

# Newspaper Clips

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Economic Times ND 21/01/2011 P3

## Prepare to pay more for IIT

### Govt Mulls Kakodkar Panel's Proposal To Raise Fees For UG Courses

Urmi A Goswami  
NEW DELHI

THE government is considering the possibility of transferring government subsidy for fees from undergraduate to post graduate programmes in IITs. Beyond moving funds from the undergraduate level, the government is proposing to make more funds available at the post graduate and research level. This would be in keeping with efforts to improve research output at the IITs.

This proposal builds on the recommendation of the Anil Kakodkar Committee to raise fees for undergraduate courses in IIT. The report recommends that tuition fees in the 15 IITs be increased from the current level of ₹ 50,000 a year to nearly ₹2.5 lakh. The issue of raising fees at the undergraduate level will be taken up for discussion at the IIT Council meeting on Friday.

A senior ministry official said that the

proposal of raising undergraduate fees is feasible. "The undergraduate programme can pay for itself, as students do end up getting high paying jobs. But this will not mean that the government withdraws from providing subsidy. We will have more freeships and scholarships at the undergraduate level, and we will put in more money at the post graduate level," the official said.

The Kakodkar Committee is understood not to have suggested a similar hike for the post graduate level. The rationale being that a higher fee could discourage students from joining at the post graduate level. This in turn would impact the pool of researchers and faculty members. Shortages in both areas are already a cause of concern.

The proposal to shift funding to the post graduate level addresses the issue flagged by the committee. It is clear, that a substantially higher funding for post graduate and research programmes will have to

come on the back of increased tuition for the undergraduate student. However, the decision to raise IIT fees is fraught with dangers. With the real possibility of the Reserve Bank hiking interests rates to tackle inflation, any decision to raise tuition fees would not find acceptance.

There is also the argument that the IITs have in the past been more democratic in their admissions, as compared to the IIMs, and a higher tuition fee would impact that culture.

To this end, the committee has suggested a easy-loan scheme for the poorer students. Even if the number of freeships and scholarships are increased, the government will need to consider the associated problems that students face when they seek to access this. Till date, the government has been squeamish about increasing fees. A February 2010 proposal by IIT Kanpur to gradually raise tuition fees to ₹4 lakh over a ten-year period is yet to be accepted.

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# Overhaul of vocational edu system on cards

**Our Political Bureau**

NEW DELHI

THE human resources development ministry has secured the support of the states to overhaul the vocational education system. At meeting of the state education ministers held on Thursday, it was decided that the HRD Minister Kapil Sibal will set up a committee of state ministers to prepare National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF). The committee will submit its report by May.

Once the framework is ready, Sibal said that he would take the proposal to Cabinet to secure funds. The vocational education programme could then be recast as a centrally-sponsored scheme.

At the meeting attended by 16 states, there was full support expressed for this effort. State ministers, however, drew attention to the social stigma that is still attached to "vocational studies". It was felt that this issue needed to be addressed if the government wanted to achieve its goal of ensuring that at least 25% of all school leaving children had undergone vocational training.

All states will contribute to developing the framework. States would provide inputs on allocation of resources, mapping of institutions, identifying high growth sectors as well as geographically specific sectors. It would also identify possible areas where public private partnerships can be entered into. States will also have provided inputs for quality assurance systems. The National Vocational Education Qualification Framework would set common principles and guidelines for a nationally recognised qualification system, covering schools, vocational education institutes and institutes of higher education with qualifications ranging from secondary to doctorate level, leading to international recognition of national standards. The framework will be a competency-based modular approach with provision for credit accumulation and transfer. Students would have the scope for vertical and horizontal mobility with multiple entry and exits.

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# China already world's biggest economy?

Rukmini Shrinivasan | TIG

**D**id China overtake the US as the world's biggest economy in 2010? New numbers for the gross domestic product of different countries at purchasing power parity seem to suggest so. They also suggest India's economy is much bigger than previously thought.


While market exchange rates traditionally formed the basis for comparison of GDP across countries, this method increasingly came under criticism as it did not take into account the differential costs of goods and services in countries at different levels of development. As a result, the idea of purchasing power parity, in which the prices of a basket of good and services form the basis of comparison, came into being.

