# Newspaper Clips

## December 26, 2012

Times of India Ahmedabad 25-12-2012 P-11

# Peer pressure on salaries leading to depression among IITians

M Ramya | TNN

**Chennai:** Big salaries offered by companies descending on IIT campuses are worrying counsellors. 'Dream offers', faculty members say, are stressing out those offered relatively lower salaries. Offers for IITians range from annual salaries of Rs 82 lakh to Rs 12 lakh.

Dr Alok Bajpai, consultant psychiatrist at IIT-Kanpur, said only 5% of the students got big offers, but it still created "pressure on the peer group".

Some IIT-Madras students have sought the help of Mitr, the institute's guidance and counselling unit . "But many don't come to us, because they fear the first question we will ask is why they want to compare salaries," said Mitr head Sivakumar M Srinivasan. Counsellors say parental expectations and comparisons with those who receive multiple offers is one reason why some students feel this way. Failure to meet their own aspirations also puts pressure on some.

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Dr Bajpai said this affected the way school students thought about higher education.

"They want to get into IITs, without the slightest idea of what's different about these institutions. The only consideration is the fat salaries they are likely to get once they join here," he said. And parents choose specializations that will yield maximum returns after four years, he added.

To help students plan their career, rather than get jobs, IIT Madras is planning a series of workshops from next year. "We want to prepare students for what they will face rather than firefight. To identify those who might face difficulties in coming to terms with such situations, Mitr has trained student volunteers to spot and provide some help to these students," said Sivakumar Srinivasan.

The Tribune ND 26/12/2012 P-2

# River pollution: House panel slams Environment Ministry

## Wants social institutes in plan to clean up Ganga, Yamuna

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 25

A Parliamentary panel has criticised the Environment Ministry for its "business as usual passing the buck approach" towards the high level of pollution in the country's rivers. The panel has asked the ministry to ensure flow in the rivers by looking beyond the engineering approach to clean up the Ganga and the Yamuna, as was being done presently, and involve social institutes in the clean-up plan apart from IITs.

"Unless the flow of the rivers is maintained at a reasonable level, no other effort is going to be successful," the high-level committee said, advising the Centre to play a more proactive role in coordination with the state governments so that the country's lifelines could be given a second chance. "The ministry somehow seems reluctant to undertake this challenge (of coordination with states to enhance sewage treatment facilities)," the Standing Committee on Environment and Forests said in its scathing reaction to the ministry's replies in a report submitted to Parliament recently.

One of the key recommendations of the panel has been to shift approach from engineering to socio-centric approach and utilise services of institutes of social sciences apart from IITs as is being done in the case of both the Ganga and the Yamuna. It said unless the flow of the rivers was maintained at a reasonable level, no other effort was going to be successful.

According to experts, for a healthy river it is essential that 70 per cent of the water must flow in the river. "You must not extract more than 30 per cent from a river. This 30 per cent should be utilsed for whatever it has been extracted for and should not be brought back into the river in any form. However, while in the Yamuna not even 3 per cent is flowing, in the Ganga situation is only slightly better. For an average health of a river, 50 per cent of the water must flow in the river and any volume less than that cannot be considered good whatever you do," says Manoj Misra of the Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan, agreeing with the panel's observation on the flow of the two rivers.

While under the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGBRA), a Ganga River Basin Management Plan (GRBMP) is being prepared by the Consortium of the Indian Institutes of Technology(IIT), the Supreme Court recently also asked the Directors of Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Delhi and Roorkie to explore all possible options for checking the growing pollution levels and treating Yamuna waters in Delhi. The panel, however, feels that equally important to the technical approach is that the Centre should take steps to stop encroachment and illegal commercial activities in the catchment areas of all the major rivers, including the Ganga and the Yamuna.

### GOING DOWN **THE DRAIN**

- The Ganga and Yamuna clean-up plans have so far been a sad story of crores of rupees virtually going down the drain
- Projects up to Rs 2598.47 crore have been sanctioned so far under the NGRBA in UP, Uttarakhand, Bihar and West Bengal for development of sewer network, sewage treatment and pumping stations, electric crematoria, community toilets and development of river fronts
- The Centre also approved a World Bank assistance to the NGBRA at an estimated cost of Rs 7,000 crore for a project spread over eight years. The World Bank's technical and financial assistance amounts to $1 billion

