

Newspaper Clips

September 13, 2010

Hindustan Times ND 13/09/2010 | p-11

Still a rank outsider

- **SCORING LOW:** Is India ignoring quality in its efforts to make higher education more broad-based?

knowledgebase



*Charu Sudan
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India was considering a fortnight ago the pros and cons of recognising Chinese academic degrees. A proposal to mutually recognise degrees is on the agenda when Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal meets his Chinese counterparts over the coming week.

But even before he left on Friday night, the government had decided that it would like to keep the proposal on hold. The reason — fear of the Chinese swamping India's growing higher education sector with cheap education of high standards.

Just days after returning from India's eastern neighbour, Sibal will leave for the US, where he will try and forge collaborations with top American universities such as Yale. The key aims behind such collaborations and inviting top foreign varsities to India include restricting the brain drain and the loss of foreign exchange spent on studies abroad.

The latest QS rankings of world universities — a globally reputed ranking system — published on Monday reaffirm that the government's fears concerning both the east and the west may be justified, experts and stake-



■ Students at IIT-Bombay, one of the few world-renowned institutes in India.

BLOOMBERG NEWS

holders said.

Despite an unprecedented hike in public funding for higher education, Indian universities have not yet started going up the scale of rankings, triggering fresh thinking as to whether the country's strategy in the sector may need a re-look.

Rankings can be subjective and are unlikely to satisfy many institutions and countries, but India would be "foolish" to ignore them completely, a former education secretary said, requesting anonymity.

"I think the rankings suggest something we in the government itself have been slowly recognising... that our focus on expansion of higher education opportunities may have taken priority over the quality we provide at institutions."

This recognition has now led the government to form at least four panels — across ministries — to propose roadmaps to suggest strategies to make the country's universities among the

best in the world, he pointed out.

The QS rankings since 2005 show that varsities in the US and UK have held on to their traditionally dominant positions. China's top-ranking institutions may have slipped a bit, but the country has boasted six universities in the top 200 every year.

The same period has coincided with the government increasing the number of IITs from 7 to 15, IIMs from 6 to 13, and central universities from 25 to 40. Never before has the number of these top institutions increased so fast.

But neither the old nor the new institutions have been able to go up the hierarchy and challenge the Chinese, leave alone the US or the UK.

No more than three Indian varsities have figured in the top 200 in a year (in 2005), and subsequent years have seen a fluctuation in this variable between 0 and 2 (see box for details on how these countries fared).

The amount and quality of research

at these top institutions is also perceived as far behind their counterparts in the west and China, argued Harvinder Sahni, who offers GRE tutorials. "Our best institutions — like the IITs — are perceived more as good undergraduate colleges. If you observe, the top-ranking universities globally are all research institutions," Sahni said.

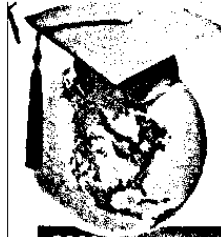
These perceptions make India vulnerable both from the west and the east. Students who "crack" the GRE and get large scholarships, or have adequate financial resources of their own, therefore continue to prefer the US or the UK for higher studies.

Those who don't have these resources look to China with its better-ranked institutions charging fees comparable to India.

That leaves India with only one real weapon to restrict the number of students headed towards China — the doubt in students' minds over legitimacy in India of degrees earned there.

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TOP OF THE WORLD

US and UK continue to dominate the QS World Universities rankings. India is not in the reckoning

2010			2009	2008
Rank	University	Country	Rank	Rank
1	University of Cambridge	UK	2	3
2	Harvard	US	1	2
3	Yale	US	3	2
4	University College, London	UK	4	7
5	MIT	US	9	8
6	University of Oxford	UK	5	4
7	Imperial College, London	UK	5	6
8	University of Chicago	US	7	8
9	California Institute of Tech.	US	10	5
10	Princeton	US	8	12
47	Peking University	China	52	50
187	IIT Bombay	India	163	174
-	IIT Delhi	India	181	154

WHERE WE STAND

Between 2005 and 2010



US: At least 6 universities ranked in top 10, and more than 50 in top 200 each year



UK: At least in top 10, and at least 20 in top 200 each year



China: At least 1 in top 50, and 6 in top 200 each year



India: Three in top 200 in 2005; two, one or none in top 200 since then

Getting the math right

Fund allocation for higher education by India

10th five year plan

₹8,000 cr

11th five year plan (2007-2012)

₹81,000 cr

India started eight new IITs, seven new IIMs, 15 new central universities, ten new NITs, five new Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research, and increased intake of all central higher educational institutions by 54%, in the last three years

But...

Focus on expansion of access through new institutions, not necessarily on quality.

Top universities — even the IITs — are perceived globally more as undergraduate institutions than as research hubs.

What now?

The government has set up several expert panels to suggest roadmaps to hoist Indian universities up the ranking ladder, but there are no immediate solutions in sight.



GRAPHIC: SANJAY KAPOOR

Outsourcing honeymoon is over, but the marriage is still strong



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IT WAS American humourist Mark Twain, who once famously said: "The rumours of my death are greatly exaggerated."

That thought came to mind last week after President Obama made speeches reinforcing a Ohio state government order against outsourcing of IT services to firms that create jobs outside the US, while also thundering against tax breaks to firms that ship jobs overseas.

While the simple fact is that India can and probably will take up the matter as a trade barrier at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), it is also pertinent to look at some of the hard facts on IT

outsourcing.

In brief, taking off on Mark Twain's famous line, I think the "rumours" about the demise of IT outsourcing are greatly exaggerated.

First, I have a thing against the gross American misuse of the term "outsourcing." Outsourcing refers to services contracted to a partner outside of a company on the ground that the service in question is not a "core competence" - and this can cover anything from security guards to caterers.

Information technology is one such aspect. By invoking the concept of "country as company" the US is subverting the terminology.

Second, while it is true that the US accounts for 61 per

cent of India's IT and IT-enabled service exports, it must be remembered that most of the money comes from the US private sector. The Obama rhetoric mainly asserts the right of the US state governments as customers. This can potentially hurt e-governance contracts, but not private demand.

True, the removal of tax breaks for private firms can hurt the budgets of US firms, but that will not alter the basic cost or value advantages of doing work with Indian firms. Do you stop shopping for cars because the excise duty goes up? Yes, but a deterrent is not a ban. Tax breaks can only go thus far.

Third, Indian firms have systematically increased their IT presence in places including Latin America and China, while Europe has emerged stronger as a focus area. For example, Infosys has this year stepped on the accelerator with country manager

appointments for European nations.

Indian IT majors now are big enough and smart enough to seek a "Blue Ocean strategy" in looking for new markets.

Last, but not the least, the emergence of new paradigms and ideas in IT, such as cloud computing, mobile applications, grid computing, collaborative computing and computing in languages other than English are throwing up new opportunities for Indian software companies, which they are well aware of.

In fact, India's problem now lies in generating enough talent to meet the emerging needs for skilled workers.

It is true that the obscene profit margins that Indian IT companies got from doing work for the now-fallen Wall Street bank are now a thing of the past. But don't confuse the main course with the dessert. The honeymoon may be over for Indian IT, but the marriage is not.

Hindustan Times ND 13/09/2010

Crucial data

SELECTING THE RIGHT SET OF DATA IS CRUCIAL FOR A GOOD SCORE IN THE DATA INTERPRETATION SECTION OF CAT. PARAG CHITALE OFFERS TIPS ON HOW TO CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE SET

Traditionally, the data interpretation (DI) section of CAT has tested a candidate's ability to interpret data given in tabular or graphical format. Interpreting data is considered an essential skill-set for any efficient manager, as managers are required to process a huge amount of data quickly, draw rapid conclusions and make informed decisions. Perhaps this is the reason why CAT has an entire section dedicated to DI. Earlier, the DI section required you to interpret different types of data in the form of tables, line graphs, bar graphs, pie-charts and caselets.

Earlier, you needed to be good at calculations to solve these questions quickly. However, in the past few years this section, just like other sections, became reasoning-oriented. Graphs gave way to tables and caselets. The sets were time consuming and difficult to interpret. The emphasis was no longer on calculations, but on cracking the underlying logic behind the set. But, with CAT going online in 2009, things changed again. The sets are once again calculation-oriented. Here are a few issues you may have in mind regarding the online DI section:

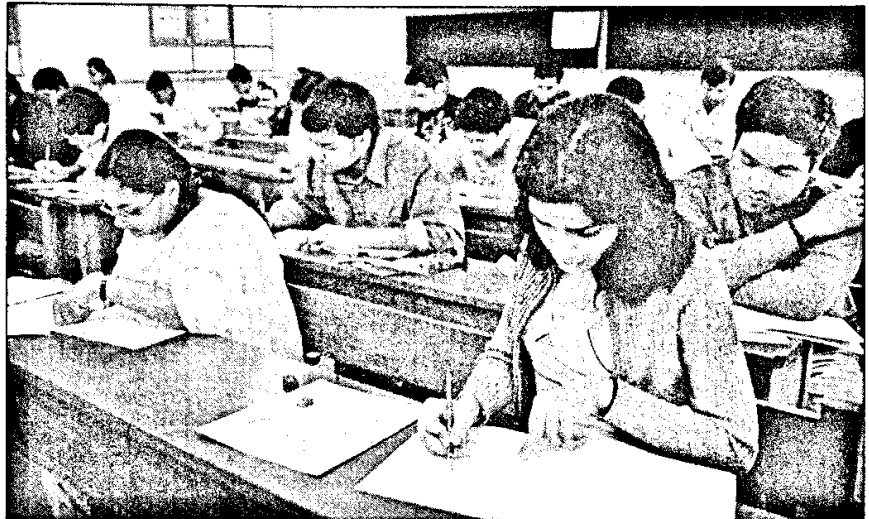
THE CHANGES

Comprehending data on a computer screen is difficult compared to paper. Hence, sets involving too many values have now been replaced by sets that are easy to interpret. As mentioned earlier, tables have now been replaced by graphs owing to their visual nature. Also, the number of questions per set and in the section as a whole have reduced.

DI ONLINE

Attempting online CAT itself is a novel experience for students who are used to the paper-pencil format. Attempting DI online is slightly more difficult. First, selection of the sets is a lot tougher as it involves more than flipping a few pages. You have to press the 'next' button a few times or better still use the 'review' mode to switch between different sets.

