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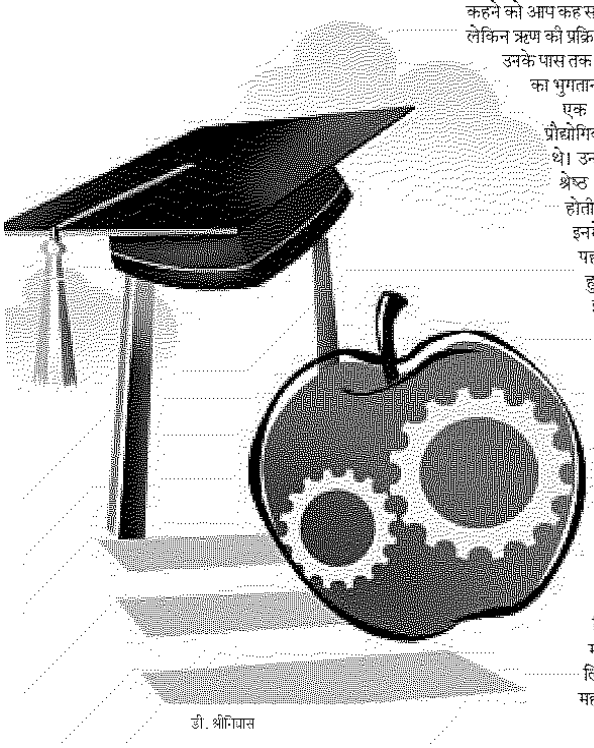
गरीब होनहारों से दूर होती उच्च शिक्षा

आईआईटी और आईआईएम की हाल की फीस बढ़ोतरी के साथ ये श्रेष्ठ संस्थान मध्य वर्ग के मेधावी विद्यार्थियों की पहुंच से और दूर चले गए हैं।



डी. श्रीनिवास

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भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थानों (आईआईटी) के बाद भारतीय प्रबंध संस्थानों (आईआईएम) ने भी अपनी फीस बढ़ाने की घोषणा कर दी है। जहां प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थानों ने वार्षिक फीस 50 हजार से 90 हजार कर दी है, वहीं प्रबंध संस्थानों ने अपनी फीस साल 2009 की तुलना में तीन गुनी अधिक कर दी है। और यह तब है, जब कि ये संस्थान सरकारी हैं। यह सब इसलिए है, क्योंकि सरकार इन संस्थानों पर लगातार यह दबाव डाल रही है कि वे अपने संसाधन स्वयं जुटाएं। इस तरह देश के इन श्रेष्ठ और अभिजात्य संस्थानों के दरवाजे आम आदमी के लिए लगभग बंद हो गए हैं। गरीब की तो बात ही छोड़िए, आम मध्यवर्गीय भी इतनी रकम आखिर लाएं, तो लाएं कहां से? कहने को आप कह सकते हैं कि बैंक से ऋण ले लीजिए, लेकिन ऋण की प्रक्रिया इतनी जटिल है कि आम आदमी उनके पास तक फटकना नहीं चाहता। साथ ही ऋण का भुगतान भी आसान नहीं है।

एक जमाना था, जब देश में छह प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान और तीन प्रबंध संस्थान थे। उनका अपना रुतबा था। दुनिया के श्रेष्ठ शिक्षण संस्थानों में उनकी गिनती होती थी। देश भर से अत्यंत मेधावी छात्र इनमें दाखिला लेते थे। दाखिले की पहली और अंतिम शर्त मेधावी होना ही हुआ करती थी। फीस की कोई दीवार इन विद्यार्थियों को रोक नहीं पाती थी। और दुनिया भर के श्रेष्ठ प्रतिष्ठानों के दरवाजे इन विद्यार्थियों के लिए खुले रहते थे। इस तरह, भारत के शैक्षिक परिदृश्य में प्रौद्योगिकी और प्रबंध संस्थानों का अपना महत्व था। हमारे पास दुनिया को दिखाने के लिए इनके अलावा था ही क्या? इसी से इनकी ब्रांड वैल्यू बनी।

1991 के बाद आई नई आर्थिक आंधी ने इसी ब्रांड वैल्यू को भुनाया। सरकार के नीति-निर्धारकों के लिए इससे अच्छा मौका और क्या हो सकता था? लिहाजा उन्होंने सोचा कि इन्हें इतना महंगा कर दो कि आम आदमी इनके दरवाजे तक ही नहीं पहुंच पाए। आज इन संस्थानों में कौन दाखिला ले पाता है? ताजा नतीजे बताते हैं कि सबसे ज्यादा छात्र आइआईटी से निकले हुए हैं। वे ही टॉपर हैं। उसके बाद उन छात्रों का नंबर आता है, जो इसके लिए जमकर तैयारी करते हैं, यानी कोचिंग लेते हैं। और इस तैयारी में वे खूब पैसा बहाते हैं। यदि किसी तरह आप वहां तक पहुंच भी गए, तो बढ़ी हुई फीस आपको बाहर का दरवाजा दिखा देती है। यानी यदि आप गरीब हैं, तो आपका आईआईएम में पहुंच पाना काफी मुश्किल है। फिर सरकार ने इनकी ब्रांड वैल्यू को देखते हुए इनकी संख्या बढ़ाकर 13 कर दी और आईआईटी की संख्या 16 कर दी है। इन सबको शिक्षा के बाजार में अपनी अपनी उपस्थिति दर्ज करनी है। अपना लोहा मनवाना है।

सवाल उठता है कि आखिर फीस बढ़ाने का क्या औचित्य है? इसके पीछे सबसे बड़ा तर्क यही दिया जाता है कि संस्थानों की ब्रांड वैल्यू बनाए रखने के लिए उनके खर्चे बहुत बढ़ गए हैं, लिहाजा ये खर्चे फीस के जरिये ही उगाहे जा सकते हैं। फिर सरकार भी लगातार अपने हाथ पीछे खींच रही है। दुर्भाग्य यह है कि इन संस्थानों को निजी क्षेत्र के साथ मिलकर संसाधन जुटाने का अनुभव नहीं है। विदेशों में भी फीस कम नहीं होती। अमेरिका के ज्यादातर विश्वविद्यालयों में छात्रों को पढ़ाई के साथ किसी न किसी प्रोजेक्ट में काम मिल जाता है। स्नातकोत्तर स्तर के छात्रों को कुछ नहीं, तो टीचिंग असिस्टेंसशिप मिल जाती है, जिससे वे अपना बहुत-सा खर्च निकाल लेते हैं। भारत से जाने वाले ज्यादातर मध्यवर्गीय छात्र एक सेमेस्टर की फीस का जुगाड़ करके ही वहां जाते हैं, बाकी वे वहां खुद अर्जित कर लेते हैं। लेकिन हमारे देश के विश्वविद्यालय या संस्थान अभी इस स्तर तक नहीं पहुंच पाए हैं। वे फीस लेना तो जानते हैं, लेकिन विद्यार्थी की समस्या को नहीं समझते।

