

**Newspaper Clips**  
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## FREE THE CAMPUS

The action against a student group in IIT Madras raises questions about institutional autonomy

**T**HE DECISION OF IIT Madras to temporarily derecognise a student group on the basis of an anonymous letter is a case of extreme overreaction. The unsigned letter sent to the HRD ministry had accused the group — the Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle (APSC) — of calling the Narendra Modi government pro-corporate and communal and of fostering caste animosity among students. The derecognition seems to be a panicky response to the HRD ministry's note, which had sought the IIT's comments on the letter. The ministry has clarified that it forwarded the letter as a routine administrative matter and that the disciplinary action was the IIT's choice. The step has divided the student fraternity on campus and outside, and invited the attention of political parties and social outfits. IIT-M has justified its action, claiming that the APSC violated guidelines the institute and student representatives had drawn up for campus activities.

The derecognition would deny the study circle access to IIT-M's infrastructure for holding its functions, which have in the past included film screenings, seminars on the thought of Ambedkar and Periyar, debates on social, political and cultural issues as well as the social impact of technology. The ideological orientation of the APSC is at variance with that of other groups in the institute. The choice of speakers and subjects in APSC seminars reflect their political preferences, which may have triggered the anonymous complaint. Equally, the emergence of a new stream of thought may have upset a section of the administration. A university campus is sacred space for thought, especially unconventional thought. The IIT administration's response to the HRD ministry's query ought to have been in defence of the institution's responsibility to foster critical thought and the students' right to question the powerful and challenge conventions. The institution should have stood by its "rebel" students and objected to any attempt by the HRD ministry to intervene in campus affairs. It should have engaged with the students instead of taking disciplinary action. The preservation of campus autonomy, an issue which is often raised by the IITs in the context of appointments, must include protecting free speech on campus and encouraging a diversity of views.

Curiously, one of the violations reportedly cited by the administration was that the APSC used the name of IIT-M. This begs the question: Does the administration hold sole proprietary rights over the campus? Shouldn't students have a sense of ownership, too? In a truly autonomous campus, which is essential to promoting creative thinking, students partner with teachers to create knowledge. Universities must not be reduced to mere teaching shops where free speech and association are censored.

## IIT ban shows free speech in danger

The ban on the activities of the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle, a students' group at the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras, is alarming for the sheer intolerance that the action reflects. The group, made up of students studying at the prestigious institute, was critical of the Narendra Modi government's policies including the proposed amendments to the land acquisition bill, the Maharashtra government's ban on beef and the general rise in Hindutva politics. The group's views were neither outlandish nor defamatory. On the contrary, it was a kind of criticism that is perfectly acceptable in a practising democracy like India. The intention behind much of the criticism was to trigger debate, the very reason behind the very formation of the group.

Most higher institutions of learning, especially the well-regarded ones like the various Indian Institutes of Technology, Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science and Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, to name a few, have historically seen students set up various specialised study circles that are meant to be arenas for free flowing thought, including what some could characterise as being even radical. This is the case across the world. Students have played a major role in influencing politics and countless top-ranking leaders have had their initial political exposure in the various institutions of study.

The Ambedkar Periyar group too was one among these groups that debated, argued and fought over several issues of their choice.

For the Human Resource Development Ministry to take cognisance of an anonymous complaint that the group was spreading "hatred against Hindus" and was engaged in "anti-Modi" activities is shameful. As some reports have suggested, the complaint should have been thrown into the dustbin and the matter left there. Instead, for the ministry to have forwarded the complaint to the authorities at IIT-Madras, was despicable. The very act of forwarding the com-

plaint held an unspoken message: take action. The Institute dean in charge of students then conducted himself in the most undemocratic manner – derecognising the group on the grounds that they were "misusing their privileges". In the process, what should have been a non-issue has today come to occupy headlines across the media. What is alarming is that it sends a signal across the country that criticism of the establishment will not be tolerated. This goes against the fundamental ethos of democracy and the right to free speech. If criticism (even if it is severe, perceived to be unfair and has the potential to influence many people) is not allowed, the right to free speech is as good as dead. Lift the ban, now.



**"It shows intolerance towards criticism of the establishment."**

## Gagging students

The ban on the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle, a student group of IIT Madras, is an attack on freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under Article 19 of the Constitution. Freedom of speech and expression includes right to acquire and disseminate information. Right to disseminate includes right to communicate through any media, print, electronic or visual audio. The fundamental right can be limited only by a law made for the purpose according to Article 19 (2). The burden is on the authority to justify restrictions. No restrictions can be placed on the right to freedom of speech and expression on grounds other than those specified in Article 19 (2) according to the Supreme Court's ruling in Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting v Cricket Association of Bengal (AIR 1995 SC 1236). The Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle was established as an independent student body of IIT, Madras, on 14 April 2014, to promote the thoughts of Ambedkar and Periyar and to initiate debates on socio-economic, political and cultural issues which affect the common man within the academic fraternity. IIT Madras has a long history of being an exclusive platform for right-wing groups. In just one year, the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle has organised hall meetings, screening of movies and distribution of pamphlets and created among students awareness of threats to agriculture, GM crops and their impact on agriculture, the divisive attempt of the HRD ministry to have separate dining halls in IIT-M and IIT-Mumbai for vegetarians and non-vegetarians and the like.

De-recognition of the APSC, albeit temporarily as claimed by the Dean of the IIT, has been condemned by every political party barring the AIADMK and the BJP and it conveys its own message. What triggered the present controversy was a speech by R Vivekananda Gopal, a social scientist on the faculty of Dravidian University, on "Contemporary Relevance of Ambedkar" on 18 May in which he criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for programmes like \*\*\*ghar waapsi\*\*\*, ban on cow slaughter and the move to acquire agricultural land compulsorily. It clearly made an impression on the IIT student community. IIT authorities had been uncomfortable with the activities of the APSC even before Gopal's speech. An anonymous letter was sent to the Union HRD Ministry. Prisca Mathew, an under-secretary in the ministry, sought IIT's response. No one has taken HRD Minister Smiti Irani's claim that IITs are autonomous institutions which take their own decisions, especially in the light of the recent resignation of Anil Kakodkar, chairman of IIT Bombay's board of governors. Authorities of IIT Madras may not agree with the views of APSC or academician Gopal but they have a duty to uphold freedom of speech.

