

## Newspaper Clips

January 30, 2011

Times of India B`lore 28.01.2011 P-8

# IIM-B students may bring out teachers' report card

## Institute Plans Peer Rating For Faculty Incentive

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bangalore:** Peer review and student feedback could decide the quantum of incentive for faculty at Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore (IIM-B). That's the performance evaluation scheme planned at the behest of the human resource development ministry.

A committee has proposed this new appraisal system. If, for instance, a faculty members fails to get an average student feedback score of less than 3.0 (on a 5-point scale) across all courses taught over three years, their score will be zero. "Student questionnaires should accurately record feedback and students should be counselled on its importance," recommends the committee headed by Prof Rahul De.

In the new scheme, faculty performance will be evaluated once in

### ON THE ANVIL

- HRD ministry wants IIM-B to develop performance-related incentive

- Rahul De committee submits report; board to assess recommendations

- IIM-B faculty to submit work reports and documents to area chairs every June

- Incentive will depend on financial status of the institute at end of every evaluation cycle (year 3)



every three years and at the end of the cycle, they will be assigned levels of Expectation — Below, Meets or Above.

Pitching for peer evaluation, the committee feels, "Although area chairs and the dean will coordinate the process, fundamental assessment and evaluation rest with peers." The committee feels the scheme could spur collaborative research and teaching. "The peer review culture will enable faculty to know each other's work in a more

substantive manner," states the report accessed by TOI.

Some sections of IIM-B faculty have raised questions whether it will be implemented fairly and if it's the right time for it. The board of governors headed by Reliance CMD Mukesh Ambani has constituted a three-member committee to advise the dean (academic) on ways to manage the transition. The board could discuss the issue at its next meeting in February second week.

toiblreporter@timesgroup.com

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# Global warming may rob basmati of its fragrance

Parakram Rautela | TNN

New Delhi: An experiment by Indian agriculture scientists points to the enormous effect global warming could have on the fragrant basmati rice. Basmati, Sanskrit for the fragrant one, may lose not just its aroma, the famous long grains may get shorter, say scientists.

H Pathak, principal investigator of Indian Agricultural Research Institute's Climate Change Challenge Programme, told TOI the Tarawari basmati grown in research fields in Delhi did not grow long enough and wasn't as fragrant as it should have been when cooked.

He said global warming may be to blame for the disappointing basmati produced in the 2006-2007 experiment. Temperatures that year crossed 26 degree Celsius in September when the basmati flowers and, 15 to 20 days later, when the grain begins to fill out, because of which a shrivelling of the grain was seen.

The extra heat, he said, prevented the food stored by the plant from travelling to the grain. Consequently, it failed to grow to the right length. The heat also destroyed fatty acids stored in the grain which give the basmati its distinct fragrance when cooked.

No field studies have been done so far but if true, global warming may have enormous implications for India's prized basmati crop, which stood at 4.5 million tonnes last year.

Pathak says the IARI has been receiving complaints from farmers about a sudden



**Basket case? How global warming may be affecting India's key crops. Full report in Intersections, P 27**

warming damaging rice crops.

But Dalel Singh, who heads Haryana Agricultural University's Rice Research Station at Kaul, says his scientists have not observed the phenomenon seen at IARI, at least in harvests from 2007.

Pathak says temperatures in the 700 acres that make up the IARI campus in the heart of Delhi are similar to those in Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh which grow Tarawari basmati. Therefore, what the scientists saw at IARI will be replicated in these areas.

Pathak says the best solution would be to bring planting dates forward, so that high temperatures in September don't affect the crop. The other solution would be to develop a new, heat-resistant basmati variety, though they generally have smaller yields.

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# 20 top scientists quit DRDO in 6 mths

## With Economy Looking Up, IT Firms Hiring Aggressively

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: In a severe blow to the already shrinking number of researchers in defence laboratories across the nation, 20 top scientists of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) have quit their jobs in the last six months.

With the economy looking up and IT sector beginning to hire in a big way, defence scientists are opting for better opportunities. Scientists working in the field of computer science, electronics and communications are the most sought after by the private sector, as per DRDO records.

Vijaykumar Saraswath, scientific adviser to defence minister A K Antony, said on



**LOSING ITS EDGE?** Computer, electronics and communications experts are the most sought after by the private sector

Friday: "In the last six months, I have signed about 20 resignations of top scientists. We are losing scientists

from our labs and IT sector is picking them up. There were no such en masse resignations in the last two years."

