

Newspaper Clips

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HT Mumbai

IIT-B, computer engineering are top choices for aspirants

JEE COUNSELLING As legal tangle over NIT normalisation intensifies, candidates may opt for newer IITs

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NEW DELHI: The first round of counselling for the Indian Institutes of Technology closed on Sunday with IIT-Bombay emerging as the top choice among those who cleared the second round of the joint entrance test, with IIT-Delhi and IIT-Madras coming next. The most preferred course among the candidates was computer engineering.

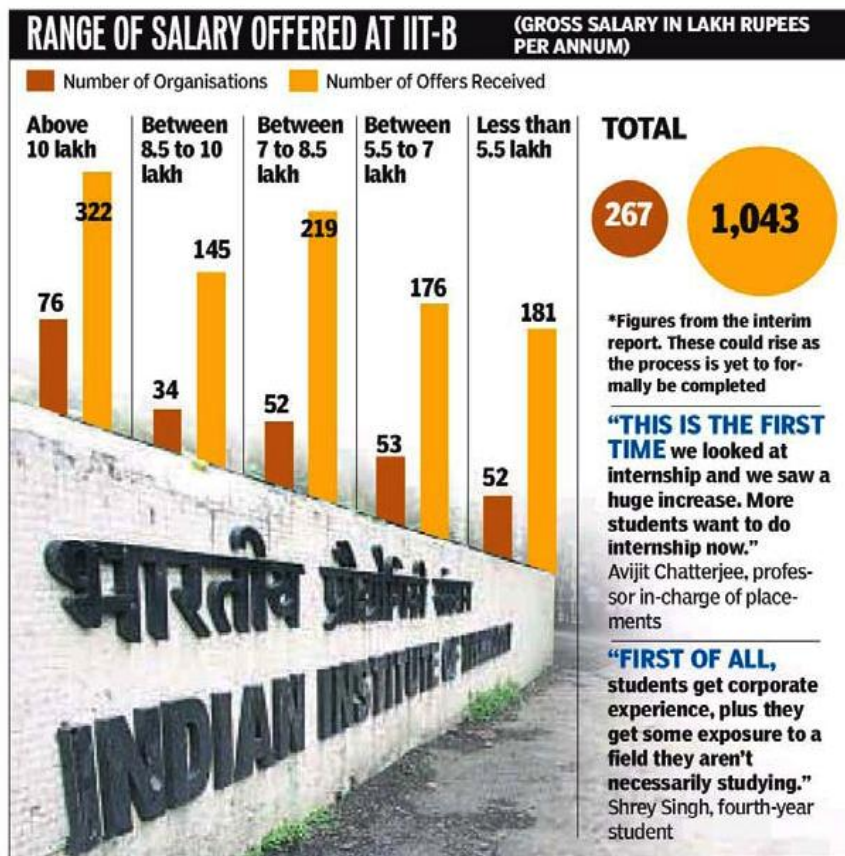
The first round of seat allotment for the IITs could be announced on July 3.

Meanwhile, admission to various National Institutes of Technology (NITs) seems to move towards more complexity after being mired in legal tussles. While the Andhra Pradesh high court had issued a notice to the HRD ministry on a petition challenging the normalisation procedure on July 27, the Delhi high court on Monday asked the respondents to file a reply within three weeks on a similar petition challenging the normalisation process.

The way normalisation is being worked out, it could result in a student with high score in JEE (Main) and not so low percentage in Class 12 (say 90%) could have a rank much lower than a friend who scored less in JEE (Main) but had a higher percentage in the board results. The procedure has been opposed by a large section of students and parents claiming that it is discriminatory.

While issuing notice to the HRD ministry and the executive director JEE (Main), the Andhra Pradesh high court had given an interim order that the selection of students for admission to NITs and centrally-funded institutes shall be subject to further orders.

Students who had applied to the NITs were expecting their rank list on July 1. Considering the uncertainty that hangs over the normalisation formula of the NIT exam, less popular institutes like ISM Dhanbad and some new IITs may gain popularity.



45% INCREASE IN INTERNSHIP AT IIT-BOMBAY

MUMBAI: More IIT-B students go for internship at companies and universities this year, with the process being formalised and streamlined by the institute placement office.

