popular," says Kevin D'Souza, country growth manager, Facebook India. "People click pictures, but don't know how to share them or what to do with them. Lot of problems in downloading pictures or chatting are due to device limitations."

Kartagadda of Google believes the gap between hardware and software is the key to the greater challenge to reach the next billion in Internet users in language and giving a visually-rich experience on entry-level phones. "The hardware on a ₹10,000 phone is as good as a laptop four years back. Devices will improve," he says. "But for users, you need more bandwidth and better phones that can enable visually rich content to be delivered and a simple user interface."

Add Velloody of KPMG: "Facebook needs to focus on models that encourage wider adoption. That includes dialects and devices to significantly impact adoption." Facebook is available in nine Indian languages, using translation tools and crowd sourcing, and plans to add more languages as per demand. "Facebook on desktop and laptops was primarily in English," says D'Souza. "Most existing users prefer English, but we are seeing a shift on mobile, with local languages picking up."

Ads Will Follow Users

According to D'Souza, though Facebook has 78 million users in India, this is less than 10% of the country's mobile user population. "That's why the continuous focus on local innovation," he adds or, one example, last year, it installed a dedicated key for one-click access on the Nokia Asha 206 phone and launched an SMS-based access service ("SMS services") to access Facebook on feature phones. February, borrowing from sachet marketing techniques of FMCG companies, it offered data packs for unlimited Facebook usage in partnership with Reliance (₹1 per month) and Airtel (₹6 per day). It's been doing similar things at a global level as well. In 2011, it launched "Facebook for everyone" for 2G networks. Last week, this service crossed 100 million users in countries like India, Mexico, Vietnam, Indonesia and Brazil.

Only 25% of Facebook's revenues come from outside of US, Canada and Europe, but that is its main focus. Even as it moves the pieces to monetise better—for example, in India, country head Kirihiga Reddy is reportedly in the process of relocating from Hyderabad to Mumbai, ostensibly to be closer to advertisers and customers—it is pressing new levers to add users.

"Being in a monopoly kind of situation, they are not too bothered about advertising," says Rahul Khanna, managing director, Canaan Partners, a venture fund. Add Aishesha Rajna, research analyst, Gartner: "With a focus on feature phones, Facebook is targeting the masses. Advertisers will come. They just need to focus on scale and that's what they are doing." Especially on the mobile, with India as their lab.

"For Facebook, the challenge of access is not only in India, but the whole emerging world—from Asia to Africa to Latin America. India provides an ideal research and trial ground for Internet access and managing scale with diversity"
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