

# Newspaper Clips

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WARMTH IN DECEMBER

## IITs Gear Up for a Bright Start to Placements

Registrations up; first-time hirers queue up

**DEVINA SENGUPTA**  
BANGALORE

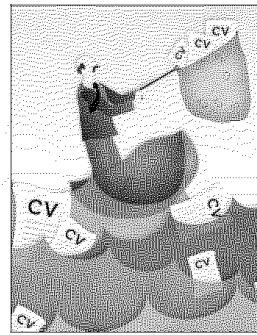
India Inc may well be treading with caution on hiring this year, but on the campuses of India's premier Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), there is an air of optimism around final placements. Registrations at IIT Bombay, Delhi and Madras outshine or maintain last year's numbers, and first-time hirers are pouring in for placements, scheduled in December.

"Companies are upbeat and there is no reason hiring will stop, in fact it may even increase," says Kushal Sen, placement head, IIT Delhi. Over 150 companies have registered with IIT Delhi as of September 22. A similar number of firms had registered last year.

IIT Madras currently has 100 firms registered in their placement portal compared with last year's 60, says Ramesh Babu, placement head. Foreign companies such as Japan's NTT Communications and Infoaxe from the US, have registered for the first time this year. Among the Indian first-timers are FMC Technologies, Broadcom India, MN Dastur, eGain, Essex Lake Group and Tribi Systems. NIIT University wants to hire PhD students, says Babu.

Finisar from Malaysia, which hired last year, has confirmed this year as well. Singapore's Sumitomo has been visiting the campus since 2009 and has also registered this year. Company profiles reveal that global salaries can go up to as much as \$60,000, says Babu. R&D and engineering firm King Abdullah from Saudi Arabia, which had hired students for 96,000 Saudi riyals last year, is yet to register, but the institute is hopeful.

At IIT Bombay, 100 companies had registered till August, and by December, the institute expects to cross last year's 250-mark. Ravi Sinha, placement head did not divulge the names of the companies, but expects firms from Japan, Korea, North America and few Eu-



ropean nations. Work Applications, a Japanese enterprise resource management firm, has approached IIT Bombay for the first time, says Sinha.

Companies that are interested in hiring students from the IITs expected to get the requisite approvals from the placement committee

and then sign into the placement portals. They have to mention the job profile, location and salary, based on which students can decide which firm's interview to take. All those who register do not necessarily come for the placements, which last till June.

Not just the IITs, but Kolkata-based Jadavpur University too has its share of first-timers — Tokyo-headquartered IT firm Job Tessio and Abu Dhabi's iron and steel firm Al Ghurair Group are in the process of selecting students. The Japanese firm is expected to offer Rs 31 lakh per year while the latter will take care of accommodation, food and travel expenses of its employees, besides paying a salary of Rs 3.6 lakh, according to Siddharth Bhattacharya, officer of placement and training.

**Over 150 companies have registered with IIT Delhi. A 100 firms have registered with IIT Madras compared with last year's 60**

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## CASHLESS TRANSACTIONS

## UIDAI tests pilot project at IIT-B

BY SURABHI AGARWAL &  
DAVID SHAFTEL

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

Late in December, or early next year, the campus of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) at Powai will go entirely cashless. All transactions will be electronic, using micro-ATMs with a fingerprint reader.

Behind the cashless movement at Powai, first reported by the *Hindustan Times* on 24 September, is the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which issues unique IDs, or Aadhaar numbers, and which will be testing its authentication services at the IIT.

"Apart from being a good means of identification, Aadhaar can also be leveraged for authentication services," said Ashish Das, a professor in the department of mathematics at IIT-B and the author of a 2010 paper on cashless payment systems. "When it comes to digital payments, the biggest issue is of establishing the authenticity of the transaction."

If the pilot is successful, the cashless transactions at IIT-B could foreshadow the norm for all banking transactions in the country. "We are already testing our authentication services

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**If the pilot is successful, the transactions could foreshadow norms for all banking transactions**

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in rural areas through an ongoing pilot in Jharkhand. The idea of starting a pilot in IIT-Bombay is to also test it in the urban setting as well," said A.P. Singh, deputy director general of UIDAI.