Secondly, underlining important points or values is not possible. Hence, many things need to be memorised and recalled when required. Also, the scroll bar needs to be used judiciously to ensure that you do not miss out on important information that is not visible on screen.



CRACK IT

Thankfully, the rules of the game have not changed with the online exam. The challenges while attempting DI remain the same, irrespective of the format. The key to cracking the section remains in selecting the right sets and focusing on accuracy. Do not keep DI as your last section, or at least do not attempt any DI set in the last 20 minutes of the paper. In case you are not able to decipher the set in the available time, you may lose out on all the questions. You should rather focus on individual questions that may be squeezed into the last few minutes. These may include quant questions or even data sufficiency questions.

SET SELECTION

You may choose the sets based on parameters like familiarity with the data format, nature of the values, or ability to extract data from a set. The reasoning-based sets, ideally, may be avoided because it may not be easy to understand the underlying logic. There is always a possibility that you may miss out on some aspect of the logic and get the entire set wrong. It is best to

stick to familiar territories such as graphs or tables, even if it means spending those extra minutes doing calculations. At least, you are certain about the answers.

PREPARATION TIME

Taking as many section tests as possible under timed conditions would be a good idea. Focus on selecting about three to four sets in each test and answering them correctly.

Also, since your comfort level in comprehending data online is going to play an important role in cracking this section, take all or many of these section tests online be it in Microsoft Word or Acrobat Reader. Gain exposure to several reasoning-based sets. Lastly, but most importantly, remember that your ability to crack reasoning sets depends on your ability to find the underlying logic.

*(The writer is Founder, CEO of a CAT test-prep institute in Mumbai)
For more tips on how to crack CAT, visit the Competitive Exams section on www.educationtimes.com*

Financial Chronicle ND 13/09/2010 P10

Ohio ban forces IT firms to look for new markets

YOGIMA SETH SHARMA

New Delhi

INDIAN IT companies are now aggressively looking at other markets such as Japan and African countries for exporting IT related services after the various protectionist measures slapped by the Obama administration.

The state of Ohio in the US recently banned outsourcing of government IT and back office projects to offshore locations. The state made it clear that it would not give tax incentives to companies that outsource processes to other countries including India. This comes close on the heels of US administration increasing the fee for H1-B and L-1 visas.

"The dependence on the US market for India's software services in the overall basket of exports for this seg-

ment is almost 60-62 per cent out of \$50 billion, which is pretty large," DK Sareen, executive director, Engineering Export Promotion Council, said.

According to Sareen, India's level of exports in Japan is hardly about 3-4 per cent and there is a clear mismatch to what could be accomplished and what is being done.

"Japan, which is the second largest market after US, would be perpetually short of IT programmers and engineers for quite some time to come. Similarly, the entire African continent, except South Africa, is open for development of IT exports from India. India's preparedness to rise to challenges in these countries would be the key to sustainable export development," he said.

TV Mohandas Pai, head (HR), Infosys, feels that the Ohio episode will

spread negative sentiments across US. "Right now there's a marginal effect on services export revenues to India as the US government spends \$100 million on IT. However, there have been a series of events in the past, including the US senate abusing Indian companies and the hike in visa fees, which calls for a protest," he said.

The ban on outsourcing is expected to hurt firm such as Infosys, Wipro and Patni, which win multi-million dollar state-level government contracts routinely.

"The market will become a constraint for Indian companies who work on offshoring business model," Amitabh Singh, head (tax and tariff committee) of the Indo American Chamber of Commerce, added.

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Supervise private universities

TWO developments, one in Karnataka and other in Uttar Pradesh, on setting up private universities bring focus back on the privatisation of higher education. Few months ago, the Karnataka legislative council passed Azim Premji University Bill, 2010, and the Alliance University Bill, 2010, amidst a walk-out by the Opposition. Later, yielding to the Opposition, the government declared setting up a joint select committee to consider the pros and cons of permitting the Bangalore-based Alliance Business School in setting up a private university.

In another development, during the same period, the UP state cabinet decided to withdraw the Uttar Pradesh Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Bill, 2010. The bill was passed by both houses of Vidhan Mandal during the budget session in February and has, since then, been pending with the governor for approval. The UP government subsequently realised that the University Grants Commission had set up a high-powered committee to prepare a model Act to regulate private universities. The committee has made its recommendations but the report is not yet approved by UGC. In view of these developments, UP state cabinet decided to study the recommendations by the UGC committee before formulating an Act for setting up private universities at the state level, so that these recommendations could be incorporated in the proposed Bill to make it more effective.

However, recently, the UP legislatures cleared the bills for few private universities. In 2003, UGC created a regulatory mechanism for the establishment and operation of private universities for safeguard-

Arun Nigavekar



SCHOOL OF THOUGHT: When one looks carefully at the prospectus of deemed universities and state private universities, one realises that both have very carefully manipulated and crossed the legal boundaries

ing the interests of students with adequate emphasis on the quality of education and to avoid commercialisation of higher education. For reasons, best known to ministry of human resource department, it was never implemented.

In 1985, in the Rajya Sabha, the government headed by Rajiv Gandhi introduced a private universities bill. The bill went to the select committee and has, since then, not seen the light of the day. It is widely felt that the delay, at that time, happened because the private sector was not happy with several clauses in the bill. For example, the bill required the formation of a permanent endowment fund of Rs 10 crores, provision of full scholarships to 30

per cent of the students, and for government monitoring and regulation of the system. In 2002, Chhattisgarh government created Chhattisgarh Niji Kosher Vishwavidyalaya Adhinyam, and created 118 private universities in six months. The Supreme Court declared the actions of the state as ultra vires and the establishment of 118 varsities was struck down.

The 'deemed universities' path was followed by many professional educational institutions in southern India and few western states namely Maharashtra and Gujarat. This approach of "privatisation through back door" was in an existing legal frame. In last few years several states have permitted several private universi-

ties to operate in their state. The states that have gone ahead are mostly in north and northeast — Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, UP, Uttarakhand and Haryana, Tripura and Sikkim — except one in the west — Gujarat. The deemed universities status was more sought for as it allowed to operate pan India whereas state private universities are supposed to work in the geographic jurisdictions of the state.

However, when one looks carefully at the prospectus of deemed universities and state private universities, one realises that both have very carefully manipulated and crossed the legal boundaries by operating distance education pro-

grammes and/or offer face-to-face full-time degrees on off campuses centers across India. Most of the information given in prospectus makes tall claims and does not paint the real picture. There is no control on the fees charged and the number of students to be admitted for a particular programme. One of the reputed private universities in Noida (which uses the media enormously to promote itself) admits 1,200 students for BBA programme with a tuition fee of Rs 3 lakh per year. The government of India, at one level, is trying to bring some order in to be deemed universities while state private universities are following the same path that deemed universities adopted — blatant profit oriented privatisation with scant regards for social aspirations and quality of education. There are exceptions to this unhealthy growth.

The Azim Premji Universities' vision is to promote, conceptualise and create a paradigm shift through development of outstanding leadership, research, knowledge and ideas for education and allied development sectors. The APU will be an institution of excellence in the area of education to develop outstanding education thinkers and leaders, and also serve as a think tank for long-term education change and sustainable development. We need such committed and clear-vision private universities. Not, and they are in majority, state universities that have become dark replica of all that was un-academic in deemed universities. MHRD needs to address this issue urgently and see that the UGC's 2003 regulations on state private universities are implemented in letter and spirit.

(The writer is a former chairman of UGC and former VC of University of Pune)

Soon, owners of e-books will be reading in color

The iPad has influenced small firms to use LCD technology in devices

ANNE EISENBERG

Black-and-white movies have their appeal, yet it is glowing color that rules on most consumer displays these days, with one exception: the pages of e-book readers. There, color is still supplied the old-fashioned way — not with filtered pixels but with readers' imaginations.

Now that stronghold of austere black letters is crumbling. "We expect companies to market color e-book readers — if not by the holidays, then soon after," said Sarah Rotman Epps, an analyst specializing in consumer product strategies at Forrester, the market research company. "And some consumers will definitely opt for them."

Of course, even with their current monochromatic text, e-book readers have already been strong sellers, said Vinita Jakhanwal, director of small and medium-size displays at the market researcher iSuppli. Worldwide shipments have risen quickly — to 11 million in 2010 from 5 million in 2009, she said, with 15 million predicted for 2011.

But the popularity of the Apple iPad, on which people can read books, surf the Internet, watch videos and enjoy thousands of applications — all in full color — has shaken up the market. "It's forced e-book reader manufacturers to

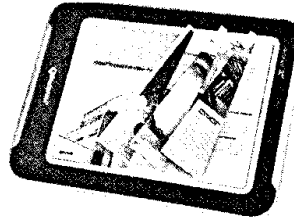
innovate," said Paul Semenza, a senior vice president for DisplaySearch, an industry researcher in California.

Major e-reader companies like Amazon, which sells the Kindle, and Barnes & Noble, seller of the Nook, have not announced that they will be offering color versions or that they are committed to a specific technology for doing so. But some smaller entrants in the market have said they will be using liquid crystal displays, just as the iPad does.

The Literati by Sharper Image, for example, has a full-color LCD and will go on sale in October, priced at about \$159. And Pandigital has said that the Novel, its full-color e-reader with an LCD touch screen, will be at retailers this month at a suggested price of about \$200.

But LCD displays have disadvantages, Mr. Semenza said. They consume a lot of power, he said, because they need backlighting and because much optical energy is lost as light passes through the polarizers, filters and crystals needed to create color. They are also hard to read outdoors, he added.

Other types of displays may also find a foothold with consumers — particularly low-power, reflective technologies that take advantage of ambient light and are easy to read when outside. E Ink Corp. in Massachusetts uses this reflective technology for its present product — the black-and-white displays in the Kindle, Nook and other e-readers — and will soon introduce a color version, said Siram Peruvemba, E Ink's vice presi-



A mirasol e-book reader from Qualcomm.

dent for global sales and marketing. The technology will probably first be used for textbook illustrations and for cartoons.

The E Ink color displays, which have had many prototypes in the past two years, have not yet found favor with Kindle. "We've seen E Ink color displays in the lab, and they aren't ready," Stephanie Mantello, a senior public relations manager for Kindle at Amazon, wrote in an e-mail.

