Newspaper Clips
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HT.COM ND 07/11/2014 P-8

■ Ericsson has invited proposals from IIT students across the country   FILE PHOTO

Competitive innovation is the way forward

Proyashi Barua

Ericsson has recently announced the launch of the Ericsson Innovation Awards in association with the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT) to recognise the spirit of innovation among students at Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). With these awards, Ericsson aims to facilitate innovative projects from engineering students and support some deserving ventures through to their incubation phase at IIT-approved technology business incubators. These awards will also insulate the inventor with regard to his/her patent.

Incidentally this is the first time that Ericsson has inked a MoU with seven IITs and the FITT to encourage innovation. Talking about the broad objectives of this MoU, Chris Houghton, head of region India, Ericsson says, "At a macro level, this will give an edge to not just innovation but research in the telecom space. This initiative will encourage students to find innovative technology solutions for masses. It is a step to realise the Digital India Vision. For India to truly become digital, you need technology which can be deployed using the internet. Hence we have invited projects within the telecom domain and on Internet of Things."

The Ericsson Innovation Awards seek innovations in areas such as web design, cloud computing, storage and networking, human-machine interface, embedded and hardware system design, MIMO (multiple-input, multiple-output), machine-to-machine/Internet of Things, software-defined networking, open source, graphics and visualisation, as well as research.

Ericsson has invited proposals from IIT students across Chennai, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Mumbai, Roorkee and Banaras Hindu University.

Following the preliminary screening phase, the student proposals will be shortlisted through two jury sessions, comprising senior members from Ericsson R&D, FITT and industry experts. In the first round, the jury will shortlist up to 10 proposals. Each shortlisted proposal will be given an incentive by Ericsson to complete the initial prototype within three months. In the second round, the jury will select two innovation projects. These will be announced in a ceremony in April 2015.

Calling himself 'RSS person,' applicant praises Irani, weeks later is made chief of Nagpur NIT

FAST-TRACKED

- Smriti Irani takes oath as Union Minister on May 26
- Jamdar writes to her on May 28, seeks post of VNIT chief
- Appointments to 12 NITs pending, HRD ministry singled out
- VNIT vacancy on Aug 29
- Irani dumps 4 names recommended by ministry, forwards only Jamdar name
- Jamdar's appointment as chairman of VNIT, Nagpur cleared on Sept 15

AMITAV RANJAN
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 6

DAYS after he congratulated Smriti Irani on assuming charge as Human Resource Development Minister and sent her a job application with the reminder that he was an "RSS person" at whose Nagpur house she once had a "brief stay", Vishram Jamdar was named chairman of the Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT) Nagpur.

A panel of four names recommended by the HRD ministry for the same post was set aside and Jamdar's name was sent as the only option to the President for nomination. It was approved on September 15.

In a letter to Irani on May 28 — two days after she was sworn in as Union Minister — Jamdar wrote: "During your brief stay at our place in Nagpur & subsequent meeting in BJP office at Delhi, myself and my family members found an exceptional personality in you. We are all sure that under your able leadership the Ministry of HRD will achieve higher goals in respective field of HRD."

"I have enclosed my resume along with this letter & take this opportunity to give some more details, with specific focus on the tenure of a Member, Board of Governors, VNIT Nagpur

Applicant praises Irani, is made chief of NIT

during 2002 till 2012," he wrote.

In the letter, he referred to his RSS background. "Being recognised as RSS person I could remain there in VNIT Nagpur as BOG member in spite of the fact that Mr Arjun Singhji was HRD Minister during that period. This may probably speak of my work in VNIT Nagpur."

"With this background I earnestly feel to render my services as the Chairman of this college for the development & upgradation of this college. Incidentally the tenure of the present Chairman is also over in the month of May 2014 only. If given an opportunity as a Chairman VNIT Nagpur I shall be working whole heartedly & intimately for the Institute as I take it as my Vidya Mandir," Jamdar informed Irani.

Although appointments to 12 NITs were pending before Irani since June — panels had to be approved for submission to the President — the HRD ministry on August 29 singled out the vacancy in VNIT Nagpur on grounds that the institute was "continuously insisting on early nomination".

