

Newspaper Clips

January 29, 2013

Times of India ND 29/01/2013

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IITians close in on malaria 'super capsule'

Prithvijit Mitra | TNN

Kolkata: A malaria capsule that's immune to resistance, doesn't get degraded in the human system and delivers the drug at the area where it can act best against the disease sounds too good to be true. But this is what a team of researchers at IIT Kanpur has closed in on. They have designed a nano-capsule for target therapy of the disease that kills thousands in the country every year.

The research, which could make malaria treatment more effective and reduce mortality by getting around the problem of drug resistance, will be discussed and deliberated at length at a three-day "International Symposium on Challenges in Chemical Biology" at the IICB (Indian Institute of Chemical Biology), Kolkata, inaugurated on Sunday. •

The medicine will inhibit

the interaction between red blood cells and the malaria parasite, quickly reducing the influence of the disease in the system, said Sandeep Verma of the department of chemistry, IIT Kanpur, who is leading the researchers.

"We are trying to design a soft, hollow container of peptides that will serve as the capsule. It will be a micro-sized nano-capsule, to be filled with the anti-malaria drug. The capsule will protect the drug from degradation and ensure that very little of the medicine is lost during delivery. It will also ensure that the passage of the drug is smooth. Most importantly, it will deliver the drug at the right juncture that will lead to maximum result," said Verma.

The malaria nano-capsule, however, is still in the development stage and had a fair distance to travel before it could take the shape of a marketable medicine.

Hindustan ND 29/01/2013

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लंदन में दौड़ेगी रुड़की में बनी हाईब्रीड रेसिंग कार

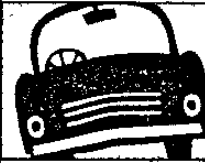
रुड़की | अमर टाकुर

आईआईटी रुड़की के छात्रों की टीम एक हाईब्रीड रेसिंग कार तैयार करने में जुटी है। मार्च 2012 से छात्र इस प्रोजेक्ट पर काम रहे हैं। जुलाई के पहले हफ्ते में लंदन में होने वाली रेसिंग कार स्पर्धा में उतारी जाएगी। इस हाईब्रीड कार की खासियत यह है कि यह चार्जबल बैटरी और पेट्रोल दोनों से चलेगी। कार तैयार कर रही टीम के लीडर दिगेंद्र सिंह राठी ने 'हिन्दुस्तान' को बताया कि कार का बॉडी डिजाइन तैयार हो चुका है। अब इंजन और बैटरी के पार्ट जोड़े जा रहे हैं। अप्रैल तक कार तैयार कर ली जाएगी। मई और जून में इसकी टेस्टिंग होगी। सोसायटी ऑफ ऑटोमोटिव इंजीनियर्स और इंस्टीट्यूशन ऑफ मैकेनिकल इंजीनियर्स की ओर से लंदन में

कैसे दौड़ेगी हाईब्रीड कार

इस हाईब्रीड कार की खासियत यह है कि इसमें बैटरी और इंजन दोनों होंगे। 72 वोल्ट और 48 एच क्षमता वाली बैटरी तथा 125 सीसी पेट्रोल इंजन कार में होगा। यह कार बैटरी से चलेगी। लेकिन बैटरी का चार्जिंग लेबल घटने पर इंजन कार को चलाने लगेगा। इंजन बैटरी भी चार्ज करेगा। बैटरी चार्ज होने पर इंजन बंद हो जाएगा और कार बैटरी से चलने लगेगी।

100 किमी प्रति घंटा होगी रफ्तार



इस कार की अधिकतम रफ्तार करीब 100 किलोमीटर प्रति घंटा होगी। बैटरी का प्रयोग अधिक होने से इस कार से प्रदूषण की समस्या भी कम होगी।

12 लाख रुपये में बनेगी कार

टीम लीडर दिगेंद्र सिंह राठी ने बताया कि बॉडी, इंजन व बैटरी आदि सब पार्ट्स को मिलाकर कार की लागत 12 लाख रुपये तक पहुंच जाएगी। निर्माण से लेकर इस कार को लंदन तक पहुंचाने में करीब 33 लाख रुपये खर्च होने का अनुमान है।

