

Newspaper Clips

November 20, 2011

The Hitavada, Nagpur, Nov. 9, page 12-13

AICTE's mandate for US-based E-journals may cost Rs 1,800 cr to Engg colleges

■ By Vikas Vaidya

WITH All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) making it mandatory for engineering colleges to purchase E-journals from particular agencies of United States of America, around Rs 1,800 crore revenue would be transferred to the agency, it is feared. Many of the colleges in India have sent letters to AICTE Chairman, questioning the rationale and propriety of shortlisting only US agencies and shelling out such a huge amount for E-journals.

The colleges have asked AICTE if

it is mandatory to purchase E-journals of given packages from the particular agency notified by AICTE. If so why should it be made mandatory to purchase such a large amount of E-journals for upcoming new colleges? The financial implication of these packages ranges from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 30 lakh per year per college. This means, there is a transaction of Rs 1,800 crore. The money would be transferred to US agencies from our education system only through 6,000 engineering colleges. Implication on Management Institutes is separate.

Colleges have also claimed that by

subscribing to many quality journals which are available at a much cheaper cost, the remaining amount could be fruitfully utilised for promoting and strengthening research and other facilities for Under Graduate students.

Pramod Pampatwar, Director, Technical, Jhulelal Institute of Technology who took the lead in protesting the move, approached Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT) to know how they are dealing with the issue. He came out with the information that VNIT is not paying any money for the link of

(Contd on page 2)

AICTE's mandate for US-based...

E-journals of IEEE and this is being taken care off by IIT Delhi where a link is available for the Education in India and all IITs and NITs share these link. Sufficient downloading required for research fellows is also available to them. All IITs are primary members and all NITs are secondary members and it is available to some private colleges also.

If a faculty is registered with IEEE he is charged 35 dollars a month with limited downloading facility. To start with, the research culture is to be embedded in our institution and this option is better than what is proposed by AICTE, he stated.

Some colleges have pointed out that on the issue of huge amount of expenditure they have to incur on setting up and running the institute. Hence, it is legitimate for all the colleges to look into justified avenues of cost savings which otherwise amount to wastage of precious money. Some colleges have suggested that E-journals can be shared like IIT-NIT pattern.

Possible way-out

- There are some more publications which are not listed but are having better impact factors than the publishers/ Journals listed by AICTE for e.g., Wiley Publications, Springer Publications etc.
- List suggested by AICTE is only partial and also unjustifiable.
- AICTE can subscribe to all these E-journals (no of licenses/users = no of institutions) and provide the e-access to all institutes as every institute approved by AICTE has a separate User ID and password on its web-portal.
- For this, AICTE can charge minimum amount to each Institute (say 20% of what is suggested in guidelines Brochure) or the whole can be paid by AICTE/Government of India.

Hindustan Times ND 20/11/2011 P-1

Govt plans to give more an education

BIG IDEAS Mulls unprecedented scholarships for school toppers

ht EXCLUSIVE

THE PROPOSALS

Prasad Nichenametla

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NEW DELHI: In what could change the face of higher education in the country, the government has been presented with two ambitious plans.

The first proposes that tuition fees of the top 10% performers passing out of school into undergraduate courses be paid for by the government. That means eight lakh students would benefit, irrespective of caste, religion, economic status and discipline (arts, commerce, science).

The annual benefit to a student would range from ₹2,000-5,000 for a conventional degree in a government college to ₹50,000 as charged by the IITs. The selected students would be free to study whatever they

■ Top 10% students across disciplines, boards to be given scholarships at undergrad level

■ Annual benefit to a student could be from ₹2,000 (bachelor's degree) to ₹50,000 (IITs)

■ Students can take up any discipline at college of choice

■ Part of fee of private institutes may also be covered

■ Financial aid to SC/STs and minorities may be raised from ₹2,000cr to ₹8,000cr

wanted in any state-run institution of their choosing.

According to estimates, more than 80 lakh students appear for 10+2 boards every year with about 8 lakh of them coming from CBSE.

Fees, or part of it, in select accredited private institutions

could also be covered.

The financial requirement for the landmark proposal taking scholarships to an unprecedented level is to be worked out.

A related plan proposes that financial aid for educating the disadvantaged — scheduled castes and tribes, minorities — be increased four times from ₹2,000 crore to ₹8,000 crore.

Both the proposals have been worked out by the Planning Commission.

The government has set a target of increasing enrolment at the higher education level from the current 15% to 25% of the eligible population, which would mean four crore additional students in universities and other institutions.

Plan panel deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia had earlier said education and skill development would receive priority in the 12th plan.

NEW DELHI 20 NOVEMBER 2011

The art of fund raising

IIMs must examine ways of tapping more from alumni

Last year, Harvard University was the recipient of ₹270 crore of donations from two Indian business houses. Anand Mahindra, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of Mahindra and Mahindra, who graduated from Harvard in 1977 and earned an MBA degree in 1981, gifted Rs 45 crore to Harvard's Humanities Centre, the largest for the centre so far. A few days later, the Tata Group pitched in with ₹225 crore — the largest international donation in the school's 102-year history. Ratan Tata was a student of the Advanced Management

Programme at Harvard in 1975. Harvard is just one example of how Indian business leaders have opened their purse strings to express gratitude to their alma mater. In fact, many Ivy League colleges and the Indian Institutes of Technology have benefitted from such generosity. Consider the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay which has in the past decade, built a corpus worth ₹200 crore from donations. Its counterparts, IIT Madras and IIT Delhi, have raised around ₹100 crore and 75 crore, respectively, over the same period. IIT Bombay's

mantra is to encourage smaller donations from alumni across the world. So even if half its 40,000-strong alumni choose to donate a mere ₹10,000 each to their alma mater, IIT Bombay would have access to an additional ₹20 crore at its disposal. This is all very good — after all, alumni donations remain a major source of sustenance for many reputed institutes all over the world.