To retain the bright scientists, he said "we need to have good HR policies, which are now in place," he added.

But there is hope. A large number of young NRI science graduates are approaching DRDO for work. "Also, there are a lot of youngsters from our own universities who have shown interest in pursuing research. We are looking forward to recruiting youngsters," said Saraswat.

In 2008, when 285 scientists had resigned over the span of three years, defence minister A K Antony had promised incentives to arrest the attrition rate in DRDO. The proposed incentives included providing career enhancement opportunities to scientists by granting them study leaves.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Jan 30, 2011;Section: Times Nation;Page: 16;

# TCS boss set to advise PM on skill development

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Davos:** TCS vice-chairman S Ramadorai is all set to be appointed an adviser to the PM on skill development as part of a government-led initiative to impart more training to the workforce.

As an adviser to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Ramadorai will enjoy the rank equivalent to a Cabinet minister. An official announcement on his appointment is likely to be made on Monday, sources said.

The PM's Council on National Skill Development has a mission of creating 50 crore skilled people by 2022. Of these, the target for the National Skill Development Corporation, which began its operations in October 2009, is 15 crore, according to finance minister Pranab Mukherjee's budget speech for 2010-11. The National Skill Development has done a comprehensive skill gap study of 21 high growth sectors and has approved three projects worth about Rs 45 crore to create 10 lakh skilled manpower at the rate of one lakh annually.

Mukherjee had said an extensive skill development programme for the textile and garment industry would be launched by the textiles ministry. The ministry had set a target of training 30 lakh people over five years. Analysts said the challenge for skill development in India is huge given the lack of training institutes.

"We have 1,900 industrial training institutes compared to China's 100,000. Our capacity is extremely stunted and needs a quantum jump," said Amit Mitra, secretary general of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. "Ramadorai will have to integrate different ministries to address the challenge of skill development. Faced with acute shortage of skilled manpower like plumbers, electricians and rig operators, some Indian companies have set up in-house skill development centres," he said.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Jan 30, 2011;Section: Times Nation;Page: 21;

# Radio tags on Indian students unfair: MEA

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India has reacted sharply to the US action to attach radio-trackers on Indian students of an illegal university and said that these should be removed. Hundreds of Indian students in the US face the prospect of deportation after Tri-Valley University in California was shut by the US government.

When questioned, MEA spokesperson, Vishnu Prakash said, "We have conveyed to the US authorities that the students, most of who are victims themselves, must be treated fairly and reasonably, and that the use of monitors on a group of students, who were detained and later released with monitors in accordance with US laws, is unwarranted and should be removed."

A number of Indian students, who had been arrested have been dog-tagged by the US authorities with GPS trackers strapped on their bodies to



Students demonstrate against the California-based Tri-Valley University, near the US consulate in Hyderabad

monitor their movements, since according to US law they now qualify as illegal aliens. This, according to officials, is only adding to their agony.

The Indian government wants the US to allow the students to "clarify their position". Many of the students had got transfers from other universities, officials said. Approximately 100 students had obtained visas from the US mission in India, and a number of students in the US as dependents of their spouses, had enrolled in the uni-

versity after taking the required authorization.

Prakash said, "The students should be given ample opportunity to clarify their position and present their case; those who wish to return to India should be allowed to do so voluntarily; those students who have not violated any visa or immigration laws should be given opportunity to adjust their status; and, those who are eligible to seek transfer to other universities should be given adequate opportunity and time to do so."

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## Now, cellphones that work without towers

Washington: Scientists have developed a new mobile technology which they claim is set to improve calls during disasters by allowing the transmission of signals without nearby cellphone towers.

An international team, led by Flinders University, has created the software which can run on 'off-the-shelf' mobile phones and allow them to relay calls for one phone to another — without the presence of mobile phone towers in the vicinity — before ultimately

**FAIL-PROOF:** The technology will allow people to make calls during disasters

re-connecting with an operating mobile telephone tower.

"Our technology allows the signal from the working towers to be relayed into areas lacking signal, allowing calls in and out of affected areas. What is amazing is that we have programmed fairly ordinary mobile telephones to perform this function, without using any specialised hardware," Dr Paul Gardner-Stephen, who led the team, said.

He added, "My team and I

are excited about the potential of our technology to help when a crisis strikes. From the outset of this project we have been committed to making our technology freely available. Any telephone carrier or handset manufacturer that wishes to incorporate our technology is free to do so, and indeed we would be delighted to assist them in that process."