Hari Bhumi ND 26/12/2012P-6

## रोजगार बढ़ाने के लिए लिया फैसला

# आईआईएम ने घटाया सहभागिता शुल्क

कविता जोशी. नई दिल्ली

भारतीय प्रबंधन संस्थानों (आईआईएम) ने छात्रों के लिए रोजगार के अवसर बढ़ाने के लिए सहभागिता और नियुक्ति शुल्क में कटौती करने का निर्णय लिया है। इसके पीछे आईआईएम की कोशिश हर साल ज्यादा संख्या में कंपनियों को आकर्षित कर छात्रों के लिए बड़े पैमाने पर रोजगार के अवसर उपलब्ध कराने की है। इस कवायद के कुछ आईआईएम में सकारात्मक परिणाम देखने को मिल रहे हैं और पहले की तुलना में रोजगार सृजन के लिए आने वाली कंपनियों की संख्या में भी इजाफा देखने को मिल रहा है। गौरतलब है कि देश में कुल 13 आईआईएम हैं। इनमें पोस्ट ग्रेजुएशन, डॉक्टोरल समेत एक्जीक्युटिव एजुकेशन जैसे पाठ्यक्रमों की पढ़ाई कराई जाती है।

## सहभागिता शुल्क यथास्थिति

मानव संसाधन मंत्रालय के सूत्रों के अनुसार वर्तमान में कुछ ऐसे आईआईएम भी हैं जो सहभागिता शुल्क के नाम पर कोई धनराशि वसूल नहीं कर रहे हैं। आईआईएम रायपुर, आईआईएम रोहतक, आईआईएम रांची, आईआईएम बंगलौर, आईआईएम कोझीकोड, आईआईएम शिलांग, आईआईएम काशीपुर, आईआईएम तिरूचिरापुल्ली और आइआईएम उदयपुर इस सूची में शामिल हैं। इसके अलावा कुछ ऐसे संस्थान हैं जिन्होंने नियुक्ति और सहभागिता शुल्क में कटौती न करने का निर्णय लिया है। इसमें एकमात्र आईआईएम लखनऊ शामिल है। आईआईएम इंदौर ने वर्ष 2012 में नियोजन शुल्क छोड़ने का निर्णय लिया है। आईआईएम कलकत्ता ने कहा कि उसके कैंपस में पहली बार दौरा करने वाली कंपनियों, शुरू होने वाली कंपनियों, सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों और सरकारी विभागों से सहभागिता और नियोजन शुल्क नहीं वसूला जा रहा है।

## कंपनियों की तादाद बढ़ी

इसके जरिए तीन आईआईएम को ज्यादा फायदा हुआ है। इनमें आईआईएम इंदौर, आईआईएम अहमदाबाद और आईआईएम कोझीकोड़ शामिल है। यहां रोजगार देने वाली कंपनियों में क्रमश: वर्ष 2011 में 92, 143, 110 की तुलना में मौजूदा वर्ष 2012 में 138, 151, 135 तक की वृद्धि हुई है। आईआईएम में रोजगार के लिए मैकेंजी, आईसीआईसीआई बैंक, माइक्रोसॉफ्ट, ज्यूरिक फायनैंनशियल सर्विसेज, बैंक ऑफ अमेरिका जैसे कंपनियां दौड़ में रहती हैं।

## अहमदाबाद का विशिष्ट निर्णय

देश में स्थित 13 आईआईम में से इस मामले पर आईआईएम अहमदाबाद ने सबसे विशिष्ट निर्णय लेते हुए साल के दौरान सहभागिता शुल्क को समाप्त कर दिया और विभिन्न कलस्टरों में भर्ती के लिए तीन अलग-2 स्लैब में संशोधित शुल्क राशि देने का प्रावधान किया है। इसमें कलस्टर एक में 1 लाख 50 हजार रुपये प्रति छात्र, कलस्टर दो, तीन, चार में प्रति छात्र एक लाख रुपये, चार के बाद में प्रति छात्र 75 हजार रुपये का प्रावधान रखा है।

Times of India ND 26/12/2012 p-13

# IIMs trump Harvard, Stanford in GMAT score

Garima Prasher | TNN

**Bangalore:** It is students from IIM-Bangalore, not from Harvard or Stanford or even MIT, who excel at GMAT, the entrance test for the creme de la creme of B-schools across the world.

According to the QS Global 200 Business Schools report, Indian MBA candidates are the world's most academically distinguished, with students of the IIM-B scoring the highest average of 780. IIM-B students are ahead of leading institutions like Stanford in the US and INSEAD in Europe.

While the average GMAT score of Stanford is 730, INSEAD lies at 704.