The ministry appended four names — Dr Shreeram Inamdar, Professor at University of Delaware; B M Munjal, Chairman of Hero Honda Motors Ltd; M G Parameswaran, Executive Director & CEO of FCB Ulka Advertising Pvt Ltd; and, Arun Jain, Chairman & CEO of Polaris Software Lab Ltd — besides giving Irani the option to "recommend some other suitable names to the Honourable Visitor".

A week later, Irani recommended Jamdar's name. The President approved it on September 15.

Under the NIT Act of 2007, the President, in his capacity as Visitor to NITs, nominates their chairpersons and members. Since 2008, the practice has been for the HRD minister to send a panel of at least two names to the President from a list of four or five drawn up by the ministry.

Prior to the enactment of the NIT Act, the chairpersons were directly selected by the HRD minister in his capacity as Chairman of the Council of NITs.

In July 2010, the ministry decided to approach the scientific community, CSIR, IITs, industrial and commercial institutions as well as industry houses to nominate persons of eminence for the posts of chairpersons of 30 NITs.

"This is with the purpose of utilizing the services of eminent persons and their expertise in channeling the available resources of the NITs in developing a pool of technical repository in the country," the ministry said.

The ministry had received 110 names including those of industrialists, academicians, scientists and retired bureaucrats. But this list was given a miss.

When The Indian Express sought his comments, Jamdar admitted writing to Irani. "I rendered my services since I was a board member right from the day it became VNIT in 2002 to 2012. Also because I got education from this college," he said over phone.

He said he continued to be associated with the RSS but said his interaction with Irani was "not much" before she became minister. "I met her a few times during any BJP meet," he said.

In the proposal to the President, Jamdar is mentioned as president of Laghu Udyog Bharti — it was the beneficiary of an institutional plot on Deendayal Upadhyaya Marg in New Delhi in early 2003 when the NDA was in power.

According to the VNIT website, Jamdar graduated in metallurgy from the college when it was the VRCE. It says "his association with the industry started way back in 1972" and he worked with "more than 40 industries".

He was chairman of the Dharampeth Polytechnic, Nagpur from 2010-2013. He was national president of the Laghu Udyog Bharti for three years and a member of the working group on labour formed by the PMO, the website stated.

Last month, Irani quashed the panel suggested for NITs at Calicut, Rourkela, Surat, Surathkal and Tiruchirapalli to recommend one woman executive from technology firms for appointment as chairpersons "to encourage eminent women professional leaders to envision NITs".

Irani and her office did not respond to phone calls and SMS texts.

Students Fuel Placement Engine at IIMs, IITs

Hundreds of students juggle smart decisions, strategic planning and innumerable probabilities to maximise hiring

Devina Sengupta & Sreeradha D Basu

Mumbai: The adrenalin-powered frenzy in the placement cell at the Powai campus of IIT-Bombay matches that of any trading room in a stock broking firm. A 146-member team – mostly students – are industriously working dozens of phone lines reaching out to 5,000 companies to place 1,600 students graduating this year.

The students have organised themselves efficiently into six placement managers, 50 company coordinators and 50 department placement coordinators. The company coordinators call employers and convince them to come to campus for placement season, department placement coordinators prepare students for aptitude tests, group discussions and interviews and another 10 associate placement coordinators also help out the different groups.

"We are one of the best placement teams across the country and work very hard to maintain that reputation," says Mohak Mehta, B.Tech Student Representative for IIT-Bombay.
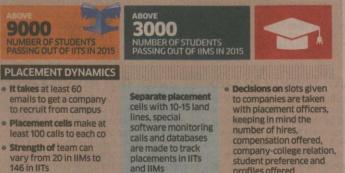
IIMs too are gripped by a frenzy that is equally intense — it takes around 60 emails and over 100 phone calls to get one company to come to the campus to recruit, even if the firm is an old timer.

Sophisticated project management software also power the work done by placement cells

Two Talent Battles ▶▶ 16

Pulling Off A Class Act
A Peek Into the Placement cells of India's Top Campuses

ABOVE 9000
NUMBER OF STUDENTS PASSING OUT OF IITS IN 2015

ABOVE 3000
NUMBER OF STUDENTS PASSING OUT OF IIMS IN 2015

PLACEMENT DYNAMICS

- It takes at least 60 emails to get a company to recruit from campus
- Placement cells make at least 100 calls to each co
- Strength of team can vary from 20 in IIMs to 146 in IITs

- Separate placement cells with 10-15 land lines, special software monitoring calls and databases are made to track placements in IITs and IIMs

