

Newspaper Clips

April 22, 2011

Mid Day ND. 21.04.11, P-7

Technology you can use

From indigenous dental implants to stain-resistant cotton, IIT Delhi will showcase its latest innovations in its annual tech festival

ANURAG JADLI
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NEXT time, if your dentist tells you that you need a dental implant, don't worry about the cost. For the first time in the country, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi has developed dental implants. Once they are commercially available, their cost is likely to be half of the imported plants that dentists use currently.

"We have developed dental implants indigenously in our labs. So far, dental implants were imported but once the manufacture of these indigenous plants starts at commercial scale, their costs will be almost half of the imported ones. But before we tie up with some industry for their commercial manufacturing, we will be carrying out their human trials," said Professor Naresh Bhatnagar of mechanical engineering department.

Another interesting usage of technology was seen in the stain and water repellent cotton creat-



An M.Tech final year student displays his innovation, a stain resistant cotton. PIC/RAJEEV TYAGI

ed by Tripurari Choudhary, an M.Tech final year student of fibre science and technology under the supervision of Professor Ashwani Aggarwal. "In this the cotton has been treated with the plasma technology to make it more comfortable to wear and at the same time resist stains and water," said Tripurari.

Times of India ND. 22.04.11, P-21

Public opinion to count in IIT-JEE reforms

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: T Ramasami Committee on reforms in IIT Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) has decided to have a single entrance examination for admission to engineering course, but is yet to firm up how specifically it would be done.

The panel has decided to seek public opinion before finalizing its recommendation. In the next few days, a dedicated website would be created to draw public opinion. It remains to be seen if IIT Coun-



ENTRANCE ANXIETY

cil agrees to be a part of engineering entrance examination that would also be for admission to non-IIT engineering colleges. Even state governments would have to come on board.

Sources said, to begin with even if an all-India single entrance examination is not introduced, JEE would definitely be reformed. Reform in JEE is one of the pleas sought by Rajiv Kumar, professor of IIT-Kharagpur, in his petition in the Supreme Court.

On Thursday, Ramasami gave a short presentation of

three ways in which single entrance test can be held. HRD minister Kapil Sibal, directors of IIT-Kanpur, Delhi and Roorkee were present.

Since 2008, Ramasami Committee is the fourth attempt to reform JEE. The first was an internal committee under V G Idichandy of IIT-Madras. In October 2009, IIT Council suggested increasing eligibility cutoff from the existing 60% to 80% in Standard XII. This was followed by the Acharya Committee of four IIT directors to suggest JEE reforms.

Hindustan Times ND. 22.04.11, P-15

Panel for single exam option for all engineering institutes

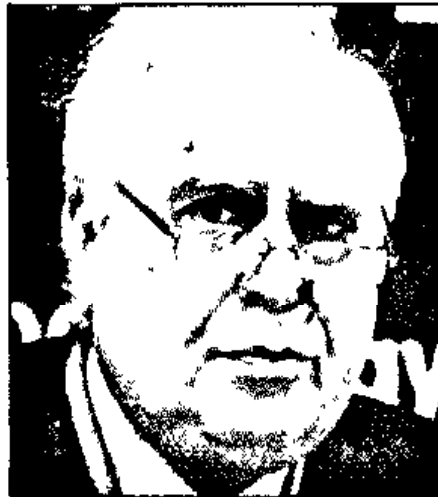
Charu Sudan Kasturi

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NEW DELHI: A panel recommendation for a single entrance examination for all engineering institutions has thrust upon human resource development minister Kapil Sibal a key test — picking between his convictions and likely pressures from states and the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT).

Science secretary T Ramasami, head of a panel set up by Sibal to pencil a blueprint to replace India's myriad engineering exams with a single test, on Thursday proposed three possible mechanisms to implement the plan, government sources confirmed.

But Ramasami's proposals — which are not final and will be worked on by the science secretary further — have set the stage for Sibal to try and convince state governments and elite institutions like the IITs to



■ HRD minister Kapil Sibal

give up their entrance examinations, sources said.

"It will not be easy. In fact, this will be very, very difficult. But if he succeeds, it will be historic," a senior official said.

Unlike a proposal by an earlier panel set up by Sibal under IIT Kharagpur director Damodar Acharya, the new plan involves a single national aptitude test.

The Acharya panel had sug-

PROPOSAL SETS STAGE FOR SIBAL TO TRY AND CONVINCe STATES AND ELITE INSTITUTIONS TO GIVE UP THEIR ENTRANCE EXAMS

gested that institutions like the IITs be allowed to hold an add-on test with subject specific questions on Physics, Chemistry and Math. Seven IITs objected to the HRD minister's proposal for a single test — with no exceptions — to reduce the burden on students who at present have to appear for multiple admission tests.

Even the Acharya panel's report was rubbished by faculty forums at the IITs. The plan to dump the add-on test is likely to spur greater protests from within the IIT community, the sources said.

Single, common entrance test proposed for engineering admissions too

Aarti Dhar

NEW DELHI: Close on the heels of the decision to conduct a common entrance test for undergraduate medical courses, the government proposes to hold a single test for admissions to engineering and technical courses, including in the Indian Institutes of Technology, too.

