

**Newspaper Clips**  
**July 17, 2014**

Hindustan Times, ND 17/07/2014

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## IIT-Delhi student commits suicide

**HT Correspondent**

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**PATNA:** A second-year student of IIT, Delhi, allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself in his room on Mandal Path under Shastrinagar Police station on Tuesday.

The incident came to light when his family found Ridham Kumar Singh, 20, hanging from the ceiling fan.

His body was first sent to railway hospital where he was declared 'brought dead'.

The station house office of Shastrinagar police station, Ramesh Singh said that the cause of suicide not known. "No suicide note was recovered from the spot.

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**IIT student kills himself:** A second year student of IIT-Delhi, Ridam Kumar Singh (19), has committed suicide at his residence on Mandal Path in Shastri Nagar police station area. Ridam's father Narendra Kumar Singh, a chief engineer with Indian Railways, was transferred to Patna from Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, four months ago.

Hindustan Times ND 17/07/2014 P-12

# IIT's all about politics, not common sense

Rather than setting up new IITs, the government must focus on improving the quality of existing engineering institutions

**moreisnotmerrier**

**Arnab Ray**

Once election promises went thus: 'If voted to power, I shall dig a tubewell at this spot.'

Now they go: 'If elected, I shall make an IIT here.'

Kapil Sibal gave us a few. Now Smriti Irani, the new HRD minister, has promised us eight more.

Some are understandably miffed at this because of fears that more IITs will dilute the value of their degrees. To them I say fear not. The worst that can happen is that, moving forward, the campuses will become the discriminator and not the institute, in the same way that the University of California is not the brand but Berkeley is.

Some object to the move by saying "but we should be investing in primary education and school meals and all this higher education investment is elitist and useless". That is a regurgitation of the hoary "but we should be investing in poverty-alleviation rather than sending people to space" argument. The problem of primary and higher education has to be tackled simultaneously and one cannot wait for the other.

I am not convinced that opening new IITs is the most efficient use of taxpayer's

money. Of course we know why HRD ministers like opening IITs. People love them. The government dutifully obliges.

But the problem with higher education, particularly in engineering, isn't that we need more graduates. Ask those in industry and they will say that their biggest headache is not quantity but quality. And even when the people say "we want more IITs" what they really mean is "we want more quality engineering education".

For a sarkar whose mantra is 'less government, more governance' I would have expected a solution that relies less on increasing the size of government and a bit more on how to strategically leverage existing assets.

It's not that we don't have engineering colleges. We have a lot of them. Students pay a lot of money to study in these colleges and then, at the end of four years, they often find themselves unemployed or underemployed. That's because anyone with cash and political connections can start an engineering college and all they have to do is invest in advertising and an army of lawyers and if any money remains after all that, they can hire some teachers and have a little bit of lab space. If our sarkar would clearly define stringent academic requirements that an institu-

tion has to meet and then put in place a system of enforcement that has teeth (as opposed to the current AICTE regime), maybe people would have the confidence in the infrastructure that already exists, instead of clamouring for newer IITs, even though it ends up spreading thinner our already thin higher education resources, thus exacerbating the problem rather than solving it.

Of course better regulation is only one part of the solution. If making quality higher education accessible for all is a priority, investments that are being earmarked for new IITs should be channelled towards creating a liberal federal assistance scheme for meritorious students with economic limitations, as well as a quick-start programme that allows high-school students with an aptitude for engineering to have summer-internships at elite institutes like IITs. The options are endless, and almost all of them are better uses of tax rupees than mindlessly opening new IITs.

And yet, we will have more IITs and then some more, because when it comes to politics and common sense, it is politics that wins every time.

*Arnab Ray is the author of May I Hebb Your Attention Pliss and The Mine  
The views expressed by the author are personal*

# IIT, IIM, NIT, central varsity in AP soon: Irani

**NEW DELHI:** Premier institutes such as IIT, an IIM, a NIT, a central university and a petroleum university would be set up in Andhra Pradesh as envisaged in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, HRD minister Smriti Irani on Wednesday said.

Steps would also be taken to set up an Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), a tribal university, an Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), an agriculture

university, a National Institute of Disaster Management and an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) type of institute in the state, she said in the Lok Sabha.

'In Telangana, one horticulture university and one tribal University are proposed to be established as per the Act,' the HRD minister said in a written reply.

'Details of locations and budgetary provisions for these institutions are yet to be finalised,' she said in a written reply.



Smriti Irani

New IITs and IIMs have also been proposed in the general budget in different

states, she said adding two institutions of excellence like the Indian Agricultural Research Institute in Assam and Jharkhand, an agriculture university in Rajasthan and a horticulture university in Haryana are also proposed.

A Jai Prakash Narayan National Centre for Excellence in Humanities in Madhya Pradesh is also proposed to be set up.

Details of locations and budgetary provisions are yet to be finalised, she said.



■ Students at IIM-A. HT PHOTO

## MORE WOMEN JOIN IIMs, IIM-A REGISTERS 30% OCCUPANCY

Vanita Srivastava

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**NEW DELHI:** The percentage of women in the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) has increased, bringing more gender diversity in the classrooms.

IIM Ahmedabad has this year registered a nearly 30% occupancy by women for the PGP programme, the highest ever so far in the history of the institute. This has been a tremendous jump from 11% in 2011, 17% in 2012 and 22% in 2013.

Prof. Ashish Nanda, Director, IIMA said: "This has been possible because of the cumulative effect of some interventions. We reached out to college students and encouraged bright women to apply to IIMA."

