

Newspaper Clips January 16, 2015

Millenium Post ND 16/01/2015 P-5

6 IITs to get permanent campus soon

DHIRENDRA KUMAR

NEW DELHI: Even though there is a huge fund cut of Rs 3,900 crore in higher education for the financial year 2014-15, the Human Resource Development Ministry is 'hopeful' that six new IITs will be shifted to their permanent campus this academic session. According to a senior ministry official, six of total eight new IITs would start functioning from their permanent campuses. "The construction as well staff recruitment work for new IITs is almost in the last lap. We have visited most of the sites identi-



fied for establishing buildings for new technical institutes and the remaining locations would be soon visited," said an HRD official.

The six new technical institutions that will get their permanent address in academic session of 2015-16 include IIT-Bhubaneswar, IIT-Patna, IIT-Indore, IIT-Jodhpur, IIT-Gandhinagar and IIT-Hyderabad, while

IIT-Bhubaneswar, Patna, Indore, Jodhpur, Gandhinagar and Hyderabad to get campus this session, while IIT-Ropar, Mandi will have to wait for some time

other two IITs such as IIT-Ropar and IIT-Mandi will have to wait for some time for a permanent campus. With an objective to expedite the functioning of other five new IITs, which were announced in the Narendra Modi gov-

ernment, the HRD ministry officials are making hectic visits to complete the land identification job. An HRD sources said, "A team of officials have visited three states, where new IITs would come up, a few days back. The team is expected to visit other tow states of Kerala and Chhattisgarh in the coming days."

It is pertinent to mention here that the Modi government in its maiden budget, which was presented in July last, had announced to open five new elite technical institutes in the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

Indian Express ND 16/01/2015 P-1

HRD moves against DU Vice Chancellor but President steps in to seek answers

RUHI TEWARI &
ABANTIKA GHOSH

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 15

EVEN as the HRD ministry has trained its guns on Delhi University Vice Chancellor Dinesh Singh, having forwarded a file with three key allegations against him to President Pranab Mukherjee, Rashtrapati Bhawan is said to be unconvinced about the charges and has sought further clarifications.

The President is the Visitor of all central universities.

In its file sent to Mukherjee recently, the HRD ministry has sought an explanation from the VC on three issues:

- Charges that Rs 150 crore was diverted from OBC funds for students' to purchase 62,600 laptops;

- Whether the amended ordinance of the university that enabled the Four Year Under Graduate Programme (FYUP) had the President's approval;

- DU's affidavit in the Delhi High Court last year asserting that "the university falls within the definition of 'state' under Article 12 of the Constitution" and therefore can have its own policy on quotas under Article 16 (A).

According to sources in the government, while scrutinising the allegations against



DINESH SINGH

Singh, senior functionaries of Rashtrapati Bhawan were not convinced about the ministry's stand. The President is thus yet to take a decision and his office has sought more clarifications.

While the HRD Minister's office said it has sent the file to the President and is awaiting his orders, Rashtrapati Bhawan refused to comment. "We do not comment on such issues," said Venu Rajamony, press secretary to the President.

The UGC-appointed Satyam Committee, in its report submitted in October last year, found that DU diverted OBC funds to buy 62,600 laptops, most of which are lying unclaimed. The committee, however, did not find any misappropriation of funds.

Ministry officials claim that since the main allegation against Singh is that of diversion of funds and not

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HRD move

misappropriation, it makes the case against him less tenable. "Given the circumstances, the President may well allow him to continue for the remaining part of his term, given that there are only nine months left," said an official.

Singh, who took over as VC in October 2010, completes his tenure this October.

The HRD ministry under the NDA government has had a running feud with Singh over the FYUP issue after he refused to scrap the programme and revert to the three-year undergraduate course despite its directives. The Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has also been alleging financial and administrative irregularities under Singh.

Meanwhile, the ministry is yet to accept the resignation of IIT-Delhi Director Raghunath K Shevgaonkar, who quit last month amid controversy, with some reports alleging he was faced pressure from the HRD ministry to release salary dues of nearly Rs 70 lakh to former IIT-Delhi faculty and now BJP functionary Subramanian Swamy between 1972 and 1991.