There was a nearly 50% increase in internship at IIT-B over last year (909 compared to 605 last year). The internship season started around mid-August 2012 and continued till mid-May. This was also a part of the interim placement report that the institute has prepared.

"This is the first time we looked at internship and we saw a huge increase," said Avijit Chatterjee, professor in-charge of placements. "More students want to do internship and companies also make placement offers based on internship." Internship is not a formal requirement at the institute but students prefer to do it for various reasons. Internships at universities included those in India (27 students) as well as in countries such as Germany (students), USA (13 students).

BHAVYA DORE

Recruiters offer 322 jobs, ₹10 lakh packages

Bhavya Dore

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MUMBAI: Recruiters made 322 offers in the topmost salary bracket to students of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) this year despite global recession.

Though the number is the same as last year, the salary brackets have been scaled up, with the top bracket moved up from Rs9.5 lakh and above to Rs10 lakh and over. Subsequent brackets have also been revised upwards this year.

(It [placement] has been roughly the same as that of last year.)

AVIJIT CHATTERJEE,
placement in-charge, IIT-B

The latest data is from the institute's interim placement report for 2012-2013, with the final report due by the end of the month once placements are completed by mid-July.

So far, 267 companies have made 1,043 offers to IIT-B grads. In 2011-12, 262 companies had

made 1,060 offers, but the figure is likely to reach or even breach last year's mark after the procedure is completed.

"It has been roughly the same as last year," said Avijit Chatterjee, professor in-charge of placements at IIT-B. He estimated the average salary this year at roughly Rs8 lakh per annum, an upward movement compared to Rs7.5 lakh last year.

"Unlike the general atmosphere of uncertainty due to global economic slowdown and recession, IIT-Bombay entered

its placement season with confidence due to its high quality of students and strong corporate relationships," said the introduction to the report.

A sector-wise analysis of the report showed that engineering and core areas continued to be dominant, with more than two-thirds of the students opting for science, engineering and technology-oriented jobs.

The other big recruiters were companies in the consulting, financial services and analytical sectors.

Plea on NIT, IIT admissions

» The Centre and CBSE were on Monday directed by the Delhi High Court to respond to a plea challenging the government's assessment process for admission to undergraduate engineering programmes in top institutes, including IIT and NIT, *PTI* reports from New Delhi.

Issuing notices to the HRD ministry, and Central Board of Secondary Education which conducts the entrance test, Justice V K Jain sought their responses on a plea challenging the "normalisation procedure" adopted for admissions in top engineering colleges.

Filing a petition through advocates Aritra Das and Rashi Bansal, an engineering aspirant Arnav Ohri said, "While adopting the normalisation procedure, the gov-

ernment has ignored the vital fact that several Boards in India (like CBSE, ICSE, and State Boards like Bihar Board, UP Board) have different curriculum, system of examinations and marking schemes. Therefore, giving 40 per cent weightage to the XII board exams is arbitrary and unconstitutional.

"This new policy and assessment pattern was introduced by the then HRD minister Kapil Sibal last year and the entrance examinations, including IIT-JEE 2013, were held under this new formula. In May-June, 2013, the JEE Interface Group issued a notification explaining the normalisation procedure adopted to prepare the All India rank of the candidates taking JEE (Mains) examination for the academic year 2013-2014."

What makes IITs tick

▶ A lateral, rather than top-down, incentive system will improve educational outcomes.

Dinsha Mistree

The Indian state faces a serious need to overhaul its mechanisms of accountability. According to a Pew Research Poll conducted in 2010, 98 per cent of Indian citizens classify government corruption as a "very big" or a "moderately big" problem facing the country.

There is good reason for citizens to be concerned. Every year, the government loses countless crores of rupees to bribery and embezzlement. Related to the lost money are the lost man-hours. Worker absenteeism, defined as the practice of staying away from work without good reason, is another huge problem.

A recent study conducted by Harvard and Princeton economists revealed that 25 per cent of public primary school teachers

INDIA IN TRANSITION

This article is by special arrangement with the Center for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania.

and 40 per cent of government healthcare workers are absent from their jobs on any given day.

