

Newspaper Clips

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Remove food, soft drink co agents from scientific panels: SC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the government to remove people linked to food and soft drink companies from the statutory panels tasked to enforce safety and standards on edible items, including products of these firms.

A bench of Justices Dalveer Bhandari and A K Ganguly felt that company representatives on scientific panels was a clear breach of the mandate under Section 13(1) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

It asked the Food Safety Authority to rectify the mistake and re-constitute the panels with independent scientific experts as members within two weeks and report back to the court. The authority had set up eight panels for laying down scientific standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import, to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

A petition by NGO 'Centre for Public Interest Litigation' through counsel Prashant Bhushan had alleged glaring conflict of interest as the panels included employees, officials of food item manufacturers like Coca Cola, Pepsi Co, Hindustan Unilever, Marico, Britannia, ITC, Nestle India, Hind Agro



Industries, GSK Consumer Healthcare and Food Safety Solutions and International.

The court said the presence of industry representatives on the panels, which the authority's counsel termed as a dynamic decision, was unacceptable as Section 13(1) had a clear mandate that members had to be independent scientific experts who would invite views of the food industry as well as consumers before giving recommendations.

The public interest litigation had alleged that soft drinks marketed by MNCs like Coca Cola and Pepsi were harmful for human consumption and was a major cause of obesity in adolescents. It had sought a scientific investigation into the contents and their harmful effects on health of citizens.

Appearing for the soft drink majors, counsel K K Venugopal and Amit Sibal said that obesity was a rich man's problem and in a country where 36% of population lived below poverty line, the petition's plea was an exercise in futility.

The global workplace@2020

The recently held HR Conclave brought together senior HR directors from across the globe to discuss emerging trends at the workplace and their impact on HR functions and corporate strategies

For years, the workplace and corporate environment have remained relatively stable, but as companies seek newer ways to cut costs, create happier and more productive employees and cater to the needs of Generation Y, the business landscape would change dramatically. To discuss these critical issues and get a global perspective and probable solutions to them, the HR Conclave 2011 on 'HR challenges at the global workplace 2020'



Dignitaries at the event

was organised on January 27 and 28, 2011 by the SP Jain Center of Management Singapore.

"Many studies have attempted to capture a vision of the workplace of the future and

we need to understand the people challenges that will impact the organisations and consequently, the implications they will have on the HR function. Our thinking on HR global challenges was sparked

by the rising profile of people issues on the business agenda – the talent crisis, the rising multi-generational workforce, an increase in the global worker mobility and organisational and cultural issues emerging from the dramatic pace of business changes of the past decade," expressed Prof Rajagopalan, convener - HR Conclave and dean, executive education, SP Jain Singapore.

Participants of the conclave explored ways through which these issues might evolve and highlighted the need for HR to constantly adapt itself to the changing trends to stay successful. It is all about preparing for the workplace of 2020.

EVENT REPORT

- Yasmin Taj

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JNU questions more students

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: The chief proctor's office investigating the pornographic MMS episode at Jawaharlal Nehru University questioned more students on Tuesday. The questioning took place even as the university administration went into overdrive, calling meetings of students, faculty and administrative staff, taking stock of security measures and other related issues. The university administration has decided to enforce strict monitoring of co-ed hostels and also review overall security system on the campus.

The vice-chancellor, S K Sopory,

called for a meeting with students, faculty and administrative staff on Tuesday and precautionary measures are expected to be announced in a few days. Sopory said: "I was shocked. I have a meeting with all stake holders today and I assure all that the guilty will be punished. The good part is that the students are also seeking exemplary punishment for the guilty."

In order to avert any further embarrassment to the university, the administration is going to strictly monitor all visitors to the hostels. Identity cards, fine and suspension are some of the measures being considered. "In co-ed hostels, the girls'

wing is anyways barred for boys. But we would also ensure that girls restrict their visits to the boys' hostel to the common areas and not the rooms. In case of any violation a fine will be imposed and on repeat of the offence the students will be suspended," said Sopory.

Meanwhile, the investigation continued for the third day as more students were questioned. On whether there is possibility of more students being involved in the making and circulation of the MMS, the chief proctor's office said that nothing can be said conclusively till the investigation is completed. No police complaints have been

PORN MMS PROBE

filed so far, although Delhi

Police have started their own probe into the issue. Chief proctor H B Bohidar said: "Investigation is on and some more students are under the purview of this investigation. We spoke to them today. We will take a few more days to complete the internal inquiry as we want to make it comprehensive. The report will be submitted to the VC."

The HRD ministry would seek a report from Jawaharlal Nehru University over the circulation of a video clip. According to an HRD official, the issue is also likely to figure when the newly appointed vice-chancellor of the university SK Sopory calls on HRD Minister Kapil Sibal on February 10.

Times of India ND 09-Feb-11 p-22

Earth: No Space Oddity?

If planets like ours are common, the possibility of life out there increases dramatically

Saswato R Das

Last week, Nasa's Kepler satellite released a list of 1,235 potential planets orbiting nearby Sun-like stars, with 68 planets that are roughly the Earth's size and 54 planets in the so-called habitable zone, a region conducive to life as we know it. This is an incredible haul, and we are witnessing the culmination of the scientific revolution started by Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler, in which the Earth and then the Sun lost its special place as the centre of the universe. Now, it seems a planet like the Earth, which many believed was unique, could also turn out common.