- Decisions on slots given to companies are taken with placement officers, keeping in mind the number of hires, compensation offered, company-college relation, student preference and profiles offered

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कैंपस स्ट्रैटेजी कंपनियों को बुलाने से लेकर स्टूडेंट्स के इंटरव्यू तक का जिम्मा कोऑर्डिनेशन टीमों पर

कॉरपोरेट पैटर्न पर IIT, IIM के प्लेसमेंट सेल

[देविना सेनगुप्ता & श्रीराधा डी बसु | मुंबई]

आईआईटी बॉम्बे के पवई कैम्पस का प्लेसमेंट सेल इन दिनों किसी स्टॉक ब्रोकिंग फर्म के ट्रेडिंग रूम की तरह काम कर रहा है। यह टीम 146 लोगों की है और इनमें से अधिकतर स्टूडेंट्स हैं। ये इस वर्ष ग्रेजुएट होने जा रहे 1,600 स्टूडेंट्स के प्लेसमेंट के लिए 5,000 कंपनियों से संपर्क कर रहे हैं।

टीम में छह प्लेसमेंट मैनेजर, 50 कंपनी कोऑर्डिनेटर और 50 डिपार्टमेंट प्लेसमेंट कोऑर्डिनेटर हैं। कंपनी कोऑर्डिनेटर्स एंप्लॉयर्स को कॉल कर उन्हें प्लेसमेंट सीजन के लिए कैम्पस में आने को आश्वस्त करते हैं, डिपार्टमेंट प्लेसमेंट कोऑर्डिनेटर्स स्टूडेंट्स को एप्टीट्यूड टेस्ट, ग्रुप डिस्कशन और इंटरव्यू के लिए तैयारी करवाते हैं और 10 अन्य एसोसिएट प्लेसमेंट कोऑर्डिनेटर्स अलग-अलग ग्रुप्स की भी मदद करते हैं।

आईआईटी बॉम्बे के स्टूडेंट रिप्रेजेंटेटिव और बीटेक के स्टूडेंट मोहक मेहता ने कहा, 'हमारी टीम पूरे देश में बेस्ट प्लेसमेंट टीमों में से एक है। हम इस साख को बनाए रखने के लिए मेहनत करते हैं।' आईआईएम में भी प्लेसमेंट को लेकर कुछ इसी तरह से काम हो रहा है। इन टॉप मैनेजमेंट स्कूलों में एक कंपनी को कैम्पस रिक्रूटमेंट के लिए बुलाने के मकसद से 60 ईमेल और 100 से ज्यादा कॉल की जाती हैं, चाहे वह कंपनी पहले भी कैम्पस में रिक्रूटमेंट के लिए आती रही हो।

प्लेसमेंट सेल में शामिल स्टूडेंट्स कुछ प्रोफेसर्स या इंस्टीट्यूट के स्टाफ की लीडरशिप में तेजी से काम करते हैं। इन पर कैम्पस से हायरिंग को अधिकतम करने के लिए तुरंत फैसले लेने, कैलकुलेशन करने, स्ट्रैटेजिक प्लानिंग की जिम्मेदारी होती है। देश में हर साल आईआईटी के 9,000 से ज्यादा और आईआईएम के 3,335 स्टूडेंट्स का भविष्य इन्हीं प्लेसमेंट सेल पर टिका होता है, क्योंकि कैम्पस रिक्रूटमेंट से ही उनके करियर की डगर तय होती है।

आईआईएम इंदौर की प्लेसमेंट कमेटी के कोऑर्डिनेटर निशीथ केजरीवाल ने बताया, 'ज्यादातर स्टूडेंट्स प्लेसमेंट होने के बाद थैंक्स भी नहीं कहते। लेकिन प्लेसमेंट के हमारे मिशन पर इसका असर नहीं पड़ता। आईआईएम इंदौर में 2015 में 500 से अधिक स्टूडेंट्स का प्लेसमेंट होना है और केजरीवाल जैसे लोग इस पर जुलाई से काम कर रहे हैं।' आईआईएम में फर्स्ट ईयर के स्टूडेंट्स फाइनल प्लेसमेंट की जिम्मेदारी संभालते हैं, जबकि सेकेंड ईयर स्टूडेंट्स समर इंटर्नशिप प्लेसमेंट देखते हैं। इस तरह से सेकेंड ईयर स्टूडेंट्स को समर इंटर्नशिप के दौरान मिला पूरा डेटाबेस फर्स्ट ईयर स्टूडेंट्स को परिवार की किसी विरासत की तरह सौंप दिया जाता है।

Tribune ND 07/11/2014 P-12

40 Mandi IIT students get campus placement

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MANDI, NOVEMBER 6

Forty students of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) here have received campus placement offers with the highest package of Rs 26 lakh.

