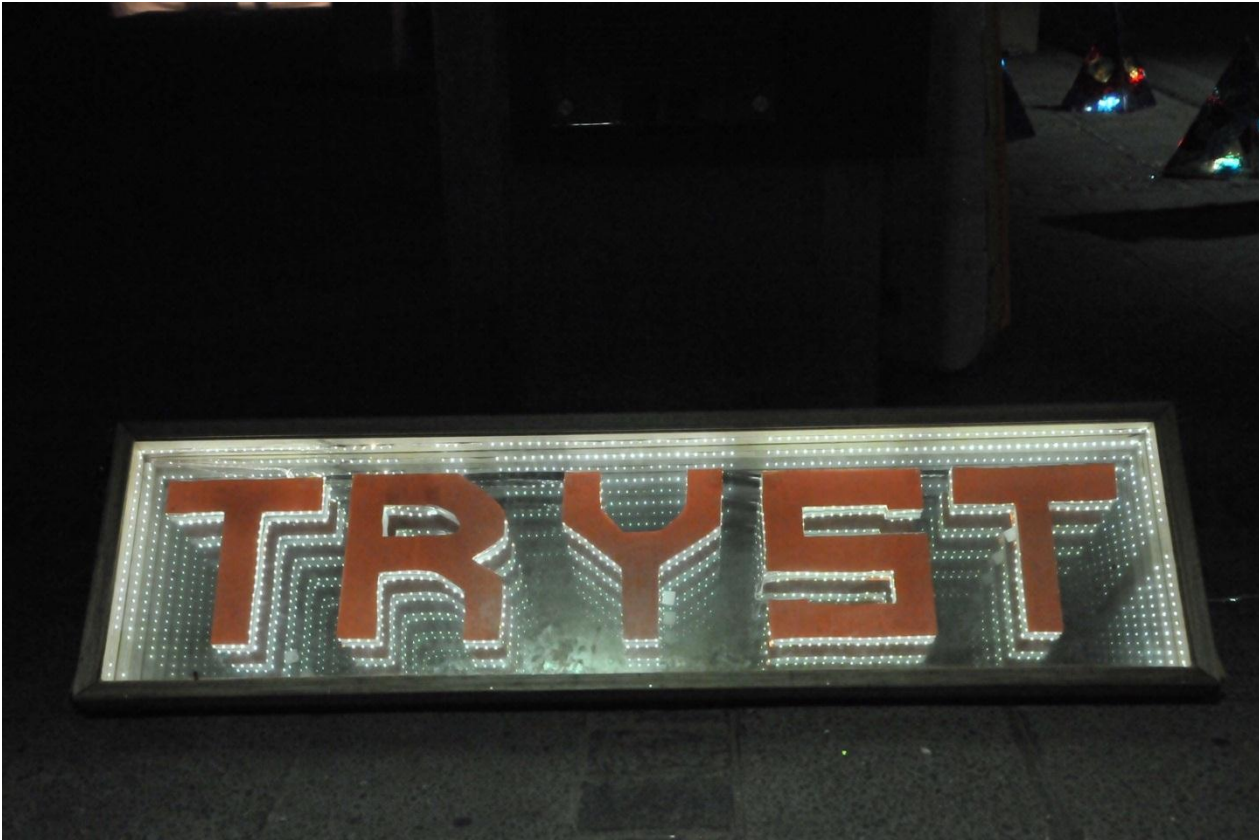


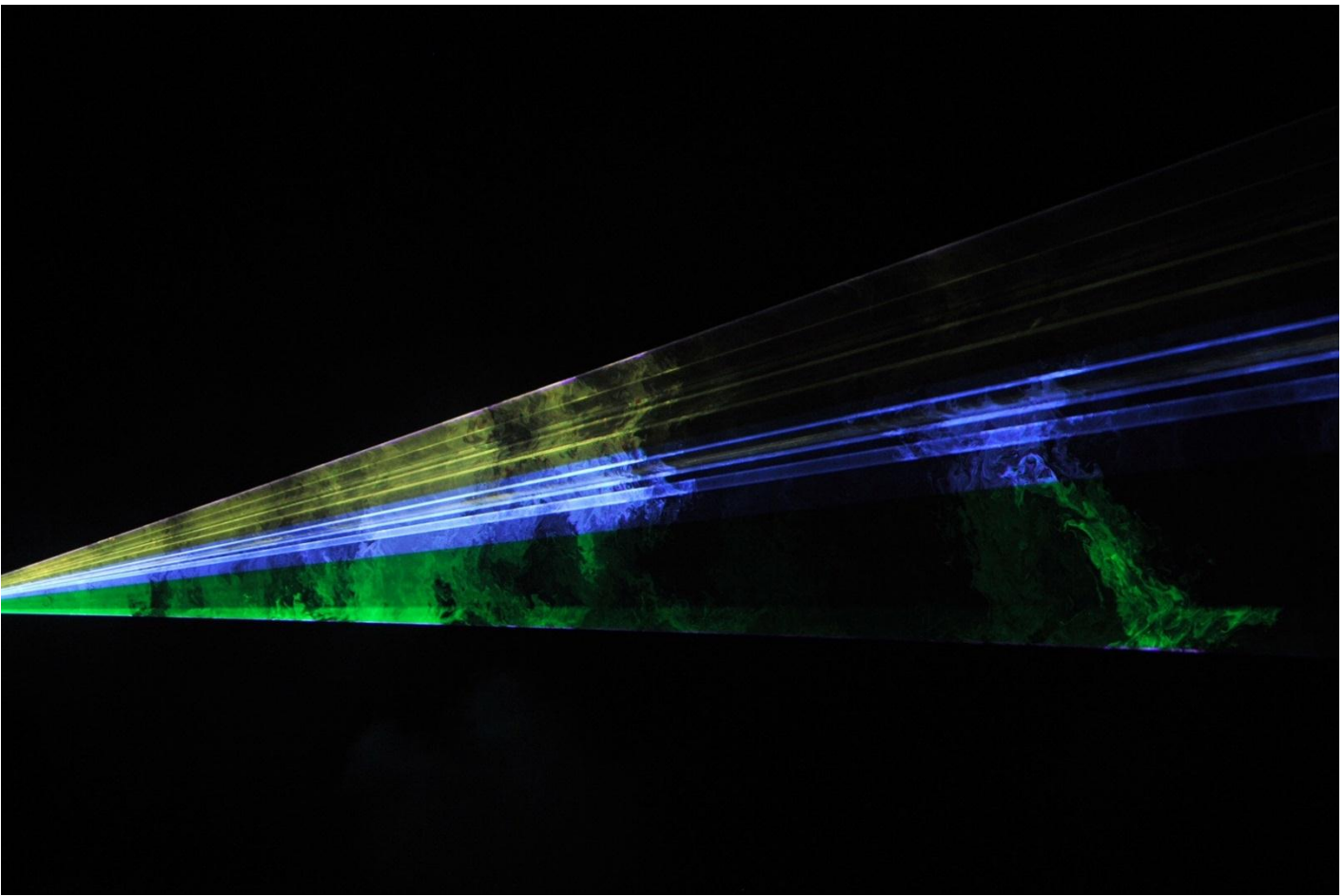
## Newspaper Clips March 4, 2016

### **IIT Delhi tech fest 'TRYST' ends on a high note**

<http://www.pagalguy.com/articles/iit-delhi-tech-fest-tryst-ends-on-a-high-note-40692067>



There couldn't have been better utilization of February 29, than to watch one of India's largest annual Technical Festival conclude. IIT Delhi's "vmock Tryst" powered by Robosapiens and driven by Datsun. This 3-day extravaganza was flagged off on February 26, with a theme called 'FIFTH DIMENSION,' which celebrates the idea of Gravity being a dimension just like spatial coordinates and time.



The inaugural ceremony left the crowd craving for more laser shows and robot dances performed not by humans but by robots themselves. This marked the beginning of a line-up of more than 100 events which included guest lectures, competitions, informal events, workshops, debating events etc. You name an event and they had it. The first day of the fest had lectures of Dr Archana Sharma, Mr Kris Gopalakrishnan, Mr Sudhir Sethi, Mr Kunal Shah and some more eminent personalities. And who can forget the amazing workshops namely Rubik's Cube, FSAE and the one by none other than Mr Arsh Dilbagi. These events were followed by myriad competitions like RoboSoccer, Robowars, quizzes like Electroquiz, Astro Quiz, trailed by a Gaming Night to everyone's delight. The winners of TATA Pioneer's makerthon were also announced on Day 1.

Day 2 saw engaging events like Youth Parliament, Paper Presentation, Fake Research, Mock Stocks etc. Where else do we see such a perfect combination of economics, literature and technical events than at Tryst? It was a great pleasure to hear personalities like Mr. Richard Stallman, Dr Jayati Ghosh. The informal stage events ensured that everybody is well entertained. Flipkart Q&A Session with Mr Sachin Bansal and Mr Binni Bansal was the cynosure of the day.

The final day was lined up with events like Bridge Building, Embeddrix, Speedy CAD Design etc. It was great to be an audience to lecturers like Mr Charley Lineweaver and Mr Ralph Leighton. The elite IIT Parliamentary Debate Competition also concluded on the final day. This 4-day festival saw massive crowds from over 300 prestigious technical colleges and no denying the fact that Tryst duly served its aim of bringing together world's leading scientific minds along with renowned technologists and influential thinkers and connecting them to the students and faculty across India.