It was only 15 years ago that the first planet beyond the solar system was found, even though many astronomers had believed our solar system was not unique. In the intervening 15 years, about 500 exoplanets (as these planets beyond the solar system are called) have been found. Most have been large - Jupiter-sized. But now our technology is getting better, and the smaller ones are being discovered.

Nasa also announced that the Kepler satellite has found a solar system with six planets. No planet in Kepler 11 (as the new solar system is called) is Earth-like, but many seem similar to planets like Neptune.

And last month Kepler scientists announced that they had found a rocky planet, with a radius about 40% larger than the Earth's, orbiting a Sun-like

star. Dubbed Kepler 10b, it is only 40% larger in size, with about four times the mass of the Earth. It orbits its sun furiously - in only 20 hours, compared to our Earth's 365 days, at a distance 1/20th the distance Mercury is from the Sun. Conditions on Kepler 10b are far too hot to sustain life as we know it. But its discovery has prompted great excitement among astronomers, because it was the smallest exoplanet found.

And now we have more than five dozen others - a veritable cornucopia. In the coming months, astronomers will investigate them diligently to see if any are truly similar to the Earth.

We are witnessing the culmination of the scientific revolution started by Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler, in which Earth and then the Sun lost its special place as the universe's centre

Finding planets around other stars is no easy matter. Planets emit no light of their own, and they shine by reflecting the light of their parent stars. The separation between stars is immense and measured not in miles but in light years (a light year is almost six trillion miles). Given the immense interstellar distances involved, even the nearest stars appear to



Not alone in the universe?

us only as pinpoints. Planets are even fainter, and it's an immense technological challenge differentiating a planet from its parent star, which is thousands of times brighter.

The first exoplanets were, in fact, found by an indirect method: their gravitational signature. A planet's presence affects the motion of a star, and it was this rhythmic gravitational wobble in a star's orbit that was detected in the case of the first extrasolar planets. This method, however, tends to pick out larger planets close to their star, because it relies on a planet's mass - the more massive the planet, the larger the gravitational wobble produced.

There are other ways to detect smaller planets, and Nasa launched the Kepler satellite for that express purpose. Kepler's mission is to

find Earth-size planets around other stars, and it does so by searching for planetary transits - a brief dimming of light that's caused when a planet passes in front of its sun.

Over the ages, there have been some who have held that there are other planets in the universe. Philosopher Epicurus wrote in the 4th century BC that "there are infinite worlds both like and unlike this world of ours". In the 13th century, Albertus Magnus posed the question, "Do there exist many worlds, or is there but a single world?" He went on to say, "This is one of the most noble and exalted questions in the study of Nature." And the heretic Giordano Bruno, who was burned at the stake in 1600, held that "innumerable suns exist, and innumerable Earths revolve about these suns".

But it was philosopher Immanuel Kant who made the strongest case for exoplanets. In his theory of the heavens in 1755 - a time when only six planets were known - Kant advanced the idea that planets were not confined to our solar system. "Our planetary system has the sun as its central body, and the fixed stars which we see are, in all probability, centres of similar systems," he wrote.

Part of the excitement at the recent announcement is because astronomers realise that so many of the planets lie in a habitable zone. This is an area around a star where temperatures are such that liquid water can exist. Scientists think the presence of water increases the possibility of finding life. Of course, the question that follows is whether there are many, many planets like the Earth out there. After all, the Sun is an ordinary star, and there are millions of similar stars in our galaxy. Nasa's latest results seem to indicate so, and it may turn out that Earth-like planets are a dime a dozen.

And if Earth-like planets are common, what does that do to the question of life? Many scientists believe that if we have Earth-like environments, we would dramatically increase the possibility of life, since the processes that gave rise to Earth and life will be replicated there as well. It seems we are finally getting close to learning whether life is unique to Earth and we are alone in the universe.

The writer is a commentator on science and technology.

Times of India ND 09-Feb-11 p-23

Mat race? Qigong slowly but surely catching up with yoga

Wellington: Just as yoga became popular when the Beatles came to India, a 5,000-year-old Chinese energy cultivation system is poised to become the new kid on the block among rat racers hungry for a more serene form of fitness.

Sometimes called Chinese yoga, Qigong is a mind-body practice that melds slow graceful movements, mental focus and deep abdominal breathing to boost and balance a person's vital energy, or 'qi'.

"As China becomes more of a player in the world, Chinese practice is becoming more mainstream," Stuff.co.nz quoted Matthew Cohen, creator of the Tai Chi & Qi Gong Basics DVD, as saying. Cohen, an instructor at Sacred Energy Arts in Santa Monica, California, said unlike in India, yoga in the west has come to favour the athletic at the expense of the meditative.

"The world is getting more crowded, cars and computers getting faster," he said. "Qigong is about going slower, so internally



ENTER THE DRAGON: Qigong, also known as Chinese yoga, melds slow graceful movements, mental focus and deep breathing to boost a person's vital energy, or 'qi'

you create space," he added.

Tom Rogers, president of the Qigong Institute, a non-profit ed-

ucational organisation, said Qigong is the precursor to all Chinese energy practices. "Tai chi is the most well known moving form of Qigong. Kung fu is also a form of Qigong," Rogers said from his home in Los Altos, California.

The slow, spiral exercises of Qigong, such as rolling the ball or wave hands in the cloud, require no equipment, can be done anywhere, and are easy to learn. "I call it getting an MBA: movement, breathing and awareness," said Rogers. "One is adjusting your posture so energy flow is better; two is slow, deep, abdominal breathing; three is awareness, or trying to get thoughts out of your head," he added.

