

## **The Telegraph**

### **Start-ups retract job offers to 140 IIT students**

New Delhi: Around 140 IIT graduates have been left in the lurch because 30 companies facing a financial crisis have allegedly retracted their offers six months after selection.

The All-IIT Placement Committee (AIPC) yesterday blacklisted these companies, making them ineligible for participation in campus recruitments for one year.

As many as 29 of the 30 companies are start-ups. IIT functionaries associated with campus recruitments said the development highlighted the crisis start-ups were facing.

The AIPC took the decision to blacklist the companies at a meeting in IIT Bombay yesterday.

Professor Kaustubha Mohanty, the chairperson of the AIPC who is associated with IIT Guwahati, told The Telegraph that around 140 students had been affected by the withdrawal of the offer letters.

Mohanty said never before had the IITs experienced such a huge number of retraction of offers.

"This is the first time so many students have been affected. There usually are one or two cases of withdrawal every year. The IITs always used to settle the cases with the organisations," Mohanty said.

These companies that have retracted this year are Zettata, Nowfloats, ConsultLane, Zimply, Peppertap, Portea Medical, Babajobs, GPSK, Hopscotch, SmartTrak Solar Systems Pvt Ltd, Crayon Data India Pvt Ltd, Glow Homes Technologies Pvt Ltd, Teskra Software Pvt Ltd, Grofers, Tenova India Pvt Ltd, Verity Knowledge Solutions, Excellence Tech, Stayzilla, Roadrunnr, Lexinnova Technologies, LeGarde Burnett Group, Johnson Electric Japan, Mera Hunar, Fundamental Education, Cashcare Technologies, Holamed, IndusInsight, Clicklabs, Grabhouse and Medd.

Zomato, which had been blacklisted last year, will continue to be so for another.

"Obviously, these companies are passing through a crisis. They are putting the careers of students in jeopardy," Mohanty said.

IIT Madras director, Professor Bhaskar Ramamurthi, said IITs could not allow the careers of students to suffer.

"We have to ensure that good companies participate in the campus recruitments. Many students reject the offers several months after accepting them. That should also stop," Ramamurthi said.

An IIT Delhi faculty member said the 30 companies had participated in campus placements in December. The faculty member said the companies had made the offers keeping in mind their potential and to withdraw them in May was "unethical".

"If they do not have the potential or ability, they should not have made the offers. They withdrew the offers at a time the students have little choice for placements," the faculty member said.

Mohanty said these companies would have to make presentations and prove that their financial health was sound to participate in placements again.

However, some of the companies did not agree with the IITs' version that they had retracted the offers.

ConsultLane founder Dinesh Sharma said the students whom the company had offered jobs had sought time to join. "I have written to the IITs against their decision. We have not revoked our offers," Sharma said.

Naina Sahni Parnaik, a Zomato official, said the company was blacklisted last year not because of withdrawal of offers but because IIT Delhi was not satisfied with its package, which included an equity component.

An IIT official said blacklisting would send a negative message and might affect placements and discourage start-ups, which the Narendra Modi government has been promoting.

"These companies may be facing problems, but to blacklist them is a harsh decision, particularly when we are developing a climate for the promotion of start-ups," the official said.