ब्रांड से जुड़ा दूसरा मुद्दा है, यहां से निकलने वाले छात्रों को मिलने वाला पैकेज। चूंकि पैकेज ज्यादा होता है, इसलिए संस्थान चाहते हैं कि उन्हें भी अपना हिस्सा मिले। फिर अच्छा पैकेज दिलाने के लिए उन्हें भी कम मशक्कत नहीं करनी पड़ती। उद्योग क्षेत्र से विशेषज्ञों को बुलाना पड़ता है, नौकरी देने वालों की आवभगत करनी पड़ती है, सॉफ्ट स्किल्स सिखाने पर बहुत ध्यान दिया जाता है, औद्योगिक प्रतिष्ठानों के भ्रमण आयोजित किए जाते हैं। और सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि प्रबंधन की शिक्षा में शो बिज यानी दिखावापन बहुत बढ़ गया है। यानी उनका खर्चा काफी बढ़ गया है, जिसे वे विद्यार्थी की जेब से निकालना जानते हैं।

मुक्त मंडी की चकाचौंध में यह सब स्वाभाविक है। लेकिन हमारे नीति-नियंताओं को यह तो सोचना ही चाहिए कि इससे देश में एक नई वर्गीय खाई बन रही है। आईआईएम से निकले छात्रों को एक करोड़ से अधिक का पैकेज मिल रहा है, जबकि दूसरे-तीसरे दर्जे के संस्थानों से एमबीए किए हुए युवा दर-दर भटक रहे हैं। मैकिन्से की हालिया रिपोर्ट बताती है कि चार में से एक इंजीनियरिंग किया हुआ युवक और दस में से एक बीए पास युवक ही नौकरी के लायक है। बाकी कहां जाएंगे? वर्गीय खाई इतनी चौड़ी हो गई है कि एक ही प्रतिष्ठान में काम करने वाले दो कर्मचारियों के वेतन में सैकड़ों गुना का अंतर है।

यह भी देखने की बात है कि ज्यादा पैकेज और फीस की वजह से समाज में इन पाठ्यक्रमों का एक छद्म हौव्वा बन जाता है। एमबीए वालों का पैकेज बढ़ा, तो सब एमबीए की ही तरफ सभी भागने लगे। निजी क्षेत्र में इसकी अंधी दौड़ शुरू हो जाती है। यहां शिक्षा पर नहीं, शो बिज पर ज्यादा ध्यान दिया जाता है। इसलिए आज यह जरूरी हो गया है कि प्रबंध शिक्षा के कुल योगदान की समीक्षा होनी चाहिए। आखिर इतने खर्च के बाद देश और समाज को इनका योगदान क्या है? किस तरह की संस्कृति वे उद्योग जगत को दे रहे हैं? क्यों इंजीनियरिंग के छात्र, जिन पर सरकार पहले ही भारी-भरकर राशि खर्च कर चुकी होती है, वे अपने क्षेत्र में न जाकर प्रबंधन में जा रहे हैं? इसकी भरपाई कैसे होगी? उनके अनुसंधान का कितना इस्तेमाल उद्योग जगत कर रहा है? इसलिए फीस नहीं गुणवत्ता बढ़ाइए। गरीब और होनहार के लिए अपने कपाट बंद मत कीजिए।

(ये लेखक के अपने विचार हैं)

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प्रौद्योगिकी का विकास आम लोगों के लिए हो: प्रणब

अनुसंधानकर्ताओं की कमी पर चिंता

भाषा. शिबपुर

राष्ट्रपति प्रणब मुखर्जी ने आज कहा कि प्रौद्योगिकी का विकास लोगों के फायदे के लिए किया जाना चाहिए और अंतरिक्ष, ऊर्जा, चिकित्सा तथा रक्षा जैसे अहम क्षेत्रों में कुशल अनुसंधानकर्ताओं की देश में कमी है। उन्होंने कहा, 'अकसर मैंने देखा है कि अंतरिक्ष प्रौद्योगिकी, परमाणु ऊर्जा, रक्षा के साथ ही चिकित्सा प्रौद्योगिकी एवं पर्यावरण विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी में मूलभूत इंजीनियरिंग अनुसंधान जैसे सामरिक क्षेत्रों में अनुसंधान करने वाले लोगों की कमी है।'

राष्ट्रपति बंगाल इंजीनियरिंग एंड साइंस यूनिवर्सिटी (बेसु) के पांचवे दीक्षांत समारोह को संबोधित कर रहे थे। मुखर्जी ने कहा, 'आप विज्ञान की सीमाओं को तोड़ते हैं और नई तकनीक खोजते हैं, इसलिए मैं आपको याद दिलाना चाहूंगा कि आपके प्रयास वाकई में अमूल्य होंगे अगर ये हमारे उद्योग में दक्षता, लोगों के रोजाना जीवन में सुविधा लाते हैं और हमारे नागरिकों में से सबसे ज्यादा चुनौती का सामना कर रहे लोगों के आंसुओं को पोंछ डालते हैं।' राष्ट्रपति ने कहा कि वैज्ञानिक और अनुसंधानकर्ता उद्योग के साथ सहजीवन संबंध स्थापित कर सकते हैं जिसका प्रौद्योगिकी के विकास और उसे उपयोक्ताओं उन्मुखी बनाना हो जो लोगों को हमेशा फायदा दे।

शिबपुर। बंगाल इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज के 13वें दीक्षांत समारोह में प्रणब मुखर्जी को एक पुरानी तस्वीर भेंट करते पश्चिम बंगाल के राज्यपाल एम के नारायणन। फोटो: एजेंसी