Jessica Matthews, an exercise physiologist with the American Council on Exercise, said research trials have reported statistically significant decreases in the incidence of stroke, decreased blood pressure, increase in bone density and improved effectiveness of cancer therapy among practitioners. ANI

Pessimism is in the genes

People With Lower Levels Of Neuropeptide Are Much More Negative: Study

London: Are you perceived to be a pessimist? Blame your genes, for researchers say that some people are genetically programmed to be negative. A new study has revealed the amount of a chemical in the brain affects how people view the world — in fact, the researchers discovered that levels of a molecule, neuropeptide Y (NPY), directly relates to whether people have a “glass half empty” or “glass half full” attitude towards life.

Those with lower levels of the substance are much more negative and find it more difficult to deal with stressful situations; they are also more susceptible to depression, say the researchers.

The team at University of Michigan believe the amount of NPY is genetically programmed and hope that the discovery could lead to early diagnosis of and prevention of psychiatric illness.

The researchers scanned the brain activity of volunteers as they viewed negatively charged words (like “murderer”). Subjects with low levels of NPY showed strong activation in the prefrontal cortex, which is involved with processing emotion, while subjects

ON THE PRECIPICE: Those with low levels of NPY are more susceptible to depression, say researchers

with high NPY showed a much smaller response.

Scientists also compared NPY levels with major depressive disorders. Subjects with low-expression of NPY were more likely to suffer depression, it was found. ❧

Faulty chromosome behind sleepwalking

London: In a possible breakthrough which may pave the way for a cure for somnambulism, scientists claim to have identified the “genetic code” which makes some people sleepwalk. An international team has claimed that sufferers share a faulty chromosome which is responsible for their behaviour while asleep; by studying four generations of the same family, the scientists traced the fault to a section of chromosome 20.

Carrying even one copy of the defective DNA is enough to cause sleepwalking and having isolated the defective section of genetic code, they hope to find new treatments for the condition, the Neurology journal reported.

For the study, the team, led by Christina Gurnett of Washington University School of Medicine, sought the help of a large family of sleepwalkers. The family had been referred to them because one

of the youngest members, a 12-year-old girl called Hannah, had been experiencing particularly troublesome sleepwalking, which regularly caused her to leave the house during the night.

Using saliva samples, the researchers analysed the family's DNA to unpick the genetics of the condition. They found the problem stemmed from genetic code in chromosome 20 and this code had been passed down from generation to generation. Someone with the gene has a 50% chance of passing it on to their children.

Gurnett told the BBC: “It is likely that several genes will be involved. What we've found is the first genetic locus for sleepwalking. We do not know yet which of the genes in this linkage region of chromosome 20 will be responsible. But discovering these genes could help with identifying and treating the condition.” ❧

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Unhappy meal? Junk food lowers children's IQ

London: It's a research which may anger many busy parents who rely on processed foods to placate kids — eating junk food lowers a child's IQ.

Researchers in Britain have carried out the study of 4,000 kids and found that those under the age of four eating a diet of processed food, fat and sugar have lower brain power at eight-and-a-half years. Their IQ fell by 1.67 for every increase on a chart which reflected how much processed fat they ate. And the damage could not be reversed — as diet at the ages of four and seven had no affect on IQ scores.

In the study spanning several years, the researchers at Bristol University monitored the diet of kids at age three, four, seven and eight-and-a-half years, the Sun reported.

Kate Northstone, who led the research at Bristol University, said: "In this population of contemporary British children, a poor diet, associated with increased intake of processed foods, fat and sugar in early childhood may be associated with lower IQ at the age of 8.5 years.

"In addition, a healthy diet may be associated with higher IQ. It is possible that good nutrition during this period may encourage optimal brain growth."

But she added: "Further



BRAIN DRAIN: According to a study, kids under the age of four eating a junk food diet have lower brain power at eight-and-a-half years

research is required to help determine the true effects of early diet on intelligence."

Barbara Gallani, of the Food and Drink Federation, said: "It isn't surprising that a healthy, balanced diet is important in IQ development — just like it is generally for children's health and growth. We believe it is important for everyone to eat a wide variety of foods. It's possible to eat a healthy diet and still include some treat foods." PTI

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Now, a liquid that makes nerves glow

London: In what could make surgeons' job far more easy during surgeries, scientists have claimed that they are inching closer to developing a new fluorescent liquid that can make hard-to-see nerves glow when injected into patients.

The peptide, developed by a team from the University of California's San Diego School of Medicine, consists of a protein fragment containing amino acids. The glow-in-the-dark liquid, according to the researchers, would soon enable surgeons to see even the most sensitive nerves instead of relying on their experience and electronic monitoring.

Avoiding these during surgery is important as accidental damage can lead to severe pain or paralysis, they said. The researchers injected the liquid into mice and found that it created a distinct contrast between nerves and other tissue. PTI

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NZ Terraces, world's 8th wonder, rediscovered

Washington: Scientists have rediscovered what they claim is the eighth wonder of the world — Pink and White Terraces in New Zealand, which were buried in mud for a 100 years, losing some charm.

Until the late 19th century, the Pink and White Terraces along Lake Rotomahana on the North Island, attracted tourists from around the world, interested in seeing beautiful natural formations created by a large geothermal system.

