Newspaper Clips
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IIT-Hyderabad tops in research among new institutes

R. Ravikanth Reddy

The Indian Institute of Technology here has taken the lead among the eight new IITs in quality of research.

Equipped with strong research facilities, IIT-H has been rated nine on the h-index along with IIT Ropar, while the other six IITs in Patna, Indore, Mandi, Jodhpur, Gandhinagar and Bhubaneshwar were rated in the band of two and five. This was revealed in a recent journal citation assessment commissioned by the new IITs.

The h-index, named after Argentine-American physicist Jorge E. Hirsch, measures the impact of a scientific research publication of an institution or an individual researcher based on the number of citations per publication.

The assessment revealed that research from IIT-H had been cited 535 times compared to 362 for IIT Ropar. The figures for most other new IITs are in just two digits.

Expressing happiness over the development, IIT Hyderabad Director U.B Desai credited the faculty for the honour.

Next target

The effort now will be to improve the h-index to 40 and then to 50 from the existing nine, he said, while admitting that it would take a while for the fledgling institute to reach the position.

Prof. Desai said the institute was currently working on 75 projects. The institute, with 150 full-time faculty members, also has the most number of students (1,355) pursuing various courses.

Among these, around 300 are Ph.D students, indicating the institute's strong focus on research.

New campus

Prof. Desai said the institute, currently functioning from Yeddumailaram near the ordnance factory at Medak, will move to its permanent campus at Kandi near Sangareddy in the next academic year. Student hostels will be constructed by March next and the main academic building by May.

"I have set up committees to ensure the campus development programme is on track," he said.

Keywords: IIT, research, h index, publications, peer review, journals, scientific impact, UB Desai, Sangareddy campus

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Integrate aesthetics, everyday design, artist tells IIT students

Shalini Umachandran, TNN | Oct 28, 2013, 03.02 AM IST

CHENNAI: If you've ever been stumped by that installation of an unmade bed (Tracey Emin at Tate Gallery, London, 1999) or the oversized catamaran loaded with everyday objects (Subodh Gupta, Kochi-Muziris Biennale, 2013), the title of artist Bose Krishnamachari's talk on Sunday would have struck a chord — 'Everything Could Be Art, Everyone Could Be An Artist'.

"You can use any kind of tools to make art. Style is not important to an artist, the idea is," said the Kerala-born, Mumbai-based Krishnamachari, as he clicked through a slideshow of artists, architects, fashion designers and graphic artists from across the world who have used everything from steel and glass to corrugated cardboard and clay to create installations, sculptures, buildings, even bus shelters.

Krishnamachari, 50, one of the directors of Kochi-Muziris Biennale, was in Chennai to speak to members of IIT-Madras' Fine Arts Club as part of its two-day Kalaikoodam art festival. The art biennale, the first of its kind in India, was supported by the Kerala government, but ran into controversy over the money spent on it. Despite this, it was a success, Krishnamachari said, adding that the next would begin on December 13, 2014 and run for more than 100 days.

"We will declare the name of the curator on November 15," said Krishnamachari, who is working on a solo show that will travel around the world.

At IIT though, his focus was to make students see that art isn't far removed from their largely technical fields of study. "Art can take any form," he said, using the example of fashion designer Alexander McQueen's clothing inspired by The Sydney Opera House. He introduced his favourite artists, architects and designers — Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid, pop art icon Andy Warhol and British artist Damien Hirst among others.

He moved to the idea of integrating aesthetics into everyday life. He drew from the example of award-winning Canadian architect Frank O Gehry who incorporated his artistic aesthetic into architecture to construct buildings that were striking and functional. "He even designed bus stops, as did Zaha Hadid and Spain's Justo Garcia Rubio," he said.

"Art and sculpture meets everyday life," he said, pulling up slide after slide of appealing bus stop and public toilet. "How can we do this in India? We need to demand the right aesthetic. Chennai is a city of cables and flex boards. When we build bridges and buildings, we should bring art and life together," he said.