While various agencies, including the IMF, calculate GDP at PPP, the Penn World Tables brought out by the Center for International Comparisons at the University of Pennsylvania (CICUP) since

**ENTER THE DRAGON**

Country	GDP at market exchange rates (2010)	GDP at PPP (2010)
China	5.7	14.8
US	14.6	14.6
India	1.4	4.4

Figures in \$ trillion



1970 have come to be regarded among economists as the definitive source.

The yet-to-be-released latest version of the Penn World Tables corrects for biases in past measurements, such as the collection of only urban prices in China, which resulted in China's GDP being understated. Factoring in these corrections has resulted in China's GDP at PPP being revised upwards by 27% and India's by 13% for the year 2005, CICUP data made available to TOI show.

► **10.3% growth in 2010, P 24**

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# 30 outbreaks later, only 2 hi-tech labs

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: Believe it or not, India with its size has just two laboratories to test human samples infected with highly infectious viruses like the deadly Crimea Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) with a fatality rate of 90%.

While the National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune is the only bio-safety level (BSL) IV lab to test human samples in India, the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in Delhi is a BSL-III lab. A ministry note to the Planning Commission admits, "At present, there are only two labs well-equipped to deal with all kinds of viruses."

Now, faced with recent outbreaks of highly pathogenic viruses like Nipah (2001), SARS (2003), H5N1 (2006-09),

**Faced with recent outbreaks, the health ministry has finalized plans to establish over 200 test centres**

Chandipura (2005), Chikungunya (2006), H1N1 (2009) and now CCHF, the Union health ministry has finalized plans to establish a network of labs for diagnosing and managing dangerous pathogens. In India, over the past 30 years, 30 different outbreaks have been recorded of which 21 have been due to different viruses.

The plan is to have two national labs in the form of NCDC and NIV, six regional labs, 28 state labs and 200 district labs. Four new labs are already functional in Port Blair, Lucknow, Bhubaneswar and

Manipal. Four more are likely to start functioning in Allapuzha, Jaipur, Chhattisgarh and Thiruvananthapuram.

"We have already received an in-principle approval from the Planning Commission. Around 12 labs in this network already exist and belong to the ICMR which are being upgraded. The bulk of the funding for these labs should be cleared in the next four months, all of which will cost Rs 740 crore," a ministry official said.

A ministry note available with TOI admits that "till date, there is no infrastructure for timely diagnosis and management of viral outbreaks. There are very few labs which have the potential to work on viruses. Large number of patients with dangerous diseases go undiagnosed."

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# Pill to combat skin cancer just a yr away

London: In what could revolutionise the treatment for malignant melanoma, scientists have developed a new pill which they say significantly improves survival rates of patients suffering from the deadliest form of skin cancer.

Researchers behind the drug, known as RG7204, claimed that it was found to reduce the size of tumours by 80% in patients who participated in a trial held at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre in New York. And the side effects such as rashes and photosensitivity were all classified as mild, the researchers from the Royal Marsden NHS Trust in London said, adding that the drug could be available as early as 2012.

The breakthrough, according to them, was made following the full decoding of human DNA, which pinpointed a genetic flaw in about half of cases of malignant melanoma. The flaw drives the cancer cells to grow and spread, but RG7204 seeks out and blocks the mutated gene, called BRAF, causing tumours to shrink.

The scientists believe the drug will have a dramatic effect on treatment for those patients whose cancer has the BRAF mutation.

James Larkin, who led the research, said, "This is an incredibly exciting breakthrough. With a growing incidence of melanoma in

## In a first, malaria attack filmed

Scientists claim to have for the first time caught malaria parasites in the act of invading red blood cells, a major breakthrough which could pave the way for developing more effective treatments for the disease. An international team has used new image and cell technologies to obtain the images of how malaria parasites attack red blood cells, the 'Cell Host & Microbe' journal reported. ¶¶

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younger people, the results of this trial are very encouraging. The drug shows a dramatic degree of activity in this disease. I hope it will become available to patients as quickly as possible, perhaps later this year or early in 2012."