# Higher abdication

IIT Madras episode shows up an academic leadership that signed the government's dotted line



PRATAP BHANU MEHTA

THE CONTROVERSY OVER the Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle at IIT Madras displays multiple pathologies of Indian higher education. Rather than addressing problems, the sector compounds every social division, governance failure, and our sheer littleness. It is almost as if this is a sector where all thinking, common sense and plain decency go to die.

Much horror has been expressed at the fact that the HRD ministry seems to have interfered in the functioning of an academic institution, forwarding an anonymous complaint, ostensibly ideologically motivated. But to think this is the root of a problem is to confuse the general pathology of the system with a specific instance. Let us be very clear. The relationship between government and academic institutions has been debased for a long time. So-called progressive education ministers have enshrined practices that make heads of academic institutions supplicants to even director- or under secretary-level officials. The forwarding of anonymous complaints, sometimes even to the CBI, so that the ministry acquired control over vice chancellors, was an art perfected by many a previous minister. This history is important. Because two wrongs don't make a right. But the credibility of many protesting against this HRD ministry's actions is vitiated by the fact that they were willing to put up with similar practices, even worse, when it was politically convenient. If higher education is to be rescued, it will need interlocutors with greater credibility. The sector will have to move beyond charges of hypocrisy. But for that it will have to find interlocutors less hypocritical.

Second, the real ire should be directed at the academic establishment itself. The leadership of IIT-M has once again proved the suspicion that when the history of Indian higher education is written, academic self-abdication will rank higher than political perfidy. Even if the ministry forwards a letter, there is no reason that the university leadership has to act on it. At least, it need not act on it without giving the students a fair hearing. The IIT's claim that the Ambedkar-Periyar group violated rules seems contrived since it comes after the fact. The leadership crisis in

higher education is acute. India has some fantastic academics who have braved adverse conditions. But many have either seceded from institutional matters or are willingly compliant with the powers that be. Residual collegial piety still prevents us from naming and shaming many. But if you draw up a list of top academics who have willingly signed on the dotted line presented by government, you will feel almost queasy. The occasions when academics rush to the HRD ministry for intervention in their favourite cause are too numerous to list. We invited the politicians in, and rue it only when the game does not go in our favour.

The third issue is the place of caste in higher education. Caste, as India's original sin, still casts a shadow on almost every debate. It is still a poison that vitiates most intellectual life. The upper castes are, with justification, an object of suspicion. Their credibility on creating an inclusive education system is roughly zero. But post OBC reservations, the moral imprimatur of India's reservation policy has also diminished. Dalits have an overwhelming claim to reservations. But instead of placing that reservation in an ethical framework centred on discrimination and the need to treat people with decency, the indiscriminate expansion of reservations turned higher education into a virtual power grab. Reservation could no longer be articulated as an ethical requirement; rather, it was seen as a manifestation of organised power. And as the nature of that electoral and organised power shifts, different groups will assert themselves, and use state power whenever they have access. Clearly, in Tamil Nadu, anti-Periyar forces think this is a moment for them. But when identity and interest so deeply colonise reason, every move will be seen, by one party or the other, as threatening war. It is important not to render the operations of caste hierarchy invisible under a cloak of anonymity. But an intellectual culture that reinforces the alignment of identity and reason will suffocate any prospect of a meaningful dialogue.

Professors like to think of universities as protected spaces that preserve the possibility of dissent. They should be such spaces, where every thought can be debated. But

there are two issues about dissent. First, who draws these boundaries? India's liberal left has been plagued by the problem that it did not see the university in terms of an open space with a free flow of ideas. It always thought of the university as being about social engineering rather than cultivation of the intellect. The second issue is a paradox. Oddly enough, there is often more freedom to debate when the consequences of the debate are relatively trivial. In Western universities, it is seemingly easy to discuss anything, partly because there are no political stakes. In India, we have the opposite challenge: almost everything, any figure, any icon, is politically charged, with immediate material consequences for society. No social science or humanities discussion here is merely academic. So people find it harder to draw the line between protest and dissent, argument and threat, dialogue and disorder, critique and hatred. In an odd way, we don't want to debate ideas because we understand their power more. It is a crying shame that the establishment did not engage with Ambedkar and Periyar. But it was also a backhanded compliment in that it knew what the consequences of real engagement would be. In India, therefore, saying that universities are spaces of dissent is not going to be enough; it will take a more imaginative pedagogy to negotiate the, hyper-politicisation of ideas.

There are other issues as well. Does a single-minded focus on technical education and exams reduce our ability to handle the larger social dialogue that is at stake in our universities? Ironically, of all the IITs, IIT Madras had taken impressive strides in fostering the social sciences. But the way it has handled this controversy does not bring it credit. It has done a deep injustice to its students, particularly those in the Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle. It has sent out a grim reminder that the academic establishment is unlikely to stand up for liberal values, administrative independence and plain common sense.

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Caste, as India's original sin, still casts a shadow on almost every debate. But post OBC reservations, the moral imprimatur of India's reservation policy has diminished. Instead of placing reservation in an ethical framework centred on discrimination and the need to treat people with decency, the indiscriminate expansion of reservations turned higher education into a virtual power grab. Reservation could no longer be articulated as an ethical requirement; rather, it was seen as a manifestation of organised power. When identity and interest so deeply colonise reason, every move will be seen, by one party or the other, as threatening war.

HT.COM ND 02.06.2015 P-3

# 200 protesters detained at IIT-M

**STANDOFF** Protesters demanding revocation of a ban on a Dalit group held for jamming a busy road near the college

**HT Correspondent**

**CHENNAI:** Around 200 protesters were detained on Monday for jamming a busy road near IIT Madras as they demanded immediate revocation of a ban on a Dalit students' group of the prestigious technical education institute.

The Jayalalithaa government has positioned a large posse of policemen near the institute to prevent violence. Still, traffic has been hit on the Adyar stretch as slogan-shouting protesters worked in teams to block the road and police rushed instantly to detain them.

IIT Madras has been besieged with a vigorous agitation since Friday after it derecognised the Ambedkar-Periyar Student Circle (APSC) on an anonymous complaint forwarded by the Union Human Resource Development Ministry, accusing the group of fomenting hatred against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Hindus.

