

Newspaper Clips

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P-8

TASHI TOBGYAL



Dr Vipin Tripathi

IIT prof uses education to bridge India's divides

SEEMA CHISHTI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 13

A SESSION on 'Oscillations and Waves' followed by a three-hour lecture on 'Electromagnetic Waves and Plasma Confinement' wouldn't normally be the kind of event to fill up a college hall, leaving not even standing space.

That's what did happen at Azamgarh's Shibli National College on December 7, when 400 students packed in for these physics sessions by IIT Delhi professor Vipin Tripathi and Banaras Hindu University's Ram Gopal.

According to Tripathi, who has a Ph D on 'Interaction of Electromag-

netic Waves in Gaseous and Solid State Plasmas', it proved once again a theory he has been putting into application. That education, which doesn't cost too much, can bridge the caste, class and sectarian inequalities that continue to plague India.

It was the fifth year that such physics lectures were organised at the co-educational college, which had been founded by Islamist educationist and scholar Shibli Nomani in 1883. Tripathi says that while Azamgarh may be associated with crime and terror now, all he has ever found at the college is boundless enthusiasm.

"There was no place to even stand at the lectures (on December 7) and

they stayed crammed in the room to listen and absorb whatever they could. I was stirred, especially by the girls who were so sharp," Tripathi said.

Tripathi, 64, retired recently but will continue to teach at IIT Delhi until July. He has also taught at the University of Maryland, and had short teaching stints at General Atomic and University of Denver in the US, at the Institute of General Physics in Moscow, and at the Max Planck Institute in Germany.

It was in 1989, however, that he found his true calling, Tripathi says. Moved by the Bhagalpur riots and the spreading Ramshila puja movement, he was drawn towards "looking at how healing could be effected in society".

His Sadbhav Mission NGO has since then striven to use education to break through divides and has been conducting lectures and workshops in riot-affected areas, which are also the most deprived. The most recent work for which Tripathi has been in the news has been with riot victims in Ahmedabad's Muslim ghetto of Juhapura. His efforts have helped get the victims a functional government school.

"I have a friend in the US who has a sandwich shop, and it was from him in 2007 that I learnt about Juhapura, Pandharwada and how the Gujarat riots were continuing to keep the communal divide alive," he says.

That year, he held a mathematics

workshop in Godhra, "with 500 Hindu and 500 Muslim school students together". "The response, their engagement, the teacher training we did, all alerted me to this tool I need to use to bridge distances. Education as a healer and as a liberator was the way forward with youngsters, I concluded."

His Azamgarh workshops too have been a success, and Tripathi sees the thirst for his classes as proof that the past can be put behind.

Tripathi's next stop will be Assam, with the *Sadbhav Mission Patrika*, in its 23rd volume now, talking of the violence in the state leaving people's life disrupted and "schools and classes disrupted".

Hindustan Times , ND 14/03/2013

p-14

IIT-Madras admits to pension package 'interpretation' error

ht FOLLOW UP

Charu Sudan Kasturi

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NEW DELHI: The Indian Institute of Madras on Wednesday accepted that it had paid retirees in excess of what the department of personnel and training (DoPT) had ordered, but insisted that its move was a result of its wrong "interpretation."

"I would say that our interpretation was wrong, but there was no illegality," IIT Madras Director Bhaskar Ramamurthi said, a day after HT reported on the excess pension payments to faculty and staff who retired before 2006.

The Comptroller and Auditor General had pulled up the IIT for the excessive pension payments, and the human resource

IN 2011, THE HRD MINISTRY HAD ORDERED THE IIT TO RECOVER THE EXTRA MONEY PAID TO PENSIONERS AND STOP EXCESS PAYMENTS

development (HRD) ministry too ordered the institute in 2011 to recover the extra money paid to pensioners, and to stop the excess payments.

The IIT did stop the excess payments, but never set up a mechanism to recover the lost money. Pensioners had approached the Madras High Court and obtained a stay order on the HRD ministry order, after which the IIT reinitiated the excess pension payments to retirees.

IIM-B placements: More firms offer leadership roles

BS REPORTER

Bangalore, 13 March

This year, the final placements for the post-graduate programme at the Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore (IIM-B) saw a significant rise in the number of companies offering leadership roles to students. Companies that selected students for such roles included HCL, Reliance Industries, Aditya Birla Group, Tata Group (for Tata Administrative Services), Cisco, Mahindra Group, Hinduja Group, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Cipla, DTDC and Ranbaxy.