The proposed National Aptitude Test will annually benefit more than seven lakh students, who at present have to take multiple examinations to get into engineering.

The objective "is to reduce psychological and financial stress on students and give more emphasis to Class 12 results than coaching," T. Ramaswamy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, has said in his report. He was entrusted with taking a re-look at the test methodology of selections and having a common system for admissions to the IITs, the Indian Institutes of Science, Engineering and Research, the National Institutes of Technology and other engineering colleges.

"The government has broadly agreed on the 'one nation, one examination' policy," sources in the Human Resource Development Ministry said after Dr. Ramaswamy made a presentation before it here on Thursday. The single examination obviates the need for students taking 150 entrance tests conducted by various State Boards and institutions, including the IITs.

Like in the common entrance test for medicine, Dr. Ramaswamy has given three different options to imple-

ment this system including students choosing the institutions. The details will be put on the government website to invite public opinion to build consensus as the matter involves States also.

C.N.R. Rao, chairman of the Prime Minister's Scientific Advisory Council, has also recommended a common entrance test for higher education, including medical and technical courses. He has asked HRD Ministry to set up a task force to prepare a road map for higher education within the next 12 months.

EDUCATION REFORMS

PM's council calls for exam system overhaul

Replace the 'menace' of multiple entrance tests with a single exam for all higher education institutions, says report

By PRASHANT K. NANDA
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NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister's Science Advisory Council has advised the government to institute a single national examination to assess the eligibility of candidates for all higher education institutions, replacing the current system of multiple competitive tests.

Entrance examinations have "become a menace", according to a report prepared by C.N.R. Rao, chairman of the Prime Minister's Science Advisory Council. "IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) entrance has the reputation of being difficult and purposeful, but it has also had a negative effect on young minds. Young people suffer so much to succeed... and in the process lose excitement in education."

Rao also advocated the need to work toward having at least 10 Indian institutes among the world's top 100, and advised the government to stop appointing bureaucrats as administrators of colleges and universities.

In his recommendations, which the human resource development (HRD) ministry made public on Thursday, Rao, a renowned educationist and



Fresh approach: C.N.R. Rao.

scientist, criticized the government's move to open a number of higher educational institutes without bothering about the faculty crunch the sector is facing.

"It would seem counter-productive to allow uncontrolled increase in the number of government-supported colleges and universities without careful consideration of manpower requirements," he said.

In the last couple of years, the Union government has opened 16 new central universities, seven Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), eight new IITs, more than 20 National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and a number of other research institutes in the field of science and technology.

However, the institutes are facing problems in terms of physical infrastructure and human resources. Most of the new central universities do not have even 50% of the required faculty. The new IIMs are being run

by visiting faculty from the older schools. Moreover, Union government-run institutes including the IITs are already facing a faculty crunch of 33%, according to official figures. India currently has 40 central universities and 15 IITs.

Criticizing the government's handling of the administration of colleges and universities, the scientist, who has been visiting faculty in leading universities including Oxford and Cambridge, said this requires an overhaul. "What is unfortunate is that educational and research institutions are administered by people with IAS (Indian Administrative Service) or similar administrative backgrounds, many without any real interest in education," he said.

A senior HRD ministry official, who declined to be named, said the report is not being regarded negatively. "It's a good checklist for government on what we should do."

Regretting that no Indian college is equal to the best institutions in the advanced countries, Rao has suggested that "it is important that in next 10-15 years, several of our educational institutions are in the top 100 in the world. As a step forward, around 10 higher educational institutions could be provided all the support required to enable them compete with the best of institutions in the advanced countries."

If India wants to succeed it should give greater importance to the teaching profession and accord due respect to teachers, Rao said.

Hindu ND. 22.04.11, P-7

ST panel unhappy over minority status for Jamia

Now the varsity is exempted from providing quotas

Aarti Dhar

NEW DELHI: Unhappy over grant of minority status to Jamia Millia Islamia — now exempted from providing quota to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes — the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has asked the Union Human Resource Development Ministry to ensure that all public-funded institutions of higher education give reservation to Scheduled Tribes.

This proposal was made by the NCST after a meeting with the Higher Education Secretary here. The fallout of Jamia Millia being granted minority status by the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI) was discussed at the meeting, chaired by the Commission vice-chairperson Maurice Kujur, who has sought the views of the Ministry on the proposal.

The NCST believes that im-

• **NCST leaves it to Union HRD Ministry to come up with a solution**

• **"Ensure all public-funded institutions of higher education give quota to STs"**

plementation of the February 23 order of the NCMEI will "dilute" the Constitutional rights of the STs in reservation in admission to higher educational institutions funded by the public exchequer. The Commission has also impressed upon the HRD Ministry not to exclude minority institutions from the purview of the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006, and, if need be, amend the Act on reservation to safeguard the interests of the Schedule Tribes.

The CEI Act, 2006, under Article 15(5) of the Constitution exempts minority educational institutions from providing reservation of seats. The Act provides for 15 per cent quota for SCs, 7 per

cent for STs and 27 per cent for OBCs, but exempts minority institutions and institutions of excellence from reservation.