आयोजित रेसिंग कार स्पर्धा में आईआईटी रुड़की की टीम इस कार को उतारेगी। टीम लीडर ने बताया कि

उपलब्धि

- कार के संचालन के लिए इंजन और बैटरी दोनों का किया जाएगा प्रयोग
- जुलाई में लंदन में होने वाली प्रतियोगिता में

- मैकेनिकल व इलेक्ट्रिकल विभाग के 40 छात्रों की टीम जुटी है कार तैयार करने में

मैकेनिकल और इलेक्ट्रिकल विभाग के करीब 40 छात्रों की टीम कार तैयार करने में जुटी है। मैकेनिकल विभाग के

एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर डॉ. आरपी गक्खर, अक्षय द्विवेदी और इलेक्ट्रिकल विभाग के डॉ. प्रमोद अग्रवाल गाइड कर रहे हैं।

Indian Express, ND 29/01/2013 p-6

Govt set to revive IIM Council despite opposition

ANUBHUTI VISHNOI

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 28

EVEN as it is promising degree-granting powers to the Indian Institutes of Management, the government has revived its controversial plan to create a pan IIM Council that will coordinate between all the 13 IIMs, review them, and submit actionable reports on them to the government. Upset at what is being viewed as an attempt to curtail their autonomy, many IIMs have indicated their opposition to the move.

The IIMs had shot down the proposal for the creation

of a pan IIM Council in 2008 after the R C Bhargava committee report had first mooted it. The revival of the Council in the draft Indian Institutes of Management Bill has surprised the IIMs.

To be chaired by the Union HRD minister, the Council is envisaged as a body with over 50 members, packed with government officials, save three persons of eminence.

It proposes to “coordinate the activities of all institutes”, deliberate on matters of “common interest”, “review achievements” of policy objectives and make reports on each IIM and recommend appro-

priate actions that will be acted on by the government.

IIM-Ahmedabad director Samir Barua warns that setting up an overarching IIM Council will end up undermining the powers of the Board of each IIM and work against encouraging innovation and diversity in the IIMs.

“If an IIM Council frames policies and rules for IIMs, the Boards will be undermined. Instead, if need is felt, the Boards should be empowered and made more accountable. That apart, an IIM Act applied across all institutes — some five decades old and the other just a couple of years behind

them — is in the danger of attempting to make all IIMs uniform in nature. Anything extremely uniform allows neither diversity nor innovation. Each IIM, depending on its tradition, has different requirements, and uniformity is definitely not the answer,” Barua told *The Indian Express*.

Most of the older IIMs echo Barua’s sentiments and while they have conveyed their views on the subject to a five-member committee appointed by the ministry to seek their views, they will soon send formal responses after taking up the issue at their next Board meetings.

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प्रपोज्ड कानून पर IIM-A ने लगाई केंद्र सरकार की क्लास



[उर्मि ए गोस्वामी नई दिल्ली]

सरकार 13 इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट्स ऑफ मैनेजमेंट में ट्रांसपैरेंसी और जवाबदेही बढ़ाने एवं उन्हें बराबरी पर लाने के लिए नया कानून बनाना चाहती है। इसके तहत इंस्टीट्यूट्स की काउंसिल बनाई जाएगी, जिसकी कमान एचआरडी मिनिस्टर के हाथों में होगी।

हालांकि, आईआईएम अहमदाबाद ने प्रपोज्ड इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ मैनेजमेंट बिल का विरोध किया है। उसका कहना है कि इससे उसकी आजादी खत्म हो सकती है। वहीं, सरकार का कहना है कि यह डर बेबुनियाद है। अब तक दूसरे आईआईएम ने बिल का विरोध नहीं किया है।

ड्राफ्ट बिल का मकसद आईआईएम को राष्ट्रीय अहमियत वाले संस्थान का दर्जा देना है। इससे मैनेजमेंट एजुकेशन का लेवल और बेहतर होगा। बिल के मकसद में आईआईएम की ऑटोनॉमी के मुताबिक ट्रांसपैरेंसी और यूनिफॉर्मिटी को बढ़ावा देना भी शामिल है। इस कानून के पास होने के बाद आईआईएम रजिस्टर्ड सोसायटी नहीं रह

