Newspaper Clips

October 10, 2014

Economic Times ND 10/10/2014 P-8

More Women Enrol for IIT-B's Business Plan Contest in 2014

Rica.Bhattacharyya
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: IIT Bombay's business plan competition Eureka this year saw a jump in female-to-male ratio to 1:5 from 1:7 last year, signaling the keenness among women to take up entrepreneurship.

The event, which for the first time in 2013 got entries from across the globe including the US, Japan, UAE and Singapore, got 21 international entries this year from Dubai (five entries), Abu Dhabi, Los Angeles, New Jersey, Netherlands, Andaman, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Total participation in the event increased to 7,100 from 6,000 a year ago. Interestingly, entries in the social track increased by 28% compared with 18% overall increase. The final event will be held on January 31 and February 1, 2015.

This year, the event introduced a new metric, Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for judging during the finals. The event is organised by IIT Bombay's entrepreneurship cell in partnership with Intel and DST.

"The reason for doing this is to provide an incentive to those who have a drive to execute their ideas and form a tangible product or service," says Sagar Sheth, media manager of The Entrepreneurship Cell, IIT Bombay. It will also give the judges and/or investors an additional metric to judge teams on, other than the theoretical business plan that teams will present.

"Mentors for the finalists will also encourage teams to make or improve their MVP and will provide dedicated feedback and suggestions on the same," adds Sheth.

Also, this year the event is introducing an award called Touching The Lives Award, which is to promote ideas in the social venture space. "The vision of this award is to celebrate entrepreneurial spirit in the context of socio-economic well-being of the country and to promote the ideas that have promise to challenge the existing barriers of growth," says Sheth.

Eureka aims to provide a platform for potential ideas and early stage start-ups to evaluate their business plan in the risk-free environment of a competition. There are total prizes worth Rs 45 lakh at stake and opportunity to win trips to Stanford E-Bootcamp and Intel APEC Challenge.

Among other incentives, the winners are also assured legal, HR, PR, IP and social media consultancy and incubation opportunities, apart from one-to-one mentoring sessions.

Last year, the competition saw more than 6,000 entries. Eureka can be broadly divided into two tracks – business and social, with a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh and Rs 1 lakh for the first two years. Some of the other awards include Intel Technology Challenge, Eureka! Youth Award, Technology and Sustainable Development Award.

Eureka Line-Up

- Event received **21** international entries this year from Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Los Angeles, New Jersey, Netherlands, Andaman, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh
- Total participation increased to **7,100** from **6,000**
- Final event to be held on January 31 and February 1, 2015

HT.Com ND 10.10.2014 P-10

■ Student who graduated from foreign universities are deemed better prepared than those from Indian universities

FILE PHOTO

Firms prefer foreign university graduates

Indo-Asian News Service

Global companies prefer to hire graduates from foreign universities over those of Indian educational institutions, a survey said here Tuesday. Added to this is the fact that Indian universities have scored poorly in the recent global rakings.

Released by the British Council, Britain's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities, India Employability Survey 2014 said: "Graduates from foreign universities (39 percent) are deemed better prepared for the job than those from Indian universities (14 percent) and require lesser extensive training."

Besides, 41.6 percent firms rank American universities as either their top or their second choice, while 25.8 percent do so for universities in Britain.

Germany is a distant third, with 6.9 percent firms ranking it as one of their top two choices.

The research surveyed 200 foreign and Indian companies on ascertaining the attractiveness of Indian and foreign university graduates for employers on various parameters such as skill-set, availability and quality of talent pool and other parameters.

Speaking on the occasion, Rob Lynes, director, British Council India, said: "As organisations strive to compete and drive business growth in an increasingly global marketplace, they place significant importance on international education in the talent they recruit."

He added: "Hiring foreign-university graduates is an integral part of the core talent plan for a large percentage of companies are dependent on the graduatuates who can bring diversity."

HT.Com ND 10.10.2014 P-10

US varsity named B-school after Indian American

Press Trust of India

Rockford University announced the creation of the Puri Business School in recognition of a USD 5 million contribution to the varsity by First Rockford Group Founder and President Sunil Puri, 1982 alumnus and 2013 recipient of an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the university.

Puri Business School is the first named school at the University. "It is important to my family, that the Puri Business School offers not only an exemplary space where students, faculty and the community can interact and innovate, but where significant programmatic and curricular advances that will deepen the University's commitment to advance the university and partner in the economic revival of this region," Puri said.