Talking to The Tribune, faculty adviser for placement Samar Agnihotri said eight or nine companies, including Microsoft and Amazon, participated in the campus recruitment drive, which started on October 24. The drive would continue till next week.

He said 40 of the 110 students from the computer science and electrical and mechanical engineering departments had been recruited so far.

He said the highest package of Rs 26 lakh was given to a computer science student. Last year, the highest package of Rs 20 lakh was given to a student of the computer science department.

"Students of the computer science department get higher pay packages whereas students from the electrical and mechanical engineering department generally get packages in the range of Rs 10 to 12 lakh," he added.

He said two more campus placement drives would be organised before the end of the academic session.

"This is the third year of campus placement. On an average, 85 per cent of the students get recruited through these drives every year," Agnihotri said.

He added that most of the remaining students did not take part in the drive.

HT.COM ND 07/11/2014 P-8

Indians abroad should become partners in its progress

Press Trust of India

NIIT Institute of Finance Bankingand Insurance Training (IFBI), NIIT University and Kotak Mahindra Bank have collaborated to launch a Post Graduate Diploma in Banking and Relationship Management.

The entities have entered into a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch the 12-month course, which will be offered at NIIT University, a statement said.

The programme aims to develop and empower professionals with necessary skills and knowledge to undertake various roles in banking and financial services.

NIIT IFBI and NIIT University will pro-

vide training to students, organise academic sessions in specialised areas of applied banking/financial/relationship management topics and also impart business and cultural orientation.

Upon successful completion of the programme, the students will get an opportunity to join Kotak Mahindra Bank as Probationary Officers.

"This programme will equip them in various aspects of jobs in BFSI. Banking is going to play a significant role in India's progress, and this programme will help create a pool of competent professionals in this sector," Kotak Mahindra Bank Executive Vice President Human Resourse Amitabha Sen said.

UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAMME, STUDENTS WILL GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK AS PROBATIONARY OFFICER

The students will also undergo an industry-linked exhaustive internship at Kotak Mahindra Bank during the course duration.

"The programme will help identify and professionally train manpower for the bank, while empowering aspiring youth to access challenging careers in the banking sector," NIIT IFBI President Bimal Jain said.
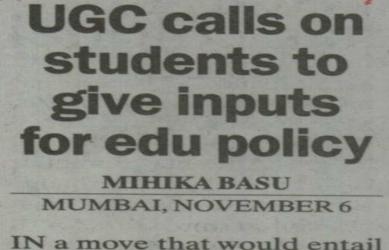
Anand Sharma founded Super 30 in Patna, Bihar in 2002   FILE PHOTO

Nai Duniya ND 07/11/2014 P-4

भिलाई की आईआईटी का रायपुर में होगा अस्थायी संचालन

भिलाई (ब्यूरो)। भिलाई में प्रस्तावित छत्तीसगढ़ के पहले आईआईटी (इंडियन इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी) का अस्थायी संचालन रायपुर स्थित शासकीय इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज (जीईसी) के भवन में किया जाएगा। शासन ने सत्र-2015-16 से प्रदेश में आईआईटी संचालन के लिए रायपुर जीईसी भवन का निरीक्षण कर प्रस्ताव केंद्र सरकार को सौंप दिया है। इस पर एमएचआरडी कमेटी की मुहर के बाद अगले सत्र से प्रदेश में आईआईटी का संचालन तय हो जाएगा।

केंद्र सरकार के मानव संसाधन एवं विकास मंत्रालय (एमएचआरडी) नई दिल्ली द्वारा छत्तीसगढ़ में आईआईटी खोलने की घोषणा बीते बजट सत्र में की गई थी। इसके बाद प्रदेश में आईआईटी संचालन को लेकर कवायद तेज कर दी गई है। सूत्रों के मुताबिक बीते मंगलवार को तकनीकी शिक्षा सचिव छत्तीसगढ़ शासन अमित अग्रवाल व अतिरिक्त संचालक डॉ. जीएस बेदी ने जीईसी रायपुर का निरीक्षण किया। इसमें आईआईटी के अस्थाई संचालन के लिए जीईसी भवन को उपयुक्त पाया।