जाएंगे। उन्हें डिग्री देने का अधिकार होगा। अभी आईआईएम के पास डिप्लोमा देने का ही हक है। एक आईआईएम के डायरेक्टर ने नाम नहीं छापने की शर्त पर बताया, 'पिछले साल जून में 13 आईआईएम के प्रमुखों ने इस बारे में कपिल सिब्बल से बात की थी, जो उस वक्त एचआरडी मिनिस्टर थे। तब सिर्फ आईआईएम

अहमदाबाद ने इसका विरोध किया था।' सरकार ने सात साल पहले भी ऐसे ही कदम की तैयारी की थी, तब इसे तीखी बहस के बाद टाल दिया गया था। उस वक्त कहा गया था कि इससे आईआईएम की ऑटोनॉमी छिनने का डर है।

हालांकि, अधिकारियों को इस बार कामयाबी की ज्यादा उम्मीद दिख रही है। आईआईएम डिग्री देने के प्रपोजल से खुश हैं और यूनिफॉर्मिटी को लेकर भी उनका रवैया पॉजिटिव है। इस कानून के तहत एक कमेटी बनाने का प्रस्ताव है, जो इंस्टीट्यूट के परफॉर्मेंस और फैकल्टी को रिव्यू करेगी।

पहल की जरूरत क्यों

- ▶ ट्रांसपैरेंसी और जवाबदेही बढ़ाने एवं उन्हें बराबरी पर लाने के लिए नया कानून बनाना चाहती है
- ▶ इसके तहत इंस्टीट्यूट्स की काउंसिल बनेगी, जिसकी कमान एचआरडी मिनिस्टर के हाथों में होगी

आईआईएम अहमदाबाद ने प्रपोज्ड इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ मैनेजमेंट बिल का विरोध किया है

Economic Times ND 29/01/2013 P1

Older IIMs See Red as Govt Plans Umbrella Authority

Newer institutes hail power to issue degrees

URMIA GOSWAMI & SREERADHA D BASU
NEW DELHI | MUMBAI

The government plans to set up an overarching body to make the 13 Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) more uniform under a new law, sparking strong reactions from established business schools that fiercely guard their autonomy. But the newer institutes like the provision in the statute that empowers them to award degrees.

The government has proposed a Council of Institutes headed by the Union HRD minister. The council, which will coordinate

the activities of all IIMs, will recommend scholarships for backward castes and classes and perform other functions referred to it by the Centre. It will also submit a report to the government on each IIM after a review, and recommend actions that the government would take.

The proposed law also sets up a formal system of reviewing the performance of the institute and the faculty. The IIMs will no longer be registered societies, but become national institutions with the authority to award degrees, not just diplomas.

Biggest Objections from IIM-A ►► 18

Role of Council of Institutes



COORDINATE activities of all the institutes



SUGGEST scholarships for backward castes and classes



PERFORM functions referred to it by Centre



SUBMIT a review report on each IIM

RECOMMEND actions to be taken by govt



Biggest Objections from IIM-Ahmedabad

►► From Page 1

The draft bill says the aim of the whole exercise is "to declare the IIMs to be institutes of national importance with a view to foster excellence in management education and to usher in more transparency and uniformity compatible with institutional autonomy of these public institutions".

"This is an empowering and positive step. You cannot be an international institute and give diplomas. It's like being doctors without PhDs. Right now we can only give diplomas, and only some places recognise it, this step will give us more value," Janat Shah, director of IIM-Udaipur, told ET.

Gautam Sinha, director of IIM-Kashipur, also welcomed the proposed power to award degrees. "It will even allow foreign students to come here since nobody would come earlier for just a diploma. Other than that, I can't comment about all aspects since I've not gone through it. For us, the government already has a say in our governance since they fund us," he said.

But for the old established business schools led by IIM-Ahmedabad, the degree is hardly an attraction as their alumni, armed with diplomas, have risen to become global CEOs. They would be happy to award degrees, but not at the cost of autonomy.