बेसु की प्रशंसा की

एयरोस्पेस प्रौद्योगिकी, रिमोट सेंसिंग और पदार्थ विज्ञान एवं तकनीक जैसे सामरिक क्षेत्रों में स्नातक और स्नातकोत्तर कार्यक्रमों की शुरुआत करने के लिए उन्होंने बेसु की प्रशंसा की। सरकार ने बेसु को उसके अभूतपूर्व योगदान के कारण भारतीय इंजीनियरिंग विज्ञान एवं तकनीक संस्थान में रूपांतरित [illegible] के संस्थान' [illegible] फैसला कि [illegible] ने समारोह में मौजूद लोगो [illegible] ीय धरोहर और सहनशीलता और परस्पर सम्मान की परंपरा को भूले बिना विकास के लक्ष्यों को पाने के समावेशी रुख में और समाज निर्माण में सक्रिय होने की अपील की। राष्ट्रपति ने भौतिकविद् डॉ. एम एस वलिआथन, शिक्षाविद् डॉ. बीके बोस और शास्त्रीय गायिका गिरिजा देवी को मानद डॉक्टरेट की उपाधि भी प्रदान की।

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अहम क्षेत्रों में कुशल शोधकर्ताओं की कमी : प्रणब

▶ बंगाल इंजीनियरिंग एंड साइंस यूनिवर्सिटी के दीक्षांत समारोह को संबोधित कर रहे थे राष्ट्रपति

बंगाल इंजीनियरिंग एंड साइंस यूनिवर्सिटी के दीक्षांत समारोह में राष्ट्रपति प्रणब मुखर्जी को स्मृति चिह्न भेंट करते राज्यपाल एमके नारायणन।

शिबपुर (एजेंसी)। राष्ट्रपति प्रणब मुखर्जी ने कहा कि प्रौद्योगिकी का विकास लोगो के फायदे के लिए होना चाहिए। हालांकि देश के अंतरिक्ष, ऊर्जा, चिकित्सा तथा रक्षा जैसे अहम क्षेत्रों में कुशल अनुसंधानकर्ताओं की कमी है। राष्ट्रपति शनिवार को बंगाल इंजीनियरिंग एंड साइंस यूनिवर्सिटी (बेसु) के दीक्षांत समारोह को संबोधित कर रहे थे। उन्होंने यहां कहा," अकसर मैंने देखा है कि अंतरिक्ष प्रौद्योगिकी, परमाणु ऊर्जा, रक्षा के साथ ही चिकित्सा प्रौद्योगिकी और पर्यावरण विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी में मूलभूत इंजीनियरिंग अनुसंधान जैसे सामरिक क्षेत्रों में अनुसंधान करने वाले लोगों की कमी है। "

राष्ट्रपति ने कहा कि वैज्ञानिक और अनुसंधानकर्ता उद्योग के साथ सहजीवन संबंध स्थापित कर सकते हैं। उन्होंने कहा," आप विज्ञान की सीमाओं को तोड़ते हैं और नई तकनीक खोजते हैं, इसलिए मैं आपको याद दिलाना चाहूंगा कि आपके प्रयास वाकई में अमूल्य होंगे अगर ये हमारे उद्योग में दक्षता, लोगों के रोजाना जीवन में सुविधा लाते हैं और सबसे ज्यादा चुनौती का सामना कर रहे हमारे नागरिकों के आंसुओं को पोंछ डालते हैं। " एयरोस्पेस प्रौद्योगिकी, रिमोट सेंसिंग और पदार्थ विज्ञान एवं तकनीक जैसे सामरिक क्षेत्रों में स्नातक और स्नातकोत्तर कार्यक्रमों की शुरुआत करने के लिए उन्होंने बेसु की प्रशंसा की। राष्ट्रपति ने कहा कि सरकार ने बेसु को उसके अभूतपूर्व योगदान के कारण भारतीय इंजीनियरिंग विज्ञान एवं तकनीक संस्थान में रूपांतरित करने और इसे 'राष्ट्रीय महत्व के संस्थान' के तौर पर स्वीकार करने का फैसला किया है। राष्ट्रपति ने समारोह में मौजूद लोगों से भारतीय धरोहर और सहनशीलता और परस्पर सम्मान की परंपरा को भूले बिना विकास के लक्ष्यों को पाने और समाज निर्माण में सक्रिय होने की अपील की। उन्होंने भौतिकविद् डॉ. एम एस वलिआथन, शिक्षाविद् डॉ. बी के बोस और शास्त्रीय गायिका गिरिजा देवी को मानद डॉक्टरेट की उपाधि भी प्रदान की।

Tribune ND 20/01/2013 P-14

Defiling the holy river

PRIME CONCERN

THE GANGA

BY VIBHA SHARMA

In spite of crores being spent on action plans, the Ganga and Yamuna waters are anything but pristine. Maintaining the basic flow and involving ground players could be the first step in infusing fresh life into the polluted rivers.

THE Mahakumbh has returned to Allahabad and preparations have been on to ensure the Ganga flows clean for the biggest religious congregation in the world. The question is why is it only on occasions like Kumbh that the focus shifts on the Yamuna and Ganga?

Sangam makes up for about 60 per cent of the Yamuna waters, though people around Delhi may find this hard to believe since they have seen the river flow like a sewer. The relatively "pure" waters of the Yamuna at Sangam are not a result of any engineering feat; nature was "allowed" to heal the river along the way.

The Yamuna covers 170 km in Uttarakhand, passing through the elevated valley of Dehra Dun, cutting through the Shivalik hills to enter the plains of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Ton and Asan in Uttarakhand and Kamal and Giri in Himachal are its main tributaries and the waters are pure, as waterman Rajendra Singh says, people of the hills know how to respect their rivers. It's when the river reaches the Hathinikund barrage and enters Uttar Pradesh and Haryana that it is defiled.

Most of the waters are drawn for power generation, irrigation and drinking purposes. At Tajewala, the Yamuna is divided into the Western Yamuna Canal and the Eastern Yamuna Canal for Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Thereafter, except for the seasonal stream Som Nadi near Yamunanagar and the heavily polluted river Hindon near Greater Noida, the Yamuna flows as a drain, carrying waste water from cities.

At Etawah, the Chambal, which has escaped human assault due to the terrain, provides a new lease of life to the Yamuna. "Yamuna's journey is a sad story of neglect and plunder but with a moral — respect the river as a living entity, allow it to retain some of its rightful share so it flows with dignity and see it bestow upon you bountiful gains," he says.

Manoj Misra of the Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan says requirements should be designed around what we have through social engineering aided by technical measures like sewage treatment plants.