But what is surprising is that this large-heartedness on the part of businessmen has not reached the campuses of the country's premier management institutes, even though many of India's corporate leaders chair the governing boards of various Indian institutes. Even the oldest and most prestigious IIMs — Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Kolkata — cannot boast of a corpus of more than ₹5 to 10 crore

through donations from their alumni. IIMs are justifiably unhappy with Indian corporate houses donating internationally and cite this as instances of how there is a deep disconnect between Indian and global corporate leaders, the latter having imbibed the culture of giving back to their alma mater. It is also true that IITs have a historical advantage over IIMs as they have a much larger alumni base. IIMs also argue that IITs have produced many more entrepreneurs who have made fortunes in Silicon Valley. While the former argument is partly true, the latter is not. IIMs too have their share of celebrated CEOs and managers in India and abroad, though many of them have not been generous in giving back. It's time IIMs looked within to find an answer to this anomaly. There is no deny-

ing that IIMs have not done enough to tap their alumni base, a key source of funds via donations, and many in IIMs privately agree that it is only now that some of them are putting in place a strategy on fund-raising. The IIM Ahmedabad Alumni Association in UK, for example, recently resented the fact that there has been no organised mechanism to enable 'giving back'. It then took the cue from IIT Bombay and asked its members to pledge three days' income to the alumni trust. But these are isolated efforts and IIMs must take a leaf out of the books of Ivy League colleges which have tapped their alumni network so well that alumni form a majority of the boards for these institutes. Perhaps Harvard University would be generous enough to provide IIMs a possible case study on the art of fund raising.

Times of India Chennai 19.11.11, p-4

IIT-M prof wins award for heritage conservation

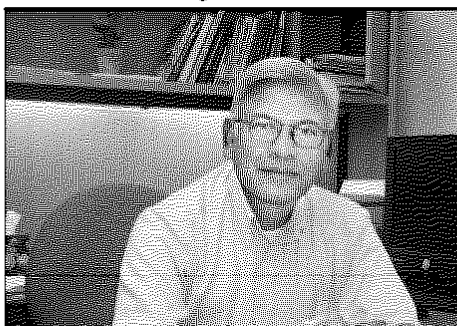
Sandhya Soman | TNN

Chennai: He is a civil engineer who has been involved with the restoration of heritage buildings for over a decade. But professor M S Mathews, who will be honoured on Saturday for his conservation work, remains enthusiastic about using newer technology to restore monuments.

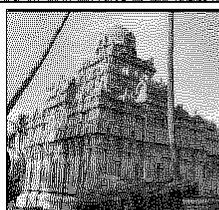
The IIT-Madras professor will receive an award from REACH, a conservation organisation, for working to preserve a 1,000-year-old temple complex in Cambodia and the Kailasanathar temple in Uttiramerur, Tamil Nadu.

"We are better off now with advanced software to analyse the condition of the ancient monuments," says the 64-year-old. There is also material available to strengthen and extend their life. "This means that projects get over faster," he says.

It was a different world when Mathews started out at IIT-M. He didn't realise how civil engineering principles can be used to restore buildings till he attended a workshop conducted by four Italian engineers nearly 20 years ago. "All of them were experts. One person had worked on the project to restore the Tower of Pisa in Italy, and another on the Colosseum in



PASSION FOR LIFE: IIT-Madras professor M S Mathews has been recognised for his work in helping to preserve the Kailasanathar temple (inset) in Uttiramerur, Tamil Nadu



Rome," says Mathews. As Italian experts spoke about restoring ancient churches and castles, the audience was spellbound. Soon, Mathews got one of his first projects - to restore a building in his native place, Kerala. It was followed by the restoration of St Joseph's church in Tri-

chy. Mathews also attended courses and conferences abroad to gain more knowledge.

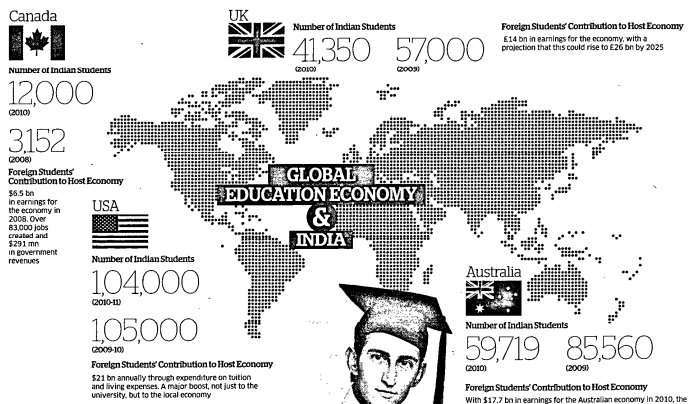
Seven years ago, the Archaeological Survey of India approached the IIT-M team to help out with the restoration of the Ta Prohm temple complex in Cambodia. The buildings are covered with roots and branches of trees that had literally taken over the complex. "The biggest success is that nothing has collapsed so far. We also did reversible interventions, changes that can be turned back when we have access to better technology," he says. It is still a struggle to get work done in India. "We have a number of monuments but few qualified people to restore and preserve them," he says. Lack of awareness, legislation and funding add to the problem.

