

# Newspaper Clips

## July 14, 2012

HT, Chandigarh

# Entry to IITs: making the new system work

**guestcolumn**  
**madhu singh**

For the last few months, a debate has been raging on whether to lend weightage to Class 12 exams for entrance to the IITs. Our policy-makers have given their decision - 2013 onwards, a Class 12 student would be eligible for IIT entry only if he or she is among the top 20 percentile of students who take the same board exam that year. Moreover, the new IIT selection formula has two tiers. First, the screening through the AIEEE conducted by the CBSE, and the second would be the JEE-Advanced to be held by the IITs. Weightage to Class 12 marks is being given so that the students get back to the school curriculum, and the coaching centre culture is discouraged. But will it really happen?

Let me first discuss the problem areas, and then the recommended solutions.

The first problem relates to the syllabus of Class 11 and 12, and that of the IIT entrance exams. The aim of education is positive culmination of the desired aim. If the exam pattern of IIT does not have minimum percentage of Class 11 and 12 syllabus, then there is no point in giving 40 percent weightage to board marks. Dignity of the school curriculum will be restored, but at the cost of making a child work doubly hard. That is study for boards and also prepare for the IIT. In case the child is not in the top 20% bracket of Class 12 boards, his efforts for preparing for the IIT would go waste.

Do the policy-makers feel that a child can study twice as much without actually getting split? Are we not going to

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burden the student that way?

The second issue is that on the one hand we have introduced continuous comprehensive evaluation (CCE) up to Class 10, with no child being failed, and giving the basic right of matriculation to every student. But on the other hand, as the student steps into Class 11 and moves up to Class 12, there is a sudden increase of academic pressure, which is quite demanding and leaves a

child confused.

Up to Class 10, our changed education system has become very student-friendly. No child can be detained as the benchmark has become so wide and each aspect of the child's personality is appreciated and graded. Thereafter, there is a sudden demand to excel, both in the Class 12 boards and the entrance exams. It may produce a large number of frustrated youth. If you have given crutches to a child to walk for ten years, snatching them away suddenly will only lead to a staggering gait and not a firm walk.

I feel the change should start from Class 9 onwards, and the curriculum should orientate the child to various aspects of basics in science and math, and build up the aptitude. Class 10 can build upon Class 9 syllabi, and Class 11-12 should be com-

pletely exam-oriented and gel with entrance exams. Then, we can achieve our aim of giving dignity to the school curriculum, and also ensure orientation of a child towards IITs.

Inclusion of board marks for IIT entrance is to counter the growing influence of the coaching centres. But our present proposal, once put into practice, may turn out to be a double-edged weapon. First, the students will go for tuitions to be thorough with the board syllabus, which was earlier neglected by their tuition teachers. Second, they will go to the coaching centres for the IIT entrance as the pattern remains the same and these centres have set training modules with them for years.

It is also worrisome to notice the incoherence in perception of different authorities. The IITs do not want their hold to be loos-

ened, the CBSE wants its own share, and the HRD minister wants to revolutionise the education system by bringing in these experimental reforms. Do it, but with one voice. The thought and the idea are noble, but the will to implement has to be unanimous.

To re-emphasise, here are some specific suggestions to make Kapil Sibal's idea of 'One Nation One Test' a success:

- As preparation to win a marathon starts one to two years in advance, similarly, changes in the curriculum to suit the IIT entrance should start from Class 9

- Syllabus of Class 11-12 should at least be 60% same as that of the IIT entrance exam

- To discourage coaching institutes, and to build confidence in students, the curriculum should be well spaced out, streamlined, and goal-oriented

- Empower the teachers at the

senior secondary level by holding workshops to keep them abreast with the latest policies and the expectations

If we do all of this, I feel that the child will emerge the winner. It will also help the poor children who suffer, as they cannot afford coaching centres. The new system will particularly give an impetus to the girls who normally outshine boys in Class 12 exams.

The new AIEEE-JEE combine, with value to school marks, will offer more options to the students, and will also restore the standing of the school system. The school curriculum and the teaching faculty will now be respected more. Above all, hard work and creativity of a child, and the guidance by the teacher, will be rewarded.

*(Writer is teacher at Army Public School, Ambala. Views expressed are personal)*

Economic Times ND 14/07/2012 P-2

**WOONG NITISH** HRD ministry agrees to Nitish's demand for additional university in Motihari, apart from one at Gaya

## 2 Central Varsities for Bihar

**OUR POLITICAL BUREAU**  
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday agreed to set up a central university in Motihari, in addition to the one proposed in Gaya, conceding to Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar's demand. "I have given the approval for establishment of a central university in Motihari and I am happy that the issue has been resolved," said human resource development minister Kapil Sibal.

The timing of the announcement was significant, as it has come just ahead of the presidential election, in which Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United), although part of the opposition National Democratic Alliance, has decided to support United Progressive Alliance candidate Pranab Mukherjee.

Work on the proposed university has been delayed by several months because of differences between the state government and the human resource development ministry over the location of the university. While the Nitish Kumar-led government had been insisting that it should be set up in Motihari, the ministry viewed Gaya as a better location. The ministry had also proposed to set up two campuses, as in the

case of Himachal Pradesh, but Kumar rejected this suggestion.