The focus so far has been on sewage treatment but one of the key recommendations of those working on the ground has been to shift to socio-centric methodology. Criticising the Environment Ministry for its "business-as-usual and passing-the-buck approach" towards the pollution in rivers, a parliamentary panel recently recommended that institutes of social sciences should be involved in the clean-up plans along with IITs.

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. The Supreme Court had recently asked the IITs to explore options to check the growing pollution in the Yamuna. However, the panel says unless the flow of the river is maintained at a reasonable level, no effort will be successful. It has asked the government to first ensure the flow is not disturbed or blocked and take steps to stop encroachment and illegal commercial activities in the catchment areas. It has also asked the Centre to play a more proactive role while coordinating with state governments. It's another matter the NGRBA has not met in months.

Misra says, "The authorities think IITs have all the wisdom. Those working at the ground level have also been unable to make themselves heard. The IITs may attract bright minds but they cannot claim to have all the wisdom. It is the people working with the rivers on the ground who know where the problem lies. The reason why the Yamuna, which flows like a dirty drain till Agra, revives to contribute 60 per cent of the flow at Sangam is because its tributaries retain their identity in the absence of major industrial clusters along their course."

Experts say for a healthy river, it is essential 70 per cent of the waters must flow in the river at all times. "You must not extract more than 30 per cent from a river and it should not be thrown back in any form. In the Yamuna, not even 3 per cent is flowing while in the Ganga, the situation is only slightly better," he claims.

A pipedream

Water is needed for agricultural, industrial and domestic purposes, and so maintaining the ideal flow may not be easy. Conservationists say even treated sewage should not be pumped back into rivers.

"For glacial rivers like the Ganga and Yamuna, the greatest need for a reasonable flow is during the lean season between February and June. After monsoon, the flow gets reduced to a trickle around November and by February, nothing much is left in the river. If you take even that away, how can it survive?" Misra asks. The waters are being diverted for more and more schemes like canals and projects for more and more cities to fulfill poll promises, he adds.

Rationing, recycling

The government needs to turn consumers — the industry, farmers and city urban dwellers — into conservators. The waters help to sustain biodiversity and recharge ground water. The industry should be told water is limited and it should be used judicially. Farmers should be asked to recycle it and employ sustainable practices, besides opting for crops that do not require huge amounts of water. People should be encouraged to ration water.

"The authorities should use integrated water sources like lakes and rainwater to create a win-win situation for all. Till taps are flowing, people will not understand the need to harvest rainwater. The absence of relevant laws and political compulsions in states like Punjab and Haryana to provide free power is compounding the problem," says Singh.

Wastewater should be recycled and given to the industry for keeping campuses green. Treated sewage can be used in agriculture. Rashtrapati Bhawan uses this water for its lawns. The system can be replicated in the rest of Delhi.

Action plan

Action plans focus on sewage treatment rather than ensuring ecological security of rivers as an ecosystem. "The pollution control measures of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) have failed to deliver as municipal authorities report to the Urban Development Ministry. The MoEF should review river conservation programmes and surrender pollution control to the relevant ministries," says Misra.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Jan 20, 2013;Section: Front Page;Page: 3;

Kumbh mystique now draws Harvard dons

Academics Intrigued By Mela's Size, Dynamics

Praveen Dass | TNN

Besides the millions of pilgrims, ash-smeared ascetics, doe-eyed starlets and wide-eyed tourists that usually flock to the Mahakumbh Mela in Allahabad, there is a new class of visitors the religious gathering has attracted this year: academics and students from Harvard University.

Intrigued by the sheer scale and complex dynamics of the mela, a group of top Harvard dons have been quietly working on a big multi-disciplinary project to study its various aspects. The effort, dubbed 'Mapping India's Kumbh Mela', is underpinned by the desire to figure out just how tens of millions of Indians gather peacefully in one spot to celebrate this ancient rite of religious passage.

"There's no doubt that the mela is an incredible, even astonishing, human undertaking. Just the organizational logistics involved in managing so many people over a few months in one spot is tremendous. Our project seeks to understand this unique phenomenon better," says Diana Eck, a key faculty member associated with the project.

ONE FOR THE THESIS: Students at work at the Kumbh Mela

Eck's students will examine various rituals, groupings and traditions as well as the slow-bubbling sense of environmental awareness she terms the 'Green Kumbh'.

Tarun Khanna of Harvard Business School is fascinated by the temporary township — he calls it a 'pop-up megacity' — that springs up on the banks of the converging rivers. It is spread over 1,940 hectares this year. "To make an inexact but useful comparison, consider how large, bustling cities like Istanbul or Lagos took several decades to go from populations of 1 million to 10 million. At the Kumbh, it's quite amazing to observe such speedy migration into a city like this. It makes for a unique, rapidly moving laboratory — and offers us a special opportunity to study everything from the process of organization to the interplay of commerce and technology," he says.

▸Biggest database, P 21

OXFORD COLLEGE SUED OVER USING WEALTH 'MERIT' FOR APPLICANTS

Daniel Boffey
letters@hindustantimes.com

LONDON: An Oxford college is being sued for discriminating against poorer students applying to study for postgraduate courses. St Hugh's, which was founded in 1886, is being taken to court for choosing applicants not just on academic merit, but also on their ability to prove they can pay tens of thousands of pounds for tuition fees and otherc living expenses.

It is claimed that, along with other Oxford colleges, St Hugh's is "selecting by wealth" in asking students with a conditional place at the university to demonstrate that they hold funds to cover tuition fees, plus at least £12,900 a year for living costs. The university refuses to take into account projected earnings from students who plan to carry out paid work during their course and has only one means-tested scholarship available.

Legal papers submitted by Damien Shannon, 26, who was barred from taking up a place that he won to study economic history because he did not have access to a total of over £21,000 for fees and living costs, said:

This month leaders at 11 universities told the Observer of their concerns about the socially divisive impact of rising tuition fees in response to teaching grant cuts and a lack of finance for prospective postgraduate students.

IIT-B grads get 10% jump in salary offers

Deepa Nair
Nivedita Ganguly
Mumbai, Jan. 19

Students of the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) have got a 10 per cent jump in offered salaries despite the global economic slowdown.

Last year, 65 firms offered salary packages of over Rs 9.5 lakh a year, 43 firms offered between Rs 8 lakh and Rs 9.5 lakh and 61 companies offered packages between Rs 5 lakh and Rs 6.5 lakh. This year , the salary packages offered have been higher, said S. K. Mehta, Assistant Placement Officer, IIT-B.