The NCST was established under Article 338 A of the Constitution. Its duties essentially are to investigate and monitor all matters relating to safeguards provided for the STs under the Constitution or under any other law. The reports are placed before Parliament along with a Memorandum of Action Taken or proposed to be taken. The ST panel has left it to the HRD Ministry to come up with a solution, and is awaiting a response. The minority status of Jamia has already been challenged in the Delhi High Court and is likely to come up for hearing shortly.

Financial Chronicle ND.22.04.11, P-10

IIMB rolls out courses with Chinese, US B-schools

SREERUPA MITRA
Bangalore

BUSINESS schools across the globe are developing programmes aimed at creating global leaders. The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) has joined hands with top universities in the United States and China for a global senior management programme that will expose the students to social and government practices in other innovation hubs.

Called "Innovation and Leadership Beyond Borders," the certificate programme will begin from June this year and will allow students to go to the Robert H Smith School of Business

at the University of Maryland, US and the School of Management, Zhejiang University, China for a week each and study the innovation and leadership models in those countries. Similarly, students from the other two universities will also visit the IIMB campus.

"At IIMB, we endeavour to design, develop and offer programmes that are both of topical interest and relevant to managers. Our research indicates that innovation will be a key to success in the globalised economy. By addressing various facets of innovation in a global economy through a three-country programme delivered in India, China and the US, the programme meets the



CROSSING BORDERS: The programme will expose students to social and government practices in other innovation hubs

needs of managers and organisations," said G Shainesh, associate professor, marketing and programme director, Innova-

tion Beyond Borders.

The programme is primarily targeted at senior managers of MNCs as well as Indian companies and

entrepreneurs; these and other similarly qualified candidates may participate. Each country can take up 15 nominations, so IIMB will admit 15, and the class size is expected to be 45, he added.

According to Shainesh, the programme provides participants a combination of global exposure and theoretical analysis and will help building skills in global leadership, innovation, business model optimisation, cross-cultural management, and product or service development. "Gone are the days when all activities of a product were localised to a single country; global product development is becoming a necessity to leverage the

strengths available in different geographies for successful execution of product strategy," he said.

As part of this tie-up, IIMB will focus on services, Smith School on innovation and creativity and Zhejiang on manufacturing. The first phase of the programme will be on managerial and creative innovation in Maryland, followed by the second week of training in manufacturing and innovation in Zhejiang in September. The participants from Smith School and Zhejiang would attend a service innovation module in Bangalore next January.

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Hindu ND.22.04.11 P-19

Three satellites in good health

PSLV-C16 launched them on Wednesday; Resourcesat-1 still working

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: The three satellites put in orbit on Wednesday by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C16) are "absolutely fine," officials of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said on Thursday.

The Resourcesat-2, the Youthsat and the X-Sat were in good health and working satisfactorily, they said.

The Resourcesat-2, an advanced remote-sensing satellite, will replace the Resourcesat-1, which was put in orbit in October 2003. The

Resourcesat-2 has been fitted with three sophisticated cameras, and the first images of the earth are expected on April 28. Though the Resourcesat-1's life was five years, it was still sending pictures of the earth.

The images from the Resourcesat-2 will be useful in estimating the acreage of crops and the stress they are under, keeping a surveillance on pests, locating groundwater, identifying schools of fish in the sea, predicting the advance of glaciers, monitoring water bodies and keeping a watch on deforestation or

changes in the rural and urban landscape.

They can also be used for estimating the salinity or acidic conditions of the soil owing to the excessive use of fertilizer, and for disaster management, mapping wetlands and categorising wasteland.

The Resourcesat-2 also carries a payload from Canada, which receives signals from ships and provides information about their location and speed. The estimated life of the satellite is five years, and its images will be used by more than 15

countries.

The Youthsat has three payloads — one from Moscow University and two from ISRO. Together, they will help in investigating the relationship between activities in the sun and the thermosphere-ionosphere above the earth. The X-Sat of the Nanyang Technological University of Singapore is an earth-viewing satellite.

The Resourcesat-2 is India's 18th remote-sensing satellite. A series of Indian Remote-sensing Satellites (IRS) have been put in orbit, beginning with IRS-1A in

March 1988.

"The imaging systems in the IRS series have demonstrated India's technological leadership at the global level in observing the entire earth," an ISRO official said.

The nine IRS in service now are the Technology Experiment Satellite, the Resourcesat-2, the Cartosat-1, 2, 2A and 2B, the Indian Mini Satellite-1, the Radar Imaging Satellite-2 and the Ocean-sat-2.

They make the IRS system the largest civilian remote-sensing satellite constellation in the world.

10 NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

Six months into office, semester system critics still revile V-C but

By Ritika Chopra in New Delhi

ON NOVEMBER 7 last year, Delhi University vice-chancellor (V-C) Dinesh Singh made a candid confession at a small ceremony organised by the alumni of his alma mater, St Stephen's College. "I have been advised against assuming this responsibility by many people. I am fully aware of the situation I find myself in. It's true that it's not bed of roses," he said to a gathering in a seminar room of the Indira International Centre just after his felicitation for being appointed as the next head of the university.

On that Sunday, he was just a little over one week old as the university's new V-C. The honeymoon period is now long over. And Singh — who is just a week away from completing six months in office and is up to his neck in the ugly semester row he inherited from his predecessor Deepak Pentel — is no more a stranger to why he was reviled.