IIM Calcutta has witnessed an increase in women percentage for the PGP course from 10% two years back to 25% this year. This has been made possible because for the last two years, IIM C gives additional points for women in the preliminary shortlisting before the interview.

IIM Bangalore has also registered a similar kind of 'women presence' on the campus. This year there are 96 girls out of the total strength of 406. "There has been a good increase in the percentage of girls getting admitted to IIM B over the last few years. We are making all efforts to popularize the PGP programme in women colleges. We are looking at broadening the outreach and increasing the diversity. For this we may take a relook at the admissions criteria," said an official spokesperson of IIM B.

"The key focus this year during the admissions in the PGP programme was to ensure diversity without compromising on merit," Dr. Devi Singh, Director, IIM Lucknow said.

## Govt revamps Bill for digital academic database

SUSHMI DEY

New Delhi, 16 July

The ministry of human resource and development (HRD) is likely to bring back the National Academic Depository Bill to Parliament with some key changes, primarily removing any role of private players or agents in collecting and maintaining the digital records. Instead, the ministry has proposed government funding for the project, while roping in academic institutions as well as public sector banks and post offices as facilitators, an official said.

The Bill, which was initially mooted by the United Progressive Alliance-led government, is aimed at creating a national database of academic awards in an electronic or digital format. The database can be used by students, employers as well as by the government for any sort of verification, authentication, attestation etc, whenever required. Students can also obtain duplicate records easily using this database. According to the plan, all academic institutions, school boards, the Indian Institutes of Technology or IITs, the National Institutes of Technology or NITs and polytechnics from various states will also be linked to the depository.

# Ministry of Science makes open access to research mandatory

Date: Jul 16, 2014

<http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/two-departments-ministry-science-make-open-access-research-mandatory>

Researchers who fail to meet the requirements would not be considered for promotions, fellowships, future grants or appointments



Source: oaindia2013.wordpress.com The Centre has made it mandatory for the researchers who receive funds from the Centre to submit a copy of their final research papers to open access journals or online open access repositories.

Stating this, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), both under the Ministry of Science, recently released a draft of their Open Access policy. The departments have also invited comments and suggestions on the same. The document is open for comments till July 25th.

**OPEN ACCESS INDIA** In the draft, DBT and DST have stated that since this research is funded by the public, it is necessary that the knowledge be made accessible to the public as soon as possible, so that it can be read and built upon. This will promote research culture in India.

In the past, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) have also released similar open access policies that encourage authors to make their work easily available to the public.

Traditional journals such as Nature impose a heavy subscription fee for access to their articles, thus limiting the viewers that these papers can reach. In some cases, authors may also be required to sign over their copyright of the paper to the publisher. Scientists consider it to be a matter of prestige to publish their research in these journals as it is believed that the quality of papers published here is superior to that of papers in open access journals.

But the trend is slowly changing. According to T Vishnu Vardhan of Bengaluru-based Centre for Internet and Society, “For open access journals like PLoS ONE, a scientist or an author has to pay less than one-third of the cost of publishing that he would pay to traditional models. The publishers have for long been holding forth on the editorial quality that their commercial operations assure, which no more holds ground as the open access journals have historically demonstrated same level of efficiency.” He adds that this is primarily because most of the peer reviewing of scientific scholarly publication is done for free.

The policy proposes that a copy of the paper be submitted to the repository within a week of being accepted by a journal. If the journal imposes an embargo, the paper will remain in the repository, but be made open access only once the embargo ends. Journals can thus charge a subscription fee for the duration of the embargo period. However, the policy asks the authors to suggest that the embargo period be no longer than a year.

The departments maintain that while they do expect the authors to publish their work in quality, peer-reviewed journals, the research work done by them should be judged on the basis of the merit of the work and not the journal it is published in.

It also states that authors must submit the deposit ID of the work in question along with the final work, and also while applying for any future funding, or their proposals will not be considered. For authors of research

conducted in institutions that come under the control of DBT/DST which do not carry the deposit ID, the penalty proposed is severe. These authors will not be eligible for promotions, fellowships, future grants or appointments.

The policy also provides a copyright addendum which states that the author retains all rights to reproduce and distribute the article, as long as it is not done for monetary purposes.

It is hoped that this policy will encourage other departments to make open access research mandatory too. Senior scientist at ICAR Research Centre for Eastern Region and a member of Open Access India, Sridhar Gutam says that there is a lack of clarity amongst researchers in India over open access policies. He hopes that now that CSIR, ICAR, DBT and DST have rolled out open access policies, this will encourage discussion on the issue and once this policy is finalized, other departments and institutes of higher education and research will follow suit and introduce their own policies.

## **Students at IISc, IIM Bangalore protest against low research stipends**

<http://www.prepsure.com/current-affairs/students-at-iisc-iim-bangalore-protest-against-low-research-stipends/>

Students at the Indian Institute of Science or IISc Bangalore, and the Indian Institute of Management or IIM Bangalore are increasingly becoming frustrated the research stipends frozen at 2010 levels. Demands for higher stipends are coming from different campuses as students are seeking nationwide connection with their peers to cause a stir.