Ken Werner of Nutmeg Consultants in Connecticut, an information technology services firm, who is a specialist in the display industry, says that he has viewed E Ink prototypes and that their technology is worthwhile.

"If you are expecting these reflective color panels to look like an LCD TV or an iPad, you'll be disappointed," he said. "They are not going to have that depth and range of color." But, he said, the displays are valuable because of their low

power consumption, thinness and light weight.

E Ink will ship its color displays to device makers in late autumn, Mr. Peruvemba said. Hanvon Technology in Beijing, a maker of e-book readers, will be one of the first customers, he said.

The color display consumes no more power than black and white, he said.

Reflective color displays from Qualcomm will also be on the market soon, said Jim Cathey, vice president for business development at the Taiwan office of Qualcomm MEMS Technologies, based in San Diego. The company's color technology, called mirasol, will be shipped to device makers this quarter and should be available to consumers in the first quarter of next year, he said.

Mirasol dispenses with color filters, as its name suggests — it combines the Spanish words "mira," for look, and "sol," for sun, into a play on the English word "mirrors." The pixels in the display use tiny, mirrorlike elements in optical cavities to reflect ambient red, green or blue light selectively — much as sunlight is bounced off a bird's feathers. The pixels switch fast enough to run video, he said.

Ms. Epps of Forrester also thinks sales of e-book readers, whether in color or black and white, will withstand competition from the iPad and others. "We see the market bifurcating into two separate arenas with two different price ranges," she said, with one group choosing multifunctional slates like the iPad and the other choosing e-book readers.

Times of India ND 13/09/2010 P-1

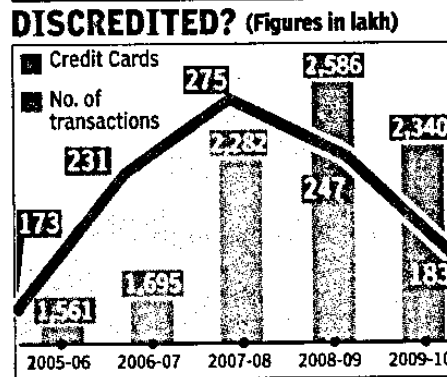
Plastic not so fantastic? Credit card usage dips

Hemali Chhapla & Kartikeya | TNN

Mumbai: Almost everyone has been a victim of the aggressive cold calls in which banks push their credit cards. With the Indian economy expanding rapidly and the middle class burgeoning, several analysts believed there was no end to the use of plastic money in India. In fact, they had predicted it would only grow.

However, numbers released by the Reserve Bank of India have belied such projections — far from growing, credit card usage amongst India's consumers is actually falling. Use of plastic money, instead of cash, is seen by economists as a sign of confidence of consumers in the economy. But data thrown up by the most recent RBI bulletin shows that the Indian consumer remains cautious about using plastic.

Not only is plastic money in circulation in India falling, it is also underutilized. On average, the annual number of transactions per credit cards stands at 11; it is only one in case of debit cards. "Deb-



it cards have had a slow start and their growth only took off in the last three years. On the other hand, credit cards grew faster since inception, with the growth turning negative in the latest year," noted IIT-Bombay faculty Ashish Das, who authored a paper 'Cashless payment system in India — A roadmap'.

► No. rose in 2005-08, P 22

During '05-08 no. of credit cards rose

► Continued From P 1

Backed by strong marketing, the number of credit cards issued by various banks showed an upward trend from 2006 to 2008.

In fact their number grew by more than a crore in the three financial years from 2006 to 2008.

However, thereafter, figures began to dip — perhaps due to the global economic slowdown and the Indian consumer's conservative nature. For the first time in many years, the number of transactions where credit cards were used also fell in the last financial year of 2009-10. While 25 crore purchases saw the use of plastic money in 2008-09, the figures fell by more than two crore transactions in the financial year ending March 2010.

"We have seen several customers surrender their credit cards. Increasingly, debit cards are gaining popularity. While the total business transacted by credit cards fell by 10% across India, the total amount of transaction with debit cards increased from Rs 18,547 crore to Rs 26,417 crore," said a senior manager from HDFC bank.

In the recent past, credit cards have found acceptance with the Indian consumer after banks introduced several security features and even simple purchases could be made using plastic money.

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Exams in Nov, but chaos on course

Neha Pushkarna | TNN

New Delhi: Though exams for the first semester in 13 science courses are scheduled to be held in November in Delhi University, many students say they cannot prepare for them. With teachers striking work because of a call by DUTA and the upcoming vacations during the Commonwealth Games in October, there are hardly any weeks left to complete the curriculum. No wonder then that even the newly-elected students' union of DU has threatened to boycott the semesters if students are forced to take the exams.

On Thursday, three DUSU members from the ABVP sent a memorandum to the VC saying that the students may start a large-scale agitation if the semesters are

SEMESTER ROW

not implemented in a more democratic way.

Though most students are still unaware of DUSU's latest stand, they agree that holding exams in November will be too early.

Prakash Kumar, a first-year student of BSc (H) physics in Dyal Singh College said, "Our syllabus is far from over. Senior teachers have not been taking classes due to frequent strikes. As a result, we have covered only a couple of chapters so far. Even the teachers agree that finishing the curriculum in time for the exams in November will be a big challenge." He added, "We are really worried as the teachers do not seem willing to carry on with the semester mode but the university has already taken our examination forms and the fees. We are the first batch to be taught in the semester mode but we feel more like scapegoats."

It's been close to two months since the new session began in Delhi University. However, the stand-off between teachers and the university still continues. "Our course is semester-based and that is what we have been told since the beginning. But now I am worried about sitting for exams as roughly only 50% of the course has been covered yet," said a Hans Raj College student.

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13/09/2010

UGC's forked tongue creates legal hassles

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: The deemed university case in Supreme Court has taken a strange turn with the government's legal team grappling with the problem of University Grants Commission having spoken in two completely different voices about the same institute on matters of academic infrastructure and procedural clearance obtained by them.

"Deemed universities are already using satisfactory report by UGC's review committee to counter HRD ministry's review committee report that found 44 of them unworthy of deemed status. But legal team has found that UGC, in a short span, took contradictory positions," a source said.

In case of Poonaiyah Ramajayam Institute of Science & Technology, (PRIST) UGC's review committee last year expressed "complete satisfaction" on its performance but in May this year, wrote to HRD ministry recommending removal of its deemed status.

The review committee had said, "This deemed university's progress during the last one year and eight months duration indicates the positive direction of the growth of the university, its willingness to realise its stat-

ed objectives and its readiness to contribute to the development of society."

In passing, the UGC review report said PRIST had opened many engineering courses without approval from AICTE after which UGC could have given approval. What UGC also did not mention was that from December 2008 to April 2009, it was writing to PRIST not to give admission to students without seeking clear-

DEEMED UNIV ROW

ance but the university went ahead. Despite this, the review committee did not find anything wrong and said its performance was satisfactory.

PRIST refused to follow UGC's instructions that resulted in the commission recommending withdrawal of its deemed status. Now, PRIST has obtained a stay from Madras HC. HRD ministry's review committee has put PRIST in the list of 44 who do not deserve deemed status.

The second case is of Vinayaka Mission's Research Foundation, another deemed varsity. UGC had taken note of violation of rules by the institute in opening study centres in distance mode of education without prior approval of a joint committee of UGC-AICTE-Distance Education Council.

'Engineering freshers get ragged most'

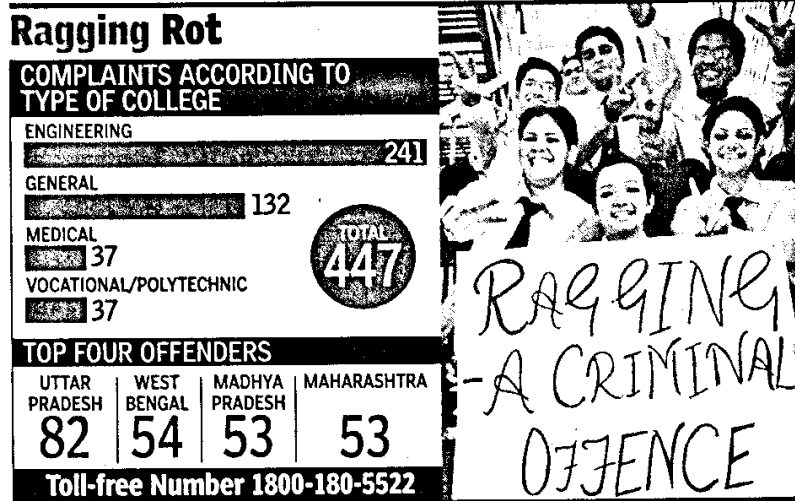
Data Compiled Through UGC Initiative Throws Up Shocking Figures

Kartikya | TNN

Mumbai: The current academic session is well on its way in most colleges across the country and any fresher would tell you that this is the most crucial phase in one's college life as far as ragging is concerned. Now data compiled through a University Grants Commission (UGC) initiative to curb ragging has shown that the likelihood of a fresher being a victim of ragging is highest if he is studying in an engineering college.

The nationwide data pertaining to incidents of ragging was not maintained centrally until the UGC launched a helpline in June 2009. It set up call centre facilities in English, Hindi and ten other regional languages, including Marathi. Students who were victims of ragging could call for help and narrate their plight.

An analysis of the distress calls received in the last one year shows that ragging was most rampant



in engineering colleges with states like Orissa, UP and West Bengal taking the lead.

Until August 9, 2010 the helpline registered 447 complaints. More than half these calls were made from engineering colleges, followed by general category colleges. In-

terestingly, only 37 calls were received from freshers studying to be doctors even though it is widely believed that ragging is rampant in medical colleges.

The 24-hour helpline was set up by the Human Resource Development Min-

istry in keeping with a Supreme Court directive to put in place a tough regulatory mechanism to deal with incidents of ragging. Thus any call made to the helpline by a student in distress is forwarded to the head of his institution and the district au-

thorities for action. The caller is also given a unique number so that he can track the status of his complaint.

The information received by the anti-ragging call centre is stored in an IT-enabled web portal. It is compiled on the basis of states and the kind of academic institution the victim was calling from.

Maharashtra saw just 14 calls being made in the first year of the helpline, but educationists are hoping that victims of ragging will feel comfortable enough to register their plight through the toll-free number.

