

eNewspaper Clippings

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(TOI)

JNU to host SAARC univ, for present

New Delhi: The ambitious SAARC university will start functioning from a temporary campus in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) this year with 50 students in two MA courses. JNU on Wednesday agreed to provide its school of physical sciences building to be used as the temporary campus of the SAARC university which will offer MA in development economics and MA in computer application with students from all the eight member countries.

In a letter to SAARC university CEO prof G K Chadha, JNU vice-chancellor prof B B Bhattacharya said the building can be used for a year for running classes and administrative purposes, said an official source. PTI

NO LOOKING BACK?

DUTA goes to President

New Delhi: Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) members and an academic council member, along with member of Parliament Sitaram Yechury, met the President of India Pratibha Patil on Thursday, urging her to start an inquiry against DU vice chancellor Deepak Pental for alleged violation of the University Act. The President is the visitor of DU.

Even as many teachers decided not to heed DUTA's call to dissociate themselves from admission duties and with college principals assuring the vice-chancellor of the smooth conduct of admission 2010-11, DUTA continued with its effort to stall implementation of the semester system at the undergraduate level. TNN

ET

The World in 2030

DR KALAM'S DISTINCTIVE PROFILE FOR THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD IN 2030

- **A world** of nations where the divide between rural and urban, rich and the poor, developed and developing has narrowed down.
- **A world** of nations where there is an equitable distribution and adequate access to energy and quality water.
- **A world** where core competence of each nation are identified. Missions synergising the core competence of different nations lead to economic advantage and faster development for all the societies.
- **A world** of nations where all the students of all societies are imparted education with value system.
- **A world** of nations where affordable quality health care is available to all.
- **A world** of nations where the governance is responsive, transparent and corruption free.
- **A world** of nations where crimes against women and children are absent and none in the society feels

alienated.

- **A world** in which every nation is able to give a clean green environment to all its citizens.
- **A world** that is prosperous, healthy, secure, devoid of terrorism, peaceful and happy and continues with a sustainable growth path.
- **A world** of nations with creative leadership who ensure effective mechanisms to resolve conflicts between nations and societies in a timely keeping overall peace and prosperity of the world as a goal.

AKSHAY KOTHARI & ANKIT GUPTA

STANFORD UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

Breaking News: iPad app spells riches for desi duo

Indian Geeks' News Gathering Software Turns A Big Hit

Sruthijith KK NEW DELHI

ON THE first Sunday in April, 22-year-old Ankit Gupta woke earlier than usual and drove from Stanford University's leafy campus in Palo Alto, California, to his friend's place a few blocks away. Gupta and his Stanford mate Akshay Kothari, who is a year elder to him, made it to the old Apple retail store on University Avenue by 7 am. There were already more than a hundred people there. At 9 am, the store would open, and they would be among the first people to lay their hands on Apple's iPad, among the most anticipated products in history.

Two months later, on May 31, they were famous. They were on NBC's evening news, they were on The New York Times and they were on TechCrunch, the powerful technology blog. Since they bought their iPad, they had developed a software application, or app, that aggregates news from various sources on the iPad, as part of a college project. They started selling the software for \$3.99 on the Apple store, and in days, it had become the most downloaded paid app for the iPad, beating similar products from large companies such as Wired Magazine, NFL, The Wall Street Journal, Marvel Comics and several others.

They are living every aspiring entrepreneurs' dream. Their college project has turned into a viable business on a platform that is at the cutting edge of media. While hugely successful properties, such as Twitter, are yet to figure out how to make money, their little app is bringing in a steady trickle of cash. About Rs 60 lakh, in week one.

Sitting on a gold mine

More importantly, they are sitting on a gold mine. While 30,000 iPad users have downloaded their app so far, there are two million users out there. This year, the device is expected to sell six million units. By next week, they hope to release the same app for the iPhone. The size of the iPhone app market is estimated to be about \$3 billion. There are 50 million active iPhones out there. Their early success has won them the attention of about every important venture capitalist in Silicon Valley and scores of large media and technology companies.