Shekhar Chaudhuri, director, IIM-Calcut-

ta, said it was too early to comment. "This entire exercise is still at the draft stage. Nothing's been finalised and I don't know how many meetings will be required before we get to that stage," he said.

A five-member committee comprising directors of IIM Calcutta, Bangalore, Kozhikode, Udaipur and Tiruchirappalli are discussing the issue of empowering the institutes to grant degrees and enacting a new law.

The proposed new law will govern the IIMs the way the Indian Institutes of Technology are run by the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961. The draft bill does not alter the powers and functions of the board of governors and directors, or the manner of their appointment. Some experts say the IIMs are much more autonomous than the IITs and the two institutions have very different requirements and require different approaches.

The director of another well-established IIM said the biggest objections came from IIM-A. "In June last year, heads of all 13 IIMs discussed this issue with Kapil Sibal, who was then the HRD minister. Only IIM-A raised strong objections," the director of one of the IIMs, who did not want to be identified, told ET.

The government had planned such a move about six years ago, but it was shelved after

an emotive debate over autonomy of the top business schools. However, officials said they were more optimistic this time as several IIMs are keen to have uniformity and be able to award degrees.

Earlier, a committee headed by RC Bhargava had suggested setting up a pan-IIM body, which the IIMs objected saying each business school had its own unique requirements and the powers of the board of governors would be diluted.

Even the new IIMs are not unanimously cheering the proposed law. "It will hamper the autonomy of IIMs in some way or another. We did want degree-granting status, but quite a few things have been included that we

did not want. Right now, the IIMs have a faculty council, but the government wants something on the lines of a senate where there will be representation from not only professors, but also external experts and ministry officials. So our powers will be contained. Another issue is that there may be reservations for faculty, which is most unwelcome. Faculty should be taken on purely on merit," the director of an IIM who did not want to be named.

Another provision that could prove contentious is a committee to review and evaluate the performance of the institute and the faculty. The committee would have to be set up within seven years from the day the law is enacted. According to the draft bill, the institutes will have to be reviewed once in every five years. The central government would have powers to give directions on the basis of the committee's recommendations, with which the IIM will have to comply. If there is a dispute, the views of the central government would prevail.

The committee would comprise members renowned in industry or academics. It would evaluate the institutions for innovation, entrepreneurship, research, impact on trade and society, quality of teaching and governance, achieving a global standing, and achieving social equality through education and innovation.

The new law also proposes to set up a senate for each institute. The senate would be the top body for all academic matters. It would be chaired by the director. Members would include heads of departments, dean in charge of academics, six faculty members, three eminent people in the field of education, and three more with specialisation in management.

(With inputs from Devina Sengupta)

HT Indore

Few foreign takers for IIM-I's PGP

LITTLE HOPE Institute not expecting more than 20 applications

Amrita U Kadam

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INDORE: Indian Institute of Management, Indore (IIM-I) has invited applications from foreign nationals for admission to its two-year post-graduate programme (PGP) in management for the 2013-14 batch. However, the B-school is not expecting more than 20 applications.

According to admission chair Rohit Kapoor, only a small population of foreign nationals applies for the course. The course would start by mid June 2013. "One who applies for the PGP programme is taken mostly by the other IIMs," Kapoor said.

In the previous batch of PGP, there wasn't any foreign national, he added. "There must be only a few of them in IIM Ahmedabad and the ones who apply for the course mostly prefer IIM ABC (Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Kolkata)," Kapoor added.

Foreign nationals mean those students who have qualified from foreign universities or boards of higher education, recognised by the Association of Indian Universities. These candidates need to clear the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) or the Common Admission Test

In the previous batch of PGP, there wasn't any foreign national.

ROHIT KAPOOR,
admission chair

(CAT) with a score of 650 or above.

As it is a postgraduate course, the students are required to have completed their bachelor's degree or those in the final year of their bachelor's degree can apply, provided that their final examination including practical examination gets completed by June 30, 2013.

When asked whether the institute has any special provisions for foreign nationals Kapoor said, "There aren't any special provisions for them and they will have to undergo the same admission process like any other student from India."