100 COMPANIES

"Recruiters have already made around 900 offers to about 880 students so far. Around 600 students have yet to get placed," Mehta said.

More than 100 companies are expected to visit the campus in the ongoing second phase of placements at the IIT-B. The first phase that started on December 1 saw over 240 companies making job offers.

Analytics, consulting, education, engineering and processing, finance, FMCG, IT/Software have been the main industry verticals hiring students.

Boston Consulting Group, McKinsey, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Schlumberger, Morgan Stanley, Samsung, Google, Sony, Credit Suisse, Amazon, Adobe, Oracle, Yahoo, LinkedIn, Twitter Inc and digital marketing company Rocket Fuel have hired students.

SOME OPT OUT

"While two companies in the engineering and technology sector offered maximum jobs, 10 in the finance sector have offered 90 jobs. Offers from the finance sector have also increased compared to last year," Mehta added.

Around 25 per cent of the students did not sit for placements this year.

"A few of them may be looking to become entrepreneurs and starting their own ventures, some others may go for higher studies or may have other career plans," said Mehta.

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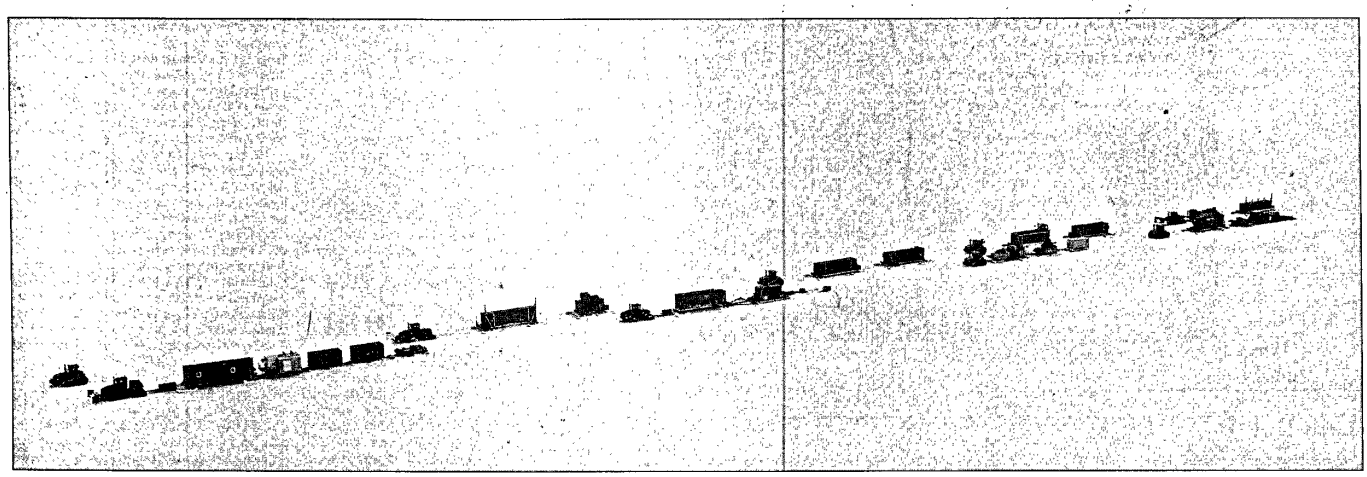
Indian Express ND 20-Jan-13 P-12

DEEP UNDER ANTARCTICA, LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF LIFE



A US project that has set out to drill into a lake under the Antarctic ice could yield surprises

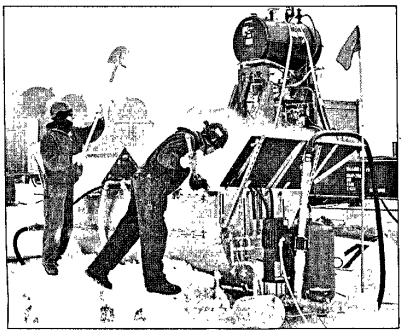
JAMES GORMAN

THREE major scientific projects set out this season to seek evidence of life in lakes deep under the Antarctic ice—evidence that could provide clues in the search for evidence of life elsewhere in the solar system, perhaps in Mars' past, or even now under the surface of Enceladus, one of Saturn's moons. But only one of the projects, a $10 million expedition from US, has a chance of identifying long-hidden microbes before the weather on the frigid continent puts an end to drilling in about a month.

One of the projects, a British effort, ran into technical trouble and had to be called off for this season. An expedition from Russia will be returning samples to be analysed later.The US effort, financed by three federal agencies and a private foundation, is about to start drilling into a lake half a mile below a glacier called the Whillans Ice Stream and will analyse samples on the spot in a field laboratory. An announcement of what it finds could come in the next few weeks.

John C. Priscu of Montana State University, leader of the project, said there was no guarantee. "We don't know; there are going to be surprises," he said in a conference call in December with the two other members of the project's executive committee, Ross D. Powell of Northern Illinois University, and Slawek Tulaczyk of the University of California, Santa Cruz. Priscu and Tulaczyk were getting ready to fly to Antarctica; Powell was already at McMurdo Station, the US scientific base there.

Priscu is hopeful, he said, given that "10 years of circumstantial evidence" suggest that "there should be a viable microbial community that's living in the dark and the cold." The project is called WISSARD, for Whillans Ice Stream Subglacial Access Research Drilling.



The Wissard team will drill through a half mile of ice to reach the subglacial lake and look for signs of microbial life

Both the Russian and British projects aimed to reach waters under two or more miles of ice. Lake Whillans lies under a half-mile of ice. For all three, there is no sun to power living cells, only minerals and heat from the earth's interior. While life is known to survive in the deep ocean without photosynthesis, nothing like these cold, freshwater depths have ever been explored. Robin Bell, a senior research scientist at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, who studies the behaviour of ice sheets with radar and other techniques, said the subglacial Antarctic lakes hold "whole ecosystems that have never really been looked at." Chris McKay, an astrobiologist at NASA Ames Research Center, said exploring extreme environments offered practical lessons for efforts on other planets.

The Lake Whillans research is also aimed at understanding the flow of water beneath glaciers into the Southern Ocean and the rate of melting of Antarctic ice, which could provide important information for climate studies.

