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TALENT HUNT GROOMING A FACULTY

‘Home-bred’ PhDs power smaller IIMs

More Doctorates From IIMs, IITs Take To Academics As Pay Packets Rise

Avinash Nair
AHMEDABAD

HARSHAL Lowalekar is only 27 years old and has joined the faculty at the Indian Institute of Management-Indore. Harshal, a fresh doctoral student from IIM-Ahmedabad (IIMA), is just one example from a growing tribe of young and dynamic PhD students, who have recently passed out of the top IIMs and IITs and have chosen to power the pedagogy in some of the smaller IIMs in the country. The incentives seem to be an opportunity to associate with brand IIM and to be an integral part of the growth story of these budding institutes.

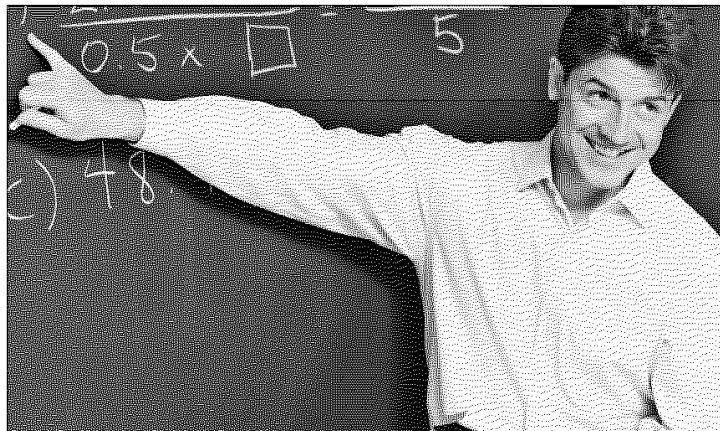
“A few years ago, the number of PhDs choosing to join academics was hardly 50%. There were significant numbers of students who used to opt for an opening in the industry. However, after the recession and implementation of the Sixth Pay Commission (which saw faculty salaries rise by 60%), academics has suddenly become more attractive. The numbers of students opting to take up teaching as a career has now risen to 80%,” says Abraham Koshy, a senior faculty at IIMA.

The trend is very evident in the recent faculty recruitment at some of the smaller IIMs. While IIM-Indore has recruited around 20 fresh PhDs from the top three IIMs in the last one year, IIM-Shillong has opted to recruit fresh passouts from IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology). Similarly, others like IIM-Lucknow (IIML) and IIM-Kozhikode too have recruited PhDs from the IIM talent pool.

“In the last one year, we have recruited about 22 faculty. About three-four of them are from the US, while the rest are from the top IIMs. All of them are young and energetic,” says N Ravichandran, director, IIM-Indore. Similar is the case of IIM-Shillong. “We have recruited fresh PhDs from IITD and one faculty is in the process of completing his PhD from IITK,” says an official from the institute. This fresh crop of doctoral students passing out of the top IIMs and IITs are proving to be ideal panacea for some of these B-schools that are battling faculty crunch and are more inclined to tap “home-bred” talent.

When asked why fresh doctoral students were being tapped by the institute, Ravichandran quips, “Who else is available? Moreover, there is a talented crop of young fellows who pass out every year from the top IIMs.”

The director’s comment seems to be an extension of what Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal



Fresh crop helping B-schools tide over faculty crunch

told the Lok Sabha last month. In his reply to the House, Sibal said that about 25% of faculty positions within the IIMs were lying vacant and the government had initiated various long-term measures to attract young people to take up teaching as a career option.

While brand IIM is proving to be an obvious attraction for the doctoral students, the IIMs, in turn, have preferred to bank on their own progeny, as grooming home-bred talent becomes a lot easier for the institutes. “The IIM brand is an obvious attraction. But this attraction is more at

IIM-Indore has to offer to the new recruits.

Similarly, IIML, which recently recruited a doctoral student from IIM-Bangalore as faculty, says, “We will prefer taking more of IIM students if we have a chance...”

Prof A Vinay Kumar, chairman of the Fellowship Programme at IIML, says, “In the recent past, our graduating students took jobs in other IIMs including IIM-Kozhikode and IIM-Indore. Perhaps, the students prefer the IIM work environment to start their careers.”

“There are a number of vacancies in these new IIMs. However, the rigour of getting into one of the newer IIMs will almost be the same as that of (getting into) some of the older IIMs like IIMA. I doubt if there is any lowering of guard as far recruiting quality faculty is concerned,” says Prof Koshy of IIMA.

When asked how the fresh doctoral candidates were making up for their lack of academic experience, Vaibhav Bhamoriya, another fresh doctoral student from IIMA, who has been recruited by one of the smaller IIMs, says, “The time we have spent in the IIM system gives us confidence to handle MBA students. Moreover, as researchers, we come with sharp, analytical skills which are a tad above the students. Our knowledge about our individual subjects gives us the required edge in the class.”



The IIM brand is an obvious attraction. As far as IIM-Indore is concerned, there is a lot of opportunity for inclusive growth. It is a very young institution, about 10 years old, and the opportunity to grow is tremendous

N RAVICHANDRAN
DIRECTOR, IIM-INDORE

a basic level. As far as IIM-Indore is concerned, there is a lot of opportunity for inclusive growth. It is a very young institution, about 10 years old, and the opportunity to grow and be a part of the success story is tremendous,” adds Ravichandran while talking about the opportunities that

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Biotech authority's mandate limited to safety & efficacy

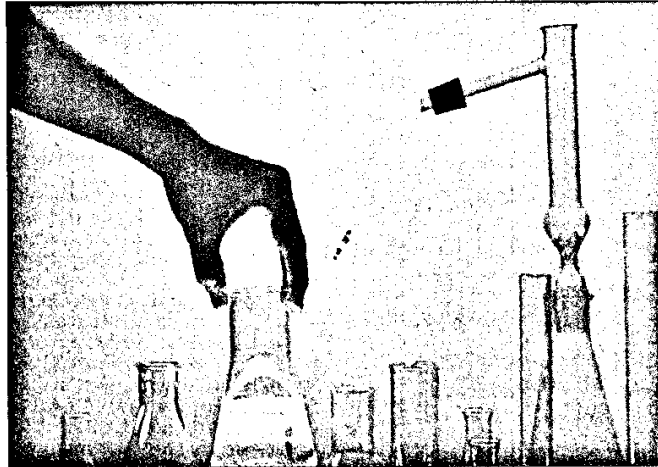
GEAC To Be Rechristened As Environment Appraisal Panel Under The Proposed Body

Urmi A Goswami
NEW DELHI

THE Centre has pruned the mandate of the proposed Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India. The body will now deal only with safety and efficacy issues, leaving decisions on commercialisation of biotech products to respective administrative ministries.

The curtailed mandate appears to be on account of 'conflict of interest' and turf wars in the government. The environment ministry had raised issues about placing the biotech regulator under the administrative control of the department of biotechnology. It was argued that the promoter of biotechnology should not be allowed to perform the role of the regulator as well.

The compromise was hammered out between the environment ministry and department of biotechnology. As per this agreement, the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) currently housed in the environment ministry would be rechristened as the Environment Appraisal Panel under the proposed Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India. The panel will be governed by the Environment Protec-



COMPROMISE FORMULA

tion Act in managing and protecting the environment. The chairman and member secretary of this panel will be nominated by the environment ministry.

The chairman of the environment appraisal panel will report directly to the

BRAI chairman. In the event of a difference of opinion between the panel and the regulator, BRAI will pass a speaking order.

Similarly, the expert member on environment in the product ruling com-

mittee will be selected from a roster prepared jointly by the environment ministry and BRAI.

The proposed regulatory authority has run into trouble with the health ministry now saying that it had not been consulted. The health ministry stands to lose turf with the proposed regulator subsuming the biotechnology-related functions of the Drug Controller of India.

Though the regulatory authority will now be under the administrative ambit of the department of science and technology, concerns on the conflict of interest still persist.

Traditionally, the same minister heads departments of biotechnology and science, raising the conflict of interest issue yet again. The health ministry's intervention could reopen the issue. It has been suggested that the regulator be parked in a neutral ministry, as in the case of the Commissioner for Railway Safety.

This office is housed in the ministry of civil aviation. The other option is to place the regulator under the Cabinet Secretariat as in the case of the National Authority, Chemical Weapons Convention.

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'Rajivji too wanted quick action on edu reforms'

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI

HUMAN resource development minister Kapil Sibal took the opportunity accorded by the Literacy Day celebrations to take on his critics. Wednesday's celebrations were attended by NAC chairperson and Congress president Sonia Gandhi, who inaugurated 31 newly-constructed Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas. The human resource development minister has been under attack from a section of his party "for being in a hurry".

Mrs Gandhi's participation in the programme, coming close on the heels of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's praise, gave the minister the opportunity to clear the air. Mr Sibal invoked the late Rajiv Gandhi to explain his focus on introducing reforms in the sector.

"If people say that we are in a hurry, then I would like to state that Rajivji had said it in 1985 that this should be achieved in a few months," Mr Sibal said.



I'M NOT IN HURRY: Kapil Sibal

The minister's remarks could be seen as an apparent rebuff to detractors with his party like K Keshav Rao, who had attacked the policies of the HRD ministry in a debate in the Rajya Sabha that forced the government to defer the Education Tribunal Bill. Mr Rao has attacked the HRD minister in the Rajya Sabha for his "hurry" to get the House to pass the Education Tribunal Bill.

ONE-ON-ONE

It is time to go the e-way

End of days for 'chalk and talk' ways of teaching. With the government pushing for the use of Information and Communication Technology at secondary school level, resource limitations in education system will soon be a thing of the past, says Shakila T Shamsu



Shamsu is Jt Advisor (Education), Planning Commission of India

What is your take on digital inclusion at the secondary education level?

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has to be integrated into academic curriculum and, presently, the government is thinking of including ICT at secondary school level. It is being targeted to cover about 1,20,000 secondary schools which are in the government sector. But the point remains that unless we bring in ICT into the school curriculum, we can't achieve the advantage of better teaching-learning and skill empowerment of the learners. At the school level, ICT can be a subject and can also be integrated with subjects like mathematics, science and different languages.

The digital divide in Indian education sector is often said to be a result of economic divide. How can we overcome this challenge?

There is a digital divide within the nation that exists between information haves and information have-nots. However, there is a general perception that an economically resourceful

educational institution is able to integrate ICT in classroom teaching or into the education mainstream. With availability of funds, these institutions are in a position to leverage more of those ICT resources. But it is not necessarily so. The question is how to scale it up. Today, we have a lot of low-cost devices, computers that can be optimised in a manner that do not invite much investment. Most schools in our country still use 'chalk and talk' method in classrooms. But student will be empowered better if the teacher uses a computer which has multi point access for the children.

Most Latin American countries that are economically poor are going for similar modes of teaching. This is a question of applying technology in a more innovative manner where we optimise it in a way that the costs are reduced. There is a little bit of investment that needs to be done at the institution level also. But funds are not really an issue in government schools, as the government has a policy of enabling schools with ICT.

How can technology be a catalyst for growth of students and organisations?

Technology is a great enabler. It improves the quality of any educational outcome. It also empowers an individual immensely, because in today's world we are living in an information age. To have information at fingertip is not possible unless we harness technology. In that sense, technology is a great empowering tool for teachers, students, educational institutions and organisations, irrespective of the kind of enterprise they are involved in. Technology cuts across activities it caters to. The more technology is used, the higher are the returns, thereby one is able to invest more into an enterprise.

What are the key innovations in education that the government is stressing on?

Considering that we are in an ICT driven society, we have the National Mission in Education through ICT in higher education domain. The government has felt that educational institutions that

are in the higher education domain, i.e. colleges and universities, must be provided a high speed broadband facility so that there is an exchange of knowledge and information at the base level. This takes place in two ways, one is connecting these institutions through Internet and the other is connecting the institutions within themselves for sharing of knowledge.

Next, the focus is on digitalising the content and making it available in an interactive mode and open up a platform for e-learning. The 11th plan document has talked of wi-fi campuses. The idea is to move towards an ideal by way of overcoming all resource limitations. The government also welcomes private sector in its participation to improve the education sector, but there cannot be a set timeline for achieving this aim. The idea is to achieve it as early as possible. At this point in time, we should be glad that we are thinking and moving in the right direction.

— As told to Rajarshi Bhattacharjee

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Short-staffed IITs seek foreign help

TNN & AGENCIES

Mumbai: Facing an acute shortage of well-qualified teachers, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have mooted a proposal for hiring foreign nationals as permanent faculty members.

TOI had first published an article, 'IITs seek quota for foreigners', on December 27, 2006, following which the HRD ministry allowed the IITs to hire foreign nationals as faculty members in 2007 but only for a maximum period of five years on a contract basis.

But now, with a third of teaching positions lying vacant, the proposal to hire foreign faculty as permanent staff seems like a solution to the teacher shortage. The matter was expected to be discussed at the next IIT council meeting on Friday, IIT officials said.

The move, if accepted, would enable the premier institutes to select foreign teachers up to 10% of their faculty strength and appoint them in permanent posts.

Similarly, with expansion, campuses require 1,200-1,500 more faculty members, which translates to recruiting 70 faculty members per year at each IIT. It has been extremely difficult to get quality faculty members, said sources in IITs.

"There are several very good foreign faculty members who can be pulled in. Several faculty members from Eastern Europe are willing to come and teach," said an IIT director.

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IAF's digital info network set for takeoff

New Delhi: IAF is now all set to bolster its network-centric warfare capabilities with its state-of-the-art digital information grid AFNET (air force network) slated to become operational next week. "AFNET, a fully secure and reliable network, will make IAF a true net-centric combat force. It will replace the old communication network set-up using the tropo-scatter technology of the 1950s," said an official on Wednesday. Linking all major IAF formations and static establishments through a secure wide-area network (WAN), AFNET will accelerate the use of information technology as well as link all field units through a dedicated satellite.

The five nodes of IACCS (integrated air command and control system) being established — the first is already operational in the western sector facing Pakistan — will also ride the AFNET backbone, integrating all ground-based and airborne sensors and air defence weapons. The automated IACCS will enable quick transfer of data from low-level transportable radars, high-power static radars and medium-power radars. **TNN**

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Web magic: Internet can help fight the blues

Washington: Internet can help teenagers fight depression, says a study by an Indian-origin researcher.

Suvena Sethi of the University of Sydney and his colleagues found that interactive online mental health resources and traditional counselling can help improve the mental wellbeing of

teenagers. The study assessed the effectiveness of online mental health resources (static and interactive), including tools used to assist rural and remote young people suffering from mild-to-moderate depression.

The study, titled "Internet Self-Help for Depression", focused on evaluating current on-

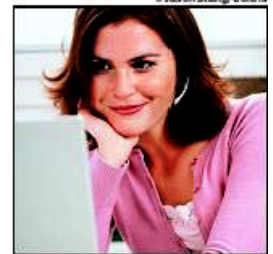
line mental health resources to demonstrate their effectiveness as both stand-alone tools and tools used in conjunction with traditional therapy. Each of these innovative online approaches to the prevention and management of mild to moderate depression are in use globally.

"The independent and com-

bined effectiveness of online mental health help tools being accessed by adolescents with education sites or online support groups had not been investigated in combination with face-to-face cognitive behavioural therapy. The findings have been published in Journal of Technology in Human Services. **PTI**

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BRINGING BACK THE SMILEY

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Soon, a machine to read people's mind

London: Scientists who have discovered a way of translating people's thoughts into words, say that a mind-reading machine is on the anvil.

An international team, led by Bradley Greger of Utah University, has been able to translate brain signals into speech using sensors attached to the surface of the brain for the first time.

The experimental breakthrough, which is up to 90% accurate, offers a way to communicate for paralysed patients who cannot speak and could eventually lead to being able to read anyone thoughts, the Daily Telegraph reported.

"We were beside ourselves with excitement when it started working. It's just one of the moments when everything came together. We have been able to decode spoken words using only signals from the brain with a device

that has promise for long-term use in paralysed patients who cannot now speak.

"I would call it brain reading and we hope that in two or three years it will be available for use for paralysed patients," Greger said.

The team achieved the experimental breakthrough when it attached two button

NO SECRETS LEFT

sized grids of 16 tiny electrodes to the speech centres of the brain of an epileptic patient who had part of his skull removed for another operation to treat his condition.