Second to IIM-B students in GMAT score are their counterparts from IIM-Ahmedabad with 767.

The survey says, "IIM-Ahmedabad is notable for the extraordinarily high average GMAT scores of its students, with its figure of 767 exceeded only by fellow Indian institution, IIM-Bangalore (780). This places the two ahead of any North American or European school for the academic quality of their student intake. The fact that students enrolled at both schools have an average of just two years of professional experience underlines the tendency for academically gifted students to move quickly on to the MBA qualification at the outset of their careers, rather than using it to up-skill at mid career, as is more common in Europe and North America."

Students of IIM-B have scored the highest average of 780, while the average GMAT score of Stanford is 730

IIM-B also appears in the survey as one of the emerging global business schools across the world, overtaking Melbourne Business School.

The colleges were also judged on different subjects under their programme. In corporate social responsibility, IIM-B ranked 21 among the top 50 business colleges across the globe, whereas IIM-A grabbed 19th rank.

When it comes to emphasis on start-ups and small businesses to kick-start private sector growth ( entrepreneurship), IIM-B ranked 25 and IIM-A ranked 17.

QS is an online and offline meeting place for aspiring managers, B-schools and businesses for career and educational-related decisions.

Pioneer ND
26/12/2012

P-13

# Engineering through correspondence

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) would soon allow more technical courses including engineering through correspondence, Human Resource Development Minister MM Pallam Raju said.

After a meeting with AICTE Chairman SS Mantha and other officials, Raju told reporters that a new accreditation body for technical education, Indian Board of Accreditation (IBA), will also be constituted soon.

Students are presently allowed to pursue management (MBA) and computer application (BCA, MCA) programmes through correspondence. But the AICTE does not allow engineering courses through this mode.

The AICTE chairman said that based on recommendations of several committees, the council has decided to allow more technical courses through correspondence. However, "there will be strict conditions of eligibility".

Mantha said: "Nearly all courses except medicine and architecture would be allowed through correspondence."

He, however, added that the final decision in this regard would be taken later. The proposal is likely to be finalised by February next year.

Mantha added that an entrance test would be organised for graduate level courses, while Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) scores might be considered for entrance to post-graduate courses.

Hindustan Times ND 26/12/2012 P8

# Tough to ascertain India's preparedness, says NASA expert

**Vanita Srivastava**
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** A senior NASA scientist of the Indian origin feels it is difficult speak on the preparedness of India's ISRO on its Mars Mission scheduled for November 2013 because all the vital information on the mission is not available yet.

"Yes, there would be a launch but it is difficult to conclude anything at this stage because of the lack of information," Dr Kumar Krishen said. A scientist of Indian origin, Krishen has been working at NASA, Houston, USA, for more than 37 years. As a senior scientist, he plays a pivotal role in transfer of technology from NASA to US companies.

During his private visit to India, he gave his opinion on space exploration and technology.

The Mars Orbiter Mission is targeted for launch in November 2013 to study the surface and atmosphere of the planet.

■ Dr Kumar Krishen

According to sources, ISRO is integrating subsystems on the Mars Orbiter Structure that was given to it by the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd a few months ago. ISRO will build the spacecraft on this structure with subsystems and payloads. Till March 2013, the focus will be on integration of subsystems and after that the payloads on which the scientific experiments are done will get integrated, an ISRO official said.

On human space missions, Krishen said that international collaboration and partnerships among different nations was essential.

"This partnership will help ISRO in training Indian manpower, developing instruments, extra vehicular activity astronaut suits, and infrastructure to get the latest technology for successful missions."

Maintaining that private sector participation must be bolstered in human missions to space, he said by involving the private sector, the technology becomes available to the commercial sector.

Deccan Herald Nd 26-12-2012 P-6

# Challenges of virtual learning

## Knowledge on online classes rely heavily on self-motivation self-discipline and ability for effective written communication

**N N Prahallada**

Virtual education has been in existence Virtual education has been in existence in some form or the other for sometime throughout the globe including India and is becoming increasingly popular.

Virtual education has been in existence in some form or the other for sometime throughout the globe including India and is becoming increasingly popular.

Online classes are less expensive compared to regular college or university programmes. The internet and other global information infrastructures provide a major challenge to higher education such as: the extent to which education should become 'virtual', the actual cost and value of such innovation and its suitability to its stakeholders (e.g. students) are now discussed the world over.

Online universities have gained a lot of interest over the past 12 years. The prospect of a "Virtual Campus" in which students communicate, study and work together with each other and teachers from different locations, brings both challenges and opportunities for higher education institutions.