"In the final placements this year, we decided to focus on leadership roles for students. Generally, students are selected for various operational roles. They are then groomed for leadership roles. This year, our focus was to look at grooming next-generation leaders," said Sankarshan Basu, professor and chairperson (career development services), IIM-B.

This time, Reliance

Industries selected two students for the company's strategic services unit — the students would work towards enabling the chairman's office to guide and set the direction of the company's long-term strategy. HCL Technologies had the Entrepreneur@Residence initiative, under which the selected candidates would get a chance to work directly under the company's founder and chairman, Shiv Nadar.

"RIL selected six students for various roles in the company. Of these, two were for the strategic services unit. A similar number of students were selected for HCL's Entrepreneur@Residence," Basu said, adding, "As an academic institution, we have not seen any impact of the slowdown on campus hiring."

IIM-B said 381 eligible students had participated in the final placements. Most of the recruitment was accounted for by the consulting segment, in which The Boston Consulting Group made 12 offers.

Times of India 14/03/2013

P-2

IP univ flouts NAAC norms

Accreditation Expired Last Year But Varsity Still Using It

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: The National Assessment and Accreditation Council's (NAAC) certification for Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSI-PU) expired last March and it is yet to be renewed. The university claims it has moved papers for the mandatory renewal, but NAAC insists it's yet to receive several key documents from the university.

At stake are the futures of more than 20,000 students who go to the Delhi government-run institution. University Grants Commission (UGC) mandates that all universities and colleges under its purview must be NAAC-accredited and also linked it to funding and recognition.

Despite the expiry of the accreditation status, the university's new-look website and admission brochure for aca-

Future At Stake

- ▶ Without grade, varsity can't get UGC grants
- ▶ Varsity claims it has applied for renewal, but NAAC says documentation incomplete
- ▶ Varsity flaunting 'A' grade in admission brochure

demic year 2013-14 continue to flaunt its "A" grade. This goes against NAAC's clear instructions stating: "Institutions are advised not to use the status of accreditation after the validity period is over. This amounts to misleading the stakeholders in general and in particular students and public. Institutions are liable to face stringent action by NAAC."

The GGSIPU got accredited in March 2007 and its validity ended on March 2012. Across courses, it admits 22,000 annually. NAAC director H A

Ranganath said: "It's mentioned in the NAAC website as well that post the validity period, institutions are not supposed to use that status as it amounts to misleading students. Since it has been brought to our notice that GGSIPU is mentioning this in their new admission brochures and website, we'll write to the university seeking an explanation." GGSIPU's name also figures in the NAAC's official website under the section "institutions accredited by NAAC whose accreditation validity period is over."

GGSI-PU VC D K Bandyopadhyay said the university had applied for re-accreditation on March 2012 and was awaiting NAAC's assessment. He blamed NAAC for the delay. "We applied in March 2012 and the documents have been sent to NAAC." Asked why the university continues to display its

old accreditation status, he said: "We are expecting the NAAC's team visit any time."

NAAC officials said the varsity's documentation process was incomplete and NAAC had asked for a self-study report which GGSIPU hasn't sent. "GGSI-PU should have applied well in advance as they are aware of the process and validity duration," a NAAC official said. In fact the gazette notification of January 19, 2013 on accreditation said institutions should "apply for re-accreditation six months before the expiry of the five-year period."

As per the notification, no higher education institution or its faculties, schools, departments, centres or units shall be eligible to apply for or receive financial assistance from UGC without undergoing assessment and accreditation.

Now, train at a lab near you for PhD

AICTE to launch programme to promote research in technical fields, eyes 5,000 scholars in three years

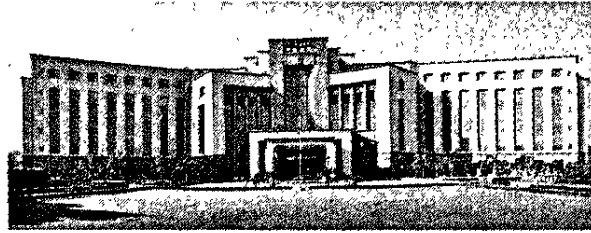
KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai, 13 March

Come April, India's premier research organisations — the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) — could help you clinch that PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in the field of technology, if you are an aspirant.

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) will launch a programme next month, wherein aspirants can apply online to pursue a PhD programme sponsored by it. The regulator for technical education aims to get 5,000 PhDs through this new programme in the next three years.