Using the electrodes, the scientists recorded brain signals in a computer as the patient repeatedly read each of 10 words that might be useful to a paralysed person: yes, no, hot, cold, hungry, thirsty, hello, goodbye, more and less. ❀



Enter the world of digital natives

Tech-savvy youngsters are learning things on their own by being a part of the digital world and social networking sites offer them a democratic platform to share their views and speak their mind

Anu Bhambhani

Times change. Generations change. But, one thing that never changes is the process of learning. From teaching from books in the past to using technology to teach students, even teachers have been changing their methods of teaching. But, now days, students don't really depend on the teachers to enlighten them about the world. Easy availability of technology has made it possible for them to know things on their own. There is an information explosion, more so due to their being tech-savvy. Children today do not really need to be taught to use a computer or an I-Phone for that matter. Sharing information on the Internet, especially social networking sites, is how they connect with each other and know what's 'in' and what's 'cool'.

These days, people, mostly youngsters make sure they have a digital ID. This they do by being present on not one, but all the prime social networking sites, apart from having a blog and an email id. So influenced is this generation by the bug that it won't be an exaggeration to call it the facebook generation—that's

how Professor MM Pant, former Pro-Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU and formerly in the faculty of IIT Kanpur and today a world renowned academician describes social media enthusiasts today.

He observes that if you go by the number of users registered on social networking site facebook, it can well be the most populous planet after earth. The presence of this huge chunk of population on and usage of the social media applications by these digital natives indicate a change in terms of them moving from cyber literacy towards ICT fluency. Sandeep Maheshwari, Founder & CEO, ImagesBazaar.com, shares, "It is imperative for students today to concentrate on innovation and open themselves to learning beyond textbooks, so that they can be ahead of their competitors in the real world."

Yet, in an age when there is bombardment of information through technology, who draws the line about how much is enough and who knows what's right information for the young, impressionable minds. No one, say experts

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Enter the world of digital natives

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who give reasons for thinking so. "From education for the few who could afford it, today it is for everyone," says Professor Pant. This also happens to be an age when the young generation is increasingly getting on to Internet as a medium to gain knowledge. "When you give a person books, his mind opens up to a whole new world. His knowledge of reading equips him with enough understanding of differentiating between what's wrong and what's right. Same is the case with Internet. It opens up mind to a lot of possibilities and interpretations." The best thing is that the users become part of a large democratic process wherein they can speak for themselves. They get to know and interact with a lot many people who share their view of the world.

But then, is there no need to moderate this information? Is it not necessary to tell them how to sift through this? RS Sharma, general secretary, DAV College Managing Committee, Delhi, feels, "The internet age has definitely brought about a radical change the world over as it of-

fers information on everything under the sun. Students have to be educated about the judicious use of the Internet so that they may not be mis-directed towards unlawful or

ON INNOVATION



It is imperative for students to concentrate on innovation and go beyond textbooks

Sandeep Maheshwari,
| FOUNDER & CEO,
IMAGESBAZAR.COM

unethical activities. Value education plays a very important role and so can the teachers by guiding the students to the right use of the internet. The human touch of the teacher can never be replaced."

However, Professor Pant feels there is no need to monitor this and gives reasons too. He explains, "From being passive receivers of information back then, to being active learners, students have come a long way, courtesy Internet. If they have any doubts or questions regarding something, they'll log on to the net and seek answers. Even when on social networking sites, they are writing on each other's walls, asking each other questions, answering those, thereby making it a very democratic process wherein everyone has a right to put forth views. By joining communities on facebook, they are getting to know more like-minded people with whom they may have a discourse or discussion about things that influences them the most."

Platforms like facebook, twitter, youtube and the like, give them a voice. They are questioning, exploring and finding out things on their own. Instead of 'consuming information' they are 'processing' it, validating it and not memorising it. The digital natives are only more intelligent and thinking individuals. The trend is only going to grow and rightly so!

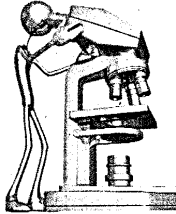
Prof. M Balakrishnan



India's research output is woefully small and if we consider only the engineering disciplines, it does not even compare favourably with small Asian technology happen- ing countries like Taiwan or Korea. Typically research output comparisons between countries (or even institutions) are based on quantum of publications in quality journals and conferences as well as number of patents filed. There is one more measure that is significant and in some sense captures both the amount of ongoing research activities as well as potential for research in future and that is the output of PhDs in a given discipline. This is because the world over almost all serious research today is carried out by PhDs. This is true for universities, government research laboratories as well as industrial R&D labs.

Some steps are required to scale up the number of PhDs produced. To reiterate, there are multiple objectives linked to this effort...
 > Support new knowledge creation for sustaining long-term growth and leadership
 > Generate manpower for industry to enable them to move up the value chain
 > To produce better trained faculty that is necessary for the growth of quality education.
 The last objective has a multiplicative effect as any increase in qualified faculty would generate better trained students at all levels. Currently only a handful of institutions

produce any significant number of PhDs in engineering and this does not add up to even 500 per year. For any scaling up effort to be successful, it has to expand the number of institutions engaged in research as well as the student pool from which to draw talent for PhDs. There are three specific steps to promote expansion of PhD research:
 > Identify and support PhD students directly: The world over, PhD research in universities is supported by the public bodies. This support, available through a competitive mechanism, includes grants for student scholarships as well as research equipment and operating ex-



penditure. We see the same approach being adopted in India. Unfortunately this approach cannot expand the base of institutions engaged in research as very few institutions have the faculty with expertise to participate in this process.
 An alternate approach to kick-start PhD research in newer institutions would be to identify a large number of meritorious students through a common examination (say GATE) and provide them an attractive scholarship as well as a research grant. Allow host institutions to top up their scholarship against limited participation in their teaching activities.

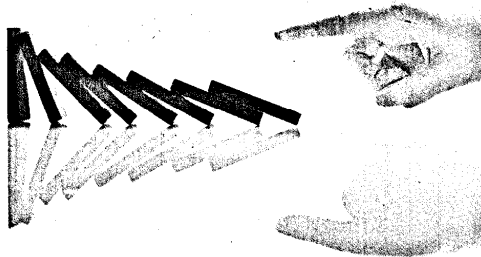
> Support PhD students from abroad: Major success of US higher education has been its ability to attract quality foreign students for PhD. Today an opportunity exists for India to reach out and get talented students from the developing world. This is possible only if we can support their tuition and living expenses and perhaps a work permit for five years after their graduation. Our top institutions already have the infrastructure and visibility to attract students from the developing world and this should be tapped to increase the pool of students.
 > Promote employment of PhD graduates: Finally, a sustainable

growth in PhD enrolment is possible only if the PhD applicants see attractive career opportunities on graduation. With few openings in industry and teaching careers in most of the institutions not being attractive, PhD in India has always been a poor choice for graduates with other options. On the positive side, industry scene is changing both due to entry of multinationals as well as Indian industry moving up the value chain. This is a good time to publicise and promote the career opportunities that are emerging for PhD graduates. Two specific incentives by the government can help. Any PhD graduate making a decision to teach in one of the newer institutions can be provided a substantial research grant to initiate research.
Conclusion: Proactive steps can create the right environment for scaling the number of PhDs.

—The writer is Deputy Director (Faculty) and Professor, CSE Dept, IIT, Delhi

The power of research is supreme

To achieve long-term growth and leadership in a knowledge economy, it is very important to support new knowledge creation. This can be achieved by scaling up research output of all educational institutions



Innovation in education



A CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

Time to bridge the digital divide

At a time when technology rules the roost, digital divide can be transformed into a digital opportunity by giving top priority to development of information and communication technology

AK Bakshi



India has the third largest system of education in the world, next only to USA and China, with more than 400 universities and around 20,000 colleges. To introduce ICT-enabled education in such a large system one needs to have high quality multi-me-

much needed if we really want to create a holistic learning environment focusing on quality, innovation, expansion, excellence and inclusion.
 ICT-enabled education is not only an answer to the growing demands for enrolments in education, but is also in tune with the mindset of the present day students and helps meet the challenges of the growth of knowledge. ICT, if used creatively, can make a big difference in the way

dia enriched content in different disciplines for various courses, capacity building of teachers and students in ICT skills and state-of-the-art infrastructure along with broadband connectivity for disseminating the content. The launch of National Mission on Education through ICT (NMEICT) in 2009 is a major initiative of the Government of India in this direction. It aims to leverage the potential of ICT in providing high quality personalised and interactive content, free of cost, to all the learners in higher education institutions in anytime-anywhere mode. Delhi University's Institute of Lifelong Learning (LLL) was set up with an aim to integrate ICT with education and is presently engaged in the development of high quality multi-media enriched content in the form of e-Lessons, e-Quizzes, e-Labs

and e-Lectures. While e-Lessons provide quality content with multi-media enriched value additions, e-Quizzes in the form of MCQs of different difficulty levels provide students a mechanism for self-learning and assessment through a complete, logical reasoning of the correct as well as incorrect answers. The concept of e-Lectures or live lectures enables best faculty members to reach out to students across various DU colleges. Similarly, multi-media enrichment helps communicate difficult concepts in simpler ways.
 However, the development and increasing use of ICT in education is accompanied with a bitter contradiction—the digital divide, which refers to the digital gap between people with effective access to ICT and those with limited or no access at all. Major factors

contributing to this digital divide include, quality and cost of physical infrastructure, lack of knowledge about full capabilities of ICT and lack of availability of high quality content uniformly across the country.
 One can transform this digital divide into a digital opportunity by giving top priority to the development of ICT and telecommunication infrastructure in order to provide universal and affordable access to information to people all across. ICT courses should be integrated to curriculum from the school level itself. Also, once the content has been developed, it should rather be standardised in the light of suggestions from users and experts.
 —The writer is Director, Institute of Lifelong Learning, Delhi University

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Skills do make careers

Vocational education should not be considered as the last option for under performers, but as mainstream career opportunity

Roy Newey

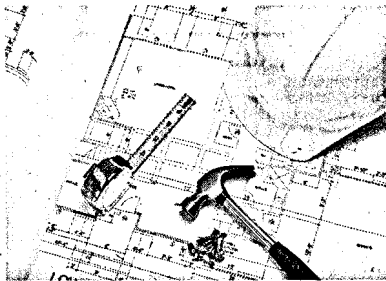


My grand dad was a plumber, with no educational qualifications. He was just the person everybody turned to when the tap leaked, the gutter rotted and the drains backed up. And my dad, wasn't just a plumber; he was a master plumber, time served, the best sweated joints in Liverpool. My big brother, he is not just a plumber, time served, but he has studied and become a heating and ventilation engineer (and a multi millionaire as all plumbers are these days in UK). His education in the vocation not only helped him be successful but also master the skill and do well for himself.

The skills agenda in India is one of mammoth proportions requiring much convergence and alignment. India with its unique demographic opportunities and economic possibilities finds

kets, redefining some key elements of education is an absolute necessity. An opportunity to enter the work force needs to be made available to students via the vocational education route. Models that address the education needs for school drop outs, differently abled, special categories need to be merged with vocational training elements to allow them find respectable work opportunities and an individual growth path. For the students pursuing higher education compulsory skill programs shall ensure employability. Vocational education should not be considered as the last option or for school drop outs, under performers but as mainstream career opportunity. Fact is that India is a growing service economy and not everyone can be and should be a doctor or engineer. Hence the need for such training.

The biggest challenge that a student faces in the selection of the career, is often an inability to select a vocation of choice due to lack of prop-



itself uniquely placed as compared to the other growing nations. My engagement with the Indian policy making in the so many years has demonstrated certain facts clearly: the Indian Government's seriousness to reap the demographic dividend is evident from its ambitious 500 million skilled work forces by 2022 target. An array of policy initiatives like the National Rural Livelihood Mission demonstrates the desire to address both quality and quantity. The Indian Industry, on its part, has shown great leadership and taken responsibility of training youth on global benchmarks either through own initiatives or organisations.

Sadly, we have been noticing that large numbers in India have no access to training or education while a considerably large number have access but no quality in vocational skills. This makes it all the more important to have a system that ensures equitable balance between skills and education.

As an economy treading towards services not only for domestic, but also global mar-

er entry level aptitude assessments. Vocational skills 'taster programs' at the time of entry into an institute could ensure they do not fall into the trap of a wrong choice which they have to then pursue lifelong.

Dual degree programs which are emerging from the marriage of vocational qualification and higher education, with a modular training approach are a great solution for the Indian market.

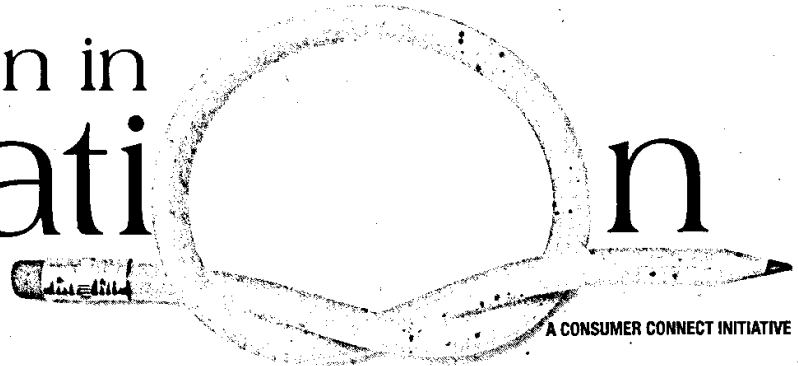
The pedagogy of training—making it more practical and less theory—dashed with industry project work will go a long way in making the candidates' job ready. Amongst this all, another critical need which needs immediate solution is a lack of trained teachers and trainers. This needs to be looked into on an urgent basis.

The UK-India partnership is covering a lot of ground around these areas to ensure the quality of input is enhanced and learner benefited for life.

—The writer is International Director of AAE, Board Member of UKIBC

Times of India, ND 09/09/2010 p-13

Innovation in education



A CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

The education system has reached a point where industry-academia collaboration is no longer just a desirable thing, but an absolute imperative. And, it is the government that can play a key role in creating an environment for team work



Dr Manish Gupta



Industry-academia collaboration has been a much talked-about topic for a considerable time. There have

been efforts, mostly at organisation levels, to build a strong relationship between businesses and academic institutions in India. However, a truly sustainable model has so far been elusive. We have reached a point where industry-academia collaboration in this country is no longer just a desirable

thing but an absolute imperative at all levels. This is needed to solve problems through disruptive innovation as well as to prepare students better for jobs.

Economic liberalisation, better use of technology, and a unique demographic dividend have spearheaded India's growth, which is expected to

continue well into the next several decades. The growth has given rise to a plethora of interesting challenges that are unique to this country and solutions have to come from within. For example, the number of customers that Indian telecom companies cater to, is unheard of in other geographies, except

for China. A company providing the IT infrastructure to such a telecom company, which in turn is offering services at really low prices to consumers, has to deal with challenges never seen before and develop innovative solutions.

The industry should be posing and academia should be ac-

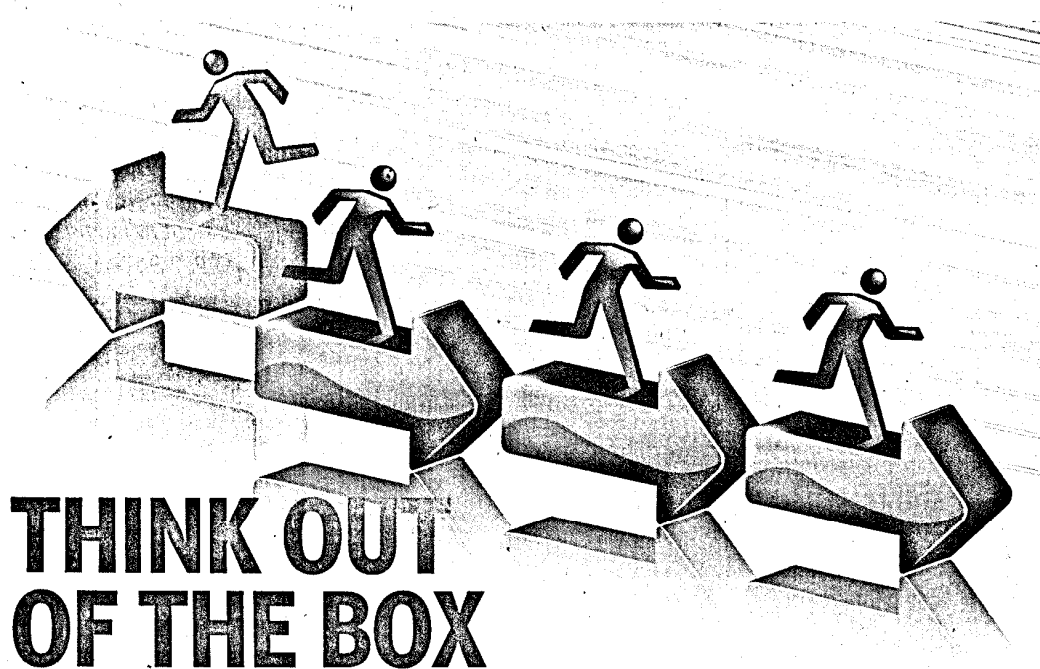
Times of India ND 09/09/2010 P-9

Innovation in education

Recently some of the finest minds in the education space came together at a one-day conference to discuss the importance of innovation in education.
A special report.

n

A CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE



THINK OUT OF THE BOX

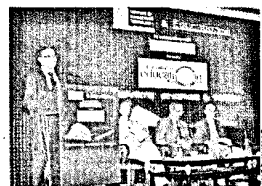
At a recent forum—*Innovation in Education*—organised by Education Times, academicians, industry leaders and policy-makers came together to share their views on why innovation is the need of the hour

By A Correspondent

In countries like India that are interspersed with diversity in the socio-political and economic front, education has to take a micro-view while adopting a macro-focus. While it is necessary to align states and regions with the larger national vision, it is equally important to understand the special needs, unique strengths and discrepancies of each region. Academicians, policy makers and industry experts agree that the Indian education sector has taken significant steps particularly in the last 15 years. While India is setting sights on internationalising its education system, it is still struggling with problems of inclusion and quality even at the primary school level.

