

Newspaper Clips

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MINT ND 30/06/2011 P-10

£450,000 grant for IIT-Delhi from trust

New Delhi: The Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi on Wednesday said it has received £450,000 from UK-based Wellcome trust for further developing a navigational mobility aid for the visually challenged.

IIT-Delhi has developed a hi-tech "Smart Cane" to help blind people navigate busy roads, catch a bus and get "vibratory signals" from an approaching obstacle three meters away by using ultrasonic sensors.

The detachable unit is powered by a rechargeable lithium-ion battery such as those found in mobile phones and cameras. **PRASHANT K. NANDA**

IIT-D to hold 'adaptation classes' for SC/ST students

Charu Sudan Kasturi

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NEW DELHI: In a notice that has sparked accusations of demeaning SC/ST communities, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has asked SC/ST students to come for special classes to help them "adapt to the environment at IIT Delhi."

IIT director Surendra Prasad told HT that the notice, posted on the IIT Joint Entrance Examination site, "was inappropriately worded."

"There is something amiss in the notice. The classes are

meant for all students from rural backgrounds, and not just for SC/ST students, and were conducted last year too," he said.

But SC/ST students demanded that the notice be withdrawn and that IIT issue an apology. "It is demeaning. I am not sure anymore that I want to go to IIT Delhi," Rajesh Kumar, an SC candidate said.

The classes, to be held by the Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation, will help SC/ST students "develop social skills, orientation and ability to adapt to the environment at IIT," the notice states.

Times of India ND 30/06/2011 P15

IIT-Delhi rolls out 'etiquette lessons' for SC-ST students

Experts Say Self-Enrichment Class Smacks Of Apartheid

Hemali Chhapla | TNN

Mumbai: Even before this year's freshmen enter the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi, some others will be pushed to pick up etiquette lessons required to live on the tech school campus. The intention may be noble but putting just the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates through a self-enrichment programme has prompted experts to criticise the move as smacking of apartheid and causing a distinction on the basis of caste.

Delhi is the only IIT to have felt the pressing need to put all the selected SC/ST candidates through classes on manners.

The co-ed programme — which will be run from July 10-17 — is made up of modules on communication, personality

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An IIT faculty member

development and theatre for communication (public speaking). Put together, in all logical integrity, it is meant to boost the confidence of students who come from a different background, say IIT-Delhi heads. An IIT-Delhi faculty member, however, snorts at the idea. "A campus is a symbol of assimilation of many minds and several lives. To carve out a group on the basis of their origins and put them through a training programme — I would

term it nothing short of apartheid," he said. Many parents too aren't kicked about it. "On day one, the institute is telling my child that he is different," rues a parent from Andhra whose son is joining IIT-D.

TISS director S Parasuraman feels it is not useful to segregate students. All students from rural and underprivileged backgrounds need adjustment but putting them through a training programme is not the answer. "IIT-Delhi

needs to have a long-term support system in place and hire better counsellors for every student, not just SC/STs or OBCs," he says.

The residential programme is conducted by the Centre for Research and Education for Social Transformation, Kerala. IIT-D director Surendra Prasad says he would love to leave the door open for any general category student who wants to attend the programme. "The programme came out of our desire to be pro-active, to take care of all our students, especially those who hail from different backgrounds. The academic community at the institute felt a section of students need to be better prepared and confident for their stint at the institute," said Prasad.

Asian Age ND
30/06/2011 P-4

IITs plan three-phase counselling

AGE CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

June 29: For the first time in the history of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), the institute will be conducting three-phase counselling in 2011 instead of the two phases conducted till 2010. This, according to IIT administrators, will help prevent seats going vacant.

Speaking to this newspaper on Wednesday, Prof. V.G. Idichandy, deputy director of IIT Madras, said in 2010 seven students who had paid their fees had not joined the institute. He added that other IITs also faced similar issues. In order to prevent such seats going vacant the IIT administration decided to conduct a third phase of counselling this year.