Hindustan Times ND 16/01/2015 P-18

Let's not 'make' history

To maintain the neutrality of educational and cultural institutions, appoint people with the right credentials

A knowledge of the scriptures and ancient Indian folklore seems to be a preferred qualification for those being shortlisted for posts at the prestigious Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR). Among the 18 panelists proposed by the council's chief Sudershan Rao are three historians who are office-bearers of the RSS' Akhil Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Yojana. All three have strong views on the validity of the scriptures as the foundation for historical theories in India. The names are now with the HRD ministry awaiting clearance. The fact that the RSS is pushing its people into various think-tanks and educational and cultural institutions goes without saying. But, it is up to the heads of such institutions to see that ideology does not come in the way of fact and proven research in the various fields.

It would be to stretch the imagination to expect that someone with a strong RSS background could be completely objective when it comes to history, considering that the organisation has definite views on the events that shaped our past. But the HRD ministry has to be impartial and rigorous in ensuring that the people chosen have the right credentials to merit inclusion in the council. If Left historians have been accused of rewriting history to suit their ideology, the Right-wing should not repeat the mistake. The prime minister has spoken of how it is merit and merit alone that qualifies a person for a particular position. This should be so in institutions like the ICHR, which are meant to produce works of a very high standard.

In a world made more equal and accessible than ever by the Internet, distortions of history will be caught out quickly. A coloured view of history, if allowed, is to do a disservice to those who have painstakingly researched and documented the past. Of course, there can be several interpretations of the facts of history, but the facts themselves cannot be changed or embellished. And ancient texts rooted in mythology cannot form the basis for historical research though they may provide useful insights into the events of those times. The professionalism which the NDA government is committed to should extend to all disciplines, especially history, which seems to attract the most controversy.

Times of India ND 16/01/2015 P-8

NGT order to make drains pollution-free

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: If the National Green Tribunal (NGT) judgment on the Yamuna and stormwater drains in Delhi is implemented, drains, which are eyesore now, will transform into recreational green spaces.

NGT, while pronouncing a judgment on restoration of Yamuna and natural drains in the city earlier this week, accepted the recommendations of an expert committee headed by IIT professor, AK Gosain. One of the plans is to ensure no sewage enters the natural stormwater drains that lead to the Yamuna. This will serve two purposes—pollution in Yamuna will reduce and natural drains will recharge Delhi's groundwater aquifers. It will cost the government about Rs 4,000 crore to make it a reality.

To start with, no drains will be covered in Delhi under

NGT's 'Mailey se Nirmal Yamuna Revitalisation Plan, 2017.' Those who have just begun construction will have to remove the structures. Two projects to cover drain had already started in Andrews Ganj and Chirag Dilli under a Rs 233-crore Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Mission (JNNURM) scheme. About Rs 58 crore have already been spent on it. These projects may now be scrapped completely.

"The reason is simple. If rain water is not reaching drains, underground aquifers are not getting recharged. These drains are also rich in biodiversity and support a large number of species, but that will not happen if they are covered. Drains will also not play their natural role of carrying floodwater if there is sewage in it," said Gosain.

There are about 200 such natural drains in Delhi that need immediate relief from sewage and toxic effluents

'KEEP DRAINS OPEN & CLEAN'

Expert committee's reasons for recommending a stop on sewage flowing through stormwater drains and keeping those open

- ▶ Natural drains are groundwater recharge zones and support biodiversity. Any pollution there will have adverse consequences
- ▶ If they are covered rainwater will not be able to recharge the underground aquifers
- ▶ Use of storm drains to carry sewage will result in flooding of local areas as there will be no space left for floodwater

The NGT, in its judgment on drains, had said:

- ▶ There shall be no construction or coverage of any of the drains by any authority or municipal corporation
- ▶ Where more than 85% work has been completed,

such work is permitted to be completed by the corporation after obtaining specific orders from the Tribunal

- ▶ Where construction has just begun, everything shall be removed

that flows into them.

NGT's plan is to ensure that in unsewered areas—about 45% of the city—the sewage generated is intercepted before it enters the natural

stormwater drains. "Sewage can be diverted to the nearest sewer line or taken to nearest STP. That is why we need new STPs in the city. As for sewer areas—55% of Delhi—people

have no business draining sewage into natural drains," Gosain said. In these sewer areas, the sewerage system may need repair and maintenance as part of the project. Gosain is hopeful that this project may be successful as Delhi Jal Board (DJB) in its affidavit had itself suggested the plan.

Along with ensuring that the natural drains are sewage-free, certain species of grasses and trees will be planted along them. "Some grasses help clean water. Drains also have their micro eco-system where a lot of species thrive. With this, we can maintain biodiversity. NGT is treating the natural drains as part of larger Yamuna," Manoj Misra, petitioner in the case against covering of stormwater drains, said. He added that the judgment could have been even more effective had the tribunal imposed the "polluter pays" principle against those who dump waste in drains.