"The liberal arts education I received at Rockford College significantly contributed to my success and the Puri Business School is my way of paying it forward," he added.

The event was attended by Senator Dick Durbin, last week.

"I am pleased to honor my friend Sunil Puri for his commitment to Rockford University as we dedicate the Puri Business School," Dick Durbin said.

Business Standard ND 10/10/2014 P-1

Good times back on engineering campuses

IITs expect offers of more than ₹1 crore this year too; pay packages up 20%

- Engineering institutes register surge in offers
- Expect to receive ₹1-crore-plus packages
- Average surge in pay packages is 10-20%
- Stock options are being doled to make offers more attractive
- Google, Amazon, eBay, Flipkart, Microsoft, Oracle, Walmart, LinkedIn, IBJ Group and Rakuten among those making offers
- Institutes expect to achieve 80-90% placement this year

KALPANA PATHAK & VINAY UMARJI
Mumbai/ Ahmedabad, 9 October

Companies and jobs are back with a bang on engineering campuses. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and other engineering colleges say they are seeing a surge in the number of companies and job offers. Salary packages have so far increased between 10 per cent and 20 per cent. And, to make the offers more attractive, even stock options are being doled out.

While the older IITs are 50 days away from their final placements, and the newer ones 20 days, they expect the 2014-15 placements to be better than last year.

At other engineering colleges, placements have already begun and students are happy with the offers that have come so far.

At IIT Guwahati, besides marquee recruiters like Google, Microsoft and Oracle, first-timers Walmart and LinkedIn have confirmed their participation in final placements. Around 35 such confirmations have come, even as registrations are still on. Against 120-130 recruiters last year, IIT Guwahati is expecting 200 firms this year.

"We also hope to see better compensation packages than last year," said an official from the institute who did not wish to be named. The institute hopes a repeat of the ₹1-crore-plus packages seen last year. In terms of pre-placement offers, IIT Guwahati has so far received 60.

In 2013, Google had made ₹1.5-crore offers across IITs.

"We are getting a good response from companies. Many new companies have also come forward to participate in placements," said a placement official at IIT Ropar. Compared with six pre-placement offers last year, this institute has already received 10 this time. Fifty companies, including Flipkart, Google, Microsoft, Amazon and eBay, have confirmed their presence. Microsoft had already made a pre-placement offer and confirmed it would be on the campus to offer internships, said the official.

In Mumbai, VJTI has seen Japan's Rakuten recruiting students. The highest offer made by it has been ₹40 lakh. Another Japanese firm, IBJ Group, has made offers to three students and given them a pay package of ₹20 lakh each.

"Students wanted to go for dream companies and core companies. We are focusing on that. We will also have mass recruiters on the campus in a few days," said a placement official from VJTI.

The institute has around 500 students to be placed this year. Accenture, IBM, and Infosys are to visit its campus in a few days and make bulk job offers.

Many of the engineering institutes that had placed only around 50-55 per cent of their students last year are hoping to achieve 80-90 per cent placement this year. Some students also opt for higher studies or appear for the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering to join public sector companies. To encourage entrepreneurship, IITs are also leaving the option open for students to come back to campuses and participate in the placement process if their venture does not take off.

Hindu ND 10.10.2014 P-8

Brightness at night

This year's Nobel Prize for physics awarded to Isamu Akasaki and Hiroshi Amano of Nagoya University in Japan and Shuji Nakamura of the University of California at Santa Barbara, goes beyond recognising their invention that is of "greatest benefit to mankind". It befittingly rewards them for their perseverance and tenacity and for daring to "challenge established truths". With red and green light emitting diodes (LEDs) already available, there were feverish efforts by many industries and institutions across the world to invent a blue LED; a combination of red, green and blue produces white light. But there were almost insurmountable challenges that had to be overcome, and most scientists dropped out of the race midway. The first major practical difficulty to be overcome was growing high-quality gallium nitride crystals using a suitable substrate. Dr. Akasaki and Dr. Amano, who worked as a team, and Dr. Nakamura used diverse approaches to achieve this. The duo finally tasted success in 1986 even as others moved on to different materials; Dr. Nakamura produced it four years later. Since the gallium nitride crystal is by default n-type layer with a surplus of electrons, the laureates had to create a p-type layer (holes that are electron-deficient). Working against all odds, the two teams finally succeeded in creating the p-type layer and hence a blue LED. They also created heterojunctions with multiple layers to improve the efficiency of blue LED.