Even if you get resources, putting together a team is tough. "To work on most Indian monuments you need a good knowledge of Sanskrit and the traditional sastras, especially those relating to temple construction," says Mathews. If you add civil engineering to the skill set, then it will take a lifetime. "The only solution is to work in teams, along with traditional sthapathis (temple sculpture artists) and other experts," he says.

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What's Your Foreign Degree Worth?

Planning to go abroad for studies? Think again. Tighter immigration and weak job markets in the West combine with a declining premium on foreign degrees in India. A Western university would love the ₹20 lakh an Indian student spends. But what's the return on investment? *ET on Sunday* investigates



Shashi Dutt Gupta & Avinash Celestine

When 23-year-old Saurav Roy (name changed) decided to join a three-year IT engineering course at an Australian university in 2006, he did so at a seemingly opportune time. The Indian economy was booming and jobs seemed plentiful. There were hundreds of other Indian students like him, headed to countries like Australia, whose colleges seemed far easier to get into, than their counterparts in the United States or the United Kingdom, the traditional study destinations for most Indians looking for that coveted foreign degree. As in the case with many foreign universities now, the first year of education was spent in India with classes conducted through a partner institution of the university in Kolkata, where he lived. But it was when Roy reached Adelaide in 2007 to begin the second year that his troubles began. Accommodation was difficult to find and it turned out to be expensive — he finally end-



ed up sharing a flat with another Indian and two local boys. The Indian boys didn't get along well with the locals with disputes about the sharing of bills. "And though the students had the permission to work 20 hours a week on or off campus, jobs were difficult to come by," says Roy. Being a talented musician, he worked at a local music studio in Adelaide on part-time basis. That was a job he enjoyed and it earned him some money as well. It was in the midst of this that the newspapers began to fill with headlines about violence against Indian students in Australia. Roy had a small taste of this — he claims that the parents of one of the local boys he shared a flat with, threatened him. Scared, he returned to India and told his mother, who had raised a ₹20-lakh loan to finance his study abroad, that he would not go back. So after two wasted years, Roy returned to India for good in 2008, just as the global economic crisis took hold and job markets around the

globe tanked. The credits he earned in Australia could not be transferred to any college here and he has now enrolled in a management course through correspondence at a college in India.

Kolkata Isn't Adelaide
Roy's bad experience is not necessarily the norm. Few students face such severe adjustment problems that they have to return without finishing their course. And while attacks did take place against some Indian students in Australia, they were never very large in number and have declined.

But it is Roy's expectations about his education, and how they ran up against reality that is perhaps a bigger cautionary tale. When beginning his course, Roy was told that along with his engineering degree, he would also be able to take courses in management, thus enabling him to earn an MBA-cum-engineering qualification. But he found the infrastructure in the affiliate in Kolkata quite poor. "We found that the management modules promised were not available," says Roy. "We were encouraged, at least initially, to take only technical courses." He says there was an improvement in the quality of instruction only when he began taking courses directly with the university rather than with the affiliate. But that happened only a year and a half into his course of study. At the end of it, all students, like Roy, and their parents, must contemplate that most uncomfortable of questions: was all that money worth it?

The Middle-class Dream
For decades, the foreign degree has been a great Indian middle-class dream — a way to not just get an excellent education, but also a fast track to migrate to the West. In many countries, immigration rules were structured to allow Indian students, once they graduated, to work for a couple of years. Students would use that option to settle for a longer time — perhaps permanently.

If permanent resident status in the US or UK or Canada was the "pull" factor, the "push" came from the class system in Indian higher education. The top-flight institutions — the IITs, the IIMs, and a handful of other liberal arts and technical colleges were far too few in number to be able to absorb the enormous number of students looking for a good degree, that would get them that extra edge, that second look from a recruiter overwhelmed with CVs, in a highly competitive job market. As researcher Craig Jeffrey, a lecturer at the University of Oxford, documents, in his study of the state of higher education in Mexico, there are youths who accumulate degree after degree, without any hope of getting a job. He visited Meerut twice — in 1996 and 2004. "Between 1996 and 2004 I had completed my PhD, married, and obtained an academic job," says Jeffrey in a paper he wrote on the unemployed permanent students of Meerut. "During the same period, many of my informants, now in their mid-30s, had, it seemed, stood still.

Unable to obtain desired employment, one of these students asked me: 'What can we do about study and work?' That pressure on the Indian education system will only get worse. According to United Nations Population projections, the population aged between 15 years and 24 years will rise from an estimated 241 million in 2015 to 248 million by 2030. The huge excess demand for education has led to all sorts of perverse outcomes in India — such as the requirement that students post a 100% mark to be able to get admission into the coveted IITs (hundreds of courses in Delhi University (DU). Indeed, a few months back, newspapers ran stories of students who had been accepted to top Ivy League colleges in the US such as Cornell and Dartmouth after being rejected for admission to DU.

