

# Newspaper Clips

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GLOBAL BLUEPRINT

## More autonomy, new programmes for IITs

ht EXCLUSIVE

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**NEW DELHI:** The Indian Institutes of Technology may soon adopt a blueprint for reforms aimed at pushing IITs up the global rankings. Under the new blueprint, the institutes will increasingly fund themselves and also gain greater autonomy from the government.

Human resource development minister Kapil Sibal has called a crucial meeting of the IITs to discuss three reform plans and a new set of academic programmes the institutes want to introduce.

The IIT Council will meet on January 21 to shore up plans in governance and administration, promotion of students from one semester to the next and examination reforms, top government sources told HT.

The agenda for the meeting also includes plans to introduce programmes in cyber security, and ratification of extensions granted to the directors of IIT Madras and Delhi. "We will take up the reform plans at the meeting," HRD minister Kapil Sibal told HT. IIT Bombay chairman Anil Kakodkar, head of a panel set up by Sibal to prepare the blueprint, is expected to make a presentation on the panel's report at the meeting.

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## More autonomy for IITs

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The panel is expected to recommend a new financial model to allow the IITs to generate their own income and depend less on the government. In return, the IITs will receive greater autonomy.

IIT Kanpur Director Sanjay Dhande is expected to deliver a presentation on a proposal to uniformise the criteria for promoting students from one semester to another across IITs - a demand frequently raised by students. Dhande was in

2010 appointed head of a panel by Sibal to prepare a strategy to end the system of different IITs employing varying performance criteria for promoting students. A panel under science and technology secretary T Ramasami is working on examination reforms.

"None of the three panels have submitted their final reports yet, but are expected to present at least a template," a source said. The meeting is also expected to clear a proposal to set up a permanent secretariat for the IIT Council.

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## Blood group 'O' cuts heart attack risk

**London:** Blood group 'O' protects people against heart attacks, say researchers.

A new study, published in *The Lancet* journal, has revealed that the same gene which creates the enzyme that causes people to be blood group 'O' gives them some protection against heart attacks.

The study was carried out by an international team led by researchers from Cardiovascular Institute at Pennsylvania University in the US. For their study, the researchers

compared almost 6,000 people who had suffered a heart attack with 7,400 people who had a type of coronary heart disease, but had not had a heart attack. They described the association as "notable, in view of decades of work suggesting a relation between ABO blood-groups and both thrombosis and coronary heart disease".

However, the study did not look to quantify how much extra protection being blood group 'O' might give someone from having a heart attack.



The gene that produces the enzyme behind blood group 'O' cuts plaque build-up

"Certain genes predispose to heart artery plaque build-up, whereas different genes lead to heart attack when you already have plaque build-up," said study author Muredach Reilly, an associate professor of medicine at the Cardiovascular Institute of the University of Pennsylvania.

One of the more heart-protective genes also helps direct people to have type O blood, the team reported. The study suggests the multifaceted relationship between ge-

netics and cardiovascular health, Reilly said. "Not all genes for heart disease are equal and therefore have to be used differently in new treatments for heart disease and when assessing risk of heart disease," he said.

But one expert cautioned while blood type O may offer some protection from heart attack in people with coronary artery disease, that doesn't mean that your blood type alone will spare you from cardiovascular trouble. AGENCIES

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## Now, video games that use living organisms

**Washington:** A Stanford researcher has started developing video games using biotechnology.

Ingmar Riedel-Kruse has begun developing "biotic games" involving parametia and other living organisms.

In his video games, a player's actions influence the behaviour of living microorganisms in real time - while the game is being played.

"We hope that by playing games involving biology of a scale too small to see with the naked eye, people will realize how amazing these processes are and they'll get curious and want to know more," said Riedel-Kruse.

"The applications we can envision so far are on the one hand educational, for people to learn about biology, but we are also thinking perhaps we could have people running real experiments as they play these games," he added.

Riedel-Kruse and his colleagues tried creating some classic games like PacMan, which was renamed as PAC-mecium, Biotic Pinball POND PONG and Ciliaball.

The basis of the games is parametia - the single-celled organisms.

A camera sends live images to a video screen, with the "game board" superimposed on the image of the



**LIVE PLAY:** In the video games, a player's actions influence the behaviour of living microorganisms

parametia. A microprocessor tracks the movements of the parametia and keeps score.

"We are talking about microbiology with these games very primitive life forms. We do not use any higher-level organisms," he said.