The eruption of Mt Tarawera on June 10, 1886,

buried the terraces in sediment and caused the lake basin to enlarge, engulfing the land where the terraces stood. For over a century, people have speculated whether any part of the Pink and White Terraces survived the eruption.

An international team has located portions of the Pink and White Terraces, using autonomous underwater vehicles to map the bottom of the lake. The team used the camera system to capture images of the lake floor where they were able to photograph some the terrace edges. PTI ■

Hindustan Times ND 09/02/2011 P1

IIMs change eligibility criteria, aspirants hit

U-TURN Even CAT toppers find themselves missing the mark

ht EXCLUSIVE
Charu Sudan Kasturi

■ charu.kasturi@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Studying at the bedside of his parents as they both battle cancer, 25-year-old Dipesh Kaien secured a 99.27 percentile in the 2010 Common Admission Test (CAT), the entrance examination conducted by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs).

That places him in the top 1% of IIM aspirants, but he's not

eligible for the next steps in the admissions process — group discussion (GD) and personal interview (PI). Neither are dozens of others.

After the CAT results were released last month, four of the B-schools changed the eligibility criteria while the remaining six used norms that were hidden till then.

Though the CAT prospectus clearly stipulated 50% marks in the bachelor's degree as the eligibility requirement, the four new IIMs in Shillong, Rohtak, Trichy, Raipur are using a 65%

score in the bachelor's degree as their minimum eligibility criteria. The six older IIMs — Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Indore and Kozhikode — are screening students for the GD and PI based on a weightage they are assigning to CAT scores, class X, XII and degree marks.

While the B-schools had said they would consider parameters other than CAT scores, the often decisive weightages given to these criteria were only disclosed after the CAT 2010 results were released last month.

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IIM CRITERIA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

An exact count of the number of students affected is difficult because each IIM employs different rules. "I have lost out because of the weightage given to school and bachelor's degree scores. Had I known the criteria they would use, I would not have wasted a year of my life, apart from money, to prepare for CAT," said Kaien, who is planning to file a public interest litigation in the Supreme Court.

IIM Ahmedabad Dean HS Jajoo, however, argued that at least the older IIMs had not changed any criteria after the exam. "I sympathise with the students, but there has been no change in criteria employed by us," Jajoo told HT.

Hindustan Times ND 09/02/2011 P3

Police yet to register case

JNU MMS SCANDAL No formal complaint filed; proctor says he has come across new facts

HT Correspondent

■ htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The south Delhi Police are yet to register a case in the 'JNU sex movie scandal', as neither the girl in the video nor the university authorities have approached them with any formal complaint. "We cannot register a case till either the woman or university authorities approach us," said HGS Dhaliwal, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South).

Chief proctor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), HC Bohidar, who is investigating the matter, revealed that he has come across some new facts. "These facts are proving to be quite helpful in our investigation. The report will be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor in a week's time. If proven guilty, the students will face severe punishment," he said. Bohidar also added that both the boys, including the one who filmed the act, are being interrogated but the girl has not been called to Delhi as she had left the university last year after the incident.

The video, which was made

THE STORY SO FAR

- The video, shot on a handycam, has been doing the rounds for almost a year now.
- Officials of JNU believe that the video was shot on the sly and that the girl was not aware of being filmed.
- The proctor is interrogating two boys—the one in the video is a BA student in the School of Languages, while the other who filmed and edited it is a computer applications student.

with a handycam, has been doing the rounds of the campus for almost a year now. According to JNU sources, the girl's boyfriend, a BA student in the School of Languages, made it when she visited him at one of the hostels in the campus.

"The video was then circulated among the friends of the main accused. We believe that the woman was not aware about being filmed. We are investigating as to why the accused made the video in the first place," said a senior official at JNU on condition of anonymity

as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

Another person under the scanner is a student of computer applications in the same university, who allegedly filmed and edited the video.

The incident came to light when a department of the university submitted the clip to the Proctor's office.

When questioned, most JNU students said they came to know about the incident only on Tuesday through news reports. Student leaders of various parties have so far refrained from commenting on it. "We don't think it is appropriate to make any comment right now. It is a sensitive subject and we urge the administration to look into the matter seriously and take steps against those who are behind it," said Sucheta Das, a Ph.D student and member of the All India Students' Association.

But the question everyone is asking is, are the varsity authorities contemplating about making hostel rules stricter? "That won't be necessary. This case is an aberration, not a routine," said Bohidar.

The JNU halo begins to dim



FALL FROM TOP: JNU no longer ranks among the world's best universities.

By Suhas Munsal in New Delhi

AUGUST 2009: Eight JNU students are ragged by their seniors in their hostel room. This is the first instance of ragging in JNU's 40-year history.

JANUARY 2011: A computer application student shoots an obscene SMS at a couple getting cozy in their hostel room; the video goes viral on the Net.

NCE considered the epitome of high thinking and impeccable ethics. Jawaharlal Nehru University clearly is no longer the revered institution that it used to be. It is not just academic standards that have fallen at the university. Life at JNU has also undergone a change — and a rather unpleasant one at that.

An inactive electorate since October 2009, the infamous ragging incident and the discovery of the pornographic SMS in its own campus orchestrated by its own students means that JNU no longer leads over other universities in the country like it used to do.

Actor Shalini Vatsa, who impressed as a Marxist's wife Dhanyia in *Peepli (Lite)*, and who is a JNU alumnus, puts it succinctly: "JNU used to be a non-money, non-criminal campus. But now there are just too many students and too many influences for there to be any kind of solidarity among the students. It's alone any sort of idealism."

