

# Newspaper Clips

## May 8, 2012

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# IITs make life a bit easy for students



In previous years, IIT-JEE candidates could appeal against errors only after the results were out. Now, they can do it before the results are out and even ensure their place on the merit list.

By Talrah Firdous

**W**AITING for the results of the country's most competitive examination can get on your nerves and make you restless. Now it seems that the IITs have found a way to ease the anxiety of the half-a-million aspirants who took the JEE last month.

Until last year, the IIT-JEE answer key was only made public and available online after the results were out, but this year, the IITs have decided to post the answer key of the test before the announcement of the results, which is expected on May 18. This move, experts point out, will bring immense benefits to engineering students and help them chart out their future.

"This is an excellent move," commented Sharad Awasthi, Chief Operating Officer of the education services provider, CL Educate, formerly known as Career Launcher. "It will help students to point out the errors (if any) in the answer key before the results are out."

In previous years, Awasthi pointed out, students were able to figure out the errors in the answer key only after the results were declared, and some would lose their merit list ranking only because of those errors, "which was unfair".

Apart from the JEE answer key, which has been on display since

May 3, the evaluated optical response sheets (ORS) of all the candidates were made available on the IIT-JEE site on May 5. The ORS are displayed along with the machine-read responses and the point scores. Students can log on to the website and check their ORS and get an idea about where they stand. Candidates can also submit revision requests online by Thursday (May 10), in case of errors in the machine-read responses. Will making the ORS available

online pose privacy issues? Awasthi was categorical in his reply: "There are no privacy issues. It is not that anyone can log in and get your details.

You can only log in if you know the roll number or the application number." Another big advantage of this move is that the students appearing for other engineering examinations in the coming weeks and months can analyse the errors they have made. And they can work on improving those areas. "The answer key will help stu-

dents who are taking other engineering entrance exams next month, and have time to go through the topics and questions that they have missed. They can work on those areas," Awasthi said. But he made it clear that the key wouldn't help students who are taking entrance exams, such as the AIEEE, in the next one or two weeks. "You don't have the kind of time you need to analyse the answer keys," he said.

The answer key does not promise any cut-off predictions, but the move will definitely bring transparency in the evaluation system. And till the results are not officially out, it won't hurt you to calculate your points.

Log on to <http://jee.iitm.ac.in/> and follow the instructions

## By making the JEE answer key and individual papers available online, the IITs have allowed students to get errors corrected and draw the right lessons from their mistakes

5.21 lakh  
Number of students  
who took the IIT-JEE  
2012 for about  
10,000 seats in  
17 IITs

ward to meet faculty sho... <http://paper.hindustantir>

# IIT-Kanpur looks westward to meet faculty shortage

**GOING GLOBAL** Plans to open an office either in Washington or New York

**Vanita Srivastava**

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**NEW DELHI:** In a bid to meet the problem of faculty shortage, IIT-Kanpur is looking westward and is planning to open its office in the US. If this comes through, this would perhaps be the first initiative by an IIT to have a global presence for tapping good faculty.

The new office, which will be either in New York or Washington will help the institute hire faculty and garner donations.

The institute will put forth this proposal at its board meeting on June 1 and if approved the office may start functioning in two months. Initially there would be just 2-3 people in the office, including a coordinator who will liaise with Indian students doing Phd in the US. At present the institute has been able to fill only 2/3rd of its faculty positions.

"There are so many US and European universities, which have their offices in India. We strongly feel that there is a need to have a presence at a location, which provides you with lots of resources. US will be an excellent platform for providing fac-

**THE INSTITUTE WILL PUT FORTH THIS PROPOSAL AT ITS BOARD MEETING ON JUNE 1 AND IF APPROVED THE OFFICE MAY START WORKING IN TWO MONTHS**

ulty and donations," says Manindra Agarwal, dean resource, planning and generation.

Acknowledging that faculty shortage was a major problem Agarwal said: "This shortage has arisen because we have our own standards and cannot compromise on quality. But because of the shortage, we are not able to offer many courses. This has also prevented us from offering flexibility to the faculty besides hampering us from being able to form big research groups."

Since over 50% of the faculty comes from the US, Agarwal said the US-based office will help in tapping prospective candidates for hiring. "It will also act as a catalyst for fund raising and increase research collaboration with universities and industry in the US."

DNA Indore 7-5-2012 P-7

## Time government stepped away from IITs

A bunch of students are huddled over a piece of paper. They are thinking up ways to use a few lakh rupees that have landed in their hostel kitty by fluke. They already have all they need - a room to each, subsidised mess, high-speed internet, gym, TV and music room, football grounds, push badminton and tennis courts, and what-have-you. At their wits' end, they have put up a notice asking for ideas to spend the booty.