## अफगानिस्तान के नवनिर्माण से प्रेरणा लें आईआईटी छात्र

कानपुर (एसएनबी)। आईआईटी में गुरुवार से शुरू हुए चार दिनी टेक्नोफेस्ट 'टेककृति' का उद्घाटन करने बतौर विशिष्ट अतिथि पहुंचे अफगानिस्तान के पूर्व राष्ट्रपति डॉ. हामिद करजई ने तालिबानी आतंकवाद से त्रस्त अफगानिस्तान के नव निर्माण की कहानी सुना छात्रों को कुछ खास करने के लिए प्रेरित किया। करजई ने कहा कि आतंक के चलते अफगानिस्तान का कोई भविष्य नहीं था, लेकिन अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रयासों व अफगानी नागरिकों के सकारात्मक सहयोग से आतंकवाद को खत्म कर देश को विकास की पटरी पर लाया गया। उन्होंने अफगानिस्तान की बर्बादी में पाकिस्तान का हाथ बताते हुए उसकी घेरेबंदी की व भारत को परम मित्र बताया।



■ अफगानिस्तान के पूर्व राष्ट्रपति ने आईआईटी टेककृति का किया शुभारंभ

डॉ. करजई के आईआईटी आगमन पर आतंकी खतरे के केंद्र व राज्य सरकार से मिले इनपुट पर बाहर व अंदर कड़े सुरक्षा प्रबंध थे। इस कारण परिसर में आने-जाने में लोगों को दिक्कत हुई। टेक्नोफेस्ट कार्यक्रम का शुभारंभ डॉ. हामिद के हाथों देर शाम संपन्न हुआ। तत्पश्चात डॉ. हामिद ने आईआईटी छात्रों व शिक्षकों को संबोधित किया। उन्होंने पाकिस्तान को घेरते हुए कहा कि अफगानिस्तान की बर्बादी के पीछे उसी की भूमिका रही। उन्होंने

भारत को परम मित्र व विश्वसनीय बताते हुए कहा कि भारत से सदैव मदद मिली है। आईआईटी के तकनीकी छात्रों की सराहना करते हुए डॉ. हामिद ने कहा कि उन्हें पढाई व रिसर्च के साथ इनज्वाय भी करना चाहिए। तकनीकी क्षेत्र में तमाम सफलतायें हासिल करने के लिए उन्होंने आईआईटी व उसके छात्रों को सराहा और कहा कि तकनीकी रास्ते से हम विकास के पथ पर बढ़ सकते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि यही कारण है कि आईआईटी कानपुर का निमंत्रण मिलते ही उन्होंने तुरंत स्वीकार कर लिया। उन्होंने उम्मीद जतायी कि इस टेक्नोफेस्ट में विद्यार्थी इनोवेशन, रिसर्च व डिजाईनों पर माथापच्ची करने के साथ ही जमकर मनोरंजन भी करेंगे।

## आईआईटी टेक्निकल फेस्टिवल शुरू

एजेंसी, कानपुर

आईआईटी कानपुर में गुरुवार की शाम से शुरू टेक्निकल फेस्टिवल टेक कृति में देश के विभिन्न शिक्षण संस्थानों के छात्र- छात्रायें भाग ले रहे हैं।

आईआईटी के इस 22 वें टेक्निकल समारोह की शुरुआत गुरुवार की रात अफगानिस्तान के पूर्व राष्ट्रपति हामिद करजई करेंगे जबकि छह मार्च को इसके समापन समारोह में विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता विकास स्वरूप और फिल्म

■ फेस्टिवल टेक कृति में देश के विभिन्न शिक्षण संस्थानों के छात्र- छात्रायें भाग ले रहे हैं

अभिनेता निर्देशक फरहान अख्तर शामिल होंगे। टेक कृति के मीडिया प्रभारी शुभम मित्तल ने गुरुवार को एक प्रेस वार्ता में बताया कि इस तीन दिवसीय कार्यक्रम में टेक्नालोजी से संबंधित करीब 50 प्रतियोगितायें आयोजित की जायेंगी जिनमें देश के अनेक तकनीकी

संस्थानों के छात्र शरीक होंगे।

इस दौरान विभिन्न तकनीकी मुद्दों पर संगोष्ठी, प्रश्न उत्तर कार्यक्रम आदि आयोजित किये जायेंगे साथ ही साथ छात्र अपनी तकनीकी ज्ञान का प्रदर्शन भी करेंगे। उन्होंने कहा कि इस कार्यक्रम के आयोजन का मकसद विभिन्न क्षेत्रों के लोगों को यहां बुलाकर उनसे उनके क्षेत्र का ज्ञान हासिल करना है। आईआईटी परिसर में करजई के आगमन को देखते हुये यहां सुरक्षा व्यवस्था अत्यन्त कड़ी कर दी गयी है।

# Higher education is not just about funding

The Budget outlay apart, an ambience of autonomy and a focus on soft skills are just as important



ASHISH NANDA

**T**he Budget identifies education as one of the key pillars of its agenda. It offers support on three dimensions – reach, infrastructure, and quality in higher education.