What transpired in those two months is a story of extraordinary entrepreneurship. The idea was born out of personal frustration in the lack of good news consumption experience. They observed and figured the pain was widespread. They listened to potential customers. They built a prototype that was panned by early users. They tweaked and tweaked and tweaked. They priced well and marketed innovatively. Now they have tasted success, but continue to sleep only two hours a day.

LAUNCH PAD

Kothari and Gupta took diverse routes to Stanford. Kothari was born and raised in Ahmedabad, where he studied at the St Xavier's School, before he left for Purdue University in the US to study engineering. Subsequently, he

made it to Stanford for a masters' degree in electrical engineering. That is where he met Gupta, who he calls a "genius".

Mumbai-born Gupta showed plenty of promise early on. He came third in the Joint Entrance Exam to IIT, an exam he took armed with months of training from an institute in Kota, Rajasthan. After earning a computer science engineering degree from IIT Bombay, he went to Stanford for a masters degree in the same discipline.

In the last quarter of their two-year graduate programme, they got accepted into a "really cool" programme called Launch Pad, at the design school on campus. The idea of Launch Pad was simple: build a product and launch a company in three months. Months before they were set to graduate, Kothari and Gupta set about building a company in a campus renowned for nurturing engineering entrepreneurs. A project that had started in the computer science department later became Google.

"What leapt out at us about the iPad was that it was a great consumption device for news, videos or games. And we were really passionate about the news space and we were personally dissatisfied with the news consumption experience," Kothari said, speaking on the phone from California. That is how the idea for an iPad app that would offer an entirely new way of consuming news came about. The idea sounded ordinary compared with other projects that were being built at Launch Pad. Twogirls from the business school were building a website that would offer custom-tailored bras. The idea came from research that showed that 85% of American women wore the wrong-sized bra.

Kothari and Gupta walked around campus, went to shopping malls and observed how people consumed news. They spoke to people. The verdict was clear. People were not happy with their news consuming experience on mobile devices. Their hunch was validated; there was consumer pain in this segment. "The trouble is, while a consumer can tell you what he doesn't like, it's hard for him to pinpoint what he wants. Because that doesn't exist," says Gupta.

Kothari got to work on the user interface and Gupta started writing the software in COBjectivE, the coding language all Apple products understand.

In four days they completed the first prototype when some of the advisors as well as guests from the Silicon Valley—tech company executives and investors among them—took an early look at the project. "Try something else" was the most common response, says Kothari. "I wouldn't fault them, because the prototype was really basic," he says. They were told they had little to offer that others were not already offering.

They went back to building their product.

Were they not bogged down by the criticism? "Basically, I think once you set out to do something, you must put your whole heart into it," Kothari says. So the duo woke up every morning, went to a café in Palo Alto, and started designing and writing code.

"It was continuous improvement. We were tweaking the product every hour," Kothari says. Gupta would write the code and Kothari would go out with the app on the iPad to test it with potential consumers. Because the iPad was a new device, there were plenty of volunteers to play around with it. Once they started toying around with the device, Kothari would get them to try their app. "I would watch above their shoulders. Where they were going, which features they were using, and make notes," he says. He would go back and pass on the feedback to Gupta, who would have by then built an improved version. Kothari would go out again.

Thus they tweaked and perfected the app. "On day 1, people were like, 'this is awful'," Kothari says. By day 5, testers were asking if the app came bundled with the iPad. "Then we knew we were on to something," he says.

It was hard work. Gupta would code for hours at a stretch and Kothari would constantly look for ways to improve the 'look and feel'.

Once they were confident about the product, came the issue of pricing and marketing.

"On pricing, our thinking was this: Most apps are priced at \$4.99. We thought here is a guy who just spent money buying an iPad and he is looking to download some apps. A discount might attract him," Kothari says.

Then came the issue of marketing. "We feel it's key. Most engineers think if they build an awesome product it will sell itself. We knew that approach was not going to work in a crowded app marketplace," Kothari says.

So the duo made two videos featuring the app and uploaded them on YouTube, where it caught the attention of a couple of design blogs. Then they got wiser.

