

ON THE SHELF

Are you getting ready to enter the job market or planning to go abroad for higher education? **SAUMYA PANT** reviews four useful books that will prepare you for the big plunge, covering areas as diverse as getting your resume right to how to crack the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

JOB AT FIRST SIGHT: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO YOUR FIRST JOB

By **RADHIKA MADHAVAN; RUPA, ₹95**

RADHIKA MADHAVAN is a professional consultant and trainer based in Bengaluru. In her 15-year career, she has worked in research, communications and HR. Having interviewed, hired and trained thousands of college students over the years, she shares her experiences and insights into the art of getting one's first job. The book covers the entire job hunt, from giving step-by-step directions on how to write an impressive resume to advice on ways of developing and using one's networking skills. Madhavan has made the book very easy to read by peppering it with examples that give the reader an idea of how to prepare or conduct oneself to get one's dream job.

INSTANT MBA: THINK, PERFORM AND EARN LIKE A TOP BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATE

By **NICHOLAS BATE; RESEARCH PRESS, ₹14.99**

NICHOLAS BATE has worked extensively with individuals and teams in organisations as similar and different as Microsoft, Marks & Spencer, Phillips, Hudson Global and Intel. The benefits of a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree can be massive — fast-track career advancement, a big fat salary packet and a top-notch executive lifestyle. But studying for an MBA isn't something to decide to do lightly. It is a big investment to take a year or more out of your career path, or commit endless weekends to a part-time version, and for many the cost of either of these options is prohibitive. Instant MBA is the must-have guide to making the most of yourself and your career prospects, whether you're studying for an MBA or just out to improve your prospects while you work. It is packed with inspiring expert practical advice on everything you need to know, from the original tried-and-tested business models to the newer ideas such as emotional intelligence and inspirational leadership, which modern MBA courses are focusing on.

BARRON'S IELTS WITH AUDIO CD: INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING SYSTEM

By **DR LIN LOUGHEED; NEW AGE INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS, ₹395**

THE IELTS is internationally recognised as fulfilling English language testing requirements for admission into academic courses by more than 380 American colleges and universities, as well as by higher education institutions in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. This brand-new test preparation manual covers all parts of the IELTS and all of its question types: multiple-choice, short answer, sentence completion, flowchart completion, graphs, tables, making notes, summarising, labelling diagrams and maps, classification, matching, and selecting from a list. The manual also offers four practice tests with answers, and listening and reading modules with answer keys.

POWERFUL VOCABULARY BUILDER

By **ANJANA AGARWAL; NEW AGE INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS, ₹299**

ANJANA AGARWAL has been teaching English language and literature for more than 12 years to secondary and senior secondary classes. For the past eight years, she's also been associated with international organisations that test the English language skills of students. Her book aims at helping students build their vocabulary — they are introduced to words they need to know to succeed — and offers quirky tips to help them retain newly learnt words for long-term usage. The book is recommended for those students who are appearing for various competitive examinations such as SAT, IELTS, TOEFL, GRE and GMAT as well as those who wish to enhance their communication skills. The practice and review exercises are particularly useful.

Frances Cairncross, rector of Oxford University's fourth oldest college, was in Delhi and Mumbai to tap funds for scholarships aimed exclusively at Indian graduate students

‘If you're doing your course work seriously, you'll barely get six hours to sleep. We would like our students not to worry constantly about working after completing their academic work.’

FRANCES CAIRNCROSS, Rector, Exeter College, University of Oxford

By **Sourish Bhattacharyya**

WHAT was common to Pakistan's first prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan, India's one-time education minister, Humayun Kabir, and Pakistan-born writer and filmmaker Tariq Ali? What's the common thread in the lives of J.R.R. Tolkien, the man who wrote *The Lord of the Rings*, and Martin Amis, one of Britain's best-known contemporary novelists best-known for *London Fields*? And what's the link between the first man to run a mile in less than four minutes, Roger Bannister, and the actor Richard Burton? They all went to Exeter, the fourth oldest constituent college of the University of Oxford founded in 1314.

Normally, the rector of an Oxford college with such distinguished pedigree and a reasonably good endowment wouldn't have a reason to come here to raise funds for scholarships aimed at Indian graduate students. But Frances Cairncross, formerly a senior editor with *The Economist* and the second woman to be made rector of a college that did not admit female students till 1979, believes that Indian students fit seamlessly into Exeter's culture of questioning received wisdom and not accepting a position without argument.