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Hindustan Times ND 30/06/2011P-11

Home ministry blocks IIT foreign faculty move

Charu Sudan Kasturi

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NEW DELHI: The home ministry has stalled appointments of foreign teachers by Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, despite the HRD ministry's nod — the roadblock hitting plans to globalise faculty at the IITs.

The IITs, India's premier engineering schools, will now need to wait longer to hire foreign teachers even if they hold Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards that give them most eco-

nomie rights available to Indian citizens.

Hiring even OCI card holders — as IIT, Delhi, was doing — is against the Citizenship Act of 1955, in the absence of a special government order, the home ministry has said, sources said.

"It is a setback...and although we expect to sort this out within the government, it has embarrassed IIT, Delhi. It could also end up hurting all the other IITs since foreign faculty — already wary of Indian bureaucracy — may now rethink

IITs WILL NOW HAVE TO WAIT LONGER TO HIRE FOREIGN TEACHERS

whether they want to come to the IITs," a senior official said.

The concerns were raised at a recent meeting between IIT directors and senior HRD ministry officials, sources said. The HRD ministry will now approach the home ministry and the ministry of external affairs (MEA) to try and obtain

an in-principle approval from them for the appointment of foreign faculty at the IITs, the sources added.

"Instead of case-by-case approvals, we want to try and get the home ministry and the MEA agreed to our plan as a general principle, to avoid repeated embarrassments of this nature," a source said. HT was the first to report — on September 2, 2010 — the proposal by the IITs to allow them to hire foreign faculty on a permanent basis.

The IIT Council — the highest decision making body of the IITs — headed by HRD minister Kapil Sibal agreed to the proposal and decided to allow the Institutes to fill up to 10 % of their permanent teaching posts with foreign faculty.

But early in 2011, the MEA raised the first of objections — refusing to liberalise visa norms to allow foreigners to hold permanent jobs in India. It however allowed faculty to be hired on a five-year contract which can be renewed.

Business Standard ND 30/06/2011 p-10

TECH COMPANIES INCREASE PhD HIRING FOR R&D UNITS

With firms expanding India operations, major institutes like IITs, IISc see rise in demand



PRIYANKA JOSHI & KALPANA PATHAK

Internet company Yahoo's recent job notification cries out loud: "Scientists wanted". To meet its requirements in India, the company has even decided to launch a talent hunt with its Yahoo PhD Coop programme in collaboration with major Indian institutes.

Yahoo said the programme will allow its employees to work full-time and do research under the guidance of institute faculty on topics of mutual interest. "We make sure that PhD candidates who join us get to work in labs that are as good as developed countries and are given freedom in developing web products and services for internet users, globally. This programme has a lot of advantages — Yahoos can study full-time, even as they have unrestricted access to the company's data sets and get stipend competitive with fellowships from the best global universities," said Rajeev Rastogi, VP and head of Yahoo Labs, Bangalore.

Launched in 2008, the lab is part of Yahoo Labs network that develops innovative technology services and internet products.

Other multinationals like Intel, AMD, Applied Materials, IBM, Bell

Labs, Microsoft and Google, among others, are also queuing up to hire PhD scholars for their global research units located in India.

AMD on its part, has been tapping the engineering colleges — Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Kolkata — for the last two years to meet its requirements.

AMD said with an increase in architectural level work in India, PhDs are in demand. "AMD has doubled the PhD hiring and looking for more. The company usually hires PhDs as interns and grooms them accordingly. In some cases it gives funding to universities for research and faculty or PhD students work on research," said Shiva Gowni, corporate vice president (Design Engineering), AMD India.

Rastogi, who has published over 125 research papers, with 40 patents to his name, said: "We already have a Key Scientific Challenge (KSC) programme where the company provides \$5,000 unrestricted research seed fund to PhD students. Every year at least two Indian PhD students are selected for KSC, where participation comes from across the globe."

Even computer chip giant Intel is planning to increase the number of PhD recruitments in India from eight last year to a double-digit figure this year. Preethi Madappa, senior HR of Intel said: "We have even launched a PhD programme for our employees in collaboration with IIT Kanpur. Further, to help retain the talent we hire, we ensure that they are given maximum exposure by allowing PhD candidates to work with Intel's R&D centres in Israel and the US."