Over a period of time, the government is hoping to set up interactive online facilities that freshers can use to reach the appropriate authorities if they become victims of ragging. The issue of ragging and excessive abuse by senior students in its guise had made national headlines when Aman Kachroo, a 19-year-old student at a medical college in Himachal, died in March 2009 hours after being thrashed by four seniors.

China beats India in GMAT race to join US B-schools

More Students Submitting Scores To Indian Institutes

Anahita Mukherji | TNN

Mumbai: The great Indian dream of pursuing an MBA in the US seems to be on the wane. India has for long been ahead of China when it comes to flooding US B-schools with GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) scores: from 2005 to 2009, US B-schools received the maximum number of GMAT scores from India. But this year, the dragon has beaten the tiger in this arena.

So where have all the Indian students gone? They seem to have found a new destination for management education. It's called India.

Here's a look at the facts. In testing year 2005 (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005), when over 43,000 GMAT scores were sent to management programmes in the US by Indians, a mere 19,196 GMAT scores came from Chinese citizens. Till 2009, India maintained its lead over China. But in testing year 2010 (July 2009-June 2010), for the first time the number of Chinese sending in their scores has far outnumbered Indians:

Crouching Dragon Eclipses Tiger

TY: Testing Year

(Testing year 2010 is from Jul 1 2009 to Jun 30, 2010)

No. of GMAT scores sent by Indian citizens to US B-schools

TY 2005 43,091

TY 2006 53,163

TY 2007 64,716

TY 2008 81,978

TY 2009 75,499

TY 2010 65,361

No. of GMAT scores sent by Chinese citizens to US B-schools

TY 2005 19,196

TY 2006 26,116

TY 2007 36,406

TY 2008 50,358

TY 2009 66,205

TY 2010 80,669

80,000 to the Indians' 65,361.

Ashok Sarathy, vice-president, GMAT Programme, feels this may have a lot to do with the emergence of high-quality management education within India. "There's been a growing interest in the local market among Indian management aspirants, with high-quality management programmes being offered in India. Indians are now seeing

tremendous opportunity in their own economy and in Indian degrees," said Sarathy, speaking to TOI from the US.

Sarathy's views are borne out by the statistics. In testing year 2010, over 17,000 Indian citizens sent in their GMAT scores to Indian institutions. Meanwhile, only 1,743 GMAT scores from mainland China (and 5,184 from Hong Kong) were sent

to Chinese B-schools in the same period. While the last five years have seen only a marginal increase in GMAT scores sent by Chinese students to academic institutions in their own country (but a steady growth in those sent to US), there has been an almost four-fold increase in number of Indians applying to Indian management institutions—from 4,879 in 2005 to a whopping 17,087 in 2010.

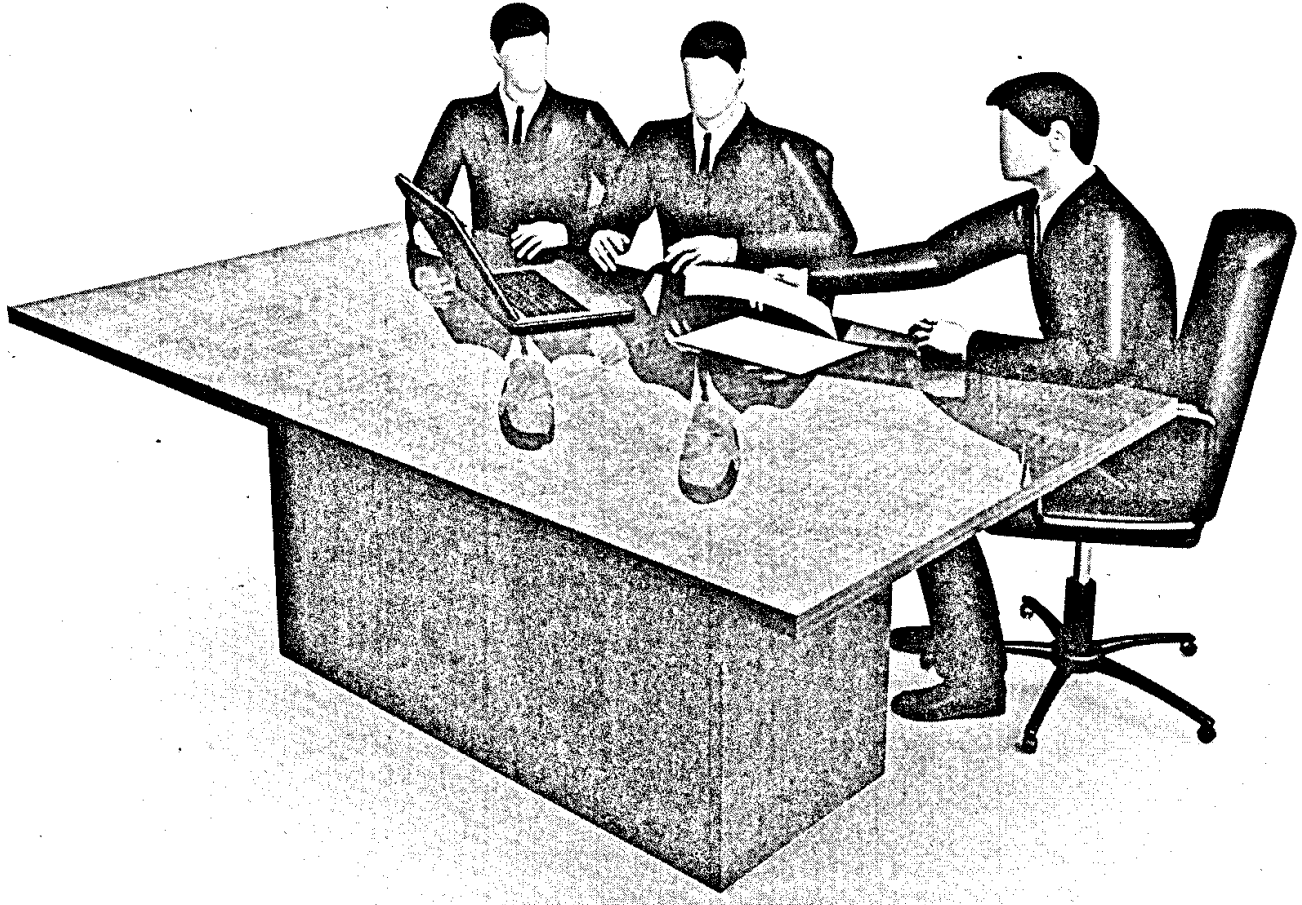
The recession saw a dip in the number of GMAT scores sent to the US by Indians, from nearly 82,000 in 2008 to 75,499 in 2009. But in the same year the number of Indians sending their GMAT scores to Indian institutions peaked.

Pratibha Jain, overseas education consultant says, "Earlier, we had a student body which wanted to go to US with no intention of coming back to India. But when the recession hit, Indian students realised that they were paying \$200,000 for an MBA in US without getting any job. Meanwhile, MNCs in India are hiring students from Indian B-schools and paying them a high salary too."

Business Standard, ND 13-Sep-10 p-15

IT'S RAINING JOBS...

Other management institutes are catching up with IIMs in pre-placement offers



GOUTAM GHOSH
Kolkata

Pre-placement offers (PPOs) at the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are pouring in, but other B-schools in the country are not far behind — they are fast catching up with the trend.

While some of these institutes have started receiving pre-placement offers, others are in talks with companies to roll out the process.

For instance, Bhubaneswar-based Xavier Institute of Management (XIM) has tapped several companies to find out whether they are considering PPOs for their students.

"The outlook this year seems brighter as compared to the past two years. We expect the picture to be clear by October. PPOs continue to trickle in as late as December," said Sabita Mohanty, placement co-ordinator of XIM Bhubaneswar. Mohanty has been meeting many company officials.

The institute has placed about one-third of its students through PPOs in the past. XIM has a batch strength of

180 for its flagship post graduate programme in management (PGPM) and a batch size of 60 for the rural management course.

PPOs are offered to students based on their performance during the summer internship in a company, after the completion of the first year of the management courses.

At the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade's Kolkata campus, they hold pre-placement interviews (PPIs) instead of PPOs that eventually turn out to be actual offers. "This year, we have received nine PPIs but no formal offer has been made so far," said Manish Bhargav, placement officer at IIFT.

"Last year, we had received 48 PPIs out of which 38 offers had been made and 31 offers were accepted by the students. PPIs will pick up next month."

Although the process appears to be slow, the total number of PPOs last year can be compared to what some of the Indian Institutes of Management

PPOs are offered to students based on their performance during the summer internship, after the completion of the first year of the MBA programme

had received. Last year, IIFT had received 48 PPOs, whereas the comparable figure for IIM Calcutta was 41 and that of IIM Lucknow was 35.

IIFT has two campuses in New Delhi and Kolkata with a batch strength of 150 in New Delhi and 60 in Kolkata. The institute offers specialisations in International Business, Marketing, Finance and Systems, among others. In the previous years, the students have been offered jobs from the IT, FMCG, Trading, Marketing, BFSI, Auto and Media sectors.

Gurgaon-based Management Development Institute (MDI) has received 19 PPOs so far. "Of this, eight offers were accepted from companies like Goldman Sachs, Godrej, American Express and I3 Consulting. Around 11 offers are in the process that include companies like J P Morgan, Reckitt Benkiser, Pepsi and Godrej," said a MDI spokesperson.

Last year about 26 PPOs were ac-

cepted by MDI students. The highest offers were made by Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages and Procter & Gamble. The salaries offered were between ₹17-18 lakh per annum. The number of PPOs to MDI students can match that of IIM Kozhikode. While the number for MDI Gurgaon was 19, IIM Kozhikode bagged 20 (but expects it to go up to 25-30 this year).

For Mumbai-based Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JBIMS) the process has just started. "As our course commences a little late as compared to other top B-schools, we are still in the process of getting in touch with companies regarding PPI/PPOs. However, keeping in mind the interaction that we have had with companies so far, we are very positive about the final placements," said a member of corporate relations committee at JBIMS.

The IIMs on the other hand, have so far been offered 15-45 PPOs so far and expects the numbers to increase by anything between 10-15 per cent this year.

With inputs from Chitra Ummithan in Ahmedabad

Mint, ND 13-Sep-10 p-6

EXPANSION PLANS

NTT Data seeks aggressive India ramp-up

By LISON JOSEPH
lison.j@livemint.com

MUMBAI

NTT Data Corp., the Japanese information technology (IT) services firm that acquired Hyderabad-based Intelligroup Inc. this year for \$200 million, is still scouting for opportunities to ramp up its presence in India.