A rush of support from political parties and Dalit organisations against the controversial decision added fuel to the agitation that reached Delhi, too, as scores of students raised slogans outside Shashtri Bhawan, the HRD ministry headquarters, on Monday.

"Youngsters must get freedom of speech on campuses. Extending bans is like suppressing their voices. This is completely wrong," said PL Punia, chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) that has sent a notice to IIT Madras for an explanation.

DMK chief M Karunanidhi demanded on Sunday Prime

Minister Modi's "direct intervention" in revoking the order. The DMK students' wing and the pro-backward class Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) were at the forefront of protests along with APSC members.

The Congress, too, has joined the protest chorus, accusing the Modi government of stifling freedom of expression.

## Economic Times ND 02/06/2015 P-4

**LETTER TO IIT** Kanimozhi attacks suspension, saying it is objectionable, unfair & unsustainable

# DMK Takes Up IIT Issue, Amma's Party To Raise it in 'Proper Manner'

V.PremShanker@timesgroup.com

**Chennai:** IIT Madras is not only attracting political parties that want to speak up for a suspended student body on their campus, but the campus is also becoming a platform that is showcasing the changed in approach to issues by the two Dravidian majors that have ruled Tamil Nadu - the DMK and the AIADMK. While the DMK has jumped into the fray with a double-barrel attack, the AIADMK says it has shunned the idea of agitations and will take the issue in a 'systematic manner'.

DMK president M Karunanidhi on Sunday sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "direct intervention" for revocation of the order and to restore "peace" on the (IIT) campus. He indirectly hit out against the Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani for her "authoritarian" interference that allegedly led to de-recognition of a students' body at IIT Madras.

## Enter Politicians

### DMK Attacks

Is leading the protests from the front



DMK president on Sunday sought Prime Minister's "direct intervention"

Hit out against the Union HRD Minister for her "authoritarian" interference

Rajya Sabha MP and DMK's women's wing leader Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, a face of the generation next of her party, however, decided to write an open letter to the Director of the premier technology insititute.

"I find the decision of IIT Madras to de-recognise the APSC (Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle) to be objectionable, unfair and unsustainable,"

### AIADMK Mum

Says watching the situation

Doesn't want to politicise it

Will take it up and will find a permanent solution

Will raise the issue with the Union HRD Minister



Kanimozhi wrote in her letter.

Meanwhile the other major Dravidian party—the ruling AIADMK—preferred to remain silent on the issue. Although the party officially says it is watching the situation, when an issue like this has erupted in the past and the DMK has taken the lead, the rival has not been far behind.

"We do not want to politicise it. We

are for student democracy. We are for freedom of expression. We are for students getting enlightened and empowered. We will raise it only at appropriate forum," said Rabi Bernard, spokesperson of the AIADMK.

When asked why the party was quiet when their rivals had picked up the issue on behalf of the students, he said, "We are not quiet. We will take it up and we will find a permanent solution. There must be a systematic approach not an ad hoc one. In our party representatives' next visit to the capital, we will raise the issue with the Union HRD Minister," Rabi Bernard added.

Experts do agree that the AIADMK is taking a different approach but add that currently the party does not have many options. "It may be due to political compulsions that the AIADMK is remaining quiet. It could also be because at this time they do not want to get into any sort of controversy," said N Sathiyamoorthy of Observer Research Foundation.

Millenium Post ND 02/06/2015 P-5

# IIT-M row: Stir continues, Athawale says action unjust

## 200 members of DMK students' wing detained in Chennai

**MPOST BUREAU**

**CHENNAI/NEW DELHI:** Protests continued on Monday over de-recognition of a students' body, comprising mostly dalits, by IIT-M as NDA ally RPI joined the chorus against the premier institute's action, terming it as an "act of injustice" and "attack" on freedom of expression.

Protests were held in Chennai and the national capital against the institute's decision to temporarily de-recognise Ambedkar-Periar Study Circle (APSC) by the IIT-Madras management after an anonymous complaint that it was spreading "hatred" against Prime Minister Narendra Modi was forwarded to it by the Union HRD ministry.

About 200 members of



**Police detain members of BSP, protesting against HRD Minister Smriti Irani and IIT-Madras management near the institute in Chennai**

DMK's students wing led by its secretary Ela. Pugazhenthii were detained in Chennai while staging a protest to demand revocation of IIT-M's decision.

The agitators demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi step in to resolve the situation.

VCK founder Tho. Thirumavalavan, who led a separate demonstration by his supporters, was also detained, police said. Expressing solidarity with APSC, members of left-backed students unions and organisations staged a protest outside

Shastri Bhavan in New Delhi where HRD ministry is located.

"The APSC was de-recognized as per the Ministry's diktat. What we feel is that there are other groups too which conduct programmes which politicize campus.

"Why the ministry has objections to the group (APSC) which talks about education system, contemporary issues? So, to express solidarity with them we staged protest," president of Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union Ashutosh Kumar said at the protest venue.

Amid mounting outcry, RPI leader Ramdas Athawale denounced IIT-M's action as "unjust" and said HRD Minister Smriti Irani should have intervened to thwart the measure taken by the institute against the students body.

## Hindu ND 02.06.2015 P-11

# Only sought explanation, says IIT-M director

Special Correspondent

**CHENNAI:** Following the controversy over the de-recognition by the IIT-Madras of the Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle (APSC), the institute's director Bhaskar Ramamurthi has said the management only sought an explanation from the students' group.

Currently abroad, Mr. Ramamurthi in an email response to a query from retired bureaucrat M.G. Devasahayam, said: "We have not acted in response to the contents of the anonymous complaint. When we received it, we came to know that a meeting was conducted by the APSC and they had not observed some of the guidelines created by the Board of Students." The email was shared with some mediapersons.

The Director said: "The communication to the APSC had asked them to explain why these had not been observed, so that their response

could be considered by the Board of Students. The APSC seems to have understood the communication as a ban, which it is not."

However, the IIT-M Dean's e-mail to the APSC, dated May 22, states: "This is to inform you that because of the misuse of the privileges given to your study circle as an independent student body, your student body is de-recognised by the institute. You are welcome to come and ex-

plain your stand."