MORE AND MORE RESEARCH SCHOLARS ARE opting for R&D roles in technology companies, for a fatter pay package

According to the IITs, traditionally, people have been pursuing PhDs to be in academics, but with the technology firms increasingly approaching the IITs and IISc, seeking talent for their R&D functions, more and more PhDs have seen this as an opportunity to earn better and join the corporate sector. Experts said this could be the reason why IITs are facing faculty crunch.

"While you are working with companies, not only the motivation level is higher but there are multiple avenues for employment too," said the placement chairperson at one of the IITs.

According to industry experts, with companies paying anywhere between Rs 6,00,000-8,00,000 per annum they

are bound to be the preferred destination for many. IITs on the other hand, pay Rs 3,00,000 per annum (there are however, benefits which are not monetised).

Probably, this is why Applied Materials, service & equipment provider to panel display, semiconductor industry, ensures that when PhDs join them, they do so at a higher salary range and at a higher grade level compared to fresh graduates.

"We do give credit to the fact that they have worked on their thesis over the past two to three years and we do count that as work experience. Also, PhDs are always a targeted set of people that we go after. Our hiring manager identifies certain projects that the candidate will need to work on, projects that need the competency level of a PhD," said Abhay Singh, director HR, Applied Materials.

Applied Materials, which is building the India site as a research centre, realised that it needs to begin tapping the higher education talent in India and hire PhDs almost two years ago.

At Bangalore-based Bell Labs, 70 per cent of the staff is PhD. Nurturing its own talent pool, the company also provides research internships to Btech, MS and PhD students regularly and also has a graduate student fellowship programme at IIT Delhi for PhD students.

IBM prefers hiring researchers for computer science and related areas. "PhD recruits who want to work on real-world problems leading to solutions that make a direct and measurable impact are hired by IBM for 12 years now," said Rangarajan VA, recruitment leader, IBM India. IBM runs student internship programmes and PhD Fellowships in India.

Companies like Microsoft allow its researchers to work closely with the academia on various research projects and teach courses at some of the premier research institutions in the country.

"Speaking specifically of computer science field, the country currently produces less than 100 PhDs every year, which is just not enough to feed the demand that will be forthcoming from the industry as well as the fast growing education sectors," said Vidya Natampally, director (Strategy), Microsoft Research India.

At present IITs produce around 1,000 PhDs every year against the around 8000-9000 PhDs in engineering and technology scholars annually from the US and China.

Business Line ND 30/06/2011 p-6

Microsoft launches Office 365 in India

Our Bureau

New Delhi, June 29

Microsoft's Office 365 will now be available in India at \$2 a user for a month onward (excluding applicable taxes). This cloud-based product will offer cost-effective business productivity solutions.

Announcing the commercial availability of the program customised for businesses on Wednesday, Mr Sanket Akerkar, Managing Director, Microsoft Corporation India, said: "Office 365 will allow customers to do more with less. We are excited by the enthusiastic response from customers and partners alike."