He had the students consider how they could bring art into their daily lives, whether it involved designing a building or writing computer code. "Even the way you cut your hair or pluck your eyebrows is an expression of design," he said. "When you start to look at everything with an eye for art, you can erase mediocrity."

IIT-M to expand its campus for more Japanese ventures

TNN | Oct 28, 2013, 02.55 AM IST

CHENNAI: The research park at IIT Madras is set to expand its campus and open its doors to more Japanese ventures.

Construction of the 0.8 million sqft campus will be completed by the end of 2014, said IIT-M director Bhaskar Ramamurthi at the alumni meet of the Post Graduate Program for Executives for Visionary Leadership in Manufacturing (PGPEX-VLM).

IIT Madras Research Park located on the IT corridor has 55 companies with their research and development verticals.

"Japanese firms are welcome to set up their R&D units at the park," said Ramamurthi. "The companies may also be interested in recruiting our graduates of this programme."

Every week, he said, at least one Japanese firm sets shop in Tamil Nadu and the research park already has firms like Nissan and AMADA. IIT-M has signed MoUs with 10 universities in Japan.

PGPEX-VLM, an executive MBA programme, was launched in 2006 by India and Japan through National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Every batch visits Japan as part of the course .

Meanwhile, JICA will start its feasibility survey on the Comprehensive Integrated Master Plan for Chennai-Bangalore industrial corridor this December. The survey will take one and a half years to be completed, said JICA senior representative Ichiguchi Tomohide.

"We will also improve infrastructure at the Chennai and Ennore ports. The operations and infrastructure at the ports are insufficient. The industrial zones need better roads, water supply and power connection," he said.

Masanori Nakano, consul-general of Japan in Chennai; Shoji Shiba, international expert in total quality management and breakthrough management, and Kayoko Furukawa, consul of culture, information and development affairs, were present at the event.

Wheels of change at IIT-B? Tumtums to bicycles

Yogita Rao, TNN | Oct 28, 2013, 05.56 AM IST

MUMBAI: For several years, tumtums have been the only centralized transport system available for students and staff on the IIT-Bombay's Powai campus. But with the total strength of residents swelling to almost 20,000 in the last five years, the 20 tumtums or minibuses are just not enough. In fact, IITians equate the tumtums to the Virar fast local during peak hours.

Students also claim that the frequency of tumtums is bad and the distance between two stops is huge, forcing them to hire autorickshaws.

The inconvenience caused to residents has forced the institute to seek alternative models for transport, including encouraging students to use their own bicycles, running CNG-run regular buses and building a sheltered walkway from the hostel to the main building and other structures.

While several plans are under consideration, for immediate relief, the institute has decided to encourage students to use their own bicycles on the campus. For students, who cannot afford to buy one, the institute plans to provide financial assistance to get signature bicycles. However, the details of such assistance are yet to be worked out by the authorities. IIT-B had earlier planned to organize a bicycle pooling system, wherein students can pick up cycles from various locations on the campus and drop them back after use. However, the proposal was shelved after the institute realized that there were operational problems. "To manage a centralized bicycle system would have been difficult. It is also inconvenient to use cycles during monsoon," said U A Yajnik, dean of students' affairs.

IT-B has also decided to procure five CNG-run regular buses, which will be outsourced to an external agency, for the benefit of the 20,000 residents, including more than 8,500 students and faculty members and their families. These CNG-run buses will be in addition to the 20 tumtums. The institute is also studying the viability of building a sheltered walkway from Hostel 12 to the main building and the academic buildings. "It is the most doable solution we have come across. Long corridors are already available. Students generally prefer walking to their classrooms, and would definitely like to walk under a shelter," said Yajnik.