Stating that the IIT-M was trying to sort the issue out to the satisfaction of the students, Mr. Ramamurthi said: "I hope it will be resolved soon. I wish to reassure you that we have not acted in a mindless fashion."

The news of IIT-M de-recognising the APSC on grounds that it criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government and Hindus, sparked a controversy

with many sections pointing to emerging threats to free speech and expression. With several students' organisations and political parties condemning IIT-M's decision, the issue assumed national significance, prompting the National Commission for Scheduled Castes to seek an explanation from the institution.

Members of the APSC have decided to hold a protest on the IIT campus on Tuesday.

## Protests spread to Mumbai

Rahi Gaikwad

**MUMBAI:** Protests against the decision of IIT Madras administration to ban the Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle (APSC) spread to Mumbai on Monday with over a hundred students from different institutions staging a rally at the Dadar station here.

"We see nothing wrong with what APSC has done. It is not a new group. We condemn the decision to ban it. Even if you think they

did something wrong, they should have been given a fair hearing. This is just one visible instance of the administration's autocratic behaviour. This issue is not limited to IIT Madras alone. Across IITs, there are various problems, such as poor implementation of the reservation systems, absence of Dalit faculty and so on. What does it mean when they say IITs are not political? Everything is political. To be political is my right," Kranthi Kumar, a Ph.D. scholar from IIT Bombay told *The Hindu*.

## Student solidarity: IIT-B gets its version of banned Chennai group

Hindustan Times (Mumbai)

### UP IN ARMS Students protest in city, demand action against Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle by IIT-Madras be revoked

**MUMBAI:** The ban on the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle (APSC) by the Indian Institute of Technology – Madras (IIT) has sparked protests across other institutes, with some starting their own forums modelled around the group as a mark of solidarity.

The group floated by students of IIT-Bombay is called the Ambedkar Periyar Phule Circle (APPC). To show their support, at least 60 students from IIT-Bombay, Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) and other colleges protested outside Dadar station on Monday, demanding that the ban be revoked.

Last week, IIT-Madras ignited a major controversy after it banned the APSC following an anonymous complaint to the ministry of human resources alleging that the group was trying to spread hatred towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi by distributing provocative pamphlets and posters in the campus.

The ministry, however, claimed that it had no role in banning the group and had merely forwarded the complaint letter to the dean of IIT-Madras.

Social activists and author Anand Teltumbde, who teaches at IIT-Kharagpur, commended the students of IIT-Madras for their efforts. "I congratulate you for challenging the undemocratic action by the IIT-Madras authorities at the behest of their political bosses... Needless to say India is with you in your fight against such high-handedness of the spineless authorities of a hallowed institution as IIT-Madras," he posted on Facebook.

Calling the move undemocratic, students said the APSC was not given a fair hearing before it was derecognised.

"Banning progressive groups such as the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle is another step to crush the voice of truth. We have come together to uphold the thoughts of the likes of Ambedkar, Phule, Periyar, Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries," said S Kavita, a TISS student, who participated in the protest.

Social media has played a major role in mobilising students, with several pages on networking sites coming up support of the APSC.

Some academicians are not very pleased with the demonstration.

"Academic institutions are not political platforms. While registering their protest is well within everyone's rights, nobody is talking about the real problems faced by the backward communities," said a professor and social activist from Kirti College, requesting anonymity.



# Who's siding with who & why?

GIVEN HOW POLITICS IS PRACTISED IN THIS COUNTRY, THERE'S LITTLE WONDER WHY CAMPUSES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE BEING INFUSED WITH A CURRICULUM THAT IS HARDLY CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING, SAYS **DEBAMEETA BHATTACHARYA**

**I**t is ironic how we claim that ours is a sovereign democracy and yet turn our faces away when the need arises to actually live the fact. Power corrupts and the crunch – as there always is – lies in determining who is corrupted and who isn't. On 29 May, the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, found itself at the centre of a row over derecognition of a students group, many of whom are Dalits, following a complaint that it was critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, triggering protests from the Congress and Aam Aadmi Party.

Care to know why? The Ambedkar Periyar Students' Circle was "derecognised" following an allegation that it was instigating hatred against the Prime Minister. With the Union human resource ministry having nothing to do with it, minister Smriti Irani said IIT, Madras, took action as per its own guidelines. According to her, IIT, Madras, is an autonomous institution capable of taking its own decisions. "I know people in the Congress are very interested in finding some flaw with the HRD min-

istry. But I am sure that they understand that autonomous educational institutions have the right to administer their institution as per their own laws," she said.

All the action her ministry took was forward the complaint received to the director IIT, Madras, for comments. Dean Sivakumar M Srinivasan said, "The APSC violated the code of conduct for student bodies that categorically stated that activities should have the dean's approval. (The students were insisting they had the right to freedom of expression.) Several student organisations function in the campus, operating on the basis of involvement and initiatives. Student groups who desire to use the institute's resources are required to be recognised and have to follow the guidelines laid down by the Board of Students that comprise elected student representatives."

Professor Ramamurthy, acting IIT, Madras, director said the action had been taken as the students had "violated" defined guidelines of the institute. "As per the guidelines in force,

student bodies cannot use the name of IIT, Madras, or its official entities in any capacity to publicise their activities or garner support without official permission. This group has violated the guidelines while conducting their meeting. This was what led to temporary derecognition of the group, he added.

A separate statement by the institute said that while IIT, Madras, did not "curtail" students' freedom of expression, "it is expected that student groups adhere to these guidelines while conducting their activities".

Meanwhile, Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi condemned IIT, Madras' move to censure a students' group for criticising the Narendra Modi government. "IIT student group banned for criticising the Modi government. Free speech is our right. We will fight any attempt to crush dissent and debate," he tweeted. AAP leader Ashutosh asked whether students from the Dalit community had a right to express their views

on the Prime Minister.

Away from who is siding with who, National Students' Union of India workers held a protest outside Smriti Irani's official residence on 31 May in New Delhi over derecognition of a students' body for reportedly criticising Modi. The protesters from the Congress' students' wing raised anti-government slogans and accused the HRD ministry of being behind the action against the body. They also demanded that the action be revoked. Some of the protesters were detained by police when they tried to break barricades.