As he and his team adopt tougher methods — seen and understood as autocratic by many teachers — to semestrise the remaining programmes at the undergraduate level, many are now beginning to ask and wonder if he is going the Pentel way. "Many of us feel that the situation today is probably worse than what it was during Pentel's term. Pentel did not use intimidation tactics. During his time, one never witnessed the deployment of police or bouzours to physically prevent teachers from participating in meetings and voting dissent," said Vinita Chandran, an associate professor at Ramjas College, who is



THE GOOD THINGS

V-C Dinesh Singh may have instilled hunchbacks for the way he is functioning but he has also introduced some fine initiatives in the university

- North Campus has got its first-ever permanent team comprising four guards
- Security guards to escort female students in North Campus returning late in the evening from laboratories
- Work underway on a proposal to make North Campus a closed campus
- CCTV surveillance of South Campus
- DU will fund travel undertaken by teachers for international conferences
- University to have a common helpline number to address all kinds of queries
- DU will discontinue the use of pre-admission forms from this session. Admission process will be made simpler

among the teachers resisting semester system. The anger voiced by Chandran and her peers stem from the recent steps taken by Singh to ensure complete implementation of the semester system from this year. Strongly worded letters shot off to department heads directing them to re-convene meetings of their committees of courses to discuss matters, despite having shot down the semester proposal in one such step that has attracted flak.

Such "authoritative" steps, frontally, have eclipsed his laudable efforts in the past six months. Since he became V-C, Singh has announced unprecedented initiatives for DU's betterment. He has promised to equip classrooms of all affiliated colleges with Information and Communication Technology (ICT), provided security escorts to female students returning late from laboratories in North Campus, set up a task force to work on how to make North Campus a closed campus and created a corpus to fund travel undertaken by professors for international conferences.

The DU boss & his crown of thorns

While he may have created the teachers the wrong way, his popularity among students and *Karamchaks* is only growing stronger. "He takes a round of the campus and visits colleges to interact with students whenever his schedule allows him to do so. A few of his recent initiatives were based on the feedback he got from students during such an interaction," a member of the V-C's team said. Singh said it is his habit that has become unreported in the media which assures him not everyone is up in arms against him and his efforts to introduce the semester system. "What is happening in the university is quite different from what is being portrayed. There is this impression that the semester system will till date have been questioned on this issue by just one female student. Even teachers in colleges, during my interaction with them, did not bring up this issue," Singh said. He is also unperturbed by the accusation that he is increasingly

GETTING TO KNOW THE V-C

CAREER IN THE CLASSROOM Dinesh Singh started his career as a lecturer at St Stephen's College in 1981. From there, he moved to the University's Department of Mathematics. He served as the director of South Campus from 2005-10 and briefly as the vice-chancellor (V-C). He was appointed as Delhi University's V-C on October 20, 2010

EDUCATION Singh completed his schooling from St Xavier's School in Delhi and scored 58.7 per cent in his CBSE board examinations. He then went on to pursue his Bachelor's and Masters in mathematics from St Stephen's College. After completing his M.Phil from DU, he bagged on a Inlaks scholarship to pursue a

Ph.D. from Imperial College London **HIS OTHER SIDE** Singh is fond of travelling and reading. Not many know that he's a painter, too, but he hasn't been able to devote much time to his passion ever since he assumed charge as DU's V-C. He works for almost 13 hours a day, six days a week

becoming tyrannical in his attitude. "I am not here competing in a popularity contest and I will do what I think is right. Why is it that teachers who are intimidating their colleagues are not being called tyrannical? But if I try to implement a high court judgment and the resolution of the Academic Council, I am labelled autocratic," he added. While the administration tries its best to push this change through and teachers get ready to intensify their struggle, the fate of the semester system will only be decided by the high court. So all eyes for now are set on April 28, when the court finally comes out with its verdict.

students don't turn a blind eye to his good work

BURDEN ON EXAM DEPT What the teachers say to get the examination branch will not be able to cope with the burden of two exams in a year under the semester system. What V-C Dinesh Singh has to say — "The department proved itself by announcing results of all the semestrised science programmes in flat 16 days. What more should it do to counter this argument?" **UNHEALTHY STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO** Teachers: The current teacher-

A LOOK AT THE TWO SIDES OF THE SEMESTER SYSTEM COIN

students don't turn a blind eye to his good work. The examination branch will not be able to cope with the burden of two exams in a year under the semester system. What V-C Dinesh Singh has to say — "The department proved itself by announcing results of all the semestrised science programmes in flat 16 days. What more should it do to counter this argument?" **UNHEALTHY STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO** Teachers: The current teacher-

'FORM-LESS' WAY TO CLASSROOM

One of the biggest reforms introduced by Dinesh Singh since he became vice-chancellor (V-C) of the University of Delhi is the decision to discontinue the use of pre-admission forms from this year. Here's a low down on how things will change

Will students have to fill application forms at the time of admission this year? No, neither the university nor colleges will sell application or pre-admission forms from this year. But the university



will provide admission booklets and colleges are allowed to print and sell prospectuses. The decision was announced by Singh at a meeting with college principals on April 3 and notified on April 20.