**Extend reach:** The Budget aims to extend the reach of education. At the post-secondary level, it focuses on expanding skill development (by scaling up the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana through setting up of 1,500 multi-skill training institutes) and entrepreneurship education (offering online courses in entrepreneurship to 2,200 colleges, 300 schools, 500 ITIs, and 50 vocational training centres).

**Strengthen infrastructure:** The budget commits investments in educational infrastructure. For higher education, this would include establishment of a digital depository for certificates and mark sheets, development of massive open online courses (MOOCs) in entrepreneurship, and formation of a higher education financing authority (HEFA) with an initial capital base of ₹1,000 crore for financing improvements in infrastructure of top institutions.

**Improving quality:** The Budget emphasises ensuring quality, beyond extending reach. For post-secondary education, this would include establishment of a national board for skill development certification, and identification and support of 20 institutions through implementation of an enabling regulatory architecture to help them emerge as world-class institutions.

Given India's size, demography,

and state of economic development, extending educational reach is an ongoing and important concern. What is novel is that the budget explicitly recognises that along with increasing reach, attention must also be paid to improving quality. If education is truly to build capacity of our nation and its populace, it has to be available and affordable, but also impactful.

Additionally, although investment in infrastructure does not bring immediate and visible gains, strong infrastructure significantly improves the effectiveness of other initiatives, such as push for reach or quality.

Several institutions of higher learning have cumulated a history of academic excellence, but their physical facilities are crumbling. HEFA investment will facilitate improved quality of education by making the physical environment in those institutions more conducive to learning.

Such an approach is likely to have more significant and positive impact than exclusive focus on any one dimension.

## Some questions

However, the budget raises three questions as well. How those concerns are addressed will significantly influence how successful the budget's various initiatives eventually are.

**Making the right choices:** To be impactful, the budget makes choices on where to focus. If the choices are made well, results will be positive; if the choices are made poorly, investments will be wasted. For instance, the budget emphasises entrepreneurship training through MOOCs.

One could argue that entrepreneurship courses don't develop entrepreneurs; students are nurtured into entrepreneurs by providing them a rich ecosystem of angel investors, venture funds, and mentors. If that be true, entrepreneur-



Let it fly Higher education in India really needs a fresh take off THE HINDU

ship would be encouraged by emphasising ecosystem development over course delivery.

Another potentially consequential choice is the proposal to support 10 public and 10 private institutions.

For instance, if there are 30 public and 20 private institutions in the consideration set, then the approach offers better access to resources to private institutions rather than public institutions.

A better approach would be to support a particular number of institutions, say 20, irrespective of whether they are public or private. This approach would offer equal opportunities to both sectors.

**Implementing initiatives:** The Budget provides a roadmap. But the details present an interesting picture. How the various initiatives are implemented will largely determine their efficaciousness.

For instance, if the various investment decisions (such as which institutions get what share of HEFA funding) are made in a transparent and meritocratic manner, educa-

tional institutions will vie for investments by trying to excel and developing plans to utilise the investments effectively.

If the investment decisions are made in a way that carry even hints of capriciousness or nepotism, educational institutions will vie for investments by seeking favours and peddling influence.

Another example of interpretation being the key to implementation of plans is the current uncertainty as to the nature of enabling regulatory architecture proposed to help high quality institutions become world class.

"Enabling regulation" might appear an oxymoron to some. A distinguishing characteristic of world-class academic institutions is that they have considerable latitude in operations. Our academic institutions might need "enabling deregulation" to set them operationally free.

Perhaps, that is what the phrase "enabling regulation" implies: replacing a regime of administrative estate control with a regime of ad-

ministrative freedom with regulatory oversight.

However, the proof of this pudding – how enabling regulation will make our high quality institutions become globally competitive – lies in the eating. We have to wait to see the shape these enabling regulations take.

**Building "soft" assets:** Finance Budget has to speak the language of "hard" financial investments. In the education sector, even more than other sectors, the effectiveness of these investments depends acutely on complementary "soft" investments in human capital.

To get meaningful results, financial investments must be blended with human capital investments that strengthen skills and culture.

Thus, the finance budget must be coupled with a complementary HRD ministry plan on development of human capital in academic institutions, such as plans to develop faculty capabilities and nurture vibrant academic cultures.

The writer is Director, IIM Ahmedabad

# 'There is both fear and regret in the air'

## Sedition Debate: Academics Explain Stand

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** "For patriotism to have any real meaning, you have to open up universities," said Satish Deshpande of Delhi University's sociology department. "Nationalism doesn't survive through repetition of mantras or through symbols but through defending it. If you can't question, you can't defend," he said. His colleague in the Hindi department, Apoorvanand, compared the present situation to that of Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini.