The technology also has the potential to dramatically improve mobile telephone coverage in many rural and

remote locations where a signal is available only from limited locations in a community or with a frustratingly weak signal, say the scientists.

"Phones running our software relay calls between themselves. If even just one of those can see a cell tower, then calls can be with any of the phones, thus sustaining communications in affected areas. A balloon is not necessary; a phone running our software at any vantage point can suffice," he said. **PTI**

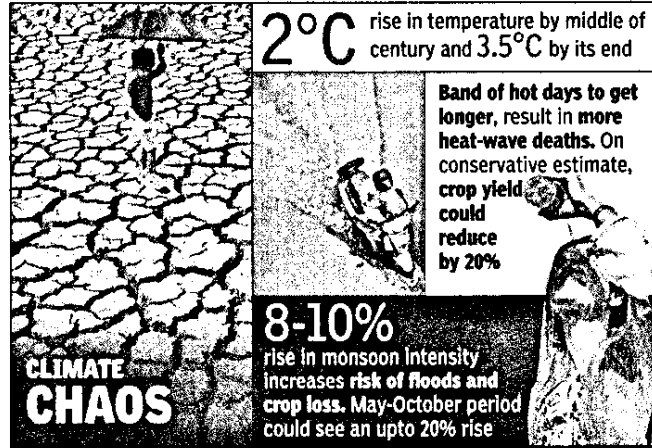
Times of India ND 29-Jan-11 p-1

# It's only going to get hotter, wetter

## Scientists' Grim Forecast Means Crop Failures

Nitin Sethi | TNN

New Delhi: Don't let the cold winter this year blindsides you to a contrary phenomenon that is creeping up on us. Temperatures in India are set to get higher—way higher than what the country has recorded in the past 130 years. The monsoon too is going to change; it will rain as much, perhaps more, but in short, intense bursts, heightening the risk of



floods and crop failure.

These are some of the grim findings of prominent meteorologists at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, a govern-

ment-funded research centre at Pune. IITM scientists, K Krishna Kumar, S K Patwardhan and B N Goswami, along with scientists from France, the US and Thailand

have concluded that higher temperatures have a strong probability of coming true.

Day temperatures will be higher and there will be less respite from the heat at night, says their research paper. The band of high-temperature days will get longer than now. In turn, these changes could result in more heat-wave deaths, apart from impacting crops.

The average annual temperatures across the country could rise by 2 degrees celsius by the middle of this century and by 3.5 degrees celsius by its end, the scientists have said on the basis of several scientific and mathematical formulae that were used in tandem to make the forecast. One such model suggested that temperatures could rise by as much as 6 degrees celsius by the end of the century.

► **Extended monsoon, P 20**

## 'Monsoon period could get extended'

► Continued from P 1

If greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced or controlled, the average daily maximum temperatures before the onset of monsoons would routinely stay above 45 degrees celsius. And rains across the country could increase by 8-10% by the end of the century and come down with higher intensity, increasing the risk of floods and bad crops. According to the scientists, rain in the May-October period could rise by 20%. This, they say, means the monsoon period could get extended.

The impact of these changes in climate could be disastrous unless government pushes adaptation policies. Even adapting, such as introducing heat-resistant seeds, would not be able to completely counter the impact of the changes, the scientists warn. The scientists found that in a pocket near Delhi — a good sample area for the Indo-Gangetic plain — the daily minimum temperatures could rise by as much as 5 degrees celsius.

Times of India ND 29-Jan-11 p-5

# New JNU VC dreams global

## Wants Varsity Among World's Top 100 & Revival of Students' Polls

TIMES NEW NETWORK

**New Delhi:** To many who believe that Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has lost its old charm, this will come as welcome news. The new vice-chancellor, Sudhir Kumar Sopory, says he will not only focus on the university achieving global recognition but will also revive the students' union elections.

Taking charge as the 11<sup>th</sup> vice-chancellor of the university, Sopory said that excelling in research, putting the university among top 100 in the world, rewarding best teachers and bringing back the tradition of students' union elections will be his priority in the next five years.

"I want to see the university among the top 100 in the world and this can be achieved only if we excel in research activities and knowledge generation. I want to bring a significant change in quality and quantity of research," he said.

A plant molecular biologist, Sopory is no new face to the university as he started his academic career with JNU at School of Life Sciences. He worked in the university till 1997. In fact, he was the first ever warden of the university and also served as vice president of the JNU Teachers' Association.