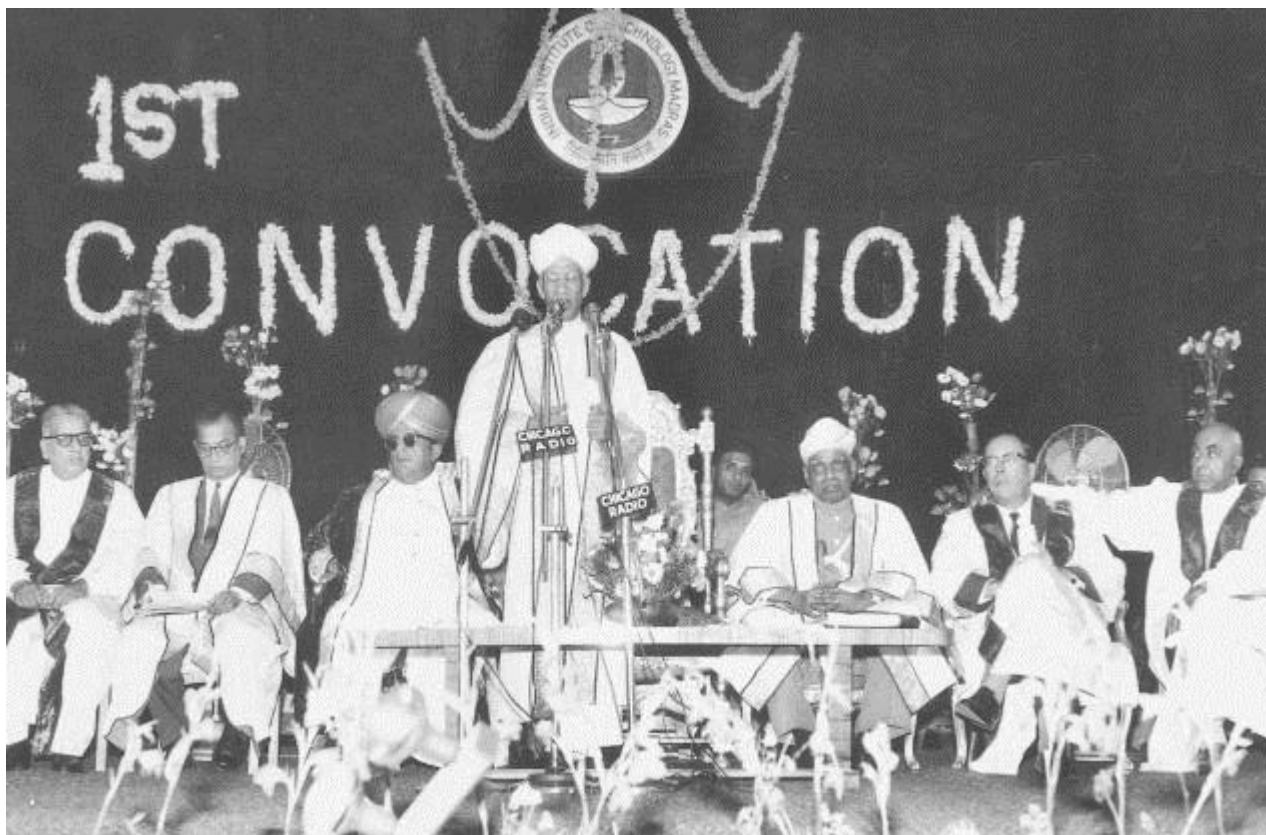
Junior research fellows at IISc get a stipend of Rs 16,000 while senior research fellow get just Rs 18,000. At IIM Bangalore, the stipend for PhD students who live inside the campus is Rs 22,000 while those who stay off campus get Rs 29,000.

At IIM B, stipend has remained the same since 2010.

At the five Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER), PhD students get a threadbare stipend Rs 16,000 from which Rs 3,000 is deducted every six months for availing campus accommodation. Students in BS-MS course gets just Rs 5,000 per month to survive on.

Students emphasize that the stipends are not enough to meet their research expenses, pay study loans and cater to daily needs. Besides at IIM B, there is no accommodation available for research fellows who are married while other IIMs like IIM Ahmedabad and IIM Lucknow do offer such facilities.

## Golden jubilee of IIT-M's first batch of graduands



At the first convocation of IIT-Madras, on July 11, 1964, Dr. S Radhakrishnan, the then President of India, awarded 92 graduates and 15 postgraduates their degrees

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/chen-society/golden-jubilee-of-iitms-first-batch-of-graduands/article6218293.ece>

On the afternoon of July 11, 1964, the air in the bowl-shaped amphitheatre at the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) crackled with nervous energy.

The institute, all of five at the time, had successfully produced its first batch of qualified scientists and engineers. After delivering the convocation address, Dr. S Radhakrishnan the then President of India, awarded 92 graduates and 15 postgraduates their degrees.

At that moment, 20-year-old B.Tech graduate R. Mahadevan had been blissfully unaware of the history he was creating along with his batchmates. Fifty years on, he recalls, “Only when I realise it was none other than the President of the country addressing us, it strikes me we were part of something special.”

Special they were, and how. With the institute having been born out of an Indo–German alliance in 1959, much of the faculty in the initial years comprised the best of German minds.

Mahadevan nostalgically recounts, “Professor Coch who taught physics was a brilliant man, but to decipher his accented English was a feat in itself. Ts were often garbled with S — thus to ‘think’ became to ‘sink’.”

Surprise exams, open book tests and intensive workshop sessions were typical of the German training the institute swore by. The engineering degree lasted five years, instead of the four-year period that is the norm now.

Apart from the emphasis on the cerebral, students also shared their space with a fair bit of wildlife. According to S. Srinivasan, an alumnus of the same batch, deer, mongoose and snakes were easier to spot than fellow human beings. Women were an even more elusive sight on the campus. It was only around 1963 women were inducted into the institute.