Slamming IIT, Madras, for its decision to derecognise a students' body for alleged violation of code of conduct, the DMK on 31 May sought



Smriti Irani: hands off



Prime Minister "direct intervention" in revoking the order to ensure that "peace" returned to the premier technical institute. Party chief M Karunanidhi said that based on an "anonymous" letter, the HRD ministry had "side-stepped natural justice" of seeking an explanation from the persons concerned and banned the group, which amounted to "stifling" freedom of expression.

Though it seems that Narendra Modi doesn't accord any importance to needless issues like banning a democratic group, it is felt that his ministers interfering unilaterally and in an authoritarian manner in such issues will impede youth's thought process and affect the nation's growth.

Given how politics is practised in this country, there's little wonder then that campuses across the country are being infused with a curriculum that is hardly conducive to learning.

**ADDING UP** IIM-B to start LGBT group later this year, plans to include awareness in orientation; counselling, film screenings and talks are part of process at other institutes

# IITs, IIMs Lend a Voice to LGBT Issues

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Mumbai: IIM Bangalore (IIM-B) will, for the first time later this month, start conversations around lesbian gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues in a movement that is gaining momentum across the country's premier institutes.

At IIM-B, the conversations will be built into the incoming batch's orientation programme as a first step towards the formation of an LGBT group later this year.

"In a society like ours, if these issues have to come into the mainstream, they need a voice," says professor Vasanthi Srinivasan, chairperson, alumni relations at IIM-B.

"That voice is now growing stronger across India's student community as LGBT groups gain a bigger footing across campuses.

This year alone, several Indian Institutes of Technology including those at Roorkee, Kharagpur and Gandhinagar have either set up — or are planning to start — LGBT support groups. Similar groups are under consideration at IIT Guwahati and IIM Ahmedabad, say members of campus LGBT communi-

ties. "The youth are today far more open about coming out and wear their sexuality on their sleeve," says Pallav Patankar, director, programmes at the Humsafar Trust, a Mumbai-based voluntary organisation that promotes LGBT rights.

At IIT Kharagpur, an initiative to launch an LGBT group on campus is under way. The newsletter will also invite people to write in anonymously. It isn't easy starting an initiative like this in a town like Kharagpur, says a student who's part of the process. In more 'open' metros like Delhi and Mumbai, people are seen having it much easier.

Institutes such as IIT Bombay have been the forerunners in this space. Saathi, IIT-B's LGBT resource group, was launched in mid-2011, the first of such groups at the IITs. Today it has over 150 members including students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Across the IITs, Saathi and IIT Delhi's Indradhanu are among the most active LGBT resource groups. IIT Kanpur has Unmukt and IIT Madras, Vannam, which was started less than a year ago. Among other institutes, IISc Bangalore, TISS and Jadavpur University also have

## The Diversity Pitch

**WHAT INSTITUTES ARE DOING**

Several IITs including those at Roorkee, Kharagpur and Gandhinagar have either set up or are planning to start LGBT support groups this year

Similar groups under consideration at IIM Bangalore, IIT Guwahati and IIM Ahmedabad

IIT Madras started its LGBT resource group last year

IIT Bombay's Saathi and IIT Delhi's Indradhanu are among the most active groups

**WHAT THE SPECIAL GROUPS DO**

The groups organise film screenings and talks, post articles about sexuality and provide counselling

IIT-B also has an ongoing project called Saathi Connect, where young LGBTQ people are being invited to contribute their stories

The youth are today far more open about coming out and wear their sexuality on their sleeve

**PALLAV PATANKAR,**  
Director, programmes at the Humsafar Trust

Earlier it used to feel like a thankless job. It took three years of working without expectations for things to change

**ADITYA SHANKAR,**  
IIT Bombay student and member of campus LGBTQ group Saathi

groups on campus; in some cases, informal. These groups typically organise film screenings and talks, post articles about sexuality and provide counselling. "Knowing

there are people who support you; others similar to you who have gone through various levels of taboo makes a big difference," says Nimisha Agarwal, who is part of

Queer IISc.

IIT-B also has a project called Saathi Connect, a multimedia anthology of young queer India, where young LGBTQ people are

being invited to contribute their stories. At IIT Kanpur, handouts are distributed and people who are bullied because of their sexuality, are guided through meetings and sometimes referred to psychiatrists, says PhD student A Roychowdhury.

Earlier initiatives have paved the way. Last July, for instance, Aditya Shankar of IIT Bombay's Saathi uploaded a video called 'First Love' on YouTube. Meant to sensitise IIT-B freshers about sexual orientation, the video had a bunch of students — some straight, some gay — speaking about their first love. It was a follow-up to Aditya's video a year earlier that spoke of his own coming out.

Both the videos went viral and inspired several others across campuses — including several at IIT-B — to come out and say they were gay — But there is still a long distance to cover.

While a small group of students are now open about their sexual orientation, there are many more who are afraid.

"Sexuality in general is kept under wraps in India," says Queer IISc's Nimisha. She has seen numbers of such students increasing to

60 from around 10 in the past four years. But that's not much, she says, considering the campus has 5,000-plus students.

Patankar of Humsafar Trust says that often students prefer an outside support group. "Students aren't sure if coming out on campus improves/skews their chances with recruiters. In a cutthroat world like this, people tend to think it can hinder their chances." And then there's the shadow of Section 377 of IPC, which deems homosexuality illegal.

"Barring a few organisations including Google, Microsoft, Infosys and the Godrej Group, most organisations typically do not want to know about LGBT. And if they know, they do not want to engage with it," says professor Neharika Yohra of IIM Ahmedabad who has been part of a study on Inclusion in India Inc.

And that's where campus groups are invaluable, said IIT Bombay's Aditya Shankar. "Earlier it used to feel like a thankless job. We knew there were a number of gay people on campus because of the dating apps but no one came out. It took three years of working without expectations for things to change."

# Indian students bag €30k award for plane that runs on wing power

Kounteya.Sinha@timesgroup.com

London: A team of Indian students have won the €30,000 jackpot from Airbus for creating the world's first airplane that generates its own power by the vibration of its wings which can later be used to power in-flight systems.