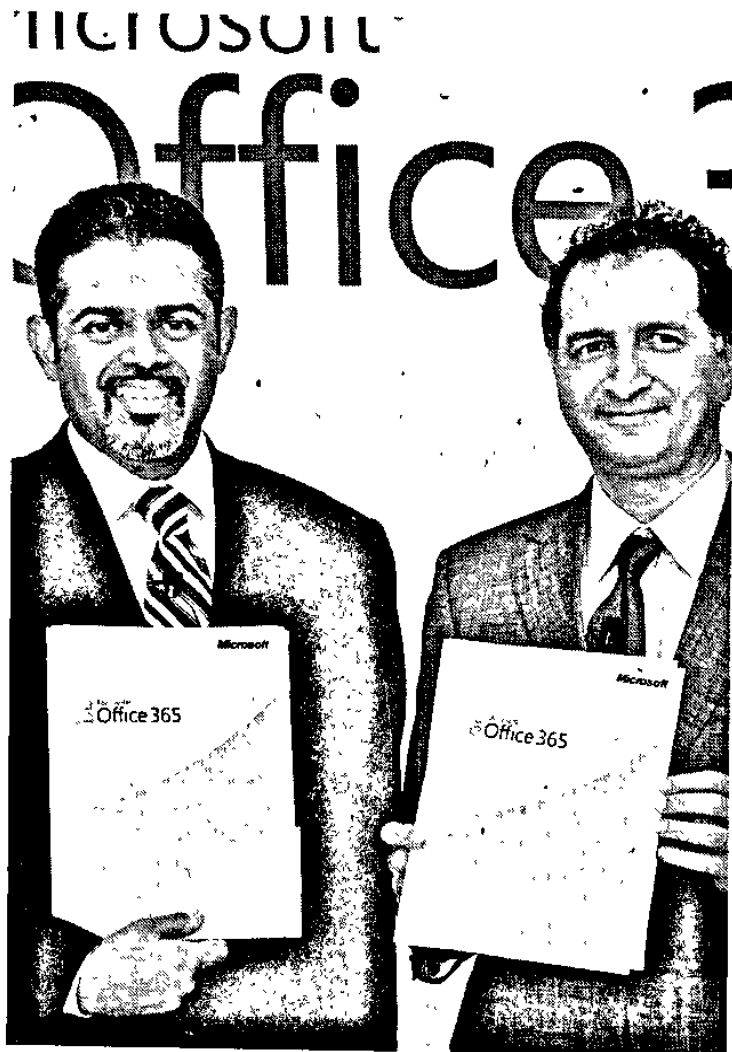
TARGETING SMB SEGMENT

The program will allow small, medium businesses and enterprise customers to access Microsoft's email, collaboration, conferencing and productivity capabilities online.

Over the last 45 days, more than 12,000 organisations have signed up for Office 365 trials, the company said. Globally, over two lakh customers have signed up, it added.

The customers can also avail themselves of Microsoft Office on subscription basis off the cloud.

According to Microsoft's long-range estimate, a typical 1,000 person organisation can cut IT costs by more than \$350,000 a year by moving to the cloud. This is based on long-range estimate over six



Bets on cloud: Mr Sanket Akerkar (left), Managing Director, Microsoft Corporation India Pvt Ltd, with Mr Sanjay Manchanda, Director, Microsoft Business Division, at the launch of Microsoft Office 365, in the Capital on Wednesday.
- Kamal Narang

years for BPOs. While results vary, customers consistently report between 10-50 per cent

cost saving and Microsoft expects that Office 365 will only better customers' experience.

Business Standard ND 30/06/2011 P-10

120,000 MBA, B Tech seats likely to go vacant in Uttar Pradesh

SIDDHARTH KALHANS

Despite a significant rise in the number of engineering and management colleges in Uttar Pradesh, the number of MBA and B Tech aspirants is on a decline.

According to the Director of GCRG Memorial Trust, Vinod Shankar Pandey, there is an acute shortage of students this year. He said many new colleges lack infrastructure and have poor placement record and this could be the main reason the students are not interested in taking admission. Experts said this may also force some of the private engineering and management colleges to close down.

Sources in the education department said barely 50,000 students will appear for counseling for engineering and management courses, starting next week, but there are 170,000

seats available. Out of the 660 seats in the 11 management courses in Lucknow University, 223 seats remained vacant this year. Not a single student opted for the MBA courses in Agriculture Management and Rural Development.

According to officials, students who cleared the State Entrance Examination (SEE) and Management Admission Test (MAT) for admission in B.Tech and MBA are opting for colleges in Noida, Ghaziabad and Meerut because of better placement records. The 600-odd management and engineering colleges in Uttar Pradesh are affiliated to either Gautam Buddha Technical University (GBTU) or Mahamaya Technical University (MTU). About 114,000 seats are available for B.Tech, while for MBA there are 33,600 seats and 965 for MCA. In B.Pharm there are 8,250 seats available in UP colleges.