If the arrival of brighter fluorescent lamps in the 20th century reduced electricity consumption compared with tungsten lamps, the advent of compact fluorescent lamps led to a further substantial drop in electricity consumption. However, LED technology has made all the other lamp technologies redundant with the superior brightness per wattage that it offers; the white light produced by LED has become a game-changer in lighting technology. Unlike the other lighting options, where a certain proportion of the electricity is converted into heat and is wasted, LED technology allows for direct conversion of all electricity into light, thereby increasing efficiency. With nearly 20 to 30 per cent of electricity worldwide being used for lighting, the widespread use of LEDs will lead to significant gains. Besides being energy-efficient, LEDs are environment-friendly as no mercury is used to make them. Currently, blue LED is used to produce red and green light by exciting phosphor. But dynamic control of colour composition can be achieved by using LEDs of all the three colours; this may happen in the future. In about two decades after blue LED came into being, it has revolutionised white light production. It remains to be seen if any another path-breaking technology can ever displace the LED.

Economic Times ND 10/10/2014 P-8

CHECKS AND BALANCES An industry that is growing at breakneck speed needs not just the money, but also the right hires. To minimise the risk of hiring the wrong people, startups are using multi-level assessments, psychometric tests and roping in external partners

Startups Install Hiring Alarms, Filters

Hiring Checks

WHAT COMPANIES ARE DOING

SNAPDEAL
Rolled out a three-level assessment test to ensure they get the right candidates in terms of skills, aptitude, culture and fitment

VUCLIP
Uses psychometric tests to narrow down candidates and find people who click with the company values

CASHKARO
Uses numerical, written and psychometric tests

WINGEFY
Uses external agency tests to whittle down the number of applicants

WHY THEY ARE DOING IT

HIRING MISTAKES can prove costly given the pace at which startups are scaling up, so they need the right people from the word go

UNLIKE LARGE companies which have large training setups for new joinees, startups want people who can jumpstart

PEOPLE WHO thrive in a startup are generally cut from a different cloth, so they measure traits like stress tolerance, risk taking, adaptability, guilt consciousness, dependability of potential hires

UPNESH

Sreeradha.Basu@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Hiring mistakes can prove costly given the fierce pace at which startups are scaling up. Swati Bhargava, co-founder of leading cashback site Cashkaro, learnt this the hard way when they hired a senior person for online marketing last year.

They faced various issues with the hire, says Swati, including overpromising and underdelivering on his part and management styles, which alienated other team members. "We had to let the person go in three months and undo and re-do a lot of work done by him. We realised in hindsight that it would have been better to wait and look for the right person than spend so much energy, time and resources on making it work," says Bhargava. In the process, Cashkaro estimates they lost out nearly Rs 8 lakh on salaries, training and the like.

As Bhargava learnt first-hand, the biggest challenge facing startups today isn't getting funded – it's hiring the right people. Attracting good talent isn't enough – they need to be the perfect fit as well. That's why a bunch of them, from Snapdeal and Vuclip to Cashkaro, Wingify and TastyKhana, are now deploying techniques like multi-level assessments, psychometric tests and roping in external partners to make sure they don't end up paying a heavy price for quick, wrong hires.

"The industry is growing at breakneck speed. The margin of error of getting a wrong hire is minimal," says Saurabh Nigam, VP – HR at Snapdeal. "We want to guarantee that our hiring is as scientific as possible."

Recently, Snapdeal rolled out a three-level assessment test to get the right talent, in skills, aptitude, culture and fitment. There's a standarised aptitude test with different benchmarks; after clearing which a candidate is tested on function-specific skills. In the technology domain, for instance, Snapdeal has tied up with HackerRank to test candidates on coding skills.

The final stage involving psychometric tests is to gauge cultural and values fitment, and for that Snapdeal is speaking to multiple partners besides the likes of Aon Hewitt and Development Dimensions International. All this will be in place before the company hits campuses for hiring later this year.

Cashkaro's Swati and her co-founder husband Rohan now extensively use numerical, written and psychometric tests to measure various parameters including analytical skills, communication skills, multitasking skills and the ability to function independently. "When it comes to recruitment, we can't afford to get it wrong," says Swati.