The first year when the structures were still being constructed, classes were conducted in the A.C. college of Technology (now in the premises of Guindy Engineering College).

Mahadevan recounts, “We were put up in the old women’s hostel in Saidapet. Every day, we would pay 2 annas to the boatman, to cross the Adyar river to get to class.”

A lot has changed since the first batch of IIT-M graduated. This and much more will be topics of conversation, come December, when the first batch will reunite in the golden jubilee celebrations of the prestigious institute.

Jul 17 2014 : The Times of India (Delhi)

## **Jamia headed for academic reform**

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New Delhi

### **Ahmad Promises Choice-Based Credit System, Bats For Holding Student Polls**

Unlike his predecessor whose focus had been on administrative reform, the new vice-chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, Prof. Talat Ahmad, has made academic reforms his priority. Upon completion of one month as vice-chancellor, Ahmad spelled out his agenda for the next five years—from holding a student union election to setting up a medical college and hospital as well as a choicebased credit system for interdisciplinary studies. The university began its new academic session on Wednesday.

Drawing the roadmap for Jamia’s progress under his stewardship, Ahmad made it clear that there will be no room for complacency. “My vision is to put Jamia on the national map in environmental studies, earth sciences and glacial studies, among other areas.” With

renewed thrust on research, the VC said Jamia has also applied for the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

Some major academic reforms and initiatives Ahmad

has been planning include setting up a medical college and hospital, starting a new school on earth atmosphere and planetary sciences and putting in place a choice-based credit system. “The Supreme Court has granted us a little over 114 bigha of prime land in Jamia’s vicinity. One of our proposals for that area is setting up a hospital and medical college.

World over, universities have choice-based credit systems. I also propose to put one in place within two years to enable students to move to diverse disci

plines under the interdisciplinary rubric. We will start this at the postgraduate level.“


Ahmad is also planning collaboration with Jawaharlal Nehru University , Delhi University and Indian Institute of Technology for interdisciplinary studies and co-supervisor facilities for masters and PhD scholars. “There is a good possibility of other universities in Delhi like DU, JNU and IIT sharing expertise and resources.

There can even be exchange programmes in which students can do a course of their interest in the university which is known for that subject and earn credits,” said Ahmad. He also has a mega-plan of bringing library resources from these central universities under one platform and offering their remote access to students and teachers.



It has been over eight years since Jamia had a students' union. Ahmad is in favour of a students' union. "We have to work that out since the matter is sub-judice. I will allow formation of students' union this year in some form. There could be 50% female representation in the union. But beyond that, I can't say anything else."

## VC'S BIG IDEAS FOR FUTURE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Choice-based credit system in two years which will allow PG students to pick and choose courses</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased collaboration with foreign institutions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Co-supervisor for masters and PhD thesis from other universities like JNU, DU</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ School on earth atmosphere and planetary sciences</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sharing of library resources among universities with remote access facility</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Gender parity in admissions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Medical college and 300-bed hospital</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Participation in world university rankings</li> <li>➤ Resumption of students' union elections</li> <li>➤ Girls polytechnic and a new girls hostel for Jamia schools</li> </ul>

**The new VC is also planning to collaborate with JNU, DU and IIT for interdisciplinary studies**

## IIT-Jodhpur offers Rs 25 lakh to faculty

[Ajay Parmar](#), TNN | Jul 17, 2014, 02.31 AM IST

JODHPUR: Faced with an acute shortage of faculty, the IIT-Jodhpur has launched an all-out effort to attract talent to its campus. It has announced a head start of Rs 25 lakh per annum including sops and incentives to new faculty.

"We are offering a start up grant of Rs 25 lakh to every faculty member joining the IIT, which is highest among all the institutions around," said the chairman of the board of governors, Goverdhan Mehta. He was in Jodhpur to attend the second convocation of the institution.

Against a sanctioned posts of 90 faculty members, IIT-Jodhpur was hardly been able to cross the mark of 50. While admitting that there was high attrition among the faculty, Mehta said there were various reasons for it, most of which the institution had no control over.

"Still we are trying our best to fill all the vacant posts and that too without compromising on the quality of the candidate," he said. In the past two years, nearly two dozen teachers had quit the institution in search of better opportunities elsewhere and also due to lack of facilities like connectivity, education and medical facilities in Jodhpur, which is a Tier II city.

It was because of these reasons, despite the institution's best efforts, some faculty members did not turn up. "In face of this reality, we have not allowed this crunch to affect the quality of education here. We have been trying hard to address

this issue by arranging visiting faculties and have lately also succeeded in attracting the attention of those who are settled abroad by our vision and work," said director of IIT, CVR Murthi.

IIT-Jodhpur currently does not have any professor and the institution has been striving hard to get these higher level academic positions filled so as to avoid any impact on its academics as well as reputation. The IIT, however, is in immediate need of professors, associate professors and assistant professors in computer science & engineering, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering.

This fresh recruitment offer includes reimbursement of relocation expenses of up to Rs 1.5 lakh, a cumulative professor development allowance of Rs 3 lakh, research initiation grant of up to Rs 50 lakh besides children education allowance up to Class XII, reimbursement of phone expenses up to Rs 1,500 per month etc.

## **Jairam Ramesh to join TISS, become its next director?**

Mumbai Mirror | Jul 17, 2014, 12.01 PM IST

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Jairam-Ramesh-to-join-TISS-become-its-next-director/articleshow/38533782.cms>

Former Union minister Jairam Ramesh, who turned 60 this April, may be heading back to the city where he went to college in the 1970s.