Among other plans under consideration are plying buses similar to those used at airports for transporting flyers from one terminal to another and electric trains. An official said that civil engineering students can work on the electric train project and even get hands-on experience on the same. However, these plans, if feasible, will take three to five years to materialize.Cheap transport, but difficult to find

* Tumtums were introduced to provide cheap bus transport for commuting on the IIT-B Powai campus and also to keep the premises pollution-free

* However, students claim that a tumtum is hard to find when they need it the most, forcing them to use autorickshaws

* With the introduction of OBC quota, the number of students on the campus has increased, leading to crowding on the tumtums problems, especially during peak hours

* The drivers also have gone on strike several times in the past as they are under pressure to bear the extra passenger load, said an official of the institute

The Hindu

IIT's 'Sampark' turns out to be a brainteaser

With its three competitions, 'Sampark 2014', the outreach event of 'Shaastra', the annual technical festival of Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, turned out to be a brainteaser. The second edition was held at Kumaraguru College of Technology here on Saturday.

'Sampark' is a series of workshops, events, lectures and qualifiers that are held in cities across India in an effort to bring 'Shaastra' closer to everyone.

All three events – auto quiz, puzzle champ, and Project X – challenged the student participants in logic, mathematics and reasoning, rather than on mere engineering. More than 1,000 students from Coimbatore and nearly 400 from other cities such as Salem, Madurai, and Tiruchi, participated in the events.

The event was to reach out to engineering students in Coimbatore and other cities of Tamil Nadu in an effort to motivate them to break boundaries.

Besides the three competitions, workshops on robotics and Rubik's cube were held. Demonstrations on various interesting scientific concepts were also held. The workshop on robotics gave an insight to students on the advanced electronics used to build modern day robotics. Students learnt to solve the six-faced puzzle at the Rubik's cube workshop.

The auto quiz, considered one of the toughest challenges in 'Shaastra', contained questions on automobiles. Puzzle champ tested the participants' proficiency in logic, reasoning and mathematics, while Project X made students create a real world entity using icecream sticks, glue and other household items.

According to Anand Babu, Student Co-ordinator of 'Shaastra Outreach', the event was a huge draw with all participants receiving a certificate. "The winners were awarded cash prizes and they will also get an opportunity to take part in the 'Shaastra' events as a wild card entrant. 'Shaastra' will be held from January 4 – 7, 2014."

e-paper

Software to help ease traffic flow

IIT Kharagpur Project Strives To Introduce Shared Rides In Peak Hours

Jhimli Mukherjee Pandey | TNN

Kolkata: IIT Kharagpur is working on a pilot project that can bring you shared rides just when you need it. If things go according to plans, the project might be launched within a year.

The unique project started two years back as part of a green initiative that aimed to check pollution by using pool cars and thereby, reducing the number of cars on the road.

The students, with the help of a select group of faculty from several departments, came up with a software code based on genetic algorithm, with which it would be easy to co-ordinate between passengers having more space in their cars and those in need of transport.

The software has been named 'MobiUrb' after its purpose: urban mobility. It will have a dedicated server that will, with the help of cellular service providers, connect with people seeking transport.

The institute will sponsor the students involved with the project and help them start their own company

The software has been named 'MobiUrb' after its purpose: urban mobility. It will have a dedicated server that will, with the help of cellular service providers, connect with people seeking transport

once the project gets finalized. This will be the first-of-its-kind in the country.

"We will first try to provide the service in a tier II city like Kharagpur and then move to Kolkata. We will cater to a population of 500,000 to start with. When we reach Kolkata, we will have to divide the city into zones due to the pressure of mobile population," explained Sudeshna Mitra, senior faculty member of the civil engineering department, who is guiding the students.

A team of three boys, Vivek Kumar, Akshay Pratap Singh and Udeep Agarwal, has already won an award for this project at the prestigious Acer Incredible Green Contest held at Taipei recently.

A total of 2130 teams from over 100 countries participated in the contest. The project is also about to be patented.

"To start a project in a hypothetical situation is one thing and to go ahead with a company and get the project moving is another. However, in less than a year we should be able to do so," Udeep said.

Director of IIT Kharagpur, PP Chakraborty, said that the institute is trying hard to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in students. Its 2020 Vision document pledges to support all such start-up initiatives. "I will most enthusiastically support the project and ensure that the boys are able to start their own company," Chakraborty said.