The lake itself is different from those studied by other projects. It is smaller and not as deep, and is replenished more quickly from other water sources under the Antarctic ice shelf. It is a basin in a subglacial river where water accumulates to form a lake but keeps flowing, eventually reaching the ocean. Priscu said that while the water in Lake Vostok was replaced about every 10,000 years, and the water in Lake Ellsworth every 700 years or so, the replacement rate for Lake Whillans was more on the order of a decade.

The scientific approach is different as well. The WISSARD project involves the use of a remote torpedo-shaped submersible, about two-and-a-half feet long. It will operate on a tether about a mile long and will be used to map the three-dimensional space of the underground lake, including its inlets and outlets. Tulaczyk said that understanding the shape of the lake, and how the water moves in and out, is important for knowing how and why the glaciers above these deep lakes move, "why parts of Antarctica are gaining, and others losing" ice cover.

Glaciologists have a good understanding of how the ice sheets on the surface of Antarctica move, he said, but the nearly 400 known buried lakes affect the movement of ice above them. They can serve as a kind of lubricant between the mountains and valleys of the Antarctic continent's land mass, and the vast amounts of ice under which it is buried.

The WISSARD team will also be taking samples from the sediments at the bottom of the lake, to look for living microbes or chemical evidence of past activity. Subglacial microbes may, for instance, be changing the mineral composition of the water, freeing iron that then flows into the ocean around Antarctica.

The project involved not only developing and testing a hot-water drill with a filtering system to prevent contamination of the buried lake, but transporting the drill—along with the submersible and a laboratory capable of on-site analysis of water and sediment samples—over 500 miles of ice, from McMurdo Station to the Lake Whillans site.

NYT

January 21

HT Amritsar

■ Ved Prakash

UGC GETS CHIEF AFTER 2-YR WAIT

NEW DELHI: India's apex higher education regulator, the University Grants Commission, has a new chief after two years, with the Centre picking acting chairman Ved Prakash for the panel's top job. **HTC**

Millennium Post ND 21/01/2013 P-5

IIT studies pollution at Metro stations

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Are you breathing polluted air in the underground Metro? This is precisely what the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi is trying to find out. Are the tens and thousands of commuters inhaling polluted air and what impact will this have on their health?

The IIT's civil engineering department and the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) have undertaken the study to find out the levels of pollutants in the air at the Patel Chowk and Chandni Chowk stations. The IIT will also formulate an indoor air quality monitoring protocol - the minimum air quality limits - for Delhi Metro stations and precautionary measures to be taken.

Metros across the world have such standards and the moment the pollution level crosses the minimum limit, automatic measures come into effect to neutralise the rising level. 'Through the study we want to know the level of pollution at underground Delhi metro stations,' Mukesh Khare, the IIT professor heading the project, said.

'Every day, hundreds of thousands of people commute by the Metro and sometimes all of us must have felt nauseating and suffocating while standing at a station or inside a train. A drop in oxygen levels and poor air circulation are among the main reasons for this,' Khare pointed out. An IIT team has placed air monitoring instruments at the two stations and data is being collected at different time periods - peak and non-peak hours.

'We will collect the data of the quality of air at two stations for a year. At underground stations air is circulated by the air conditioning system but most of the time, its periodic maintenance is not done, which adds to the problem,' said Khare.

'The air-conditioning system takes air from outside and circulates it inside. The air in Delhi is very polluted and it is for sure that the air circulated is also polluted,' he added. The final results of the study will be available only in 2015 as analysis of data will take about two years.

However, if anything alarming or significant emerges during the study period, this will be looked into, a DMRC official said.

Khare said that former DMRC chairman E. Sreedharan had shown interest in initiating the project but it was commissioned by present chief Mangu Singh.

About the basis of selecting the stations for the study, the professor said they were looking for those with high and low footfalls. This led them to select Patel Chowk, which sees a low turn-out, and Chandni Chowk, which leads to the walled city market and attracts shoppers and tourists.

'Chandni Chowk has very high footfalls and many businessmen also travel on this route while Patel Chowk gets fewer footfalls,' Khare said. He said through the study people will get to know about the air they inhale at underground and its impact on their health. At present 43 km of the 193-km system is underground.

The study is important as with the completion of Phase-III in 2016, DMRC would cover almost 70 per cent of Delhi. This line will be a combination of elevated (95 km) and underground (45 km) tracks.

'The study will help in assessing the pollution levels at Metro stations and the precautionary measures to be taken,' a Delhi Metro official said. Delhi Metro makes over 2,700 trips a day and ferries around 1.8 million passengers on weekdays.

DMRC TO CONSTRUCT SUBWAY IN WEST DELHI

NEW DELHI: Delhi Metro will construct an underground subway across the busy Pankha Road in west Delhi to connect one of its proposed station under Phase-III with localities on the other side of the road. The subway would come up near the Dabri Mor circle on the left side of Pankha Road moving towards Delhi Cantonment, enabling entry to the proposed Dabri Mor station from both sides of Pankha Road.

'The Dabri Mor Metro station will be constructed just adjacent to the Janakpuri C2D area on DDA land. The subway will connect the station with localities such as Sitapuri, Dabri Mor Police Station, Sagarpur etc on the other side of Pankha Road,' a DMRC spokesman said.

The station is part of the Janakpuri-Botanical Garden corridor under the Phase-III.

He said the subway will be an architectural landmark as it will be built without hampering the construction of a flyover which will be right above it at a height of 9.77 mtrs from road level.

'It will also pass below the existing drain on Pankha Road and the Metro tunnel will come up below the subway at a depth of 17.05 mtrs from road level. An innovative technology known as 'box pushing' will be used to construct this subway. In the use of this technology, vertical excavation or large scale digging is not required,' the spokesman said. Apart from Metro commuters, general public intending to cross the busy Pankha Road will also be able to use this subway as it will be in the unpaid area of the Metro station.

Times Of India ND 21/01/2013 p-5

Pollution check at Metro stns by IIT

New Delhi:IIT Delhi's civil engineering department and the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) have undertaken a study to find out the levels of pollutants in the air at the Patel Chowk and Chandni Chowk stations.

IIT will also formulate an indoor air quality monitoring protocol - the minimum air quality limits - for Delhi Metro stations and precautionary measures to be taken.

Air monitoring instruments have been placed at the two stations and data is being collected at both peak and non-peak hours.