Bringing a virtual campus to life and making it functional requires a minimum of administrative support, strategic planning, technical solutions, teacher and student motivation, educational vision and online contents. There are different ways for universities, and for countries, to implement their e-learning strategies in universities. If we want to open up public education to new providers and forms of learning, the fundamental challenges are to ensure both quality and academic integrity. And virtual education gives us an opportunity for a new approach that puts effectiveness and student outcomes at its centre.

Virtual education refers to instruction in a learning environment where teacher and student are separated by time or space, or both, and the teacher provides course content through the use of methods such as course management applications, multimedia resources, the Internet, and videoconferencing. Students receive the content and communicate with the teacher via the same technology.

Virtual education is a term describing online education using the Internet. This term is used in K-12 schooling, often to refer to cyber schools, and in higher education, where so-called virtual universities have been established. A virtual course of studies is a study program in which all courses, or at least a significant portion of the courses, are virtual courses, whether in synchronous (i e real time) or asynchronous (i.e. self-paced) formats.

Virtual courses (or online courses) are delivered on the internet. "Virtual" is used here to characterize the fact that the course is not taught in a classroom face-to-face but through some substitute mode that can be associated with classroom teaching.

Both the asynchronous and synchronous methods rely heavily on self-motivation, self-discipline, and ability for effective written communication.

### Instruction modes

Many virtual study programs are mainly text based, using Power Point techniques. Any attempt to personalize the educational experience is essential in that students respond to personal attention and feedback. Today a wide spectrum of instruction modes is available, including the following

**Virtual Classroom:** Live teacher instruction and feedback online that enables real-time voice interaction, whiteboard sharing, and breakout sessions to enhance a student's learning experience. This provides students an opportunity to interact with the teacher as well as classmates by oral and written communication.

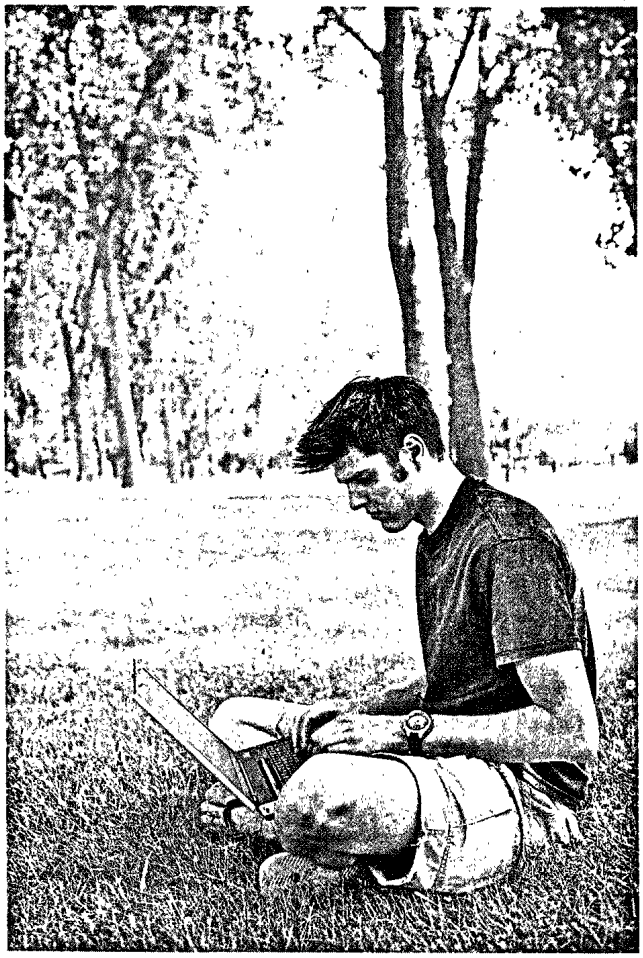
Video-based courses are like face-to-face classroom courses, with a lecturer speaking and Power point slides or online examples used for illustration. Video-streaming technologies is used. Students watch the video by means of freeware or plug-ins.

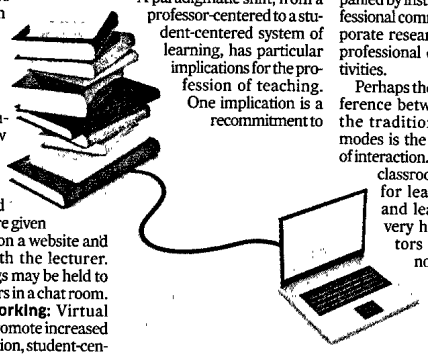
Audio-based courses are similar but instead of moving pictures only the sound track of the lecturer is provided. Often the course pages are enhanced with a text transcription of the lecture.