Unfortunately, introducing new mechanisms of accountability can be a daunting prospect. It is apparent that certain institutions and accountability procedures, when copied from other (typically Western) societies, have fizzled out when introduced to the sub-continent.

MONITORING ISSUES

Also, many forms of accountability are prohibitively costly for a developing country like India. Consider the problem of teacher absenteeism.

Typical top-down recommendations would involve the principal (in this case, the government) redefining its relationship with the agent (the teacher) either by incentivising good behaviour, punishing bad behaviour, or through some combination of the two. Providing such incentives and puni-



IIT faculty are driven by pride and peer recognition.

shments would require close monitoring; the government would need to know which teachers are doing their jobs and which are not.

Closely monitoring such behaviour becomes a formidable challenge when one considers that there are almost 2.5 million primary school teachers spread across the country, from the urban centres to the rural fringes. And even if the costs of monitoring were negligible, the costs borne from providing incentives or from imposing penalties would be quite substantial.

However, while much of the state requires serious reform, it is worth stressing that not all government institutions in India are riddled by corruption and absenteeism. Indeed, there are several agencies within the government where accountability is monitored and enforced.

One such government agency which is known to execute its mission well are the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

IITs STAND OUT

The IITs are India's premier engineering and science universities. Each year, many of their undergraduates matriculate to the top graduate programmes in the world; several others enter India's corporate ranks.

Top-quality research is produced at each of the sixteen campuses. Most impressive of all is that such excellence comes from what would be considered a shoestring budget compared to other major engineering universities.

At the heart of any university

is the faculty, and the IITs are no exception. Professors design and conduct an entirely meritocratic entrance exam, a remarkable process given that entrances can be bought at so many other universities and government agencies.

Taking money for grades, another common feature in the Indian educational system, never happens. And most strikingly, IIT faculty show up to teach their classes; faculty absenteeism is virtually non-existent.

Additionally, many professors complement their teaching loads with extensive student mentoring, to say nothing of the long hours spent running labs and conducting research.

Such high-level performance is all the more remarkable when one considers that IIT faculty are employees of the central government. Like other bureaucrats in India, protections make it difficult for them to be fired.

Indeed, as the IITs are deemed to be Institutions of National Importance, politicians and outside ministries face serious restrictions in even reprimanding delinquent faculty. Also, like other bureaucrats, faculty pay automatically increases over time, with pay grades mirroring those of other government officials.

Put simply, IIT faculty are not subject to the typical principal-agent mechanisms that we would expect of such a well-functioning and accountable organisation.

In order to understand the motivations and to identify accountability mechanisms driv-

ing the performance of IIT faculty, I conducted an in-depth study of IITs during the 2011-12 academic year. In addition to interviewing professors at several different campuses across India, I designed and executed a survey across the entire IIT faculty. I received 1,141 completed responses, representing a 30 per cent response rate across the sixteen campuses.

INCENTIVE SYSTEM

The results suggest that the high performance of IIT faculty is not due to top-down mechanisms of accountability, but instead, due to lateral accountability across the faculty.

Specifically, the faculty possess a strong sense of obligation to their local departments and to their broader scholarly communities. These broader communities extend across different universities and even across countries and continents.

During semi-structured interviews, when professors were asked why they show up to teach their classes, they did not mention the fear of punishment from their bosses, nor did they mention any monetary incentives. Instead, they cited motivations of professional standing: respondents want to be regarded as good teachers, or, at least, they do not want to be known by students and other professors as the faculty member who shirks his or her teaching duties.

Likewise, when faculty were asked about their research motivations, respondents described their desires for recognition in their fields of expertise. IIT pro-

fessors strive to attain professional accolades from their scholarly networks, as they want to be regarded as important researchers. More than anything else, the faculty of IITs are motivated to do their jobs because they crave recognition from their scholarly peers.

It should be noted that in this regard, IIT professors are not unlike professors at many other universities. Many tenured faculty in the United States (who also do not face the threat of being fired) also state that they continue to pursue professional excellence because they want to improve their reputation among their scholarly peers.

