

Newspaper Clips

May 3, 2013

Hindu ND 03.05.13 P-18

Whistleblower professor resumes work

Staff Reporter

KOLKATA: Nearly two years after being suspended, Rajeev Kumar, a professor at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur (IIT-KGP), resumed office on Thursday following an order from the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) earlier this month to “revoke the suspension with immediate affect”.

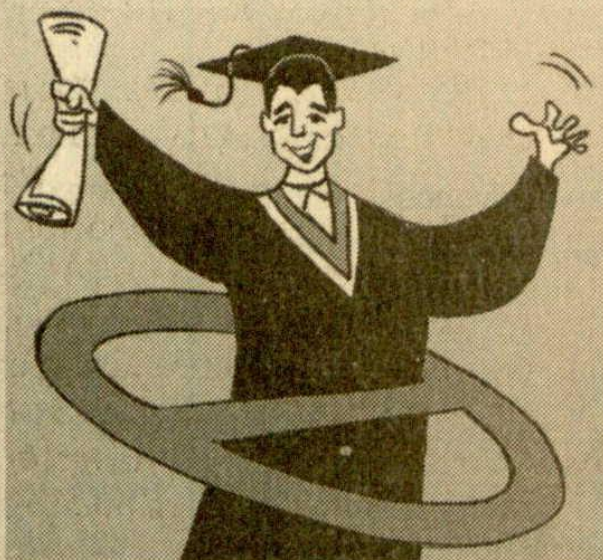
A notice issued by the institute’s Registrar early this week states that Prof. Kumar is “allowed to resume his duty with immediate effect revoking his suspension...”

He was suspended in May 2011 after the Institute accused him “accessing the media for personal gains and maligning the institution.”

Prof. Kumar had brought to the fore certain irregularities into the IIT-JEE examination using the Right to Information applications and exposed a “fake institute” run by certain officials on the IIT campus.

DOCTORED DEGREES

A private university's 434 PhD awards in a year would make India proud, if only they were genuine



GIVEN the huge shortage of PhDs in India, the news that CMJ University in Meghalaya has awarded 434 PhDs in one year should come as a shot in the arm. But with just a tenth of the private university's faculty having a PhD themselves, the number looks more than a bit fishy and the university finds itself the subject of a probe. The nat-

ural reaction of the government in such a case is to impose stricter controls. While a degree of regulatory oversight is indeed required, it would be a mistake to tar all private universities with the same brush. It is unlikely, for instance, that anyone takes PhDs from such an institution seriously anyway or that these would be equated with those from a reputed institution.

India's education system already suffers from too many counter-productive controls, the last thing we need is to increase these further. India needs a lot more universities than the government can possibly build/run, so what is needed is light regulation with a greater emphasis on transparency and mandatory public provision of information—details of faculty and alumni, for instance, will go a long way in letting people know what the university is all about.

Economic Times ND 03/05/2013 P-12

Stop the Excoriation of Delhi University

The proposed new four-year undergraduate programme in Delhi University is so ill-thought-out that it actually endangers India's premier educational institution. The decision must be reconsidered and consultations held with all stakeholders: experts, faculty, students, even parents. Leave alone the danger of the move inflicting irreparable damage on Delhi University, the thought of producing a generation of undergraduates lower on the knowledge-gain or employability fronts is enough to vitiate the very idea of a university. There is simply no room to experiment with a few batches of students and then perhaps hope for corrective measures in the scheme for future ones. Autonomy of the university does not mean the political authorities should stand aside and watch Delhi University



being wrecked. The government has a responsibility to intervene and halt this scatterbrained scheme.

A university is supposed to be a place for generating intellectual excitement and depth, where a tangible amount of knowledge transfer is achieved in an

atmosphere of a free exchange of ideas. This enables students to develop skills that they can use later, whether they choose to become, say, entrepreneurs or researchers. Innovation in pedagogy, an adaptive curriculum *et al* are fine ideas, even necessary. But rushing through a fundamental transformation without a democratic, consultative approach is foolhardy.

The proposed scheme is so flawed that it subverts the very goal of introducing a four-year programme, of allowing young minds to explore different fields of knowledge and then choose one in which to acquire greater depth. It is criminal to play with students' lives simply to let one vice-chancellor prove that he can prevail. Let more thorough preparation and planning precede introduction of the new course.

DU VC flaunts support from principals and students

Press Meet Held After Two Years To 'Clarify Opinions Of Different Shades'

Stephen's physics teachers attack 4-yr course syllabus

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi University vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh addressed the press on Thursday evening to tell them that all is well. Amidst the huge controversy generated over the new four-year undergraduate programme — which has split the academic community and left students confused — the VC produced a letter of support signed by 43 college principals. He also recalled his meeting with 3,000 school students earlier in the day. He also mentioned a written feedback in which 90% of the students apparently said they "understand the new four-year undergraduate programme and feel it is good for them".