"NTT Data's objective is to become a top five IT services company, and we view India as a very important part of our plan to achieve that," said president of global IT services Takashi Enomoto. "Global delivery capabilities from India are a very important part of this strategy."

NTT Data is counted among the top 10 IT services companies globally.

Analysts say NTT Data, which raised \$1.2 billion (₹5,592 crore) in April 2010, is scouting for midsize IT firms in India to reduce its overall employee costs and be profitable. In 2010, NTT Data's total revenue was around \$12 billion (₹55,920 crore), but the net profit margin was about 3%.

The acquisition of Intelli-

group in June gave NTT Data around 2,600 employees in India. It wants to grow aggressively and may look for expansion opportunities outside Intelligroup, Enomoto said.

NTT Data is following in the footsteps of global IT service companies such as **International Business Machines Corp.** (IBM) and **Accenture Plc**, which used India as a low-cost hub to increase profitability.

IBM set up shop in India in 1992 and had a headcount of around 73,000 in December 2007, when it stopped sharing India-specific headcount.

Analysts who track IBM's India operations put its current India headcount at around 100,000.

Similarly, technology and consulting firm **Accenture's** India headcount is expected to touch 50,000 by the end of this year, representing about 50% of the company's global headcount.

Currently, NTT Data's offshore presence is predominantly in China, from where it serves Japanese clients. The firm has a global headcount of more than 34,000—of which around 5,000 is offshore. Japan

Japanese IT services firm scouting for midsize companies to reduce its overall staff costs

is the second largest IT services market after the US, estimated to be worth \$117 billion.

"NTT Data has a very strong presence in Japan, but as their customers started expanding to the US and Europe, they started losing out to larger global competitors such as IBM and Accenture," said Vikram Gulati, chief executive of Intelligroup. "They lacked a global delivery model, especially with presence in a prime offshore location like India."

In fact, NTT's customers started insisting on a global delivery capability that Indian IT services firms such as **Tata Consultancy Services Ltd** or **Infosys Technologies Ltd** are known for.

Gulati confirmed NTT is looking for an offshore pres-

ence in India beyond Intelligroup.

"They need more people than Intelligroup can offer or hire immediately," Gulati said. "We are currently at 2,600 people in India and hiring furiously, as fast as we can."

Intelligroup is up to capacity at its Hyderabad offshore development centre and has taken new office space in Bangalore.

NTT's operating profit margin is around 7% compared with around 12% for Accenture and 17% for IBM. NTT Data outsources most development work to third-party contractors, which reduces profitability. Having a larger India presence will help NTT in-source software development work and raise profit margins.

Nitin Padmanabhan, IT sector analyst at **Indiabulls Securities Ltd**, said NTT's India ambition offers takeover opportunities for midsize Indian firms.

"Granting equity stake (partial ownership) for future business with dedicated offshore centres could throw significant opportunities for mid-tier vendors to rapidly scale and grow business," Padmanabhan said.

Asian Age ND 13/09/2010 P11

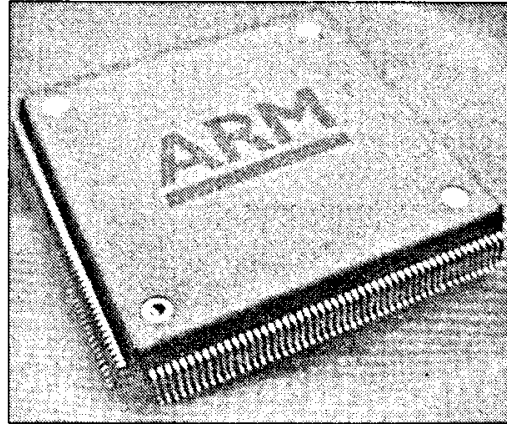
By 2012, smartphones as powerful as laptops

ASHLEE VANCE

NEW YORK

Sept. 12: With its latest product release, the chip designer ARM may find it tough to maintain its tradition of understated British talking points. It would seem that some pomp and circumstance has been put on order.

ARM's executives left their Cambridge confines this week and came to Silicon Valley to show off Eagle, the next version of the company's top-of-the-line chip design. The Eagle products should end up in most of the world's smartphones and a host of other hand-held devices. They'll run about five times faster than today's high-end ARM chips and handle meaty stuff like movies and pictures far better than current smartphone chips, while still con-



suming hardly any power.

ARM licenses its designs to the likes of Samsung, TI, Qualcomm and Nvidia, and it tends to take these companies a couple of years to bring out fresh products based on the new designs.

Pete Hutton, a vice presi-

dent of technology and systems at ARM, noted that consumers could expect to see smartphones in 2012 that have about the same performance as a current business laptop. The fastest phones at that time will have four 2.5-gigahertz processor

cores and be able to handle things as complex as running virtualization software.

People could theoretically use the virtualization software to give their phones different personalities, like a work version with added security and a personal one with entertainment applications.

More importantly for ARM's long-term future, the Eagle designs should make the company more competitive in previously untapped markets, like networking equipment and computer servers.

The upcoming chips will have one to eight cores, up from one to two cores today, meaning they can handle more software jobs at a time.

Smooth-Stone, a start-up based in Austin, Texas, has revealed plans to make server versions of the ARM chip

and sell them to Web companies. The main thrust behind Smooth-Stone is that ARM chips have grown up enough to handle basic server tasks like cranking out Web pages and can do so at a lower cost while consuming less power than server chips from Intel.

ARM's data center strategy more or less mimics Intel's strategy of yore. Intel crushed the custom chip businesses of companies like Compaq, Sun Microsystems, IBM and Hewlett-Packard with lower-cost, speedy chips.

Today, power consumption has become as important as horsepower to many companies with large Web presences, and so ARM thinks it can undercut Intel on price and power.

Close to 100 percent of the cellphones on the market run on ARM chips. — NYT

Asian Age ND 13/09/2010 P11

E-readers are going colour, Amazon unimpressed

ANNE EISENBERG

NEW YORK

Sept. 12: Black and White movies have their film noir appeal, yet it's glowing color that rules on most consumer displays these days, with one exception: the pages of e-book readers. There, color is still supplied the old-fashioned way — not by filtered pixels, but by readers' imaginations.

Now that stronghold of austere black letters is crumbling. "We expect companies to market color e-book readers if not by the holidays, then soon after," said Sarah Rotman Epps, an analyst specializing in consumer product strategies at Forrester, the market research company. "And some consumers will definitely opt for them."

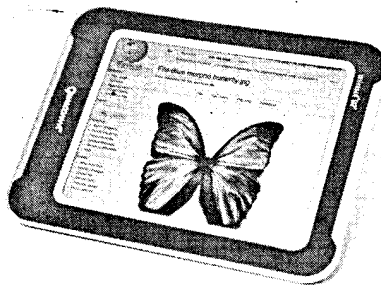
Of course, even with their current, monochromatic text, e-book readers have already been strong sellers, said Vinita Jakhnwal, director of small and medium displays at the market researcher iSuppli. World-wide shipments have risen

quickly — to 11 million in 2010, from 5 million in 2009, she said, with 15 million predicted for 2011.

But the popularity of the Apple iPad, on which people can read books, surf the Internet, watch videos and enjoy thousands of apps — all in full color — has shaken up the market. "It's forced e-book reader manufacturers to innovate," said Paul Semenza, a senior vice president for DisplaySearch, an industry researcher in Santa Clara, Calif.

Major e-reader companies like Amazon.com, which sells the Kindle, and Barnes & Noble, seller of the Nook, have not announced that they are offering color versions, or that they are committed to a specific technology for doing so. But some smaller entrants in the market have said they will be using liquid crystal displays, just as the iPad does.

The Literati by the Sharper Image, for example, has a full-color LCD and will go on sale in October, priced at about \$159. And Pandigital has said that the Novel, its



An E-reader from Qualcomm. The display uses reflective instead of LCD technology.

full-color e-reader with an LCD touch screen, will be at retailers this month at a suggested price of about \$200.

But LCD displays have disadvantages, Mr. Semenza said. They consume a lot of power, he said, because they need backlighting and because much optical energy is lost as light passes through the polarizers, fil-

ters and crystals needed to create color. They are also hard to read outdoors, he added.

Other types of displays may also find a foothold with consumers — particularly low-power, reflective technologies that take advantage of ambient light and are easy to read when outside. The Elnk Corpora-

The popularity of the Apple iPad has shaken up the market forcing E-reader makers to innovate, use new technologies and offer options such as versions with colour.

tion in Cambridge, Massachusetts, uses this reflective technology for its present product — the black-and-white displays in the Kindle, Nook and other e-readers — and will soon introduce a color version of the technology, said Siram Peruvemba, E Ink's vice president for global sales and marketing. The technology will probably first be used for textbook illustrations and for cartoons.

The E Ink color displays, which have had many prototypes in the last two years, have not yet found favor

with Kindle. "We've seen E Ink color displays in the lab and they aren't ready," Stephanie Mantello, a senior public relations manager for Kindle at Amazon.com, wrote in an e-mail.

Ken Werner of Nutmeg Consultants in Norwalk, Conn., and a specialist in the display industry, says that he has viewed the E Ink prototypes and that their reflective color technology is worthwhile.

"If you are expecting these reflective color panels to look like an LCD TV or an iPad, you'll be disappointed," he said. "They are not going to have that depth and range of color." But, he said, the displays are valuable because of their low power consumption, thinness and light weight.

E Ink will ship its color displays to device makers in late fall, Mr. Peruvemba said. Hanvon Technology, in Beijing, a maker of e-book readers, will be one of the first customers, he said.

The color filters used in the displays block some of the light, but the loss is offset by

an improved ink formulation that yields higher contrast, he said; the color display consumes no more power than previous monochromatic displays.

Reflective color displays from Qualcomm will also be on the market soon, said Jim Cathey, vice president for business development at the Taiwan office of Qualcomm MEMS Technologies, based in San Diego. The company's color technology, called mirasol, will be shipped to device makers this quarter, and should be available to consumers in the first quarter of next year, he said.

Mirasol dispenses with color filters, as its name suggests — it combines the Spanish words "mira," for look, and "sol," for sun, into a play on the English word "mirrors." The pixels in the display use tiny, mirrorlike elements in optical cavities to selectively reflect ambient red, green or blue light — much as sunlight bounces off a bird's feathers. The pixels switch fast enough to run video, he said.