Several other alumnus lament the loss of JNU's open culture over the years. They talk about the time when girls did not need to think twice about going out for a 2 am break at the nearest dhaba in the campus. Now, of course, the situation is quite different.

The staff at JNU, however, is quite keen to claim that nothing has changed and that incidents such as the latest MMS scandal are just "one-off cases". They say such incidents cannot dent the reputation of an institution that has over 40 years of unimpeachable credibility behind it.

"They do, however, acknowledge that such episodes end up disturbing the otherwise hospitable and open culture of the campus. We are concerned about our image because of this incident. But I am sure JNU's ethos and culture will help us tide over it," JNU registrar Prof. V. Jain said.

University officials claim accused who are dealt with harshly, but insist they were only "misbehaving in JNU's strong soundly disciplined culture". Jain talks about the effectiveness of the punitive action taken by the university in the ragging case: "We took strong anti-ragging measures and they were effective. This was proved by the fact that no other incidents of ragging were reported from the campus after that one incident," he says.

Bedini Chaudhry, a student pursuing her Masters in English from the university, agrees with Jain. "Unfortunately occurrences

A 'non-money, non-criminal' campus? Hardly. The latest MMS scandal shows that JNU is no longer the venerated univ it once was

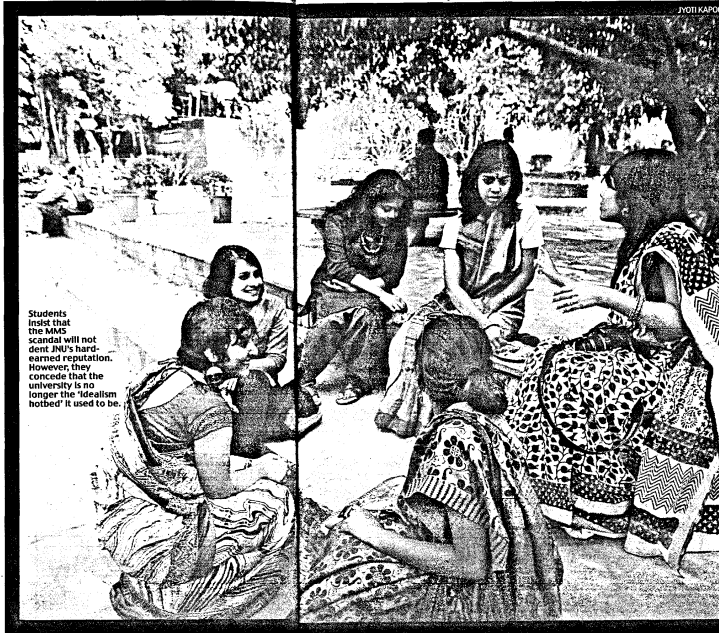
Rankings for JNU	2009	210
Arts & Humanities	70	121
Engineering & IT	291	350
Natural Sciences	245	301
Social Sciences	73	128

*World rankings based on a survey of 3,700 institutions

like these don't necessarily reflect the culture of this university. The only major difference I can spot is that students aren't taking part in regular elections. During the year when regular elections took place and political battles were fought, students managed their own 'self-monitoring' bodies. Discipline was given a priority and matters were discussed openly," M.S. Thapar, associate professor at JNU's Centre for Political Studies, says.

Former students, too, believe that stating the election process wasn't good for the university. "The scandal that has been in the talks for the past week isn't unique to the institute. JNU is not an island. The institute has maintained a spotless disciplinary record, having a few incidents. Though one doesn't smell a systemic rot in the university, a lot of its students and ex-students believe that arresting the university's elections wasn't in the best of its interests," Harsh Dohal, a former JNU student, says.

(With inputs from Neetu Chandra)



Students insist that the MMS scandal will not dent JNU's hard-earned reputation. However, they concede that the university is no longer the 'idealism hotbed' it used to be.

ALUMNI LAMENT FALLING STANDARDS

OMAIR AHMED, Writer
YEARS IN JNU 1998-2001 (dropped out)
COURSE: International politics or COURSE I am going to begin by saying: "In the good old days, it was all very different!" But even when I joined JNU, it was already changing. The influence of the outside world was showing; there were far too many cars in the campus, more people had money and even more were interested in making money. Just like Delhi has gone from being the political capital to being the politically flush capital, the campus of JNU, too, has changed a lot — it is no longer the closed-knit unit with a lot of local clout that it once was.

DIPANKAR GUPTA, Sociologist
YEARS IN JNU 1971-75
COURSE: Sociology and Anthropology
WHEN we were students, JNU was all about the heady intellectual life. Reading was a very important part of being a student. Especially because it helped in debating, which was the most important aspect of life in JNU. I find this aspect considerably diminished now, particularly in student politics. The campus has become less cohesive. Though these may be snapshots that seem different, the overall composition could be the same. Still, we will have to wait and watch if that is the case.

SHALINI VATSA, Actor
YEARS IN JNU 1995-2000
COURSE: Political Science
JNU USED to be the place for idealism. I know that never works in the real world, but even if the tiniest bit of those beliefs stay on in the mind, then it is a good thing. I was very upset when I heard there are no student elections anymore. If we talk about apathy, not having elections is the start. It used to be a non-money, non-criminal campus but now there are just too many students and influences for there to be any kind of solidarity among the students, let alone any sort of idealism.