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union elections are on hold for last three years due to alleged violation of Lyngdoh Committee recommendations. Currently, the case is pending with the Supreme Court. Though the administration plays a negligible role in these elections, Sopory said: "The students' elections are unique and



**WINDS OF CHANGE:** Sudhir Kumar Sopory has taken over as the 11th vice-chancellor of JNU

something that I don't want to lose. I don't know as the vice-chancellor how much I can help. But I can assure students that I will do my best to revive the process. After all, good politicians should come from universities."

The new vice-chancellor also said that transparency in administrative policies, improvement in teaching and making campus

life attractive are other areas where he will focus. The VC also said that he will consult the community before taking major decisions. "If I start enforcing my agenda then there will be only hurdles. I also want to im-

“ The students' union elections are unique and something that I don't want to lose. I don't know how much I can help. But I can assure students that I will do my best . Good politicians should come from universities. ”

**Sudhir Kumar Sopory | VC**

prove facilities in hostels and make campus life more attractive," said Sopory.

On academics, the VC said: "We have to break the barriers between schools and centres and encourage more interdisciplinary research."

An old-timer at JNU, on his homecoming Sopory said: "I was part of JNU during the tenure of its first vice chancellor G Parthasarathy. Things were completely different when I joined. This was barren campus then. But now I see lot of greenery. I was also offered the position of director of National Botanical Research Institute, but I chose JNU and I am happy to be back on the campus."

**Times of India ND 29-Jan-11**  
**p-15**

# Medical edu under new watchdog: PMO steps in

**Akshaya Mukul | TNN**

**New Delhi:** The PMO, HRD and health ministry have started looking at various options on the setting up of the National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), especially bringing medical education within the ambit of the proposed regulator.

A meeting on the issue, held on Friday and chaired by TKA Nair, principal secretary to the PM, discussed the NCHER Bill prepared by task force of HRD ministry and a separate bill prepared by the health ministry for setting up a regulator for medical education. The process of recon-

ciling the two bills has started, sources said refusing to indicate if medical education will become part of NCHER.

Law ministry officials were not called for the meeting. HRD ministry's task force expects that the report of the medical journal 'Lancet', advocating joint planning in the education and health sectors, will help bring medical education within the ambit of NCHER.

One of the options being looked at is separating Medical Council of India's function of regulating medical education. In December, HRD's task force had made this proposal while making a presentation on NCHER to the PM.



Times of India ND 29-Jan-11 p-23

# In a first, hacker-proof software

## New Operating System Kernel, seL4, Works By Weeding Out Malware

**Melbourne:** Scientists have developed what they claim is the world's first hack-free software which can protect systems from failure or malicious attacks.

The 'seL4' microkernel has been developed by a team led by Australia's ICT Research Centre of Excellence's spinout company — Open Kernel Labs (OK Labs). It is a small operating system kernel which regulates access to a computer's hardware.

Its unique feature is that it has been mathematically proven to operate correctly, en-



**SAFE INSIDE:** The software has been mathematically proven to operate correctly and can separate trusted from untrusted software

abling it to separate trusted from untrusted software, protecting critical services from a failure or a malicious attack, say the scientists.

In future applications, seL4 could ensure that trusted financial transaction software from secure sources like banks or stock exchanges can operate securely on a customer's mobile phone alongside "untrusted" software, such as games downloaded from the Internet, according to its developers.

It could also provide a secure and reliable environment for mission-critical de-

fence data, operating on the same platform as everyday applications like email. Or, it could protect the life-supporting functions of an implanted medical device, such as a pacemaker, from hacking, they say.

"Our seL4 microkernel is the only operating system kernel in existence whose source code has been mathematically proven to implement its specification correctly. Under the assumptions of the proof, the seL4 kernel for ARM11 will always do precisely what its specification says it will do," lead scientist Gerwin Klein said. p71

Times of India ND  
29-Jan-11 p-23

## At 3,200°C, this planet is hottest in the universe

**A**stronomers have claimed that a planet discovered last year is the hottest ever found in the universe, where the temperature is a scorching 3,200°C. The scorching temperature of exoplanet, WASP-33b also known as HD15082, is explained by its close orbit around its star, itself one of the hottest planet-hosting stars at 7,160°C; it's 380 light years away in the constellation of Andromeda, the 'Daily Mail' reported. It's temperature is 900°C hotter than what was formerly the hottest known planet in the Milky Way Galaxy — WASP-12b.