**Animated courses:** Enriching text-oriented or audio-based course material by animations is generally a good way of making the content more interesting. Animations are created using Macromedia Flash or similar technologies.

Web-supported textbook courses are based on specific textbooks. Students read and reflect on the chapters by themselves. Review questions, topics for discussion, exercises and case studies are given chapter wise on a website and discussed with the lecturer. Class meetings may be held to discuss matters in a chat room.

**Social Networking:** Virtual classrooms promote increased social interaction, student-centred instruction and a problem solving curriculum. Students can address a problem that is oriented to a cross curriculum activity. Teachers will act as guides and resources, but it is up to the students to collaborate, discuss, review ideas, and present solutions.





### Implications

A paradigmatic shift, from a professor-centered to a student-centered system of learning, has particular implications for the profession of teaching. One implication is a recommitment to creating an ideal learning environment for students, employing new technologies to address variances from the ideal.

A second major implication for faculty is a shift from traditional to new roles and classroom responsibilities. The transition from lecturer to facilitator will not happen overnight and must be accompanied by institutional and professional commitment to incorporate research findings into professional development activities.

Perhaps the most telling difference between learning in the traditional and virtual modes is the kind and extent of interaction. In the traditional classroom, the potential for learner-instructor and learner-learner is very high, but instructors have largely ignored this mandate for change and continue to employ the lecture mode as the predominant method of instruction.

In the virtual classroom, on the other hand, technology supports collaborative learning, heterogeneous groupings, problem-solving and higher order thinking skills-educational processes that a lecture format cannot facilitate.

We need to explore the varieties of impact made on higher education by advances in technology and the implications this has for the methods and delivery of education. The impact on the locations and the institutions where education has traditionally been delivered can also be examined. Similar website can also be found at Virtual Learning Network Homepage VLNH.com

### Advantages

Compared to traditional classroom setting, virtual learning is a better option for many. Depending on the self-discipline, pace of learning and style and motivation of an individual, getting an online education could easily offer a learning experience more effective than attending classes at a brick and mortar educational institution.

One can learn from anywhere even from the comfort of one's home comfort saving countless hours of transit that one would otherwise spend.

Virtual learning is extremely flexible allowing students to learn when they want. This is of a great help for students who have a full time job or have children and may not be able to attend regular classes. any other way.

The pedagogical value of online learning is that it provides the learner greater autonomy thereby learner has the liberty to accommodate multiple learning styles and mediums, which suit him/her the best – email, chat rooms and video conferencing.

Union Minister for Human Resource Development Kapil Sibal is of the view that in coming years the physical barriers of universities can be broken allowing students to take up courses in any institute across the globe through virtual medium. He also hinted that a virtual university may soon come up in the country offering students' immense opportunities.

While speaking at the Indo-US higher education summit at Washington, USA recently, Kapil Sibal also said that the 21st century classrooms would be different and the content of pedagogy too would be radically altered. "Customized learning across cultures will be the dominant theme of higher education. We need to open up the university as a learning space, embrace collaborative knowledge production, and break down the walls between institutions."

Endorsing Kapil Sibal's vision, Prof. V G Idichandy, former Deputy Director of IIT-Madras observed that, virtual mode will eventually happen, as we start moving on to virtual classrooms. "There is nothing wrong in removing physical barriers, as it will help many who want to study in distance education mode. This will help us to provide education to more students across the globe. Virtual university will help us achieve anybody, anywhere, anytime concept. This has to happen soon".

In our country efforts are being made to start virtual universities. At present Tamil Virtual University, IGNO University Virtual Campus, Nalanda Virtual University, Birla Institute of technology and science BITS Virtual University, IITs and a host of other universities are coming forward to provide virtual University facilities to the students.