THE GIANTS HAVE GONE

(Most of JNU's iconic professors have bid adieu to the university)



POL. IDEAL NO MORE

The Umpson Committee, constituted to frame guidelines for students' union elections, termed the JNU Students' Union (JNSU) election as a "major failure". But the Supreme Court in 2008 stayed the JNSU elec-

THEY GRADUATED FROM JNU

ACADEMICS



OTHER FAMOUS ALUMNI



No more a centre of higher learning

By Kavita Chowdhury in New Delhi
THE MMS scandal that has rocked the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) could well be symptomatic of a larger crisis facing the esteemed institution. Built to be a centre of higher learning and to promote research, JNU has fallen into the trap of churning out students by the numbers. In the process there has emerged a disconnect between the faculty and the students. Former students and teachers that had once distinguished JNU from other Indian universities. The faculty which is the university's backbone, appears to be a divided lot with most teachers pursuing their personal agenda, turning reluctant to the free flow of ideas. This has led to the flight of several eminent scholars and academicians from the campus over the years. Such a situation was unimaginable in the past when the faculty and students worked in close proximity and formed a community unlike any other in the country. Debates and discussions, which led

to an intellectual engagement, were the centrepiece bond. This has obviously broken down," Baksh Barabhai, alumni and now deputy director of the Academic Staff College of the old campus, said. Bhatia Malasaptra, who taught at the university from 1966 to 2005 and was a student from 1981 to 1984, calls it "a somewhat decline in the spirit of JNU". "All institutions need to move with the times and meet new challenges. JNU is at the crossroads. A university needs to be known not for the degrees it produces but for the alternative imagination it offers," Malasaptra said. "It is increasingly becoming a teaching university for B.A. and M.A. courses," Barabhai said. "The high quality research, need to experiment. The university has not encouraged such an environment which led to several eminent teachers leaving JNU," he added. Some prominent teachers who quit the faculty include Pratap Bhanu Mishra, Shankar Dutt, Sudipta Karvy and Rajeev Bhargava. Bhargava, who has taught at JNU's Centre for Political Studies for 26 years and is now director of the Centre for Developing Societies, pointed to a more serious problem afflicting the university. "The political climate has declined. The public involvement of earlier times is missing and that is evident in cases like the MMS scandal," Bhargava said.

Students and faculty no longer share the bond that had once distinguished JNU from other Indian universities.

Business Line ND 09/02/2011 P-5

British B-schools brace for immigration clampdown

Vidya Ram

London, Feb. 8

Britain's business schools are warning of the severe impact that proposed changes to student visa regulations could have.

Many countries are tightening up, but there is a real danger that if we are seen to be the most demanding there will be a big decline in foreign student numbers, Mr Jonathan Slack, chief executive of the Association of Business Schools, told *Business Line*.

At the start of February, the coalition Government completed a two-month long public consultation on student visas, which attracted some 30,000 responses, and is expected to announce its plans shortly.

Last year, the Government pledged to make the student route into the country harder, after Home Office research found high levels of abuse, and concluded that net migration into the country could not be brought down without changes in this area.

Among the changes being proposed are tougher entry criteria, including tougher English language requirements, limiting a

student's ability to work and bring dependents, and requiring the student to return home after the initial course had been completed.

UNACCEPTABLE

This last requirement could make it harder for business schools, said Mr Slack. "Its unacceptable," he told *Business Line*. "We see no reason why a student who completes an MBA and wants to do a specialist degree in finance should have to leave the country. All it does is add a significant bureaucratic element."

Britain has been a very popular destination for business students. 20 per cent of all non-EU students enrolled in post-graduate studies in the UK are doing a business degree.

Students from Asia account for a large proportion of these numbers, with Indian students forming the second largest foreign group, with 9,841 studying business and management in 2009. China sends the largest numbers, with 20,876 students in 2009. Nigeria, Germany, France, Pakistan, Poland, Malaysia, Greece, Taiwan, Russia and the US are some of the countries that send over 1,000 students a year.

SCHOOLS FEARFUL

Business schools are fearful that growth from these markets, which has soared during the last 10 years, could be severely weakened.

According to a survey carried out by the Association of MBAs last month, 97 per cent believed the restrictions would impact enrolment numbers. Visa restrictions had already hit revenues, with one institution estimating that the loss of revenue in the last twelve months totalled 680,000 pounds, according to the study.

"The risk of dwindling numbers will have a devastating impact on U.K. universities and the industries they support," warned the association in a recent report.

The organisations say they recognise the Government's concerns about preventing abuse within the system, but argue that little of the abuse comes from the business school sector. "Most of the problems are lower down the education chain," says Slack. "We may not be the target but we are fearful that it will creation the perception that the UK isn't open to international students."

Tribune ND 09/02/2011 P13

CIC orders police protection for whistleblower IIT professor

ADITI TANDON/TNS

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has directed the West Bengal police to provide security to the IIT Kharagpur professor who exposed grave irregularities in selection of JEE candidates and subsequently feared a threat to his life from the institute authorities.

Professor Rajeev Kumar of IIT Kharagpur, whose exposes on manipulations in the cut-off calculation formula to benefit certain students in JEE 2006 led to the recent momentum of reform in the IIT system, had complained to the CIC of victimisation, harassment and a threat from the IIT Kharagpur authorities, cross with him for filing RTI applications to gather sensitive exam-related information.