Indian Express ND 07/11/2014

P-7

UGC calls on students to give inputs for edu policy

MIHIKA BASU
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 6

IN a move that would entail participation of young minds of the country in policy formation, the government has sought suggestions from students from across the country for a new education policy.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has written a letter to the vice-chancellors of all universities, calling for recommendations from students and asking institutes to organise a discussion among students on "Shikshit Bharat, Saksham Bharat—Quality Education for All" on the occasion of International Students' Day. The UGC letter further says that it has been proposed to select the best recommendations and suggestions on the subject of education and invite one student leader from selected universities to Delhi to interact with the Minister of Human Resource Development and "to attend session of the Parliament when the subject of education is discussed".

IIT KHARAGPUR SETS UP INNOVATION CENTRE

Hindustan Times (Kolkata)

In order to give innovation a fillip, IIT Kharagpur (IITKgp) on Wednesday opened the MN Faruqui Innovation Centre (MNFIC). Around a decade back, an innovation lab was set up, which led to several student groups doing innovative projects. IIT Kharagpur took the initiative of establishing this centre to promote technical innovation through a more structured, pervasive and institutionalised approach.

The scope of activities of the centre may be expanded further with additional support from individuals, corporate bodies, national and international funding agencies or the government. Innovation activities carried out by students may help them earn additional credit for their degree programmes.

The centre was named after Professor Mohammed N Faruqui, who had joined IIT as a student in 1952 and subsequently became faculty in the electronics and communications engineering department. He was regarded as a mentor for several bright students and distinguished alumni. Another distinguished alumni of IIT-KGP Arjun Malhotra provided $1 million to this centre.

The main objective of the centre is to support the creation and operation of an academic organisation within IIT Kharagpur. It would enable students to ideate, design and develop technical solutions to various problems. In addition, the centre would provide financial and technical support for protection of the intellectual property and facilitate development of real products either through entrepreneurship or by technology transfer. It would work in conjunction with other academic units of the institute, sponsors and collaborators, government support agencies and individual experts.

Scientists find alternative to antibiotics

New Drug Successfully Kills Superbug In Trial; May Come As Pill Or Shot Within 5 Years

London: In a major breakthrough, scientists have developed the first effective alternative to antibiotics that may aid the fight against drug-resistant infections.

In a small patient trial, the drug was shown to be effective at eradicating the superbug Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).

Researchers said it is unlikely that the infection could develop resistance against the new treatment, which is already available as a cream for skin infect-

ON THE WAY OUT?

© HBSS/Corbis

ions. They hope to develop a pill or an injectable version of the drug within five years.

The treatment marks "a new era in the fight against antibiotic-resistant bacteria", according to Mark Offerhaus, chief executive of the biotechnology company Micreos, which is behind the advance.

The treatment attacks infections in an entirely different way from conventional drugs and, unlike them, exclusively targets the Staphylococcus bacteria responsible for MRSA, and leaves other mi-

crobes unaffected. The approach is inspired by naturally occurring viruses that attack bacteria using enzymes called endolysins. It uses a 'designer' endolysin, Staphefekt, which the scientists engineered to latch on to the surface of bacteria cells and tear them apart, 'The Times' reported.

"Endolysins exist in nature, but we've made a modified version that combines the bit that is best at binding to the bacteria with another bit that is best at killing it," said Bjorn Herpers, a clinical

microbiologist, who tested the drug at the Public Health Laboratory in Kennemerland, the Netherlands.

Conventional antibiotics need to reach the inside of the cell to work, and part of the reason they are becoming less effective is that certain strains of bacteria have evolved impenetrable membranes. By contrast, endolysins target basic building blocks on the outside of bacterial cells that are unlikely to change as infections genetically mutate over time. PTI

India 4th most vacation-deprived nation: Survey

Himanshi.Dhawan
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Indians are the fourth most vacation deprived nation globally, with 67% polled saying that they took only 15 days of leave in a year. Mumbai took the least vacations while Delhiites took the maximum holidays in a 5 city survey by Expedia.

