

Newspaper Clips **Sept. 2, 2015**

24% jump in patents at IIT-Bombay in five years

Hindustan Times (Mumbai)

INVENTION SPREE

72 patents registered in 2014-15 compared to 58 in 2010-11

MUMBAI: Students at the IIT-B seem to be on an invention spree, with patents for inventions such as solar-powered fluid heaters, speech-decoding systems and a user-friendly map of Mumbai's rail system, jumping up by more than 24% this year. In 2014-15, the institute registered 72 applications for patenting, compared to 58 in 2010-11. MUMBAI: Students at Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B), are on an invention spree, with patents for inventions like solar-powered fluid heaters, speech decoding systems and a user-friendly map of Mumbai's rail system jumping by more than 24% this year.

Other inventions include a process for treatment of organic solid waste using special equipment and transport routers-a single networking medium which will revolutionise data usage.

For the academic year of 201415, the institute has registered 72 applications for patenting as compared to 58 in 2010-11.

Devang Khakhar, director of IIT-B said that almost all patents have student contributors. Of the 72, ten patent applications have been filed with the Patent Cooperation Treaty (an international patent law treaty that provides a unified procedure for filing patents), eight of which, have been filed in the US and two in Canada. The Indian patents have also fared well, with six having received approvals and are now available for licensing, said an official from the R&D office at the institute.

Academicians have attributed the rise in number of patent filing to new steps taken by the institute to encourage students and professors by assessing project work and shortlisting them for possible patent filings each year.

Workshops on intellectual property (IP) rights, process of copyrighting, enhancing innovations have also increased a manifold in the last few years.

Last year, IIT-B set up an in-house patent search facility so that researchers can assess the novelty of their work. Also, to encourage more patenting, M. Tech students' project works are reviewed in consultation with researchers and experts to test its potential for patenting.

“New initiatives like a research park and attorneys to help researchers with filing Intellectual property rights for both professors as well as undergraduate and post graduate students have made the process of patenting very conducive,” said Chetan Solanki, associate professor with the department of energy science.

India to have its first skill university soon

Hindustan Times (Gurgaon)

DEVELOPMENT Employment exchanges should be converted into skill counseling centers to help youth get trained for a job

NEW DELHI:
OFFICIAL, NITI Aayog

India will soon get its first skill university for accreditation of skilling centers and to allow them to issue degrees and diplomas equivalent to conventional educational institutions. Employment exchanges in the country will also act as skill counseling centers.



HT FILE (From left)

Finance minister Arun Jaitley, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and minister of state for skill development and entrepreneurship Rajiv Pratap Rudy at the launch of the National Skill Development Mission, in New Delhi.

These are some of the major recommendations of a sub-group of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog firmed up after consultation with all states.

According to a senior functionary of the panel, the country's first national skill university will provide guidance to skill training institutes being run by the government and the private sector on grading students on 10 point scale under the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF).

The framework organizes qualification according to level of knowledge, skills and aptitude at par with formal education system. A person with no formal education can also get a certificate of equivalence to formal education like upper primary or higher secondary under the framework depending on his skill and knowledge of a particular profession. The framework allows one to upgrade his or her certification by training at different skill centers.

The new university will implement the framework in place of the All India Council for Technical Education which was mandated by the UPA government to do so. Sources said the AICTE under the HRD ministry was found wanting in its implementation as skill training programmes were run by different ministries.

As the government has created the skill development ministry as nodal point for skill management in the country, the proposed university will be under the ministry and will implement NSQF.

To prevent duplication of effort, the sub-group has recommended that the university should be nodal office to implement quality and standards in all skill training institutes across the country with a special focus on employability.

The sub-group has also recommended that employment exchanges across the country should be converted into skill counseling centers to help the youth to get trained for a job as per his or her aptitude. For this, the proposed university will provide a framework.

The panel has, however, rejected the idea of having a skill university in every state. "The states have agreed to get their skill training centers accredited to the new university," an official said.

The NITI Aayog has also negated the proposal of right to skill as suggested by skill development minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy. The sub-group suggested the government can bring a right to skill policy as done in Chhattisgarh which provides a "holistic" approach towards achieving the goal of providing skill to all youth.

Central Information Commission asks AICTE to name deemed universities not conforming to standards

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/name-deemed-universities-not-confirming-to-standards-cic/1/462325.html>

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has asked the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to name and identify deemed universities which are not maintaining the prescribed standards.

