

## ROLE OF IIM SHILLONG IN THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHEASTERN PART OF INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The IIM Shillong is the seventh Indian Institute of Management set up by the Government of India, located in the north eastern state of Meghalaya. The institute has set itself the ambitious target of not only offering conventional PGDM degrees but also introducing students to the concepts of sustainability. To this end, each batch of PGDM students undergo a two week compulsory foundation course on sustainability taught by internationally renowned faculty drawn from all over the world. Students who graduate from this institute are expected to be not only good managers but also better human beings. Students for the Master course are chosen after a rigorous country-wide selection process called CAT (Common Admission Test) and the Shortlisted candidates are screened through a process of personal interaction with an expert panel constituted for the purpose. The majority of the students come from an engineering background (BSc), some of them have working experience in industry as well. In addition to the MBA course, the institute also offers short term programmes with high regional relevance. These courses are designed to act as catalysts for the socio-economic development of the region and to inculcate better management techniques and skill enhancement to the existing work force drawing from both the government and the private sector. The institute and the faculty members are at the forefront of an effort to help both government and industry to streamline their work and to ensure greater productivity and effectiveness. In this regard, a number of departments of the government and industrial sector approach the IIM for help in the form of consultancy. It may be said that the IIM Shillong provides a yeoman service to the country and the region by bringing about desirable social economic change to a region that is generally considered backward in relation to the rest of India.*

Keywords: role of universities, regional development, application (CAT) system, India, IIM Shillong, infrastructure, education, third role of universities, triple helix

### INTRODUCTION

The IIM Shillong is the seventh Indian Institute of Management set up by the Government of India. It is located in the north eastern state of Meghalaya. It is nearly three years since IIM Shillong started with a vision to be a Centre of Excellence with innovation and diversity as the two important projecting planks. The institute has set for itself an ambitious target of not only offering conventional PGDM degrees but also introducing students to the concepts of sustainability. To this end, each batch of PGDM students have to undergo a two week compulsory foundation course on sustainability, taught by internationally renowned faculty drawn from all over the world. The Institute has set up standards in its admission

process, curriculum and pedagogy which are being emulated by other institutions. Students are encouraged to think independently and not to be averse taking risks in doing things innovatively and differently. Students who pass out from this institute are expected not only to be good managers but also better human beings.

Shillong is located at an altitude of 1,496 m above the see level, with a population of 260 000 people (Figure 1). It is capital of Meghalaya, one of the smallest states in India. The city is surrounded by verdant hills, which gives it a cool salubrious climate and a panoramic view of the graceful scenic country-side.

**Figure 1**

**Location of state Meghalaya and Shillong city**



Prof. Ashoke K. Dutta is the founder director of the RGIIM Shillong, and he started it with the vision of expansion and mobilization of facilities for offering good quality management education and research in the North-Eastern region of India. The Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management (RGIIM) offers a comprehensive two-year postgraduate diploma in management program (PGDM) in addition to other courses. The institute aims to develop exceptional leaders for an economically and ecologically sustainable society, with the help of a unique curriculum that comprises a mix of compulsory and elective courses, supplemented by specialized courses.

In our publication we try to give an overview about IIM Shillong, in the field of education, infrastructure, research and regional development activities. In addition we try to define to which category – of the recently made third role of university categories – IIM Shillong matches. We hope this investigation would be of assistance not only to the university but to the collaborating partners as well, and provide a better appreciation about the third role of universities in other parts of the world, and thereby improve their own functioning as well.

### **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF IIM SHILLONG**

The main activity of IIM Shillong, at the moment, continues to be Post Graduate Management Education – as there is neither Bachelor nor PhD programmes. Students to the Master course are chosen after a rigorous country wide selection process called CAT (Common Admission Test) and then the shortlisted candidates are screened through a process of Personal interaction with an expert panel constituted for the purpose. The majority of the students come from an engineering background (B Tech and M Tech), though there are many candidates who come from backgrounds as diverse as accountancy, commerce, economics, law, sociology and the humanities. Many of them have working experience in industry as well. It is entirely through merit that they qualify through this very rigorous, clean selection process successfully. Neither university, nor the local government can influence the selection process.

In addition to the PGDM course, the institute also offers short term programmes with high regional relevance. These courses are designed to act as catalysts for the socio economic development of the region, inculcate better management techniques and skill enhancement to the existing work force drawn both from the government as well as the private sector.