Interim results from a trial of 700 patients at the Marsden and other international centres have not yet been released, but earlier reports suggested patients in late stages of the disease using the drug might enjoy up to seven extra months of life.

Richard Marais, part of the team that helped link the gene to skin cancer, said: "These results represent a paradigm shift in melanoma treatment and will change how we approach treatment of this disease." ¶¶

Pioneer, ND 21-Jan-11 p-4

# Education Ministers favour Sibal's national qualification

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

**H**RD Minister Kapil Sibal's high-level meeting with 17 State Education Ministers on Thursday saw that the States responding in favour of his proposal, to put in place a National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF).

The NVEQF would set common principles and guidelines for a nationally recognised qualification system covering schools, vocational education institutes and institutes of higher education with qualifications ranging from secondary to doctorate level and leading to international recognition of national standards.

The meeting called for the constitution of a Group of Ministers from State Governments to suggest ways and means for strengthening vocational education in the country at all levels and to develop a broad consensus on the contours of the NVEQF.



Sources said, under the proposed NVEQF, students who obtain an advanced diploma from recognised polytechnics will be treated as qualified at par with those holding traditional university undergraduate degrees.

These students will no longer need to obtain UG degrees to study PG courses or to be eligible for jobs requiring UG degrees as a qualification, pointed out the sources. The qualification framework also proposes linkages between industrial training institutes and polytech-

nic, and between students of vocational courses in Classes XI and XII, and students of formal education.

The framework will follow competency based modular approach with provision for credit accumulation and transfer.

This would be especially useful to promote the creative genius of every child including children with special needs. Sector skill councils and industry would collaborate in the development of quality standards, competencies, model curricula, assessment standards and testing procedures. Linkage between education providers and employers would be a prerequisite.

A centrally sponsored scheme of vocational education in the higher secondary stage would complement these efforts. The meeting was of the view that the educational institutions could allow its premises to be used after working hours for skill development.

Times of India 21/01/2011 P-9

# GMAT: Indians good at maths, Chinese better

Anahita Mukherji | TNN

**Mumbai:** Here's proof that Indians have a flair for mathematics. Indians scored higher than the global average in GMAT's quantitative section that tests math skills in 2010. But Chinese students have the highest average in quantitative scores, and India is far behind, at seventh position.

The US, which accounts for the largest number of students appearing for GMAT, trails both India and China in the quantitative section, as well as in overall performance.

B-schools worldwide use Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) scores to select students.

India's high scores at the GMAT may be because over

## Numbers Game

▶ Rank 1 China: 47 (avg score)

▶ Rank 2 South Korea: 45

▶ Rank 3 Taiwan: 44

▶ Rank 4 Japan: 43

▶ Rank 5 Turkey: 43

▶ Rank 6 Israel: 43

▶ Rank 7 India: 42

60% of Indian GMAT test-takers had an engineering background, while only 15% candidates globally were engineers. High mathematics scores may also have to do with an education system that favours math and science over the liberal arts.

The quantitative section tests students basic math skills built up over a life-

time. Education systems in different countries vary in the emphasis on certain subjects, like math.

"This is often reflected in GMAT scores. We have found that students who come from countries which lay a great emphasis on high-stakes tests tend to perform better in the GMAT," says Alex Chisholm, senior analyst, research and development, with the Graduate Management Admission Council, the body that conducts GMAT.

While the worldwide average score in the quantitative section was 37, for India, it was 42. India also had a higher average total score (578) when compared to the global average (544).

"Indians are, to a large extent, more competitive

than the rest of the world. We value an MBA degree far more. Others aren't hungry for an MBA the way we are. If an American gets a good job as an undergraduate, there's little chance that he will pursue a postgraduate degree, whereas in India, many hit the glass-ceiling without an MBA," said overseas education consultant Pratibha Jain. She also points to the fact that in India, an MBA improves one's social status and self-image.

China's performance, overall as well as for the quantitative section, is also better than India's. Jain said this could be because Chinese students are more disciplined than Indians, who often get complacent. Engineering courses in China lay greater emphasis on

quantitative analysis. The Chinese know that while language is a handicap for them, math is their strength, and so they work to excel at it, Jain said.