The Commission also issued a show-cause notice to IIT Kharagpur's public information officer as to why penalty should not be levied on him for supplying false information to the whistleblower. The officer is accused of tendering "false information" to Kumar, who had sought all official and personal communications of IIT Kharagpur administration -- including file notings -- regarding JEE 2006 where in the most admission irregularities are said to have occurred.

"The appellant has informed the Commission that he has been threatened, harassed and victimised by the director, deans and the registrar of

IIT Kharagpur since he is filing RTI applications and exposing certain wrong doings. We direct the Kharagpur ASP to ensure that proper security is provided to Professor Rajeev Kumar after making assessment of the threats he has been receiving. If any physical harm comes to him, the police will be held responsible for not having performed its duty," Information Commissioner Shailesh Gandhi said in his order.

Gandhi, meanwhile, agreed prima facie that the institute seemed to be misleading the Commission considering Kumar placed on record critical letters and information on JEE 2006 shared between the institute and the Ministry of HRD.

The Tribune had in February 2010 used documents accessed by Kumar to report how 994 top scorers in JEE 2006 had failed to make it to the IITs and low-scoring candidates had clinched the admissions due to faulty calculation of cut-off marks as per a formula crafted by the IIT Joint Admission Board that year.

The institutes were also found to have shredded the optical response sheets pertaining to the admissions, inviting suspicion. Further, instances had come to light of wards of IIT faculty making it to the institutes on suspect grounds. Following The Tribune reports, the Delhi High Court had issued a notice to the institutes and HRD Ministry. The case is underway.

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Inspector Sibal



ROHIT BANSAL

One more reason for India Inc to despair. In coming months, the production line for talent will get choked by a fierce regulatory struggle. 380 private B-Schools have blown the conch against HRD minister Kapil Sibal's regulatory arm, AICTE, for trying to tell them what to teach and how much to charge. A high-profile legal battle is imminent. The clock is ticking towards February 28, All India Council for Technical Education's D-Date for the country's 380 Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) B-Schools.

Despite government's tall claims, education remains a dark hole in the reform process. Oblivious to ground reality, the PM and Sibal foster an amusing mutual admiration society. Sibal never tires of repeating that he will do for education what Singh has done for the economy; the PM has stated that Sibal is the best teacher in India and work being done by the HRD ministry is the most important one in the Union government.

Ironically, on Monday, Sharad Jaipuria, the emissary of PGDM schools, started the anti-AICTE-inspector-raj-tirade at the door of the PM's principal secretary, TKA Nair.

Normally a sedate lot, several B-School directors have said that Sibal's AICTE, which grants them affiliation, is prone to corruption. It's new notification, they say, will unleash a new wave of inspector raj. This includes new inspectors from host states. For example, if implemented, admission tests to 380 PGDM B-Schools (except minority institutions) would be conducted by the host states and fee would be decided by their fee-fixation committees. On its part, AICTE will control the model curricula, the conduct of examinations, and arbitration on matters of examination. PGDM B-Schools have advised from Senior Counsel KK Venugopal that they must take Sibal and AICTE to court, an option they plan to

exercise after a protest march before the Supreme Court.

AICTE acting chairman SS Mantha isn't impressed. He argues AICTE doesn't just have the legal mandate to regulate PGDM B-Schools, it has a moral and fiduciary duty towards parents and students. For example, unlike the university system, a PGDM complainant today has few options between the devil and a hard place. That said, in the absence of grading within these 380 PGDM schools; Mantha is left to paint a school like XLRI or MDI with the same broad brush as a shady land grab in Noida. Also, if he lets go the B-Schools, AICTE won't have a case to regulate other branches of technical education: engineering and technology, architecture, town planning, pharmacy, applied arts and crafts, hotel management and catering technology. It is a fact that many unscrupulous B-Schools seek (and then flaunt) AICTE affiliation, but once affiliation has been 'managed', they break into their opaque groups, each one evolves its own, often, dubious curricula, examination standards, faculty and redressal are uneven, and fee is fixed whimsically, often in violation of Supreme Court orders.

The ensuing confusion would expose the underbelly of India's mythical managerial base. The world would wonder if our managers are all that well trained. That's good in the long term. We deserve these questions, for we've been sweeping the muck under the carpet for far too long.

Of course, schools are a divided lot and their nascent group associations can only thank the AICTE notification. That said the drastic changes on offer have come without discussion and debate. Key key stakeholders were never asked.

Will the face-off damage careers of young students even before they've started? Yes. Will India Inc insist that business leaders must sit on the boards of some of these PGDM shops? No, but it should. Is the AICTE move prejudicial to the interests of home-grown institutions even as foreign management institutions don't face such curbs; or will Inspector Sibal regulate Stanford too? The jury is out on that!

(Email: rohitbansal@post.harvard.edu. The writer is CEO and co-Founder India Strategy Group, Hamurabbi & Solomon Consulting).

Hindu ND 09/02/2011 p-12

Team of U.S. nuclear scientists on 10-day visit

Sujay Mehdudia

NEW DELHI: A high-level delegation of U.S. officials and nuclear scientists, including representatives from the Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory (INL), the government's lead nuclear engineering and science laboratory, are on a 10-day visit to India to explore ways of cooperation in the nuclear

energy sector.

According to an official release, the aim of the visit is to learn more about the country's nuclear energy community and to identify development opportunities and partnerships that will benefit both countries.