Unlike large companies which have big training setups to train new joinees, startups want people who can jumpstart, says Varun Aggarwal, CTO and COO of leading employability solutions company Aspiring Minds, which works with nearly 600 startups. "They really want to avoid bad hires. For some, even one bad hire might be 10% to 20% of their total work force," he says.

Companies are looking for hires who are goal-oriented, passionate, self-motivated, and can handle uncertainty

According to the Indian Startup Study Report 2014 by the Hay Group, Indian startups face a high employee attrition rate of 17%, which rises to 21% in growth startups, says its director Debabrat Mishra.

"More than the direct cost, it's the cost to business that has bigger implications in case of a bad hire," says Anuj Roy, partner, digital practice at executive search firm Transearch.

Startups across the board agree that the success of their organisations hinges on the right talent. People who thrive in a startup are generally cut from a different cloth: they need to be goal-oriented, passionate, self-motivated, be able to handle uncertainty, think out of the box, be adaptable, open to chances and have the ability to exceed expectations.

Simulated tests of programming, personality assessment and those based on situation handling skills are very relevant for startups, says Aspiring Minds' Aggarwal. Their technology and products are used in various combinations by customers according to requirements and include AUTOMATA (simulated test of computer programming), AM-Start (workplace competency test measuring traits like effective communication, team work, learning attitude, prioritisation, etc) and AMPI (Big-five based personality inventory to measure goal-orientation, dependability, and so on).

In March this year, mobile video company Vuclip used psychometric tests at two campuses to filter through hundreds of resumes to get down to a set of about 30-40 candidates for in-person interviews.

"We assessed potential hires for what we call their 'get-it' ability as well as their other skills to help find the best functional and cultural fit. This is because we believe that a combination of natural intelligence (not just grades) coupled with a great attitude leads to amazing results," says Nickhil Jakatdar, CEO of Vuclip.

Candidates have mastered the art of cracking the interviews and hence, start-ups are using psychometric assessments to know their real self, adds Mohit Gundecha, co-founder and CEO of Jombay, a startup in the space of recruitments and profiling.

"Start-ups typically measure behavioural traits like stress tolerance, risk taking, adaptability, guilt consciousness and dependability of the potential hires," says Gundecha, whose clients include Vuclip and Pune-based food ordering startup TastyKhana. Jombay uses assessment and analytics to find the cultural fitment of the candidate to the job and the company.

Sparsh Gupta, partner and CTO of Wingify, says that they have used external agency tests to whittle down the number of applicants while hiring for customer happiness (support) engineers where the pool of available talent tends to be very big.

Overall, he says, the passion and the vision of the hires are hugely important. "Every product we design is like a baby. We nurture it, design it and spend months, even years, refining it. We need people who believe that we can become the next big thing and work towards making it happen."

Economic Times ND 10/10/2014 P-2

After NaMo's Wish, UGC Wants You to Learn Yoga & Meditation

Asks all recognised universities to start offering lessons on campus to promote 'holistic well being'

Ritika.Chopra@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's aggressive promotion of yoga seems to have made a believer out of the country's higher education regulator.

Just a few days after he urged world leaders at the United Nations to adopt an International Yoga Day, the University Grants Commission (UGC), under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, has asked all recognised universities to start offering yoga and meditation lessons on campus to promote "holistic well being" of students.

It's unclear at this point whether these lessons would be compulsory for students. Universities will have to employ qualified yoga instructors for this purpose and are also free to charge a small fee from participants.

NEED OF THE HOUR

Health clusters are need of the hour. It might be new to India, but abroad it's the norm: UGC official

The yoga sessions will be part of UGC's positive health programme, an extension of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan launched by HRD minister Smriti Irani on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Anand, Gujarat, last week. Under the 'Swachh Bharat, Swasthya Bharat' (Clean India, Healthy India) scheme, universities will have to promote healthy living along with cleanliness. The UGC will provide financial assistance to universities to implement this scheme.

"A clean and healthy mind is as important as clean environment. Students these days are stressed and do not lead a healthy lifestyle. Health clusters in universities are the need of the hour. This idea might be new to India, but abroad it's the norm," said a senior UGC official, who did not wish to be identified.