— NYT

Indian Express ND 13/09/2010 P1

14 foreign students in SAARC varsity's first batch of 50

ANUBHUTI VISHNOI
NEW DELHI, SEPT 12

MOHAMMED Sarwar Kamal is from Bangladesh, Aitzaz Shah from Pakistan, Bamaisha Jayaratna from Sri Lanka and Darshan Karki from Nepal. The four are among the 14 foreign nationals studying at South Asian University (SAU) — the first joint venture of its

kind by the eight SAARC countries.

A dream project of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, SAU started its first academic session on August 26, with a batch of 50 students enrolled for courses in Masters of Computer Application (MCA) or MA (Economics). While Indians form the bulk, there are two students from Pakistan, five

from Bangladesh, four from Nepal, two from Bhutan and one from Sri Lanka.

"India's education system comes with high standards. That eight countries are collaborating to make this university work is its main strength, and the quality of faculty shows that," says Kamal, who is enrolled for the MCA programme.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

14 foreign students in SAARC varsity's first batch of 50

While Rajesh Piryani from Mitthi district in Pakistan echoes Kamal, his fellow countryman, Aitzaz Shah, feels that it is the exposure to people from other countries that makes SAU truly worthwhile. However, Shamina Akhtar from Dhaka, enrolled for MA, Developmental Economics, finds the switch in curriculum taxing.

"SAU is great for soft diplomacy. It is all right for starters, but it is still very new, so I do miss the academic atmosphere of institutes like Jawaharlal Nehru University. However, we are lucky to be in the first batch," says Karki.

While academics weighs heavily on their minds, the Taj Mahal is on every student's itinerary.

Earlier, following Islamabad's objections, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) arranged for special

multiple-entry visas for students and faculty joining SAU. These visas allow the foreigners to visit any part of India barring "prohibited areas", as well as three visits to and from their country of origin annually.

Among the Indian students, there is Rahul Singh from Dehradun who has enrolled for MCA. He says he ignored a job offer from Wipro to join SAU. Malik Altaf from Kashmir points out that SAU also means more job opportunities in all eight SAARC nations.

With Prof G K Chadha as CEO, SAU has filled eight of the 11 faculty positions so far. At present, the only one from outside India is assistant professor Pranab Kumar Muhiri from Bangladesh. SAU authorities say they will recruit at least 50 faculty members next year. As incentive, SAU is offering tax-free salaries

SAU

2 PG courses — MCA and MA (Economics).

COMPULSORY course on South Asia to help develop regional consciousness.

50 STUDENTS, including 14 foreign nationals.

8 FACULTY members, one from Bangladesh.

OPERATING from old JNU campus at present, it will have a 100-acre campus near IGNOU.

ranging from \$15,000 to \$45,000, besides 25 per cent house rent allowance.

"We will be going to each SAARC nation, meeting people and advertising SAU in a big way to draw both students and faculty. While this year students have been selected on the basis of their school and college scores, we will hold entrance exams in each country next year. We hope to start a number

of courses. We have to ensure that students from Afghanistan and Maldives also join us next time," says Prof Rajiv K Saxena, OSD, Academics & Planning. The target is to have no less than four per cent students from each SAARC nation.

As per the terms of agreement, India will bear the entire cost of setting up the varsity, and has already provided 100 acres of land free in Delhi. The operating cost will be shared by all SAARC nations, with 50 per cent being contributed by India. Sources said the funds from other SAARC nations have already begun to come in.

The varsity will soon have its own governing body with the steering committee set to hand it over in the coming week, just ahead of a formal launch, which is expected to be attended by heads of states from other SAARC nations.

Indian Express ND 13/09/2010 P8

Students seek single-window medical entrance, SC finds merit in petition

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 12

THE Supreme Court has admitted an urgent application jointly signed by medical students from across the country seeking a single-window system for MBBS/BDS or PG courses at the all-India level to prevent "rampant seat blockage/wastage and seats being sold for crores".

A Bench of Justices R V Raveendran and H L Gokhale took "serious note" of the application seeking intervention in an already pending litigation filed by doctors against the Union of India in which, as per the application, the government on August 13, 2010 recorded its approval for a Medical Council of India proposal to amend regulations relating

to courses of graduate and postgraduate students by providing "a single eligibility-cum-entrance examination".

The court had on August 13, 2010 given the government three weeks to notify the single-window scheme and place it on record, it said.

The contents of the students' application, the court said in a short hearing on Friday, were reflective of the ground realities.

Advocate Avdesh Chaudhary, lawyer for the students, said his clients were "medical students belonging to the middle-class strata of the society, who have very limited resources for pursuing medical studies in private colleges and have either pursued or are pursuing or will have to pursue in government medical colleges".

The students' representa-

tive in the application, Dr Prashant Kumar Sharma, told *The Indian Express* that they "have been or are victims of the present system of admission process for medical education in one way or the other as large number of seats go either vacant and subsequently are manipulated and filled for financial considerations in various government medical colleges.

"In the wake of the directions dated 13/08/2010 given by this Hon'ble court for introduction of 'Single Window Scheme' for the undergraduate and postgraduate courses, these medical students wish to demonstrate the urge, necessity and overwhelming facts for strict and urgent implementation of the directions," the application stated.

The students complained

they have been denied of the chance for a second round of counseling to the 15 per cent all-India quota of medical seats because of the lapse shown by states to adhere to the time schedule.

They argued in favour of a uniform admission process, explaining that the "whole ideology of having a single-window system for admission to medical courses has its own rationale as students, after being successful in the entrance examination undergo one counseling and are offered confirmed seats in medical colleges and there is no scope of having students being offered/allotted multiple seats in different medical colleges".

Right now, all those seats later vacated by these candidates go unreported and vacant and genuine and meri-

torious students do not get the opportunity to pursue medical courses, which give rise to seats being manipulated for monetary consideration, they said. It was submitted that many seats in PG medical courses go waste every year due to the fact that students resign mid-session when they get better branches in the exam of some other institute.

"Even in the apex institute of the country — AIIMS — 54 seats in January 2010 session and 8 seats in July 2010 session have been simply wasted due to mid-session resignations when the students have got a better branch in other institute. As many as 88 seats in AIPGME have been similarly wasted for the year 2010-2011," the students said in their petition.

Indian Express ND 13/09/2010 p3

20 per cent classes in DU lost to teacher's agitation

DEEPU SEBASTIAN EDMOND
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 12

DELHI University students are set to lose about 20 per cent of classes this semester, thanks largely to the Delhi University Teachers' Association's (DUTA) action programmes.

Of the 88 working days in the present semester, five days have already been lost to strikes; nine more will be lost by September 17, when DUTA completes the current cycle of agitation. These nine days were spent in symposiums, marches and dharnas.

DUSU polls also claimed a

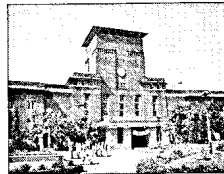
day — more if you count the five days of campaigning. In all, about 17-22 per cent of classes stand to be lost.

Delhi University reopened on July 21. There will be a 11-day mid-semester break to coincide with the Commonwealth Games, from October 4-14. Classes disperse on November 19, which is supposed to be the last working day. Examinations are to be held from November 20 to December 10.

It only gets worse. With the Vice-Chancellor staying put even after the expiry of his tenure on August 31, the DUTA has intensified its agitation. In

fact, 12 of the 14 days lost to DUTA agitation fall after August 25. It is likely that a new action programme will be announced at the September 17 DUTA general body meeting.

Apart from the DUTA agitation, a new threat looms after the DUSU held its first press conference on Thursday. The DUSU team warned the Vice-Chancellor of a student unrest within the next 15 days if their demands, including a rollback of the semester system, is not met. There are some who do not see this as an empty threat. "ABVP has claimed a majority in the DUSU after many years; it would not be



SPACED OUT

■ The university has expanded by 50 per cent in just three years, and colleges are fighting to provide space to the higher numbers.

■ Classes are often rescheduled, sometimes cancelled, due to the lack of an empty room.

surprising if they resort to some serious unrest to show off their clout and consolidate their position," observed a DU teacher who is politically active. The DUSU has also warned that they would organise a students' boycott of the first-semester exams.

There are also those issues whose impact on teaching and student performance may never be known. Science teachers of most colleges held out till the last week of August, teaching papers according to the annual mode. "A number of new teachers as well as ad hoc ones have since been coerced by their college principals to teach in the semes-

ter mode," said a senior teacher. It helps that the new system is not a "proper semester" one, as most papers in the annual mode have merely been bifurcated.

Students have been deprived of the comforts of their college hostels due to the Commonwealth Games. A large number of students joined after August 6, when OBC seats left vacant after admissions were shifted to the unreserved category. There have been fallouts. "We held back on forming the groups for laboratory work because students were still being admitted. In the semester mode, every day is valuable," a teacher said.

Indian Express ND 13/09/2010 p17

Paying for higher-education abroad

The story about Indian students pursuing higher education abroad is not new, but the mechanisms for paying for it are.



ADHIL SHETTY

EDUCATION is the key to professional success and is treated as an investment by parents who are willing to run an extra mile to give their child the best education. In recent years, education has been globalised which has increased awareness of the world's best institutes or even the fact that undergrad and graduate education can be done abroad.

This simple awareness has resulted in more Indian students going to various countries for education; be it for graduate courses or post-graduate courses. Studying abroad is expensive and at times the cost can be as high as six-times that of the cost in India and hence planning needs to be done to ensure that sufficient funds are available when needed. This is essential because to apply for the student visa, you need to show sufficient proof of funds to cover the first year of education.

In 2009, India ranked number 1 (103,260 students) among the international students studying in the US. When pursuing education abroad, the first thing that comes to your mind is an education loan. But even before an investor opts for an educational loan, make sure to pursue the university/college funding option.

UNIVERSITY FUNDING OPTION/FINANCIAL AID

1. UNDERGRAD AND GRAD COURSES

Many universities offer financial assistance to international students primarily based on merit and rarely on need. The amount and type of assistance offered varies, based on the university, department and level of study. Assistance of funds is more likely in graduate studies and less in undergraduate courses. Also, funds are more likely to be available in fields like engineering, physical sciences and biological sciences.