This is not a scene from a Hollywood film on campus life. It is life in a desi IIT. Sometimes, IITs suffer from a problem of plenty. Considering the lakhs come mostly from the taxpayer, this kind of generosity is embarrassing in a country where 200 million children go hungry to bed every night and hundreds of millions more are denied basic health care.

The Anil Kakodkar committee has recommended that they should be made to foot their operational costs by raising fees to Rs2-2.5 lakh per year. The committee prescribes collateral-free loans for those who need it, and a full subsidy and scholarship for those who cannot afford even a loan.

These steps would enable IITs to take the first step towards autonomy. The committee says a fee hike 'would be reasonable considering the high demand for IIT graduates and the salary an IIT B.Tech is expected to get.' This makes the long overdue point about the need for public funding of IITs. For long, we have been burdened with providing quality education to a select few at the cost of providing basic education to all.

Unlike education at junior levels, an IIT education is guaranteed to pay off and pay well. There is really no call to subsidise even a weaker category student. And even if there is, we could fund the few of them but not all students. And, if we insist on continuing funding the IITs, it's time to ask if we need to be so indulgent.

Each of the bigger IITs make between Rs20 crore and Rs50 crore but spends about Rs 200 crore every year. Last year, Pranab Mukherjee's budget for higher education included Rs2,113 crore for the 12 IITs and 20 NITs. If we really wish to promote the academic and intellectual evolution of the country, why are we not funding other academic or professional courses in the same

way? There are 47 agricultural universities under the umbrella of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, which has a relatively modest budget of Rs1,500 crore. Clearly, this is not fair game.

The 11th five year plan (2007-2012) allocated Rs84,000 crore to higher education of which not even half has been spent so far. This allocation would be greedily welcome in the primary education sector that is starved of funds and which should be the first priority.

Many governments abroad, like the UK, are moving out of higher education. It can be argued that Indian systems have not matured to the point the government can get off. But if that's true, how are the IITs managing so well without humungous grants?

Some argue that even the mighty MIT is subsidised by the US government to the tune of billions of dollars. They feel the steep fees would keep IITs out of reach for most and the alternative of a loan would be an expensive option for those with modest means. And, they say, if the IITs are open only to the affluent, the quality and infrastructure of education would suffer.

That higher education is neglected is a fact but allocations should be commensurate with other sectoral concerns. There are ways to encourage and promote specialised education without the state shouldering the burden, especially in this disproportionate manner. We could involve corporates as sponsors or contributors or, privatise the institutes if that's feasible. It is time corporates took interest in nurturing their prospective employees rather than plucking them ripe off the field. Setting up a world class universities is a pet project of Kapil Sibal in which he expects corporates to pitch in. Why not the IITs too? It is time to open the floor for debate.

The IIT alumni, which has been responsibly giving back to its alma mater, can be co-opted into the discussions. Going by their track record, they may not be found wanting. They could expand their canvas of giving to include the countrymen at large, who made them worthy of giving. The benefit of producing IITians cannot be harvested only by the IITs. The alumni could part-fund the deficit areas of growth in the country and ensure all of us move together.

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Seema Kamdar

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## Get hooked to top institutes and pick the best courses

### PROPOSAL Gujarat govt's plan to introduce a 'multi-varsity' concept will give students a chance to study simultaneously in IIT, IIM and NID

Vanita Srivastava

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**NEW DELHI:** How about enrolling in a state university and doing one or two credits from an institute like IIT, IIM or NID? This would be a kind of cross-pollination allowing vertical and horizontal migration of students outside the discipline which they belong to.

The 'multi-varsity' concept, first of its kind in the country, is what the Gujarat government is planning to roll out shortly.

"We are having a dialogue with the concerned institutes and have had around five meetings in this regard. The formal structure is gradually evolving and will take a few more months," said Dr Jayanti Ravi, commissioner of higher education, Gujarat.

The students across different universities in Gujarat can do some credit courses from institutes like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), National Institute of Design (NID), Mudra Institute of Communications Ahmedabad (MICA), Indian

Institute of Management (IIM), Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) and Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA) in the summer. Initially, the number of students who can cross-register in other institutes and be a part of this multi-varsity will be confined to 50. "We are trying this out as a pilot programme. If it stabilises, we can enhance the strength," says Ravi.

"Basically, it is designed to give students opportunities outside their discipline. For example, if a child has a passion for designing and for some reason he is not able to get admission in NID, then he can do one or two credits course in designing from that institute. Likewise, he can do a research project from IIT, a communication course from MICA, a management course from IIM or a course in rural management from IRMA," she said.