The Boom Decade
Unsurprisingly, the global mobility of Indian students increased phenomenally over the past decade. Indian students went from 54,000 in 2000-01 to 1,04,000 in 2010-11, according to the Open Doors report, which is published annually by the Institute of International Education (IIE) in partnership with the US State Department's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs. Students from India still form about 14% of all international students in the US and are second only to the Chinese. A total of 218,000 Indian students were studying in the US, UK, Canada and Australia in 2009-10.

Many students are now heading overseas for an undergraduate degree, something that used to be out of the reach of most, except the very rich. "A new trend is that increasing numbers of talented young high-school students who are not sure what they want to do the rest of their lives, and wish to explore different options before committing to a major, go as 'undecided' freshmen," says Rama Raju Raju, country co-ordinator, educational advising services, US-India Educational Foundation. According to Open Doors, 44.8% of Indian students in the US are now undergraduates. If Indian students are heading abroad in droves, the higher education systems overseas, battered by budget cuts, welcome them with open arms. International students contribute more than \$2 billion to the US economy, through their expenditure on tuition and living expenses, according to the US Department of Commerce. Higher education is among the US top service sector exports. The Australian education industry — education is the largest services export sector, contributing \$17 billion to the Australian economy in 2009. In 2008, international students in Canada spent in excess of \$6.5 billion on tuition, accommodation and discretionary spending; in the UK, a research paper from the department for business, innovation and skills in June 2011 estimated the total value of UK education and

STUDENT STORY

Manisha Malhotra | 23

(Name changed on request)

Overseas Course
After a BA Economics from Delhi University, in 2009 went for a 10-month marketing course + 2.5 month internship at ESADE business school in Spain.

Amount Spent
Around ₹16-20 lakh

Return on Investment

Negative
She did not want to come back to India as she thought that Indian firms wouldn't know much about the degree and it was difficult to break into the MNC sector. She had been looking for a job in Europe but had problems as the student visa became invalid after her course. In Spain, the employer is required to prove that no Spanish national is available for the job before hiring a foreigner.

Back in India. It was very difficult to get a job.
She had to do two internships for 4 months and could mail many recruiters. Finally, she joined a media planning firm.

Positive
Despite the struggle afterwards, the education quality was brilliant.

Price Tags

- United States**
₹15-40 lakh/year
2-year Masters Course
- Britain**
₹12-25 lakh/year
1-year Masters Course
- Australia**
₹15-25 lakh/year
1-1.5 & 2-year Masters Course
- Most Expensive**
MBA Course
₹15-50 lakh/year
Full-course Fees

Be Careful of Fraudsters

- Thousands of Indian students were victims of the Tri-Valley University of Northern Virginia Immigration Scams in the US. Authorities warn against lack of attendance at colleges and unauthorised employment.
- The department of homeland security has many more institutions under the scanner for fraudulent practices.
- UK has announced a new most trusted institutions list for its Tier 4 student visa system. To gain entry into the UK, students need to be enrolled only in institutions included in the list.
- Australia has cracked down on bogus private colleges, many of which were fronts for immigration scams involving international students. Indian students enrolled in these institutions had to come back.
- 11,000 foreign students have been barred from entering Britain after their colleges were exposed as bogus. More than 450 colleges have lost licences.

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Kalam ropes in six I-A graduates

Dayananda Yumlembam | TNN

Ahmedabad: Former president APJ Abdul Kalam has emerged as one of the top recruiters of the students of the Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (IIM-A) during the summer placement this year.

As the placement came to an end on Friday, six students of the institute bagged internship offers from Kalam's office. Confirming the number of offers ex-

tended by Kalam's office to the IIM-A students, an official close to the development said that the students will be handling various social campaigns and roles related to rural development under Kalam.

"It is a good sign. It shows that an increasing number of these students are taking interest in social sector," said the official.

Out of the six students, one belongs to the post-graduate programme in agri-business man-

agement (PGPABM) the rest are from the post-graduate programme in management (PGP).

The number of students opting for internship in the social sector has also increased at the IIM-A this year. Last year, only four students of the institute had done internship with Kalam.

A city-based organization National Innovation Foundation (NIF), which hired four students last year, returned to the campus to hire 11 students this year.

With all the students getting internship offers, the summer placement at IIM-A came to an end on Friday. More than 20 companies conducted interviews during the day with Tata Steel making the highest number of offers. Other companies like Aviva Insurance and Samsonite also took part in the recruitment. Agnya Carbon Ventures, started by three IIM-A alumni last year, also offered summer internships to the students this year.



There are students from Andhra & Punjab looking at overseas education as a quick fix to immigration. Their numbers are falling

Bharat Gulia, Senior Manager, E&Y

training exports to the economy at \$24 billion, with a projection that this could rise to as high as \$26 billion by 2025. But despite this happy coincidence of increased supply meeting increased demand, the trend in student numbers to these countries from India has actually been downward. The US has seen a marginal decline of 1% in student inflow over the last academic year. Between 2008 and 2010, the number of student visas to Indians in Australia declined by 38%, and for the UK, the number declined by 27% in just one year. Canada by contrast, saw an almost four-fold jump between 2008 and 2010.

Three Categories

There are roughly three categories of Indian students who are looking at foreign degrees, points out Bharat Gulia, senior manager, Ernst & Young, a leading consultancy. The top layer of Indian students from the best colleges such as the IITs usually get admissions in the best institutions overseas and some of them do not get good funding for their education. Top MBA courses are included in this segment and there's no drop in interest for them.