While giving the go-ahead, the Centre said it would not provide additional funds for the additional university. The ₹240 crore allocated as initial capital for the university will, therefore, have to be divided between the two varsities. The Central Universities Act, 2009, will now have to be amended to enable opening of two central universities in Bihar. The legislation has made an exception only in the case of Jammu & Kashmir.

Congress may have sensed an opportunity in the strained ties between JD(U) and BJP, the main constituent of NDA. Though Kumar has denied a lasting political deal with Congress, there are clear signs of a growing distance between him and BJP.

In an interview to ET last month, Kumar had virtually threatened to walk out of NDA if Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi was chosen as the alliance's prime ministerial can-



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**Kapil Sibal**  
HUMAN RESOURCE  
DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

didate. Although Kumar did not mention any name, the qualifications that he proposed for the NDA's prime ministerial candidate — someone with secular credentials, absolute faith in democratic values and without rough edges in his personality — made it clear that Modi was not acceptable to him.

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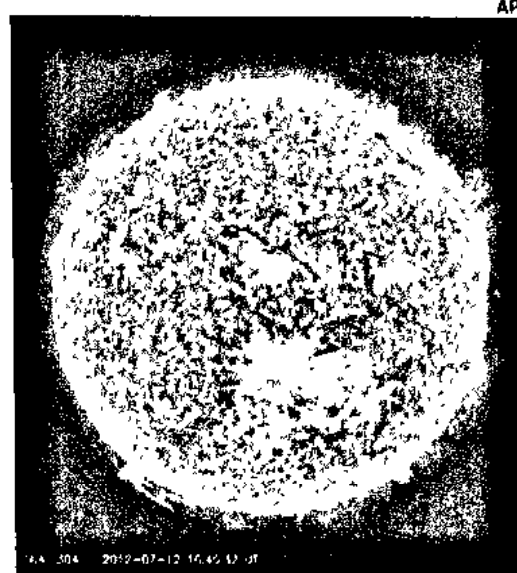
# Solar storm rising, to hit Earth today

**Washington:** A huge solar storm, the second major flare to erupt from the Sun in less than a week, has triggered a coronal mass ejection which is expected to reach the Earth on Saturday, scientists have claimed.

The powerful flare unleashed on Thursday sent a wave of plasma toward Earth at a speed of about 1,400 km per second and it's expected to reach the planet by 5.00GMT (10.20 India time) on Saturday. While it may spark a minor geomagnetic storm, power stations, satellites and astronauts need not worry, the scientists said.

"It erupted from Active Region 1520, which rotated into view on July 6," Nasa officials said in an alert. Active Region 1520 (AR1520) is a giant sunspot facing towards Earth. According to Nasa and the Space Weather Prediction Center (SPWC) the sun storm registered as an X1.4-class solar flare which is more powerful than the X1.1 flare that erupted on July 6 from another giant sunspot known as AR1515, making this the strongest solar storm of the summer so far.

The sunspot region AR1520 could be up to 300,000 km long at its peak. It is about 50% larger than last week's sunspot AR1515, solar astrophysicist Alex Young of Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Centre said. "It's quite extensive," Young said, adding that sunspots the size of AR1520 are normal as the sun nears its peak of its weather cycle in 2013. But while sunspot AR1520 may sound like a solar behemoth, it's actually a modest sunspot, which promises more sun storms to come, Dean Pesnell at Nasa said. P11



**SEEING RED:** A Nasa image shows a solar flare (lower centre) erupting from the Sun on Thursday

## Astronauts get a shield against solar storms

Scientists have claimed to have developed a system which can warn astronauts and air crew about radiation from solar storms nearly three hours in advance, giving them enough time to take protective action. "If you're in a plane flying over the poles, there is an increased radiation exposure comparable to having an extra chest X-ray you weren't planning on," says John Bieber, professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Delaware Bartol Research Institute. "However, if you're an astronaut on the way to the Moon or Mars, it's a big problem. It could kill you," adds Bieber. P11

# It's semester mode from now in Jamia

2 years after PG courses made the switch, UG courses will follow new system from this session

NAVEED IQBAL  
NEW DELHI, JULY 13

**J**AMIA Millia Islamia will adopt the semester system for all its undergraduate courses, beginning Monday. This comes two years after it switched its post-graduate courses to this system.

All admissions in this central university's current session will follow the semester system, while the existing annual mode will be phased out in the next two years.

The university's media coordinator, Simi Malhotra, said Jamia wouldn't face Delhi University-type difficulties in implementing the new system because "it does not have affiliated colleges".

"All under-graduate courses have been redesigned over the past two years. Since our class strength is small, the changeover is likely to be smooth," she said.

She said: "The semester system will be demanding for students and teachers. But this is how it should be."

In the new system, stu-

**"The semester system will be demanding for students and teachers. But this is how it should be"**

SIMI MALHOTRA  
Media coordinator

dents will have six semesters in their three-year graduation programme. Each semester will include 75 per cent marks for external assessment, class presentations and tests and 25 per cent for internal assessment — depending on the need and nature of each course in the nine faculties of the university.

Jamia shifted its post-graduate courses, including some in BTech and Architecture, to the semester mode in 2010. The courses and modules have been revised over the past year after consultations with experts.

Sources said the university gave itself two years to shift the undergraduate courses to semester mode because doing it simultaneously with its post-graduate programme "would have been difficult".



Annual mode will be phased out in 2 years: Univ officials