This is where innovation can play a major role and help produce customised solutions to the wide and varied challenges in the education sector. "Innovation can be instrumental in ironing out the discrepancies and ushering in a level ground in the education sector. And this level ground is imperative if India as a nation wants to realise the goal of a knowledge economy," said RP Agrawal, chairman of board of governors, IIT, Delhi. Agrawal was speaking at a forum 'Innovation in Education', recently organised by Education Times. The event was presented by the Institute of Management Technology in association with 'Images bazaar' and supported by 'A&E' and 'Peerpower.com'.

The forum saw the participation of academics, industry leaders, policy-makers, corporations and research and funding organisations. Some of the pertinent issues that were addressed in the course of the day-long forum included speeding up cutting-edge research and development initiatives, vocationalisation of education,



The seminar saw in-depth discussions on the role of innovation in education

bridging the digital divide and internationalisation of higher education.

One of the most visible aspects of a knowledge economy is its research. "Not just the volume, but the quality and relevance," observed Sanjay Kallapur, senior associate dean, Indian School of Business. Quality research has to be undertaken in the area of fundamental and basic research as well as incremental and advanced research. "There is urgency towards establishing world-class innovation univer-

sities that have a pronounced mandate on large-scale research initiatives. This is especially because at present sophisticated and high-end research facilities are mainly confined to the IITs. IIMs and AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences)," stressed M Balakrishnan, deputy director (faculty), IIT Delhi. "Our innovation universities, among other things, should help in nurturing people who can develop intellectual properties like patents," he added.

Besides, as far as research is concerned, the industry-academia connect has to be strengthened. "Industry should throw challenges encountered in the actual work space as research assignments for university and college students. In fact, the government can also play a role in this respect by identifying research opportunities of national interest and by orienting the industry and academic fraternity to these challenges," shared Deepak Pentel, vice-chancellor, Delhi University.

Another critical area where industry-academia relations have to be strengthened is the area of entrepreneurship. "Our country needs entrepreneurs and visionaries who can propose sustainable and innovative solutions. And for this to happen, our education system has to be geared in a manner so that students can identify real-world opportunities and understand the nuances of real time business environments. This is clearly one area where the industry can guide academia," said Manish Gupta, director, IBM Research India and chief technologist IBM India /South Asia.

Academicians and industry leaders are in broad consensus that while India explores innovation, it is important to understand that innovation cannot be predetermined. "The attempt should be to encourage freshness in ideas and concepts that have scalability and can contribute significantly in generating quality innovation, expansion, excellence and inclusion within the education system. Hence,

it is necessary to remove regulatory road-blocks and psychological reservations that are impediments towards fostering a climate of innovation," opined RP Agrawal.

Roy Newey, group board director, A&E India, pointed out that vocational education could be one of the solutions. "In countries like UK, vocational education is regarded at par with mainstream education. Every country requires skilled manpower not just in the tier one segment of industry but in the tier two and tier three segments as well—a need that can be actualised through the vocational system of education. For vocational education to become a success, the parameters of entry, assessment and employability have to be clearly ascertained," shared Newey.

Shabnam Sinha, senior education specialist, The World Bank, stressed on the role of technology in terms of augmenting quality in education. "Technology, particularly the use of multimedia, can play a pivotal role in facilitating personalised learning," she stated. However, it is not sufficient to make available only the infrastructure to schools and colleges. In-service training programmes have to be regularly conducted for upgrading the skills of teachers, she stressed.

Talking about the subject of internationalisation of higher education—a subject that is being mullied widely in academic and policy-making circles, Dilip K Bhandopadhyay, vice-chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, said, "Internationalisation is not a question of strategic choice for India. It is an obvious choice, given the fact that in today's globalised world, compartmentalisation of education is an unreal concept. Entry of foreign universities is welcome on Indian soil because while on one hand they will infuse innovative teaching methodologies and educational concepts, on the other hand they will automatically unleash a spirit of healthy competition among Indian universities," he stated.

Times of India, ND
09/09/2010 p-14

Short-staffed IITs seek foreign help

TNN & AGENCIES

Mumbai: Facing an acute shortage of well-qualified teachers, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have mooted a proposal for hiring foreign nationals as permanent faculty members.

TOI had first published an article, 'IITs seek quota for foreigners', on December 27, 2006, following which the HRD ministry allowed the IITs to hire foreign nationals as faculty members in 2007 but only for a maximum period of five years on a contract basis.

But now, with a third of teaching positions lying vacant, the proposal to hire foreign faculty as permanent staff seems like a solution to the teacher shortage. The matter was expected to be discussed at the next IIT council meeting on Friday, IIT officials said.

The move, if accepted, would enable the premier institutes to select foreign teachers up to 10% of their faculty strength and appoint them in permanent posts.

Similarly, with expansion, campuses require 1,200-1,500 more faculty members, which translates to recruiting 70 faculty members per year at each IIT. It has been extremely difficult to get quality faculty members, said sources in IITs.

"There are several very good foreign faculty members who can be pulled in. Several faculty members from Eastern Europe are willing to come and teach," said an IIT director.

Times of India ND

P-1

09/09/2010

First of many? Ohio bans outsourcing

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Unrelenting economic woes in an election season = populist measures. The state of Ohio, whose Democratic governor Ted Strickland is seeking reelection later this year, is the latest American politician to take this low road by banning outsourcing of government IT and back office projects to offshore locations.

Although Strickland's order is not India-specific and arises from a flap relating to a call centre in El Salvador, the development is expected to hurt Indian companies such as Infosys, Wipro, and Patni, which routinely win multi-million dollar state-level government contracts. Sharp reactions to Strickland's move

from Infosys and India's IT lobbying group Nasscom suggested Ohio had struck India Inc where it hurt, and there is concern about whether other states will follow suit.

In the executive order issued last month, Strickland cited "pervasive service delivery problems with offshore providers, including dissatisfaction with quality of their services and...that services are being provided offshore". The ban came after it was discovered that Parago Inc, a Texas-based company hired by Ohio Department of Development to monitor a rebate program for new energy-efficient appliances, used call centre workers in El Salvador.

► **California tried earlier, P 31**

Delhi is also PhD capital of the country

West Bengal Ranks Second; Maharashtra Has Highest No. Of Univs But Is 3rd On List

Hemal Chhapla | TNN

Mumbai: Delhi may be home to only a few universities (19), but that has not stopped it from emerging as the PhD capital of the country. In the last decade, from 1998 to 2007, Delhi has produced over 17% of the total doctoral theses in India. West Bengal is a distant second at 11.9%, followed by Maharashtra, which despite having the largest number of varsities in the country (96), merely contributed 8% to the PhD pool. These figures are based on a sample survey.

This is the first time in India that researchers sifted through thousands of theses lying in university library vaults to tabulate and analyze the country's body of research. The paper — researched by the National In-

A Feather In The Cap

TOTAL NUMBER OF PHDS FROM 1998 TO 2007
1,14,188



- ▶ Two-thirds of doctorates are awarded to males
- ▶ Only one in two people who register for a PhD complete it
- ▶ Most PhDs are in recent years are in humanities disciplines
- ▶ Low research interest in professional courses like science & tech, engineering, commerce

stitute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) at Bangalore — is a pointer to what thousands of

doctoral fellows in the country have been exploring and producing on thickets of

bound paper. In fact, it took Anitha Kurup, an associate professor at NIAS, and Jagdish Arora, director, Information and Library Network Centre — who received a grant from the Tata Consultancy Services — a year to get all the raw data in place. In their report, Trend in Higher Education — Creation and Analysis of a Database of PhDs in India, they have principally recommended that a single agency should draw up a database on PhDs, and also assimilate the profiles of doctoral fellows.

As observed in the report, two-third of all the PhDs has been awarded to males; and across genders, the attrition rate stands at 50% — only one out of two people who register for the hallowed PhD degree, manage to reach the finishing

line. Delhiites contributed the most, producing 2,381 PhDs in the field of medicine, followed by research in pure sciences.

Even in terms of the subjects chosen there has been a noticeable shift in trends. While the largest amount of research has been carried out in pure sciences, in recent years humanities is leading the pack to become the most popular discipline that is being currently explored.

There have been some other interesting changes in the pecking order. "The growth in agriculture is seen from the year 2000, when it overtook other disciplines such as engineering and technology, and medicine. But the interest in the field tapered off towards the end of the period, with the numbers falling below engineering and technology in

2007," the report noted. Disciplines that have consistently recorded lower number of PhDs are mostly professional in nature.

Speaking to TOI, Kurup said that as India competes in the information age, PhDs are markers as they contribute to knowledge. "However, I would attach a rider to my research, which is that the number of PhDs has nothing to do with the quality of work we are producing. But first, it is essential to know where our PhDs are being produced and who is bringing them out," she added.

If one were to compare the research output to the local universities, Delhi again performs best in terms of PhDs produced annually in each state (874.7), followed by Haryana (312.4) and Uttar Pradesh (285.3).

Times of India, ND 09/09/2010 p-19

Like Rajiv, I'm in no hurry on edu reforms: Sibal

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With memories of deferment of the Educational Tribunals Bill still fresh in his mind, HRD minister Kapil Sibal on Wednesday invoked the name of Rajiv Gandhi, in the presence of UPA and National Advisory Council chairperson Sonia Gandhi, to make the point to his detractors that he was in no hurry to bring in educational reforms.

Speaking at the inaugura-

Rajiv had said we need to improve quality of education and in months. Twenty-five years have elapsed and we are at the same stage. Now people say we are in a hurry

Kapil Sibal | HRD MINISTER

tion of buildings of 31 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, Sibal said, "Rajiv Gandhi had said we need to improve the quality of education and in months. Twenty-five years have elapsed and we are at the same stage. Now people say

we are in a hurry. We should be in a hurry."

For Sonia Gandhi herself, 25 years of JNV was a proud moment. Started by Rajiv Gandhi in 1985 with two schools there are now 593 JNVs all over the country.

Gandhi paid tributes to her late husband for his "vision" that has made JNVs a success story providing quality education to children from economically and socially weaker sections. "It is a matter of great satisfaction that Navodaya Vidyalayas have lived up to expectations," she said.

At the same time, she expressed concern as to why other government schools were not as good as Navodaya Vidyalayas. She pointed out that one-fourth of the teach-

ers are absent in these schools and while children did take admission here, many of them, especially from the weaker sections, dropped out.

The 31 recently constructed buildings of JNVs are in states across the country — Kerala, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Statesman, ND 09-Sep-10 p-1

MOVE DISCRIMINATORY, SAYS NASSCOM

US state bans outsourcing

sns & agencies

WASHINGTON/BANGALORE, 8 SEPT: In what is feared may be a portent of things to come, the American state of Ohio has banned outsourcing of government Information Technology and back-office projects to offshore destinations like India, a move that comes on the heels of the steep hike in visa fees that has hit Indian IT firms and IT professionals.

Running behind in opinion polls ahead of gubernatorial elections in November, Ohio Governor Mr Ted Strickland, of the Democratic Party, who until recently was going out of his way to woo Indian companies, issued the executive order banning outsourcing last week, arguing that this undermines economic development and has unacceptable business consequences for his state.

"Outsourcing jobs does not reflect Ohio values," Mr Strickland said in a statement after he signed the executive order.

Reacting to the order, the Indian IT sector, which gets 60 per cent of its export revenue from the USA, termed the move as discriminatory and said it amounts to a trade barrier. The move, which comes ahead of US President Barack Obama's visit to India in November, follows a controversial legislation that increased H-1B and L1 visa fees, hitting India's over US\$ 50 billion IT industry.

The Indian industry will take up the issue with its US counterparts and seek the government's support to flag it with the American authorities. "Nasscom is leading a delegation to the USA later this month and will be taking this up with relevant officials in the USA," the apex body of the IT and ITES industry said in New Delhi. "Ohio's ban on outsourcing can only be viewed as counter-productive to the US government thrust on reducing public deficit... It only reinforces our stand on discrimination," it said.

Nasscom said it would not be surprised if more such "electoral rhetoric" follows in the run-up to the November elections to the US Congress and Ohio Governorship.

While some individual Indian IT leaders pre-

USA reacts on N-liability Bill

WASHINGTON, 8 SEPT: The USA says it will look to India to see what "changes" can be made to the Nuclear Liability Bill just passed by Parliament in the wake of concerns over making suppliers of equipment also liable in the event of a nuclear accident. "We continue our discussions with the Indian government on this issue," state department spokesman Mr PJ Crowley said in the first reaction by the Obama administration to some controversial provisions in the Bill. *pti (see page 5)*

ferred to wait and watch on the Ohio government's move, arguing that the Indian IT industry's dependence on US government business was limited, as a leading IT professional put it, more than the quantum of damage, it is the posturing which worries the industry which believes that it is purely political in nature.

The fear is that other states in the USA could take a cue from Ohio and follow suit, a move which could be detrimental to Indian software sector in general.

Of equal concern is that fact after the recent economic crisis, a large number of Indian software companies had begun to woo US government agencies for business believing that these would prove longer lasting. The idea was that it would be better than depending fully on the private sector for business in the USA.

In 2007, TCS, India's largest IT company, said it would build its North American Delivery Centre in Milford, an Ohio city, after Mr Strickland offered about US\$ 19 million in tax credits and other incentives. TCS now has some 400 employees working here.

Signalling an apparent change of heart, Mr Strickland said Ohioans have been among the hardest hit by more than a decade of unfair trade agreements and the trickle-down economic policies that promoted off-shore jobs at the expense of Ohioans who work for a living.

Statesman, ND 09-Sep-10 p-3

Govt hints at lapses in CVC findings, wants re-test

statesman news service

NEW DELHI, 8 SEPT: While rejecting the findings of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) which claimed sub-standard quality of material being used in some of the Commonwealth Games projects, Delhi government has requested the anti-corruption watchdog to carry out a "re-check", indicating lapses in its procedure to lift samples.

Reacting to the CVC report, PWD principal secretary, Mr KK Sharma, said his department had conducted a series of "standard tests" in renowned institutions to check the quality of construction of five major projects but did not find anything wrong in them.

"Now we have requested the CVC to take the samples again and conduct re-test as our tests showed that there was nothing wrong in the quality of construction," said Mr Sharma.

An assessment report prepared by CVC's Chief Technical Examination Wing in July found large-scale procedural violations, including corruption in 16 different projects being carried out by various

government departments.

Six of the projects out of the 16 mentioned by the CVC were implemented by the PWD where the watchdog found sub-standard quality of work.

"We carried out the tests in renowned institutions and the test report did not indicate any compromise with quality of material or overall standard," said Mr Sharma, adding that he has directed his officials to prepare a detailed report which will be submitted to the CVC.

"The findings of the various tests done by us have already been sent to the CVC. Now it is up to them to decide on the issue," he said.

Meanwhile, top government official said any enquiry by the CVC's Technical Examination Wing is preliminary in nature and no detailed probe has been carried out by it so far.

"In all our projects, third party certification is a must and institutions like IIT, Delhi and IIT, Roorkee are carrying out third party quality checking. So, there is little room for any compromise on quality," said PWD chief engineer, Mr AK Sinha.