If IIT Kharagpur's green project turns out to be successful, very soon one might get an SMS alert about a private car with an empty seat just when it is required the most.

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Research experience

An internship opportunity in a French national research institution, offers students an international scientific environment along with a scope to continue in a PhD programme later. Tirna Ray reports from Grenoble

While India's target is to create 500 million skilled workers by 2022, institutes and universities across the world continue to emphasise the importance of hands-on learning. In this context, Indian students can avail of an internship programme offered by Inria or the French Institute for Research in Computer Science and Automation.

Each year, the institute welcomes students from across the world for a research training experience through the internship programme. Says Paulo Gonçalves, in charge of international relations, Inria, "Undergraduate, Masters or PhD students can come and spend between two and nine months — depending on their level — with an Inria research team." India has been one of the top countries in terms of interns, he says, adding that between 2009 and 2011 he received 20 PhD students.

A French national research institution, focusing on computer science, control theory and applied mathematics, the institute offers 1000 euros (approx) per month to interns. Today, Inria has about 130 partner-universities and research laboratories worldwide. Each of these 130 partners has its own local contact in charge of promoting Inria and selecting candidates. "The most common exchanges involve Asian students, in particular from India," says Gonçalves.

>> TIMELINE

● **November 19-Dec 15, 2103:** Subjects are sent to the partnered institutions. Each partner pre-selects and pre-validates a list of students who can apply to the call (directly through website, *www.inria.fr*

● **Dec 15, 2013-Jan 15, 2014:** Inria teams who proposed a subject select and rank applicants to their own subject

As far as the application procedure is concerned, in the fall, Inria's researchers propose research subjects that are open for internship application.

For full story, click on 'Europe' under 'Study Abroad' on *www.educationtimes.com*

HT New Delhi

e-future: Jamia Millia to link all students online soon

Shaswati Das

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NEW DELHI: Spending endless hours in a queue to get classroom notes photocopied or figuring out lecture schedules will soon be a thing of the past for students of Jamia Millia Islamia.

The Delhi-based Jamia Millia Islamia university is all set to take a step towards the future by connecting more than 18,000 students online that will enable them to access and share information over the web.

Being one of the few Central universities to shift its academic operations on to the web, the varsity will first link all its students through email IDs which will provide them access to course specific lecture material and schedules from October 29, which also happens to be the varsity's foundation day.

This, officials said, was a step towards digitising education so as to make it convenient for students to access resources online.

"We will create 18,000 email IDs, which will be used for communication purposes. Instructions will be issued via

THE VARSITY WILL LINK ALL ITS STUDENTS THROUGH MAIL IDS TO PROVIDE THEM ACCESS TO COURSE SPECIFIC LECTURE MATERIAL

emails along with which students will be able to access teaching material using their IDs. All lecture plans, and learning material will be made available to them if they use that ID. So even if they miss a lecture, they can later still get the material for it online," SM Sajid, officiating vice chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia told HT.

Officials also added that the lecture notes delivered by the teacher will be uploaded by the departments. Further, the IT-enabled classrooms will auto-record the lecture notes in a digitized format, which can later be accessed by the students. So even if a student missed out on jotting down notes during the lecture, it will be available online on the digital surface for him/her to do so later.

However, there is a catch

to this also. Students will be required to form innovative models through the material that they are provided online by the varsity and carry out further research in their area of study. This will not be specific to just the research scholars and PhD candidates, but for all undergraduate and postgraduate students.

"This is being done to encourage greater student participation. These unique IDs will enable students to access materials online and do their own research so as to promote greater self study through Moodle," Sajid added.

While the varsity has not sought any external help to carry out this operation, they have delegated the backend work to the parent company which will be supplying the email IDs.

"We have extracted names and identified separate course groups of students. We have an agreement with Microsoft wherein all address and password related issues will be managed by us and the technical side will be handled by them," said S Kazim Naqvi, additional director, FTK Centre for Information Technology at the university.