Besides cross-registration for credit courses, the students may also be allowed to do research course for a horizontal expansion of institute, she added.

# IIT-M's geo-tubes to check coastal erosion in Andhra

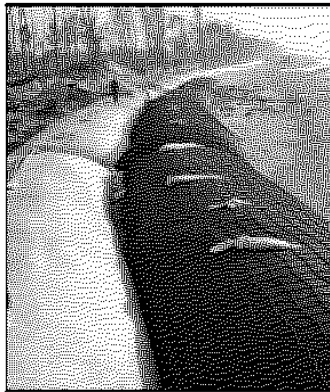
Julie Mariappan | TNN

**Chennai:** They are the new coastal protectors and appear like giant tubes along the sea-shore. The department of Ocean Engineering, IIT-Madras, will soon switch to geo-tubes and geo-bags, geo-synthetic products made of fibre used to protect the coast from sea erosion.

The IIT-M, which successfully laid out these tubes and bags for about a kilometre along the Uppada coast in Andhra Pradesh in 2010, will now extend it for another 3 km. The site was badly eroded due to severe wave activities. However, Tamil Nadu government is yet to look at the potential of these materials for its own coast.

Geo-synthetic tubes and bags are made from synthetic or natural polymer in the form of a sheet, a strip or a three dimensional structure, to use in contact with soil and water in civil and coastal engineering applications. They come in bags, tubes and containers, with at least 2% to 5% filled with fine soil to withstand the high tides.

Though the geotubes are commonly used for construction of sea walls, dykes, revetments and offshore breakwaters in western countries, the coastal states in India prefer to use the groynes which are cheaper. Groynes are carved out of big rocks, protruding into the sea for about a km or so to protect the coast and beach, bed and bank of water bodies for land reclamation. "The geo-synthetic products are



Geo-tubes can withstand high-tides

more efficient and success rate is far higher," said Prof V Sundar, department of ocean engineering, IIT Madras, who heads the consultancy team.

The IIT-M team helped build a one-km long geo-tube wall in Digha beach in West Bengal in 2008. "Geo-tubes are common in western countries, especially in the US, Australia and European countries. It can play a major role, but extensive care is required in selection of geo-synthetic material and skilled labour to make it work," said Prof Sundar.

In Uppada, the IIT-M used geo-tubes, filled with geo-bags to act like a cushion, and covered by stones tied with ropes. The state PWD sources said the water resources wing would take up geo-tubes especially in north Chennai, after IIT-M completes its study. The 1,076 km long coastline of Tamil Nadu is significantly eroded due to climatic change, man-made projections like thermal power stations, desalination plants and harbours.

# गलत सवालों से जूझते बच्चे और आईआईटी

प्रवेश परीक्षा में लापरवाही आईआईटी की साख और बच्चों की मेहनत, दोनों को बरबाद कर रही है।

आनंद कुमार  
संयोजक, सुपर थर्टी



इंडियन इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी (आईआईटी) के छात्रों का अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में क्या महत्व है, इसका अंदाजा इस बात से लगाया जा सकता है कि अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति पद के उम्मीदवार जनरल वेस्ली क्लार्क ने कहा था- अगर किसी के पास आईआईटी की डिग्री होगी, तो उसे तुरंत अमेरिकी नागरिकता दी जाएगी। वहीं माइक्रोसॉफ्ट के मुखिया बिल गेट्स ने कहा था कि आईआईटी डिग्रीधारी बतौर सॉफ्टवेयर इंजीनियर उनकी पहली पसंद हैं। लेकिन अगर ऐसे प्रतिष्ठित संगठन की प्रवेश परीक्षा के प्रश्न पत्रों में लगातार कई वर्षों से गलतियां हो रही हों, तो संस्था की विश्वसनीयता पर प्रश्न खड़े होना स्वाभाविक है। इस वर्ष भी आईआईटी ने प्रवेश परीक्षा में कई ऐसे सवाल पूछे हैं, जो गलत हैं।

वैसे आईआईटी प्रवेश परीक्षा के तुरंत बाद ही प्रश्नों के गलत होने की बात सामने आ गई थी, लेकिन आईआईटी ने जब अपनी वेबसाइट पर इन प्रश्नों के हल बताए, तो गलतियां छिपाए न छिप सकीं। लेकिन आईआईटी ने गलती स्वीकारने की बजाय चालाकी भरा प्रयास किया है। इन सवालों के नीचे लिख दिया गया कि इनके हल के लिए सभी को जीरो नंबर दिए जाएंगे। यही नहीं, बल्कि दो और ऐसे भी सवाल हैं, जिनमें बतौर उत्तर एक की बजाय दो-दो विकल्पों के चुनाव की बात सही कही गई है। ऐसी लापरवाही पहली बार नहीं हुई। दो वर्ष पहले हिंदी माध्यम के पेपर में कम नंबर देने की बात सामने आई थी। पिछले