Thus far, around 8,200 people, including students and faculty, have enrolled for the Aadhaar project, joining another two-to-three thousand. The remaining—around 4,000—will be enrolled over the next few months.

Rajdeep Mandal, 21, a final-year student of computer science at IIT-B, says that though enrolment was not compulsory, he was one of the first students to do so. "It is a national project and I think they expected some cooperation. I believe it is kind of a duty," he said. "It will simplify things.

You will be able to roam around the campus without any money, and the transactions will be faster."

While UIDAI may have its own reasons for choosing the setting of the pilot, the students already feel a strong connection to the project. UIDAI chairman and Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani graduated from IIT-B in 1978 and has maintained his connection to the school to which he has generously given.

"That man has done a lot," said one of the students who is helping on the pilot. During an interview in the canteen of his on-campus hostel, he added that IIT is a good ecosystem to test the systems because it has very good information technology infrastructure and very good connectivity.

"The kind of transactions that people do over here would be very diverse," the student said. "This canteen gives us the low-end transactions with untrained manpower at the other end. And people come here in large numbers around dinner or after midnight."

The campus book store and restaurants typically process fewer but higher-value transactions, added this student, who did not want to be identified.

The UIDAI project gives people an option to open new bank accounts or link existing ones at the time of enrolment. The first set of Aadhaar-linked bank accounts are expected to be opened next month.

IIT-B was also the seat of a pilot study for a cashless society titled Smart Rupees System, which was initiated by the Reserve Bank of India and was spread over the late 1990s, where transactions were supposed to be done through smart cards.

"The idea for this pilot is to test the UID authentication and payment system to see if money can be remitted from one bank account to another smoothly using Aadhaar as the authentication means," said Rajesh Bansal, assistant director general, UIDAI.

Enrolments, which were suspended while exams are on, are resuming this week. After the enrolments are completed, all the Aadhaar numbers will be linked to the bank accounts of the students, faculty and the shop owners of all the payment points in the college and hostel, such as the cafeteria, the book shop, the utilities store, etc.

It will take another six months for things to start rolling out completely, said Das.

Till then, cash-strapped students can conveniently pretend they've forgotten their wallets at home, when the bills arrive.

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## 600 IITians fall ill after eating canteen food

**Mumbai:** Around 500 to 600 students at IIT-Powai reported sick with fever, vomiting, headache and body ache over Monday and Tuesday. While IIT authorities confirmed food poisoning, they said the cause was yet to be ascertained.

The ill students belong to three hostels that have a common mess, and many students said the dinner served in the mess on Sunday night could have caused the poisoning.

IIT officials have sent the students' stool samples as well as drinking water served in the mess for testing. **TNN**

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### **IIM-A Web site in Hindi**

*Ahmedabad, Sept. 27*

**T**he Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (IIM-A) has launched its Web site in Hindi, as a part of the ongoing celebration of the Hindi Fortnight from September 14 to 29. Prof B.H. Jajoo, Dean, IIM-A unveiled the Hindi Web site. Prof Anand Kumar Jaiswal, Chairperson of Official Language Implementation Committee, said the IIM-A has become the first management institute in the country to officially launch its Web site in Hindi. The other events organised as part of the Hindi Fortnight included a book exhibition, essay writing contest, poem recitation, vocabulary and debate in Hindi. - **Our Bureau**

## PAID EXPERIENCE

# Be an IIM student for a day

**Divya Trivedi**

*New Delhi, Sept. 27*

Grab your seat at IIM-Ahmedabad for a day. That's if you are willing to pay.

The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, has organised an online auction under the 'Joy of Giving' week where 50 bidders would be chosen to spend a day at the premier institution.

The best part of the deal: the wannabes do not have to sit the Common Admission Test for this experience, unlike the other IIM students. But then, they will not get the MBA certificate.

The chosen ones will get to live on campus like a first year student — attend classes, submit assignments and participate in the varied activities.

The online bidding started on Tuesday at Rs 501. The institute expects to auction the seats at anywhere between Rs 5,000 and Rs 20,000 per seat. By



**Social Initiative:** IIM-A expects to auction the seats at anywhere between Rs 5,000 and Rs 20,000 per seat (file photo).

the evening of the first day, the stakes had already reached Rs 2,000.