**Times of India**  
**ND 29-Jan-11**  
p-23  
**Electric car**  
**that can be**  
**recharged by**  
**pedal power**

**Beijing:** Chinese engineers have developed China's first "human-electric" hybrid vehicle, allowing users to charge it by pedalling as they drive along. The vehicle, developed by researchers at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, can carry two people and luggage.

Pedal energy is reclaimed and charges the battery. It can be driven in electric-only mode or pedal plus electric power, Shanghai Daily reported. Unlike existing Twike electric cars in operation in Europe, the vehicle can be recharged anytime as it has an "intelligent battery".

Twike drivers can only recharge the vehicle through braking or moving down a slope. The intelligent battery, developed in Shanghai, also allows users to gauge consumption. "If drivers are stuck in a traffic jam with the air-conditioning on, their car would soon run out of power," Jay Lee, President of the Advanced Industrial Technology Research Institute was quoted as saying. PTT

Times of India ND 29-Jan-11 p-23

# Great exodus: Humans left Africa 50,000 yrs earlier than thought

**London:** Modern humans may have emerged from Africa up to 50,000 years earlier than previously thought, a new study has claimed.

An international team says that humans could have arrived on the Arabian Peninsula as early as 125,000 years ago — directly from Africa rather than via the Nile Valley or the Near East, as earlier thought. Researchers have reached the conclusion on the basis of stone tools uncovered in the Ara-

bian peninsula, which they say were made by modern humans 125,000 years ago, that implies modern humans first left Africa much earlier than thought.

The team, led by Hans-Peter Uerpmann of the University of Tuebingen, Germany, uncovered the stone tools at Jebel Faya in the UAE, which resemble those found in East Africa at the same time period. According to the researchers, who dated the tools using a light-

based technique, the people who made them were newcomers in the area with origins on the other side of the Red Sea, the BBC reported.

Though earlier studies of DNA had suggested a timing for the "Out of Africa" exodus of 60-70,000 years ago, but researchers behind the latest study argue that the people who made tools at Jebel Faya 125,000 years ago are ancestral to humans living outside Africa today. PTI

Hindustan Times ND 29/01/2011 P-7

## With grand plans, new VC assumes office in JNU

### STUDENT POWER Sopory says would like to see students' union back in action

HT Correspondent

htreporters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Knowledge-generation and thrust on research are two of the key areas that will help Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) become one of the top universities in the world, said Sudhir Kumar Sopory, who took over as the new vice-chancellor of JNU on Friday.

Sopory said he aims to convert JNU into one of the top universities of the world. Sopory succeeded BB Bhattacharya, who was the VC from 2005 to 2010.

"There needs to be significant changes in the quality and quantity of research. We need to develop common research programmes and encourage education with value and purpose," added Sopory, who before assuming the office of VC was the group leader at the International Centre for genet-



■ JNU VC SK Sopory during an interaction with mediapersons on Friday in New Delhi. VIPIAN KUMAR/HT

ic Engineering and Biotechnology. An eminent plant molecular biologist, Sopory began his career in 1973 as a faculty member at the School of Life Sciences in JNU.

Among the other changes

that the new VC seeks to bring in are transparency in administrative policies, improving ways of communication with students to encourage them to attend classes, rewarding good teachers and providing equal opportunity to gender and

diversity.

"Inter-disciplinarity across courses needs to be encouraged for students to help them fathom their hidden talent."

He also said the university needs to enhance fundraising. "The education policies

of the present government give a lot of importance to higher education. JNU should become competitive to attract the funds."

Sopory who was the first hostel warden of the first JNU hostel, Kaveri, said he would ensure that besides opening new hostels, the present ones would be upgraded and provided with latest facilities like wi-fi connectivity.

Speaking about the controversy regarding the reservation issue of Other Backward Classes, he said JNU has complied with the court orders and would look for ways and means to implement the reservation better.

About the students' union elections being not held for the past few years he said, he would like to see the students union back in action and wants the university to produce good politicians, as in the past.

## CASE STUDY

*IIM finds lessons in Maya parks, Ambani home***Manish Chandra Pandey**

■ manish.pandey@hindustantimes.com

**LUCKNOW:** What do Mukesh Ambani's 27-storey residential wonder — named Antilla, located in south Mumbai — and Mayawati's humongous statues spread across parks and museums in Uttar Pradesh, have in common?

Two things: first, both evoke extreme reactions. Second: they form the subject of a case study devised by a professor at IIM,

Lucknow.