Asian Age ND 09.09.2010 P-11

Google's crown jewels: Indian trio

MIKE SWIFT

SAN JOSE

Sept. 8: Like few other people on the planet, Google's Ben Gomes knows what interests the world.

Gomes is the engineer in charge of improving what you see when you Google. From one of the most important but little-known offices in the Googleplex in Mountain View, Gomes is responsible for shaping the automatic suggestions users get as they begin typing a query, and the few lines of text and links they get back, which Google calls "the snippet." He sees the digital torrent of Google's 1 billion daily search queries.

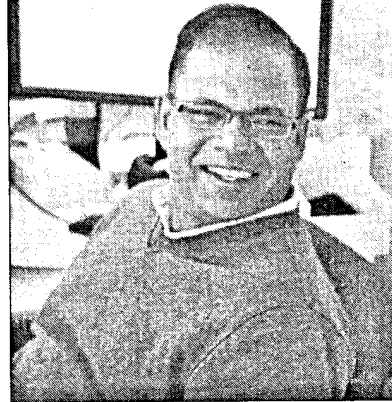
The interaction between user and search engine defines what Google is all about and company cofounders Larry Page and Sergey Brin have put Gomes in charge of improving that dialogue.

"I think of Ben as our diplomat," said Marissa Mayer, Google's vice president of search products and user experience. "It's Google; it's search. There's a lot of big personalities; there's a lot of opinions, and Ben is the reasonable one that can help build the bridges. When we look back, there was a point where Larry and Sergey really felt like we needed to name a search czar ... And there was only one natural choice - this was back in 2002 - and that was Ben."

Despite the wave of Google products like Gmail, Android smart phones and digital maps, Google's touchstone remains search, which according to estimates by the research firm IDC accounted for 92.5 percent of Google's \$6.8 billion in revenue in the second quarter. The history of Google search can be told through the evolution of technical features like the snippet, but it is also the story of the dogged behind-the-scenes work of engineers like Gomes, who is little known outside the Googleplex.

Gomes shares an office with three key search engineers, including one he has known since they were 13-year-old friends in Bengaluru, India - Krishna Bharat, the inventor of Google News.

In Bengaluru, Gomes and Bharat were similarly turned toward science and math by one committed high school chemistry teacher. As teenagers in the 1980s, they competed to teach themselves programming on a ZX Spectrum, a boxy little British computer similar in



From left: Krishna Bharat, Ben Gomes and Amit Singhal



"The guy who invented Google News is right behind me, and I can turn around and ask him questions, and Amit basically leads all the search ranking efforts, and Ben is all the front end and the UI and the things that people actually see, and I'm just sort of like, 'Wow.'" — Matt Cutts, who shares an office with the trio.

was on modeling computers to mimic human thought.

Google's trademarked PageRank system, first developed by Page and Brin at Stanford, generally gets the credit for making Google a search juggernaut. PageRank's innovation was to index and rank search results based on the number of other sites that linked to a website.

But Gomes says there's another half of Google search that has been given too little credit. That process is based on a long-existing concept in computer science called "Keyword In Context," which automatically creates a few lines of text that shows users the context of the keyword they Googled.

"Every other search engine at the time gave you the first two lines on the page. What Google did was it showed you the lines on the page that were relevant to your query," Gomes said. "And you might think this is a small change, but it is so much harder to do."

Not only does Google have to find the most relevant Web pages from a query, but it must then search within those pages and automatically build a custom snippet that shows how the keyword occurred on the page.

Gomes and Bharat were

and the things that people actually see, and I'm just sort of like, 'Wow.'"

Cutts is not exactly a laggard. Because of Google's dominant market position, he is perceived by many as the person with the most power over the industry of search engine marketing (SEM) - the Internet businesses that specialize in manipulating search keywords and Web links so their clients rank higher in Google results. Cutts holds so much sway that at the Search Engine Strategies conference attended by 6,000 people in San Francisco last week, an SEM company from Nashville, Tenn., distributed foam stress relief balls that had only Cutts' face on them. No identifying caption was needed.

Gomes, Bharat, Singhal and Cutts have all been with Google for roughly a decade. Mayer, who joined Google in 1999 just a few months earlier, says they are among Google's early core who helped create the corporate culture that employees sum up with the word "Googley."

The four engineers, who describe themselves as friends, say they share an office because it's better for brainstorming - and vigorous debates about each other's projects. That, they said, is definitely Googley.

Bharat and Gomes found their way from Bengaluru to Silicon Valley separately. After earning his doctorate at University of California-Berkeley, Gomes was working at Sun Microsystems in 1999, trying to make its Java software run faster. Bharat tracked down his boyhood friend and told him about a startup he'd joined in Mountain View "that" Bharat believed would become the world's top search engine.

Gomes, who lives in Palo Alto, California, hasn't completely embraced the California outdoor lifestyle of running and rock climbing. "I don't like sweating," he said. Instead, he's a lover of reading, cinema and debating politics, and he believes writing computer code is not all that different from creating art.

"You see something coming alive in front of you, and it really is alive - it does things," Gomes said of programming. "People working on computers often are characterized in a certain way, and I don't think that captures that joy of creation."

This past Christmas, Gomes' girlfriend surprised him with a gift she'd found on eBay - a ZX Spectrum. "It was," he said, "the most awesome present." —MCT

Asian Age ND 09.09.2010 P-11

Oracle offered Hurd \$1m pay

New York, Sept. 8: Oracle Corp. offered its new president, Mark Hurd, former head of Hewlett-Packard Co, a salary of \$950,000 and a bonus of up to \$10 million for fiscal 2011, plus stock options.

Oracle, the world's No. 3 software maker, named Hurd co-president on Monday, a month after he stepped down from HP following a scandal involving expense reports and a female contractor.

On Tuesday, HP sued Hurd, asking a California court to block him from taking a job with a rival to whom he could reveal HP trade secrets. Oracle and HP compete in the server computer market.

As well as the salary and bonus, Hurd's offer letter, filed with regulators on Wednesday, said he would be granted an option to purchase 10 million Oracle common shares after the first board meeting following his hire date.

In addition, Hurd can buy 5 million Oracle common shares each year for the next



Mark Hurd

five years, according to the filing.

Hurd on Monday was also named an Oracle director. The filing said the company expects he will be nominated to stand for election to the board at the annual shareholder meeting on October 6.

At Oracle, the 53-year-old Hurd will be responsible for sales and marketing, consulting and Oracle's global business units, according to a document Oracle filed with regulators. Oracle acquired Sun Microsystems last year, putting it in competition with HP in the server market. — *Agencies*

Asian Age ND 09.09.2010 P-4

Foreign nationals may join as IIT permanent faculty soon

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Sept. 8: The IITs may soon be employing foreign nationals as permanent faculty members in an effort to overcome shortage of quality teachers.

Official sources stated that the proposal was likely to come up for discussion at the IIT council meeting scheduled to take place on Friday. The proposal aims to enable the premier engineering and technology institutes to appoint foreign teachers on permanent positions, up to 10 per cent of the faculty strength.

In 2007, the IITs had been granted permission to hire foreign nationals as faculty members, but only for a maximum period of 5 years on a contract basis.

As reported by this paper earlier this week, the IITs face a massive shortage of faculty with IIT Kharagpur having the maximum vacancies at 299, followed by IIT-

The IIT's may soon be employing foreign nationals as permanent faculty members in an effort to overcome shortage of quality teachers. Sources stated that the proposal was likely to come up for discussion at the IIT council meeting scheduled to take place on Friday.

Bombay with 222, IIT-Roorkee with 194, IIT-Madras with 138 and IIT-Delhi with 78. While there are 69 vacancies in IIT-Kanpur, 65 in IIT-Guwahati and 48 in IIT-Ropad.

The proposal points out that the United States varsities have benefited by attracting faculty from across the globe. It was also felt that the presence of foreign faculty would expose graduating students to globally distinguished profes-

sors and help reduce brain drain.

Appointment of foreign faculty could also give a boost to IITs' plan to enrol foreign students for the post-graduate programme. IITs have already requested the Union HRD ministry to enrol foreign students to the extent of 25 per cent of the total student strength.

The HRD ministry had recently permitted IITs to hire persons of Indian origin (PIOs) as permanent faculty after an initial vetting process. The IIT council meeting could also finalise plans to set up 'centre of studies' devoted to a foreign country with a view to develop expertise on countries of strategic importance.

The recommendations of the Prof. Acharya Committee on streamlining and rationalising JEE examinations and the prospects of a two-tier examination process will also be discussed at the meeting.

Indian IT cries foul after Ohio order

**Yashwant Raj/HT
Correspondents**

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI/BANGALORE: The country's software industry has slammed as discriminatory a decision by the US state of Ohio to ban offshoring of information technology projects.

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) termed the move as "electoral rhetoric" while industry watchers linked it to Congressional elections due in November.

"It is imperative that the focus on free trade remains strong," Nasscom said, adding the Ohio ban reinforced the industry stand against discrimination.

The Ohio government's decision comes shortly after the US Senate last month approved a hefty rise in IT-related visa fees. US accounts for 61 per cent of India's \$37 billion (nearly Rs. 174 lakh crore) IT exports.

The ban came after a firm was found to have used call centres in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador.

"Outsourcing jobs don't reflect Ohio values," Governor Ted Strickland had said while issuing the August 6 order.

There was no word on whether any company funded by Ohio was offshoring to India.

We are concerned with the recent news from U.S. about banning offshore outsourcing by Ohio State.

**KRIS GOPALAKRISHNAN
CEO & MD, Infosys**



OBAMANOMICS? THE TIMING IS CRITICAL

The order comes at a time when Indian infotech majors are looking to US government contracts to boost profits.

What is offshoring?

The practice of relocating business processes from one country to another. In this case the term refers to Indians working in India on a US government IT project.

What is the Ohio offshoring issue all about?

Ohio state of the US banned outsourcing government IT projects to offshore destinations. Governor Ted Strickland passed the executive order citing service delivery problems and dissatisfaction with quality of services provided by such companies.

How can it impact Indian

infotech companies?

Traditionally, outsourcing contracts Indian IT majors have come from the banking, finance, telecom and retail sectors in the US. In the wake of the recession, they expect a major chunk of revenue to come from government IT spends. If other states follow suit it could affect Indian IT majors' earnings.

What is the US government's IT spending?

The US federal government budgets an IT spending of around \$ 36 billion in non-military areas including health, security, treasury, transport, energy and commerce.

Indian Express, ND 09/09/2010 p-1

Govt, industry not interested, so IIM-A scraps policy course'

ANUBHUTI VISHNOI

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 8

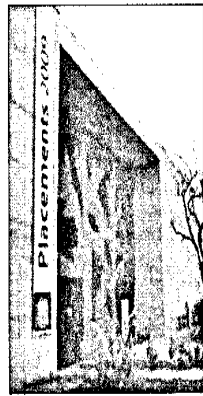
IIM Ahmedabad's post-graduate programme in public management & policy (PGP-PMP) has been discontinued for the year — perhaps for longer.

Launched three years ago amid high expectations, PGP-PMP was envisaged as a rigorous one-year programme aimed at drawing policymakers from the government and emerging lead-

ers of industry to the classroom for some genuine brainstorming.

However, the government sponsored officials who were either mediocre or not senior enough to be in the thick of high-level policymaking, and the response from the private sector was lukewarm at best — with the result that the prestigious programme has been scrapped for the academic year 2010-11.

Theoretically, the programme could be revived after a review,



PG course started 3 yrs ago

but the chances of that, sources said, were slim.

"The government did not send many officials in the first place, and the ones they did sponsor were not the kind of students that we expected. IIM Ahmedabad was looking at attracting senior IAS officers who were actively involved in policymaking and governance decisions, what we got instead were largely officials from PSUs, and officials who were not really in positions

where they could influence policy," said a top IIM-A official.

This, the official said, defeated the purpose of the course. "The private sector also didn't respond as we expected," the official added. "Finally, a survey was done, and after discussing PGP-PMP with all stakeholders, we decided to discontinue the programme for this academic year."

Officials said that the programme was now under "comprehensive review" to see if it

could be "redesigned".

Government-sponsored candidates for PGP-PMP were charged a course fee of Rs 2.5 lakh. For private sector candidates, the fees were at least Rs 5 lakh more — deemed steep, especially at a time of financial slowdown. Incidentally, despite a long follow-up process, IIM-A has not received the fees for five government candidates, and has now decided not to award them their diplomas.

Indian Express, ND
09/09/2010 p-6

Another NIT director suspended

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPT 8

THE HRD Ministry has suspended National Institutes of Technology (NIT) Tiruchirapalli Director M Chidamabram on allegations of misconduct and defiance of the decisions of the Board of Governors. Prof M Chidambaram has been asked to return to IIT Madras where he was a faculty member before being appointed NIT Director.

Incidentally, he is the second NIT Director to be suspended in a little over a month. NIT Warangal director Y V Rao was suspended last month following a series of charges ranging from discrepancies in admissions to inadequate civil work construc-

tion at the campus.

The suspension orders follow inquiry reports on charges against the NIT Directors submitted to the ministry. HRD ministry sources said that there were charges of administrative misconduct against the NIT Tiruchirapalli Director.

“I have not even been told what the charges are. I was just sent an online letter saying I stand suspended. The Board of Governors has been against me for a while ... The BoG also works on very casteist lines and have cast all kinds of aspersions against me. I intend to go to court to challenge my suspension,” Prof Chidamabaram told *The Indian Express* over telephone.

**Indian
Express, ND
09/09/2010**

p-6

**IIPM can't
confer
degrees: UGC**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 8**

THE University Grants Commission (UGC) on Wednesday issued another public notice against the Indian Institute of Planning & Management (IIPM) saying that it is "not a university within the meaning of Section 2(f) of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956".

It added that as per Section 22 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956, IIPM does not have the right of conferring degrees as specified by the commission under Section 22(3) of the UGC. It has also clarified that IIPM is neither entitled to award MBA/BBA/BCA degree nor it is recognised by UGC.

"The public and students are also hereby informed that the universities established either by a Central Act or a State Act or an Institution deemed to the university under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act can confer or grant only those degrees which are specified by the University Grants Commission under Section 22(3) of the Act," the UGC said in its public notice.

Last week, the Delhi HC admitted a PIL challenging the legality of the IIPM "franchising" education by way of conferring degrees through a foreign university.

Mint ND 09/09/2010

P-4

IT INDUSTRY

Ohio offshoring ban unlikely to have a significant impact

BY LISON JOSEPH &
SURABHI AGARWAL

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

The latest round of political rhetoric in the US against outsourcing, including a ban by Ohio on sending work abroad, is unlikely to have a significant impact on Indian industry, say analysts.

Industry observers say the latest rhetoric is fuelled by high unemployment rate in the US—at 9.6%—and impending mid-term elections in November in that country.

Only around 723,000 new jobs have been created this year in the US, *Bloomberg* reported, whereas 8.4 million jobs were lost during the recession that began in 2007.

Computer World reported on 7 September that Ohio has banned offshoring, or sending work to places outside the US.

The Economic Times reported on Wednesday that Ohio has banned outsourcing of government IT and back-office projects to locations such as India.

Analysts say business from the US public sector for Indian IT companies is insignificant. The stock markets also brushed aside any fears.

The Bombay Stock Exchange's sectoral index of IT companies, BSE IT, gained 0.57% on Wednesday to close

at 5,650 points, faring slightly better than the benchmark Sensex's 0.12% rise to 18,666.71 points.

Tata Consultancy Services Ltd, Wipro Ltd, and HCL Technologies Ltd did not offer any comment on the issue.

The country's second largest IT exporter, **Infosys Technologies Ltd**, said the latest commentary from Ohio was a cause of concern, but ruled out any impact on its business.

"Infosys' initiative in the public services sector is focused on creating a domestic delivery centre in the US; hence this should not be affected," chief executive Kris Gopalakrishnan said in a statement on Wednesday.

Infosys' shares gained 0.56% on the Bombay Stock Exchange to close at ₹2,872.05.

Mid-size IT firms *Mint* spoke with, including **NIIT Technologies Ltd, Intelnet Global Solutions Ltd and Zensar Technologies Ltd**, too, said the Ohio ban was unlikely to have any material financial impact.

"Public sector business from the US constitutes an insignifi-

cant portion of Indian IT companies' revenue from the US," said Nitin Padmanabhan, an analyst with **Indiabulls Securities Ltd**. "The fact that companies such as Infosys has set up dedicated US subsidiary to serve that segment means there is scope for deeper penetration."