The institute, as well as the faculty members, is also at the forefront in helping both the government and the industry in streamlining their work and ensuring greater productivity and effectiveness. In this regard, a number of departments of the government and also industries approach the IIM for help which is offered in the form of consultancy.

#### **Special courses**

In addition to the core courses RGIIM Shillong offers special courses for example as below:

#### **Foundation Course on sustainability**

IIM Shillong, with its emphasis on Sustainable development, is among the first institutes in the country to conduct a week long Foundation course on Sustainability. The first foundation course of sustainability was conducted by the internationally renowned figure on sustainability, Prof Paul Srivastava, currently Chair of the John Molson School of Business of the Concordia University, Canada. For the PGP batch of 2009 the course was taken by a visiting faculty from the Bucknell University USA – Prof. Jamie R. Hendry, while the 2010 PGP batch was

taught by Prof. Raymond Paquin of the Concordia University. The course focuses on an array of pressing issues like global poverty, green house gases emission, inclusive development and injustice

### **Course on sports management**

RGIIM Shillong has roped in Prof Douglass Michele Turco, a sport management specialist from Drexel University, USA to undertake a course in Sport Management for the second year students as well as a special certificate course on sports Management. Some of the areas covered in this course include sport sponsorship, sports tourism, event management and globalization of sports.

### **Research activities of IIM Shillong**

In spite of the fact that the Institute has less than 30 faculty members there were 3 books published, and several research papers published in international and national journals and conferences in the academic year of 2010-2011. These publications are summarized every year in the Academic Reports so are the research and consultancy projects. The list of recent publications can be found on the website of the institute. ([www.iimshillong.in](http://www.iimshillong.in))

### **Vision to Victory Research Programme**

This programme is being conducted by IIM Shillong and Drexel University.

## **THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF IIMSHILLONG**

IIM Shillong is currently operating out of its temporary campus. This campus previously housed the North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) and is at the heart of the city of Shillong in a place called Nongthymmai. The design and construction of the new campus has also started.

As the North-eastern part of India is generally considered backward in relation to the rest of India, the motto of the institute is: “Where logistics may be difficult, technology may be the answer”. Thus, although the campus is temporary, the infrastructure is very modern, and easily the envy of other universities.

IIMShillong boasts of the latest sophisticated equipments with regards to keeping pace with the trends in the modern Educational field. These include:

- Enterprise Resource Planning
- Wireless Campus
- IIM Shillong SharePoint Portal
- Moodle-Learning Management System
- IIMS Wiki
- Video Conferencing System
- Interactive Whiteboards
- Surveillance System
- Biometric & Attendance System
- Knowledge Center – Library

### Enterprise Resource Planning system:

On 6th August, 2009, IIM Shillong became the first among all the centrally funded educational institutes and universities, which also includes IIMs and IITs, to go live on a comprehensive campus wide ERP system.

The institute has implemented:

- PeopleSoft Campus,
- PeopleSoft Financials,
- PeopleSoft Enterprise Human Resources,
- PeopleSoft Payroll,
- PeopleSoft Absence Management,
- PeopleSoft Enterprise Purchasing,
- PeopleSoft Enterprise Inventory,
- PeopleSoft Recruiting Solutions

### Wireless Campus

IIM Shillong also has Wi-Fi connectivity through the perimeter of the campus. A state-of-the-art Wireless Mesh Network (WMN) has been set up for seamless connectivity with necessary redundancy.

### IIM Shillong SharePoint Portal

Helps to the users to share information on a much updated level (Figure 2).

Figure 2

### IIM Shillong Share Point Portal



### Moodle-Learning Management System:

Moodle is an Open Source Course Management System (CMS), very popular among educators around the world as a tool for creating online dynamic web sites for their students (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