Apart from yoga, universities and affiliated colleges are also expected to generate awareness about healthy diets, drugs and substance abuse, benefits of exercise and also promote communal harmony. Although the circular hasn't made implementation of 'Swachh Bharat, Swasthya Bharat' compulsory, UGC officials told **ET** that they expect that most educational institutions dependent on grants will comply.

This is not UGC's first attempt at promoting yoga. Under the XI Five-Year Plan, the regulator had initiated a scheme for 'Promotion of Yoga Education and Practice & Positive Health in Universities', which was a non-starter. "The government's focus on cleanliness and healthy living gave fresh lease of life to the proposal to promote yoga on campuses," said another UGC official.

ANIRBAN BORA

QUITE HOPEFUL

UGC officials expect that most educational institutions dependent on grants will comply

A NON-STARTER

Under XI 5-yr Plan, UGC initiated a scheme for 'Promotion of Yoga Education', which remained a non-starter

Times Of India ND 10/10/2014 P-27

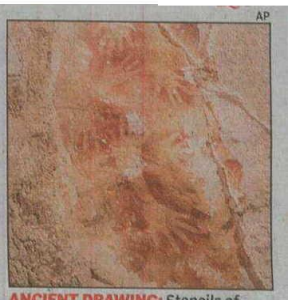
Indonesian cave art may be oldest in world

Washington: Ancient cave drawings in Indonesia are as old as famous prehistoric art in Europe, according to a new study that shows human ancestors were drawing all over the world 40,000 years ago. And it hints at an even earlier dawn of creativity in modern humans, going back to Africa, than scientists had thought.

Archaeologists calculated that a dozen stencils of hands in mulberry red and two detailed drawings of an animal described as a "pig-deer" are between 35,000 to 40,000 years old, based on levels of decay of the element uranium. That puts the art found in Sulawesi, southeast of Borneo, in the same rough time period as drawings found in Spain and a famous cave in France.

And one of the Indonesian handprints, pegged as at least 39,900 years old, is now the oldest hand stencil known to science, according to a new study published on Wednesday in the journal Nature. These are more than 100 Indonesian cave drawings that have been known since 1950.

In 2011, scientists noticed some strange outcroppings on the drawings. Those mineral deposits would make it possible to use the new technology of uranium decay dating to figure out how old the art is. So they tested the cave popcorn that had grown over the stencils that would give a minimum age. It was near 40,000 years. "Whoa, it was not expected," said study author Maxime Aubert, an archaeologist and geochemist at Griffith University in Australia. AP



AP

ANCIENT DRAWING: Stencils of hands in a cave in Indonesia

IISc nanoscientists plan mission into a live brain

By Nirad Mudur, Bangalore Mirror Bureau | Oct 9, 2014, 09.46 PM IST

http://www.bangaloremirror.com/others/sci-tech/IISc-nanoscientists-plan-mission-into-a-live-brain/articleshow/44760549.cms

The will conduct experiments by sending 'explorers' into a live mouse to see if they can deliver drugs to some areas of the brain to tackle mental diseases

Indian scientists may have mastered the art of sending a spacecraft to Mars 65 crore kilometres away from Earth; now, another set of Indian scientists are trying to perfect the technique of sending microscopic voyagers into the brain of a live animal to see whether life-saving drugs can be delivered to take mental disease head on.

Researchers at the Bangalore-based Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE), Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore, are working on sending such explorers (called nano-voyagers), measuring 5 microns in length (one micron is one-millionth of a metre) and one micron in width, to parts of the brain through the blood vessels of mice.

Such an experiment was tested successfully in laboratory conditions in human blood, fluids as well as in water under the microscopes. But this will be the first time that such an experiment will be conducted on a live animal model.

Assistant Professor Ambarish Ghosh at CeNSE told Bangalore Mirror that he and his team along with those from Material Research Centre of IISc will collaborate with a senior scientist, Prof Sujit Sikdar from IISc's Molecular Biophysics Unit (MBU) to send the nano-voyager into the brain of a live mouse.

"We want to try and move the nano-voyager in the brain of a live mouse in a controlled fashion and see whether drugs can be effectively delivered," he said. The MBU is equipped with a deep tissue imager which will help monitor the movement of the nano-voyager within the mouse's brain.

The scientists have overcome major challenges to get so far. Ghosh said they first had to decide what kind of locomotion would be ideal for moving the nano-voyager in the blood with ease. "The reason is that the cells in blood follow a concentrated suspension. So to move through a bed of objects (in the blood) is not very easy," he said.