Over a dozen of Delhi's best-known academics from DU, Jamia Millia Islamia, Ambedkar University, South Asian University and even IIT came together to explain their stand on Thursday. Attacking institutions of higher education, said Deshpande, is attacking the "only significant resource we have to address inequality". "You can't be a deeply unequal society and a democracy for long," he said.

The teachers also addressed the "public resentment" against universities. "I would blame the universities. If they

**“ If you can't question nationalism, you can't defend it...You cannot be a deeply unequal society and a democracy for long**

**SATISH DESHPANDE**  
Sociology department, DU

had been successful, the ordinary public would have had the language to convey their issues, their frustration. But they have no other symbol to attack and universities have become readily available targets," Deshpande said.

Countering the argument that students in public-funded universities were benefiting from taxpayers' money and shouldn't, therefore, participate in politics, the teachers argued that universities are higher education spaces and not merely "training institutes". "If there's any constant, it's change. And we have to deal with changes; we need people who'll have the confidence and ability to think creatively and differently," Deshpande said.

Rajan Krishnan of Ambedkar University also pointed out that if students have the right to vote, they "have the right to speak about development". "It is not for the state to decide what people should do with the nation. If there is a law and order situation, then the state can step in. How can taking a position on a political question be sedition?" he said.

Krishnan wasn't the only one to object to the government's model of a student. "If we're to follow the guru-shishya paradigm, my students should genuflect every time they see me. They should touch my feet or kiss my hands. This is the sort of paternalism universities need to fight," said Sunil Kumar of DU's history department.

Apoorvanand spoke of the increased surveillance and vigilantism: "Teams are going around to check what seminars, talks and plays are being held. Principals, VCs and department heads are being threatened into withdrawing permission because nobody wants an FIR. There is an atmosphere of fear and regret."

## Bengaluru to house largest IIT Alumni Centre; incubator to fund new ideas

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/bengaluru-to-house-largest-iit-alumni-centre-incubator-to-fund-new-ideas-116030400189\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/bengaluru-to-house-largest-iit-alumni-centre-incubator-to-fund-new-ideas-116030400189_1.html)

### Alumni have purchased land from Karnataka government for the project to come up near electronics city

Bengaluru will house India's largest Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Alumni Centre in the country that when setup will house an incubator for startups and will take up projects to serve societal needs. The project being funded by the alumni of various IITs saw its first fundraiser event recently.

The city, which houses the single largest number of [IIT](#) graduates in the country, will become home to the second such centre — the first was setup in Chennai. The alumni have purchased land from the Karnataka government for the project to come up near electronics city by 2018.

"The alumni interaction centre will be a place where alumni can interact and contribute to society and industry. As part of that, there is an incubation centre being planned,"

said Kris Gopalakrishnan, Infosys co-founder and an IIT alumnus. "It will be an engagement platform for alumni to interact with government, interact with society and give back to society."

Due to be completed in March 2018, the centre will house an incubation centre for startups, will serve as a place for alumni to interact, work together on solving societal issues and even form an advisory to state governments. The centre will be open to current and ex-IITians and faculty. It will also invite corporate and research institutions where IITians are working.

Bengaluru is home for several [IIT alumni](#) turned head honchos that include [Nandan Nilekani](#) and N R Narayana Murthy of Infosys, Sachin and Binny Bansal of Flipkart, Pranay Chulet of Quikr, Bhaskar Bhat of Titan.

Gopalkrishnan added that the current plan is to "build a corpus so that various activities can be supported in the long run."

## Day after protest, signature campaign resumes at IISc

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/Day-after-protest-signature-campaign-resumes-at-IISc/articleshow/51237956.cms>

Bengaluru: The signature campaign at IISc in support of JNU students, which was suspended on Tuesday following protests by a section of students, resumed on Wednesday in the presence of security officials.

The administration and the student council said the presence of security personnel at the C&D Mess where signatures were being collected by students was simply a precautionary measure.

Students organizing the campaign as well as those against it claimed Monday's protest was blown out of proportion by a section of media. About 200 students have signed the letter during the campaign by IISc students, including Concern, an organization of liberal and Left-leaning individuals. The campaign will continue on Thursday and Friday, following which the letter will be sent to President Pranab Mukherjee.

"There was sloganeering and a few posters we were distributing were torn down. But there was no violence of any sort. The furniture was not upturned or destroyed," said one of the students.

"Only about 40-50 people had signed. But the letter seemed to suggest that this was the opinion of the entire campus. We protested against that," another student said.

Wednesday's letter, a copy of which is with TOI, stated that individuals had signed it in their personal capacity and the institution's affiliation was being provided only for identification purposes.