Why was this decision taken? DU had introduced the common admission form about nine years ago with the intention of reducing inconvenience to applicants. So, instead of running from one college to another to purchase and fill their application forms, applicants could fill just one common form (which was later available in many of 61 colleges. But students were applying to all programmes in all colleges irrespective of their catchment area as far as the applications were concerned. According to university sources, colleges stopped using this data to decide cut-off marks. Hence, the decision to discontinue pre-admission forms.

So how will the admission process be conducted this year? Colleges will decide their cut-off list based on their previous year's experience and analysis of board results. The cut-off lists will be declared directly and any student who meets the cut-off can directly go and claim admission in the college and course of his/her choice. Colleges will have to admit all students who meet the cut-off marks and not admit on first-come-first-serve basis.

Could declaring cut-off marks based on previous years' experience lead to over-admission in courses? Yes, that is possible if the cut-off marks are not decided carefully and are pitched low. To avoid such a situation, colleges may peg very high cut-off marks in the first list. If a college does not fill all seats in the first list, then it can bring the cut-off marks a little lower in the second list. Colleges are allowed to declare up to five cut-off lists to fill all their seats.



Administration's shock and awe tactics can destroy varsity

COMMENT by Nandita Narain

DELHI University (DU) seems to have entered an Orwellian zone in which every statutory and academic process is subverted by the very authorities that are entrusted with protecting them. Long established democratic norms, without which meaningful academic engagement is impossible, are vandalised and teachers protesting to voice genuine academic concerns are sought to be silenced by the proverbial midnight knock.



The Delhi University Teachers' Association has opposed the implementation of the semester system that was introduced during Deepak Pentel's tenure.

As the university community matches in shocked disbelief, it is easy to get caught up with the cataclysmic approach that has been adopted by the administration in flouting the so-called semester system on an unwilling academic community, rather than consulting on the unsustainability of the system for undergraduate courses in DU per se. It is important to remember that central universities were set up by the Union government to make quality higher education accessible to a large cross-section of Indian society beset by severe economic and social disparities. The S. Radhakrishnan Commission and Kothari Commission had reaffirmed the goals of higher education as those of nation building, promoting social and national integration and the creation of a truly democratic society. The University of Delhi, in particular, was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1922 on the lines of the affiliated Universities of London, Oxford and Cambridge. Today, it has grown into a complex academic organism, comprising several undergraduate colleges and postgraduate departments. It enrolls a several lakhs of students drawn from all parts of India and from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

DU's unique federal structure enables a live intellectual and social interaction between students and teachers of undergraduate colleges with each other and with postgraduate departments that is mutually enriching. Common regulations, syllabi, examinations and qualifications of teachers reap collegial benefits in difficult conditions and enable rural populations such as those in Biwani and Khan to keep up their academic standards.

The challenge has always been to be able to bring about meaningful academic reform, and promote innovative projects within colleges and departments without losing the federal character, which defines our very essence. Contrary to myths engendered by educational bureaucrats, teachers have always been at the forefront of all genuine academic reform, be it the mammoth task of the revision of the syllabi, the restructuring of courses to introduce concurrent subjects whose marks count in the final result or the introduction of interdisci-

plinary courses to make the first year more integrated. Teachers have been campaigning for years before the administration has responded to their demand for reforms. Just a few years ago, DU introduced a system of internal assessment, which makes up 25 per cent of the final result. It is based on continuous term-wise evaluation, an in-house exam in January and a project. In a sense, the system is already semestrised, but the first exam is set and corrected internally by the college teachers themselves. This system is a judicious mix of an internal exam and an external "board" exam in April set and evaluated centrally. The flexibility gives teachers an opportunity to cover the syllabus at their own pace, so that more time can be given to building concepts and foundations, training students to think critically and creatively, motivating them to go beyond examination requirements and catering better to students with special needs. There is time and space for students to explore both academic and co-curricular spheres, which makes for more holistic intellectual and socio-emotional growth. Some of our honours courses are among the best in the world and many of our graduates give an excellent account of themselves at the national and international level.

Simply saying it will enable mid-session credit transfer to foreign universities is not enough. Even if, despite staggering differences in socio-economic realities, western models were to be our guiding principle, why conveniently forget the example of the affluient universities of the UK, which are closest in structure to DU and have robust annual examination systems?

The reasoned criticism given by a majority of teachers about the disastrous implications of bi-annual centralised exams for the academic context, pedagogic processes and politics of social inclusion, has been ignored. Unprecedented ugly and vicious forms of intimidation and harassment have been resorted to in order to coerce departments into submission. In short, all constitutional and statutory safeguards and academic norms are carefully put in place over decades, precisely to prevent whimsical functioning, i.e. managed. The shock-and-awe tactics being used raise uncomfortable questions about the real agenda and integrity of the forces driving these changes that are sending the country's largest central university hurtling downwards in self-destructive gear. (The writer is associate professor, department of mathematics, St Stephen's College)

Business Standard ND. 22.04.11, p-8

KINDLE USERS CAN BORROW E-BOOKS

In a reversal of its policy, Amazon would allow Kindle users to read e-books from more than 11,000 public libraries

JULIE BOSMAN
San Francisco, 21 April

Library books are finally going to be compatible with the Kindle. Amazon said that it would allow Kindle users to read e-books from more than 11,000 public libraries on the devices beginning later this year, a reversal of the company's previous policy.