Nasscom, an industry lobby, said the latest rhetoric in the US against outsourcing should be viewed in the light of unemployment and the coming elections.

"Ohio's ban on outsourcing can only be viewed as counterproductive to the US government thrust on reducing public deficit and possibly lead to an increased tax burden on its citizens," Nasscom said in a statement on Wednesday.

It added that as international trade is a federal subject, it is evaluating the legality of a state government passing such a Bill.

Nasscom will take up the matter with relevant officials in the US when it leads a industry delegation to that coun-

try later in September, it said. The industry body is also seeking support from commerce minister Anand Sharma, who will be visiting the US around the same time, to address the issue with his counterparts.

"Whether or not this (rhetoric) will impact any specific company will depend on what actual legislation is passed," said Sid Pai, managing director at the Indian arm of multinational outsourcing advisory TPI. "That said, Indian firms have reached a stage where they seriously need to consider truly globalizing and creating more employment in the countries that purchase services from them."

A lobbyist, who did not want to be identified, said India's IT industry should explore multiple channels for mobilizing support in the US.

The lobbyist, who has helped India's IT industry counter protectionist rhetoric in the US in the past, said pressure can be put on large US firms such as **International Business Machines Corp. (IBM), Accenture Plc. and Boeing Co.**, which get big business from India.

"They understand that counter measures by Indian government or state governments could mean significant business loss for them in India."

IBM employs at least 100,000 people in India and gets more than \$1 billion (₹4,670 crore) in revenue from India. Accenture has nearly 50% of its global headcount based in India. Boeing recently won an order for 30 aircraft from India's **SpiceJet Ltd**, worth \$2.7 billion.

lison.j@livemint.com

The latest rhetoric is fuelled by the high unemployment rate in the US and impending mid-term elections in Nov, say industry observers

P&B Daily ND 09/09/2010 p-7

Despite talent shortage, India to remain competitive: Infy

CHENNAI, SEPT 8

DESPITE a shortage of talent in the Information Technology sector in India, the country would remain competitive at least for the next five to 10 years, a top official of Infosys said here today.

"Globally there is shortage of IT talent...it is there even in the United States and also in India. But India will continue to be competitive for at least the next five to 10 years", Infosys CEO and managing director Kris S Gopalakrishnan told reporters here.

Stating that salaries offered would be the same for one employed locally in an offshoring site to one who shifts base from India, he said there would be additional charges by means of visa transportation and family transportation.

Asked whether the US market was passing stringent laws to restrict Indian companies setting up off shore facilities in US he said the market there is one of the most open in the world, a reason why most Indian companies have maximum percentage of business coming from there.

"I dont want to say the United



States is unfair and we are fair.. it could be vice versa.. there are several instances that our own policies are not fair. But both of us (US and India) have to work together to increasing bilateral trade so that there is benefit to

all participants", he said.

The Infosys CEO said India has to put across its views on how the two nations can go together. "We want bilateral trade to grow and India has certain strengths, particularly on IT services.. we can take it up through industry bodies like CII, Ficci and Nasscom," he added.

Vice-chairman of Cognizant Technology Solutions Lakshmi Narayanan said they were not concerned about stringent norms from the United States.

He was reacting to media reports that Ohio state has banned offshoring of software

services to countries like India.

"This is not something new and has been happening in the past also. But from industry perspective, from our company's perspective, we are not unduly concerned about it. We believe that the talent required for doing jobs in the private and government sectors is something we have to focus".

However, Narayanan said this was a passing phase after the global recession. "Once they (US) move to the growing state, investments will start coming in and then things will come back to normal", he said.—PTI

Mint ND P-10
09/09/2010

EDUCATION

IITs plan to appoint foreign faculty

New Delhi: Facing shortage of teaching staff in the wake of capacity augmentation, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have proposed to appoint foreign nationals to its faculty positions.

The move, if accepted, could enable the prestigious institutes to appoint foreign teachers on permanent positions, which could be up to 10% of the faculty strength, said IIT officials.

The proposal is expected to be deliberated at the next IIT council meeting on Friday.

IITs have contended that the presence of foreign faculty on IIT campuses will benefit graduating students in the globalized world, besides lending a true international flavour in the campuses and reducing brain drain.

Appointment of foreign faculty could also give a boost to IITs' plan to enrol foreign students for the postgraduate programme. IITs have already requested the ministry of human resource development to enrol foreign students to the extent of 25% of the total student strength. **PTI**

India Inc fears ripple effect across US in crucial election year

OHIO BAN ON OUTSOURCING UPSETS IT COS

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

INDIA'S IT industry reacted with anger and concern on Wednesday to a move by the US state of Ohio to ban all outsourcing of government projects. The \$50 billion (₹233,400 crore) IT sector gets more than 60 per cent of its revenues directly from outsourcing.

The fear is that Ohio governor Ted Strickland's populist move may spread to other states, with less than two months to go for the US Congress elections in November. The Ohio ban follows on the heels of a controversial move to restrict the number of H1-B and L1 visas and doubling their cost. This was also seen as being aimed directly at the Indian IT industry, the largest user of these categories of visa.

The move has generated sharp criticism from India Inc which has dubbed it "discriminatory". **Turn to Page 31**

'The Ohio move is damaging in spirit'

continued from Page 1

and "against the spirit of free trade". Som Mittal, president of Nasscom, an apex body for the Indian IT and IT-Enabled Services (ITES) companies, said the move was more damaging "in spirit" as more such electoral rhetoric could be expected in the next few months. These two issues are likely to be irritants during US President Barack Obama's November visit to India.

"No public funds should be spent on services provided offshore," Ohio Governor Ted Strickland said in an executive order issued on August 6 asking state officials to "remain passionately focused on initiatives that will create and retain jobs in the United States in general and in Ohio, in particular". The order came into effect from Aug 31.

"We must do everything within our power to prevent outsourcing jobs because it undermines our economic development objectives, slows our recovery and deprives Ohioans and other Americans of employment opportunities," he added.

TCS is the only Indian IT company to operate in Ohio

Ohioans and other Americans of employment opportunities," he added. TCS, India's largest IT firm, runs a project in Ohio. It employs 300 people and receives \$19 million in tax credit for creating local jobs. "All staff there are involved in private projects," an analyst quoted a company official as saying.

Nasscom is leading a delegation to the US later this month and will be taking this up with relevant officials in the US.

"We are taking up the issue with the US officials concerned later this month. We will also seek the support of the Union minister for industry and commerce Anand Sharma, who will be in the US at the same time," Mittal said.

He added, "It is imperative that the focus on free trade remains strong, but instances like Republic Senator (Charles) Schumer's Border Security Bill and the Ohio state ban on outsourcing only reinforce our stand on discrimination."

Expressing its concern over the ban, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) said that at a time when the global economy is just getting out of a financial crisis and when countries need to work collectively, protectionist measures of any kind could further deteriorate the situation. "At a time when companies from

across the globe, including those from the US, are participating in government projects in India, Ohio state's ban on outsourcing by government departments would discriminate against Indian companies," Amit Mitra, secretary-general, Ficci, said.

According to another industry body Assocham, the ban is against the spirit of "free world trade" and "amounts to creating trade barriers" which will go against the US.

Infosys chief executive officer (CEO) and managing director (MD) Kris Gopalakrishnan said, "We are concerned with the recent news from the US about banning offshore outsourcing by Ohio state government departments."

Infosys is India's second largest IT firm and a big part of its \$4.59-billion revenue in 2009-10 was generated from the US market. Harit Shah, an IT analyst at



POLL VAULT: Governor Ted Strickland wants to please Ohio's voters before the November gubernatorial elections.

VERBAL VOLLEY

"There are pervasive service delivery problems with offshore providers, including dissatisfaction with the quality of their services and with the fact that services are being provided offshore."

— TED STRICKLAND, GOVERNOR, OHIO

"Ohio's ban comes at a time when the Nov polls to the US Congress & Ohio governorship are drawing nearer. More such electoral rhetoric can be expected in next few months."

— NASSCOM STATEMENT

"We are concerned... Our initiative in the public services sector would not be affected as it is focused on creating a delivery centre in the US."

— KRIS GOPALAKRISHNAN, CEO, INFOSYS

Kary Stock Broking said the government's "mindset of protectionism" in the US may lead to some more drastic measures. The uncertainty about "what more is likely to come" is bothering the industry.

Even if the ban, which Nasscom is examining the possibility of challenging legally, spreads to other states, it may not immedi-

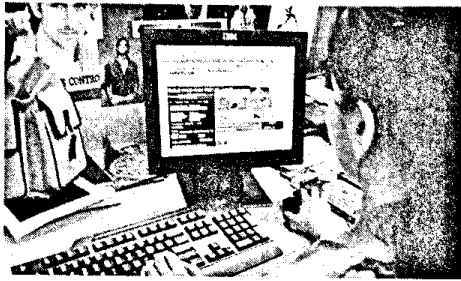
'Ohio ban amounts to a trade barrier'

ately impact India's IT exports, since government, particularly state governments in US, are not a major vertical for Indian IT companies. The biggest revenue earners for Indian IT outsourcees are the banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), manufacturing, telecom and retail sectors.

Besides, players said that Indian IT companies are increasing the representation of local citizens in their global delivery centres in the US and Europe, in line with local sentiments. Though such a move will affect their margins to an extent, IT companies could easily afford that kind of negatives, analysts said.

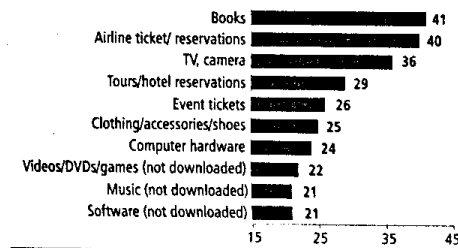
Shah added that the ban is considered to be a non-tariff trade barrier by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and it would be very difficult for the US to defend Ohio government's move in the world forum.

Bhishit Anand, IT analyst at Angelt Broking, said the likes of TCS and Infosys could employ locals and continue with their outsourcing operations. "The only concern is the possible imposition of tax on outsourcing, which could affect these companies' margins," he said.



ONLINE SHOPPING

IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, INDIANS ARE MOST LIKELY TO BUY (PERCENTAGE OF ONLINE CONSUMERS)...



BS REPORTER
New Delhi, 8 September

More than eight out of 10 Indian online consumers plan to buy products on the net in the next

12 months, while a quarter said they spend about 11 per cent of their monthly shopping budget on online purchases.

According to a recent Nielsen Global Online Shopping Report, Asia Pacific consumers spend

50% online consumers bank on social media sites

most on online purchases, as a percentage of total shopping expenditure, compared to any other region globally.

Twenty-three per cent of Indians surveyed, said they had never shopped online. Globally, 16 per cent of consumers have never shopped online and the percentage is less in Asia Pacific with only 13 per cent.

To shop online, Indians depend on recommendations from family and friends. According to the Nielsen report, 71 per cent of Indians trust recommendations from family when making an online purchase decision, followed by recommendations from friends at 64 per cent and online product reviews at 29 per cent.

Indians like to have a first-hand experience for high involvement products and services. The traditional one-to-one experience with a sales person, who clarifies their doubts, is preferred by many. Since the online medium doesn't allow them the luxury, most prefer recommendations from family and friends. However, many are catching on

with the idea of reading through expert reviews online, said Karthik Nagarajan, director, online division, The Nielsen Company.

Online reviews and opinions are very important for Indians when buying consumer electronics (57 per cent), software (50 per cent) and cars (47 per cent). The Nielsen report highlights the importance of online opinions as part of the decision-making process in purchasing products and services. Many Indian consumers went on to say they would not buy products or services without considering online reviews, especially consumer electronics (41 per cent), cars (38 per cent) and software (35 per cent).

With online reviews and opinions weighing so heavily on the consumer's decision making processes, it is interesting to note that more than four in 10 Indians are likely to share (post a review/ tweet/ review) a negative product or service experience online than they were to share a positive experience. At the country level, this ten-

dency was highest among consumers in China (62 per cent), Vietnam (46 per cent), Singapore and India (both 44 per cent).

Half the Indian consumers use social media sites to help them make online purchase decisions. The percentage is higher for the Asia Pacific region, at 60 per cent who use social media sites to help them make purchase decisions (compared to 43 per cent globally).

In the next six months, Indians are most likely to buy books (41 per cent), airline ticket/reservations (40 per cent), and electronic equipment like TV and camera (36 per cent) online. Other products and services that Indians are inclined to buy in the next six months include tours/hotel reservations (29 per cent), event tickets (26 per cent), clothing/accessories/shoes (25 per cent), computer hardware (24 per cent), videos/DVDs/games (not downloaded) (22 per cent), and music (not downloaded) & computer software (not downloaded) (both 21 per cent).

INDIAN IT MAY REMAIN IMMUNE TO OHIO BAN

But MNCs like IBM, Accenture, CSC and HP likely to get affected more

BS REPORTERS
Mumbai/ Bangalore/Chennai,
8 September

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), the country's largest information technology (IT) services company, will remain immune to the US state of Ohio's ban on outsourcing of government IT and back-office projects to offshore locations such as India. Rather multi-national companies like IBM, Accenture, CSC and HP will be affected more by this.

Though the US government segment has been a recent focus for TCS, the latter does not have a significant presence in this vertical. TCS has a centre in Cincinnati, Ohio, where around 400 people work.

On the other hand, for global companies like IBM, Accenture and HP get at least 13 per cent of their businesses from the US government. For CIBER, which has three centres in India, about 30 per cent of its business comes from the US government.

While it's difficult to quantify how much of the US government contracts are offshored, analysts say almost 35 per cent of the overall work (including other sectors) gets offshored. "Revenue generation by employees at offshore sites

(these include not just India) should be in the range of 15-20 per cent of the total US revenues of these firms," said Avinash Vashistha, president and chairman of Tholons, an advisory and research firm.

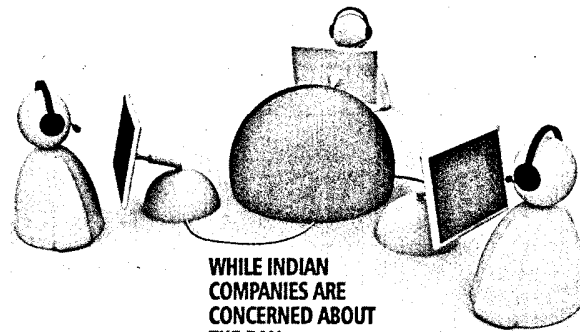
"I do not think this will impact the Indian IT service providers, as they do not have any significant presence in the government sector in the US...But if other states follow suit, which seems likely, this will impact US IT services firms like IBM, Accenture, HP and others," he added.

While Indian companies are concerned about the ban, many have a different strategy in place to target the US public services, including increasing onshore presence.

"We are concerned with the recent news from the US about banning offshore outsourcing by the Ohio State government departments. Infosys' initiative in the public services sector is focused on creating a domestic delivery centre in the US, hence this should not be affected," said Kris Gopalakrishnan, CEO and MD, Infosys.

For this, the company is increasing hiring. In 2010-11, Infosys plans to hire 1,000 people in the US.

"The game plan was to develop local capability and recruit graduate locally and do some of the onsite work in the



WHILE INDIAN COMPANIES ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE BAN, many have a different strategy in place to target the US public services, including increasing onshore presence

US from that centre. The centre will also be useful as we start to increase our focus into the government and healthcare segment in the US," N Chandrasekaran, chief executive officer and managing director of TCS, had told Business Standard earlier.

Meanwhile, IBM has been steadily cutting jobs in the US and offshoring works to its centres in India, China and Argentina. According to Alliance@IBM/CWA, the official website for IBM Employees Union, the company laid off at least 1,052 workers, or about 1 per cent of IBM's 105,000-

person US work force, in March 2010. In terms of hiring in 2009, IBM hired 13,376 employees in Asia Pacific, 7,112 in Latin America, and 3,514 and 820 in the US and Canada, respectively. Similarly, in case of CIBER, 10 per cent of its overall headcount is in India.

Unlike its global counterparts, for TCS, the banking, financial services and insurance

(BFSI) segment contributes over 40 per cent of its revenue, majority of which comes from the US market, and the government segment has been of low prominence. The situation is similar for Infosys and Wipro. Rather Indian IT service providers have been focusing more on the private sector.

"We do have some contracts with the US government, rather this is our new focus area... I think such comments and actions are protectionist in nature and they do not fit into the globalised world," said Suresh Vaswani, Joint CEO of Wipro.