The press conference revived — after a break of two years — the university's traditional press meet before the commencement of annual admissions. Singh said he wished to clarify statements and "opinions of different shades".

He said the university had organized a two-hour interaction with school students and made a "detailed presentation and answered queries" in DU's Rugby stadium. "The result is 90% have expressed a liking for the programme. It

SPELLING OUT THE DETAILS

Issue & receipt of registration forms | June 5-June 19 from 9am to 1pm (excluding Sundays)

Four-year structure

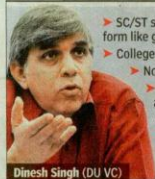
Year of study	Courses	Weightage (%)
1st year	Discipline 1 (honours)	33
	Foundation courses	67
	Discipline 1	34
2nd year	Foundation courses	34
	Discipline 2 (minor)	16
	Applied courses	16
3rd year	Discipline 1	60
	Discipline 2	20
	Applied courses	20
4th year	Discipline 1	75
	Discipline 2	25

► A student will get baccalaureate honours/BTech degree on completion of four years of studies

► Baccalaureate degree if a student exits after three years

► Associate baccalaureate degree if s/he exits after two years

Total seats
54,000



Dinesh Singh (DU VC)

► SC/ST students will fill the same common pre-admission form like general/OBC candidates

► Colleges will issue cutoffs for SC/ST

► No additional criteria for SC/ST/OBC

► No certificate verification and centralized application process for physically handicapped category

► PH candidates with 40% and above disability to directly contact colleges

► All students under four-year admissions

is another affirmation. We believe this (four-year-degree) is a good thing."

And like in mid-April when the university circulated a letter by the dean of faculty of science to the registrar, signed by heads of departments and seniors offi-

cial in the DU administration, Singh again cited a letter signed by 43 of the 65 college principals.

"We, who represent the colleges of the University of Delhi, wish to state that we are well-prepared for the four-year undergraduate programme. We take objection to the opinions and needless interference of those who are superficially acquainted with the processes and activities of the university. Such people reflect a certain elitism far removed from the ground realities," stated the principals of colleges which included Shri Ram College of Commerce, Hindu College, Miranda House, Sri Venkateswara College and IP College for Women.

The colleges missing from the list were St Stephen's, Ramjas, Lady Shri Ram and Hansraj.

Singh also spoke about special efforts being made for SC/ST admissions and that from this year it will also be a decentralized process.

"The admission process will be far more simple and effective," claimed Singh, adding that the "four-year programme will empower these specially committed students and learning material will be given free".

toireporter@timesgroup.com

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: Physics teachers of St Stephen's College have attacked the four-year programme of Delhi University and have blamed the new structure — especially that of physics course — for being inflexible and out-of-tune with other such programmes.

While science teachers from other colleges and departments are silent on the syllabi approved by the university departments and faculty, the physics department of the college came out with a critique. The teachers compared the four-year programme with what's on offer in the US and in institutes like Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISERs), and cited anomalies in the course structure.

A document has been framed by the physics teachers and it analyzes and compares the reasons given by the DU for replacing the present three-year undergraduate structure with that of four-year programme. The document has been signed by all the eight permanent teachers of the department, including the head of the department.



ALL FOR A CAUSE

Demolishing the claims of flexibility, the teachers said that a student enters the programme having already chosen his major discipline course (DC) 1 and does not have the option to change at any stage.

"In the US, the four-year bachelor's degree allows students to make an informed choice of major after appropriate sampling. Meanwhile, DU students will indeed get a broad exposure in the first two years since they all will have to attempt the same 11 mandatory foundation courses. But they will not be able to use this exposure to make an informed choice of major (DC1)," the document said.

Calling the new pro-

gramme 'rigid', the document states that any student who has chosen physics must study the same course for all the four years. At no time are there any optional courses available — at least none in the proposed physics syllabus. A student generally discovers after two years whether his inclinations and abilities lie in experimental or theoretical physics, or if he is interested in astrophysics or biophysics.

Criticizing the multiple-exit option, the teachers feel that a student who leaves after two years will evidently not be considered a "graduate" while applying for employment or while taking admission to any Master's or MBA programme.

We've completed supply of 100,000 Aakash 2 tablets to IIT-B, says Datawind

BS REPORTER

Bangalore, 2 May

DataWind, the manufacturer of low-cost tablet computer Aakash, today said it had completed the supply of 100,000 devices to the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B). The deal in this regard was signed around two-and-a-half years back.

Datawind said it had already delivered 74,700 units to C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing), Noida and IIT-B, and another 25,300 units are with a transporter in Noida awaiting processing of letter of credit documentation by IIT-B. The final shipments will be released by State Bank of India (IIT-B's bank) upon endorsement of the delivery order.