The team dressed up aircraft wings in a composite piezoelectric fibre skin that harvested energy from natural vibrations or

flex in the wings. The Indian students are spread across four countries in three continents — studying in Bangalore, the Netherlands, US and London. They beat 518 teams representing 3,700 students from 104 countries to win in Hamburg.

Team leader Sathiskumar Anusuya Ponnusami from Delft University of Technology (Netherlands) told TOI after winning the competition, "Our group, in

consultation with an Airbus team has invested enormous efforts in ascertaining the technical and economic feasibility of our idea based on the current

and projected states of **HITTING THE JACKPOT** input technologies, including battery and piezoelectric fibre composites as well as interfacing circuits, structural dynamics and aero elasticity. We have

no doubt that our promising idea will see the light of the day within the next decade."

The jury declared, "The five dynamic members of the all-Indian team have been able to work 24 hours a day by interacting across physical boundaries from four different locations around the world. The team members met physically for the very first

time at the final round of the event this week where they managed to present the most disruptive idea for the future of aviation. Team Multifun's winning idea is all about good vibrations."

The team used piezoelectric fibres which gather electrical charges from even the smallest movements during flight, storing the energy generated in battery panels integrated in the fuselage and using it to power

auxiliary in-flight systems.

This reduces the energy footprint of aircraft during flight and could even replace the entire power source for ground operations.

"We also convert the body of the aircraft into a gigantic battery. On an average the plane needs to fly for about 12 hours to have enough energy. So the idea will cater to long haul flights," Ponnusami added.

# Higher education: Unanswered questions

NILANJANA GUPTA

No Indian university features in global rankings of institutes. This often makes headlines but what is conveniently left unmentioned is how the Indian government invests far less than countries which have the best institutes

ONE of the issues that is least talked about in any discussion of the achievements of the year old Modi Government is higher education. Rightly so, as the Modi Government has shown no particular interest in this area. As in earlier regimes, in this year's Budget, the Central Government has promised to set up a number of new institutions with the brand names IIT, IIM, AIMS in politically sensitive states. The money earmarked for these constitutes a large proportion of the money allocated for higher education in the 2015 Budget. As always, the total allocation is well below the amount spent on higher education by first world nations. While the fact that no Indian university features in global rankings of institutes often makes headlines in the Indian media, the fact that the Indian government invests far less than the countries which have the best institutions is conveniently left unmentioned. On the one hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi clearly dreams of India emerging as an economic superpower. This aspirational dream accounts, in large part, for his appeal to the youth of the nation. On the other, his government is clearly reluctant to invest in the nation's youth. Instead, we find in India that education is seen by many business analysts as the sector which promises the biggest business opportunity for canny investors. As one book suggests, time is ripe for Saraswati to become Lakshmi.

## Campus placements

At this time of year, lakhs and lakhs of students all over the country are in the process of desperately applying for admission to college and universities. Every year it seems that more and more students are vying for places in the few top institutions while simultaneously seats remain empty in colleges across the country. At the other end of the process, we see a similar pattern—top corporations will visit the top institutions and placements from campus interviews have become quite common on some campuses across the country, while other institutions struggle to attract even smaller companies to hold job interviews for their students. Repeatedly the feedback from the employers is that most—in some reports as high as 85 per cent—of the students graduating from the higher education system in India are unemployed. They lack even basic skills necessary for low-end jobs. This is even more true for students of private engineering and management colleges where in states like Tamil Nadu, more than 50,000 seats in engineering colleges were vacant last year.

## Mushrooming colleges

For a period from 2006, there was an average of 10 new colleges opening everyday in India, most of them private engineering colleges. Around 300 colleges have since officially closed down and many more are no longer admitting students due to lack of demand.

It is worth looking at some of the profit-making private ventures, especially since the first wave of such private initiatives—the establishment of technical colleges and management colleges—has now slowed down across the country. Today the biggest profit turners are the Coaching Centres, especially those that claim to prepare students for entry into the IITs and other "elite" institutions. The other fast-growing ventures are the training courses offered in the on-line mode. Educomp, one of the most successful on-



In India, higher education is supposed to fulfil multiple roles. Perhaps that is why more than 80 per cent students graduating from higher education institutions are unemployed. PHOTO: PTI

## Lack of legal framework

While basic schooling has received much attention and funding from the state and the Right to Education Act has created a legal framework within which school education must function, higher education is yet to receive the same attention from lawmakers, activists, policy-makers, or potential employers. Interestingly, business analysts have identified some of the requirements of the higher educational sector and are providing solutions by setting up a wide range of educational products which are rapidly expanding.

line education providers in India offers tutorials for preparation for entrance examinations, civil services exams, spoken English as well as a wide range of other so-called "leisure" courses such as playing the guitar. Educomp also teams up with people or groups with specialised expertise and offers training modules; for example ProfitShastra offers training for "budding financial professionals" to make them "market-ready." Another big player in this emerging market is Pearson, the transnational publishing house.

## Radhakrishnan Commission Report

In India, higher education has always been expected to fulfil multiple roles. The very first Commission Report in post-Independence India, popularly known as the Radhakrishnan Commission Report of 1948-9 defined these expectations in grandiose terms: "The most important and urgent reform needed in education is to transform it, to endeavour to relate it to the life, needs, and aspirations of the people and thereby make it the powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realisation of the national goals." Higher education was and still is expected to serve these diverse requirements simultaneously. This, of course, is easier said than done.

Another problem is that the huge majority of students enrol in institutes under the state governments, while the Central Government only funds and administers the so-called "elite" institutes like the IITs, the IIMs and Jawaharlal Nehru University. State governments typically lack the economic resources necessary to fund infrastructural development in the education sector. They

find it difficult to even provide for salaries to the teaching and support staff which inevitably leads to large numbers of vacancies in teaching posts. Rather, due to political exigencies, there is constant pressure to increase student intake which only further increases the unviable student-teacher ratios. Two initiatives regarding higher education begun by the Central Government have so far not attracted the kind of public discussion and debate that is desirable in a democratic framework. The first is Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) that was adopted in 2013. The main thrust of this Abhiyan or Mission is the improvement in the quality of education imparted by the majority of colleges and universities that are funded by the state governments. This is has the potential of a huge impact as 94 per cent of all students enrolled in higher education are in institutions either directly under the state governments or in private institutes that are administered and affiliated to state universities. Colleges and universities under the state governments are typically starved of funds, especially for improvement of infrastructure, as most states do not have the money or the political will to provide enough support for upgrading such institutions. Data from the budget of states shows that in most states, 95-98 per cent of the state's expenditure on higher education is earmarked for salary payments. With a few exceptions, spending on capital investment accounts for less than 10 per cent of the total allocation. Plan expenditure of the state governments is meagre all over the country practically all across the country. Under the RUSA, more than 300 universities and 8,500 colleges will be eligible to

receive funds from the Central Government, largely for improving the infrastructure. According to the RUSA guidelines, funds will be monitored and time-bound to ensure proper utilisation. Interestingly, this funding may also be funnelled into private institutions. This initiative has, like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, on which it modelled, can make a meaningful intervention into the fund-starved state system.