Having studied the movement of spermatozoa and the escherichia coli (or E. coli), they chose the latter. He explained that spermatozoa used a filament to crack like a whiplash to move forward while the E. coli used rapid rotation of its head and tail to gain the forward movement, much like a cock-screw used to open a champagne bottle.

Having achieved that, the scientists then decided to use magnetic force as the propellant for the nano-voyager.

The next thing was crucial - the very safety of injecting a foreign substance into a body and ensuring that it does not prove to be toxic. The nano-voyager is made of silicon-dioxide (which is basically glass). "We first did the experiment in water and it had gone well. But when we decided to do it in blood, we realized that the screw gets immediately edged. The irons in blood are very corrosive. Blood is a very corrosive and a nasty material in that sense. So that was the major issue," he said. But a chance meeting with Prof Srinivasrao Shivshankar of MRC came as a blessing. MRC's researchers had developed zinc ferrites - a very thin film of material that fights corrosion - which was found to be biocompatible, and the nano-voyager was coated with that.

The scientists are also working on enabling these nano-voyagers interact with each other while on the mission - something like nano robots. He said the scientists are also working on making the nano-voyager faster in thicker fluids (right now the speed is 15 microns per second) like the normal human blood.

But Ghosh and the others are confident that these challenges would be overcome.

And when they do, experiments which till now remained in the realm of science fiction like Inner space (1987) or Fantastic Voyage (1966) would be a reality.

Interestingly, these very science fiction movies had encouraged the scientists to set in pursuit of developing some "vehicles" to enter the body to carry out treatment directly at the 'source' of the problem.

These nano-votagers can also be used to measure the viscosity of different types of fluids.

UGC asks varsities to send academic data

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolhapur/UGC-asks-varsities-to-send-academic-data/articleshow/44731897.cms

KOLHAPUR: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked universities from across the country to send academic data to make various policy decisions in higher education. According to a Shivaji University, Kolhapur (SUK) circular dated October 8, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has asked for information on the teaching and non-teaching staff to be submitted at the earliest.

Arjun Rajage, Board of Colleges and University Development (BCUD) director, said, "We asked all 281 affiliated colleges across the Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts to produce the information on or before October 16 in hard copy and soft copy versions to the university. The information will provide details regarding academic status in universities across the country, which will be used to make policy decisions, regarding fund allocations and other such matters."

The UGC also wants information regarding the number of teaching and non-teaching positions in a university, number of class I-IV positions, total number of sanctioned positions, total number of existing vacant positions and number of employees with disabilities.

Rajage added that the MHRD is acquiring academic details through several other programmes as well. One of them is the 'All India survey on Higher education' (AISHE). "We have also invited details for AISHE. Over 200 colleges have filled in the required details, which have been submitted to the MHRD. Details about this will soon be released," he said.

The AISHE covers information on enrolment at various levels, human resources, infrastructure, income and expenditure for all types of institutions engaged in higher education. These may include arts, science, agriculture, teacher education, management, and engineering including polytechnics, medical and nursing.

Kolhapur: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked Universities across the country to send the academic data to make various policy decisions in higher education. According to a Shivaji University, Kolhapur (SUK) circular dated October 8, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has asked the information on teaching and non-teaching staff to be submitted at the earliest.

"We have asked all the 281 affiliated colleges in the Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts to produce the information on or before October 16 in hard copy and soft copy version to the university. The information ultimately will provide the details regarding academic status in the universities across the country, which will be used in making policy decision regarding the fund allocations and others," said Arjun Rajage, Director, Board of Colleges and University Development (BCUD).

The information that has been sought by UGC requires-number of teaching and non-teaching positions in a university, number of class I to class IV positions, total number of sanctioned positions, total number of vacant positions existing, and number of employees with disabilities.

According to BCUD Rajage, the MHRD is covering the academic details through several other programs too; one of them being 'All India survey on Higher education' (AISHE).

"We have invited details for AISHE too; in fact over 200 colleges have filled in the required details, which has been submitted to the MHRD. Details about it will soon be released," he said.

It has to be noted that the AISHE covers information on enrolment at various levels, human resources, infrastructure, income and the expenditure for all types of institutions engaged in higher education, which may include arts, science, agriculture, teacher education, management, and engineering including polytechnics, medical and nursing.