### IIM Shillong Moodle Learning Management System

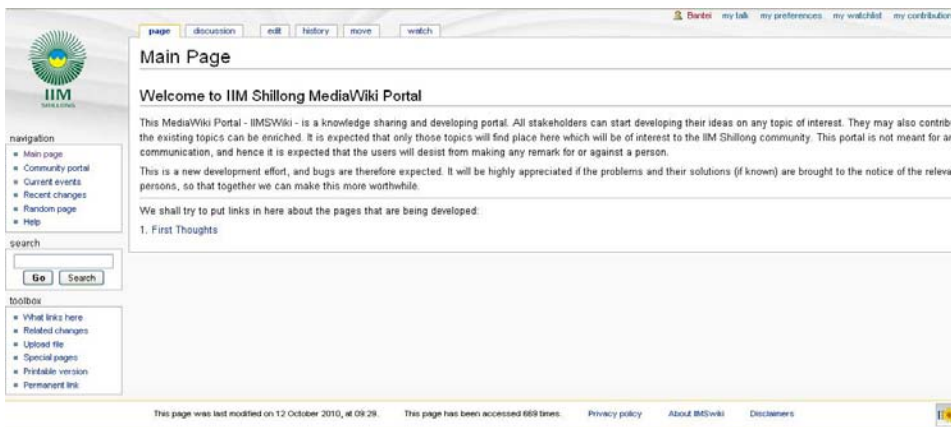


### IIMS Wiki

A knowledge sharing and developing portal (*Figure 4*).

**Figure 4**

### IIMS Wiki of IIM Shillong

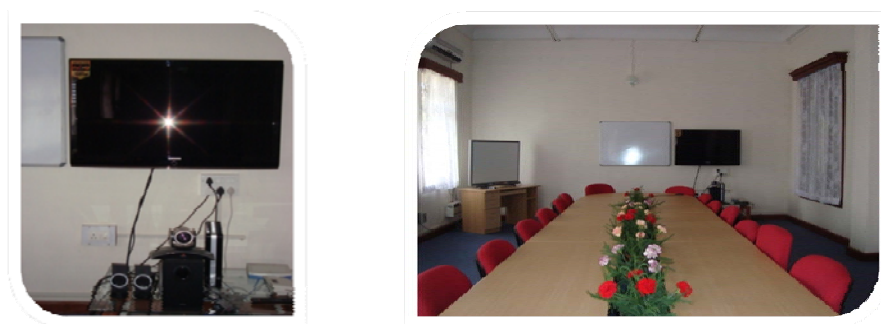


### **Video Conferencing System**

Through the hardware based high definition Videoconferencing System, IIM Shillong connects its Students and faculty to the outside world (*Picture 1*). This Videoconferencing System is connected via telephonic (i.e. ISDN PRI link) as well as IP network. Many Conferencing calls have been carried out in and outside India for lectures, presentation and interviews with other Institutes and Corporate Organizations.

**Picture 1**

#### **Video Conferencing System of IIM Shillong**



**Interactive Whiteboards** (*Picture 2*)

**Picture 2**

#### **Interactive Whiteboards at IIM Shillong**



The author considers this as one to the best examples of the use of technology. As there is the possibility of power failure all the IT devices are connected to the central UPS (uninterruptable power supply) power supply – this ensures that the smart board can be seen, but the black or white board may not be visible because of the shortage of light in the room.

### **Surveillance System**

IIM Shillong has installed the surveillance System for full Security of the campus perimeter (*Picture 3*).

**Picture 3**

#### **Surveillance System of IIM Shillong**



### **Biometric & Attendance System**

IIM Shillong also has implemented the Biometric attendance system for all the Faculty and Staff of RGIIMS (*Picture 4*).

**Picture 4**

#### **Biometric Attendance System**



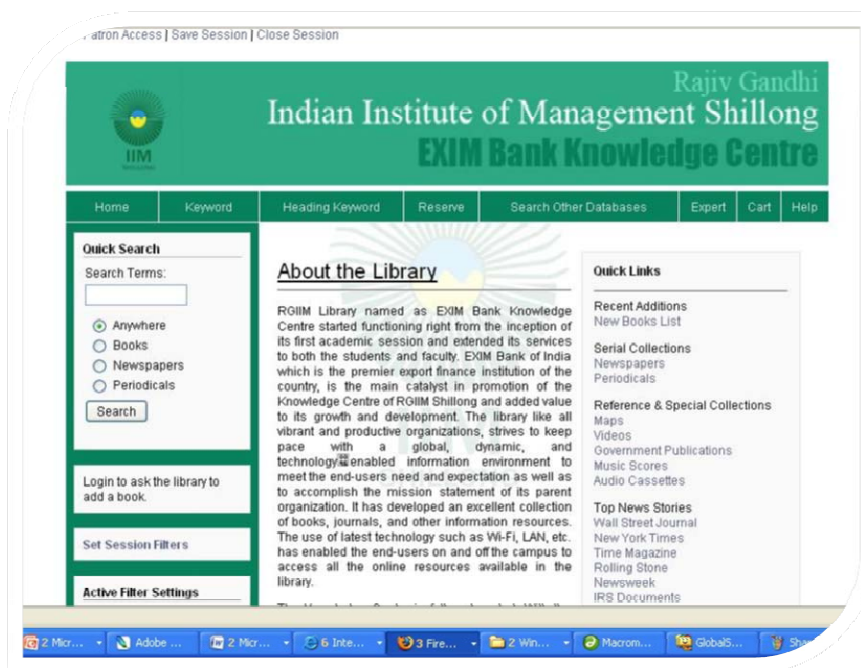
### **Knowledge Center – Library**

A Knowledge Centre Portal is being used by students as an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) for searching books, journals etc. (*Figure 5*).