## Over-centralisation

In addition, the RUSA also speaks of non-monetary reforms which are required to ensure enhanced quality of education deliverables. Of these reforms, the one most difficult to achieve will be the autonomy of the institutions. The RUSA Guidelines quite correctly identifies over-centralisation and over-bureaucratisation as hampering the robust growth of colleges and universities. Self-governance, academic autonomy and non-interference from the state governments are required, according to the RUSA Guidelines, in addition to more funding to ensure dynamic and quality-conscious institutes. To ensure this, the RUSA funding is to be channelised through the state higher education councils rather than the states, plan, monitor and advise the institutions.

The functions and composition of the state higher education councils are also given in detail in the RUSA guidelines according to which the members and chairman/vice-chairman should all be eminent senior academicians. However, given the sensitive nature of higher education, already some states such as Gujarat and West Bengal have violated this point by appointing the ministers of education/higher education as the Chairman of the state higher education council. A World Bank Report has concluded recently that none of the state higher education councils meet the RUSA criterion of "an arms-length relationship with state political leadership and state government." Already, problems range from Maharashtra's State Higher Council, which has not met even once since its

constitution—to West Bengal's State Higher Education Council which is suggesting a common syllabus, entrance examination and examination system across the 23 universities in the state.

One other important caveat is that RUSA will provide 65 per cent of the funding required, while a matching grant of 35 per cent must be provided by the state government. Given the limited resources of most states, this will be a negative incentive for many. For most states, the only income from higher education is in the form of "affiliation fees" which private colleges must pay for their degrees to be recognised. This has often led to further over-burdening of the affiliating universities who administer the examinations and oversee the administration. No extra staff is appointed for these purposes so this practice usually leads to undesirable outcomes such as inordinate delays in publishing results. Because access to education is a politically sensitive issue, no state government can raise the student fees for college or university education though students pay lakhs of rupees to dubious private institutions for often dubious degrees. Like many governmental policies, RUSA too has many good ideas and intentions.

The guidelines to RUSA correctly identified many of the problems faced by state colleges and universities in the country. It has also come up with a mechanism to address many of these issues. However, as with many governmental initiatives, there is a high possibility that the particular priorities and ideologies of the political parties in power in the various states will subvert and modify the original objectives in pursuit of their own narrow agenda.

While the RUSA talks about the autonomy and agency of the institution, it actually effectively removes it. By bypassing the UGC, an autonomous body, and giving all power to the state government, RUSA makes the institution completely dependent on the state government, its policies and its controlling mechanisms.

The writer is Dean & Professor, Department of English, Jadavpur University

Hindustan Times ND 02/06/2015 P-4

# Choice-based credit system will erode higher education standards in India

BY INVITATION



SHOBHIT MAHAJAN

**NEW DELHI:** Once again, it is the time of the year when admissions to the University of Delhi dominate front pages of newspapers in the Capital. Pictures of teenagers sweating it out for admissions are standard. This is also the time of the year when revolutionary changes are proposed in the way the university functions—whether it is moving on to semester system, four year undergraduate programme (FYUP), meta-universities, BTech in humanities—every new session brings forth new innovations. This year's flavour is the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), approved by DU's decision making bodies recently.

A hallmark of all such changes is the undemocratic way in which they are introduced. There is no discussion or debate among stakeholders, or even an effort to take them on board.

Fundamentally, the CBCS proposes to overhaul higher education system in the country in one stroke. The university grants commission (UGC), which is a unique example in the world of a regulator and a funding agency rolled into one, proposed that every university (central, state, private, deemed-to-be etc.) move to this system

immediately. Of course, given that the UGC funds most of these universities, the proposal should be read as a diktat.

CBCS links two key concepts in the dynamics of higher education—choice and assessment. The cafeteria approach, a feature of the now abandoned FYUP, is being reincarnated. Courses are to be sliced and diced into categories like foundation, core and elective and a student can opt for courses of her choice from a bouquet of courses.

It is hard to argue against the desirability of more choice for students though one could nitpick about the actual criteria for clubbing particular courses. Unfortunately, the theoretical attractiveness of this scheme is at odds with its practical limitations.

Infrastructure—both physical and human—even in a well-funded institution like the University of Delhi, is woefully inadequate. Cramped classrooms, shortage of faculty, inadequate library and laboratory facilities etc. will make the scheme unworkable in its spirit. It speaks volumes on how mandarins of higher educa-

tion are far-removed from realities on ground.

Planners of this scheme also seem to be conflating choice with uniformity. The scheme envisages a uniform curriculum, provided on the UGC website, for all universities. The arrogance evident in this riding rough shod over all concepts of academic autonomy is astonishing. Once again, leaving aside the in-principle objections, the practical implications are mind boggling.

Standardising curriculum, such that an undergraduate course is taught in the same way at a small state university with scarce resources and infrastructure as the Delhi University will have disastrous consequences. The differentials in the infrastructure and institutional culture will make any such attempt farcical.

This is not to argue against high academic standards in all institutions of higher education. But for that, we need to empower and equip the faculty in those institutions to formulate and implement those standards.

Finally, the issue of assessment: the UGC claims that "grading system is considered

better than conventional marks system and hence is followed by top institutions in India and abroad". Here, the CBCS seems to be confusing categories. It seems to imply that a simple semantic shift to grades and CGPA is inherently better than the existing system of giving marks. In a system of assessment of absolute performance, grades or marks essentially communicate the same information. It is only when grading is relative, as is the norm in the "top institutions" which the UGC desires to emulate, that grades communicate something more than marks. It is noteworthy that the UGC is not demanding a shift to relative grading.