“We find these qualities in Indian students more than

There aren't more than 10-12 Indians at Exeter. Cairncross proposes to change this.

their peers from many other societies,” says Cairncross, an economist and journalist who succeeded Marilyn Butler as rector in 2004. “Amartya Sen's expression *The Argumentative Indian* sums up the great tradition of original thinking in India.” Exeter has a very small student community — 540 in all when last counted — and not more than 10-12 Indians study there. Cairncross proposes to change this fact forever.

She was in India to unburden wallets for a worthy cause — raising the number of scholarships aimed entirely at Indian students from the present two to 10-12, a number Cairncross wishes to reach with help from philanthropic Indians. “India is seeing a rapid rise in personal wealth and wealth creates opportunities in philanthropy,” Cairncross said, explaining why she was optimistic about rolling out more graduate studies scholarships for “clever young people from modest homes”. To make it possible she met “a number of good friends, including people who are very interested in Oxford University” during her short and unpublicised visit.

Cairncross pegs the cost of an education at Exeter at £30,000 (₹21 lakh) a year. It is indeed steep, but she's quick to point out that students get much more individual attention because of their low numbers. Intellectually, too, an education at Exeter is fulfilling because students are exposed a more rounded global



Exeter plans more schols for Indians



Exeter College, alma mater of celebrated authors J.R.R. Tolkien and Martin Amis, was founded in 1314

view. It is this characteristic what separates Oxford from most universities on the other side of the Atlantic. “America is so vast that you get to see the world only from the American point of view,” says Cairncross, who read Modern History at St Anne's College, Oxford, and Economics at Brown University, USA.

Does Exeter encourage students to work while studying to recover a part of their investment in an education in the UK's most acclaimed university system?

INDIAN PRESENCE AT EXETER

The number of Indian students enrolled at Exeter is not more than 10-12 and they go there mainly to read the sciences, especially the life sciences. Here's what Frances Cairncross had to say about Indian students at her college:

- ▶ Indian students opt for the courses in which Exeter has a reputation, namely, Biology, Pathology, Pharmacy, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.
- ▶ Plant Science is the area of specialisation of “one of the cleverest Indian students”.
- ▶ The emerging favourites at Exeter are Financial Economics and Law and Finance. There's a lot competition for admission to these courses.

Cairncross makes her thoughts on this prickly issue abundantly clear: “If you're doing your course work seriously, you'll barely get six hours to sleep. We would like our students not to worry constantly about working after completing their academic work.” The scholarships the rector is putting in place promise to open doors for more Indian students by freeing them from the burden of making ends meet.

sourish.bhattacharyya@mailtoday.in

Hong Kong univs seek out Indian students

By **Shara Ashraf**

THE YELLOW Emperor Huang Di has intrigued Kshitij Tiwari since his childhood and that explains his obsession with kung-fu. But Tiwari, an old student of DPS R.K. Puram, is not a martial arts pro. He's a first-year engineering student at the Hong Kong University (HKU) and is one of the recipients of the HKU Foundation Scholarship For Outstanding International Students 2010-2011.

For Tiwari, studying in China means not only mastering kung-fu moves, but also making invaluable contacts that would help him work in that part of the world. Hong Kong is emerging as a popular destination for Indian students, which explains why Indians today make up 9 per cent of the university's overseas student population.

Prof. John Spinks, the HKU vice-chancellor's senior adviser who came here with a delegation of higher education leaders from Hong Kong, said the university had seen a three-fold increase in the number of Indian applicants in 2010, compared with 2009. He attributed this increase in applications HKU's No. 1 rank in the QS Asian University Rankings 2009 and 2010. “We have also recorded an almost 100 per cent employment rate for HKU graduates last year. This has ensured its growing popularity.”



(Above) The Hong Kong University (HKU) campus; (right) Prof. John Spinks, senior adviser to the HKU vice-chancellor, says the number of Indian students applying for admission to the university has risen three-fold this year

Spink and other delegation members met HRD Minister Kapil Sibal to discuss opportunities for closer collaboration in education. The University of Hong Kong also opened its first liaison office in the capital last month.

Hong Kong has 13 higher education institutions offering courses in areas such as science, technology, management, finance and human resources. Apart from the merit of the courses, Indian students are choosing Hong Kong for higher studies because it is affordable too. Tuition fees in Hong Kong's institutions range

from US\$9,000 (₹4.13 lakh) to US\$13,000 (₹6 lakh) per year.

Scholarships provided by Hong Kong universities are also drawing Indian students in large numbers. The Hong Kong Ph.D. Fellowship Scheme provides candidates an annual stipend of nearly US\$30,000 (₹14 lakh). The other big draws are the top-drawer executive business management programmes offered by Hong Kong's universities.



RAMESH SHARMA