Times of India ND 16/01/2015
P-25

NASA's Mars rover set to drill into crystal-rich rock

Mars rover Curiosity will drill into a crystal-rich rock to detect possible salt mineral left from a drying lake on the Red planet, according to an Indian-origin NASA scientist. This target, called "Mojave", displays copious slender features, slightly smaller than grains of rice, that appear to be mineral crystals. A chance to learn their composition prompted the team to choose Mojave as the next rock-drilling target.

Hindustan ND
16/01/2015 P-8

आईआईटी के सहयोग से पाइप लाइन सुधरेगी

गाजियाबाद। मुरादनगर से दिल्ली जाने वाली गंगाजल पाइप लाइन की मियाद पूरी होने के बाद उसकी मरम्मत कराने की तैयारी चल रही है। मरम्मत कराने से पहले दिल्ली आईआईटी से सलाह मांगी गई है ताकि उसी दिशा निर्देश के तहत काम हो सके। दिल्ली आईआईटी की रिपोर्ट के बाद लाइन की मरम्मत का काम शुरू किया जाएगा।

मुरादनगर से दिल्ली के गोकुलपुरी प्लांट जाने वाली गंगाजल पाइप लाइन की मियाद पूरी हो चुकी है। जल निगम ने इस लाइन की मरम्मत कराने के लिए दिल्ली जल बोर्ड से संपर्क किया। साथ ही इस लाइन में आई कमियों की रिपोर्ट भी उसे दी थी। इसके लिए जल निगम ने मरम्मत कराने के लिए एजेंसियों से भी संपर्क किया और उनका प्रस्ताव भी लिया। जल निगम के मुताबिक, 26 किलोमीटर लंबी लाइन की मरम्मत में करीब 200 करोड़ रुपये खर्च होंगे। दिल्ली जल बोर्ड ने इस मामले में दिल्ली आईआईटी से सलाह लेने का फैसला किया है।

Smriti Irani: PM Narendra Modi's youngest minister isn't ruffled by controversies

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/smriti-irani-pm-narendra-modis-youngest-minister-isnt-ruffled-by-controversies/articleshow/45903936.cms>

NEW DELHI: Declaring that she was in the government to bring about change and shatter the status quo, Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani has said she is the victim of a "deliberate narrative" and her forthrightness "makes a lot of people uncomfortable".

Irani, a first-time minister and the youngest in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ministerial council, also said her detractors were "flustered" by her changes and that she does not go whining to the PM against them as "he has a more important job to do". She also vehemently denied that RSS had any role in her ministry's functioning.

"I think there has been a deliberate narrative, as far as I am concerned, which has been nicely seeded into the media," the 38-year-old former TV star-turned-politician told ET in an hour-long exclusive interview.

Pressed to say who was creating this narrative and if she was alluding to people within her own party, Irani smilingly retorted that she knew who it was. "I know you will be out on the lookout to look for some spice, but I will only say this much: I know who it is and because I know who it is, I couldn't care less," she said.

Don't Care for Perceptions, says Irani

Irani, a self-made politician who even did a modest job at a McDonald's restaurant, said she didn't care much for perceptions.

"Because if my entire focus is on calming those choppy waters then my boat will not sail...If I fight perceptions all the time I would hardly have time left for work," said the minister, claiming that her work occupied most of her day barring some five hours or so of rest time.

Irani more than any other minister has been a magnet for controversies in the short period the Modi government has been in power. She has hurtled from one row to another, starting with the row over her educational qualifications followed by a high-profile standoff between her ministry and the Delhi University, the Sanskrit row in CBSE schools, the fracas over observing Good Governance day on Christmas and most recently the resignation of IIT-Delhi's director.

Asked if she had ever complained about what she suggested was a deliberate targeting of her to the prime minister whom she refers to as "boss" and the only person she really looks up to, Irani replied in the negative saying she was not "one of those whiny people".

Appearing unflappable and confident, Irani, who rather unusually for ministers sits next to the driver in the front seat of her official vehicle with her staff sitting in the back, was unflustered by a barrage of questions put to her by ET's reporters and editors, calmly answering posers on topics that ranged from the nitty-gritty of education policy to controversial appointments to politics and finally herself.

She strongly denied RSS or persons such as Dinanath Batra — the Sangh's ideologue on education issues — had any role in running of her ministry and said criticism over some appointments to key institutions was a case of "sour grapes".