"We are saying any research lab outside universities can become research centres for PhD aspirants. Whoever registers through this process will get a monthly scholarship of ₹16,000 for two years and ₹18,000 for the third year. We aim to get about 5,000 PhDs in three years," said Shankar S Mantha, chairman, AICTE.

A PhD aspirant will have to apply to AICTE online and provide a choice of five or six research labs that he or she wishes to pursue a PhD at. The



OPEN DOORS A DRDO spokesperson says students are allowed to pursue PhD in various disciplines at their labs

application would be reviewed by an expert committee and then forwarded for approval. The research centres will also interview the aspirant and reserve the right to accept. The centres will also provide guides.

The scheme will be funded by AICTE under its Quality Improvement Programme (QIP), wherein the objective is to upgrade the expertise and capabilities of faculty members of degree-level engineering institutes, the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and the National Institutes of Technical Teachers Training and Research (NITTTR). At present, there are 80 institutions under the QIP and AICTE plans to take that number to 200.

"If you have a structured

methodology to increase the number of PhDs, it makes things easier for everyone involved. There have been several requests from different places for improving the PhD strength in our country, and we have been trying to work out

how we could increase their number," added Mantha.

A DRDO spokesperson said students were allowed to pursue PhDs in various disciplines at their labs.

At present, India has around 35,000 PhDs in various disciplines. Of these only 8,000 hold a PhD in pure technical education. Experts say the shortage of faculty and research scientists in India is 150,000. In engineering, the shortage of qualified PhD faculty members is

between 20,000 and 30,000.

Technical education, which includes technology, management, architecture and pharmacy, has around 450,000 teachers. But less than half of these are PhDs.

"This will be an interesting programme, with good potential. If AICTE implements it well, it will be a good step forward. However, getting good candidates, as well as advisors, is a challenging task, but not impossible," said Surendra Prasad, former director of Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi.

Institutes like the IITs have been aiming to promote research and improve the quality and output of research by bringing in young talent. At present, the IITs produce around 1,000 PhDs every year, against 8,000-9,000 engineering and technology scholars annually in the US and China.

According to the IITs, traditionally, people have been pursuing PhDs to be in academics. But with technology firms increasingly approaching the IITs and the Indian Institute of Science seeking talent for their research and development functions, more and more PhDs have seen this as an opportunity to earn more and join the corporate sector.

FRESH CHAPTER

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According to experts, with companies paying ₹6,00,000-8,00,000 per annum, they are bound to be the preferred destination for many. Engineering institutions, on the other hand, pay just over ₹3,00,000 per annum (however, there are benefits which are not monetised).

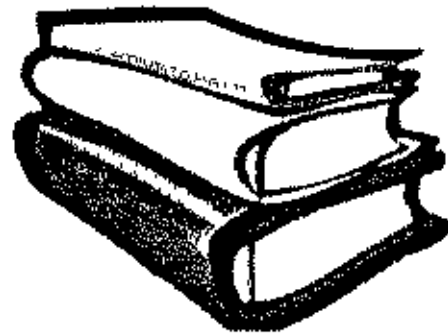
Deccan Herald ND 14/03/2013 P-4

'HRD team to inspect IIT Rajasthan soon'

KOTA, PTI: A team of Union human resources development ministry will be visiting the site of the proposed Indian Institute of Information Technology, Rajasthan (IIIT-R) at the end of the month, Kota-Bundi MP Ijjayraj Singh said on Wednesday.

"The formalities about IIIT-R in Kota by Rajasthan government have been completed," said Singh, adding that he had met and had discussions with the minister of state for human resources M M Pallam Raju and other officials of the ministry in New Delhi on Monday.

The proposed IIIT-R has to be set up on a public-private partnership model as 50 per



cent of the expenditure for the institute would be contributed by the centre, 35 per cent by Rajasthan government and 15 per cent would be funded by the companies in partnership, he said.

A 100-acres land for IIIT-R has already been allotted in Ranpur area here. The companies associated with the institute are Cairn India, Birla Group (NEC), Vakrangee Software and Genpact India.

Hindustan Times , ND 14/03/2013

p-17

Jayalalitha joins DMK in opposing new UPSC norms

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayalalithaa joined her arch rival, DMK chief M Karunanidhi, in opposing fresh examination norms announced by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for selection of IAS, IFS and IPS aspirants. A day after the DMK chief described the new system as a bid to impose Hindi on non-Hindi areas, she wrote to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh listing four reasons why non-Hindi students will be discriminated in the scheme of the Civil Services Examination for the year 2013 onwards.

