

Spy, violinist, cyclist, activist: IIM-A sees an eclectic bunch

'Diversity Indicates Evolving Economy, Redefined Managerial Roles'

Parth.Shastri@timesgroup.com

Ahmedabad: IIM-A is gearing up to host its 59th convocation Saturday, where one of the biggest classes of 148 PGPX (2023-24) students will bid adieu to their alma mater. This was one of the most diverse batches at the institute, with students from more than 30 sectors, officials said.

The soulful rendition of 'Mat kar maya ko ahankar...' from Hansal Mehta's Scam 1992 and a draft on electric vehicles by Niti Aayog have one thing in common. The men behind these two projects — violinist of the band Kabir Café Viswanath Ramaswamy and co-researcher and contributor for the EV policy Diewakarr Mittal — were batchmates of this very PGPX course.

Chartered accountant Kartik Bhatia decided to pursue PGPX after industry exposure to understand the startup ecosystem to become an entrepreneur himself. Shuchita Thapar, employed with an international human rights organisation, en-



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rolled for PGPX to get a perspective on management and its applications in social sectors. The batch also has doctors, armed forces veterans, and adventure enthusiasts like cyclists along with those from diverse sectors ranging from IT to FMCG, startups and aviation. Several women students lived with their children or families on campus to pursue their MBA dream, said officials.

Mohammed Irshadullah Gharbi's case is an example

of changing roles and aspirations. He worked with the ministry of home affairs for more than two years — for economic and technical intelligence in the Intelligence Bureau among other aspects — before joining PGPX. "I had industry exposure with PwC before I joined govt service. I felt that a management degree would give me exposure and a network to explore other avenues. The course was tough as I had to learn several things for the first time, but it

was quite enriching and will help me branch out into new territories," he said.

Prof Amit Karna, chairperson for the PGPX course, told TOI that peer learning plays a major role in management education which is why it is crucial to have diversity in opinions among class peers.

"If we compare the cohorts with the one a decade ago, there is greater diversity in terms of gender, sectors, educational background, and even the regions they come from. One of the reasons that the PGPX programme attracts students from the entire spectrum of disciplines is the expanding economy and redefined managerial roles. While we have one student who wishes to pursue political consulting, another wants to study management in the medical sector. This is becoming more mainstream," Prof Karna said, adding: "The eclectic batch profile not only makes each one of them good general managers but also prepares them well for leadership positions."