Sridhar Acharyulu, the Information Commissioner said there is a strong need for the AICTE to inspect deemed universities and institutions offering technical courses and ascertain if they are maintaining standards. And if it is concluded they are not, their names should be published in official website, so that students are informed about courses and standards. "As per the law and rules, the AICTE has to use its recommendatory power to inform people about the tested standards of courses in various Universities," he said.

The Information Commissioner has directed AICTE to inform the appellant how many institutes are inspected by its teams, how many Universities or institutions are found to be conforming with the standards and norms laid down by AICTE. He also asked the Council to furnish the names of the universities or institutions informing the general public about their standards or the lack of them.

This came to light after one Neeraj Siwach sought to know certified copies of all notifications, office order, and basis of according approval to B.Tech Civil Engineering course by AICTE to which the council had said no prior approval is needed for any course. Acharyulu said that though approval is not needed, its disapproval, if found that a particular university is not maintaining required standards, can properly guide students and parents in deciding on the appropriate institution.

He further added that, "The Commission notes that such recommendations are not coming forth from the AICTE and because of that, students and parents are confused while substandard courses are being sold at exorbitant fees. Falling standards of MBA and B.Tech reflect this inaction strengthening suspicion of corruption everywhere."

Barack Obama might head back to Columbia University after his term—possibly as a professor

<http://qz.com/491992/barack-obama-is-reportedly-heading-back-to-columbia-university-after-his-term-possibly-as-a-professor/>

With a little more than a year left in office, Barack Obama may be closing in on his post-presidency plans. An announcement yesterday (Aug. 31) by Columbia University president Lee C. Bollinger sent rumors about those plans flying. With [previous rumors](#) already suggesting that Obama [was considering](#) a move to New York City to teach at Columbia Law School, Bollinger said he's looking forward to welcoming Obama back to campus in 2017.

According to the university newspaper, [the Columbia Spectator](#), Bollinger did not say anything specific other than to suggest that the president ([and perhaps the first lady](#)) would have some sort of official presence at Columbia in the 2017 academic year.

The university [promptly responded](#) to the rumors, saying that Bollinger had not made a big reveal. His comments, it said, reflected no further developments concerning Obama's plans, but rather "reiterated the May 12 statement by the Barack Obama Foundation that it 'intends to maintain a presence at Columbia University for the purpose of exploring and developing opportunities for a long term association.'"

Obama was previously a law professor at the University of Chicago. He received his undergraduate degree from Columbia.

The White House [also responded](#) to the rumors, saying no decision had been made about Obama's role at the university after he leaves office.

This IIT-IIM duo looks to take a bite off the \$1B events industry pie

[Sharika Nair](#) | September 01, 2015 at 4:02 pm

<http://yourstory.com/2015/09/invitemyguest/>

The events industry is a rapidly growing sector in India. Along with big awards functions, concerts, and shows, involving thousands of spectators, smaller events like college cultural fests or even weddings and birthday parties are also being outsourced to professionals. Most companies have started having their corporate events organized by events firms to ensure that the arrangements are taken care of in a professional manner. Many talented young people also work in the event industry, where they are able to enjoy creative satisfaction along with a successful career.

Delhi based InviteMyGuest.in (IMG) aims to be a one-of-a-kind online marketplace that enables one to explore and hire (invite) artists, performers, photographers, academicians, emcees, speakers, entrepreneurs and trainers (referred to as ‘guests’ by IMG) for any and all kinds of events, all from the comfort of one’s home or office. They aim to offer their users the luxury to browse, choose and finally ‘invite’ only the best ‘guests’ for those special and important occasions, be it a wedding, corporate party, training, birthday celebration, sports day at school, cultural fest or even a guest lecture in college from within or even outside the city.

The genesis

“The idea emerged from my personal experience during my stay at IIM-Calcutta. As an active member of various clubs on campus, I spent a lot of time trying to get speakers –preferably well known personalities or celebrities – on campus for events. Usually, obtaining quick and transparent access to such people, and, even before that, gathering enough information to identify the best prospective ‘guests’ for a particular event, was a daunting task. On the other hand, there were lesser-known people equally or more eligible for such invites. Clearly, there was a gap which needed to be addressed,” says [Vivek Pateshwari](#) (Co-founder of InviteMyGuest.in), also an IIT Kharagpur alumnus.

Vivek used to head the marketing portfolio, comprising five countries, for a large business conglomerate based out of Doha, Qatar. He even organized one of the biggest events in Qatar, including a human smiley that set a new Guinness World Record for its immense size, followed by a concert. Armed with the knowhow and the desire to solve a real life problem, Vivek approached his friend [Akshay Agarwal](#), an IIT Guwahati and IIM Raipur alumnus. He was immediately taken by the concept, and it didn’t take long for the duo to quit their respective cushy jobs and relocate to Delhi to work full time on IMG.

