

IIMs may double CAT window next year

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Ahmedabad, 7 December

To avoid a repeat of the chaos seen this year in the first few days of the computer-based Common Admission Test (CAT), the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are thinking of doubling the testing window period next year to make the process smoother.

"It seems more feasible to extend the test window than to conduct the test throughout the year. We are considering to double to number of days of the test next year so that the pressure on the infrastructure lessens," said Samir Barua, director of IIM-Ahmedabad (IIM-A). He said that against a 10-day test window, a 20-day test window will allow the IIMs to use less number of computers with more options.

Barua said the IIMs would not consider putting up their own infrastructure for testing as it was too costly and the as-

sets would not reap benefits. On asked whether the IIMs would review the performance of Prometric, the company contracted by the IIMs for conducting CAT this year, Barua said, "We are ready to review whether this agency has been too poor to execute its job or not." The institute is also mulling doing a case study on its experience of CAT 2009.

Meanwhile, IIMs and Prometric have said that a new test date will be announced in about a fortnight to provide an opportunity to candidates who could not take the test due to genuine reasons. Prometric would inform all such candidates about the date and the venue for the test.

For CAT 2009, the IIMs originally had a 10-day testing period from November 28 to December 7 which was extended by a day to December 8. On December 8, the last date of the exam, the test will be conducted in 20 centres across 100-odd labs.

187,000 candidates complete CAT by Day 9

BS REPORTERS

Bangalore/Mumbai, 7 December

Despite the chaos that characterised its start, 187,000 candidates completed the computer-based Common Admission Test (CAT) in the first nine days of the exam. As part of its process to reschedule students who couldn't take the exam due to technical hassles, the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and US firm Prometric conducted exams for 26,800 candidates on December 6 across 32 cities.

"New appointments have been provided to candidates who either had been unable to take test or had a less than complete test experience. Computer viruses were the cause of the majority of the rescheduling that was required. Nearly 20,000 candidates have been rescheduled and most of them have subsequently completed their test," said Prometric.

Addressing candidates' concerns that their results may have been affected by viruses that prevented testing, Prometric has verified that no re-

sults have been deleted or modified by a virus attack. "The majority of sites and candidates have tested without incident and their performance indicates that most candidates had a valid and fair experience," said a statement from the company.

On the ninth day of the test, a lab in Lucknow — the Sahara Arts and Management Academy — was reported to have been cancelled, affecting close to 50 students. There were also rumours that due to the bandh in Hyderabad over the Telengana statehood issue, the exam was cancelled in the city and that students who could not appear for CAT so far were told by Prometric that all slots this year are full and they will have to try next year. However, Prometric told Business Standard that it was not true.

"There were no closures that were related to the bandh. There were some virus issues in one lab in Hyderabad today," said Ramesh Nava, vice-president and general manager (Asia-Pacific, Japan and Africa) of Prometric.

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Transport bandh hit CAT students

BS REPORTER

Hyderabad, 7 December

A few students in Hyderabad could not reach the test centres in time to appear for the Common Admission Test (CAT) today, the penultimate day of the computer-based test, due to the bandh call given by the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, a political outfit fighting for a separate statehood for Telanagana.

A statement issued by TIME, a training institute, said a few students contacted the call centre of US firm Pro-

metric, which is implementing the test for admission into the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), and were told that all slots

he transport facilities and business activities have been suspended for the second consecutive day in the 10 districts of Telangana

for the exam for this year were full and asked them to appear next year.

The transport facilities and business activities have been suspended for the second consecutive day in the 10 districts of Telangana.

This apart, a few students could not take the tests at three computer laboratories at the MVSR Engineering College at Nagargul on the outskirts of the city due to a server error.

Prometric chief operating officer Charles Kernan said new appointments had been provided to candidates who either had been unable to take the test or have had a less than complete test experience.