Buzz in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences is that Ramesh, who was spotted on campus two weeks ago, may soon join the institute as one of the Tata chair professors. Though Ramesh and TISS were not available for comment, sources said he will most likely start off as a visiting professor emeritus for environment.

An alumnus of IIT Bombay, Ramesh has in the past often spoken of his fondness for the city. Few know that he is a quizzier of the highest quality and partnered his UPA colleague and Infosys founder Nandan Nilekani in the 1975 Mood Indigo festival during their student days.

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Though he is still a Rajya Sabha member, Ramesh, who will complete 10 years in the upper house, has in the past advocated a maximum of two terms for Rajya Sabha MPs. He is nearing the completion of his own second term.

Sources added the TISS administration is also looking at the possibility of Ramesh as a future director of the institute. In fact, the stage is all set for TISS to get a new director.

Incumbent S Parasuraman has been at the helm of affairs since 2004 and has completed two full terms. There were rumours that he would leave last year. Sources said Parasuram, who still has a year left in his tenure, will now stay on and "help in the transition period as the new director takes charge."

Considering how often the outspoken Ramesh has courted controversy during his time in the government, TISS is a beat that the city's journalists will now keep a close tab on. Welcome professor!

## हिंदी नहीं आने से परेशान हैं आईआईटी बंबई के छात्र

अंग्रेजी न आने के कारण परेशानी का सामना करना तो तमाम बार सुनने में आता है लेकिन अगर हिंदी भाषा न आने के कारण परेशानी आए तो थोड़ा हैरानी जरूर होती है। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी-बंबई) के कई छात्रों के लिए हिन्दी न आना परेशानी बन गया है।

यह खुलासा यहीं के छात्रों द्वारा कराए गए एक सत्रे में हुआ है। सत्रे के मुताबिक दक्षिण भारत से आए छात्रों को हिंदी न आने के कारण कई कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। इस कारण वह अन्य छात्रों के साथ घुलने-मिलने में दिक्कत महसूस करते हैं। धीरे-धीरे वह कक्षा और हॉस्टल में अपना अलग गुप बनाकर रहते हैं। आईआईटी-बी के छह हजार छात्रों के बीच हुए एक सत्रे में पाया गया है कि 83 फीसदी छात्र अच्छी हिंदी बोलते हैं जबकि शेष 17 फीसदी छात्रों को हिंदी बोलने और समझने में दिक्कत होती है।

आईआईटी-बी के इनहाउस न्यूजपेपर 'इनसाइट' में 'वी डॉट नीड नो सेग्रेशन' शीर्षक से प्रकाशित इस सर्वे में सामने आया है कि जो छात्र हिन्दी नहीं बोल पा रहे हैं उनमें से 89 फीसदी छात्र दक्षिण भारतीय हैं। इसमें 78 फीसदी छात्र तेलुगू बोलते हैं। इन छात्रों को हिंदी बोलने और समझने में दिक्कत होती है। ऐसे में कक्षा के बाहर वह ज्यादा लोगों से बातचीत नहीं कर पाते हैं।

हिंदी न आने के कारण हो जाते हैं अलग-थलग

यहां पढ़ने वाले वारंगल के एक छात्र कहते हैं कि 'हिंदी वहां के लोगों के लिए एलियन भाषा है। यानी यह भाषा न हम बोल सकते हैं, न ही लिख, पढ़ और समझ सकते हैं।' आगे वह कहते हैं कि हिंदी उनके लोगों के लिए तीसरी भाषा है। वहां के लोग या तो इंग्लिश में पढ़ते हैं या वहां के स्थानीय भाषा में। कक्षा के बाहर मेस हो या हॉस्टल या खेल का मैदान सभी जगह छात्र हिंदी में ही बात करते हैं। इससे वह खुद को अलग-थलग महसूस करते हैं।

कमजोर इंग्लिश से पढ़ाई में पिछड़ रहे हिंदी वाले

सर्वे के अनुसार कक्षा के बाहर भले ही हिंदी भाषा को प्राथमिकता दी जाती है, मगर जिन छात्रों की इंग्लिश भाषा पर मजबूत पकड़ नहीं होती वह परीक्षा में अच्छे अंक नहीं ला पाते हैं। यहां तक कि जेईई मेन हिंदी में लिखकर उत्तीर्ण करने वाले छात्रों को भी कक्षा में प्रेजेंटेशन देते समय या साक्षात्कार के समय काफी दिक्कतों का सामना करना पड़ता है।

आरक्षित श्रेणी के छात्रों को होती है ज्यादा दिक्कत

आरक्षित श्रेणी के छात्रों का परिणाम उम्मीद के मुताबिक नहीं होता। वह पूरी साल अंग्रेजी को लेकर संघर्ष करते रहते हैं। यहीं कारण है कि वह भी परीक्षा में उतने अच्छे अंक नहीं ला पाते जितना उनसे उम्मीद की जाती है। इसका सीधा असर प्लेसमेंट पर भी पड़ता है।

सर्वे के अनुसार

83 फीसदी छात्र अच्छी हिंदी बोलते हैं आईआईटी-बी में

17 फीसदी छात्रों को हिंदी बोलने और समझने में होती है दिक्कत

छह हजार लोगों पर किया गया सर्वे

Indian Express ND 17/07/2014 P-8

# Institutes may have to take permission before study tours

RAGHVENDRA RAO

NEW DELHI, JULY 16

SENDING a “written communication” to the district magistrate or concerned authorities before undertaking a study tour to places like dams, power plants or sea-bridges could soon become mandatory for educational institutions. The suggestion, currently being considered by the Human Resource Development Ministry, is a fallout of the June 8 accident in which 24 engineering students from Hyderabad were washed away in Beas river in Himachal Pradesh’s Mandi district.