There's another section of young students who look at overseas options when they fail to get admissions in the top colleges in India. They are mostly from affluent families and are going overseas for undergraduate degrees. Finally, there are the students from small towns in states like Punjab and Andhra Pradesh who are looking at overseas education as a quick fix to immigration. These students often get duped by unscrupulous agents and service providers and their numbers have been falling in the past couple of years.

While data are not available about the pattern of intake of foreign students, it's highly likely that the boom in foreign students overseas in the past few years, and even

accounting for the recent drop in numbers since 2008, is driven by the last two segments. The top universities in the US, even those outside the Ivy League, or the Oxbridge universities in the UK are far too small and selective to have a significant impact on overall student visa numbers.

All segments of students will be hit by changes in immigration policy, such as those that have hit international students in the UK. But it is the last two segments of students who will be most hit by the other trends affecting foreign student flows — weak job markets, and a crackdown on 'fraud' universities.

The Big Squeeze

Twenty-eight year old Aman Dhall decided to head to the UK after five years of working in India. His course? An MSc in sports management at Loughborough University. Dhall decided on the course after looking around and finding no institution of comparable quality which offered a similar course in India. "I had planned to work abroad for two years before coming back to India," says Dhall. But despite having worked on several projects abroad, he didn't get a job. He is back in India and has set up his own venture, after reaching sports marketing at Khalsa College and working on a project with sports and development NGO.

Dhall's experience is not unique. The UK has tightened rules for international students including curbing the opportunities to work during study and bring in family members. Further, international graduates are no longer allowed leave to stay in the UK for two years after their course, to look for a job. They will have to secure a skilled job with a sponsor, to continue to remain in the UK. Under new language requirements, students who cannot speak English will be refused entry. And very recently, the UK Border Agency has also created a list of more than 2,000 Indian banks and financial institutions from which it will no longer accept evidence to show that a student has sufficient funds to support himself and pay for his course. These drastic changes will have a huge fall-out on the international student numbers in the UK. And finally, joblessness among young people in the UK is now above 1 million for the first time since 1992, making it politically extremely unlikely, if not impossible, that this tight policy will be reversed anytime soon.

On the Immigration Route

The fall in Australian student visa reflects a tightening of that country's immigration policy as well, after a series of steps to tighten norms for international students, service providers and student visas following the spate of racist attacks on Indian students in 2009. But Australia has now announced a rollback. Recent visa changes that came into effect early this year means that Indian students going to Australia will have to demonstrate less funding. Further, Australia is offering two to four-year post-study work period for university degree graduates which is not linked to any skills occupation list. "Following the racist attacks in Australia and the revamp of the system initiated by the government which followed, there's a clear change in perception when choosing Australia among Indians," says Ravi Lochan Singh, managing director of education consultant Global Reach. "The recently introduced post-study work route will help graduating students remain in Australia and if they find jobs they will gain valuable international work experience and can recover some of the money they spent on studying overseas."

Canada too has liberalised immigration policy. With the creation of the Canadian Experience Class in 2008, eligible foreign students can apply for permanent residency from within Canada, and they now effectively have a couple of years advantage over others applying for permanent-resident status.

STUDENT STORY

Arjun Jassal | 27

(Name changed on request)

Year & Course

After working for two years in India, in 2008-09 went to USE for MSc in communication, information and society (research)

Amount Spent Around \$15 lakh

Return on Investment

Negative Took a while to get a job in London, had to do paid internships for 4-6 months but eventually worked in a venture capital firm in London for a two years.

Positive

The course was an amazing learning experience and there was no comparable course on the sociology of media or sociology of technology in India. He decided to move back to India as the economy was growing and has started his own company here.

Few Jobs, Many Frauds

The US has not changed its immigration policy too much over the past couple of years. And in fact an Indian student in the US can get a work permit (the coveted H-1B visa) far more easily now than before. Earlier, the H-1B quota of visas used to be filled within the day applications were opened. Now months can pass, and H-1B visas are still available. But that unfilled quota in H-1B visas is because of a weak economy and job market, with unemployment in the US running at 9%. And in a weak job market, employers have become more discriminating. Vikram Bhargava, chief executive of Redisson, an executive search firm, with offices in North America and India, is actually optimistic. "Despite the weak economic environment, there are jobs to be had and that is a fact. However, employers are far more selective now than ever before. For instance, when they hire an MBA graduate, they will look to see if the candidate has a strong sub-domain learning, expertise or specialisation in either of the core disciplines of finance, marketing or HR. More specialisations don't guarantee you a job."

"Given the low morale in some important sectors such as financial services in the US, Indian students should start looking out for internships right after they finish their first year studies so that they can build up good networks," says Rohinder Sachdev, president of think tank Imagindia Institute and India director of the US India Political Action Committee. "While there are many cases of Indian students coming back to India a few months into the optional practical training period (the 12 years that they have to base on research for jobs), there are some sectors where there are jobs to be found," he says, pointing to some recovery in IT, and increased opportunities for students in sectors such as oil and gas. "American companies which are looking to aggressively tap global markets are recruiting international students in a big way."