LATERAL ACCOUNTABILITY

What can we learn from the IITs? First, without such lateral accountability, the IITs probably would suffer from the accountability issues afflicting other parts of the Indian state, with professors shirking their duties while taking their pay.

While this argument for lateral accountability can be applied to other government officials such as teachers, healthcare workers, judges, and soldiers, it should be immediately applied to other universities in India.

Profound shifts are taking place across the higher education landscape in India, from dramatic demand-driven expansion to the government removing itself from accrediting and licensing universities. Fostering this culture of lateral accountability amongst the faculty of other Indian universities will become even more important in creating positive outcomes.

Second, such a form of lateral accountability is incredibly effective and we know that it already works in India. It can also be very cheap. Motivations like being a referee for an academic journal carry no financial benefit, and yet professors take on this responsibility to display their commitment to scholarly service. Similarly, a department-determined title promotion from assistant to associate professor may come with no salary increase, but it is highly prized nonetheless.

Developing and applying similar mechanisms of lateral accountability to other agencies and institutions may prove to be a viable and economic approach for improving accountability across the Indian state.

The author is a Ph.D student in the Department of Politics at Princeton University.

Crore-Plus Salaries Make Their Debut at IIM-B Executive MBA

Best placement in programme's history as average salary too goes up; institutes tweak courses in line with global standards

ANUMEHA CHATURVEDI,
RICA BHATTACHARYYA &
DEVINA SENGUPTA
NEW DELHI | MUMBAI | BANGALORE

American multinational e-commerce company Amazon and at least one other company have just offered compensation packages in excess of Rs 1 crore for the first time to two students from IIM Bangalore's full-time Executive Post Graduate Programme (EPGP), a sign that recruiters are not totally averse to hiring bright talent even in this bleak environment.

One student has been placed in India, and the other in the US, Amazon declined to comment on an ET query.

The average salary at IIM-B also went up to ₹26 lakh this year from Rs 23 lakh last year. About 55 companies came to recruit for the programme for a batch of 74 students, and about 50% were repeat recruiters. This is the best placement season in IIM Bangalore's EPG's four-year history.

"The one-year programme, with its four-term model and an international immersion programme, is comparable to global business schools," says professor Sankarshan Basu, chairperson, career development services at the institute. The international immersion module enables students to go to overseas business schools to gain exposure. It also helps them build networks with their alumni, faculty members and corporates overseas.

For institutes that offer full-time, one-year programmes, the trend is a refreshing change. In the past, the programmes have been in the sidelines for their lack of summer internship options — a prerequisite for job offers — and the absence of a 'holistic' two-year perspective. This year, though, they seem to be finding favour with recruiters at campuses like IIM Bangalore, IIM Lucknow, MDI Gurgaon and SP Jain in Mumbai.

Corporates are warming up to the content of these programmes, encouraged in part by success stories. For instance, NC Bopanna, COO of manufacturing firm Keld Ellentoft and Piyush Deogirkar, COO of Mother Earth Retail have graduated from IIM-B's programme.

RECRUITERS QUEUE UP

Consulting firm KPMG would earlier hesitate to recruit from one-year MBA programmes. Now, however, it is seeing value in the course. "Some of these programmes have successfully distilled what was taught in two years at these institutes with their modules, faculty and course content," says Narayanan Ramaswamy, partner — management consulting & national indus-

The Changing Face of One-Year MBAs

IIM Bangalore

₹1 CRORE

Two students received salaries in excess of Rs 1 crore for first time ever

AVERAGE SALARY

This Year Last Year
₹26 LAKH ₹23 LAKH

Work Experience Criterion
Reduced to 5-15 years for next year's batch from 7-15 years

Course Shuffle:
Emerging Economies and Entrepreneurial Management are now core courses

New Addition: Business project component in the international immersion programme

SPJIMR, Mumbai

HIGHEST SALARY

This Year Last Year
₹40.5 LAKH ₹28.5 LAKH

AVERAGE SALARY

This Year Last Year
₹16.71 LAKH ₹15.63 LAKH

TIED UP with schools in the US for advanced courses in students' area of specialisation