In order to seek financial assistance, you need to submit the institutions financial aid application form and the

Foreign Students Financial Aid Form, which will be provided by the college and will be administered by the College Scholarship Service of the College Board. In addition, some details will be required which may include

- Your total personal annual income if any
- Total annual income of your parents
- Your average annual living expenses
- Some details of you and your parents' assets

You need not be disillusioned if you do not get the financial aid at the onset because many students manage to get some financial aid from the university/college after a couple of semesters.

2. POST GRAD COURSES

Postgraduate students have to indicate their requirement for financial aid at the time of filling in the application form. The different types of financial help available include

- **TUITION WAIVER:** This means that the student does not have to pay the tuition fees at the university. However, general fees (for the use of university facilities like the library, computers, and sports and health services) usually have to be borne by the student. A tuition waiver is frequently awarded in conjunction with a scholarship or teaching/research assistantship.
- **SCHOLARSHIP / FELLOWSHIP:** This is usually an outright grant based on the student's academic ability and performance. Hence, only a truly outstanding student may be considered for this type of award, before enrolling at the university. A full scholarship would pay for a student's entire living expenses at that university, whereas a partial scholarship would require additional funds from the student.

- **ASSISTANTSHIP:** Most students who receive assistance usually do so in the form of an assistantship, i.e. a cash stipend sufficient for their living expenses, and/or tuition waiver. To get this, they have to work for a maximum of 20 hours per week. This work normally consists of teaching and research activities. Information brochures of most universities give this information. Often,



teaching and research abilities must be proved before assistantship is granted. Hence, many universities grant this only after the first semester. You may also be required to take TSE (Test of Spoken English) to qualify for a teaching assistantship.

Who should apply for financial aid?

1. Students having high Standardized Examination scores (GRE, GMAT, TOEFL among others)

In 2009, India ranked number 1 among the international students studying in the US: 103,260 students.

2. Students having evidence of a high level of academic achievement

3. Students having teaching experience in a subject offered at the undergraduate level (to increase opportunities for a teaching assistantship)

4. Students having outstanding letter(s) of recommendation and an impressive statement of purpose.

5. Students having research interest which parallels that of the department and faculty or private funding source (it increases opportunities for research assistantships and grants)

EDUCATION LOAN

1. International student loan
 - For an education loan in the US, in-

ternational students are required to have a US Citizen or permanent resident as a co-signer to apply for the loan. The co-signer must have had good credit history and good employment history (or other income history if the co-signer is not employed). A good US co-signer is critical to getting your loan approved and priced reasonably. The better your co-signer, the better your interest rate will be. The co-signer is responsible for paying back the loan should you default on it.

ADVANTAGES

- No collateral is required
- Repayment terms are flexible
- The loan is paid directly to the student giving him the flexibility to spend the money
- No application fee is levied
- Interest rate is much lower in comparison to that charged in India. The margin will be set by the lender depending on the credit history of the co-signer.

So if you have a co-signer, then taking an international education loan make prove to be financially beneficial because of the low interest rates and flexible repayment terms.

2. Educational loan from an Indian Bank

If you are unable to get a loan in the US, the next option is to obtain one in India.

● ELIGIBILITY

- i. Admission should be confirmed
- ii. Loans are not given for correspondence courses

THINKSTOCK

iii. Past academic record of the loan seeker should be satisfactory.

● COLLATERAL

Usually for loans up to Rs. 4 lakh, no collateral security is required. For loans ranging from Rs. 4 lakh to Rs. 7.50 lakh, collateral in the form of a satisfactory third party guarantee is required. For loans above Rs. 7.50 lakhs, 100 per cent collateral in any of the form of Immovable property / NSC / Units of UTI / LIC policy / RBI Bonds or any transferable Government securities is required

- **REPAYMENT:** Repayment has to start 6 months after the completion of the course or if the person gets a job immediately after completing the course, one-month after getting the job. The maximum time given for the repayment is 15 years.

- **INTEREST:** Banks offer a choice between fixed and floating rate. Most nationalized banks offer variable rates while private and foreign banks charge fixed rates. The rate can vary between 10% and 15%.

- No prepayment penalty is levied

In order to obtain finance for your education, make sure you tap all the possible options w.r.t. aid and if you're unable to get aid, education loan is the next best option. ♦

The author is the CEO of BankBazaar.com

Now, the CAT prepares

The lessons have been learnt and learnt well, and Common Admission Test 2010 promises to be a better exam

Himanshu Rai

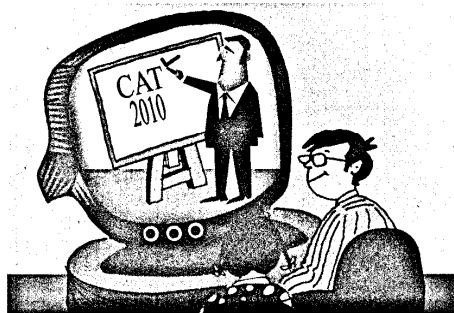
THE IIMs were established by the government of India as national schools of excellence in management sciences. Over the years, the IIMs have evolved into global institutions imparting high quality management programmes that stress on ethical leadership, innovation and cutting-edge research. *The Economist* labelled IIMs as the "toughest" B-schools in the world to get into. The entry to these nation-building institutes was realised through the Common Admission Test, popularly called CAT. It was, and continues to be, a source of pride for the faculty involved with its conception and delivery year after year, and is possibly the exam that accounts for the highest number of eyeballs and scrutiny of general public and media alike.

In 2009, the IIMs announced their decision to collaborate with Prometric to convert the CAT from paper and pencil to a computerised format. CAT 2009 represented the largest format change in testing history (not just in India, but in the world), both in scope and scale. The successful computerisation of CAT would have ramifications far beyond the boundaries of IIMs. It would have heralded the arrival of India in terms of networking and data communications infrastructure that could support com-

puter-based testing at a level of quality and performance equivalent to globally recognised standards. Not only was this decision logical and progressive but it was one that was borne out of necessity. The number of candidates taking CAT had increased steadily and the IIMs had reached the threshold where the resources available both in terms of people and test centres (read schools) would prohibit the successful conduct of the exam. The transition was necessary.

Computerisation would have other advantages as well to offer to the candidates as well as systems supporting India's information transformation. It offered the virtues of expanding access and enhancing the test development process while mitigating the perils of exam security concerns. Computerising the CAT would also ensure that the exam could span multiple days, with multiple sessions per day, thereby giving candidates flexible options in scheduling.

CAT 2009 saw problems early on and under the intense public scrutiny, these problems seemed larger than they actually were. The largest format change in testing history was met with scepticism from the cynical many and outright negative propaganda from self-serving few. The unforeseen technical snags that infested the processes, especially the testing process, did not help the cause. But the organisers persevered and at the end of the day processes got



ART BY RAGCHI

streamlined, needing issues ironed out, and the second phase of CAT 2009 went smoothly. A momentous task was accomplished, a piece of history created.

CAT 2010 promises to be a better exam. The lessons have been learnt and learnt well. We have learnt that things can go wrong even if we don't make any mistakes! This year, therefore, we intend to leave nothing to chance or words given by others. Significant improvements have been brought in all facets of CAT, be it the registration process, the sale of vouchers, the Web site and the test conditions. Some of the specific changes that have already been witnessed, with gratifying feedbacks, are a smoother process of sale of vouchers, an extremely informative Web site, which outlines in detail the entire registration process as well as explains

every part and process of CAT 2010 through detailed documents, and audio and video links. Candidates who registered after reading the registration guide reported completing the process in about 15 minutes as compared to others who did not and thus spent much more time asking questions, which had already been answered through various documents available on the Web site. The candidate helpines are working for longer hours and are better prepared to answer queries based on our experience last year. Not just that, the IVRS has been made available both in English and Hindi to facilitate candidates. Everything that a candidate needs to know about the exam has been made available through the Web site.

Our actions are guided by three mantras: thorough site readiness, en-

WE HAVE TO GET TO A STAGE WHEN CAT IS AVAILABLE TO CANDIDATES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WITH RESULTS BEING DELIVERED INSTANTLY

surving good testing experience; improved service to candidates; and overall enhancement of quality in all our processes. In line with these, the entire back-end process has been overhauled and improved upon. The venues have been contracted much in advance and the sites would be taken under control more than two weeks in advance to ensure thorough sanitisation. The testing window has been increased from 10 days to 20 days, thus giving candidates greater flexibility to choose their preferred time, date and location. Care has been taken to include only those venues that meet our stringent demands and specifications in terms of infrastructure quality and network capability. As a result, one faces issues like venues being far from city centres in some places, but these are unavoidable and have to be accepted as *fait accompli*. To top it all, a demo test will be put up on the Web site, which, while not reflecting the actual difficulty level of CAT, will facilitate candidates by giving them a glimpse of the actual screen and the process on the testing day. This and many more such enhancements have been brought in to make CAT 2010 experience good, individual performance notwithstanding.

Yet, there is a lot that still needs to be done. We have to get to a stage when CAT is available to candidates throughout the year with results being deliv-

ered immediately. This would require us to move from linear fixed-form delivery based CBT to linear-on-the-fly testing based on item response theory that would maintain difficulty equivalence while reducing item exposure and enhancing test security. This, however, requires a critical level of question bank development, and given the difficulty levels of this exam that allows it to select top 5% of the exam takers, it would easily take IIMs a couple of years before they have the necessary numbers required for this model. Other possible future enhancements include facilitation of voucher sales through online payment systems and developing dedicated testing sites. Further, CAT ought to be taken across the frontiers since that would make it more viable while bringing in the best global practices. The road is steep but the IIMs have always had the will and the capability. They have led others to global standards and they would continue to do so.

Today, CAT needs encouragement from the discerning public. Despite the best efforts taken by organisers, some things are unavoidable. If ten thousand machines are switched on any given day, some of them are likely not to start; that is the law of probability, one, which reflects human imperfection and inevitability. One swallow, however, does not make a summer, and this cannot be interpreted as a failure, just like being human cannot be seen as the limitation of the specie. This is the time for us to wish success to CAT 2010 and to the candidates who are taking it. It is the time for the human spirit to triumph.