Respective of these opportunities though, students are heading back from overseas in larger numbers. Says Sangeeta Singh, partner, human resources, in KPMG, a consultancy, "Over the past few years, there has been a large number of students returning overseas writing to us about available opportunities."

Added to employer selectivity, and a weak job market, is the fact that government is quite apart from immigration policy are extending the crackdown on what they perceive as fly-by-night operators in the education market. US authorities, for instance, cracked down on the Tri-Valley and Northern Virginia universities. In

6 questions to ask yourself before going for that expensive foreign degree

Why are you choosing the country?

- Peer pressure
- Cost considerations
- Job opportunities there

Why are you choosing a particular college/university?

- Snob value
- Extra-curricular activities
- Academic considerations

What helped you make up your mind about the foreign degree?

- Advice from consultants
- Visits to education fairs
- Parental advice & mentorship from seniors

Under what conditions do you intend to come back?

- Only if you are forced to
- Only if you cannot find a job overseas
- As soon as you find a good job in India

What kind of financial obligations are you getting into?

- You have to start repaying a loan as soon as the course gets over
- It doesn't matter since your family is paying
- You have saved from your job

What are the networks that you are depending on?

- You plan to make friends on campus
- Alumni from school/college
- Friends & family settled overseas

If you have ticked the first option for most of the questions you should seriously reconsider your decision on going to study abroad

the Indian job market. If you expected that degree from Timbuktoo university to have employers falling over you, simply because it was earned in the US, forget it.

KPMG's Singh says that outside of a few blue-blooded colleges, she gives little importance to the mere existence of a foreign degree. "We don't give any added weightage to a foreign degree," she says. There is a further problem. "A lot of people who come back from overseas have unrealistic expectations about compensation," she adds.

"The days when Indian employers used to be fascinated with a foreign degree are gone," says Shiv Agrawal, of ABC Consultants, an HR company. "Employers are now far more focused on the quality of the degree and the institution."

And forget about being paid more for doing the same job as others, simply because you have a foreign degree. "That's quite rare," says Agrawal. "What might happen is that a foreign-degree holder, if they are seen as a qualified enough, might be recruited at a more senior position."

Palak Bandyopadhyay, director, human resources at Citrix Systems, agrees that employers are now less enamoured of the mere fact of a foreign degree. "If you have a degree from a mid-tier college or below, then you have to think hard about whether the return justifies the investment," he says.

Time for a Rethink

Students go abroad for roughly two reasons. One, it's seen as a fast track to eventually settling overseas. Countries in the West facilitated this by allowing a student to finish their education and then continue working there for a set period of time — say, two years. Because of the way the immigration process worked, students who studied in countries such as the US, Canada or Australia, effectively had, in most cases, an advantage over others who had never studied abroad but had directly applied to work in those countries. The second reason was that the quality of the foreign degree (in theory) would provide a big competitive edge in the Indian market, if the student chose to, or had to, return.

The second of those assumptions is certainly not true anymore, especially if you're not studied at what Indian employers perceive as a top-class university. The first of those assumptions while not wrong, is certainly being tested in the current climate of weak job markets, and stronger immigration controls in some countries.

"With the economic uncertainty, the pay-off potential of foreign degrees is being questioned by some Indian students," says Rahul Choudhary, director at World Education Services — a New York-based nonprofit organisation that specialises in international education trends. "The majority of the students, irrespective of immigration intent, want to work for a few years abroad to not only recover the investments but also gain foreign work experience. With increasing net cost of education and decreasing work opportunities, it will take longer time for recouping the investment," he says. But he remains bullish. "However, there is no doubt that value of good foreign education still deserves the investment."

Net Gain or Pain

Indeed, it's not all bad. "My advice to students in the US right now is to stay back and continue to look for work rather than being disheartened and returning immediately after the course ends," says Redisson's Bhargava. "They should take full advantage of the fact that they are allowed to stay in the US for some time after graduation, and should use that time to position themselves in the job market and look for opportunities."

Back to the original question: is all that investment in time and money justified?

Even those for whom the reality fell short of their expectations, often have, at least, mixed feelings and few regrets. "It was a great experience, and on balance, I still think it was worth it," says Dhall.

But with the cost of a foreign degree running at ₹15-20 lakh a year, and the increased uncertainty over the end result, this is a question parents and students will increasingly ask themselves. ■

Additional reporting by Mishra Mehra

STUDENT STORY

Akash Sharma | 32

(Name changed on request)

Year & Course

After working for 10 years in India as an art editor, he went to London College of Fashion for a masters in fashion photography in 2008

Amount Spent

Was planning to spend way less but changed his course and saved most of it

Return on investment

Negative A week into the course, he realised that the standard of education didn't match up to his expectations of a foreign course. He then withdrew from the earlier course and changed to a one-year programme in advanced image editing as he had already invested some money in the college and so couldn't come back immediately.

For someone with experience, he felt that the course was a waste as he'd already been exposed to most of the technologies and software being taught there.

On coming back, he missed his previous employer and so he feels there was no positive return on his investments.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi; Date: Nov 20, 2011; Section: Times Nation; Page: 14;

Med regulator bill to be tabled in next session

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: The National Council for Human Resources in Health bill that aims to create an overarching body to regulate medical education will be tabled in the winter session of Parliament starting on November 22.

A senior health ministry official said the bill has been sent to the cabinet for approval following which it will be tabled in the House. "There were some differences between the health and the HRD ministry regarding contents

of the bill which has been sorted. The health ministry will regulate medical education," he said.