Asked about trenchant criticism faced by her, especially from noted feminist writer and academic Madhu Kishwar, Irani said she could not be bothered by it.

"I am not defined by somebody's comments or an article or somebody's angst about me or their anxiety about me or what is being said about me on social media. I have lived life enough to know that I define myself," said Irani, who first

became famous in the television serial Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi and is immortalised in public memory as one of its main protagonists — Tulsi.

"I think in my entire 15 years of public life I have lived with many circumstances where my sense of forthrightness makes a lot of people uncomfortable. I know the pros and cons of being absolutely blunt.

I know the pros and cons of not being diplomatic... I am here because people did not want to retain status quo. I am here because people wanted the agenda for change to be implemented," added Irani, a mother of two schoolgoing children.

Saying that education in the previous government suffered because it "became a political akhara", Irani said she had brought a sense of holistic thinking to the ministry. Asked if the government, given its emphasis on cultural pride and nationalistic moorings, was anti-English, she rejected the suggestion and said there had to be a balance between English and Indian languages.

Set up a central university after Narayana Guru: Subramanian Swamy to Smriti Irani

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/set-up-a-central-university-after-narayana-guru-subramanian-swamy-to-smriti-irani/articleshow/45901703.cms>

NEW DELHI: BJP leader Subramanian Swamy has urged HRD Minister Smriti Irani to establish a central university in Thiruvananthapuram after Dalit icon Sree Narayana Guru.

Sree Narayana Guru is widely revered for his contribution to uplifting the members of Kerala's backward Ezhava caste. "...a Central University in Trivandrum should be established in his name because he uplifted a most backward community called Ezhava to such heights that today this community has become the most educated community of Kerala," Swami said in a letter to Irani.

Swamy said he had attended a meeting of the Sree Narayana Dharma Sanghom Trust on December 31 last year which was also attended by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

"During the course of the speech, we had committed that for great Guru Sree Narayana, a central university in Trivandrum should be named after him," the letter said.

MOOCs will take off in a big way the world over by 2020: Anant Agarwal, edX

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/opinion/interviews/moocs-will-take-off-in-a-big-way-the-world-over-by-2020-anant-agarwal-edx/articleshow/45904922.cms>

In his recent visit to India, Anant Agarwal, CEO of edX, an online learning destination founded by Harvard and MIT, has his agenda clearly defined. He is eyeing a larger share for edX and is targeting the high school segment in India. He is also keen on capturing the professional education segment through the edX platform. "In order to create content for these new segments, edX is looking at forging alliances with IITs, IIMs and other institutes," he tells Prachi Verma in an interview. Edited excerpts:

Will Swayam, the government-led MOOC programme, be the answer to India's problem of bridging the gap between demand and supply in education?

Swayam is a phenomenal initiative by the academia and government. I see it as a major national platform where it can

be made available both for online learning and blended learning in universities. I expect a lot of it to come out in about a month or so.

How are the tie-ups with technology and internet companies shaping up?

edX has partnerships with Google, Facebook, Microsoft and with Amazon. Microsoft will give a free subscription to PowerPoint for six months with Mix, where you can create videos from PowerPoint and load them into edX automatically.

Are there any such partnerships in India?

We had announced a partnership with Aspiring Minds about a year ago. Commercially, we are talking to a few other people but haven't announced anything, for both content and development. We have a content partnership with IIT Bombay and IIM Bangalore, and are talking to several other universities for similar partnerships.

Another round of partnerships will be with corporates to launch professional education courses on edX. Professionals will have feebased MOOCs called Freemiums.

Which is better — blended or pure online learning?

I would say both are important. If you already have been to a university and are working, then online learning is a good option. But if you are on campus, the blended model is very useful. In universities, you can use platforms like Swayam to augment the classroom experience.

What trends do you predict for Indian higher education system?

Many students have access to high quality education through MOOCs. I expect this to become the norm. By 2020, at least a dozen universities around the world will give university degrees with 100% content on MOOC. So far, students taking courses on MOOCs are getting certificates. MOOCs will also translate to credit. By 2020, I see students entering universities after taking their first year courses online.

How does India rank in terms of number of edX users?

India is the second highest user country. US usage is at 30%, India is at about 12%. But our challenge in India is getting the word out. We want to educate 1 billion people in the next 10 years. What are the next big bets for edX? We started off with college-level education, and recently came up with high school and executive education. These are the next two big bets. The other interesting fact is that the median age of the online learner in India, at 24 years, is four years less than the global median.