Agrees Ganesh Natarajan, ex-chairman of Nasscom and CEO of Zensar Technologies. "Most of us do not have a significant presence in the US government segment or the public services. I think this is more driven by the fact that jobs need to be created in the US."

"More and more politicians are taking a protectionist stand, but this won't really impact the offshoring industry to a great extent. That said, Indian firms have reached a stage where they seriously need to consider truly globalising and creating more employment in countries that purchase services from them. Besides a small state like Ohio making an impact on a national level seems unlikely. This might change cost dynamics in Ohio at best," said Siddharth Pai of TPI.

Industry body Nasscom said the ban was more to do with election rhetoric.

"While the public sector represents a small fraction in the overall demand for offshored services, it does represent a future focus area. Ohio's ban on outsourcing can only be viewed as counterproductive to the US government thrust on reducing public deficit and possibly leading to an increased tax burden on its citizens," said a Nasscom statement.

BRICI may house 1.2 bn Net users by 2015

VANITA KOHLI-KHANDEKAR
New Delhi, 8 September

The Chinese spend more time on the internet doing a better variety of things than Indians. Brazil has a higher PC penetration than India, but there are more Indians surfing the internet than Brazilians. The cost of broadband internet access in the interiors of Russia is 2-3 times that of large cities, pulling down usage.

These, among other nuggets, is what a report released this week by The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) says. 'The Internet's New Billion - Digital Consumers in Brazil, Russia, India, China and Indonesia' (BRICI), tracks internet growth and usage in these countries.

Currently 45 per cent of the world's population lives in BRICI countries, but it accounts for just about one-third of the total internet users. Thanks to macro-economic factors, this number

will double in the next five years to 1.2 billion, predicts the report.

It, however, doesn't manage to move beyond the obvious. Much of what the report says - that Indians use the net, large-



ly, for job hunting and e-mail or that Russians use it for search - is stuff that is available on most research about the net. The value addition, if any, comes from two things.

One, the comparisons with the US and Japan. The Americans and Japanese use the net primarily to read news, watch video or play games. That ex-

plains why internet advertising is mammoth in those markets and why both newspapers and TV are losing audiences. The US clearly is the leader when it comes to using the net for all its possibilities. E-commerce and mobile banking usage are the highest in the US (see chart). Funnily enough social networking is not as popular in the US as it is in the BRICI countries, especially Indonesia.

The other value addition is from the nuggets on the dynamics of these markets. For instance, in Brazil, a highly urbanised country access costs are very high - about \$27 a month, compared to say \$5-15 in most markets including India. So, lower income youngsters in the cities or villages, go to neighbourhood LAN (local area network) houses to surf. These are what we know as internet cafes. They have 10-20 PCs and charge rates as low as \$1 a hour. That is how the net is spreading in India, too.

[INDIAN STATES DEVELOPMENT SCORECARD]

INDIA'S MORTAL COMBAT

The country has made progress in reducing infant mortality but it is still some distance from its 2015 target

INDICUS ANALYTICS

According to the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations, India has the target of reducing the infant mortality rate (IMR) to 28 per 1,000 live births by 2015. Where do we stand today? The latest estimates for 2008 put the IMR at 53 and with five years left, it is clear that we have a long way to go to achieve the target. In fact, the UN projects an IMR of 46 in 2015, flagging the high incidence of neo-natal deaths in the heartland states as the biggest challenge to be overcome.

While the overall rate is high, there is of course significant disparity across states and across the rural-urban divide. Not only does rural India have a higher IMR of 58 compared to urban India's 36, the states of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh have rural IMRs higher than 70. These states would also require more targeted intervention in the most backward districts and social groups.

Even in urban India with higher access to health care, there are six states with IMR greater than 40 - Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Bihar. When it comes to the most rapid progress in the past decade, the star performer is Orissa, with a 19-point fall in IMR over the period 2002-2008 - the government's Navajyoti strategy adopted in 2004 is showing results; in urban India Rajasthan stands out with the highest fall of 17 points. Both these states, however, continue to have higher-than-average IMRs, so the progress needs to be accelerated.



There has been considerable progress since 2005 on improving access to healthcare, especially in rural areas

There are essentially three important aspects to reducing infant mortality: improving access to healthcare for mothers and infants, nutritional status and sanitation. One positive point to note is that there has been considerable progress since 2005 on improving access to healthcare, especially in rural areas. The recent Coverage Evaluation Survey 2009 commissioned by the UNICEF points to the success of the Janani Suraksha Yojana in raising the share of institutional deliveries, coverage of ante-natal checkups etc. There is also improvement in access to oral rehydration therapy for di-

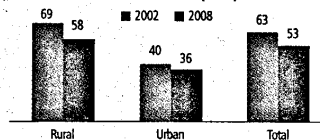
arrhoea, immunisation and so on and significant changes in practices with newborns such as cutting the umbilical cord with a sterilised/new blade, proportion of new-borns checked within 24 hours. Moreover, under the Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness programme, there is a coordinated action plan for preventive care and managing illness. Although we can expect such programmes to continue to make their impact on reducing infant mortality, when it comes to sanitation, the picture is much bleaker, with little change expected even in the future.

Indian States Development Scorecard is a weekly feature by Indicus Analytics that focuses on the progress in India and the states across various socio-economic parameters. For comments please contact sumita@indicus.net

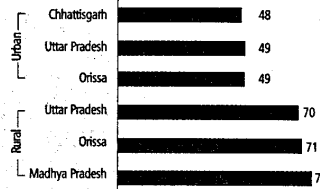
THE BORN IDENTITY

There are significant disparities in infant mortality rates across the rural-urban divide and the states

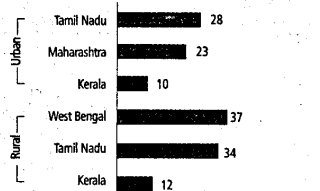
INFANT MORTALITY RATE (IMR) ALL INDIA



HIGHEST IMR



LOWEST IMR



Figures in per 1,000 live births

HOW THE STATES PAN OUT

State	2008 Total	2008 Rural	2008 Urban
India	53	58	36
Andhra Pradesh	52	58	36
Assam	64	66	39
Bihar	56	57	42
Chhattisgarh	57	59	48
Delhi	35	40	34
Gujarat	50	58	35
Haryana	54	58	43
Jammu & Kashmir	49	51	37
Jharkhand	46	49	32
Karnataka	45	50	33
Kerala	12	12	10
Madhya Pradesh	70	75	48
Maharashtra	33	40	23
Orissa	69	71	49
Punjab	41	45	33
Rajasthan	63	69	38
Tamil Nadu	31	34	28
Uttar Pradesh	67	70	49
West Bengal	35	37	29
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	31	-	-
Arunachal Pradesh	32	-	-
Chandigarh	28	-	-
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	34	-	-
Daman & Diu	31	-	-
Goa	10	-	-
Himachal Pradesh	44	-	-
Lakshadweep	31	-	-
Manipur	14	-	-
Meghalaya	58	-	-
Mizoram	37	-	-
Nagaland	26	-	-
Puducherry	25	-	-
Sikkim	33	-	-
Tipura	34	-	-
Uttarakhand	44	-	-

Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Business Standard ND 09/09/2010 P11

Paying the banker

Delink PSU pay from IAS and monetise all perks

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Duvvuri Subbarao has once again spoken the difficult truth. This time on the issue of the pay and compensation given to executives of public sector banks. Coming, as these views do, not just from the governor of the central bank but someone who belongs to the hallowed Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and one who has been Union finance secretary, they must be taken seriously. The governor is right to draw attention to the fact that in a highly competitive market for talent, public sector banks, indeed most public sector firms, are constrained from offering better pay to talented executives because of governmental restraints. The starting point of this problem is the unwritten rule that guides all government and public sector compensation that no chief executive officer of a firm or head of a government-funded institution should get a salary higher than that of his equivalent in the IAS hierarchy. Thus, a bank chairman or a university vice-chancellor, or indeed the director of an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) or Technology (IIT) is not allowed to draw pay in excess of that of a secretary to the Government of India. The pay of an IAS officer also defines the bar for other government services, including the defence services.

To overcome this barrier, most PSUs and other services have given themselves perks that enable their institutions to compensate them in other ways — housing, company car, entertainment allowances, and such like. Thus, the perks of a public sector chief or senior defence staff may more than compensate them, compared to the pay and perks of their equivalents in the IAS.

Thus, one simple way in which this entire issue of public sector pay can be handled is to monetise the compensation of both civil servants (Lutyens' Delhi housing, for example) and public sector executives, and estimate what may be dubbed "cost to taxpayer" — CTT — and bring out the real attractiveness of the jobs concerned. A public sector bank chief who gets company housing, fully furnished and with peons and security guards thrown in, in a plush south Mumbai locality would have much less to complain, looking at the pay package of a private sector executive who may have to pay for all that.

Governor Subbarao was right to draw attention to the threat of the flight of talent from the public sector, indeed even from the civil services, to the private sector. The government cannot respond to this challenge purely monetarily, because it does not have the fiscal means to do so. One way in which it can be helpful is, in fact, to respect public sector autonomy. Nothing irritates a senior PSU executive, a university vice chancellor or even an army general more than being bossed around by a joint secretary in the ministry concerned, in the name of Parliament and public accountability. Greater managerial autonomy, and the dignity associated with it, is itself a perk, and one that cannot be monetised. But no administrative system can be run based on the presumption of good behaviour of those in authority. There is, then, no alternative to curbing that authority. One way in which this can be done, without reducing the element of accountability to Parliament and government, is to, in fact, offer better financial compensation. In short, more money for less power!

Financial Chronicle ND 09-Sep-10
p-4

TCS bags Rs 2,000 cr government orders

Will double staff to 7,500 for domestic projects

S RONENDRA SINGH

New Delhi

TATA Consultancy Services (TCS) on Wednesday said it had bagged government orders worth Rs 2,000 crore to be completed by 2012. This is in addition to Rs 750 crore order, which the company bagged earlier this year. The present orders deal with developing citizens' service delivery portals and e-governance infrastructure across states.

These services, to be done through public private partnerships (PPP), include registration of caste, birth, marriage, domiciliary certificates and purchase of long distance bus, train and airline tickets.

They would also be useful for rendering diverse services like advising on crop information and remote distance telemedicine in tier II and III cities. These centres would act as a one-stop-shop for different services of various government departments, particularly for people who are deprived of such services in rural areas, vice-president and head government industry solutions unit, TCS, Tanmoy Chakrabarty, said.

To materialise these or-



HOME ASSIGNMENT: The orders deal with citizens' service delivery portals and e-governance infrastructure across states

ders, the company would double head count from 3,500 to 7,000, Chakrabarty told *Financial Chronicle*.

He said while some of these projects are under the national e-governance plan (NeGP), the company on its part is initiating various programmes by talking to different state governments. TCS has outbid companies such as Mastek and NIC for many projects, he added.

The company is also planning to bid for central

government's GST programme for providing and maintaining the software.

To generate long-term businesses in the IT PPPs, the company has proposed eight to ten years long projects for various state government programmes. "We are focused on governance issues and challenges," Chakrabarty said.

TCS/BSE Rs 876.80 ▲

NSE Rs 876.60 ▲

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Ohio outsourcing ban to backfire

Repeated setbacks worry industry; IT firms say private sector projects won't be hit

**RAVI MENON
& SANJAY VIJAYKUMAR**
Bangalore & Chennai

AFTER Obama's protestations on jobs being "Bangalored", Senator Schumer's Borders Security Bill, and visa fee hikes, the news of the Ohio state government's proposed ban on outsourcing of government IT projects has apparently sent shudders down the collective spines of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) as well as Indian IT majors. But, not everybody tracking the sector is worried.

Chief executive officer of India's second largest software firm, Infosys, Kris Gopalakrishnan, on Wednesday expressed concern about the ban on offshore outsourcing by the Ohio state government. "Infosys' initiative in the public services sector is focused on creating a domestic delivery centre in the US. Hence, this should not be affected," he said.

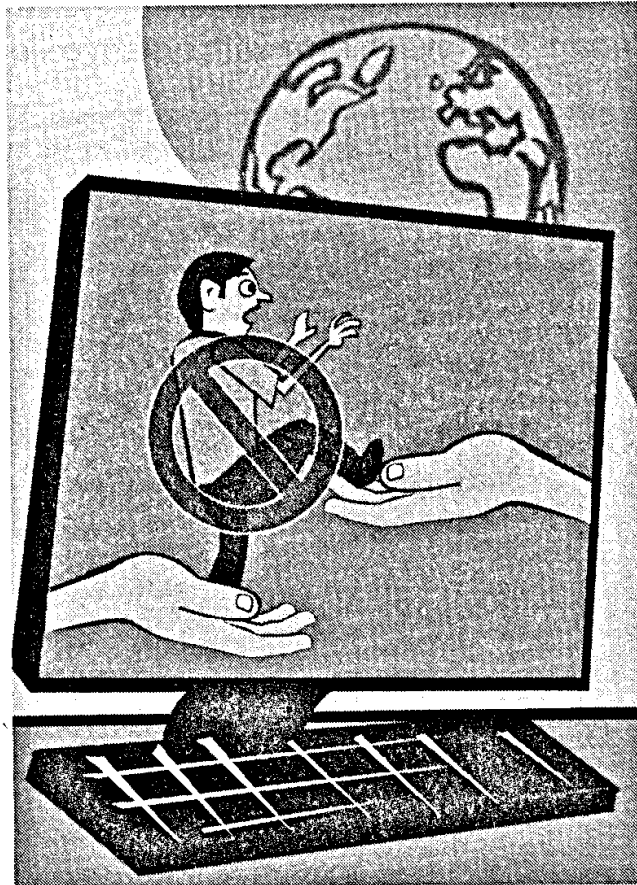
S Mahalingam, CFO of TCS, which is the only Indian company to operate in Ohio where it employs about 400 people, said, "we will have to see the long term impact of the move. But it is too early to predict the impact and industry associations would take up the issue."

The ban was proposed last month by Ohio governor Ted Strickland on the plea of service delivery problems with offshore providers, and quality issues.

There have been concerns that Ohio would resort to such a ban after governor Strickland recently objected to Parago, a Texas company that administers Ohio's \$11 million appliance rebate programme, offshoring the task of processing applications and answering customer calls to a call centre in El Salvador.

"This is an understandable move given that the US unemployment rate is high and there is pressure on the industry and government to create more jobs locally. We are in constant talk with the governments, industry associations for a solution. We need to take a global perspective and we are trying to increase local recruitments," Gopalakrishnan said. He also ruled out that the ban would spread to private sector projects and said Indian IT companies exposure to government projects is minimal.

Wipro has invested in expanding its US presence through partnerships with states like Georgia where the company has built a de-



velopment centre in Atlanta. "We have also been focussing our investments and efforts in developing solutions for the government segment to help government become more effective and efficient. These moves and announcements seem counter-productive to the government's efforts to reduce deficit," said a Wipro statement.

A Cognizant Technologies spokesperson said that the company does not have government business in the US on its radar. Lakshmi Narayan, vice-chairman of Cognizant added, "Ban on offshoring has happened in the past also. We are not unduly concerned and this is a passing phase. We will always look at hiring good talent in India and abroad. Unlikely that other states in US will follow suit if value can be demonstrated then customers will pay for it".

The unemployment rate in Ohio is higher than the US national average of 10.5 per cent. Besides, mid-term elections due in November could be another reason, said

Avinash Vashistha, CEO of IT outsourcing advisory Tholons. "The Ohio ban happened over a month ago, but nobody really raised the issue to me when I was in the US during this period. I doubt if such a move will be replicated by other states in the US," he said.

Indian companies still do not garner a significant share of the \$100-billion in tech spending absorbed by government and public sector projects in the US, according to industry insiders. Government outsourcing to India is still not substantial and only a fraction of the total government tech spend comes to Indian companies, they said. Since Indian companies have not been doing too many government projects, the impact of such a ban would not be significant, said Vashistha.

"This is a populous move with an eye on the mid-term elections in November. Besides, who can enforce such a ban? The private sector in the US is fiercely independent when it comes to outsourcing

and will not follow state-led mandates. Hence, the ban will have no material effect and is to be viewed from a political perspective," said former Microsoft veteran Krishnan Thyagarajan, who is now managing director at Quest Software India.

Nasscom has noted that while the US public sector represents only a small fraction of the overall demand for offshored services, it does represent a future focus area. Calling the Ohio ban "counter-productive", Nasscom cautioned that the move could possibly lead to an increased tax burden on US citizens.