The sudden release of wa-

## MANDI TRAGEDY

ter from Larji hydropower project dam and the inability of the students to hear the hooters were found to be the two main reason behind the tragedy. Subsequently, there was a discussion on the need to keep the authorities in the loop and providing them with prior information whenever a group of students visits vital installations so they are can prevent accidents or deal with them.

While there are no provisions in either the UGC or the AICTE Acts regarding safety of students on study tours, the HRD minister has had a com-

bined meeting of the AICTE and the UGC, which will submit recommendations to the ministry about measures the institutions can take.

“One of the recommendations is that if the tour is undertaken to public places, dams, cities, power plants, sea bridges, a written communication must be made to the district magistrate or concerned authorities,” Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani told the Lok Sabha Wednesday.

The LS was also informed the Himachal Pradesh High Court had ordered payment of Rs 5 lakh as ex-gratia “to be borne equally by the institute and the electricity board”.

## BUSINESS EDUCATION

# Symbiosis to set up ₹300-cr health sciences park

To tie up with Belgian govt for it and invite companies to set up R&D centres

SHIVANI SHINDE NADHE  
Pune, 16 July

After marking its presence in general education, Pune-based Symbiosis International University is now planning to set up a health sciences and technology park with an investment of ₹300 crore. The project will be completed in five years.

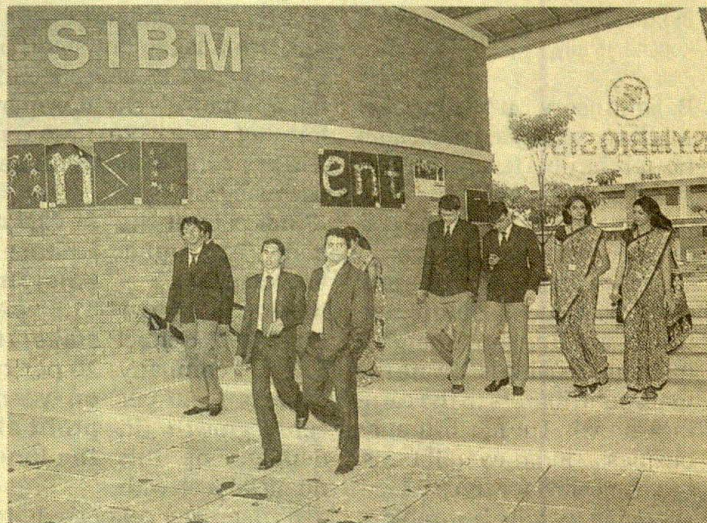
The university will seek help from the Belgian government and set up the park on the lines of the Science Park of Wallonia (Spow) in Belgium. The university would soon sign a memorandum of understanding.

"They have plans to set up two such parks, one each in India and China. In India, they are partnering with us. They will be the knowledge partner in this project," said Vidya Yeravdekar, principal director at Symbiosis.

Symbiosis Health Science and Technology Park will focus on collaboration between R&D centres of corporates, and engineering and technical institutes. The park will also have a charitable hospital with a 200-bed capacity.

The university plans to fund the project through internal sources. It might also take assistance from corporates.

"This is one of the most



The university will seek help from the Belgium government and set up the park on the lines of the Science Park of Wallonia in Belgium

BS PHOTO

ambitious programmes of the University. We do have an engineering school. This park will for the first time see an institute that will bring health sciences and engineering together. We will also invite corporates to set up their R&D (research and development) centres here, where students can be part of the R&D aspect right from their campus days," said Yeravdekar.

The university will fund the project internally as the plan

has been in the works for the past three-to-four years. "We have earmarked for these funds as we have been discussing this for the past three-four years and waiting for environmental clearance. We might not be required to put in the total amount, since many corporates might want to fund their own centres setup," Yeravdekar added.

In terms of the set-up, the university, which already has

engineering, bio-tech and a health science school, will add a charitable hospital. The health science school will focus on areas such as stem cell research, immunology, and vaccinology while the engineering school will focus on radio science.

The university said the initial discussions with companies have been encouraging. "In India R&D and academics, have been two separate aspects. In our interaction with corporates, I have found that they have started thinking that R&D should not be in isolation but should happen at campuses, which is a global norm," said Yeravdekar.

For access to faculty, the park, R&D centres and Spow will work together. Along with the existing faculty at Symbiosis, which will get access to participate in live research projects, researchers at the R&D centres will also be tapped for lectures. The university will also look at visiting faculty from Spow.

Symbiosis comprises of 43 institutes imparting training in diverse disciplines spread over nine campuses in Pune, Noida, Bangalore and Nashik. Ranked among the top 200 universities in India, it has students who hail from all states of India, as well as 75 different countries.

