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Vacant seats a big challenge for new IIMs

- Classes begin at Nagpur, Amritsar, Bodhgaya institutes, Sambalpur's turn from September end

Basant Kumar Mohanty

INITIAL HICCUPS



Silicon Institute of Technology from where the temporary campus of IIM Sambalpur runs. Telegraph picture

IIM Students in PGP courses

Nagpur	55
Amritsar	46
Bodhgaya	30

Admission on at IIM Sambalpur, IIM Visakhapatnam and IIM Sirmaur

New Delhi, Sept. 5: The new Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) started this year are struggling to fill up their seats, marking the beginning of their journey rather on a rough note.

The IIM Nagpur, the IIM Amritsar and the IIM Bodhgaya have started classes for the first batch of postgraduate programme (PGP) without being able to fill all the 60 seats. The institute in Bodhgaya could manage to fill just half the seats. The admission process is on in case of the IIMs in Sambalpur in Odisha, Visakhapatnam and Sirmaur in Himachal Pradesh.

The older institutes are mentoring the new ones to help build the IIM culture in them. The IIM Indore is mentoring the IIM Sambalpur, which was supposed to start classes in September first week, but it has deferred the launch to fourth week in view of the low rate of acceptance of offers for admission, IIM Indore sources said.

The IIM Indore has decided to hold registration on September 23 when the students will submit fees, certificates for verification and enrol for the courses. The IIM Visakhapatnam





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and the IIM Sirmaur, which are mentored by the IIM Bangalore and the IIM Lucknow respectively, would hold registrations shortly.

An IIM Bangalore (IIMB) official said its faculty members have designed the academic programme for the IIM Visakhapatnam.

"They (IIMB faculty) will be available to the students of IIM Visakhapatnam for interaction and discussion," the official said.

The IIMB will leverage its industry connections to ensure that the IIM Visakhapatnam students enjoy as holistic and transformative a learning experience as their peers at the IIM Bangalore, the official said.

Though the budget for 2014-15 proposed to set up the six new IIMs, the Union cabinet on June 24 finally approved the proposals after locations for the campuses had been finalised. By the time the cabinet approved, the older IIMs had already completed admission and started their classes for this session.

Manish Kumar Thakur, a professor at IIM Calcutta, which is mentoring the IIM Bodhgaya, said the admission process for the new institution was to be carried in short span of time. The students, who have qualified in the common admission test, were offered admission. Depending on acceptance of the offers, the process continued for some time. "These are initial hiccups associated with any new institution," Thakur said.

However, former director of the IIM Kozhikode Debashis Chatterjee said the MBA or the PGP courses were no longer considered passports for jobs. Market is discriminating students in view of their institutions. The new IIMs have not established their credentials, hence they are not getting good response.

Chatterjee said the older IIMs should have played greater role in creating the new institutions. Ideally, the older IIMs should have incubated the new ones on their main campus for initial years, so that the ambience and campus culture is created in the new institutions.

The present mentoring system asking faculty from the mentor institute to visit the new institute may not be implemented properly, he feared.

However, Thakur said replication of admission and academic practices of mentoring could be effective means of creating academic culture. Incubating the new institution in the mentoring institution is not necessary.

The IIM Ahmedabad, which is mentoring the IIM Nagpur, has conducted admission process for almost a month and managed to fill 55 seats. The IIM Kozhokode is mentoring the IIM Amritsar, which has given admission to 46 students.

An IIM faculty said locational disadvantage was one of the factors discouraging students to join some of the new institutions.

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