They made videos featuring how their favourite publications and blogs looked like on their app. Kothari spent 16 hours cutting a video and sent it to the publications and blogs that were featured in the video, pitching for coverage of their app.

SAARC VARSITY TO START FROM JNU CAMPUS

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The proposed SAARC university will start functioning from a temporary campus in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) this year with 50 students in two Masters courses.

JNU on Wednesday agreed to provide the School of Physical Sciences building as a makeshift campus of the SAARC university which will offer Masters in Development Economics and Masters in Computer Application where students from all the eight member countries can apply.

JNU Vice-Chancellor Prof B.B. Bhattacharya in a letter sent to SAARC University CEO Prof G.K. Chadha, said the building can be used for a year for running classes and administrative purposes.

"JNU has been extremely kind to grant us the space for the university. This will be a good beginning for the university," said Chaddha.

The campus of the university will be set up later, for which land is being acquired in Mehrauli in South Delhi.

Each course will have 25 students each. While 50 per cent of the seats will go to the host country, India, smaller countries will get minimum four per cent of seats.

Admission for the programmes will be carried out in July and classes are expected to start in August this year.



LIVING A DREAM: Kothari and Gupta

MBA abroad: Think about it

By Mohini Mishra

In the recent past, there has been a high outflow of Indian students to pursue management education abroad. Three-quarters of the 147 business schools across the world reported an increase in admission applications from India. Primarily, because Indian students are looking for high degree of sophistication, educational quality and exposure to a globally accepted and recognised curriculum to give their career a global edge. Demand for Business graduates has increased since 2005 and despite the economic slump, application volumes continue to climb.

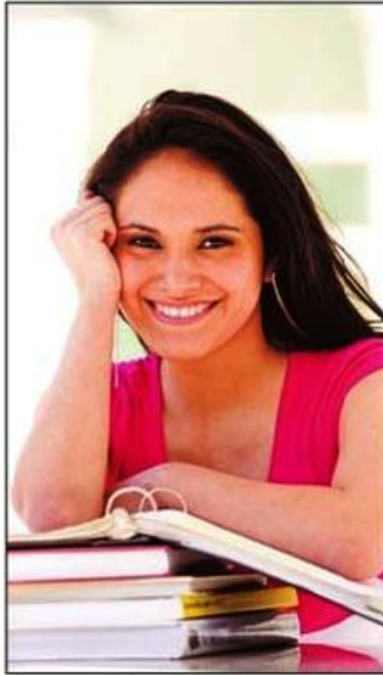
Globally yours

A very crucial question, which still pertains, is why students prefer going global for their management degrees? What impels them to zero in on GMAT preparations and MBA admission consultancies? "The answer to lies in two most obvious factors, international reach and network," says Kaushik Barua, head of operations, Global Reach, an organisation that offers recruitments, Training and promotion. He adds, "Indian institutions are still young in nature in comparison to their international counterparts."

Pankaj Malhotra, Education Consultant with Exodus Overseas, differs, "There are many students who fail to get admissions Indian B-schools. For them, going overseas is the last resort. Also, there are many who do not have the required percentage to seek admission in Indian institutions who apply abroad. It is easier and cheaper for them to pursue a foreign degree despite securing low marks.

Money matters

Students look for business programmes that are flexible in nature. This allows them to explore diversified job opportunities and best practices in related industries. Besides, even a tier-II US based B-school offers 100 per cent scholarships while Indian counterparts offer negligible or no scholarships.



"Those with a good score can even get 100 per cent scholarships. We had a student from Banaras Hindu University who got a full fee waiver and also earned extra money every month by working as a research assistant," says Nirmal Pal, Head, Management Programme, Penn State University, Pennsylvania.

Experience is must

When looking for MBA opportunities abroad, a three to four years working experience is a must. "It has been seen that 98 per cent of students who opt for foreign universities have work experiences as universities look for applicant quality rather than sheer quantity," shares Barua. United Kingdom (UK) has also recently adopted a policy of quality difference or checks called the Edu Trust for Institutions to maintain applicant quality.