About 40% of Indians cannot plan vacations in advance due to work. Indians rank fourth globally after Thailand (43%), Singapore & South Korea (42%) in vacation-deprivation.

Indians are also ranked second globally in cancelling holiday plans due to work (74%) after Thailand (77%). Globally, 15% feel guilty about taking their vacation days. Indians rank 4 at 20% while Japanese top the rank-

ALL WORK, NO BREAK

	2013	2014
Cannot plan vacation in advance because of work	59	40
Indians say they are vacation deprived	63	68
Support from bosses has dropped	69	64
Check emails 1-2 times during a 7-day vacation	94	90

● 2013 ● 2014. Figures in %   Source: Expedia

ings at 26%.

Within India, Mumbai residents took the least number of vacations with 97% saying they felt deprived of time off from work followed by Pune (88%), Bangalore (86%), Hyderabad (85%),and Delhi (83%).

ees (52%) taking fewer days then they receive.

The two most common reasons for not taking all their vacation days are a grueling work schedule that does not allow for vacation time (26%) and a personal schedule that does not allow for vacation time (25%).

Other possible reasons for not using all of their vacation time include wanting to bank their days for one longer vacation next year (23%), the ability to get money in exchange for unused vacation days (22%) and difficulty in coordinating a time that works for spouse, partner, family members and children (21%).

The Expedia survey interviewed 7855 people over 18 years of age.

Indians receive an average of 19.6 vacation days from their employer each year. They take an average of 15.5 vacation days, with over half the number of employ-

Elaborating on the survey, Expedia managing director Asia Vikram Malhi said, "Vacations play an important role in maintaining

work life balance, and general well-being of the employees while re-energizing them to be more focused and concentrate on their work. It refreshes their mind to carry on with today's tough lifestyle and work."

"The survey highlights that Delhiites are least vacation deprived compared to the other metro cities in India. 60% of people in Delhi said they would prefer more vacation days instead of money. They are usually very excited to plan their vacations and holidays, and 7% actually book it before landing back from their current vacation," Malhi added.

Overall, individuals from India (96%), Italy (92%) and UAE (92%) are the most willing to make sacrifices for more vacation days, as revealed by the global survey.

Academicians sceptical about credit transfer system

HT Correspondent, Hindustan Times Mumbai, November 07, 2014

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http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/mumbai/academicians-sceptical-about-credit-transfer-system/article1-1283347.aspx

Academicians in the city have raised eyebrows about the credit transfer system announced by human resources development (HRD) minister Smriti Irani in New Delhi on Wednesday.

The system will be introduced on November 11 for students from Class 9 up to the PhD level across India.

While the ministry said it will help students and working professionals to switch between jobs and education, college principals in the city believe the education system needed to be overhauled.

"If we want to compete with global universities, the ministry and UGC should first resolve the issue of continuing glitches in the way universities conduct examinations and declare results," said GT Thampi, principal, Thadomal Shahani College of Engineering.

"The credit transfer system will create a major shift in the education system. However, we have to identify the need of a common grading system across universities and their syllabi, " said Madhu Nair, dean of commerce, University of Mumbai (MU).

Snehalata Deshmukh, former vice chancellor of MU, said, "A co-ordination committee of all the university administrators and academicians in the country should be formed to reach a minimum common ground for the credit transfer system to be implemented smoothly."

Manohar Parrikar, an IIT-Bombay Graduate, Likely to be New Defence Minister

http://www.ndtv.com/article/people/manohar-parrikar-an-iit-bombay-graduate-likely-to-be-new-defence-minister-617205

Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar, an IIT Bombay graduate, is likely to be India's new Defence Minister. He will join Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet in an oath ceremony on Sunday, sources have told NDTV.

Mr Parrikar said today that his party, the BJP, has asked him to accept any responsibility offered by the Prime Minister.

The 58-year-old is seen as a fit candidate for the job with his tech background, his impeccable record and strong decision-making skills.

Mr Parrikar is seen as one of BJP's most successful chief ministers, having established the party in a state that has a substantial Christian vote. He also enjoys the support of the BJP's ideological mentor Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Currently, Arun Jaitley holds both the Finance and Defence ministries, but sources say the prime minister wants his full focus on finance ahead of his government's first Budget next year.

At a time India is veering towards indigenous weapons and is facing challenges at its borders with Pakistan and China, PM Modi reportedly wants a strong Defence Minister.