*(The author is a guest faculty and associate professor in education, Regional Institute of Education, Mysore)*

Times of India ND 26/12/2012 p-17

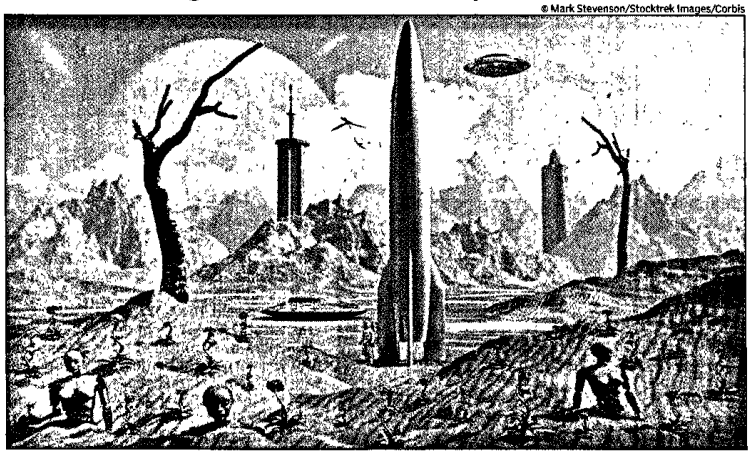
# Do aliens exist? We may find it out in 12 years

## UFO Expert Says World's Largest Radio Telescope Will Have Confirmation By 2024

**London:** Humans could make contact with alien life within 12 years, with the aid of the world's largest radio telescope, a leading UFO expert has claimed. One of the key questions whether extra-terrestrial life exists, could be answered by 2024 with the development of a supersized 1.3 billion pounds radio telescope, the Daily Express reported. The development of the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) telescope will unleash "new and exciting possibilities", according to former UK ministry of defence UFO project leader Nick Pope.

"I will be controversial and give you an exact year of when I believe first confirmation of contact will be made — and that is 2024, the year in which if everything goes according to plan the Square Kilometre Array will be fully operational," Pope, who studied UFO sightings at the MoD for 21 years, said.

The SKA, to be started in 2016, is set to be the world's largest radio telescope and will answer some of the fundamental unanswered questions of our universe. Made up of thousands of radio wave receptors covering 4,921 square km of the Earth's surface in the Australian outback, scientists have claimed it will provide alternative views of the universe than those seen with optical telescopes.



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**FINDING EXTRATERRESTRIAL FRIENDS:** New and exciting possibilities are expected to open up, thanks to the Square Kilometer Array telescope, to be operational by 2016, says a former official of UK's defence ministry

Scientists leading its development have suggested the SKA will be 50 times more sensitive, and will survey the sky 10,000 times faster, than any other telescope. "It will give astronomers insight into the formation and evolution of the first stars and galaxies after the Big Bang, the role of cosmic magnetism, the nature of gravity and possibly even life beyond," a spokesman for the SKA said.

"If there is a civilization within 100 lightyears this telescope could find it. We are now beginning to have the technology whether it's the SKA or maybe other telescopes that are being developed that will allow these possibilities. We are searching all the time for a shadow earth," Pope added. Recent research suggested that nearly 10 % of the population has seen a UFO, equally more than 6 million people just in the UK. "When I was investigating UFOs, I investigated 2-300 reports each year. 10 per cent is an absolutely astonishing figure," Pope added. PTI

## Reusable rockets to become a reality soon

A private space travel company in US claims to have successfully launched its prototype rocket, in a major step towards producing a reusable space vehicle and slash the cost of journey. California based SpaceX's Grasshopper reusable rocket took a giant leap for commercial space flight last week when it rose 131 feet and landed safely back on Earth. The latest launch by the company is a major step towards producing a reusable space vehicle, the 'Daily Mail' reported. PTI

## Rare supercomet to outshine Moon in '13

A rare supercomet is rushing towards the Sun from the outer solar system and at its peak it may outshine the Moon in November, 2013, astronomers claim. First spotted in September this year, the comet is known as C/2012 S1 (ISON), New Scientist reported. Its closest approach to the Sun will be in November. PTI

Times of India ND 26/12/2012

p-17

# 'Environment changes spurred human evolution'

**Washington:** A series of rapid environmental changes in East Africa roughly two-million-years ago may have driven the human evolution, say researchers. "The landscape early humans were inhabiting transitioned rapidly between a closed woodland and an open grassland about five to six times during a period of 200,000 years," said researcher Clayton Magill, from the Penn State University.

## DRIVING FORCE?

"These changes happened very abruptly, with each transition occurring over hundreds to just a few thousand years," Magill said in a statement.

According to co-researcher Katherine Freeman, the current leading hypothesis suggests that evolutionary changes among humans during the period the team investigated were related to a long, steady environmental change or even one big change in climate. "There is a view this time in Africa was the 'Great Drying', when the environment slowly dried out over three million years. But our data show that it was not a grand progression towards dry; the environment was highly variable," she said. According to Magill, many anthropologists believe that variability of experience can trigger cognitive development. PTI