By this time, the decision to expand their portfolio from just events in educational institutes to the broader events sector was already taken.

The opportunity

Despite the widespread fragmentation in the \$1billion events industry and the e-commerce boom in the country, there seems to be no established platform to bring together guests and hosts in a speedy and transparent manner. Besides, this sector is marred by many non-value-adding middlemen, which adds inefficiency and complexity to the system. The scenario can be compared to the pre-IRCTC days, when railway tickets used to be purchased through agents.

Going forward, InviteMyGuest.in will also have event organizers listed on the portal, in order to provide either turnkey or peripheral services (e.g. venue arrangements, decoration, stage setup etc.). They will be catering to the end-to-end needs of any event through our marketplace model.

The business model

IMG helps eligible guests enhance their PR value and subsequently, their business, through their participation in several events across the country. They charge a nominal service fee from their guests if the same derives any business from an engagement through the portal. The service fee is far less than the current standard norms in the market. In addition, both the guest and the host get a receipt/invoice for any transaction carried out through IMG. Thus, this initiative also helps channelize more taxes to the government from the sector, where a significant portion of business is currently carried out off the books.

Going forward, they plan to have multiple revenue sources, like subscription charges, and revenues from ads and featured profiles.

Campus ambassador program

Currently, they have a [web-portal](#), where guest sign-up has already begun. They will subsequently launch Android & iOS apps in the next couple of months. Along with the beta launch of the website, IMG is also launching a campaign titled #DoTheIMG in 17 premier institutes (mostly IITs and IIMs) across the country, in association with Ola Cabs, Safexpress and Yourstory.com.

One campus ambassador has been selected from each of the 17 campuses. They are responsible for conducting some social media and campus-specific events on IMG and YourStory's behalf, as well as for connecting with prospective guests IMG could enroll. Moreover, the campaign is also aimed at connecting with the institutes, and identifying their requirements and expectations for the events that are organized on the respective campuses, including conferences, cultural fests, tech fests, summits, and conclaves etc. and engage with relevant guests to fulfill some of those.

Two IIT Graduates Found a Lack in Parent-Teacher Interaction. They Are Solving It with an App!

IIT Delhi graduates Ritesh Singh and Akshat Goel have developed an app that creates an amazing communication channel between parents, teachers and students.

<http://www.thebetterindia.com/32824/mobile-app-for-education-eckovation/>

Pankaj is a resident of Chhapra in Bihar. He is a very bright student with a keen interest in academics. His parents, however, are not educated and do not have much understanding of the need for them to be involved in their son's education. For them, it is school alone that can help their child succeed. They never ask Pankaj anything about what is going on at school — whether there is any co-curricular event that has been organized, if the teacher has any message for them, or if he is happy with the facilities provided by the school. Other than a parent-teacher meeting (PTM) held once every year, there is no interaction between them and the school at all.

But things are changing ever since they attended a presentation in Pankaj's school where two young men spoke to parents about how they can be a part of their wards' education, and why communication between parents and teachers is crucial.

Ritesh Singh and Akshat Goel, graduates from IIT Delhi, met the parents during the school's annual PTM. They introduced the parents to *Eckovation*, a mobile app that can help them be in constant touch with the teachers at school and remain informed about all important school activities.



Ritesh Singh (left) and Akshat Goel, founders of Eckovation

Pankaj's parents, who don't know how to read, now listen to messages from the school teachers and principal through the audio feature of this app, and are always up-to-date with the important aspects of his education. They have downloaded the app on their older son's phone and use it constantly. Most of the other kids at Pankaj's school also have at least one smartphone in the family.

The App and How it Came Along



Eckovation connects teachers, students and parents in real time. The app is free for everyone and can be downloaded even on the most basic Android phone. It also works with a limited internet connection.

The app is a great way to initiate and increase interaction between two very important institutions of a child's education – home and school. The founders began working on it after they realised that there is a huge communication gap between teachers and parents, which, in turn, hampers the growth of students.

Ritesh, who belongs to Chhapra, joined IIT Delhi in 2008 to study mechanical engineering. At college he came across many students who had studied in some of the top schools of Delhi. *“There was a stark difference in the way they conducted themselves — the way they talked and the way they were always ready to explore new things,”* says Ritesh. During his first year, his roommate from Delhi mocked one of his class reports, saying it was similar to what he and his classmates used to make in Class 5 at school.

