

Newspaper Clips

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BRIDGING THE GAP

UGC plans to go for global faculty hunt

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NEW DELHI

The Central government on Thursday introduced a so-called faculty recharge programme to bridge the shortage of teachers in universities, especially in science and engineering departments.

The programme to be guided by the University Grant Commission (UGC), the university education regulator, will recruit qualified Indian nationals from both India and abroad as teachers.

Officials said that interested candidates can now apply for positions throughout the year through a dedicated website. A shortlisted candidate can be appointed even as a professor, depending on his qualifications. UGC will recruit teachers from abroad through video conferences.

The higher education system in India has been facing an acute shortage of faculty, both in

terms of quantity and quality, with 40 central universities reporting a shortage of about 33%, according to government data. For instance, Delhi University has a shortage of at least 2,700 faculty members.

Unveiling the scheme, human resource development (HRD) minister Kapil Sibal said that through this programme, universities would be able to upgrade and reinvigorate faculty resources in science and related departments.

HRD ministry officials said the immediate intent is to induct as many as 1,000 teachers—assistant professors, associate professors and professors—in the next few years.

Those appointed through this scheme will be paid according to the standard UGC pay scales for teachers, according to an official note. Universities will have to give these teachers an environment of research and opportunity to teach at least eight hours a week.

“The new faculty positions

carry a start-up grant and provision for project-based funding. Each candidate is required to submit a research project, briefly outlining its main thrust, novel features and expected research output,” the HRD ministry note said.

The government expects to boost research at Indian universities.

During a meeting of education ministers that concluded 8 June in New Delhi, Sibal said that universities should work as centres of excellence and research and not mere affiliating bodies for hundreds of colleges. Environment minister Jairam Ramesh had earlier pointed fingers at the elite Indian Institutes of Technology for their poor research track record.

According to the new scheme, the initial tenure of appointment will be five years and “following a peer review this may be terminated, extended or elevated”.

The UGC expects university vice-chancellors interested in inducting fresh talent through the faculty recharge initiative to give binding commitment that all of them will get research facilities.

The Central government wants to add about 30 million more students in the higher education system from the current 15 million.

IIM-A Meet to Seek Consensus on Placement Reporting

PARAG DAVE
AHMEDABAD

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIM-A) will organise a conference on 'Pan India Placement Reporting Standards' on June 18 to bring in transparency, comparability and authenticity in placement reporting.

The institute has invited top B-schools and recruiters to participate in the conference and hopes the standards it has set will become a norm across institutions. "We have invited around 140 B-schools of India, including the IIMs, and more than 100 recruiters to participate in the conference. The first draft of placement reporting standards was released this February the feedback from stakeholders will be discussed during the conference," Saral Mukherjee, chairperson of IIM-A placement committee told ET.

The conference will include a discussion on the proposed standards and suggestions. In 2010, the institute introduced a cohort-based placement process, ending the day-based process. It organised a recruiters' conclave in September 2010 in Mumbai where it invited other B-schools as well. In the conclave, the institute proposed pan-India placement reporting standards. The institute then came out with a draft of the standards and decided to follow it. As per the IIM-A placement reporting standards, the institute will announce the highest, lowest and average salaries this year.

"A common format for placement reporting is necessary. We have also proposed that the campus placement details will be au-

dated for authenticity. Audited data can help students and parents in taking important decisions," Mr Mukherjee added.

The placement standards prepared by IIM-A will remove performance-linked compensation like variable pay and annual bonus and fringe benefits such as employee stock options and club memberships while reporting final salaries.

It will calculate basic salary, additional guaranteed cash components (HRA, travel allowance, medical allowance, leave allowance, entertainment allowance, etc) and one-time cash benefits at

Around 140 B-schools of India and over 100 recruiters will be present at the conference

the time of joining (joining bonus, relocation bonus, loan repayment) to prepare salary figures. IIM-A will calculate foreign salaries in terms of purchasing power parity to make them competitive at a global level. "Now, it is clear that students at IIM-A will get the exact details about their CTC, one-time bonus, performance-linked salary etc," he said.