"We're excited that millions of Kindle customers will be able to borrow Kindle books from their local libraries," Jay Marine, director of Kindle at Amazon, said in a statement.

Until now, library users who borrowed e-books could read them on Barnes & Noble's Nook, the Sony Reader, the Kobo reader, and on laptops and smartphones.

Librarians, who have grown accustomed to telling disappointed Kindle owners that they cannot be used for free library e-books, said they were relieved that Amazon was opening its device and its Kindle app to libraries.

"That's always the question we

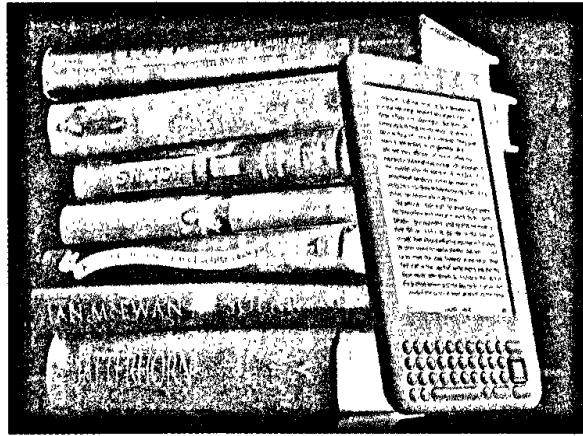
get — you lend out e-books? How can I get them on my Kindle?" said Ingvild Herfindahl, the children's librarian at the Kasson Public Library in Kasson, Minn. "People will be thrilled."

Bobbi L. Newman, who writes the blog Librarian by Day and is a manager at the Richland County Public Library in Columbia, said Amazon's decision proved that libraries were "a key player" in the e-book business.

"We've been waiting for Amazon to play ball with libraries since they came out with the Kindle," Newman said. "Even Amazon can't overlook us anymore."

E-book use in libraries has been growing at a rapid pace, particularly in the last year as more consumers have bought e-readers. The New York Public Library said last month that e-book use in its system was 36 per cent higher than it was a year ago.

Some publishers have remained uneasy about allowing their e-books to be borrowed from libraries at all.



Borrowers can download the books easily from home, so there is less incentive to buy. Two major publishers, Simon & Schuster and Macmillan, have still not allowed their e-books to be available in libraries.

HarperCollins, which has allowed its e-books to be lent by libraries, angered librarians last month when it announced a new policy requiring that e-books be checked out only 26 times before they expire, forcing libraries

to buy them again.

Roberta A. Stevens, the president of the American Library Association, said that considering the growth of e-books in libraries, Amazon's decision was all but inevitable.

"I can't say that I'm surprised," she said. "They were just shutting off a whole part of the market place. It's just logical that this would happen."

Amazon said it would work with OverDrive, a large provider of e-books to public libraries and schools. Barnes & Noble introduced its first e-reader, the Nook, in 2009 and opened it up to library e-books.

"This is not news for Nook customers who have always had access to library services on their Nook Color, Nook and Nook Wi-Fi devices given Barnes & Noble's open platform and Adobe technology partnership," Mary Ellen Keating, a spokeswoman for Barnes & Noble, said in an e-mail.

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Business Line ND.22.04.11, P-29

US scientists take steps to making 'bionic' leg

Reuters

Chicago, April 21

As 20-year-old Hailey Daniswicz flexes muscles in her thigh, electrodes attached to her leg instruct a computer avatar to flex its knee and ankle - parts of Hailey's leg that have been missing since 2005.

Daniswicz, a sophomore at Northwestern University who lost her lower leg to bone cancer, is training the computer to recognise slight movements in her thigh so she can eventually be fitted with a "bionic" leg - a robotic prosthesis she would control with her own nerves and muscles.

"We're really integrating the machine with the person," said Levi Hargrove, a research scientist at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago's Center for Bionic Medicine who is leading the project.

Daniswicz is part of a clinical trial sponsored by the US Army that is using electromyography - electrical signals produced by muscles - and pattern recognition computer software to control a new generation of robotic limbs.

Electrodes attached to nine different muscles in the thigh act as antennas, picking up electrical signals sent from the nerves to the muscles. These signals are fired in a specific pattern depending on how a person intends to move.

With a bit of training, the computer can learn a person's



Research scientist Levi Hargrove with a robotic prosthesis at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago's Center for Bionic Medicine (file photo). — Reuters

signal pattern for when they want to bend a knee or flex an ankle and it makes the virtual reality avatar move.

"The way most prosthetics work now is you have mechanical sensors. You have to push and interact with them," Hargrove said. "With this, you measure the actual neural intent and have that tell the motor what to do."

Researchers at the institute have already developed prosthetic arms directed by nerve impulses. But a robotic leg would give lower limb amputees a new kind of freedom, allowing them to climb stairs more safely and with more natural motion.