Systemic changes need to be well thought, discussed and debated among all the stakeholders for them to be efficacious. And what is more, the American adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it", needs to be followed in any large and complex system. Unfortunately, policy makers in education in India seem too enamoured by novelty especially of readymade solutions instead of thinking out of the box. They don't realise the unintended consequence of such a drastic, top-down, hurriedly implemented change will be to erode the standards of higher education in the country. And the price will be paid by poor teenagers who are currently braving the scorching heat to queue up for admission to DU.

*The author is professor of Physics & Astrophysics, University of Delhi*

THE CBCS LINKS TWO KEY CONCEPTS IN THE DYNAMICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION—CHOICE AND ASSESSMENT. UNFORTUNATELY, THE THEORETICAL ATTRACTIVENESS OF THIS SCHEME IS AT ODDS WITH ITS PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS.

SHOBHIT MAHAJAN

## Economic Times ND 02/06/2015 P-6

### Soon, Plan a Rocket Trip to Mars via Moon



Scientists are planning to develop new next-generation rocket

engines that will help people travel to Mars and Moon. The University of Texas at El Paso has been awarded a \$5-million grant from Nasa to develop rocket engines using liquid methane. The methane-based rocket technology would be used for in-space propulsion and ascent and descent engines for Mars and lunar landers. Chair of Mechanical Engineering Ahsan Choudhuri said that liquid methane was a promising fuel for spacecraft since it's economical.- IANS

## Navbharat Times ND 02/06/2015 P-4

### स्मृति इरानी फर्जी डिग्री केस में आदेश 24 को

■ वस, पटियाला हाउस : निर्वाचन आयोग में एजुकेशनल क्वालिफिकेशन के बारे में झूठी सूचना देने के मामले में एचआरडी मिनिस्टर स्मृति इरानी के खिलाफ दायर शिकायत पर अदालत ने अपना आदेश 24 जून के लिए सुरक्षित रख लिया है।

मेट्रोपॉलिटन मजिस्ट्रेट आकाश जैन ने सीनियर एडवोकेट के.के. मनन की दलीलों को सुना। मनन शिकायतकर्ता अहमर खान की ओर से पेश हुए थे। वकील ने अदालत को बताया कि इरानी ने लोकसभा चुनाव और राज्यसभा चुनाव से पहले नॉमिनेशन फाइल करते हुए भारत निर्वाचन आयोग में तीन हलफनामे दायर किए और एजुकेशनल क्वालिफिकेशन के बारे में अलग-अलग ब्योरा दिया। मनन ने कहा कि अप्रैल 2004 के लोकसभा चुनाव में स्मृति ने कहा था कि उन्होंने 1996 में दिल्ली यूनिवर्सिटी (स्कूल ऑफ कॉरस्पोंडेंस) से बीए किया, जबकि गुजरात से राज्यसभा का चुनाव लड़ने के लिए 11 जुलाई 2011 के एफिडेविट में उन्होंने अपनी क्वालिफिकेशन डीयू के स्कूल ऑफ कॉरस्पोंडेंस से बीकॉम पार्ट-1 बताई। अमेठी निर्वाचन क्षेत्र से 16 अप्रैल 2014 के लोकसभा चुनाव के लिए दाखिल हलफनामे में स्मृति ने कहा था कि उन्होंने बीकॉम पार्ट-1 स्कूल ऑफ ओपन लर्निंग, डीयू से किया है। एडवोकेट ने दलील दी कि मुद्दा तब उभरकर सामने आया जब अमेठी से उनके खिलाफ चुनाव लड़ने वाले आम आदमी पार्टी के कैडिडेट ने एजुकेशन क्वालिफिकेशन के बारे में सवाल उठाया। मजिस्ट्रेट ने अपना आदेश 24 जून तक के लिए सुरक्षित रख लिया।

## Sanjay Gupta new chairman of Engineers India Ltd

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/sanjay-gupta-new-chairman-of-engineers-india-ltd/articleshow/47500768.cms>

NEW DELHI: Sanjay Gupta today took over as chairman and managing director of Engineers India Ltd, the state-owned engineering and consultancy, procurement and construction ( EPC) company in hydrocarbons and petrochemicals.

Prior to this, he was Director (Commercial) in EIL, a company statement said here.

Gupta replaced A K Purwaha who superannuated yesterday. An Engineering graduate from IIT Roorkee, Gupta has about 34 years of experience in the company ranging from planning to implementation of mega grassroot projects in the refineries and petrochemical sector.

He took over as Director (Commercial) of EIL in July 2012 and will have a term as head of the company till June 2017 when he superannuate.

## IIT shifts to new campus on July 20

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhubaneswar/IIT-shifts-to-new-campus-on-July-20/articleshow/47497446.cms>

BHUBANESWAR: IIT Bhubaneswar (IITBBS) will start functioning from its permanent campus at Argul village, on the outskirts of the city, from July 20, director of the institute Ratnam Varada Rajakumar said here on Sunday.

He said students will move into the hostels on the new campus from the new academic year. Besides, a section of non-teaching staff and a few faculty members will be accommodated on the campus, though classes will continue at Toshali Plaza for the time being.

"We will soon start a medical facility on the new campus. Since the hospital building is not ready, it will function from the guesthouse," the director said.

For seamless transport from the permanent campus to Toshali Plaza, buses will ply every hour on working days.

The director said makeshift sports facility for the students were ready and finishing touches given to the boundary work.

Currently, IITBBS functions from eight disjointed locations.

When the construction started in November 2011, the institute had December 2013 deadline for the first-phase work, creating facility for 2,500 students, 250 faculty members and 275 support staff. Master plan of the campus was designed to accommodate 10,000 students, 1,000 faculty, 1,100 non-teaching employees, besides 1000 outsourced support staff.

The Centre approved construction of 2, 21,000 square metre of covered area (63,000 square metre for academic complex and 1, 58,000 square metre for residential complex) in the first phase for which it had released Rs 450 crore. Currently, the institute has over 900 students and more than 90 faculty members.