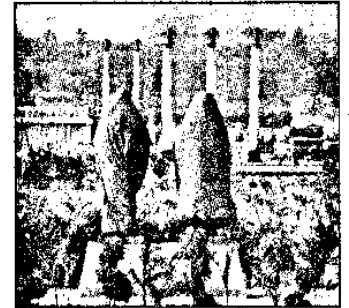
Himanshu Rai, human resource management professor at the institute, uses both to exemplify two features: the need to dream big and the power of symbolism.

"Towering Antilla symbolises the power of wealth and Man's primordial need to attract attention," said Rai. "Similarly, for the Dalits, the Maya memorials have come to symbolise emancipation."

Whatever the likes of Samajwadi Party chief

Mulayam Singh Yadav or BJP youth leader Varun Gandhi may say — both have threatened to bring down the Mayawati-built structures — Rai was clear it can never happen.

He said, "The sheer cost of breaking down either would be huge... Mayawati's memorials, dedicated to Dalit icons have come to symbolise freedom for the downtrodden. Similarly, Antilla symbolises wealth and what one can do with it."



■ The study says Ambani's house shows the power of wealth and Maya's parks (pic) the power of symbolism. FILE PHOTO

Pioneer ND 29/01/2011

P3

# Better facilities for students is top priority, says new JNU V-C

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

**B**etter campus life and improved hostel facilities top the priority list of the new Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University. Professor Sudhir Kumar Sopory who took charge as the new V-C on Friday said that the main focus of the university would be to take up new initiatives to provide better facilities to the students residing in the hostels and, steps will be taken to make significant changes in both quality and quantity of research done in the university.

Professor Sopory who began his career in 1973 as a faculty member at the School of Life Sciences was also appointed as the warden of the Kaveri Hostel in the same year.

While describing his long association with the university, Sopory said, "Many people apprehended whether I would be able to handle the university or not. My only reply to them was that nobody knows JNU better than I do."

Notably, Kaveri is the first hostel of JNU.

The V-C also talked of newer initiatives that will be taken up by the university. "We will try to provide Wi-fi facility in all the hostels. The students need the net connection for many things. We do not want our students to lack in anything. We will try convincing the Government on this. They should have access to net."

JNU recently signed a memorandum of understand-

ing with the MTNL where the students can avail themselves of the net facility at a cheap rate of ₹199 per month.

Sopory added that JNU is dependent on the Government for funds and expressed hope that the Government will be generous in allocating funds to the university.

On a question on the entry of outsiders into the campus, the V-C said that it was impossible to stop outsiders from entering the university campus. "We cannot stop people from visiting their friends in the campus, but their behaviour will certainly be monitored."

Sopory said the barriers which exist between students of various departments, schools and courses also need to be brought down immediately.

Sopory added that homogeneity between the student groups will be the goal. The V-C also expressed hope for the revival of students' election in the university.

"Students' election was one of the major activities of the university. JNU's website also mentions students' election as one of its unique feature. But there are certain things that have gone beyond the boundaries of the university. If a V-C can do something to revive the students' election, I will definitely do it."

The V-C delineating his vision for the university said, "I want to see JNU among the top 100 universities of the world. I hope we can influence others rather than others influencing us."

Financial Express ND

29/01/2011 P-8

## Case study gone wrong

Hobbled B-schools and IITs can't run faster

**I**n large states public education will always be mediocre, for the same reason that in large kitchens the cooking is usually bad," said Friedrich Nietzsche. And it seems the government is working to live up to this ideal. The All India Council for Technical Education's (AICTE) latest notification placing restrictions on the length of MBA programmes that business schools are allowed to run, the curriculum, fee structures and admission criteria have raised the hackles of the administrations at B-schools. AICTE's new regulations, aimed at 'regularising MBA admissions and curriculum', essentially serve to limit the independence of B-schools that run post-graduate diploma in management (PGDM) programmes. B-school associations, which together have over 750 institutions under them, have decided to challenge these stipulations in court. Although not all the guidelines are bad—having a standardised test to ensure a fair level playing field across schools may actually be a good plan. But instead of using it as a barrier to entry, the schools may do well to consider using it like American schools use the GMAT, as one of the many predictors of success among applicants.