The nodal body of India's IT industry is studying the legality of the bill being passed by the Ohio state. Nasscom will lead a delegation to the US later this month and will be taking this up with relevant officials in the US. "The proposed ban (on outsourcing of government IT projects) comes at a time when the November elections to the United State Congress and Ohio governorship are drawing nearer. More such electoral rhetoric that can be expected in the next few months," Nasscom said.

The \$60-billion Indian IT outsourcing industry, which has struggled to maintain operating margins caused by pricing and demand pressures from existing clients, has viewed the US government sector as a risk mitigator of choice. In June this year, Infosys had incorporated a government-focussed US subsidiary, Infosys Public Services, headed by Eric Paternoster.

The US still accounts for about 60 per cent of the revenues generated by the Indian IT industry. About 90 per cent of the receivables of Indian companies are in US dollars.

However, the anti-outsourcing brigade has grown strident in its opposition to jobs being sent out of the US; they have seriously joined issue against outsourcing to India post-December 2007, when Wipro subsidiary Infocrossing Healthcare Services bagged a multiple-year contract worth \$407 million to provide medic-aid services to the state of Missouri's healthcare programme.

Nasscom has said that it will seek support from minister for industry and commerce Anand Sharma, who is visiting the US this month, to address the proposed Ohio ban and broader issues of protectionism with his counterparts.

Business Line ND 09-Sep-10

p-4

GSLV-MkIII liquid stage clears test

Our Bureau

Bangalore, Sept. 8

Indian Space Research Organisation on Wednesday said its heavy-lift launcher programme GSLV-MkIII moved further ahead after a successful static testing of the liquid core stage.

An earlier test in March had to be aborted 50 seconds earlier after a leak was noticed.

ISRO said it was satisfied with its performance. The launcher, under development for some years now, is slated to be ready for a first flight in 2012.

"Today's successful test of (the liquid second stage) L110 for its full flight duration of 200 seconds is a major milestone in the Earth storable liquid rocket programme and a significant step forward in the development of GSLV-MkIII launch vehicle," a release said.

L110 was tested at the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre test facility at Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu, at 3.50 p.m.

The MkIII programme, taken up at a cost of nearly Rs 2,500 crore, is meant to

double the GSLV's satellite lifting capacity to four tonnes. It uses two solid fuel based strap-on boosters (S200), which cleared the test in January this year; the L-110 liquid stage and the crucial cryogenic upper stage C-25.

ISRO said L110 is one of the heaviest Earth storable liquid stages ever developed by ISRO.

It has two high-pressure Vikas engines. Nearly 500 health parameters were monitored during the test and initial data indicate normal performance.

Business Line ND 09-Sep-10 p-7

Ohio ban on offshoring is discriminatory: Nasscom

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Sept. 8

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) on Wednesday termed as 'discriminatory' Ohio State's decision to prohibit outsourcing of government IT projects to offshore destinations.

Nasscom argued that at a time when Governments globally were beginning to see the benefits of leveraging IT in public services, a ban such as this would prove to be "counter-productive" for the US and could lead to an increased tax burden for citizens.

"Ohio State's proposed ban on outsourcing of government IT projects comes at a time when the November elections to the US Congress and Ohio governorship are drawing nearer. While the public sector represents a small fraction in the overall demand for offshored services, it does represent a future focus area," a

statement issued by Nasscom said. Last month, the Ohio Governor, Mr Ted Strickland, issued an executive order prohibiting the expenditure of public funds for "services provided offshore".

Mr Strickland had stated that "Outsourcing jobs does not reflect Ohio values...We must do everything within our power to prevent outsourcing jobs because it undermines our economic development objectives, slows our recovery and deprives Ohioans and other Americans of employment opportunities."

The move - which comes ahead of US President Mr Barack Obama's India visit later this year - does not bode well for the Indian IT industry that is still reeling under the impact of US' move to hike H-1B and L-1 visa fee.

"It is imperative that the focus on free trade remains strong, but instances such as Senator Schumer's Borders Security Bill (that led to a visa

fee hike) and the Ohio State ban on outsourcing only reinforce our stand on discrimination," Nasscom said.

The apex software body is leading a delegation to the US later this month and will be taking this up these issues with the US authorities, the statement added.

Our Bangalore bureau reports: Wipro, in a statement said: "We believe in the fundamental strength of the US economy and have invested in expanding our presence there through partnerships with States such as Georgia where we have built a development centre in Atlanta. We have also been focusing our investments and efforts in developing solutions for the government segment to help government become more effective and efficient. These moves and announcements seem counterproductive to Government's effort to reduce deficit."

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Business Line ND 09-Sep-10 p-7

No major reversal in onsite-offshore recruitment mix: Infosys CEO

'Protectionist barriers may happen in all parts of the world'

Our Bureau

Chennai, Sept 8

There will not be any major reversal in the present onsite-offshore recruitment mix even as many governments in developed countries such as the US want Indian software companies to recruit locally, according to Mr S. Gopalakrishnan, Chief Executive Officer, Infosys Technologies Ltd. "Ultimately economics drive such decisions. I cannot see a reversal. We will remain competitive at least for the next five years through the present model," he said.

"We are making lot of noise, but it is a very low issue. The industry is growing much better than last year,"

he told newsmen on the sidelines of Connect2010. "Indian companies are already increasing local recruitment everywhere," he said.

Manufacturing by and large happens mostly in China because of economics and "that is what I see in IT in future also. If trade is happening and economics drive these decisions, then I think India should continue to be a global hub," he said.

OHIO'S BAN ON OUTSOURCING

Mr S. Mahalingam, Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer, Tata Consultancy Services, too agreed with Mr

Gopalakrishnan. On media reports that the Ohio State in the US plans to ban offshoring of software services to countries such as India, Mr Gopalakrishnan said when employment goes down it puts pressure on every body, including government and politicians. This is raising protectionist barriers and it will happen in many different ways and in different parts of the world, he said.

For the Indian IT industry, Indian companies have maximum percentage of business coming from the US. Certain changes in the policies are based on external environment and that will happen anywhere. "I do not want to

say that US is unfair or we are fair. There are several instances where our own policies are not fair. All of us have to work together towards increasing trade so that there is benefit to all the participants. That is what sustains and that is what we need to look at and that is how I see happening," he said.

US MARKET

Some of the US companies have a list of things the Indian Government need to do. "We will have our own list for the US government. These are things we will raise through proper forums through industry associations. So this is

how trade negotiations happen," he said.

Mr Lakshmi Narayanan, Vice-Chairman, Cognizant Technology Solutions, reacting to media reports said "this is not something new and this has been happening in the past also. From the industry perspective and from the company perspective, we are not unduly concerned about it."

"We believe that talent that is required for doing jobs both in the private sector and in the enterprise as well as in the government sector is something we have to focus. This is a passing phase as they go through the phase of coming out of recession," he said.

Business Line ND 09-Sep-10 p-7

SAP looking at volume growth; targets mid-size cos

Swetha Kannan

Bangalore, Sept. 8

Having reached a critical mass of 100 "referenceable" clients for its cloud-based ERP solution targeted at mid-sized companies, SAP is now hungry for "significant" volume growth.

In 2008, SAP realised that the middle enterprise market, with its unique requirements and challenges, needed a specific tailor-made ERP (enterprise resource planning) solution and "slice and dice" of on-premise products meant for large enterprises would not work with this segment as deployment is longer, complex and expensive with significant upfront costs. The company thus came up with the 'Business ByDesign' SaaS (software as a service) module in six countries (the US, the UK, India, China, Germany and France) that allows users to pay on a monthly subscription basis. 'Business ByDesign' promises a robust solution set that is cheaper, faster and easy to deploy and use.

For the last two years, SAP was building the 'Business ByDesign' product and acquiring customers. Today, it has around 100 clients on board globally, including four in India.

"The product is now mar-



Mr Rohit Madhur

ket-ready with 100 referenceable clients and we are looking at significant volumes (in terms of number of clients) in the coming months across verticals," says Mr Rohit Madhur, Director - Business ByDesign, SAP India.

In India, SAP is especially looking at professional services - a hitherto untapped sector. This includes companies providing IT infrastructure, business analytics, consulting, market research services. "We will later on look at conventional trading and manufacturing companies as well."

Business ByDesign targets mid-sized companies with headcount of 25 - 400 people and turnover of Rs 10 - 400 crore. SAP is looking to evolve a partner ecosystem consisting of resellers, implementers and system integrators to build the product in India.

Cost is a big consideration in the mid market, which has

"some money to spare but does not want to put all its money into IT," says Mr Madhur. "These companies are looking at IT as an enabler to build efficiency." The complete suite of Business by Design solutions (finance management, customer relationship management, project management and HR) has been competitively priced at Rs 5,610 for monthly subscription, he adds. Besides, the end-to-end solution set, SAP also offers individual starter packs for CRM, ERP and professional services for Rs 3,350.

UPDATION

Walldorf (Germany)-headquartered SAP promises to update Business by Design every six months based on criteria such as functionality, technology and user experience. Its latest update (version 2.5) offers several flexible features to users - such as multi-tenancy, wherein several users can share a single hardware instance, which brings down costs. The other encouraging feature is deployment time reduces drastically, says Mr Madhur. "While on-premise models take 6-12 months to deploy, the cloud-based model takes only 4-12 weeks, depending on the complexity."

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Sonia calls for education with technical inputs

The concept of Navodaya Vidyalayas was introduced by the late Rajiv Gandhi

The National Advisory Council Chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday voiced concern over the high dropout rate and the absence of teachers in village schools.

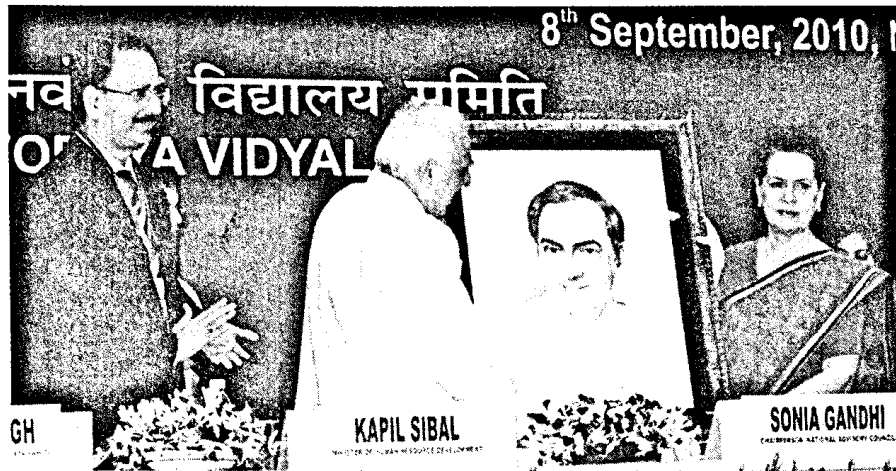
She noted that "one fourth of the teachers" in village schools remain absent and said the dropout rate, particularly amongst the minority and poor, was high.

Speaking at a function after inaugurating 31 Navodaya Vidyalayas in various parts of the country, Gandhi said, "Everyone has a right to education and it was not limited to a few."

These recently constructed buildings of JNVs are in States across the country, in Kerala, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Orissa, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

She said the Right to Education Bill (RTE) would address all issues pertaining to education in the country.

"The UPA government under Manmohan Singh is giving scholarships... aware-



Union Minister for Human Resource Development Kapil Sibal presenting the portrait of former Prime Minister late Rajiv Gandhi to the Chairperson, National Advisory Council Sonia Gandhi at the inauguration of 31 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, in New Delhi on Wednesday

ness about these has to be spread," she said, hoping that the Right to Education Bill will be able to achieve this.

In her speech, Gandhi, who is also the Chairperson of the UPA, recalled that the con-

cept of Navodaya Vidyalayas was introduced by the late Rajiv Gandhi. "I can say that students studying here are on the right track. Rajiv Gandhi was concerned about the poor, backward and their children.

He felt the country would not progress unless one works for their upliftment," she said.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Kapil Sibal, stated that the late Rajiv

Gandhi considered providing quality education for deprived children his foremost duty. It was in this context that the government decided to open a JNV in every district of the country as part of the National

Policy on Education, 1986. Today there are 593 JNVs in the country in which 2 lakh children are studying, he added.

The Minister stated that to encourage children showing aptitude in sports, culture and in vocational streams, special Navodaya Vidyalayas are proposed to be opened. He pointed out that already Navodaya Vidyalayas are considered at par with the better schools of the country and alumni of these schools are excelling in professions.

Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are fully residential co-educational institutions providing educating from Class VI to XII and affiliated to CBSE.

At least 75 per cent seats in a Jawahar Vidyalaya are filled by candidates from rural areas. Reservation of seats for children belonging to SCs and STs is provided in proportion to their population in the concerned district.

One third of total seats are filled by girls. Out of over two lakh students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, 77.84% are from rural areas, 36.67% are girls and 41.61 per cent belong to SC/ST categories.

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Ohio outsourcing ban is trade barrier: India Inc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian IT sector, which gets 60 per cent of its export revenue from the US, today said the move by the state of Ohio to ban outsourcing by government departments to offshore locations like India is discriminatory and amounts to a trade barrier.

Through an executive order last month, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland prohibited the expenditure of public funds for services provided offshore.

The move comes ahead of the impending visit of US President Barack Obama to India in November. It also follows a controversial legislation (border security law) increasing H-1B and L1 visa fees, hitting India's over USD 50 billion IT industry.

The Indian industry will take up the issue with its US counterparts and seek government support to flag it with the American authorities.

"Nasscom is leading a delegation to the US later this month and will be taking this up with relevant officials in the US," the apex body of the IT and ITES industry said here.

Nasscom said it would also seek support from Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, who is visiting the US later this month. Sharma is likely to take up the matter with the US Trade Representative and other senior officials.

It said since international trade is a federal subject in the US, Nasscom is studying the legality of such an order by a state government.

"Ohio's ban on outsourcing can only be viewed as



counter-productive to the US government thrust on reducing public deficit... It only reinforces our stand on discrimination," it said.

Nasscom said it would not be surprised if more such "electoral rhetoric" follows in the run-up to the November elections to the US Congress and Ohio Governorship.

Infosys Technologies, the country's second largest software exporter, said, "We are concerned... About banning offshore outsourcing by Ohio State government departments."

Ganesh Natarajan, the chairman of the CII national committee on IT and the CEO of Zensar Technologies, said that while the Ohio development would not have much of a financial impact on IT firms, the issue would be taken up with the US trade mission visiting India this month. Indian IT firms earn most of their revenue from the private sector in the US.

Despite these irritants, the US would remain the major market for Indian IT firms, he said.

Assocham said the Ohio ban amounts to a trade barrier and the move would be against the US's interest.

However, the stock market shrugged off the developments, with shares of TCS, Infosys and Wipro moving up on Wednesday.

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IITs face faculty crunch, moot full-time foreign teachers

New Delhi: Facing a massive shortage of well-qualified teachers, the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) have mooted a proposal for hiring foreign nationals as permanent faculty members.

With one-third teaching positions lying vacant, the proposal as a solution to meet the unprecedented staff crunch is

expected to be deliberated at the next IIT council meeting here on Friday, IIT officials said on Wednesday.

The move, if accepted, would enable the premier engineering and technology institutes to appoint foreign teachers on permanent positions, up to 10 per cent of the faculty strength.

In 2007, the IITs had been granted permission to hire foreign nationals as faculty members, but only for a maximum period of five years on contract basis.

IIT-Kharagpur leads the pack with 299 vacancies followed by IIT-Bombay with 222, IIT-Roorkee with 194, IIT-Madras with 138 and IIT-Delhi with 78. Others are not far behind either.

There are 69 vacancies in IIT-Kanpur, 65 in IIT-Guwahati and 48 in IIT-Ropad. In fact, the situation is the same in all the 15 IITs in the country.

IITs have contended that the presence of foreign faculty on their campuses would expose graduating students to globally distinguished professors, besides lending a true international flavour in the campuses and reducing brain drain.

Appointment of foreign faculty could also give a boost to IITs' plan to enrol foreign students for the post-graduate programme.

PTI

Hindu nd 09.09.10

The logic behind Honorary Doctorates

When the university is funded by the government, the dictum, "he who pays calls the tune" operates

The recent fiasco amid the non-award of the Doctoral Degree (*honoris causa*) to the chess master Vishwanathan Anand has brought forth several issues regarding the procedures that have been imposed on universities. A university is an academic citadel that promotes and recognizes intellect. Yet, when the university is supported and funded by the government, the rather unpleasant situation of "he who pays calls the tune" appears to operate. Academic freedom and autonomy are confronted by officialdom and control.