"We will collect data for a year. At underground stations air is circulated by the air conditioning system, but, mostly its periodic maintenance is not done, which leads to passengers sometimes feeling nauseous and suffocated ," said Mukesh Khare, the IIT professor heading the project.

The final results of the study will be available only in 2015. However, if anything significant emerges during the period, it will be looked into, a DMRC official said.

The study is important as with the completion of Phase-III in 2016, DMRC would cover almost 70 percent of Delhi. PTI

Financial Chronicle ND 21/01/2013 P-10

Govt to roll out red carpet for top Indian scientists working abroad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

SEEKING to inspire researchers, government plans to roll out the red carpet to attract top Indian scientists working abroad to spend some time in institutions in New Delhi.

As per the plans, such 'very high quality' scientists would be offered an annual remuneration of $1,00,000 (approx Rs 55 lakh) in addition to fully furnished accommodation and relocation expenses for a minimum of one and upto three years in India.

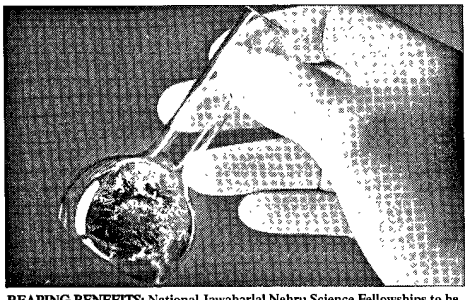
Planning commission deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia has mooted this proposal in a 'conceptual note' circulated to secretaries of scientific departments of the government.

Ahluwalia has called a meeting of secretaries of science department on Tuesday to discuss the proposal to set up new 'National Jawaharlal Nehru Science Fellowships', as the scheme is to be called.

The fellowships would be "offered to selected scientists who have achieved a degree of international distinction in areas of scientific research that correspond to our national priorities", says the note circulated by the Plan panel.

The selected candidates could be approached to ascertain their interest in taking up the fellowship, which could be for a minimum of one year and up to three years, it said.

Officials said China had implemented a similar scheme and had succeeded in attracting over 1,000 of their scientists working abroad to return to their homeland for varying periods of time.



REAPING BENEFITS: National Jawaharlal Nehru Science Fellowships to be offered to'very high quality' scientists with annual remuneration of $1,00,000

Once selected, scientists may be given an option to take up the fellowship at a time of their choosing but within three years of their selection.

The note said that injecting top class scientists into our institutions would have many advantages in terms of a positive impact on research and also motivate younger scientists.

The note said that a set of national institutions keen to host such scientists could be pre-selected on the basis of quality.

These professors would not be on the staff of the institutions and would be paid for directly by the centre.

"An annual remuneration of $1,00,000 or even more in some cases, plus fully furnished accommodation plus some relocation expenses could be considered," the note said.

The professors thus selected would also have access to research support grant, part of which would go to the institution to cover the cost of research infrastructure.

They may also have the option to hire up to two research scholars, of their choice, to work with them. Australia, too, has come out with a similar scheme that provided positions at three times the normal remuneration for top class Australian scientists working abroad, they said.

The Plan Panel proposes to select 25 scientists under the scheme to begin with, as a pilot project. It plans to increase it in stages to 100 scientists. The planning commission also hopes to rope in companies in the scheme allowing them offer such scholarships and let the scientists be associated with their laboratories.

Times Of India ND
21/01/2013 P-1

PUBLIC HEALTH PROJECT

Vatsala Shrangi/TNN

After the Masters programme in mathematics education, a joint-degree programme initiated by Delhi University (DU) and Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) University, under the Meta university concept has commenced; The next project in the pipeline is public health. The programme is expected to start in July 2013 in the new session. Jamia will be initiating the project in public health, in which all the four Meta universities, including Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Delhi, will be participating. "It will be a two-year (four-semester) Masters degree programme. We will be organising a meeting to discuss the structure of the course this month," says SM Sajid, registrar, JMI.

The course will be designed in a manner that students can be located at each institution for a semester, while faculty will be on the move. "The programme will be an inter-disciplinary programme, which will have elements from various disciplines," informs Sajid.

> For full story, click on 'Degree' under 'Courses' on www.educationtimes.com

Financial Chronicle ND
21/01/2013 P-10

Robotics Championship to begin

The National Robotics Championship 2013, an IIT Kharagpur inititive, will begin on Monday at Park College of Engineering and Technology (PCET) on the outskirts of Coimbatore.

HT Indore

50-metre-tall Skywalk Clock Tower to come up at IIM-Indore

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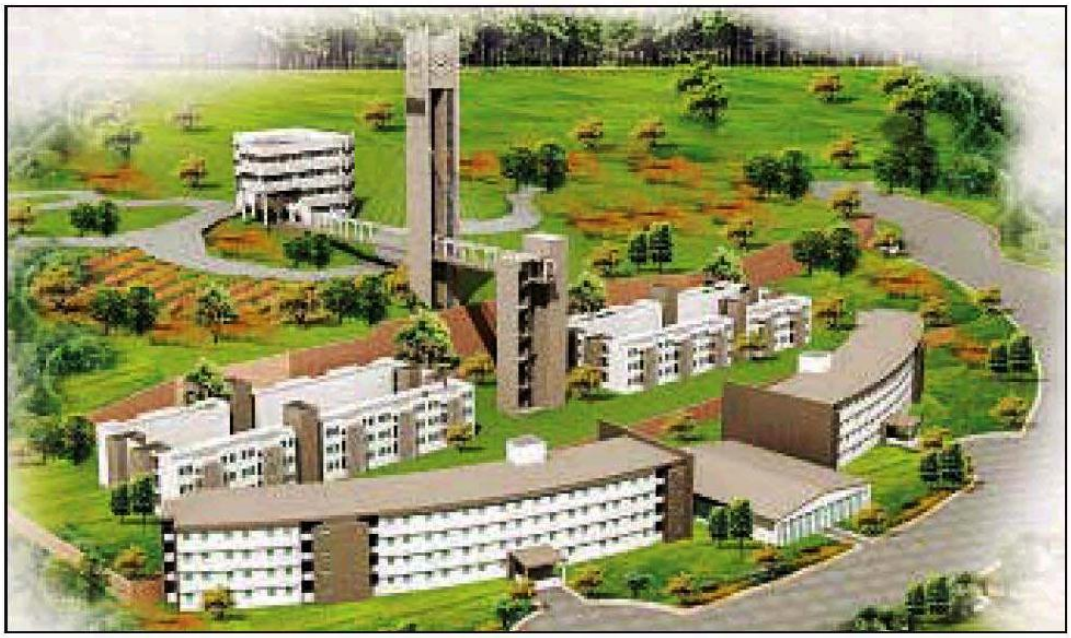

A representation of sports complex and proposed tower at IIM-Indore.