“I realised then that the kind of education these people had received was different from what I had gotten at school, and it was primarily because of the kind of environment and exposure they were provided with,” he adds.

Ritesh started discussing the unfair differences in the education system in different cities of India with his friend Akshat, a resident of Delhi. The two observed, for instance, that tier 1 city students participated in extra curricular activities much more than students from tier 2 and 3 cities.

Why the difference? What was it that even the good schools in tier 3 cities did not have access to? Why was there no demand for extra-curricular activities by parents in smaller cities? Questions like these motivated the two curious students to work in the field of education in whichever way they could.

The more they looked, the more they felt that one of the main reasons behind this difference was the complete lack of communication between parents and teachers in smaller cities as compared to the schools in the bigger metros.

This was how the idea of developing a platform that would connect parents, teachers and students came about and the duo started working on it.

How does it Work?



Eckovation
THE SOCIAL LEARNING PLATFORM

COLLABORATE
Share images, audio, video, polls with students & parents!

PRIVACY CONTROL
Teachers are busy people! So we keep **groups one way!**

EASY TO USE
Teachers can **setup groups**, and **start sending messages** in no time!

FREE OF COST
Eckovation is **absolutely free** of cost to use for teachers, student or parents

<http://eckovation.com/>

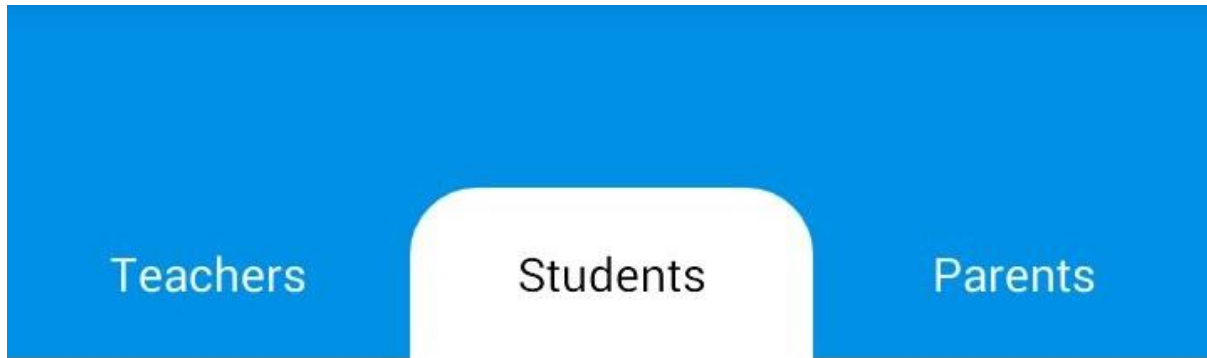


The app has three stakeholders: parents, students and teachers. The initiator is the teacher who can create a group. This group is very similar to creating a group on WhatsApp, except that only those who have the group

code can be part of it. Also, in order to maintain the privacy of teachers and parents, their numbers are not displayed.

Once parents and teachers are part of the same 'group', there can be endless communication between them in the form of written texts as well as audio and visual messages. This makes it possible for parents to never miss out on any announcement, examination detail, study material update, co-curricular event participation, etc.