Figure 5

### Knowledge Center Portal of IIM Shillong



Since all books are RFID tagged, books are easily located on the shelves using the hand-held reader (*Picture 5*).

Picture 5

### Knowledge Center – Library of IIM Shillong



When entering the library the RFID gate sensor detects the RFID tags, but signals only books that are not issued (*Picture 6*).

**Picture 6**

**Knowledge Center – Library: RFID gate**



Students can return the books by just dropping the book into the return kiosk (Picture 7).

**Picture 7**

**Knowledge Center – Library: Return Kiosk**



To get acquainted with the modern infrastructure of the temporary campus we can imagine that this institute plays an important role even by its very existence. It has been able to demonstrate that it is possible to set up a high-tech campus in a region considered to be one of the less developed areas of India.

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES OF IIM SHILLONG**

IIM Shillong has the aim of being a center of excellence not only in the field of education but in the regional development as well (Picture 9 and Picture 10). That is why IIM Shillong has set up a Centre for Development of North Eastern Region (CEDNER)

(<http://www.iimshillong.in/programmes/cedner.asp>) (Formerly: Accelerated Learning Centre (ALC). It offers a broad diversity of programmes in varied disciplines of business management skills and has helped participants to expand and extend their business operations and stimulate their business through management skills.

CEDNER has been constituted right from the inception of the Institute and is involved in organizing both short term and long term programmes relevant to the local community and society of the state and the region .The members of the local community who may otherwise have limited opportunities for getting the latest exposure to training for skill development is provided with such opportunities by the Institute. The objective of the Institute is to respond to the local needs and make the facilities of the Institute available for the training of the local talented youths of the region. The Centre offers a unique opportunity for the young entrepreneurs, businessmen and women, business executives and officers of the region to avail of the opportunities of training in skill development in various phases of their business and entrepreneurial activity. The Centre has already offered a series of such practice oriented management courses.

Some of the programmes organized so far:

- Course on Retail Management
- Sports Management
- Business Skill for Small Business
- Workshop on Effective Management
- Entrepreneurial Development Course

#### **Picture 8**

**Prof Ashoke K Dutta with the participants at the workshop  
on Increasing Media Profitability**



**Picture 9**

**A participant of SERM Course receiving certification from Shri Shekhar Dutt (centre) and Prof A K Dutta (extreme right)**



The update upcoming courses can be found on the website of CEDNER: <http://www.iimshillong.in/programmes/cedner.asp>

IIMS through CEDNER has successfully created a highly stimulating environment for the business community of Shillong and proposes to continue with the endeavor in the coming years by regularly organizing more such Courses.

**ANALYZING IIMSHILLONG IN THE FRAMEWORK OF “THIRD ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES” AND “TRIPPLE HELIX MODEL”**

As possible research topic the authors suggest to analyze IIM Shillong in the framework of the “third role of universities” and “triple Helix model” (*Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 2000*). This investigation could not only define which roles – defined by these models - this university fulfills, to which category it belongs to, but it could help to improve the vision, and the development of this institute as well.

This investigation is beyond this publication, but would be edifying.

**CONCLUSION**

In our publication we first introduced Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Shillong, the seventh IIM of India, located in the north eastern state of

Meghalaya. Providing only PGDM courses – no bachelor education. Second we highlighted the main features of the CAT system of application in India. Then we introduced with many pictures IIM Shillong’s infrastructure, the education system, and we highlighted and investigated the role of RG IIM Shillong in the regional development. At the end – as a further research topic - we offered an investigation proposal to define to which category of the triple helix categories of universities this organization belongs to. We hope this publication and the offered investigation helps to fulfill the ambitious targets of this university.

### **REFERENCES**

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[www.iimshillong.in/programmes/cedner.asp](http://www.iimshillong.in/programmes/cedner.asp)