SCHOOLS: NYU Stern, Michigan State Univ & USC Marshall Business School

MDI Gurgaon

HIGHEST SALARY

This Year Last Year
₹18.2 LAKH ₹16.8 LAKH

AVERAGE SALARY

This Year Last Year
₹13.2 LAKH ₹10.2 LAKH

Genpact, Vision Express, and TCS among the top

16 COS came to recruit this year v/s 7 last year

IIM Lucknow

THE international business module to be held at ESCP Europe, Berlin & Paris, on Managing in a European Business Env't

DELOITTE, EXL Services, IBM, Ericsson and TCS among the top recruiters

NEW companies this year: IBM, Escorts, eClerx, Mu Sigma and Embitel

try head for education, KPMG.

He believes the Indian market for one-year MBA programmes is developing. "The successful alumni of these programmes is another indicator," he adds.

Executive MBA programmes offer a good avenue to source experienced profiles for niche skill sets, says Srikantan Moorthy, senior VP and group head — HR. Although the company's requirements are primarily in areas such as consulting and sales, they have also sourced roles in project management and technology. "In recent years, the placement opportunities for these programmes have seen significant improvement," he says.

At other institutes offering the programme, it's the same encouraging story. The highest salary for the one-year MBA programme at SP Jain Institute of Management & Research this year has gone up to ₹40.5 lakh for India compared with ₹28.5 lakh last year. The average salary has gone up to ₹16.71 lakh from ₹15.63 lakh last year. Top recruiters included Amazon, KPMG, ICICI Bank, Infosys and McKinsey.

MDI Gurgaon, one of the first in the country to start a one-year, full-time, post-graduate programme for executives in 1988, has also reported better sal-

aries. The highest compensation this year was at ₹18.2 lakh compared with ₹16.8 lakh last year. The average salary this year is at ₹13.2 lakh compared with ₹10.2 lakh last year. "Surprisingly, the salary package increased this year in spite of the economy not being in good shape," says Kanwal Kapil, associate professor and chairperson, placements at the institute.

Institutes have attempted to strengthen credibility of the one-year programmes by making them more rigorous

2012-2013 commenced in November at the institute's Noida campus. Deloitte, IBM, EXL Services and TCS were among top recruiters.

Rahul Joshi, enrolled for IPMX this year after over a decade's service in the telecom sector — his last job was with Ericsson Global as lead solution architect. "My knowledge and ideas about business were fairly restricted," he says.

At the institute, he is learning about statistics, brand management and balance sheets and interacting with batchmates who are chartered accountants, brand managers and even people from the armed forces. "I am getting diverse insights about the business environment," he adds. Joshi wants to be an entrepreneur.

MORE RIGOUR

On their part, the institutes have attempted to strengthen the programmes' credibility by making them more rigorous through changes in course content and modules on international immersion. "We are making the programme much more action-oriented so that every student will have multiple opportunities to get involved with organisations and the senior management," says professor G Shainesh, chairperson of the EPGP programme at IIM Bangalore. Emerging Economies and Entrepreneurial Management are now offered as core courses in the programme, he says.

IIM-B has also included a business project component in its international immersion programme, which was earlier restricted to site visits. Student groups will work on projects spon-

sored by organisations in Singapore this year in a consulting mode. A typical project will be spread over six to eight weeks, starting with a brief given by the sponsor. It will involve a focused problem or opportunity analysis, data collection and multiple interactions with project sponsors. During the two weeks of international immersion, being hosted at the National University of Singapore, students will present their recommendations to the sponsoring organisation.

IIM-B has also reduced the work experience criterion for executives to 5-15 years for next year from 7-15 years, so as to attract a wider set of executives.

"One of the significant changes over the past two years at SP Jain has been the focus on the international immersion programme," adds Indu Niranjan, a professor of finance and deputy director of the PGP programme at the institute. SP Jain has tied up with highly-ranked schools in the US, and the participants will be going there for three weeks' advanced courses in the area of specialisation, she says.

The schools for this year are NYU Stern for finance, Michigan State University for business analytics and operations and USC Marshall Business School for marketing. "We are looking at creating concentrations within the specialisation to increase the employability of the participants and enable them to be more focused in the domain and function," says Niranjan.