The idea of defining the duration of an MBA programme is ludicrous—why is 24 months any more effective than the 21 months that an MBA at Harvard Business School runs? That the schools cannot decide their own fee structures, according to the guidelines, is another major stumbling block. Higher education institutes, even the illustrious IITs, are perpetually starved of funds—a recent petition by the IITs to raise fees was politely turned down by the HRD under the garb of 'inclusive education'. In such circumstances, giving states control over what schools can and cannot charge is an example of the environment of 'over-regulation' that exists in India, recently highlighted in the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy report. But the most serious issue of all, with the AICTE's notification, is the section of 'designing a common syllabus/curriculum model'. MBA programmes are designed to encourage critical thinking, innovation, entrepreneurship, original thought... none of which can be put under the umbrella of one size fits all. Attempting to have a 'common syllabus', therefore, is facetious. Given that only ISB and IIM-A (of which ISB is independent of government) feature in international rankings, it appears that government intervention, when it only serves to 'standardise and sanitise' without understanding the nuances of education, becomes the tipping point between mediocrity and even more mediocrity.

Business Standard ND  
29/01/2011 P4

# SC directs freeze at Vedanta Univ project site

BS REPORTER  
New Delhi, 28 January

**T**he Supreme Court will hear the twin appeals against the Orissa high court's rejection of land acquisition for the proposed Vedanta university project, but no activity will be allowed at the site till the judgment.

The "nature, status and possession" of the 6,000 acres sought to be acquired is to be frozen till then, directed a bench of judges D K Jain and H L Dattu. They agreed to an "expeditious hearing".

The appeals are from the Anil Agarwal Foundation (set up by the London-based Vedanta group of companies, Agarwal being the chairman) and the government of Orissa. Last November, the Orissa HC had quashed the notification for acquisition of land for the proposed university, in the Konark-Puri region. The acquisition had been challenged in various public interest suits, and the HC upheld these, saying the acquisition breached the law. It directed the land be returned to the original owners.

Vedanta and the state government have since appealed to the SC and this is the third bench to hear the matter. The first two benches allotted to hear the matter had both recused, earlier this month.

The bench, headed by Justice Jain, said there were several major issues to be sorted. There were several parties

who'd objected to the project and asserted the rights of the peasant-owners. There are four appeals and 17 intervenors. The counsel for one of the parties, T R Andhyarujina, today said the project was a "fraud" on the local people. Prashant Bhushan, another counsel opposed to the project, said: "A corporate group which has not even set up a primary school in the area is claiming to set up a world class university (and wants) to ac-

## **THE ORISSA HC HAD QUASHED THE notification for acquisition of land for the proposed university, in the Konark-Puri region**

quire 15,000 acres of land."

The HC had stated the Anil Agarwal Foundation was not a public company, in terms of the Companies Act. Therefore, the take-over was not permissible according to the provisions of the acquisition law. Another issue is whether it is a public purpose when a private company is the beneficiary. The government argues that the foundation was a public company since 2006.

Apart from the challenge on the ground of illegal land acquisition, the petitioners have also raised environmental issues and contended the proposed site for the university is close to the Balukhand Konark Black Buck Sanctuary and a river.

Business Line ND 29/01/2011 P-24

## Body clock — keeping time for millions of years

### Indo-Asian News Service

London, Jan. 28

The inner clock that regulates the behaviour of all life forms has existed for millions of years - unchanged.

The finding could shed light on a range of human conditions such as depression, cancer and diabetes and provide relief to workers such as pilots or nurses who do odd hours.

The studies from the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh examined the circadian clock which controls patterns of seasonal activ-

ity in everything from sleep cycles to butterfly migration, the *Daily Mail* reports.

The first study, led by Cambridge University scientist Akhilesh Reddy, found that red blood cells (RBCs) have a 24-hour rhythm, according to a Cambridge statement.

The second study found a similar 24-hour cycle in marine algae suggesting that internal body clocks have always been important, even for ancient forms of life.

Scientists had previously thought the circadian clock was driven by gene activity, but both the algae and

the RBCs kept time without it, meaning other factors were at play.

Akhilesh Reddy, neuroscientist with Cambridge, said: "The implications of this for health are manifold. We already know that disrupted clocks - for example, caused by shift-work and jet-lag - are associated with metabolic disorders such as diabetes, mental health problems and even cancer.

"By furthering our knowledge of how the 24-hour clock in cells works, we hope that the links to these disorders - and others - will be made clearer."

## Hindu ND 29/01/2011 P9 Find linkages between NCHER and NCHRH: PMO

Aarti Dhar

**NEW DELHI:** The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has asked the Ministries of Human Resource Development and Health and Family Welfare to identify linkages between the two proposed regulatory bodies — National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) and the National Commission on Human Resource for Health (NCHRH) — being promoted by them respectively to speed up the process of setting up the two authorities.