IIM-A will release its 2011 placement report before June 26. "In case our proposed draft is rejected, we will release the report as per current standards. If there are modifications in the draft on June 18, we will release the report as per the modified draft," Mr Mukherjee said. He, however, said that the institute will release unaudited report. "We are in the process of appointing an auditor. However, we have to release the audited report within three months of convocation," Mr Mukherjee added.

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Prithvi-II flight test successful

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, June 8

Prithvi-II, the surface-to-surface missile was successfully flight tested by the Indian Armed Forces from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) Chandipur, near Balasore off the coast of Orissa today.

The indigenously developed strategic missile was fired at 9 a.m. from the launch complex at Chandipur by the armed forces, which also monitored the entire operations. The missile, capable of attacking targets at ranges of 350 km was successful, according to a press release from the Union Defence Ministry.

The liquid-fuelled, Prithvi-II can carry warhead (including nuclear) up to a maximum of 500 kg is also capable of dodging anti-ballistic missiles. It is being produced by the public sector Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL).

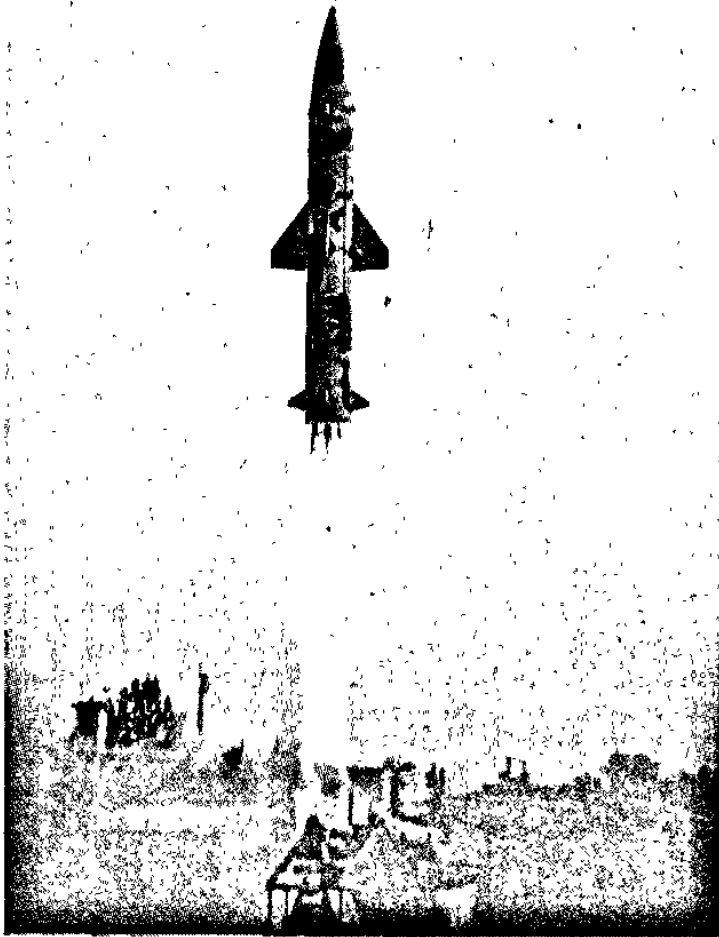
In today's flight test, the missile reached the pre-defined target in the Bay of Bengal with high accuracy of better than 10 metres. All the radars, electro-optical systems located along the coast tracked and monitored the missile throughout the flight path.

An Indian Naval ship located near the target witnessed the final hit, the release from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) said.

The launch today was carried out as part of the regular training exercise of the Armed Forces with the DRDO, which developed the missile indigenously, monitoring the event. As part of the operationalisation the armed forces had in 2009 fired two missiles in quick succession and successfully hit two different targets.

The flight test of Prithvi-II met all the mission objectives and was like a "text book" launch, according to Dr V.K. Saraswat, Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri and Director-General of the DRDO, who witnessed the launch operations and congratulated the Armed Forces and scientists for the successful flight test.

In addition to top officials of the Strategic Force Command of the Defence Ministry, Mr V.L.N. Rao, Programme Director of Air Defence (AD), Mr S.K. Ray, Director Research Centre Imarat (RCI), and top scientists of the DRDO witnessed the flight test.



Blasting off: Prithvi (P-II) being flight tested from launch complex-III at Interim Test Range in Chandipur on Thursday.
- PTI