When it comes to quantitative analysis, the gap between India and China is rather wide, with several countries including Taiwan, Japan and South Korea ranking higher than India.

GMAT scores from the US come as a bit of a surprise. Though the US has over 1.27 lakh GMAT test-takers, more than double the number for India and China put together, the average quantitative score as well as the average total score for the US is less than the global average. US scores are lower than those from India and China.

# AMU gets students union after four years

ALIGARH, JAN 20

ALIGARH Muslim University Students Union today got brand new office bearers after a gap of four years as election results were announced amidst widespread celebration at the campus.

Undergraduate law student Abu Affan Farooqi was elected president of the students' body after obtaining 4,830 votes, defeating his nearest rival Syed Mohammad Waseem by a margin of 1,125 votes.

While undergraduate

arts student Syed Umar Qadri was elected Vice-President, engineering student Amir Qutub, who had earlier launched a website for students' welfare, was elected as the Secretary.

Though for the first time in the history of the institution two women contested for posts of president and honorary secretary, neither managed to win.

The three winners of the top positions were closely associated with the Students Action Committee which led the three-month-long

**Undergraduate law student Abu Affan Farooqi was elected president of the students' body after obtaining 4,830 votes, defeating his nearest rival Syed Mohammad Waseem by a margin of 1,125 votes**

'landmark' agitation last year for restoration of the students union which was dissolved in 2007.

The student leaders

had sought intervention of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi following which Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal took up the issue with AMU Vice-Chancellor P K Abdul Aziz and University authorities finally consented to restore the students' union last month.

"This was the first time that elections for AMU students union were held under recommendations of the Lyngdoh Committee. This was also the first time that undergraduate girl students were given the right to

vote," University spokesman Rahat Abrar said. "Till now elections were held under AMU Students Union Regulation, 1953 and there were separate unions for boys and girls," he said.

Mustaq Ahmad, a student who spearheaded the agitation against the University authorities which finally restored the students union, said, "I am proud of the fact that all those elected to the top posts were associated with our movement for the restoration of students' democratic rights."—PTI



Hindu ND 21.01.11 p-9

# Cosmic rays contribute 40% to global warming: Study

Physicist U.R. Rao says carbon emission impact is lower than IPCC claim

Priscilla Jebaraj

**NEW DELHI:** A key belief of climate science theology — that a reduction in carbon emissions will take care of the bulk of global warming — has been questioned in a scientific paper released by the Union Environment Ministry here.

Physicist and the former ISRO chairman, U.R. Rao, has calculated that cosmic rays — which, unlike carbon emissions, cannot be controlled by human activity — have a much larger impact on climate change than The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) claims.

In fact, the contribution of decreasing cosmic ray activity to climate change is almost 40 per cent, argues Dr. Rao in a paper which has been accepted for publication in *Current Science*, the preeminent Indian science journal. The IPCC model, on the other hand, says that the contribution of carbon emissions is over 90 per cent.

## 'Cosmic ray impact ignored'

Releasing Dr. Rao's findings as a discussion paper on Thursday, Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh noted that "the impact of cosmic ray intensity on climate change has thus far been largely ignored by the mainstream scientific consensus." He added that the "unidimensional focus" on carbon emissions by most Western countries put additional pressure on countries like India in international climate negotiations.

The continuing increase in solar activity has caused a 9 per cent decrease in cosmic ray intensity over the last 150 years, which results in less cloud cover, which in turn results in less albedo radiation being reflected back to the space, causing an increase in the Earth's surface temperature.

While the impact of cosmic rays on climate change has been studied before, Dr. Rao's paper quantifies their contribution to global warming and concludes that "the future prediction of global warming presented by IPCC's fourth

• 'Unidimensional focus on carbon emissions put additional pressure on countries like India'

• Increased solar activity caused 9 p.c. decrease in cosmic ray intensity, resulting in less cloud cover

report requires a relook to take into the effect due to long term changes in the galactic cosmic ray intensity."