"Since multiple test players raised the question of exactly where one should draw this line, these games could be a good tool to stimulate discussions in schools on bioethical issues."

In some games, such as PAC-mecium, the player controls the polarity of a mild electrical field, which influences the direction the parametia move. ANI

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# Is India really world-class?

Indians desist from spitting in streets abroad but do so back home... from ugly buildings to lack of clean waterfronts, what's stopping us from being a world-class tourist destination? Indrani Rajkhowa Banerjee asks some people who matter

**D**ID you know that Indians travelling abroad every year heavily outnumber foreign tourists coming to India? That makes one wonder — Is India actually as good as it appears at economic summits, on postcards and in romantic fiction? *Times Life* asked a cross-section of eminent peo-

ple if they thought India could become a world-class destination in the coming decade. While all of them believe the change must come from within, they also reinforced the fact that laws should be stricter and a sense of pride must be instilled by those at the helm of power.

## Look Within



**Yuvraj Singh,**  
cricketer

**Surf 'n' sand** | India is a peninsula, yet we have only scratched the surface of our coastline for tourism. In the next decade, we could focus on developing world-class beaches, clean waterfronts, marinas, cafes and restaurants. We could develop world-class water sports facilities and theme parks as well.

**Feel proud** | India's image took a battering in 2010. We had a phenomenal year in sport but had to face the embarrassment of the CWG scam. The next decade can be dedicated to an India free of scams and corruption, one that does business ethically and openly.

**Sporting giant** | I have been privileged to see many cricket stadiums in the world. In India, it can be a nightmare to take your family out to watch cricket. I hope that, in the future, Indian sports venues boast state-of-art spectator facilities, which will then provide impetus to India as a major sports tourism destination.

## The Loo Factor!



**Anuja Chauhan,**  
Advertising professional &  
author

**Dignity of privacy** |  
"We've different stan-



A false sense of being has made us complacent. Changes take place only when there's turbulence. **The great divide** | The gap between the wealthy and poor is huge. About 70 per cent of the population is illiterate and starving. Giving alms is not the solution. Educate and empower the underprivileged.

## Inclusive India

**Priya Dutt,** politician



### Stop being delusional

To be a true superpower, there has to be equal distribution of wealth. There are two Indias — one section talks about economic growth, another section scrounges through trash bins to feed itself. It's a dichotomy. Unless the divide is bridged, it's a fallacy on our part to be delusional of being a first world country. The answer is to empower the poor. Someone rightly said, "Give a man a fish and he has food for a day; teach him how to fish and you can feed him for a lifetime."

**Smart laws** | We are modern, yet our laws are so archaic! Isn't it funny that we are using the laws formulated by the British to keep us muted? Anyone having a brush with the law becomes untouchable. This shows that the judiciary is inaccessible and doesn't work for the common man.

**Build that pride** | We have our 5,000-year-old culture, heritage, awe-inspiring traditions and breathtaking landscapes to offer the world. What more can a nation ask for? I

sense, even of our elite society, needs a fast-track education.

**Showcase the beauty** | Flaunt the real diversity of India, rather than faking luxuries that make for an ugly contrast with the close to 50 per cent of

the land from within. But the civic sation. We taught the world cleanliness, superior drainage and sanitation. How about getting our act together once again?

**women** | For servations powermen ill-and nated The



illiteracy and corruption. While shooting for *Peepi Live*, I've seen real poverty. The intention for filming the movie was to shock people out of their comfort zones.

**Wake-up call** | There can only be change when we start recognising the fact that India is a third-world country. Our development is underprepared for that has to change now.

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seven wonders of the world. A nostalgic approach to aesthetics has been missing in our country. Why are ugly buildings allowed to spring near heritage sites, and in the hills? Isn't it ironical that an Indian restrains himself from spitting on the streets in Singapore, but doesn't mind spitting in his own cities?

**Atithi Devo Bhaba** | It's very difficult to explain the goodness of a country to a tourist who was robbed or molested. To become a world-class country, we need to see our country from the tourist's eye.

**Tough laws** | How can a country be productive when half its population is not properly fed? Well, India is a vast democracy and we cannot have a one-stroke solution for our problems. But a fear of the law, combined with education and awareness can hopefully take us to the next level. India has a long way to go to call itself a world-class country.