### **What does letter say**

The campuses are democratic spaces where ideas should be debated, critique and refined. Expressing dissent democratically is the only way to generate thoughts that will aid in the progressive journey of our country. Aggression by the state and state-sponsored mobs launching attacks on discourses happening inside JNU is alarming. The incidents that unfolded at JNU could not be looked in isolation in the wake of recent occurrences at IIT Madras, the University of Hyderabad and even FTII-Pune. Invoking draconian sedition laws to suppress dissent reflects a regime of authoritarian intolerance to any alternate views. Indian nationalism is built on liberating values such as respect, cooperation and co-existence of communities, not on the narrow perspectives that choke the very harmony of the nation," it stated, asking the government to refrain from its aggression in JNU and other academic centres, take action against hooligans like the lawyers at Patiala Court and those who were behind doctoring evidence for political agenda.



## Photo Recognition Tool on Website to Help IIT Madras Alumni Reconnect

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/Photo-Recognition-Tool-on-Website-to-Help-IIT-Madras-Alumni-Reconnect/2016/03/04/article3309467.ece> Email 3



(Clockwise from top) R Natarajan (extreme right) the first registrar of IIT-M looks on as his daughter Priya receives a gift from the comforts of her mother's lap; Priya taking a photo of the digitised album on her mobile phone; and an age ripened R Natarajan | martin louis

CHENNAI: Hoping to reconnect with alumni through the ages, IIT Madras' heritage website [heritage.iitm.ac.in](http://heritage.iitm.ac.in) may soon be equipped with a photo recognition tool, where faces can be tagged - similar to Facebook. The idea, already discussed with the institution's six member heritage committee, was announced at the 10th anniversary celebrations of their Heritage Centre that saw the attendance of alumni dating back to the early 60s and even the first registrar of IIT M, R Natarajan.



(Clockwise from top) R Natarajan (extreme right) the first registrar of IIT-M looks on as his daughter Priya receives a gift from the comforts of her mother's lap; Priya taking a photo of the digitised album on her mobile phone; and an age ripened R Natarajan | martin louis

"One of the initiatives our office has taken is to get more alumni to visit our campus, and rekindle memories," said professor R Nagarajan, Dean of International and Alumni Relations said at the function. And the concept is quickly picking up momentum thanks to the recent revamp of the institution's 'virtual' heritage centre that according to curator Kumaran Sathasivam now has 13,000 photos tracing through time digitised. He said, "It took a couple of months with the help of experts, and we also digitised about a 100 of the students' publications released on campus way back like Focus and Campastimes." Incidentally, Sathasivam, an alumnus who wrote for the latter in the 80s, even released a book on the heritage of IIT M, titled Campaschimes, a play on the title of the publication he wrote for as a student. With a heritage gallery open all day at the campus, plans are underway to have the space staffed by students on a rotation basis by the end of the year, said a professor. This way the black and white photos of yore that cover everything from classrooms to convocations to culturals - will have a roomful of fresh faces to tell their tale.

### **DID you know?**

- When IIT M was founded in 1959, the campus was all forest, so it's marble foundation stone was actually laid outside the campus, in Kotturpuram

■ The opening year had a little over a 100 students who studied in classes at ACTech as classrooms were yet to be built

■ Interestingly, the hostel students who cycled from Saidapet and Guindy were not divided based on their chosen subjects, but rather on their choice of food - one was the vegetarian hostel and the other non-vegetarian

## IIT-M: Madras brew

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blink/cover/iitm-madras-brew/article8309857.ece>



The Hindu Going political: Protests, following the ban on APSC, helped bring a degree of political awareness to a campus known for being apolitical. Photo: K V Srinivasan

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Political protests have arrived at the doorstep of the ‘proudly apolitical’ IIT-Madras

On February 23, 56 teachers from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Madras wrote to President Pranab Mukherjee about their concern over recent developments in institutions of higher education. “Calling for dismemberment and ruin of our country in the name of dissent is not acceptable,” the anguished academics wrote.

The statement was reportedly drafted by Shreepad Karmalkar, who teaches at IIT-M’s department of electrical engineering. Karmalkar later told the media that the statement was prompted by the recent agitations in Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Hyderabad and even IIT-M. “We support intellectual freedom, and alternative views are a must for democracy and creativity. However, there is a deep distortion of the meaning of academic freedom,” the statement said.

But not many seem to agree. “This is phoney,” says an IIT-M faculty member who does not want to be named. “These academics appear deeply ignorant about how the government has been treating innocent students and teachers in JNU,” he says. Instead of standing with their ilk, they are dancing to the State’s tunes, he says. “This is quite unfortunate, and the fact is they don’t quite believe in giving room for alternative views.”

Agrees Akhil Bharathan, a student of development studies, and a member of Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle (APSC), the group which IIT-M banned in May last year, triggering nationwide protests. “It was a paranoid move by the HRD ministry,” Bharathan says about the ban. The group was derecognised after the HRD ministry received an anonymous complaint, which it diligently forwarded to IIT-M. The letter alleged that the APSC was sparking “hatred” against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Hindus. The group was derecognised for allegedly violating the institute’s code of conduct. “Your student body is derecognised by the institute,” Sivakumar Srinivasan, the dean, had informed the students over email. Srinivasan signed off his mail with a motto: “On a mission to nurture the students of today to be change leaders of tomorrow”.