# To keep the river alive

The Namami Ganga initiative must build on what has been achieved. And go beyond involving organisations of the ruling dispensation's extended ideological brotherhood

JAIRAM RAMESH

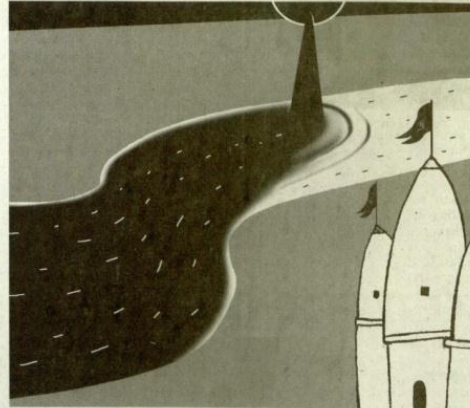


THE FINANCE minister announced the high-profile "Namami Ganga" project in his recent budget speech with an allocation of Rs 2,037 crore, but no other details. But what is really new about it, and is the hype justified? Rajiv Gandhi, in his very first address to the nation as prime minister on January 6, 1985, announced a major programme to clean the Ganga. In February 2009, Manmohan Singh declared the Ganga our national river and announced the establishment of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) under his chairmanship, comprising the chief ministers of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal and well-known activists and professionals. The NGRBA is supported by similar authorities in the basin states, chaired by the respective chief ministers.

The NGRBA was created after a detailed evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of earlier Ganga action plans (GAP), on which some Rs 900 crore has been spent. They were successful in preventing further deteri-

oration in water quality and, in fact, in improving it in some places, despite ever increasing population and other pressures. The GAPs ensured that dissolved oxygen was largely within acceptable limits. But variation in biochemical oxygen demand values was much higher as compared to dissolved oxygen and faecal coliform counts frequently exceeded stipulated limits, particularly at Kannauj, Kanpur, Allahabad and Varanasi.

Between February 2009 and March 2014, the NGRBA implemented Mission Clean Ganga, whose main objective was to ensure that by 2020, no untreated municipal sewage or industrial effluents would be let into the river. The mission had two anchors — *nirmal dhara* (clean flow) and *aviral dhara* (minimum continuous flow). To fulfil both goals, the NGRBA took five far-reaching decisions. First, it sanctioned 81 projects worth Rs 6,400 crore for sewage control and treatment in Uttar Pradesh (Rs 2,700 crore), Bihar (Rs 1,400 crore), West Bengal (Rs 1,200 crore), Uttarakhand (Rs 250 crore) and Jharkhand (Rs 100 crore). This was to create a sewer network of over 3,600 km and a sewage treatment capacity of over 700 million litres per day. A special Rs 500 crore project had been sanctioned for Varanasi alone. Second, it got a consortium of IITs led by IIT-Kanpur to prepare a comprehensive Ganga River Basin Management Plan along with enabling legislation to give effect to the provisions of the plan. Third, it declared the Gangetic Dolphin as the national



CR SAGIUMAR

aquatic animal to make it the symbol of the restoration of the cleanliness of the river. Fourth, notices were issued by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for the first time to a number of polluting industries, particularly in the critically polluted 730 km stretch from Kannauj to Varanasi so as to signal the government's firm determination to enforce pollution control standards. Fifth, three hydel projects — Loharinagar, Pala, Pala Maneri and Bhaironghati — on the upper reaches of the Bhagirathi

were abandoned on ecological considerations and the 100 km-long Gaumukh to Uttarkashi stretch declared as a regulated eco-sensitive zone.

Around 70-75 per cent of the pollution in the Ganga is caused by the discharge of untreated municipal sewage from towns and cities along it. That is why the NGRBA gave the highest priority to sewage treatment infrastructure based on future population growth, and had also announced that 70 per cent of the operation and maintenance costs of

A NUMBER of other historic and culturally significant rivers across the country, like the Yamuna and the Sutlej, also demand our attention.

the infrastructure created would be funded by the Centre. But going beyond sewage control, effluent treatment plants and control of industrial pollution, catchment area treatment, protection of flood plains and preventing runoff of non-biodegradable pesticides from agricultural fields are also equally important activities. An integrated water quality monitoring system will help greatly. The NGRBA had approved a network comprising 113 automatic stations and another 134 manual stations at critical locations along the main 2,500 km length of the river that would provide state-of-the-art, real-time pictures of water quality through data on 20 critical parameters.

Namami Ganga must go beyond involving organisations belonging to the extended ideological brotherhood of the present ruling dispensation in New Delhi. With elections in UP just two years away, perhaps some partisan politics is at play here. That would be most unfortunate. The initiative must consolidate what has been accomplished so far, since much work has already been done. The IIT consortium, for example, has already submitted 37 re-

ports, and it has given the country the first basin-wide approach to river management, a marked departure from the earlier city-centred approach. Seven hundred and sixty four grossly polluting industries have already been identified and 704 of them have actually been inspected and issued suitable directions. There is always political backlash when such directions are issued, but if we are serious about cleaning the Ganga, then Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 must be invoked and enforced ruthlessly. For this to be a reality, the five state pollution control boards have to work in tandem with the CPCB. The eco-sensitive zone from Gaumukh to Uttarkashi was finally notified in December 2012 in the teeth of opposition from all political parties in Uttarakhand.

A number of other historic and culturally significant rivers across the country, like the Yamuna and the Sutlej, also demand our attention. The Musi river in Hyderabad and the Mula-Mutha river in Pune, for instance, have become sewers. Work had been initiated as part of the National River Conservation Programme in the ministry of environment and forests, with the Yamuna getting special focus under the Yamuna Action Plan. All these initiatives must now move into higher gear even as Namami Ganga gathers momentum.

The writer, a Congress MP in the Rajya Sabha, was Union minister of environment and forests from May 2009 to July 2011

# Google's smart lens to detect diabetes

## Tech Co To Work With Novartis To Make Lens That Measures Users' Sugar Levels

Chidanand.Rajghatta@timesgroup.com

Washington: Beauty might lie in the eye of the beholder, but if Google has its way, so will medical diagnostics. In the first step towards designing miniature technology products that can monitor body functions Google has joined forces with pharmaceutical giant Novartis to advance the Silicon Valley giant's work on "smart" contact lenses that can measure the wearers' blood sugar levels, a basic for people with diabetes.