## Policy implications

This could have serious policy implications. If human activity cannot influence such a significant cause of climate change as cosmic rays, it could change the kind of pressure put on countries to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Mr. Ramesh emphasised that Dr. Rao's findings would not reduce domestic action on climate change issues, but he admitted that it could influence the atmosphere of international negotiations.

"International climate negotiations are about climate politics. But increasingly, science is becoming the handmaiden of politics," he said.

In November 2009, Mr. Ramesh had released a report by glaciologist V.K. Raina claiming that Himalayan glaciers are not all retreating at an alarming pace. It had been disputed by many Western scientists, while IPCC chairman R.K. Pachauri dismissed it as "voodoo science." However, Dr. Raina was later vindicated by the IPCC's own retraction of its claim that the Himalayan glaciers would melt by 2035.

"Since then, Western Ministers have reduced talk about the glaciers to me, they have stopped using it as frequently as a pressure point for India to come on board," said Mr. Ramesh.

When Mr. Ramesh sent Dr. Rao's paper to Dr. Pachauri, he replied that the next IPCC report was paying special attention to the impact of cloud cover on global warming. The Minister expressed hope that Dr. Rao's findings would be seriously studied by climate researchers.

"There is a groupthink in climate science today. Anyone who raises alternative

climate theories is immediately branded as a climate atheist in an atmosphere of climate evangelists," he said. "Climate science is incredibly more complex than [developed countries] negotiators make it out to be... Climate science should not be driven by the West. We should not always be dependent on outside reports."

## Disputing IPCC claims

According to the latest report by the IPCC, all human activity, including carbon dioxide emissions, contribute 1.6 watts/sq.m to global warming, while other factors such as solar irradiance contribute just 0.12 watts/sq.m.

However, Dr. Rao's paper calculates that the effect of cosmic rays contributes 1.1 watts/sq.m, taking the total contribution of non-human activity factors to 1.22 watts/sq.m.

This means that increased carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere are not as significant as the IPCC claims. Of the total observed global warming of 0.75 degrees Celsius, only 0.42 degrees would be caused by increased carbon dioxide. The rest would be caused by the long term decrease in primary cosmic ray intensity and its effect on low level cloud cover.

This means that predicting future global warming and sea level rise is not as simple as the IPCC makes it to be, since it depends not only on human activity, but also significantly on the unpredictability of cosmic ray intensity.

"We conclude that the contribution to climate change due to the change in galactic cosmic ray intensity is quite significant and needs to be factored into the prediction of global warming and its effect on sea level rise and weather prediction," says the paper.

Hindu ND 21.01.11 p-15

# 2010 tied for warmest year on record

**GENEVA:** The warmest year on record is a three-way tie-2010, 2005 and 1998.

So says the U.N. weather agency, providing further evidence on Thursday that the planet is slowly but surely heating up.

Average temperatures globally last year were 0.53 Celsius higher than the 1961-90 mean that is used for comparison purposes, according to World Meteorological Organisation.

That's a bit lower than what the U.S. National Climatic Data Center announced earlier this month, but the World Meteorological Organisation also uses figures based on data collected by Britain's Meteorological Office and NASA.

"The 2010 data confirm the Earth's significant long-term warming trend," said Michel Jarraud, WMO's top official. He added that the ten warmest years after records began in 1854 have all occurred since 1998.

The average worldwide temperature for the 20th century was 13.88 degrees Celsius.