In addition to completion of the 100,000 units of Aakash, the company said, it had also completed deliveries of its pre-paid backlog. Less than one per cent of pre-paid backlog customers remain pending, due to lack of courier coverage or contact information.

In 2011, the company had won the tender for the supply of Aakash1 devices at \$49.98, and was subsequently modified to 98,000 Aakash2 devices and 2,000 devices with DataWind's recommendations for Aakash3, all at a price of ₹2,263.

The company in its state-

ment said: "Significant efforts have been made by some to derail the project through nonsensical made-up controversies, fortunately they've all failed. The vengeance of such attacks and the glee displayed by some in claiming the demise of the project have made our resolve even stronger and we remain committed to persevering the affordability barrier, so that every citizen of the world can be empowered by the internet."

In the past, there were reports that IIT-B had started charging delayed delivery penalty from Datawind, as the institute received only 51,000 Aakash 2 tablets and the deadline for receiving 100,000 units was March 31.

Through the Aakash project under the ministry of human resource development, the government aims to provide low-cost computing devices at subsidised rate to students for accessing internet for educational purposes.

According to the company, the new device utilises multi-touch projective capacitive touch screens, manufactured at Datawind's touch-screen manufacturing facility in Amritsar. It is powered by a Cortex A8-1GHz processor and contain 512 MB RAM.

IIT-B's open source lab has developed a variety of applications for engineering students to utilise the Aakash2.

Hindu ND 03.05.2013
P-11

Varsity affiliated colleges need not take AICTE approval to run MBA, MCA

J. Venkatesan

New Delhi: Colleges affiliated to a university are not obliged to take separate permission from the All-India Council for Technical Education to conduct MBA/MCA courses, the Supreme Court has held.

"The AICTE Act does not intend [the council] to be an authority either superior or to supervise or control universities and thereby superimpose itself upon them merely for the reason that it is laying down certain teaching standards in technical education or programmes formulated in any of the department of units," said a Bench of Justices B.S. Chauhan and V. Gopala Gowda.

Writing the judgment, Justice Gowda said: "The role of AICTE vis-à-vis universities is only advisory, recommendatory and one of providing guidance and [it] has no authority... to issue or enforce any sanction by itself."

The Bench said it was the University Grants Commission which had been given the power to regulate universities in relation to granting sanction/approval, maintaining educational standards and overseeing the fee structure including admissions to various courses offered by them, their institutions, constituent colleges, units and affiliated colleges.

AICTE role should be advisory

The Bench, while holding that MCA was 'technical education', made it clear that for proper conduct of the course and regulation the role of AICTE must be advisory and a note should be given to the UGC for implementation. However, MBA was not a technical course and AICTE approval was not required for conducting it.

Financial Chronicle ND 03/05/2013 P-10

Oxford graduates richer than Cambridge peers

Two-thirds of Oxford's wealthiest alumni are self-made millionaires

ADITI KHANNA

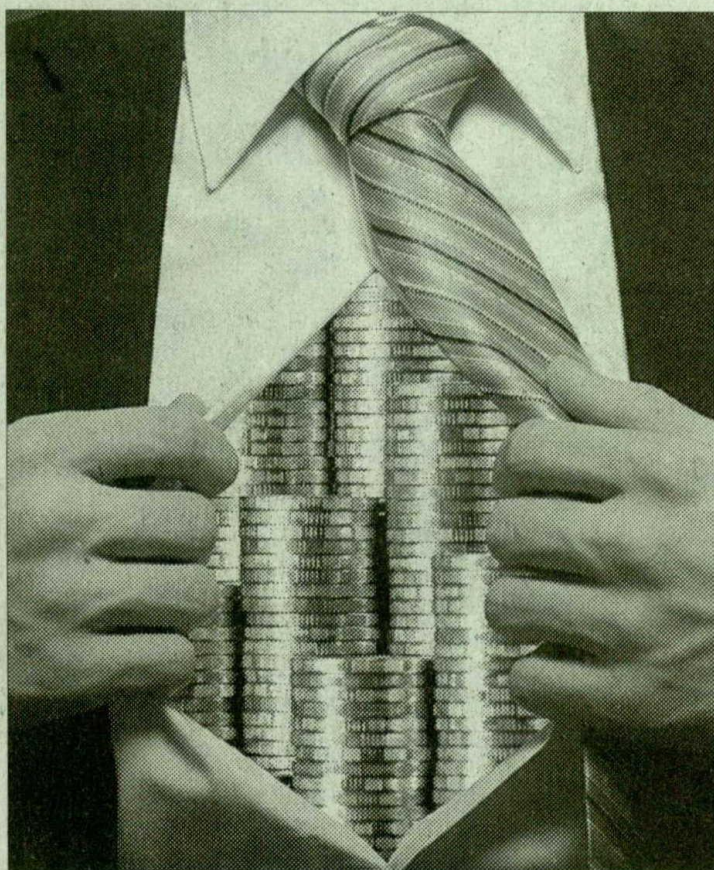
Press Trust of India

LONDON: The rivalry between Oxford and Cambridge, two of Britain's best-known universities, is legendary and now it seems Oxford has pipped its competitor by producing the wealthiest graduates.

