

# Most startups not keen to shop at IITs this year

## 50% Fewer Cos Interested After Blacklist Episode

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**Mumbai:** Startups do not seem to be the flavour of this placement season. The Indian Institutes of Technology have seen a 50% fall in the number of startups that will be present for the campus recruitment drive. Missing conspicuously are e-commerce unicorns Flipkart, Paytm, OlaCabs and Snapdeal that haven't yet signed up to shop at any of the IITs.

While the response from startups has been tepid, it's a satisfying placement season for IITs with pre-place-

### MISSING SO FAR

Flipkart | Paytm | OlaCabs |  
Snapdeal | Delhivery |  
Mad Street Den | Practo |  
Aura Semiconductor

ment offers up by 25-30% compared to last year.

Early this year, the IITs barred 31 companies, including delivery service Grofers, baby clothing website Hopscotch, Portea Medical and a host of other startups, from participating in their placement drives.

They were blacklisted for a year for "playing with the careers of students" by making last-minute changes to their offers, revoking offer letters, falsely hiring them for affiliates and delaying joining dates.

► Some being screened, P 8

# IITs screening start-ups interested in recruiting

► From P 1

Last year, a host of start-ups were blacklisted for a year for "playing with careers of students" by making last-minute changes to their offers, revoking offer letters, falsely hiring them for affiliates and delaying joining dates. The All IIT Placement Committee, which decided to blacklist these companies, estimated that around 135 students had been affected.

While many start-ups have stayed away, several are being screened by placement teams before being allowed to visit the campuses. At IIT-Madras, 54 start-ups have registered. Last year, 98 were present. At IIT-B, there are fewer start-ups among companies that have listed to recruit. "We are screening the companies that want to recruit from our campus," said a placement team member of IIT-Kanpur. "Their funding, cash flow and the year of founding, essentially their stability, is what we are checking," he added.

From the Roorkee campus, 52 start-ups had recruited last year; this year, only 35 have registered. "There is a decrease

in the number of start-ups that have registered due to funds crunch and other market issues," said placement head N P Padhy.

Some regulars too have not yet signed up: Delhivery, Mad Street Den, Aura Semiconductor and Practo. "We encourage good start-ups to participate," said Padhy. While large e-commerce companies have not yet confirmed their participation, some IITs are in touch with them. "It could be that they do not have manpower requirement. It hasn't been a great year for many start-ups," said another placement dean, requesting anonymity. The process of empanelling firms is open until the end of November.

"Until last year, most of the start-ups used to sign up early on. Also, the firms that were blacklisted made up about 30%-40% of the start-ups that used to visit all the IITs. So it was certain that the numbers would fall this year," said a placement dean. Some start-ups visiting IITs are Edgeverve Systems Ltd, Nutanix, Oxigen Wallet, Treebo Hotels, Ixigo, Smartprix, Seclore, Rivigo Labs, MyAlly, Kirusa, Epaath-sala and Wittybrains Software.