At IIM Lucknow, the international business module will be held at ESCP Europe, Berlin and Paris in September. The focus will be on managing complexities and prospects in the European business environment.

Indian business schools compete seriously with other global business schools, says William Litwack, a consultant for IIM Bangalore's EPGP who has worked on projects for Insead. "In terms of average GMAT scores, project work and the international immersion component, some of these schools are at the same level as global B-schools offering a one-year MBA," he says. The number of class hours are almost the same as a two-year MBA, and these professionals have to work harder, he adds.

But KPMG's Ramswamy feels there is still a long way to go. "Indian business schools need to be much more agile and flexible according to the changing needs of industry, like global business schools," he says. If institutes focus on non-traditional modes of course content and faculty, the one-year MBA can reach greater heights, he says.

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45% INCREASE IN INTERNSHIP AT IIT-BOMBAY

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BHAVYA DORE

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Raising the standard of Indian MBAs

Until recently, the two-year PGP course, the flagship program at all IIMs, has been the gold standard of MBA programs in India. But calling them MBAs is actually a misnomer.

One problem is that IIMs award diplomas rather than degrees. But the real impediment is the fact that international accreditation organizations such as the Association of MBAs (AMBA) require a program's students to have an average of at least five years work experience and a minimum of three years.

PGP courses do not meet this criterion. They often admit students with no full-time work experience and the average is around two years.

Officially, accreditation organizations consider PGPs to be an MBM - Masters in Business and Management. Unofficially, the PGPs usually characterize themselves as "MBA-equivalent".

From the founding of the first IIMs in Calcutta and Ahmedabad in 1961 followed by IIM Bangalore in 1973 (there are now a total of 13), this was the model that the brightest students in India aspired to.

But this comfortable status quo was challenged with the creation of ISB, the Indian School of Business, in Hyderabad in 2001. Its flagship program is of one year duration and it requires more work experience for admission - the minimum is normally two years and the class average is about five years.

It turned out that there was a strong demand for ISB's approach and their class size has grown to more than 700 per year. As you might expect, it wasn't long before several of the IIMs followed suit and established their own one year programs - first the PGPX at IIMA in 2007 and soon after the EPGP at IIMB and similar programs at IIMs in Calcutta, Indore and Lucknow.

Internationally, most of the MBAs outside North America are one year programs.

Top-tier European schools like INSEAD in France, IMD in Switzerland and IE in Spain are well-established and highly-selective.

Average work experience varies from about five to seven years. In the US, most

Deccan Herald ND 02.07.2013 P-6



MBA programs still use the two-year model but this has started to change - three of the top twenty American B-schools now also offer one year full-time programs alongside their existing two-year programs.

MBA in India and abroad

Each program has its own particularities, so direct comparisons between programs in India and those abroad are difficult but it is possible to make a few generalizations.

- Students in Indian one-year programs, generally, have more work experience, up to 9.5 years in IIMB's EPGP and 10+ years at IIMA's PGPX.

- Average GMAT scores for students in Indian one-year programs are competitive with that of programs abroad.

- The percentage of students with engineering background is more than twice high in Indian programs (For example, 28% at INSEAD and 37% at Stanford versus 74% at ISB and 68% at PGPX).

- While the fees for Indian one-year programs represent a hefty investment, up to Rs 24 Lakhs, the cost of foreign one-year programs is more than double and can be close to three times as much.

- Most European and American MBA programs have a large percentage of international students, with 40+ nationalities often being represented in a class. Indian programs, on the other hand, have a negligible representation of international students. For example, ISB had only 13 out of a class of 700+, PGPX had just six with foreign passports, and most other programs had none. Indian programs do attract a significant number of NRIs, especially in the one-year programs. These include people who intend to re-settle in India after graduating as well as those intending to continue working abroad but wanting to take advantage of the lower cost of Indian programs. The IIMs are insistent that they are not placement agencies. Their priority is providing an academic experience of the highest international standard. While all Indian B-schools offer a range of placement support to students in their one year programs, they all make it clear that placement cannot be guaranteed. The fact remains, however, that for virtually all applicants to these programs, placement post-graduation is a top priority.

(The writer is a consultant in international management education)