The cabinet note and the NCHRH bill were first submitted to the cabinet secretariat in March 2011. As per the order of the secretariat, further consultations were held with departments of higher education and legal affairs and legislative department. "A meeting was also held under the chairmanship of secretary of the legislative department in September 2011," a ministry note said.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Nov 20, 2011;Section: Times City;Page: 6

Non-teaching varsity staff seek parity

New Delhi: Officials of various central universities came together in the city on Saturday to demand parity with teachers in their pay and service conditions. The officials from Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and other varsities from West Bengal, Tripura, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh had gathered at Deen Dayal Upadhyaya College under the aegis of All India Federation of University Officers' Associations (AIFU-OA).

"Teachers, librarians and administration officers used to be at the same place till the Fifth Pay Commission. But the Sixth Pay Commission gave a better scale to teachers, while keeping us at the same level. We want MHRD to treat us on an equal footing," said Sikander Aggarwal, joint secretary, delhi university and colleges officers' association.

He added there was a difference in the retirement age and career progression as well, which must be corrected. Officers from around 20 varsities have planned to write to the MHRD and UGC and they may resort to agitation if no action is taken. **TNN**

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Nov 20, 2011;Section: Times Nation;Page: 13;

Wikipedia is neutral, says co-founder

Mahafreel Irani | TNN

Mumbai: At the country's first-ever Wikiconference held in Mumbai, Wikipedia co-founder Jimmy Wales on Saturday said the website does not take sides. He was reacting to protests against "illegal" depiction of the map of India on the site.

"It is important that Wikipedia stays neutral and for that we must learn about what the opponent's believe," the 45-year-old American entrepreneur told a gathering at Mumbai University's Convocation Hall. BJP's youth wing members protested against a map on Wikipedia showing Pakistan-occupied Kashmir coloured green and Arunachal Pradesh in red.

"A one-sided map is a mistake, which is why we involve contributors from everywhere to edit the content on the site," said Wales. The Wikimedia websites display over 3,200 maps of India, all of which have been uploaded by contributors.

In his keynote address, Wales invited Indians to write articles for more than 20 Indian language Wikipedias that exist but need improvement.

HindustanTimes

Title : UGC chief: Smear campaign begins against contenders

Author :

Location :

Article Date : 11/21/2011

UGC chief: Smear campaign begins against contenders

As the HRD ministry committee is about to finalise the name of the new University Grants Commission chairperson, the work of discrediting some of the claimants has already started.

Hindustan Times

Title : Tech-IT-Easy - An encouraging Nov for Indian IT

Author : N Madhavan, Associate Editor

Location :

Article Date : 11/21/2011

An encouraging Nov for Indian IT

Tech-IT-Easy
N Madhavan, Associate Editor



■ madhavan.n@hindustantimes.com

A FLURRY of news on the information technology and IT-enabled services industry over the past weeks has put the spotlight back on India's hottest sector and the indication seems to be that a good part of the challenges it faced over the past couple of years may be over.

First, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), the country's top software service exporter, announced its second biggest outsourcing contract worth \$2.2 billion (₹11,076 crore) from UK-

based pension firm Friends Life.

Now, India's IT and business process outsourcing (BPO) industry has always faced a paradox of sorts. On the one hand, a downturn in Western markets can be viewed as an opportunity for India because cost-cutting during such times increases the chances of work being farmed out to competitive off-shore locations. On the other hand, the overall IT spending does ease up in difficult times. On top of that, fears of job losses in the West creates an uneasy atmosphere for outsourcing

contracts to be given. In such a backdrop, the TCS win in the UK — where carping against Indian IT/BPO is higher than in the US — is a positive signal.

Days after TCS, mid-sized Hexaware Technologies, announced a UK deal for five years worth \$250 million with an unnamed but significant client in its single largest deal yet. Considering that Hexaware's revenues this fiscal year is estimated to be \$306 million, the deal is a quantum jump.

Between these two pieces of news came a big surprise: billionaire Warren Buffett, who has for decades shunned investing in technology firms because he does not quite understand it, changed his stance by revealing that his Berkshire Hathaway

fund had acquired a 5.4% stake in IBM at a cost of \$10.7 billion. Significantly, the vote of confidence came on account of IBM's services business, which is substantially based in India.

All that should be good news for TCS, Infosys and Wipro and other IT service companies of India because they pretty much do what IBM does in the services space with comparable business practices.

Last, but not the least, the US dollar strengthened to touch R 51 to the rupee last week. Given the shaky atmosphere that started after the Wall Street meltdown in 2008 and the subsequent financial crisis in Europe, the developments in November signal the resilience of the Indian IT industry.

Business Line ND 20/11/2011

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Fabrication facility may come up in Hyderabad

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, Nov. 19

The Union Government has indicated that Hyderabad is a likely location for setting up electronics fabrication facility.

Mr Kapil Sibal, Union Minister of Human Resources and Information Technology, has said that the national electronics manufacturing policy would give impetus IT hardware industry in India.

Mr Sibal, who was here to attend IT Summit for Global Peace organised by Christian preacher Mr K.A. Paul, said that the Government was in the process of all universities and 31,000 colleges in the

country in the next six months as part of National Knowledge Network.

Using this network, students in a far-off university could take courses virtually by premier academic institutes such as IIT.