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# अब भी आसान नहीं दाखिले की राह



कआर मंगलम स्कूल में फार्म जमा करने पहुंचे अभिभावक।

**आप दिन स्कूल नई-नई दिक्कतें पैदा कर रहे हैं, कोटे का बोझ झेलने के लिए कतई तैयार नहीं हैं स्कूल, मुखिकल हो रही है लॉटरी प्रक्रिया**

**कार्यालय संवाददाता**  
नई दिल्ली

नर्सरी दाखिलों में कमजोर आय वर्ग (ईडब्ल्यूएस) कोटे से अपने बच्चे के दाखिले का सपना देखने वाले अभिभावकों का सपना सच होना मुखिकल लग रहा है। आप दिन स्कूल नई-नई दिक्कतें पैदा कर रहे हैं। इस बजट से परेशान अभिभावकों को दिक्कतें कई युवा बढ़ रही हैं।

स्कूलों का कहना है कि यह इस कोटे का पुरजोर विरोध करते आए हैं और आप भी करते रहेंगे। यही नहीं स्कूलों का कहना है कि यह कोटा उन पर बोझ है और वह इसे झेलने के लिए कतई तैयार नहीं हैं। प्राइवेट स्कूल मैनेजमेंट एसोसिएशन के अध्यक्ष आरसी जैन का कहना है कि यह कोटा स्कूलों के लिए बोझ है। वह कतई नहीं चाहते कि यह स्कूलों में यह कोटा लागू हो। वह इस कोटे का विरोध करते

**किन-किन दिक्कतों का सामना कर रहे हैं अभिभावक**

- फॉर्म जमा करवाने के बाद कोई इंतज़ार नहीं हो पा रहा
- आव प्रमाण पत्र, जन्मतिथि प्रमाण पत्र मांगा जा रहा है, दिखाए जाने के बाद भी फॉर्म नहीं दिया गया
- स्कूल फॉर्म खत्म होने का बहाना बना रहे हैं
- कई स्कूलों ने फॉर्म लेने से ही इंकार कर दिया
- कई अभिभावकों के फॉर्म भी रद्द कर दिए गए हैं
- फार्म जमा करवाने गए अभिभावकों को 15 जनवरी को आने को कह जा रहा है

रहे। इस कोटे के तहत हर स्कूल कम से कम दाखिला करने को सोच रहा है। कई स्कूल ऐसे हैं जहां सीटों से कई युवा ज्यादा फार्म आ गए हैं। इसलिए लॉटरी निकालना मुखिकल है।

यही इस कोटे के तहत अपने बच्चे का दाखिला करवाने के लिए स्कूलों के चक्कर काटते हुए अभिभावकों को आए दिन नई-नई परेशानियों का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। ईडब्ल्यूएस कोटे से अपने बच्चे के दाखिले का फार्म जमा करवाने गए रॉबिन का कहना है कि स्कूलों का सच सही नहीं है। रॉबिन का कहना है कि मैं अपने बच्चे का दाखिला ईडब्ल्यूएस कोटे के तहत करवाने गया तो मुझे फार्म जमा करने के बाद कोई इंतज़ार नहीं हो पाया। नीती गोयनका और एमिटी स्कूल, साकेत ने इतिहास का फॉर्म जमा करवाने के बाद

कुछ नहीं दिया। पछुने पर जवाब मिला कि आपको बता दिया जाएगा। हालांकि सरकार ने विद्यवत टी है कि पावती देना जरूरी है। वहीं एक और अभिभावक ने नाम न छापने की शर्त पर बताया कि मैं एक स्कूल में फॉर्म लेने गई। स्कूल

ने मुझे ईडब्ल्यूएस कोटे के फॉर्म देने के लिए आव प्रमाण पत्र मांगा। उसको दिखाने के बाद दूसरे दिन मुझे जन्मतिथि प्रमाण पत्र मांगा गया। मैंने इसको भी दिखा दिया पर मुझे फॉर्म नहीं दिया गया। कुछ अभिभावकों का यह भी आरोप है कि कई स्कूल फार्म ही नहीं दे रहे। अमित मल्लोत्रा ने बताया कि कई स्कूलों ने बताया कि फॉर्म खत्म हो गए। बाद में अभिभावकों के विरोध के बाद हमें फॉर्म दिए गए। वहीं वैकटेश ग्लोबल, रोहिणी ने ईडब्ल्यूएस कैटेगरी में कई अभिभावकों के फॉर्म लेने से ही इंकार कर दिया। यही नहीं कई अभिभावकों के फॉर्म भी रद्द कर दिए गए हैं।



टंगोर इंटरनेशनल स्कूल में नोटिस बोर्ड देखते अभिभावक।

• अजित सेन