Part of the money raised from the process will be used for the event and the bulk of it will go to Prayaas, a social initiative of IIM-A students geared towards betterment of slum children,

according to a spokesperson.

"The batch of students will be taught by our professors using the pedagogy of IIM-A that is, the case method. They will be privy to some of the traditions and quirks that make up our dorm culture. They will also learn

interesting things about our campus and experience first-hand the academic rigour that we students are exposed to," said Mr Parampreet Singh Bhasin, General Secretary, IIM-A student body.

However, his enthusiasm for the project is not shared by everyone. Some dismissed it as a mere gimmick, others as hypocrisy. "Educational institutions will oppose reservation of seats for SC/ST students, but they will put up shows to help slum kids. It is indeed an attempt to flout existing norms taking the guise of altruism," said a student.

However, IIM-A sees it as an opportunity to attract prospective students and interested professionals. The auction is up on eBay India for four days and ends on September 30. Each day, 10 to 15 seats will be auctioned, with each seat going to the highest bidder.

## 'India and China to dominate this century'

Last updated on: September 27, 2011 09:49 IST



**There has been a major shift in the global balance of economic power, creating a new global hierarchy dominated by the East, says Chris Patten, chancellor of Oxford university. Naomi Canton reports.**

India and China are set to dominate in a new post-western world but "that did not necessarily mean that the United States of America and Europe have had it," the last governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, has said. Patten, now chancellor of Oxford university, made the remarks in a speech he gave at a recent alumni weekend, held by the university.

Lord Patten of Barnes, famed for handing back the sovereignty of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China in 1997 marking the end of British rule, told the audience of Oxford alumni that there had been a major shift in the global balance of economic power and that India and China would dominate this century, creating a new global hierarchy dominated by the East.

In his speech, 'What next? Surviving the 21st century', based on his namesake book, he spoke of a "fin de siècle"

mood pervading American and European society. But he compared that to the malaise felt in the West during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis "which felt like Armageddon", he said, using it to point out there had been previous periods in history when similar levels of despair had gripped the West. "Things today are not as dangerous as that," he said.

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## 'Nowadays India invests more in the UK than vice versa'

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The former Conservative member of Parliament and European commissioner warned that the world population was set to increase from 6.9 billion by a further 2.1 billion by 2050, "mostly in poor countries" which already suffered from political instability and environmental stress. "The only rich country where population is set to increase is the USA," he added.

Speaking at The Sheldonian Theatre, where Oxford's matriculation and graduation ceremonies are held, Patten said we can expect to see an explosion of growth in cities, especially in China, in the future, increase in energy and water use and globalisation. He pointed out water use had increased nine fold in the past century, when the population increased fourfold.

He then spoke of the India growth story and visible power shift already taking place. Tata's Jaguar Land Rover recently announced plans to build a Rs 2,600 crore engine plant in the United Kingdom, creating more than 2,000 jobs and Tata is already Britain's largest manufacturing employer.

"Nowadays India invests more in the UK than vice versa," he said. In fact, India is soon expected to become the third largest economy in the world.

China is currently the second largest economy in the world but, by 2020, in the new post-western world, China would overtake the USA to become the largest economy in the world, Patten said.

But he pointed out that it was not all doom and gloom for Europe. While Europe currently had only had 10 per cent of the world's population, it currently generates about 21 per cent of the world's output (global GDP). By 2050 Europe will have 7 per cent of the world's population but the economy of the union is expected to remain among the world's top three largest economies.

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## 'China's problems eroding its economic achievements'

Last updated on: September 27, 2011 09:49 IST



**T**here are serious problems confronting both India and China," Patten warned and then spoke of the "steady federalisation of the polity in India".

He pointed out that Gujarat, where more than 1,000 people were killed in the 2002 communal riots, which accounts for just 5 per cent of India's population, actually contributes 16 per cent of India's output.

Patten also spoke of the "criminalisation of politics in India" and the "terrible levels of corruption in India, specifically corruption in the judiciary, bureaucracy and legislature."