According to research by global analysts Wealth-X, Oxford counts 401 ultra high net worth (UHNW) individuals among its alumni population with a total net worth of \$51 billion and each individual's average net worth around \$127 million.

An UHNW individual is classed as having a net worth of at least \$30 million after accounting for shares in public and private companies, residential and investment properties, art collections, aircraft, cash and other assets.

According to a report in *The Daily Telegraph*, just over two-thirds of Oxford's wealthiest alumni are self-made millionaires while 14 per cent have inherited their money, and only 6 per cent of the university's wealthy alumni are women.



LOOK WHO'S RICH: Wealth-X researched the wealthiest alumni from 20 of Britain's most prestigious universities

Although Cambridge, by comparison, has a smaller number of very rich graduates - 361 - their average net worth is greater at \$258 million and their total net worth is almost double at \$93 billion. From Cam-

bridge, 70 per cent of the richest alumni can claim to have forged their own wealth while 13 per cent have inherited their money.

The average age of ultra wealthy individuals from both Oxford and Cam-

bridge is 59.

Wealth-X researched the wealthiest alumni from 20 British universities and found that the London School of Economics (LSE), Imperial College London and London Business School (LBS) also boasted a high number of rich graduates.

The University of Birmingham had the highest percentage of self-made wealthy alumni at 84 per cent. The average net worth of Birmingham's rich graduates was \$106 million.

The University of Edinburgh had the highest percentage of alumni who had inherited their wealth, at 26 per cent.

Most of the universities that made the wealth stakes cut were from the Russell Group, which represents the UK's top 24 universities.

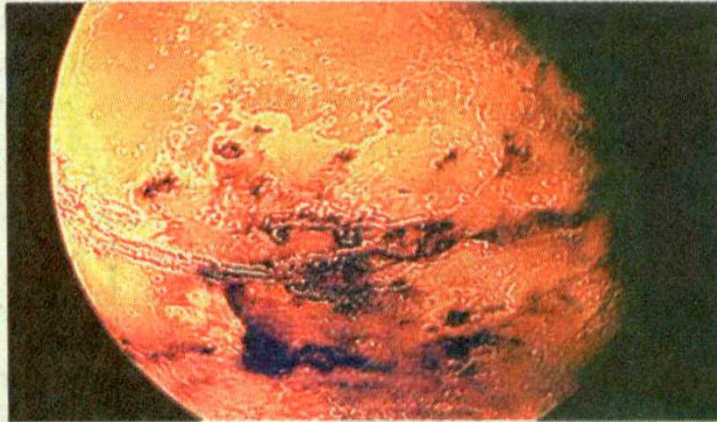
"Seventeen out of the 24 Russell Group universities are featured in the report, which reflects the ability of such prestigious institutions to attract high calibre individuals, who proceed to create financial success," said Mike Byrne, European sales director at Wealth-X, in reference to the findings.

NASA invites names, poems and messages for Mars!

WASHINGTON: Want to be a part of space exploration history?

NASA is inviting public to submit their names, short poems and personal messages on-line for a DVD to be carried aboard a spacecraft that will study the Martian atmosphere.

The DVD will carry every name submitted. The public also is encouraged to submit a message in the form of a three-line poem, or haiku, NASA said. However, only three haikus will be selected. The deadline for all submissions is 1 July. An on-line public vote to determine the top three messages to be placed on



the DVD will begin on 15 July.

The DVD will be in NASA's Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution (MAVEN) spacecraft, which is scheduled for launch in November this year.

The DVD is part of the mission's 'Going to Mars Campaign' coordinated

at the University of Colorado at Boulder's Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics (CU/LASP).

'The Going to Mars campaign offers people worldwide a way to make a personal connection to space, space exploration, and science in general, and share in our excite-

ment about the MAVEN mission,' said Stephanie Renfrow, lead for the MAVEN Education and Public Outreach programme at CU/LASP.

Participants who submit their names to the campaign will be able to print a certificate of appreciation to document their involvement with the MAVEN mission.

'This new campaign is a great opportunity to reach the next generation of explorers and excite them about science, technology, engineering and math,' said Bruce Jakosky, MAVEN principal investigator from CU/LASP. AGENCIES