Both the Ministries have been given time up to Friday next to resolve issues and work to form common grounds for coexistence. The PMO is keen on the resolution as the Medical Council of India (Amendment) Act, 2010 ends on May 15 and it is important that a mechanism is in place before that.

The Prime Minister is said to have already expressed his 'agreement' with the NCHER.

The two Ministries have been fighting a turf war for more than a year now with the task force, set up by the HRD Ministry, bringing all higher education, including medical education and legal education under the purview of an overarching regulatory body — the NCHER — while the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been opposing it tooth and nail saying that medical education was closely linked with health infrastructure and should come under the ambit of the NCHRH.

While both the Ministries claim that the draft bills for NCHER and NCHRH are ready to be placed before the Cabinet, neither have been able to do so because of possibility of overlapping and lack of clarity.

With several attempts made earlier to make the two Ministries come to a consensus having failed, the PMO on Friday convened a meeting of the HRD task force members and experts from the Health and Family Welfare Ministry (since the task force that drafted the NCHRH Bill has been disbanded) to thrash out the issues in the presence of T.K.A. Nair, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

After both the sides placed their version, Mr. Nair asked them to find a common ground for the existence of both the Commissions. One possible way could be cross representation, the second could be bringing the medical colleges and research under the purview of the NCHER while the related health infrastructure and services, accreditation, ethics and maintenance of medical registers could remain with the NCHRH. There was also a suggestion that bodies such as the National Board of Examinations that are outside the university system could be central to NCHRH.



Indian Express, ND 29-Jan-11 p-4

# Kaveri hostel's first warden, Sopory returns to take charge of JNU

DEEPU EDMOND  
SEBASTIAN

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 28

**R**ESPONDING to an offer he could not refuse, the first ever hostel warden of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) returned to the campus after 13 years on Friday. This time, he will fill in the Vice-Chancellor's shoes.

Sudhir Kumar Sopory, a plant molecular biologist, assumed office as the Vice-Chancellor of JNU on Friday. Sopory, who resigned from his position of group leader at the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, was a faculty member of the JNU School of Life Sciences from 1973 to 1997.

He was the first warden of Kaveri, which — in turn — was the first hostel of JNU. While speaking to mediapersons on Friday, he recalled the circumstances in which he was appointed. "The first Vice-Chancellor, G Parthasarathy — a very renowned person — called me and said, 'I am looking for somebody who is not married.' Turned out, I was the only one who was not married," he said, making the audience of the press conference, organised on Friday, roar with laughter.

Occupying a pride of place among Sopory's 200 research publications and 13 edited books is the JNU Hostel Manual, which he co-authored.

Sopory took over from B B



New JNU V-C Sudhir Kumar Sopory.

OINAM ANAND

Bhattacharya at 10.30 am on Friday. He spent the rest of the morning interacting with the teaching and administrative staff.

One of his first directives was to ask the administrative staff not to hold on to any file for more than 48 hours unless

absolutely necessary. "We will computerise most of the work here. The administration will be very transparent. I have told the library staff to make available a list of these submitted by students," he said.

Sopory's appointment was confirmed in the last week of December, but he had to serve a month's notice at the ICGEB. "I have had offers from many other institutions, but have resisted them so far. But the JNU offer was something I could not refuse. I felt there was something I had to

give back to it," he added.

Sopory said that though he has a few ideas for the university, he would announce them only after taking its teachers and students into confidence. "I have some ideas in mind, but they will be announced over a period of time, after consultations with the deans, students and the teachers. I can have my own agenda about what I want to do, but the best thing is to develop an agenda along with the academic community," he said.

Sopory was unequivocal in his support for the restoration of the JNU Students' Union. "We claim that the JNU Students' Union is one of its kind. We do not want to lose this uniqueness. I don't know how much is possible within the Vice-Chancellor's powers, but we will do all we can to restore it. If it was in my hand, we could have held the JNUSU elections tomorrow. But it is not," he said.

Stating that taking JNU into the 'Top 100 universities' list is his 'dream', Sopory said it can be achieved through more research. "My efforts will be to see that there is a significant change in the quantity and quality of research output. We will see to it that all the difficulties faced by researchers and teachers are solved. I won't say that 'I'll try to do it', I'll say, 'I will do it'," he said.

He also hinted at plans to encourage good teachers. "We will have a system to reward good teachers — some kind of a best teacher award. We will have to find ways and means of how to do that. We will also project the brightest students," he said.

In addition to building more hostels, efforts will also be made to improve the standard of living in the university premises, Sopory added.