"Three chief justices in India today face criminal charges," he said. He then spoke of how the country had paradoxes such as "extraordinary wealth" next to "poverty" and "terrible infrastructure."

He then moved on to China. "China also has huge problems which are eroding its economic achievements, with a 1600 per cent increase in exports to the USA over

the last 15 years, it faces huge environmental challenges," he said.

Patten said the main problem China now faced was how to rebalance its economy from substantial dependence on manufactured exports to greater investment in domestic infrastructure and domestic consumption.

Despite a massive boom in exports, wages in China remain low. Chinese wages as a share of GDP have fallen from approximately 53 percent of GDP in 1992 to less than 40 per cent in 2006.

Patten spoke of the importance of India and China taking centre stage not just economically but in global politics, international bodies and affairs too. "We know what needs to be done from the Middle East to climate change, we know the sort of things that the international community should be doing in order to find a solution. We know what we need to do to survive but there is a lack of

political will to rise to the challenge," Patten said.

"How can we expect leadership to come from the USA when we have seen that their political system is gridlocked?" he asked.

A recent protracted inability of the US government to agree on a solution to its fiscal deficit and debt problems, owing to differences between the House of Representatives and Senate, led to the country's credit rating being downgraded for the first time.

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## 'No rapid economic growth alongside mass immigration in Europe'

Last updated on: September 27, 2011 09:49 IST



**W**hen considering whether leadership should come from Europe, the 67-year-old former student of Balliol College, who is also chairman of the BBC Trust, pointed out the currency union was falling apart. "Why is it that Europe has failed to implement a series of measures to make Europe more competitive?" he asked.

Patten, a Catholic, who oversaw the Pope's visit to Britain in September 2010, said that populations were falling fast in Europe, especially in Italy, Spain and Poland and the number of people in work supporting those in retirement was falling extremely fast.

The consequences of rapidly ageing populations and lower fertility rates meant greater immigration would be required to provide jobs and services in Europe. But he warned Europe would see "some of the tensions" that arise when there is no rapid economic growth alongside mass immigration. He said immigration into Europe was also likely to increase owing to natural disasters elsewhere.

When asked why British schools weren't concentrating on teaching Hindi and Mandarin in the light of his forecast, he replied, "My daughter learnt Hindi to appear in a Bollywood film," referring to Alice Patten, who starred as struggling British filmmaker Sue McKinley in the hit Hindi movie *Rang De Basanti*. In an apparent attack on Britain's youth, he added, "We need to teach them English first."

The alumni weekend, named Meeting Minds – 21st century challenges, offered a packed three-day programme of more than 120 events for alumni.

Oxford academics from a range of departments delivered lectures showing how they were tackling a range of global challenges from population growth to increased energy consumption, climate change, living on social networking sites, the science behind earthquakes and emerging infectious diseases.

A highlight was a 'Mathematical Tour of Oxford' by Professor Marcus du Sautoy, who had presented the BBC documentary 'The Story of Maths', which had revealed that Indians had made many of the key mathematical breakthroughs in the world before the West had, even before Sir Isaac Newton was born, including inventing the zero, despite common misapprehensions that Math was a Western invention.

Hindustan ND 28-Sep-11 p5

## आईआईटी में कंपनियों ने किया रजिस्ट्रेशन शुरू

नई दिल्ली (प्र.सं)। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान में इस वर्ष से प्लेसमेंट के लिए कंपनियों ने अभी से रजिस्ट्रेशन कराना शुरू कर दिया है।

संस्थानों के मुताबिक पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले कंपनियां जल्दी और अधिक

संख्या में रजिस्ट्रेशन करा रही है। आईआईटी दिल्ली के प्लेसमेंट इंचार्ज कुशल सेन ने बताया कि इस बार पहले की तुलना में अधिक संख्या में नियुक्तियां होने की उम्मीद है। बड़ी संख्या में कंपनियां रजिस्ट्रेशन करा चुकी है।

वर्तमान में 140 से अधिक कंपनियों ने अपना रजिस्ट्रेशन कराया है।

उन्होंने कहा कि रुझान बेहतर दिख रहा है, पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले कंपनियों ने पहले ही संपर्क करना शुरू कर दिया है।