Besides, the Government would provide Internet bandwidth to 2.50 lakh village panchayats and, if need be, offer wireless connectivity to offer last mile connectivity.

The Government would also provide electronic interface to public services.

"Information technology should be inclusive. It is not for those who can afford iPads," he said.

एजुकेशन. आईआईटी राजस्थान में सीईओ बनाने की योजना 'नौकरी मत ढूँढो, खुद की कंपनी खोलो'

मनोज कुमार पुरोहित. जोधपुर

आईआईटी राजस्थान ने तय किया है कि नौकरी मांगने की बजाय हमारे स्टूडेंट्स नौकरी देने वाले बनें। सूर्यनगरी में स्थित इस संस्थान ने दुनिया का सबसे सस्ता टेबलेट पीसी 'आकाश' बनाकर इसकी शुरुआत भी कर दी है। इसके अलावा यहां स्टूडेंट्स में एंटरप्रेन्योरशिप विकसित करने के लिए कई प्रयोग किए जा रहे हैं। आईआईटी-आर के निदेशक प्रो. पीके कालरा कहते हैं, 'मैं इंजीनियरिंग छात्रों से चाहता हूँ कि वे स्वयं की कंपनी खोलें और उसके सीईओ बनें, न कि कोई नौकरी करें। ऐसा करने पर हम चीन को पीछे छोड़ सकते हैं।' प्रो. कालरा ऐसा माहौल तैयार करने के लिए काफी कुछ कर भी रहे हैं। चूंकि हर छात्र एंटरप्रेन्योर नहीं बन सकता, इसलिए संभावना वाले स्टूडेंट्स पर फोकस किया जा रहा है।

ये किया अब तक

- छुट्टियों में उद्यमिता के विशेष कोर्स।
- इनके अंक मुख्य कोर्स में जोड़े जाते हैं।
- 'आकाश' प्रोजेक्ट में 150 छात्रों को जोड़ा।
- 'रोबोटिक्स' सहित अन्य प्रोजेक्ट में 100 से ज्यादा स्टूडेंट्स।

ये है योजना

- एंटरप्रेन्योर बनाने के लिए फंड की व्यवस्था।
- गांवों में डेढ़ माह का वर्किंग सिस्टम।
- आईपीआर पर नए कोर्स की तैयारी।
- आत्मविश्वास बढ़ाने के लिए अन्य प्रोजेक्ट भी शुरू किए जाएंगे।

प्रो. कालरा का उद्यमिता फॉर्मूला :

मानसिकता : यदि किसी स्टूडेंट में उद्यमी बनने की क्षमता है तो उसके माइंडसेट को दिशा दिखाना जरूरी है। आईआईटी राजस्थान में एंटरप्रेन्योरशिप की बारीकियां सिखाने के लिए साल में दो बार स्पेशल कोर्स चलाए जाते हैं।

मोटिवेशन : यदि स्टूडेंट्स में आत्मविश्वास और प्रेरणा नहीं है तो वह उद्योग लगाकर भी उसे चला नहीं पाएगा। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए स्टूडेंट्स

के मोटिवेशन के लिए भी काफी कार्य किए जाते हैं। इसके तहत पहले सेमेस्टर से लेकर अंतिम सेमेस्टर के छात्रों को जोड़ा जाता है।

लीडरशिप : स्टूडेंट्स में लीडरशिप का गुण होना भी बहुत जरूरी होता है। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए आईआईटी राजस्थान को मिलने वाले हर प्रोजेक्ट में स्टूडेंट्स की अलग-अलग टीम बनाई जाती है, जिसमें हर टीम का एक लीडर भी होता है। ताकि उस प्रोजेक्ट पर काम करते हुए उनमें नेतृत्व क्षमता विकसित हो सके। शेष पेज 8 पर

नौकरी मत...

आईपीआर : स्टूडेंट्स को एंटरप्रेन्योर बनने से पहले इंटरलेक्चुअल प्रॉपर्टी राइट्स (आईपीआर) की जानकारी होना भी जरूरी है, क्योंकि यह बौद्धिक संपदा पर आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था की नींव है। उद्यमिता में प्रतिस्पर्धा के चलते इसका महत्व लगातार बढ़ता जा रहा है। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए शीघ्र ही आईआईटी राजस्थान में इसके लिए भी कोर्स शुरू किया जाएगा।

बिना तैयारी के कोशिश बेकार

-आईआईटी दिल्ली

कोई भी इंजीनियर एक बेहतर सीईओ हो सकता है ऐसा मानकर कैम्पस इंटरव्यू पर रोक लगाना उचित नहीं होगा। जरूरी है कि कोई ऐसा प्रोग्राम हो जो इंजीनियरों को कम्पनी चलाने का हुनर दे और इससे जुड़ी उन बारीकियों से अवगत कराए, जिसकी जरूरत एक सीईओ को रहती है। इतना प्रयास करने के बाद भी स्पष्ट तौर पर सभी छात्रों के लिए कम्पनी खोलकर काम कर पाना संभव नहीं है। हर छात्र की अपनी एक क्षमता और अपना नजरिया होता है। कोई अपना काम करना चाहता है तो किसी की नजर उम्दा नौकरी पर रहती है। -जैसा कि आईआईटी दिल्ली के एक उच्च अधिकारी ने बताया