Daniswicz has been training her computer avatar since January and she can now instruct it to bend and straighten its knee, and flex and straighten its ankle, just by making slight movements in her thigh muscles.

Daniswicz is one of four volunteers in the study trial that set out to determine whether patients would need surgery to implant additional nerve endings - a technique called targeted muscle reinnervation - to control the motorised leg.

The team had expected patients to be able to operate the knee joint, but were surprised they could control the ankle

without needing surgery, Hargrove and colleagues reported this week in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Since the trial ended, three more volunteers have had similar results.

Currently, there are roughly 2 million lower leg amputees in the world, but that figure is expected to double by 2050 as the number of people with diabetes increases, said Michael Goldfarb, a mechanical engineer at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

Goldfarb's team is developing a fully robotic lower leg for the project that can be controlled by nerve impulses.

He said most lower limb prosthetics are fairly passive.

He said advances in robotic technology are making powered legs possible.

"It's a much closer approximation to what our own limb does."

Although a few companies are developing powered knees and ankles, no company makes a lower leg prosthetic with both. And none are controlled by the amputee's nerve signals, he said.

For Daniswicz, the next step is a powered leg.

"By the end of the year, Hargrove expects to have patients walking in the lab, and then they can try more challenging activities such as stair climbing and descent.

Times of India ND. 22.4.11, P-23

Your phone may be secretly tracking your every move

Gadget Saves Info Of Owner's Location In Unencrypted Files

Kevin Rawlinson

Apple iPhones and iPads are making it possible for jealous spouses and private detectives to track their users' every move, researchers claim, after discovering the gadgets secretly track their owners' whereabouts, storing the information in unencrypted files.

Apple is coming under increasing pressure to explain to angry customers why its products have been storing the location data after it refused to be drawn on Wednesday's reports. Campaign group Privacy International accused the company of "astounding arrogance" over its "continued refusal to take part in any dialogue over privacy".

It emerged Apple's products had been collecting the data after research by two British security experts came to light. Privacy International on Wednesday night wrote an open letter to Apple, saying its phones had been "ringing off the hook with Apple users feeling betrayed and deceived".

It said it wanted to know why the file was created; who, exactly, has access to it; how Apple can ensure it is not accessed by unwelcome intruders; whether the company will allow users to opt-out; and whether it will release a statement to its customers, explaining its policies on privacy.

"Apple thinks it knows better than the rest of the industry when it comes to privacy. Other compa-



© Sung-il Kim/Corbis

nies have faced heavy sanctions recently and now the finger is being pointed at Apple. They cannot continually refuse to engage," said Eric King of Privacy International.

It emerged on Wednesday that later versions of the iPhone, as well as other 3G-enabled Apple devices, collect location data and timings automatically, saving them in a file on both the handset and on the computer used to manage the device. The file is also transferred to new devices after they are plugged into that computer.

After installing a simple programme, versions of which are available online, anyone with access to the hardware can see a detailed map of the owner's movements. It is unclear whether the feature can be disabled. "In the wrong hands, that sort of information can be very dangerous," said King. "There are a lot of things someone could easily deduce given that level of information."

Apple refused to explain why the devices, believed to have been first included in June 2010, had been designed to store the information. Security experts Pete Warden and Alasdair Allan do not believe the information is transmitted to Apple itself. Warden, a British researcher who used to work for Apple, said the company "has made it possible for almost anybody – a jealous spouse, a private detective – with access to your phone or computer to get detailed information about where you've been". THE INDEPENDENT

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING? Anyone with access to the smart phone can see a detailed map of the owner's movements after installing a freely-available software

Times of India 22.04.11, p-23

Soon, a chill pill that helps bust stress

London: Scientists have identified a brain mechanism that turns fear into overwhelming anxiety or depression, a discovery which they say could soon lead to the development of a pill that will keep stress at bay.

The research by a team at the Leicester University was inspired by the observation that while many people experience traumatic events, only some descend into depression or other stress-linked psychiatric disorders.

During experiments on mice, the researchers identi-

fied a protein, called neuropsin, which is made in the amygdala, the brain's "fear centre".

In times of stress, it was found that the brain makes more neuropsin which triggers a series of chemical reactions that culminate in a "fear gene"

being switched on, and the feelings of anxiety.

Developing drugs that target the neuropsin biological pathway could provide new treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder and other anxiety conditions, the researchers said. PTI

KEEP YOUR COOL

Hindu Chennai 21.04.11,
p-2

It is a season of internships too

They are viewed by students and organisations as a stepping stone for future opportunities

Meera Srinivasan

CHENNAI: For many college students, the hunt has begun. With several institutions making summer internships mandatory, students are on the look out for organisations they could possibly work with for the next few weeks.

A summer internship that was earlier perceived as a mere academic requirement, is increasingly being seen as a more professional endeavour.

This is evident from the changing nature of internships and the process of seeking them. Many organisations make it a period of some rigorous work for the students, seeing if there are prospective employees among the interns, even as the trainees see prospective employers in the organisations.

Recognising the increasing importance being given to internships and the challenges in finding them, enterprising youngsters Sarvesh Agrawal and Ankur Khator came up with www.internshala.com, a blog that features internship opportunities across sectors.