साल तो पूरे 18 नंबर के सवाल गलत थे, जिसके कारण आईआईटी को औसत मार्किंग करनी पड़ी थी, सवालों को हल करने के प्रयास करने वालों तथा कुछ भी न करने वालों, दोनों को आईआईटी द्वारा 18 नंबर दिए गए थे, जिससे कुछ अयोग्य छात्र आईआईटी पहुंच गए और मेधावी बच्चों को नुकसान हुआ।

इन गलतियों से आईआईटी की साख तो घटती ही है, बच्चों का आत्मविश्वास भी कम होता है। सवाल गलत हो, तो उसे हल करने का प्रयास करने वाले का समय बरबाद होता है। ऐसी गलतियों के भयंकर नतीजे सामने आते हैं। परीक्षार्थियों के मन में निराशा घर कर जाती है और कई दफा तो कुछ छात्रों का मनोबल टूट जाने के कारण वे गलत फैसले कर बैठते हैं। ऐसी गलती दुबारा न हो, इसके लिए प्रश्न पत्रों को प्रोफेसर्स को खुद भी हल करना चाहिए, ताकि गलती का पता चल सके। साथ ही परीक्षा समाप्त होते ही आईआईटी को कुछ घंटों के बाद उत्तर के साथ डिटेल सॉल्यूशन वेबसाइट पर दे देना चाहिए। साथ ही एक सप्ताह का मौका देना चाहिए। कमेंट्स भेजने के लिए, ताकि अगर कोई गलती रह भी गई हो, तो उसे सुधारा जा सके। इसके बाद ही कॉपी चेक करने की प्रक्रिया शुरू करनी चाहिए। विद्वान प्रोफेसर ऐसा करते हैं, तो न सिर्फ संस्था की प्रतिष्ठा और भी बढ़ेगी, बल्कि मेधावी व मेहनती बच्चों के आईआईटी में प्रवेश का सपना टूटने से बच जाएगा। (ये लेखक के अपने विचार हैं)

Hindu ND 08.05.2012 P-3

# High drama at Delhi University

Vijetha S. N

**NEW DELHI:** High drama dominated Delhi University's examinations on Monday which were defined by goof-ups, revisions, clarifications and four-long delays, finally ending with the university promising an inquiry and shifting the blame from its examination department to individual departments.

The day began with undergraduate students of the humanities courses being given the wrong question paper. After two hours of panic, during which angry and impatient students threatened to walk out and frantic phone calls were made to the examinations department by teachers, one "right" question paper was finally given -- handwritten and faxed to each college, which then had to be photocopied as hundreds of students waited.

The B.A. (Honours) students

were given the wrong English papers and a similar incident happened with the Sanskrit paper where students were too supplied with the wrong version of the paper.

"The exam was to be from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. After the initial panic and frantic phone calls we made to the examinations department, one handwritten paper was faxed to us at 11-45 a.m. By then, the boys were getting angry and planning to protest and some girls had left the examinations hall. We don't let anyone enter or leave the exam hall, even for a restroom break for at least half-hour into the exam to prevent any foul play. But, how can we keep impatient teenagers confined and wait-

ing for several hours?," asked Ramjas College English teacher Vineeta Chandra.

The university, however, stood up for its examination department. Pamphlets detailing exactly what went wrong and who was responsible for which error were distributed at a press conference in the evening. "Every one should exercise restraint before hurl accusations, cast aspersions and point fingers. Some errors have occurred, but you will see that these were not the examination department's work. The onus is on the English and Sanskrit departments to set the papers. The examination department just facilitates the printing and distribution of papers,"

• **Wrong question papers distributed to under-graduate students**

• **Exams delayed by over two hours**

said Vice-Chancellor Dinesh Singh, before adding: "I commend the examination department which defied all parameters and sent the right papers, they worked with alacrity... no student went home without writing the exam."

Dean of Examinations S.P. Singh said: "I am willing to spare no one, if the accusations are true".

He added that he was willing to accept moral responsibility, but that sometimes things that happened in the varsity were inexplicable. "There was this B.Com student who showed up for a Tamil language exam. There was no question paper for her in the college. When we looked into our records, her exam form said her language subject was Hindi. We do not even know whether she has been taking these classes. There is a faculty member for that subject, but we don't know of any other student taking that subject."