“The ban also exposed the dormant casteism on the campus,” says Pratheesh Prakash, an IIT-M alumnus, who was a vocal supporter of the APSC. Bharathan and his APSC comrades met with stiff opposition from a section of students and academics. He even received threats. “I got messages saying my family members will be raped and killed,” he says. “All we did was conduct discussions on the writings of Babasaheb Ambedkar, the architect of India’s Constitution, which is the backbone of institutions such as the IITs.”

The issue soon snowballed into a controversy — online and offline. Social media witnessed intense debates. And the administration had to retract. On June 8, the institute unconditionally reinstated APSC’s recognition, a move which was welcomed by DMK chief Muthuvel Karunanidhi, among others.

Many believe the APSC agitation was epochal. “It was unprecedented in the history of IITs, which rarely witness political protests,” says Prakash. The protests helped bring a degree of political awareness to a campus known for being apolitical. “To be fair, this was an achievement,” says Bharathan. Many students agree that the APSC episode gave them the confidence to be vocal with their dissent.

“The best thing that happened was several students took up copies of *The Annihilation of Caste* by Ambedkar,” says Bharathan.

It also highlighted the need for students in institutions of higher education to be politically aware. “That’s happening, but slowly,” agrees Deepak Johnson, a former student leader of IIT-M. “There is an urgent need for students in the IITs to become more politically aware,” he says.

But as of now, that’s a big ask. A circular was sent out recently banning political activities in the institute. Dated January 31, it instructed first-year students to not indulge in activities that would tarnish the institute’s image. They were also asked to stay away from political activities inside the campus. Such activities are against the “apolitical nature of the institute”, the circular said. In the news reports that followed, the dean Srinivasan denied issuing any such orders. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, the director, said it could be a “mistake” made by his colleagues. The administration did not respond to a list of queries from *BLink*. The APSC, though, considers the new developments a gag on freedom of speech. “It is a vague rule that can be used against students in different contexts,” says one of its leaders. The students allege this intolerance is directed only at left-wing, Dalit student groups whereas right-leaning ones such as Vivekananda Study Circle and Vande Mataram enjoy official blessings. They openly propagate the political ideology of the RSS and even invite their leaders to the campus, they add.

“We support the right to express dissent,” says Dheeresh Chandra K, the students’ general secretary at IIT-M. “But it should not disrupt the harmony on campus.” However, Chinta Bar, an independent students’ forum, considers the latest developments on the campus a move to silence dissenting voices and corner independent student bodies. It may not be a coincidence that this circular comes soon after student uprisings on campuses

across the country following Rohith Vemula's suicide, says a statement from Chinta Bar. Students say they will resist if such orders are imposed without discussion. The 250-hectare IIT-Madras for long remained a serene, green sprawl in the heart of a chaotically transforming metropolis. Now change is knocking at its doors.

## IIT-Kharagpur develops arsenic filter for the aam aadmi

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/IIT-Kharagpur-develops-arsenic-filter-for-the-aam-aadmi/articleshow/51250227.cms> The Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur has developed an ultra-low cost eco-friendly laterite based arsenic... Read More

Kolkata: Here's good news for the city where several pockets are contaminated with arsenic-affected water. The Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur has developed an ultra-low cost eco-friendly laterite based arsenic filter for providing safe drinking water.

The innovation has won Sirshendu De, the head of chemical engineering department, the Innovation Award 2016 from the Indian Desalination Association (South Zone).

"In India and Bangladesh, it is generally agreed that arsenic contamination of groundwater is of geological origin and derives from the geological strata. More than 200 million people are affected worldwide by arsenic menace and over 100 million people in India and Bangladesh are exposed to arsenic contamination risk. The need of the hour is an ultra-low cost, easy-to-handle solution for rural households," said De.

The indigenous material developed by De is capable of adsorbing arsenic to the extent of 32mg per gram. "It is made from naturally occurring red laterite soil. This material has undergone chemical treatment to enhance its capabilities to adsorb arsenic. Moreover, an optimized design of a filter, with the material, has been formulated as well that enjoys a plethora of advantages," De added.

"The ultra-low cost of the filter is more appropriate for the socio-economic conditions of our country, especially when the filter has no power requirement. The arsenic concentration of filtrate is always within the WHO drinking water permissible limit, independent of the ground water concentration. Also, the filter comparatively has extremely long life of about five years with no regeneration of the adsorbent (filter medium) required during its lifetime. The filter has facilities such as removal of arsenic (below 10 ppb), iron (below 0.3 ppm) and bacteriological contamination (more than 98%) together in a single unit. Upon exhaustion of the filter, the medium can be safely dumped without any risk of leaking and further contamination," he explained.