He also added that increasing the number of foreign nationals on the campus is not on the cards as the institute already has exchange programmes where the students get exposure to other cultures. "There is no need to devise a policy to have more students from other countries," Kapoor said.

IIM-I BEGINS MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

HT Correspondent

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INDORE: Indian Institute of Management, Indore, which has started sending call letters to successful CAT candidates, has now started its flagship mentorship programme iMentor, 2013 under which it will help candidates seeking admission to the institute with preparation for the written ability test and personal interview after students register online. They can seek help from experts at IIM-I.

This would help the students in the next hurdle in the admission process.

With limited number of mentors and limited registrations this service is provided on the first-come, first-served basis.

Mentors will be allotted based on similar profile, work experience, stream and institute of graduation.

The mentor would help the student in clearing all the doubts regarding the admission process.

छात्रों का व्यक्तित्व निखारेंगे आईआईटी के विशेषज्ञ

● अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

लखनऊ। गौतम बुद्ध प्राविधिक विश्वविद्यालय से संबद्ध 600 से अधिक कॉलेजों के लगभग दो लाख छात्रों को पर्सनलिटी मैनेजमेंट एवं डवलपमेंट के गुरु बताए जाएंगे। यह जिम्मेदारी उठायी है आईआईटी मुंबई ने। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय के दक्षता विकास कार्यक्रम के अंतर्गत इस योजना में इस बार उत्तर प्रदेश को तरजीह दी गयी है। आईआईटी के विशेषज्ञ तीन महीनों तक जीबीटीयू केहर कॉलेज में लैंग्वेज ट्यूटोरियल चलाएंगे जिसमें शिक्षक एवं छात्र दोनों शामिल होंगे।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय दक्षता विकास कार्यक्रम के अंतर्गत इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेजों में छात्रों के व्यक्तित्व विकास पर खास तौर पर ध्यान दे रहा है। जिससे

जीबीटीयू के कॉलेजों
में होंगे लैंग्वेज
ट्यूटोरियल

आत्मविश्वास एवं दक्षता के अभाव में युवा अच्छे रोजगार के अवसरों से वंचित न हो। कार्यक्रम के अंतर्गत इस बार फोकस उत्तर प्रदेश पर है। जीबीटीयू के कुलपति प्रो. आरके खांडल का कहना है कि यहां इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेजों में अच्छे छात्र भी बहुत बार भाषा एवं संवाद की अच्छी कला के अभाव में नौकरी से वंचित हो जाते हैं। जबकि उनके अंदर बेहतर करने की पूरी संभावना होती है। लैंग्वेज ट्यूटोरियल के जरिए छात्रों की इंग्लिश स्पीकिंग, राइटिंग एवं कम्यूनिकेशन स्किल को बेहतर बनाने पर काम किया जाएगा।

IIT-MADRAS CONCLAVE

Culturing the start-up DNA

Amrita Nair-Ghaswala

Mumbai, Jan. 28

Amit Kumar Vernekar and Sarah Pearl D'souza are all of 22. Batchmates at the B.V. Bhoonaraddi College of Engineering and Technology at Hubli, Dharwad, both have chosen not to take lucrative job offers to float their own company, Biosyl Technologies, with an initial investment of Rs 1.5 lakh.

Established in July 2012, the start-up offers research equipment for institutions and companies in the bio-tech/life-sciences industry. Their Anaerobic Workstation aims to provide researchers a quick and easy way to culture anaerobes, which are potential producers of several industrial products.

Anaerobic means "without oxygen." Anaerobic bacteria are able to survive and grow in environments devoid of oxygen and could possibly react negatively and may even die in the presence of oxygen.

"I realised most research institutes and educational organisations did not have

an anaerobic station and students couldn't carry out culturing work. Initially, we took up the project as a hobby. From there we scaled it up," said Amit.

ANAEROBIC RESEARCH

Discarding a junior researcher job offer from biotech major Biocoon, Amit, who graduated in June 2012, realised that he wanted to do something on his own. Some years down the line the anaerobic station could well be used at Biocoon's research labs, he says with a chuckle.