"Now students are keen on finding meaningful internships. We thought aggregating the information we have



MOVING FORWARD: With the internship scene turning more competitive, college students are equipping themselves to make most of the opportunity.— FILE PHOTO.

will be of use to such students. The response from both students and companies has been very heartening," says Mr. Agrawal, an alumnus of IIT-Madras.

The blog not only provides information on various internships available, but also gives tips on how a student

needs to prepare, including aspects such as drafting one's curriculum vitae.

Surveys among students showed that they privileged the learning experience over the stipend or brand value, say the founders of the blog.

Some companies, in turn, make offers to the students

of the company, says the internship spans a couple of months and students are mentored by senior leaders.

"Based on the performance in the internship program, Cognizant also makes pre-placement job offers to them at an appropriate time," he adds.

Karthikeyan Vijayakumar, CEO, www.twenty19.com, a portal that offers information on internships and opportunities for students says students who perform well during their internships have a good chance of converting it to a job offer at the end of it.

"With every year, it gets more competitive for students seeking internships," says the Chennai-based entrepreneur who graduated from BITS, Pilani.

Companies connect with such portals, letting them know of opportunities they may have for interns. "Even some big companies hire interns for good stipends. Startups, particularly, are always on the look out for good candidates as interns," Mr. Vijayakumar said.

That is how Pavan Madhini landed a job in a start up in Chennai. The student of the humanities department at IIT-Kanpur took up an in-

ternship in the company after the fourth year of his course. "I found the job unique and very exciting. The offer was good and I took it up excitedly," he says.

Krithiga Kamaraj, now in her third year of engineering at the Madras Institute of Technology, is hoping that her internship will be as fruitful. "They [the company] have asked me to take a test in May. I'm taking up this internship as it will give me some exposure and prepare me better for the GRE that I will take later," she says.

On campus

Another indication of the newly-acquired status of internships is companies going to campuses for recruiting interns. K. Nirmala Prasad, Principal, MOP Vaishnav College for Women says well-known companies, including a few MNCs, come to the institution for recruiting interns.

"Some of our students find internships in companies abroad, too. We have had several success stories of students shining in the organisations they interned with and being placed there in a good position after their courses," she says.

Hindustan ND. 22.04.11, P-1

सफलता के साथ चाहते हैं दुरुस्त रहे पर्यावरण

हिन्दुस्तान

नया
नजरिया

नई दिल्ली | अनुराग मिश्र

आईआईटी और आईआईएम से पढ़कर निकले इन तीन होनहारों को अपने जीवन में सफलता तो चाहिए ही थी। साथ ही उन्हें पर्यावरण दुरुस्त रखने का भी पूरा ख्याल था। यही वजह है कि इन्होंने मिलकर ऐसी कंपनी बनाई जो कि अपने तरीके से पर्यावरण को साफ-सुथरा रख सकती है। इन्होंने सोलर पैनल की कंपनी एक्सर्जी स्थापित की। पर यह आम सोलर कंपनियों से कई मायने में अलग है। इनकी कंपनी सोलर पैनल के डिजाइन को कंपनी के अनुरूप बदलती है साथ ही वह उसके इस्तेमाल में कम से कम कीमत लगे इसका भी ध्यान रखती है।

प्रमुख बात है कि इस कंपनी में काम करने वाले 16 कर्मचारी या तो आईआईटी से पढ़े हुए हैं या फिर इन्होंने आईआईएम से शिक्षा ग्रहण की है। आईआईटी खड्गपुर से कंप्यूटर साइंस में इंजीनियरिंग करने वाले रजत सेठी, आईआईआईटी खड्गपुर से एयरोस्पेस इंजीनियरिंग में बीटेक और आईआईएम बेंगलुरु से एमबीए करने वाले तरुण कुमार और आईआईटी खड्गपुर से बीटेक-एमटेक करने वाले रितुराज मिश्रा ने मिलकर इस कंपनी की शुरुआत की।

कंपनी के निदेशक रजत सेठी का कहना है कि 2009 में बीटेक करने के बाद मुझे अमेरिका में स्लंबर से काम करने का ऑफर था। वहीं तरुण को आईआईएम बेंगलुरु से पढ़ाई करने के बाद फाइनेंस की अंतर्राष्ट्रीय कंपनी से 60



सराहनीय

- आईआईटी-आईआईएम से पढ़े तीन युवाओं ने खोली सोलर पैनल बनाने की एजेंसी
- 3.15 करोड़ रुपये का कारोबार, देश की जरूरतों के अनुरूप बनाते हैं सोलर पैनल



जब मैंने घर वालों से यह कंपनी खोलने की बात कही तो वह इसके सख्त खिलाफ थे लेकिन आज मेरे फैसले पर उन्हें गुमान होता है।

रजत सेठी, निदेशक, एक्सर्जी

लाख के पैकेज का ऑफर था पर इन्होंने इस पैकेज को ठुकरा दिया। रजत बताते हैं कि आज उनकी कंपनी का टर्नओवर 3.15 करोड़ रुपये का है। इनकी कंपनी टाटा पावर, गेल, ईआईएल, जेके सीमेंट, एसीसी, सीसीसीएल, एनडीपीएल के लिए काम कर चुकी है।