“These changes are highly discriminatory and appear to be calculated to bias the system against civil service aspirants from non-Hindi speaking regions of the country and affect governance,” she said in her letter.

Jayalalithaa said the option of writing the exam in Tamil for students who had Tamil as their medium of education up to high school level and did their graduation in English medium had been removed. She added there was no such stipulation for candidates who appeared in the Hindi medium.

She mentioned the second “discriminatory” change as candidates wanting to opt for literature of a language as their optional paper being able to do so only if they had studied the literature of the language at the graduation level as the main subject. Such a stipulation had



■ Jayalalithaa

not been made for any other language, she added.

Jayalalithaa said the third change stipulating a minimum of 25 candidates having to opt for a particular language medium for holding the exam in that language was violative of the Constitutional right to equality.

She added the fourth change removing the compulsory qualifying paper in an Indian language and the inclusion of an English composition and précis writing section was biased towards urban English-speaking candidates.

EXAM FORMAT OF CMAT REVAMPED

In a first, candidates appearing for the Common Management Admission Test in the next session in September will have to face questions testing their emotional quotient (EQ).

The all-India CMAT, an entry test for 3,000 business schools across the country, will include this aspect to gauge candidates' preparedness for becoming managers and would account for 25 to 30 marks of the total 400.

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50% rise in US visas issued to Indian students in 2012

Himanshi Dhawan | TNN

New Delhi: Getting an American university degree is back on the popularity charts following a two-year dip. Latest data shows an increase of 50% in visas issued to Indian students since last year. Incidentally, this could finally buck the trend for the last two years. There are about 100,270 students currently studying in the United States.

According to the US consulate services 5600 student visas have been issued in India between October 2012-February 2013 marking a 50% increase since last year.

The Open Door report 2012—that documents international students studying in the US—notes the number of Indian students in the U.S. in 2011-2012 dropped 3.5% compared to the previous year, marking two consecutive years of decline.

India had been the leading place of origin for international students in the U.S. from 2001-

02 through 2008-09 before being overtaken by China.

Students from India make up approximately 13.1% of the total foreign student population in the United States.

Speaking on the rise in student visas US embassy consul general Josh Glazeroff said, “We are seeing really big growth in student visa issuance so far... For us it is a huge jump... really positive. We think this is in response to all the outreach we have been doing.”

The consular services in conjunction with the US-India Educational Foundation (USEIF) has in recent months targeted not just schools in metro cities but tier II cities as well.

Outreach programs have been held in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, Guwahati in the last few months.

The visa section also issued 500,000 visas for tourist and business travel last year, up by 12%, which is the highest in the last 5 years.

HT Chandigarh

IIT RUPNAGAR TO HOLD FEST

HT Live Correspondent

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RUPNAGAR: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Rupnagar, will organise its annual cultural fest ‘Zeitgeist-13’ on the campus from March 14 to 16. During the three day fest, various events, including dance, music, drama, literary events and workshops, will be conducted.

HT New Delhi

Malaria vaccine: Indian scientists take a leap forward

Vanita Srivastava

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NEW DELHI: In a major scientific advance, scientists at the International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi, have discovered key antigens and say that the discovery would pave way for the development of a novel malaria vaccine against *Plasmodium falciparum*, one of the species of the parasite that causes malaria in humans.

The study — supported with competitive funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Vaccine Grand Challenge Program of the Department of Biotechnology — has recently been published in

We've devised a novel approach that blocks malaria parasite & leads to neutralisation.

DEEPAK GAUR
Principal Investigator
in malaria group, ICGEB

Infection & Immunity journal of the American Society of Microbiology (ASM).

The ICGEB scientists have tested a large number of antibody combinations for the invasion inhibitory potential and finally identified a combination of three parasite antigens that elicited potent inhibition against the *P. falciparum* strains.

“We have devised a novel approach that efficiently blocks the malaria parasite

and leads to its neutralization. Based on this study, we have also filed a PCT application for the award of an International patent.” says Deepak Gaur, Principal Investigator in the Malaria Group, ICGEB and the lead corresponding author of the paper “Our study identifies key parasite antigens that can form the basis of an effective malaria vaccine. The next step is to devise a strategy to deliver these antigens to elicit potent immune responses in humans,” Chetan Chitnis, principal investigator in the malaria group at ICGEB, said.

The ICGEB malaria group is uniquely positioned with a large portfolio of antigens in its pipeline for the development of malaria vaccines.