Work visas

Top management institutions in United States (US), Canada, Australia, New Zealand and UK offer working visas for limited periods. If a student works in a for-

ign country, they are at a vantage point when seeking employment in India. This also accounts for a major reason why Indian students seek international degrees.

At times, these visa policies can also be a hindrance for students. It is so because countries like UK and US have tough visa policies, while in New Zealand, immigration rules make it difficult to return immediately after one gets the degree. Recently, Australia has also tightened their visa policy.

Options at a glance

B-schools like The Yale School of Management conduct education and research in leadership, economics, operations management, marketing, entrepreneurship and organisational behaviour. The Stephen M. Ross School of Business of University of Michigan, offers highly ranked course in Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Executive Education programs. Along with The Fuqua School of Business of Duke University, Wharton School of Business, Singapore, Canada and Australia, are also seeking attention students. These offer diploma courses and job oriented programmes.

According to industry body, The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), about five lakh Indians are studying abroad by spending about \$ 7.5 billion. Reason being, foreign countries look at education as export and India has is a good market. There are about 1,550 business schools in India producing over 100,000 management graduates every year. But it is not enough to meet the growing demand for management education. The increasingly globalised nature and context of business in the Indian economy require an expanded horizon of management and leadership, which can be achieved through continuous improvement and upgradation of capabilities, skills and mindset of management graduates.

US varsities keen to set up Indian base

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 2

VIRGINIA Tech and Georgetown University are closely working on plans to set up campuses in India, besides tying up with Indian institutes. They have confirmed the same with Union Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal.

Meeting Sibal along the sidelines of the Indo-US strategic dialogue in Washington, Dr Charles Steger, president of Virginia Tech, informed that his institution wishes to set up facility near Chennai for research in Bio-informatics, Nanosciences and Transportation studies. He also wanted to start select masters' and Doctoral degree programmes.

CEO of Georgetown University Dr Spiros Demolitsas expressed interest in projects aimed at social science research and suggested two areas — professional and executive development for policy makers and business leaders and research in climate change — requiring inter-disciplinary approach.

Sibal asked them to send concept notes, so that areas of mutual



Kapil Sibal with Virginia Tech president Charles W Steger in Washington on Tuesday. PTI

interest can be identified.

Dr Louis Goodman, Dean of School of International Service, has expressed interest in establishing an institute dedicated to Indian studies and offering inter-disciplinary courses on foreign policy and national security, science and technology policy, and sustainable development.

Addressing the Council on Foreign Relations, an important think-tank in Washington, Sibal said time has come for education to be delivered at the doorstep of the student, rather than students having to travel abroad. It is, thus, mutually beneficial for India and the US.

Sibal will meet US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Thursday.

Sibal meets Hillary

NEW DELHI: HRD Minister Kapil Sibal met the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Thursday in Washington and discussed wide-ranging issues relating to bilateral cooperation in the field of education. The two leaders discussed the use of ICT in enhancing the teaching-learning capabilities, research collaboration, biosciences, nano-sciences and other spheres besides the interest shown by US varsities in establishing institutes in India. **ENS**

PressDispalv Coverage

Expansion of universities ‘has devalued degrees’

- Daily Mail

DEGREE grades have become devalued amid the massive expansion of higher education and concerns over examiners’ marking, a report reveals.

It is ‘unrealistic’ to compare the standard of firsts, 2.1s and 2.2s between institutions, the Higher Education Policy Institute, known as Hepi, says.

This is because top universities such as Oxford and Cambridge attract brighter undergraduates and courses require ‘greater intensity of study’.

The analysis from the higher education think tank comes amid plans to ditch traditional degree classifications by 2015, with universities producing report cards giving a breakdown of marks instead.

A review of degree classifications last year concluded that the traditional system was no longer appropriate.

The Hepi report agrees the university sector ‘should press on’ with finding alternatives.

Problem areas highlighted include ‘variations in regulations and practices; lack of technical robustness; concerns about grading’.

There has also been enormous expansion of higher education since the mid-1980s, along with ‘increased competitive pressure on institutions associated with variable fees’.

Professor Steve Smith, president of Universities UK, agreed it is ‘unrealistic and simplistic to expect degree outcomes to be perfectly equivalent’.