"The market has been growing the last several years, but in India, only a few industries and institutions have access to anaerobic chambers. Many pharmaceutical products are not produced due to lack of facility and it being a tedious process to cultivate," added Sarah.

Saying no to a job offer from Navya Biologicals, a research oriented institute, was easy for Sarah, who had a clear intention to "try something out on my own."

Due to unavailability of



Patting the brains: Amit Kumar Vernekar and Sarah Pearl D'souza of Biosyl Technologies.

such equipment, research into anaerobic processes and anaerobic organisms is only explored up to 10-15 per cent, say the couple. With the advent of the duo's cost-effective Anaerobic Workstation, it would aid industries and institutions to carry out further research.

Biosyl Technologies is in its start-up phase, but has already contracted 10 per cent of its first year's projected sales.

The University of Dharwad has shown interest as

have some dental colleges and the pathology department of the Karnataka Medical College.

The company is hoping for Rs 50 lakh in funding to power the growth ahead.

DOSA CRAZE

Eshwar Vikas, who is in the final semester of SRM Engineering College, near Chennai, is least bothered about attending lectures. Eshwar has a bigger task at hand: Selling his table-top automatic, multiple-variant dosa-making machine.

The proud owner of Mukunda Foods, with two other friends as directors, Eshwar is looking to design automated food equipment for use in the retail segment.

"The idea has been germinating in my mind for three years. I worked in a couple of start-ups in Chennai and realised there is no product in the food industry other than a grinder and a microwave," said Eshwar.

Participating and winning a competition at National Institute of Technology, Tiruchi, in March 2012 gave him the required funds to float the

venture. "We have invested Rs 6 lakh. Around Rs 3 lakh came from parents, while the rest was won through competitions," said Eshwar. Another Rs 50 lakh in funding is necessary to move to the next stage.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

On January 21, IIT-Madras held a unique initiative to boost student start-ups. The start-ups of Amit-Sarah, and Eshwar were among the 11 selected among the top 29 promising ventures. These start-ups are to receive professional mentoring from entrepreneurs and expo-

sure to venture capitals (VC) and angel investors.

The two-day national conference hosted by IIT-Madras was a Tata First Dot initiative powered by NEM, India's first national recognition and mentoring platform for student start-ups. Six winners of the Tata First Dot Judge's Choice competition were felicitated as were five winners of Tata First Dot People's Choice competition.

The top 29 ventures were selected from a pool of over 400 entries from across sectors such as education, manufacturing, IT/software, hospitality/travel, re-

tail, pharma/healthcare, and

THE AWARDEES

Awardees included Laundry24, an initiative by Vaibhav Jain and Raghav Singhania, from IIT-Bombay; Wegiant Net Solutions, a cyber security and forensics start-up by Tushendra Kumar Sharma from IIT-Bombay; and The Pilates Studio, which is a simulated altitude-training room by Namrata Purohit, from Jai Hind College, Mumbai.

An online beauty store Fragume.com by Pratik Tiwari from MET's Institute

of Management was among the winners, as were personalised gift store Concept Artz by Mithlesh Jain from MET's; and Around The Globe Holidays, which focuses on organising industrial visits for colleges and tours for corporates by Tejas Wani from the Thakur Institute of Management Studies. Other winners include start-ups dealing in experiential learning tools for educational institutions, mobile app testing platforms, search engines for e-commerce, and online courses.

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'City heat affects weather in distant places'

Waste Heat From Buildings, Cars Can Warm Some Areas And Cool Others, Says Study

Washington: Heat generated by everyday activities in major cities affects temperatures across thousands of kilometres, significantly warming some areas and cooling others, according to a new study.

The 'waste heat' generated from buildings, cars, and other sources in major Northern Hemisphere urban areas causes winter warming across large areas of northern North America and northern Asia, US scientists found. The impact on temperatures may explain a

climate puzzle of sorts: why some areas are experiencing warmer winters than predicted by climate models, researchers said.

The study found that temperatures in some remote areas increase by as much as 1°C. At the same time, the changes to atmospheric circulation caused by waste heat cool areas of Europe by as much as 1°C.