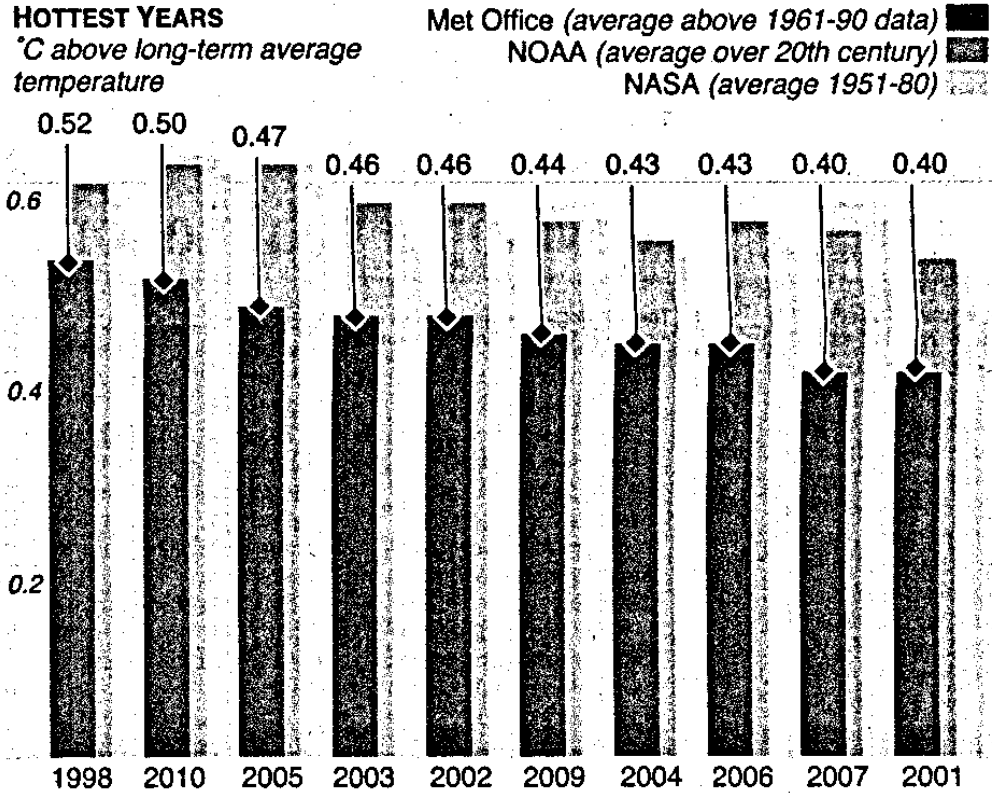
## Climate worries

But rising global temperatures over the last century are causing climate experts to worry. Most atmospheric scientists attribute the change to carbon dioxide and gases released into the air by gasoline-burning engines and other industrial processes. The gases tend to trap heat in the atmosphere like a greenhouse.

The Geneva-based global weather agency noted that last year's extreme weather — notably the heat wave in Russia and monsoon flooding in Pakistan — has continued in-

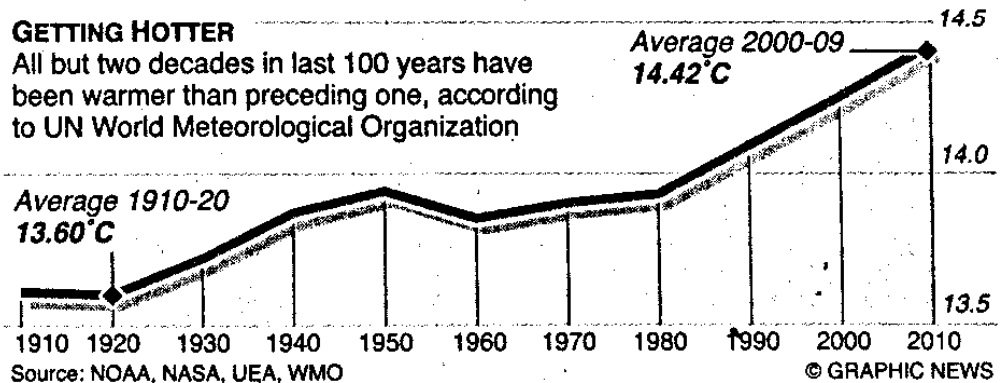
## 2010 among hottest years on record

The latest global temperature data shows 2010 was one of the hottest years since records began. Britain's Met Office says temperatures last year were only exceeded by those in 1998, while figures from U.S. organizations NOAA and NASA show it was the hottest year of all



## GETTING HOTTER

All but two decades in last 100 years have been warmer than preceding one, according to UN World Meteorological Organization



to the new year. It also cited the heavy floods in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Brazil and Australia as examples.

The year 2010 also was the

wettest on record, according to the Global Historical Climatology Network. But since rain and snowfall patterns varied greatly around the

world, scientists say more research is needed to establish a link between the warmer temperatures with the unusual moisture. — AP