### Top Comment

We need to applaud Sirshendu for his innovation work for people basic need. Our government need to recognize and reward him for these kind of innovators, by this we will encourage youngsters in innov... Read MorePradeep Kumar

## SAFE-N-SOUND

- The capacity of the filter is **80-100 litres** per day
- There's no **maintenance cost** of the filter
- It does not require **regeneration** or **backwashing**
- It has a life of around **5 years**
- Apart from arsenic, the filter will also remove **iron** and **other impurities**
- After use, the filter can be **safely dumped** without the **risk of further contamination**
- Cost of treated water in less that **3 paisa/litre**

The technology has been featured in the preferred list of the central government's department of science and technology's compendium of arsenic mitigation plan adopted for the nation.

"We have recently transferred the technology to a company that is already in the process of setting up a production unit. The filter medium will cost around for Rs 500 for a 100-litre per day capacity filter," De said.

## Life at IIT: A fresher's insight

<http://www.pagalguy.com/articles/life-at-iit-a-freshers-insight-40726705>

Every IITian in this nation has worked rigorously to get into the institution s/he is in now. If you ask any of them whether it was worth it? They would all say YES!

What happens at IIT remains at IIT. If you think IITians are hardworking, 24 hour-geeks, sleep-deprived and study most of the time, then you are very wrong. IITians aren't hard working but smart working., just like any other college student.

So, I too had to burn the midnight oil for a tardy 2 years to get into IIT Guwahati (IITG). I was a normal student, "non-KOTAian" and studied for 4-5 hours daily. (Yes, you read it right, 4-5 hours of study can get you into IIT.) After my 12th board examinations, I scored average marks in JEE Mains that shook my world apart, but JEE Advanced 2015 was a game turner. The paper pattern was at a whole new level, but somehow I pulled it off, and now I am writing this article sitting in one the best engineering institutes in the country.

IIT came as a surprise to me. Students were a lot cooler than I thought they would be. Professors are a lot younger than I expected them to be(some exceptions exist). The only thing that disappointed me was that the girl to boy ratio was 1:10, which means almost zero chances of finding a girlfriend.

The past 6 months in the institute have been packed with several big scale phenomena. During Techniche, the annual techno-management fest, and the inter hostel cultural championship we proudly proved that IITians can be photographers, actors, singers, dancers and what not. But life isn't always a bed of roses. After these good experiences came the mid-semester and end-semester exams. Just 6 months ago, we were the best academicians in India and now were struggling to just pass in a physics test

But in all, was my 2 years of hard work worth it? YES! It was.

**Note:** This article about IIT Guwahati has **not** been written by the PaGaLGuY Editorial Team. Readers should research and verify the claims and judgements in the article before reaching a conclusion.

## Stress management workshop for PhD students at IIT Bombay

<http://www.pagalguy.com/articles/stress-management-workshop-for-phd-students-at-iit-bombay-40692965>

At a time when stress related student deaths are making news everywhere, the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B), conducted a stress management workshop on March 2, 2016, for students pursuing research. The workshop was conducted under the Research Scholar Companion Program (RSCP) that serves as a platform to facilitate interaction between PhD students.

A day in the life of a PhD student at IITB starts with attending lectures. Students usually spend their afternoons in the laboratory conducting experiments, working on research papers and collecting samples to support their inferences. This occupies approximately eight to ten hours of their day. Besides, students who are in their first year of research have to take six to eight different credited courses in the institute as well. They also submit a dissertation for every course they take. Thus, most students bear a taxing 14-15 hour routine which may get mundane at times. To add to this monotony is the pressure to yield desired results, while repeated failures may cause anguish. Moreover, the stipend which PhD students get is less as compared to an income he/she would have fetched as a full time employee. Such factors may lead to self-doubt and anxiety about an uncertain future.

Shivani Manchanda, Counselling Coordinator at IITB said, "We conducted the workshop to help students understand that the stress they face is normal and one can cope with it." Manchanda also informed, "We maintain a Facebook page called *ICare IITB* which is a self-help information page on stress, relationship etc."

80 students attended the workshop. About the workshop, T. Pratyusha, coordinator of RSCP said, "Attendees were advised about issues like time management, stress management, meeting deadlines, and completing submissions in a hassle-free way."

Jai Paranjpe, a PhD student in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT-B, said, "A session on meditation was conducted in which we were taught some light exercises to relax in stressful situations."

Professor Debjani Paul, Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering , IIT-B also shared her experience of dealing with stress as a research scholar. PhD students had requested to hear the story of her travails and triumphs as a scholar "It was reassuring to know that our professors too have been through similar stress and managed it successfully," said Girish Ponkiya, a PhD student in the Computer Science Department at IITB.