The net effect on global mean temperatures is nearly negligible — an average increase worldwide of just 0.01°C. This is because

the total human-produced waste heat is only about 0.3% of the heat transported across higher latitudes by atmospheric and oceanic circulations.

The waste heat is also changing atmospheric circulation, including jet streams — powerful narrow currents of wind that blow from west to east and north to south in the upper atmosphere, LiveScience reported. In the new study, the researchers looked at "urban heat", produced directly by transportation, heating and

cooling units, and other energy-consuming activities.

"The burning of fossil fuel not only emits greenhouse gases, but also affects temperatures because of heat that escapes from sources like buildings and cars," said study researcher Aixue Hu, of the National Center for Atmospheric Research. "Although much of this waste heat is concentrated in large cities, it can change atmospheric patterns in a way that raises or lowers temperatures across distances," Hu said. PTI



URBAN IMPACT

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p-19

Rewiring brain offers hope to stroke patients

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

London: Similar to what electricians do to deal with an electrical short circuit, doctors in Scotland will, for the first time ever, try to help stroke patients overcome physical disability by helping rewire their brains.

Doctors and scientists from the Institute of Cardiovascular and Medical Sciences at the University of Glasgow are all set to undertake the world's first in-human trial of vagus nerve stimulation in stroke patients. The vagus nerve is the single most important

nerve in the human body — the one responsible for the “mind-body connection.”

Stroke can result in the loss of brain tissue and negatively affect various bodily functions from speech to movement, depending on the location of the stroke. The study will recruit 20 patients who suffered a stroke around six months ago and who have been left with poor arm function as a result.

Each participant will receive three one-hour sessions of intensive physiotherapy each week for six weeks to help improve their arm function.

Half of the group will also receive an implanted a vagus nerve stimulator

(VNS), which connects to the vagus nerve in the neck.

When they are receiving physiotherapy to help improve their arm, the device will stimulate the nerve.

Doctors hope that this will stimulate release of the brain's own chemicals, called neurotransmitters, that will help the brain form new neural connections which might improve participants' ability to use their arm.

If successful, such “rewiring of the brain” can come as a real boon for India which is expected to report

1.6 million cases of stroke annually by 2015.

The Indian

Council of Medical Research says in 2004, there were 9.3 lakh cases of stroke and 6.4 lakh deaths due to stroke in India, most of the people being less than 45 years old.

Similar to a pacemaker, a VNS is a small device implanted under the skin near your collarbone. A wire under the skin connects the device to the vagus nerve in your neck.

The doctor programs the device to produce weak electrical signals that travel along the vagus nerve to the brain at regular intervals. These signals help prevent the electrical bursts in the brain that cause seizures.

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MAJOR TRIAL

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e-paper

Taiwan tycoon launches Asia's Nobel-type prizes

Taipei (Taiwan): A Taiwanese tycoon with business interests in mainland China said on Monday he is funding what local media call Asia's Nobel Prizes for outstanding achievements in natural and social sciences.

Ruentex Group head Samuel Yin announced the establishment of the Tang Prize Foundation with an initial endowment of \$103 million.

The 618-907 AD Tang Dynasty is revered by Chinese for its cultural and scientific achievements.

The prizes will be awarded every other year to international leaders in biopharmaceutical science, sustainable development, the study of China and the rule of law.

Yin said he decided on those fields because the 118-year-old Nobels do not cover

them, and they have intrinsic importance for humanity.

The prizes will be awarded starting next year. Winners will receive \$1.7 million, compared to \$1.2 million that comes with a Nobel prize.

Last year, the 62-year-old tycoon vowed to give away 95% of his assets—estimated to be worth \$3.4 billion—after he dies. Yin is known for his generous donations to educa-



GOOD SAMARITAN: Samuel Yin

tion and charity in China. Taiwan media say over 80,000 Chinese students have received tuition assistance from him. In the 1980s, he co-financed the building of a 250km railway in eastern China.

The Tang Prize winners will be nominated and screened by special committees set up by the Academia Sinica, Taiwan's most prestigious research organization. **AP**