The recognition of outstanding persons by honouring them with doctorate degrees has been practiced by universities the world over. Recognition of this kind is simply through the ceremony where the "diploma" is offered to the honouree. No money is offered as honorarium, nor any job offer. It is just

an academic recognition. The honouree can belong to any part of the world.

Alas, here was the first rub. An official from the Ministry of Human Resource Development in Delhi asked whether Anand is an Indian or a Spaniard. How does the citizenship or nationality matter in academic recognition? After all, the Indira Gandhi prize or the Padma Awards are open to all. It would appear that the question raised was irrelevant to the issue, but it delayed the matter.

One might raise the bogey of 'security' and hence the name needs "vetting" by the government. But is this a defensible argument? The award need not mean that the university agrees with all that the honouree says or practices. If my memory is not wrong, I recall years ago an Indian state University honouring the Late Mr. Yasser Arafat. Vetting and 'clearance' of this type might also



PRAISEWORTHY: Both Anand and the University of Hyderabad have displayed admirable grace over the situation. - FILE PHOTO

SPEAKING OF SCIENCE

dampen the initiative of an Indian Central or State University to honour, say, an outstanding poet or writer from say, Pakistan.

The second issue is about the clearance from the President of India, who happens to be the 'Visitor' of the University of Hyderabad, which

wished to honour Anand. One needs to ask: Why should the President of India be involved at all as the visitor? What academic value does it bring? Likewise, why should the Governor of the state be the equivalent in state universities? Is this not simply an administrative arrangement, which needs no academic value?

Does this arrangement also not mean that as the university people-faculty or officers need to think twice (or more) before criticizing them? Other countries, notably the U.S., have many state universities with state funding and the head of state has no official connection - yet they thrive academically and administratively. We need to revisit the practices of Visitorship and Chancellorships of central and state-supported universities in India. The third point is: who should be given such honorary doctorates? The business of a university is to enhance and recognize scholarship and intellect. Universities and colleges cater more to the brain than brawn. Hence perhaps the justification to honour Anand - the

master of a game where brain and only brain matters. Note that this is different from honouring, say Tendulkar. But then one may ask: "if brain work is the sole factor, why not honour masters of the cards game Contract Bridge?"

Of course, on this score, very few politicians would be eligible for the honour. Yet we note that many of them are so honoured; some even like to have the triple prefix Dr. Dr. Dr. before their names. One suspects an element of sycophancy and "quid pro quo" in the university that does so.

Now, for the fourth point. The business of a university is to promote knowledge, spur creativity and to recognize and honour those who have brought new perspectives, values and thus enhanced humanity through their thoughts.

Thus, in honouring an individual with a D. Litt or D Sc (*honoris causa*), the university honours itself. It expects nothing from the honouree, perhaps except to hope that he/she appreciates and is proud of the honour so con-

ferred on him/her. I believe the latter is as important as the former. Further, while it is not necessary or demanded, it would be nice to have the honouree come and interact with the students and faculty of the university.

Now that 'official' clearance has come through, and both Mr Anand and the University of Hyderabad have displayed such admirable grace over the situation, we hope he would come and receive the honorary doctorate and spend a few days at the University of Hyderabad.

It would also be nice if an analysis is undertaken at that time, by the university researchers on how he does what he does. In the process, it would be nice too if they invite then the brilliant youngster Srikanth Varadaraj, the school boy from Bangalore, who not only presented a paper at the recent International Mathematics Congress at Hyderabad, but also made the opportunity to play against Anand and drew with him last month.

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ND-X

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A new part-time course in mathematical finance

The Mathematical Sciences Foundation, a registered non-profit educational society is taking admissions for its part-time programme in mathematical finance.

The course is suitable for under-graduate students, particularly those majoring in mathematics, economics or commerce as well as those taking the actuarial examinations, MBA students and employees in the finance or banking sectors.

The course will be helpful for careers in insurance companies, financial firms and the banking sector in areas such as investor education and counselling, project choice, portfolio management, and risk analysis.

A key feature of the programme is exposure to combined uses of mathematics, statistics and computer science in the financial services industry. Scholarships will be given to deserving students.

Classes will be held in the evenings from mid-September to March 2011 with breaks during the Commonwealth Games and the winter examinations of Delhi University.

Full details are available on the website www.mathscifound.org.

The Aligarh Muslim University is organising an all-India essay writing competition on the topic: "Sir Syed's Vision of Empowerment through



Character Building and Modern Education."

A first prize of Rs.25,000 will be given away in addition to second and third prizes of Rs.15,000 and Rs.10,000. State level winners will be awarded of consolation prizes of Rs.5,000.

Students can refer to information regarding the life and achievements of the AMU founder Sir Syed Ahmed Khan on the university website www.amu.ac.in. The last date for submission of entries is September 25. Prizes will be given away in October.

Faridabad-based Manav Rachna International University is drawing students from countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Nigeria, South Korea and Syria for some of its Ph.D., M. Tech, B. Tech and B. Tech courses. The university has also entered into tie-ups with educational institutes in Finland, Canada, the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

Jaipuria Institute of Management in Noida organised a seminar this past week on "Entrepreneurship: Finding Hidden Opportunities". Youth entrepreneurs of companies and management students participated in the seminar.

The purpose of the seminar was to provide a platform for students to gain practical knowledge regarding entrepreneurship. The event was characterised by brainstorming for new solutions as well as articulation of ideas by students and entrepreneurs.

The seminar projected entrepreneurship as a rewarding career choice and the spotlight was also on emerging trends, markets and opportunities.

The 'Bhavishya Jyoti Scholarship Test' will be conducted across the country on September 19 by information technology trainer, NIIT across the country. This year is also the 20th anniversary of the scholarship which rewards fee-waivers to meritorious students and graduates wishing to pursue careers in diverse industries that require IT skills.

The scholarships will be awarded for NIIT's flagship programme, GNIIT and a few other courses.

NIIT will offer scholarships to students based on their performance in a competitive written test, followed by a personal interview. Application forms for the test are available at NIIT education centres across the country. Students can also log on to www.niit.com/bjs2010 for more details. The last date for receipt of applications is September 18.

Urvashi Sarkar

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Sonia expresses concern at high dropout rate

Aarti Dhar

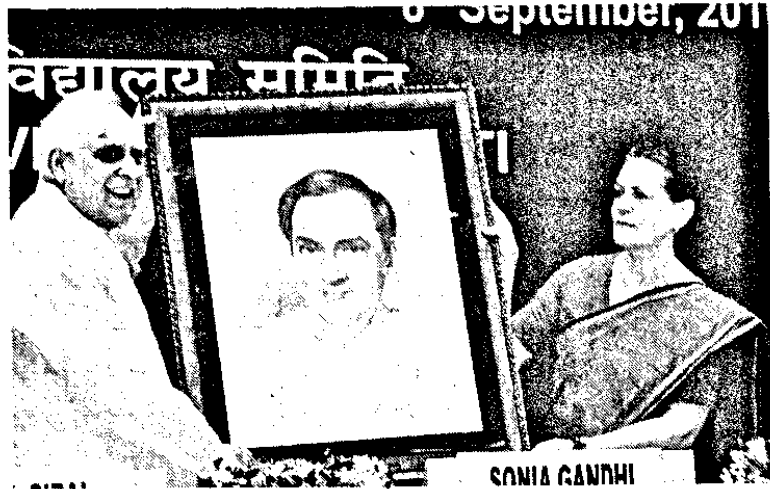
NEW DELHI: National Advisory Council chairperson Sonia Gandhi expressed concern on Wednesday at the absence of "one-fourth of the teachers" from village schools and the high dropout rate, especially among the minority and the poor.

Speaking at a function after inaugurating 31 Navodaya Vidyalayas in various parts of the country to mark the 25 years of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, she said: "Everyone has a right to education, and it is not limited to a few." The Right to Education Bill, she said, would address all issues pertaining to education. "

Recalling that the concept was introduced by the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Ms. Gandhi said: "I can say that the students studying here are on the right track. Rajiv Gandhi was concerned about the poor...and their children. He felt that the country would not progress till their uplift."

It was because of Rajiv Gandhi's vision, that 600 such schools were set up, and more than two lakh students were enrolled in them. "They get good education, and it [the school] also helps in the development of their personality," she said. The education provided in these schools was on a par with the best schools in the country.

However, the resolve should be to work in a better way and to achieve a better educational system, she said. Children should be given such education that would help them keep pace with the changes and developments.



Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal presents a portrait of Rajiv Gandhi to National Advisory Council Chairperson Sonia Gandhi at the inauguration of newly constructed buildings of 31 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas in New Delhi on Wednesday. - PHOTO: SHANKER CHAKRAVARTY

Taking on his critics who had accused him of rushing through the Educational Tribunal Bill that was stalled in the Rajya Sabha in the monsoon session of Parliament, Union Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal said Rajiv Gandhi had wanted the task of imparting quality education achieved in a few months. "If people say that we are in a hurry, I would like to state that Rajivji had said in 1985 that this should be achieved in a few months."

In its report, the Parliamentary Standing Committee had said the Educational Tribunal Bill was drafted in "haste," while senior Congress MP Keshav Rao opposed the bill in the Rajya Sabha, saying it was being passed in a "hurry."

Mr. Sibal said that providing quality education was reduced to encouraging mediocrity, and this trend must be changed.

"One of the concepts which got lost in our drive for mass education has been that of excellence. Everything is reduced to mediocrity, maybe even lower than that. This must be changed."

Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are residential co-educational institutions, providing educating from Std. VI to Std. XII. At least 75 per cent of the seats are filled with candidates from rural areas. Reservation for children of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes is provided in proportion to their population in the district concerned.

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BRAI Bill leaves biotech commercialisation in limbo

Priscilla Jebaraj

NEW DELHI: The Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) will only deal with the safety and efficacy aspects of biotech products, leaving the controversial commercialisation aspect hanging in the air, according to the latest version of the BRAI Bill, 2010.

The Bill, which was supposed to be introduced in the last session of Parliament, is back in limbo after objections by the Health Ministry. However, the latest version of the Bill has incorporated the changes demanded by the Environment Ministry.

One of the major amendments includes a clarification that since the BRAI Bill will only handle safety and efficacy, "any decision on commercialisation will have to be taken by competent authorities under relevant laws," according to Environment

Minister Jairam Ramesh.

"There is no clarity on which authorities would be competent or which laws would be relevant," he admits. "In the case of GM [or genetically-modified] foods, it may still be with the Ministry of Environment and Forests," he says. "Or it could be Health, Agriculture or the DST [Department of Science and Technology]," he added, leaving the door open for a further turf war.

Neutral regulatory body mooted

Mr. Ramesh feels that decision can be taken later, while the Bill itself should be passed into law in the next session of Parliament.

Originally, the BRAI was supposed to come under the control of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

Mr. Ramesh suggested that in order to avoid conflicts of

interest, a regulatory body should come under a Ministry unrelated to biotechnology promotion, or under the Cabinet Secretariat. However, he has accepted the compromise of the Department of Science and Technology as the nodal Ministry.

In a deal worked out between DBT and the Environment Ministry on Independence Day, just before the Cabinet considered the Bill, the Ministry agreed to give up control of the current body responsible for GM food clearances, the Genetic Engineering Approvals Committee. Its role will now be taken over by the Environment Appraisal Panel, whose decisions can be reversed by its parent body, the BRAI.

However, in return, the Environment Ministry has wrested the right to appoint the chairman and member secretary of the Panel.

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Nasscom terms U.S. move discriminatory

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Terming the outsourcing ban threat by the State of Ohio in the U.S. as "discriminatory", the Indian information technology industry on Wednesday said any such move was against the policy of open markets and hampers promotion of free trade. The IT industry has decided to register its opposition with the U.S. administration besides seeking help from the Indian government to take the matter with the American government.

"Ohio State's proposed ban on outsourcing of government IT projects comes at a time when the November elections to the U.S. Congress and Ohio governorship are drawing nearer. There is more such electoral rhetoric that can be expected in the next few months," the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) said in a statement. Through an executive order last month, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland prohib-

ited the expenditure of public funds for services provided offshore. Pointing out that globally, governments were beginning to see the benefits that could be reaped out of employing IT in public services, Nasscom said India too was opening up not only in IT, but also other areas, representing a growth market for global and domestic companies. "Ohio's ban on outsourcing can only be viewed as counterproductive to the U.S. government's thrust on reducing public deficit and possibly lead to an increased tax burden on its citizens," it

said. "It was imperative that the focus on free trade remains strong, but instances like Senator Schumer's Borders Security Bill and the Ohio State ban on outsourcing only reinforce our stand on discrimination. Our focus is to build open markets, global trade and we will work with key stakeholders to minimise the impact of such events by highlighting the benefits of employing IT with international governments," Nasscom said.

A high-level Nasscom delegation is also planning to visit the U.S. later this month to

take the issue with relevant officials in the U.S. It has also decided to seek support from Union Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma who will also be visiting the U.S. shortly.

Notably, Indian IT sector gets 60 per cent of its export revenue from the U.S. The move also comes just ahead of the U.S. President Barack Obama's India visit which is scheduled for November. It also follows the border security law where the U.S. government decided to increase fees for H-1B and L1 visas, mostly used by Indian IT

industry.

Similarly, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has expressed deep concern over the development. "At a time when companies from across the globe, including those from the U.S., are participating in government projects in India, Ohio State's ban on offshoring by government departments would discriminate against Indian companies," said FICCI Secretary General Amit Mitra.

Citing a study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (Washington D.C.), FICCI said that it was U.S. companies that gained maximum from outsourcing. In fact, a McKinsey analysis shows that every dollar of costs the U.S. moves offshore brings America a net benefit of \$1.12 to \$1.14. The same study also highlighted that worldwide sourcing would produce net benefits to Americans in terms of higher productivity, lower prices, better jobs, new export markets, and stronger companies.

Infosys expresses concern

Special Correspondent

BANGALORE: The CEO and Managing Director of Infosys Technologies S. Gopalakrishnan expressed "concern" over the moves by Ohio to ban offshoring of IT services outside the U.S. However,

Mr. Gopalakrishnan, in a statement, said Infosys "should not be affected," because its public services initiative in the U.S. "is focussed on creating a domestic delivery centre in the U.S. hence this should not be affected." Ohio had issued an order in August

banning the outsourcing of government IT and back-office projects to offshore locations in India and other countries.

An executive order prohibited "the expenditure of public funds for services provided offshore."

IT cos wary of US protectionism but dispel Ohio ban fears

fe Bureau

Bangalore, Sep 8: IT firms on Wednesday said they were concerned about growing protectionism in the US but added that a recent ban on offshoring of government projects by Ohio will not have significant impact on the industry at the moment.

Among the large tier IT companies, only TCS has exposure to Ohio government contracts and although US firms more than half of Indian IT's \$60 billion revenue basket, very few companies have bagged US state government contracts. In

fact, Indian IT firms share of government contracts worldwide in its exports pie is not more than 3-4%, analysts said.

Infosys has started a subsidiary in the US focusing on government work but currently has zero exposure. "We are concerned with the recent news from the US about banning offshore outsourcing by Ohio state government departments. Infosys' initiative in the public services sector is focused on creating a domestic delivery centre in the US and hence this should not be affected," CEO & MD of Infosys Kris

Gopalakrishnan said.

"The US is getting into elections so there will be lot of political rhetoric in the short term. This is concerning because it could impact some of the companies working in the government space," CFO V Balakrishnan told FE. "With high unemployment, this type of noise will only increase," he added. Average unemployment in the US is at 9.5% and in many states such as Ohio, the rate is much higher.

The CFO said that private firms in the US were outsourcing because of the efficiency that they manage to get. "If you

want to make sure governments and corporations are run more efficiently, they have to offshore and outsource. Two, there are not many employees available in a market like the US," he said.

Nasscom warned more such electoral rhetoric can be expected in the next few months. "Ohio state's proposed ban on outsourcing of government IT projects comes at a time when the November elections to the United State Congress and Ohio governorship are drawing nearer. Ohio's ban on outsourcing can only be viewed as

counterproductive to the US government thrust on reducing public deficit and possibly lead to an increased tax burden on its citizens," the body said. Nasscom would lead a delegation to the US later this month.

Whether the Ohio decision will influence other US states to curb government offshoring, going ahead, is anybody's guess. "We will have to wait and watch - it is an election year after all," CEO of Zensar Ganesh Natarajan said. Although TCS refused to comment, analysts estimated the impact of the Ohio decision on the firm to be minimal.