The move comes just a day after one of the principals behind the technology, Babak Parviz, an Iranian-American who also pioneered the Google Glass, left the



EYE DIAGNOSIS

company to join Amazon. But Google pressed ahead with the tie-up with Swiss multinational, which is at the centre of a drug spat with India. The two compa-

nies said Novartis's Alcon eye-care division would licence and commercialize "smart lens" technology designed by Google(x), a development team at the search engine giant. The announcement is the latest in a trend of tech companies getting into the health and fitness domain. Google already has a platform called Google Fit to measure health metrics such as sleep and exercise on devices running on its android platform headed by the Indian-American Sundar Pichai. Apple has a similar platform called HealthKit.

But Google Smart Lens is, literally, visionary technology to address diabetes. It is particularly relevant to India, which already has 65 million diabetics (dis-

missively called "sugar disease"), a figure that is expected to top a staggering 100 million by 2030.

In a note they published earlier this year, Babak Parviz and Brian Otis, the project co-founders, explained the reasoning and technology behind the smart lens, pointing to the difficulties in measuring blood sugar through traditional methods such as wearing glucose monitors, which involves disruptive and painful process of pricking the figure and drawing blood.

Since scientists had developed ways to measure glucose through body fluids such as tears, they figured that miniature electronics — including chips and sensors so small they look like

bits of glitter, and an antenna thinner than a human hair — might be a way to crack the mystery of tear glucose and measure it with greater accuracy. The result: "smart lens" that contains a miniaturized glucose sensor and a tiny wireless chip (to transmit information) that are embedded between two layers of soft contact lens material.

Early prototypes they tested could generate a reading once per second. They said they were also investigating the potential for this to serve as an early warning for the wearer, including exploring integrating tiny LED lights that could light up to indicate that glucose levels have crossed above or below certain thresholds.

Deccan Herald, ND 17/07/2014P-12

## New clothing

# Nasa sends odour-resistant dress for astronauts

**WASHINGTON:** Nasa has sent an Antares rocket to the International Space Station (ISS) carrying a Cygnus spacecraft stuffed with supplies for astronauts, including odour-resistant exercise clothing.

The new experiment with anti-microbial dress may reduce to a considerable extent the amount of clothing needed.

In this way, Nasa may send some other essential items for space purposes.

The new clothing is both

bacteria and odour-resistant, which should be of great help to astronauts who exercise for two hours every day, *Mashable* reported.

Nasa said the commercial cargo was likely to reach the ISS on Wednesday, and it will be captured by ISS astronauts using the orbiting lab's robotic arm and then installed on the earth-facing port of the station's Harmony module.

Cygnus is carrying almost 3,300 pounds (around 1,500 kg) of supplies to the ISS to expand the research capabili-

ty of the Expedition 40 crew.

Among the research investigations aboard Cygnus are a flock of earth-imaging nanosatellites, hardware to enable a trio of free-flying robots to perform 3-D mapping inside the station and a host of student experiments.

Cygnus is planned to remain attached to the ISS for about 30 days before departing with 1.3 tonnes of disposable cargo for a destructive reentry over the Pacific Ocean approximately five days later.

**Agencies**

# Civil services aspirants get Govt breather

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday asked the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to postpone the Civil Service Aptitude Test (CSAT) scheduled for August 24. It also assured the agitating civil services aspirants that it would look into their demands of scrapping CSAT sympathetically, following which scores of candidates protesting against the existing pattern of civil services examination ended their indefinite fast.

Amid concerns expressed by the Parliamentarians on Wednesday in the Lok Sabha, the Centre also assured that the three-member committee set up to look into the issue in March this year will be directed to expedite a report on the matter.

"The three-member committee was set up on March 12 this year before our Government took over. But its report is yet to come and we have instructed this committee to expedite it. We have full sympathy with their cause and there should be no discrimination on the basis of language. I appeal to the students not to put themselves in physical or mental stress," Minister of State for Personnel and Training Jitendra Singh said in Lok Sabha.

The Government said the next course of action would be decided depending on the contents of the report of the committee. Singh said the Government is already seized of the issue and has taken it up "very seriously and in a sensitive manner".

The fast undertaken by the aspirants formally ended after BJP MP Manoj Tiwari and other leaders offered fruit juice to

**After postponing date of the aptitude test, Centre assured aspirants that their demands of scrapping CSAT would be looked into**

striking students. The students expressed their gratitude and thanked Union Minister Jitendra Singh for his concern about their demands.

The civil services examination is conducted by the UPSC in three stages--preliminary, main, and interview--to choose candidates for elite IAS, IFS and IPS among others. There are two compulsory papers of 200 marks each in the preliminary examination known as CSAT-I and CSAT-II. The CSAT-II paper carries questions on comprehension, interpersonal skills including communication skills, logical reasoning and analytical ability, decision making and problem solving, general mental ability, basic numeracy, and English language comprehension skills (of Class X level).

The students had been holding prolonged protests and resorting to hunger strike for several weeks demanding scrapping of CSAT saying the exam pattern was putting Hindi and regional language aspirants at a disadvantage. Congress, RJD and Samajwadi Party members trooped into the Well and raised slogans against "discrimination" by UPSC against candidates opting for Hindi and regional languages as medium for the examination.



Students during a protest against introduction of CSAT by the UPSC in New Delhi file photo