The author is convener for CAT 2010

CAMPUS ROUNDUP

IIM Kozhikode launches 'White Knight' — the Open Entrepreneurship Competition
IIM Kozhikode has launched the fourth version of its national-level entrepreneurship competition 'White Knight', which will be held as part of its annual international management festival 'Backwaters'. The competition aims to put into action the institute's vision of shifting the B-school from the path of exclusive elitism to inclusive excellence. This event will provide a platform to enterprising and



ambitious people with ideas for profitable and scalable businesses to make their dreams a reality. This year, White Knight has been launched on a larger scale. India Innovation network is the advisor and mentor for the event while TIE Kerala is the knowledge partner. The event will invite ideas not only from B-school students but also from working professionals by recognising the fact that innovation happens not by people who meet the market needs but by those who create it.

Manav Rachna International University's global student exchange programme
MRIU's international student exchange programme attracted students from countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Nigeria, South Korea and Syria.
We invite colleges and universities to send in information — on new faculty, courses, alliances, projects and other events — for this section. Email: vikram.chaudhary@expressindia.com

LOOK OUT FOR...

Representatives from 22 US universities visiting India
IDP Education — the world's largest student placement advisor — recently announced the US Universities' Global Fair in India. Representatives from leading US universities will be visiting India to talk to students about higher education opportunities in the US. As many as 22 US universities will be individually represented and another 53 will have experts to offer personalised

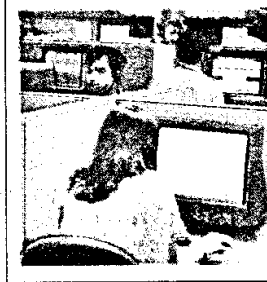
advice to students. The fair will be held in Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai from September 25 to October 3. It will provide an opportunity to students to obtain relevant information about studying in the US, the programmes offered and work prospects. The US has been and remains an important destination for higher education studies for Indian students and also provides students with international exposure in the workplace.

Financial Express ND 13/09/2010 p-7

Boom returns for skilled professionals: Experts

New Delhi, Sep 12: Happy days are here again for skilled professionals as they draw multiple job offers from companies facing talent crunch, especially in IT, telecom and financial services sectors, say experts.

As companies look to expand amid revival in the economic climate, job opportunities are amplifying, resulting in multiple offers for professionals at a particular time. "A growing trend of multiple job offers for professionals, mainly in junior and middle levels, has become visible in the past two quarters, as companies short of talent are gearing up to hire robustly," human resource service provider Ma Foi



AS COMPANIES LOOK TO EXPAND AMID ECONOMIC RECOVERY, JOB OPPORTUNITIES ARE AMPLIFYING, RESULTING IN MULTIPLE OFFERS FOR PROFESSIONALS

Randstad president (Staffing & Training) E Balaji said.

"Moreover, with job market hotting up, professionals are applying and giving interviews in many companies and they end up with several offers from different firms," Balaji added. Experts say maximum

offers are being witnessed in IT, telecom, infrastructure and banking, financial service and insurance sectors.

Executive search firm GlobalHunt director Sunil Goel said, "For the proven professionals, getting parallel and better job offers has be-

come a trend, where many firms try to attract talent with lucrative and better offers from competitors." "Multiple job offers have increased up to 40-50% from 20% in IT sector, in telecom there is an increase of 15%. Infrastructure and BFSI sectors have seen a rise of 20% and 10%, respectively," Goel added.

During the downturn, for almost 18 months, most of the firms across sectors had frozen hiring and were apprehensive about any new business plan implementation. But, since January this year, a positive momentum is in the economy and new business plans have been rolled out, vacant positions are filled in and multiple job op-

portunities are floating around. "Besides, tight deadlines for launching product and services in IT, telecom and infrastructure sectors are creating a war for talent once again," Goel added.

Meanwhile, according to a recent survey by headhunting firm executive access, employees value growth more than compensation when it comes to choosing an organisation. "In today's scenario, employees look out for as much learning as possible which he/she can leverage in real time. If an organisation is open to inculcating in-house training, the lesser are chances of facing attrition," executive access managing director Ronesh Puri said. *PTI*

p-5

IT firms prepare to face possible double dip impact

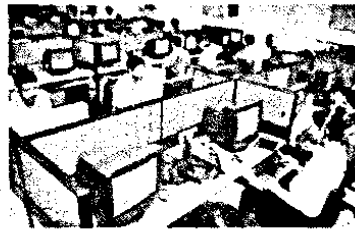
Goutam Das

Bangalore, Sep 12: If the global economy slips into a dreaded double-dip recession, as many believe it would, Indian IT firms could be affected for two-three quarters. However, executives and market watchers say Indian companies are well prepared to handle such a crisis.

The lessons learnt during the economic crises of 2001 and 2009 have made business models of Indian firms flexible to change. Top-tier companies are engaged in "scenario planning" and mid-tier firms are investing more in account management, on-site presence and customer relationships.

"The industry is well prepared to minimise the impact of a double-dip. We have a good set of business mix. At the same time, we have a good variable cost structure," V Balakrishnan, CFO, Infosys Technologies — India's second-largest IT services exporter — said. "If revenues are affected, our current cost structure can be realigned quickly to minimise the impact. We have levers in onsite-offshore mix, utilisation, variable salary structure, and even the business mix itself. We can use some of these to cushion the margins," he said, adding that a double dip could dent the performance of the IT industry for two-three quarters. He, however, said, "Offshoring will return to being big play once customers start focusing on efficiency". In the recession-hit FY10, Infosys managed to grow 4.8% to Rs 22,742 crore.

Fears of the US, which is India's



THE LESSONS LEARNT DURING THE ECONOMIC CRISES OF 2001 AND 2009 HAVE MADE BUSINESS MODELS OF INDIAN FIRMS FLEXIBLE TO CHANGE

biggest IT revenue geography and contributes to about 60% of its billings, slipping into a second recession is being viewed as a possibility owing to high unemployment rates and a slowdown in the GDP growth rate.

Though IT companies in India aren't noticing anything unusual in customer behaviour yet, they are monitoring the situation closely.

"What we have realised is that as an organisation, if you have engaged in scenario planning — an assessment of what could happen — and plan for them, you have done the best you could. That has helped us till now," Manish Dugar, CFO, Wipro Technologies, said. "The last recession has already given us some experience. If a double dip happens, we cannot guarantee that we will continue our growth rates or expansion in our margins. But we know the responses. We are much better prepared, compared to what our peer groups will be," he added.

Tribune ND 13.09.2010 P-8

Doctors at IITs

Experts should work out a consensus

ATURF war has broken out with the Human Resource Development Ministry deciding to introduce medicine as a teaching discipline in the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Health Ministry opposing the move, which it considers is an encroachment on its territory. The IIT Council met on Friday and unilaterally decided to go ahead with the controversial proposal. The man in a hurry at the HRD Ministry, Kapil Sibal, does not believe in building a consensus. Quite often his otherwise sensible ideas fall through because of opposition from within his own party. The proposal to produce doctors at the IITs will require an amendment to the IIT Act. The country's top brand name in education is associated with engineers and it will take quite some to associate doctors with an IIT. Barring perhaps the AIIMS, doctors don't have any medical institution with such global recognition.

It is true technology has infiltrated every field, including medicine, and a combined, inter-disciplinary study will be helpful. New disciplines like biomedical engineering, biotechnology and e-health are gaining popularity. Such courses as also MBBS and MD will gain international appeal and acceptance if taught at the prestigious IITs. The IITs are opening up to foreign students and faculty. Quality education has become a major business and the IITs are gearing up to cash in on growing opportunities thrown up by globalisation and recognition of Indians' excellence in information technology in the developed world.

Instead of battling for territory the two ministries should sort out their differences or let experts thrash out the issue. There is an acute shortage of quality doctors and engineers both within and outside the country. Given the sad state of medical colleges, many of whom lack necessary infrastructure and faculty, the Health Ministry should concentrate on their improvement. In fact, quality education requires urgent Central and state attention. Upgrading the standards of education to global levels is of utmost importance. In the latest QS world university rankings our IITs and universities figure very low – somewhere between 187 and 501. This is shocking, to say the least.

Mail Today ND 13-Sep-10 P-4

Coaching chain boss in textbook piracy racket

By Mail Today Bureau
In New Delhi

THE ANDHRA Pradesh Police have unearthed a major racket involving piracy of government textbooks by private publishers. It has caused a huge loss to the state exchequer.

The scam came to light with the arrest of P Narayana, chairman of the Narayana Group of Institutions that runs a chain of intermediate-IT coaching institutions.

He was allegedly found indulging in piracy of intermediate textbooks published by the state-run Telugu Academy and selling them to his students at an exorbitant cost. Preliminary estimates reveal the cost of the pirated books as around ₹10 crore.

On Friday, the Telugu Academy officials

complained to the Narayanaguda police, in Hyderabad. The officers immediately conducted raids on the printing press and godown of the Nishit Multimedia Publications at Chengicherla — which is owned by the Narayana Group — and confiscated more than 60,000 books.

The police arrested Narayana, his wife Devi and daughter Sindhoora, who are directors in the group, under Section 63 of the Copyright Act (for infringement of copyright). They were released on bail.

According to the Telugu Academy, four of its Intermediate Education textbooks — Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics-1 (a) and 1 (b) — were reprinted by the Narayana group's publishing house, violating the Copyright Act.

The chairman, however, denied the charge. He said a misunderstanding had led to the complaint.

"The basic concepts of the subjects are the same, be it in the Telugu Academy books or ours. We have our own subject experts who prepare the textbooks," Narayana said.

State higher education minister D. Sridhar Babu, however, said the government had enough evidence to prove the chair-

He reportedly plagiarised Telugu Academy's books

man was plagiarising the content of the Telugu Academy books.

"We are inquiring into reports of other publishers also indulging in textbook piracy. Once the charges are proved, we will take action," Babu said.

The Hyderabad-headquartered Telugu

Academy publishes intermediate, degree, postgraduate, D.Ed and B.Ed books annually. It also publishes study material for competitive exams. No private publisher is allowed to copy these textbooks, which are the basic texts of all colleges.

An official in the higher education department said: "They can have other books for reference, but they should not copy material from the academy books."

The Telugu Academy generates ₹30 crore to ₹35 crore annually through the books.

"In the last few years, there has been a steady fall in the academy revenue, though the number of students and colleges rose. We got suspicious and made inquiries which revealed that private publishers, in connivance with private colleges, were indulging in piracy. A few arrests were made in Tirupati and Guntur, leading to the Narayana link," the official added.