INDORE: Think of Indian Institute of Management, Indore (IIM-I) and you have picture of an aesthetically done circular sandstone building on the top of a hillock. Fast forward to the future by eighteen months and this image would probably be taken over by that of a clock tower, which is proposed to be built on the campus.

The design of the Skywalk Clock Tower has been inspired by the Bandra-Worli Sea Link (BWSL) in Mumbai, officially called Rajiv Gandhi Sea Link (see picture). It would have cable-stayed skywalk, including a 50-metre-tall tower with a hanging bridge of nearly 160 metres.

With an investment of Rs 105 crore in the fifth phase, IIM Indore would set up a hostel for IPM students, a Skywalk with Clock Tower, administration building, 30 faculty residences, 12 apartments for visiting faculty, main gate and allied services.

Groundbreaking ceremony to mark the beginning of the construction project was held at site in IIM Indore campus at the foot of Prabhand Shikhar Rau on Saturday.

Talking to the media after the pooja, director of the institute N Ravichandran said, "We need accommodation for 600 students of Integrated Programme of Management so this phase would take care of a hostel for them. We also plan to recruit more faculty members and take the number from 50 to 80 and hence we need to have 30 more residences for them."

He added that the faculty quarters would be in a multi-storeyed building with four flats on each floor. The administrative office would be shifted into one new building, which would be constructed now. There would be 12 new apartments for the visiting faculty.

Director N Ravichandran and other senior faculty members at the ceremony to mark construction of the Skywalk Clock Tower at IIM-I.

"We would also have a Clock Tower with skywalk. Many well- known colleges are known by the clock towers, we want IIM- I to have such structure which become a landmark," said Ravichandran.

This construction has several inter-connected initiatives, which include recruitment of faculty, expansion of student intake capacity, establishing centres in other parts of India as well as abroad and introducing new programmes ensuring quality education, and increasing intellectual competency of IIM Indore said the director.

The institute currently has infrastructure for a batch size of 450 students of Post Graduate Programme and 120 students of the Integrated Programme in Management (IPM), hostel for doctoral programme students, additional space for executive participants, lectures halls, class rooms, faculty houses, 18 staff accommodations, a state-of-the-art sports complex, a 820-seat auditorium and other campus amenities like a medical centre, shopping complex etc.

In addition to this, campus development work covering the extension of children park, renovation of boundary wall, surveillance road, skywalk, covered parking, baby swimming pool, watchtowers, tennis court, plastering and painting on existing buildings will also be undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 15.13 crore. This work is slated to get over in next eight months.

Hindustan Times ND p-11
21/01/2013

POLICE TO FIGHT NAXAL LURE WITH IITIANS

HT Correspondent
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PATNA: The efficacy of education in weaning away youth from left wing extremism is being put to test in Maoist-affected Rohtas district of south-western Bihar.

A group of IITians joined hands with the Rohtas police to impart free coaching to students from about 30 villages in Nauhatta block of the district, a hotbed of naxal activity.

The students will be coached in a wide range of examinations. The list of programmes on the anvil include those oriented to secondary, higher secondary, medical and engineering examinations.

"About 800 students from some of the poorest areas had already enrolled for the coaching programmes", said Rohtas SP.

Delhi University V-C Dinesh Singh, pictured taking a class, will introduce Harvard professor Michael Sander's inaugural lecture.

Tapping into a network for 'elite' lessons

By **Neha Pushkarna** In New Delhi

A LECTURE to be held at Delhi University on Wednesday will be witnessed in at least 500 universities and colleges across the country.

This public lecture is going to be the first grand showcase of the much-awaited National Knowledge Network created by the government to connect all educational institutions.

DU plans to use the network to initiate academic cooperation with other institutes in the country by sharing content and expertise.

Professor Michael Sandel from Harvard University will speak on 'Democratising Information, Justice, Equality and the Rule of Law' from the convention hall of the Vice-Regal Lodge at North Campus. Students, faculty members and the public will be able to pose live questions and take part in the discussion, geographical barriers notwithstanding.

"We have done trials earlier but this is an official launch of the network," professor Dinesh Singh, vice-chancellor of DU, who will deliver an introductory address before the lecture, said.

The institutions linked to the network include IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay, IIT-Madras, IIT-Kanpur, Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore, NITs at Bhubaneshwar, Patna, Silchar and IISER Pune, Bhopal, Kolkata and Thiruvananthapuram.

To be launched on Wednesday

"All parts of the country are being covered in this network. While these institutions have been linked to the network, the lecture will be open to the public and the global audience through a webcast," a DU official said.

He added that about 20 institutions will be linked in a dual mode. "It means that the audience will have the facility to ask questions during the interactive session," he said.

For all others, there will be a facility of sending questions through the Twitter handle of Sam Pitroda, adviser to the Prime Minister, who is also the architect of the National Knowledge Commission.

THE NATIONAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

- **Recommended by National Knowledge Commission constituted by PM in 2005 to build knowledge economy**
- **All educational institutions to be connected to a local internet connection to share academic content**
- **Sam Pitroda and Harvard professor Michael Sandel to launch NKN on Wednesday**
- **Network to be used for Meta University by DU and Jamia, to be also connected with JNU and IIT-Delhi later**

The creation of the National Knowledge Network was one of the recommendations of the NKC commissioned by PM Manmohan Singh in 2005 to suggest ways to build a knowledge economy. As part of the network, an Internet connect is provided to every educational institution bringing all of them under a local network. Such an arrangement will now enable seamless sharing of academic content.

At DU, the network will now be used to connect with institutions such as IITs and other universities in the city.

"We are planning to use the network in two to three major ways. I am in talks with IIT-Bombay which has a well-known robotics department. The faculty there will help us with our robotics centre at DU's Cluster Innovation Centre. The courses there will be routed through the National Knowledge Network," professor Singh said.

He added that he was also trying to tie up with a faculty member in the mathematics department for math education in DU.

"The Meta University set up by DU and Jamia Millia Islamia will also use this network," he said.

The varsity is also ready to help out other institutes by sharing its video lectures, e-text and audio content on the network.