"All advanced nuclear energy nations benefit by understanding each other's nuclear enterprises and col-

laborating where appropriate," said John Grossenbacher, INL Director and head of the delegation.

Representatives from INL will interact with leaders and researchers in the government, industry and academia. The delegation will meet representatives of higher education at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai, Department of Atomic Ener-

gy, the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited and NTPC Limited.

INL represented the Department of Energy during negotiations on the 123 Agreement on civil nuclear energy cooperation.

While in Mumbai, INL will also present a charter to the newly established India Section of the American Nuclear Society.

आईआईटी परीक्षा पर हुई चर्चा आरटीआई दायरे के बाहर

एजेन्सी | नई दिल्ली. आईआईटी प्रवेश परीक्षा (जेईई) की तैयारी पर बैठक में हुई चर्चा को आरटीआई के तहत सार्वजनिक नहीं किया जा सकता। केंद्रीय सूचना आयोग का कहना है कि ऐसा करने से परीक्षा प्रणाली अस्त-व्यस्त हो सकती है। सूचना का अधिकार (आरटीआई) कानून के तहत एक व्यक्ति ने आवेदन दायर कर पिछले साल जेईई समिति की बैठकों में हुई चर्चा की जानकारी मांगी थी। इस आवेदन पर विचार करते हुए आयोग ने आईआईटी-मुंबई के इस तर्क पर सहमति जताई कि इसमें महत्वपूर्ण जानकारियां हैं। आईआईटी का कहना था कि ये जानकारियां बहुत ज्यादा गोपनीय हैं।

Jansatta ND 9/02/2011

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रसोई गैस से हो रहा दिल्ली का पर्यावरण सबसे ज्यादा प्रदूषित!

सीएसई ने कहा- प्रदूषण संबंधी रिपोर्ट में कई खामियां

जनसत्ता संवाददाता

नई दिल्ली, 8 फरवरी। पर्यावरण के क्षेत्र में काम कर रहे प्रमुख गैरसरकारी संगठन सेंटर फॉर साइंस एंड एनवायरनमेंट (सीएसई) ने देश के छह शहरों में प्रदूषण के संबंध में केंद्र की ओर से मंजूर की गई रिपोर्ट पर मंगलवार को सवाल उठाते हुए कहा कि प्रदूषण संबंधी अध्ययनों में विज्ञान आधारित खामियां हैं। रिपोर्ट में कही गई यह बात समझ से परे है कि दिल्ली में सबसे ज्यादा प्रदूषण रसोई गैस से फैलता है। सीएसई ने कहा कि दिल्ली, मुंबई, चेन्नई, बंगलूर, कानपुर और पुणे में प्रदूषण के संबंध में यह अध्ययन आईआईटी कानपुर, आईआईटी चेन्नई, द एनर्जी एंड रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट (टेरी) और ऑटोमोटिव रिसर्च एसोसिएशन ऑफ इंडिया (एआरएआई) और नेशनल एनवायरनमेंट इंजीनियरिंग रिसर्च इंस्टीट्यूट (नीरी) ने किया था। इनमें से नीरी ने दिल्ली और मुंबई के लिए अध्ययन किया।

सीएसई की कार्यकारी निदेशक (शोध) अनुमिता राय चौधरी ने दावा किया कि नीरी के दिल्ली और मुंबई के लिए हुए अध्ययनों में कहा गया है कि प्रदूषण का कारक डीजल चालित कारों से ज्यादा रसोई गैस और सड़कों पर उड़ने वाली धूल है। उन्होंने कहा कि नीरी की रिपोर्ट कहती है कि दिल्ली में प्रदूषण में वाहनों से निकलने वाले धुएं का योगदान सबसे कम है और एलपीजी से सबसे ज्यादा प्रदूषण फैलता है। जबकि प्रदूषण के संबंध में एशिया में हुए अन्य अध्ययनों में कहा गया है कि एलपीजी की प्रदूषण फैलाने में हिस्सेदारी सबसे कम होती है।

अनुमिता ने कहा कि नीरी की रिपोर्ट में जहां वाहनों से निकलने वाले धुएं को प्रदूषण के लिए कम जिम्मेदार बताया गया है, वही अन्य शहरों में हुए अन्य संगठनों के अध्ययन में प्रदूषण के लिए सबसे ज्यादा जिम्मेदार वाहनों को ही बताया गया है। उन्होंने कहा कि नीरी का अध्ययन कहता है कि स्वास्थ्य के लिए बेहद नुकसानदायक पीएम 2.5 (पार्टिक्युलेट मैटर) की दिल्ली में जितनी मौजूदगी है, उसमें 50 फीसद योगदान एलपीजी के कारण है। यह निष्कर्ष पूरी तरह से अस्वीकार्य और समझ से परे है। उन्होंने कहा कि कहा कि अब ऑटोमोबाइल उद्योग जगत इस रिपोर्ट का दुरुपयोग कर रहा है ताकि प्रदूषण फैलाने वाली महंगी कारों को बढ़ावा दिया जा सके। सोसायटी फॉर इंडियन ऑटोमोबाइल मैनुफैक्चरर्स (एसआईएम) ने नीरी के अध्ययन का ही हवाला देते हुए डीजल चालित कारों का बचाव किया है। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार कृषि के नाम पर डीजल पर सबसिडी देती है लेकिन ऑटोमोबाइल कंपनियां इसका दुरुपयोग कर डीजल कारों को बढ़ावा देती हैं।