Mr Parrikar, who had led the BJP to victory in Goa in 2012, had been openly reluctant about shifting to the Centre till recently.

"I am not comfortable, I have too much affection towards the state. But rationality tells me if nation requires your services, I should take it. Whenever Goa wants my services, I will be there," he was quoted by the Press Trust of India as saying.

His decisions, party leaders say, have kept the BJP free of controversy in Goa. He has also managed to keep radical outfits like the Sri Ram Sene at bay.

Mr Parrikar, who graduated in metallurgical engineering from IIT-Bombay in 1978, is a batch-mate of technocrat Nandan Nilekani. A father of two sons, he grew up in the Goan village of Parra. His wife Medha died in 2000 of cancer.

Those in the party who know him closely say he is counted among the dynamic, energetic leaders of the party who represent PM Modi's development mission.

IITians run school to bridge social divide

Ajanta Chakraborty,TNN | Nov 7, 2014, 01.45 AM IST

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/IITians-run-school-to-bridge-social-divide/articleshow/45063578.cms

KOLKATA: A short ride from the hallowed portals of IIT-Kharagpur, nestled in a grove of eucalyptus trees, is a quaint little school, pulsating with energy and cheer. At first glance, it would seem like just another primary school in this tribal region of West Midnapore. What's unique is that it is run by IIT students.

This is no corporate social responsibility activity — the IITians call it "emotional responsibility".

Students of IIT-Kharagpur started Jagriti Vidya Mandir at Tangasol, about 5km from the institute, in 2008. Even today, reaching this English-medium school is an uphill task — quite literally. Our car lurches and groans up the unmotorable kuccha road. Every day, IITians take turns to cycle up this same dirt track to pave the future of some 185 underprivileged kids.

The classrooms have been painted in vibrant themes by the IITians themselves, who lug along their laptops to give computer lessons — and sometimes let the kids go wild with Microsoft Paintbrush. Class are often held in the open air in the beautiful eucalyptus grove. "IIT-Kgp was founded in 1951 but it remained oblivious to the under-development that surrounds the campus. Some of our seniors realised this and set up Jagriti Vidya Mandir in 2008," said Vibhu Kumar, a geology and geophysics student. "Life within the walls of IIT is comfortable, the world outside is a stark contrast. It is this contrast that motivates us."

Today, the school has moved to a permanent 2-acre campus. The four classrooms and a guard's quarters have been funded from Yogdaan, a donation drive organised by IITians and the Tiara Charitable Foundation. The guard's quarter is, in fact, a low-cost experiment by civil engineering students, who used bamboo instead of steel. The classroom walls have been painted by Spectra, the IIT-Kgp Arts Society. "We even did the land survey ourselves," said physics student Dhammapal Avhad. "The school is our baby. We even arrange for transport (jeeps) to fetch the children," gushed Harshita Chaudhary, one of the 25 IITians who form the school review committee. The 19-year-old from Bihar's Samastipur said: "All my life, I have been a bookworm striving to crack IIT. Now I want some of these children to grow up and crack IIT."

The school caters to all their needs — food, uniform, books, stationary, school bags — through the "educate a child" scheme where donors fund a child's education. Several IIT professors and alumni have. "We follow CBSC syllabus and intend to apply for affiliation so that the school can be elevated to Plus-II level," said Arbind Kumar, a review committee member.

IITians have also started training and recruiting teachers. "I have learnt so much under their guidance. This is my first job, I hadn't imagined that teaching would be such a rewarding experience," said teacher-in-charge Ajay Rai.

The concept was borrowed from a local social worker, Mrinal Kanti Bhanja, who founded Gopali Youth Welfare Society. "I took my project to a group of IIT students. They were instantly interested. It's wrong to think that brilliant students are career-oriented materialists. Working with them these six years, I have realised that they have more sense of social responsibility than so-called social workers," said Bhanja.

IIT-Kgp director Partha Pratim Chakraborty couldn't be more proud of his students. "The school has several purposes. We keep identifying child labourers who are enrolled here. This is an extremely good initiative by our students who are getting exposed to the ground reality as they pursue excellence in education."

"The school is a lesson for me," said N R Mandal, dean of student affairs. "When the students came to me with the proposal, I had discouraged them thinking it was highly impractical. When we laid the foundation, I told them 'I am so proud of you'. Now I tell them, just work, help will come from all quarters."