The Research & Development

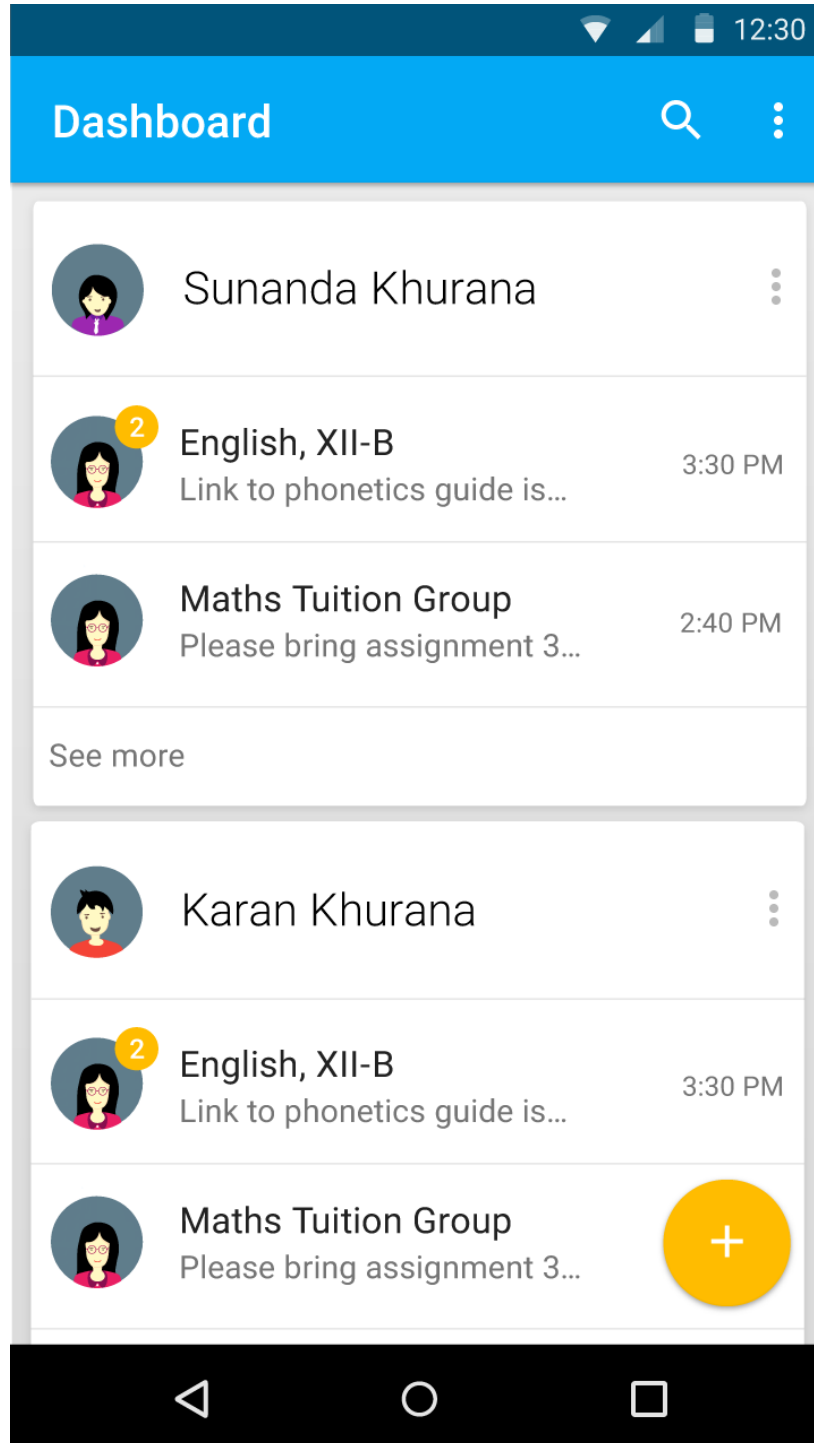


Welcome to Eckovation

Connect with your teachers, get latest updates and never miss an assignment!

Ritesh and Akshat visited many schools in big and small cities to get a feel for the differences in education and activities at these institutions. Ritesh also spent a few months in Chhapra, trying to identify the gap there — his research validated their concerns about the lack of communication between parents and teachers.

To get started, and to provide a platform for communication as quickly as possible, they first introduced a messaging (SMS) platform in June 2014, through which schools could interact with parents in the form of bulk texts. For instance, if there was a sports meet at the school, a common message could be sent out to all parents informing them about it. However, the SMS platform had many restrictions; parents who could not read, for example, were unable to utilise this platform to the fullest. Hence, after more research and refinement, they finally launched *Eckovation* in June 2015. Current usage and future plans



Two months after the launch, the app has about 1000 downloads and is being used by over 50 teachers in Bihar, Delhi, UP, and some other places. Five professors from IIT Delhi are also using it. Additionally, about 30,000 students are using the SMS platform and they are slowly shifting to the app.

Ritesh and Akshat had put in about Rs. 7 lakhs from their own pocket to develop the app. They are now looking for further funding.

They are also planning interschool interaction. This way, students in tier 3 cities can learn from teachers in tier 1 cities. For this, they are in talks with organizations like Bansal classes in Kota, and a few teachers who can dedicate some time to share their knowledge.

However, Ritesh and Akshat do not want the functionality of the app to end with school students only. There are many people who opt for unconventional schooling methods, like open schools. Hence, they are also collaborating with organizations like Avanti Education Program, and National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) to facilitate peer-to-peer communication among open school students.

“We all know the importance of education. Education is what leads to a better life and a better society. Hence, we started *Eckovation*, with the vision of educating a billion people using the power of the internet and mobile phones,” concludes Akshat.

- See more at: <http://www.thebetterindia.com/32824/mobile-app-for-education-eckovation/#sthash.y0oMIORD.dpuf>