

Newspaper Clips

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Pioneer ND 20/07/2013 P-5

Tainted dean to be IIT-KGP's director?

Alumni body seeks Partha's elevation

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

In a move raising many eyebrows, the IIT-Kharagpur Alumni Association, acting as pressure group, on Friday demanded that the institute's Dean Prof Partha Pratim Chakraborty be made the Director. This, despite the fact that Chakraborty has been indicted by the CBI in the CoalNet scam and the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has directed the HRD Ministry and the institute to initiate penalty proceedings against him. Chakraborty was appointed as Director, selected by former HRD Minister Kapil Sibal but his appointment is now pending CVC's clearance.

Expressing dismay over the delay in Chakraborty's appointment, HCL co-founder and alumnus Arjun Malhotra said that IIT-KGP Board of Governors has already 'exonerated' him of any wrongdoing.

Asked how the Board could give a clean chit to Chakraborty when the CVC itself has sought a factual report on the business 'dealings' of the institute with IIT-KGP BoG Chairman and HCL founder Shiv Nadar, Malhotra said even he could file an anonymous complaint against someone and wondered if the CVC has the time to take cognizance of anonymous complaints.

"My only point of consideration is that with no permanent Director, all the activities have stalled in the campus which is



Chakraborty has been indicted by the CBI in the CoalNet scam and the CVC has directed the HRD Ministry and the institute to initiate penalty proceedings against him

affecting the Vision Document to bring IIT-KGP in the top 20 institutes of the world. This bureaucratic hassle is unwarranted," Malhotra told *The Pioneer* separately.

A section of IIT-KGP alumni association convened a Press meet supporting the selection of Chakraborty as the institute's director by latest by July 27, 2013.

This is apparently a first of a kind movement in the country that has brought Faculty-Alumni-Students-Corporates together for a shared cause. On Wednesday, over 400 faculty members and a large number of alumni went on a token hunger-strike demanding immediate appointment of a Director and called for nationwide protests and silent marches on Saturday in Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata.

Chakraborty has been in controversy ever since his name cropped in the scam over allegations of wrongdoing, involving computerisation of Coal India. The CAG too in 2009-10 rapped IIT in the CoalNet project.

Business Line ND 20/07/2013 P-15

IIT Kharagpur stir reaches Delhi

Our Bureau

New Delhi, July 19

Agitating faculty members, alumni and students of IIT-Kharagpur on Friday brought their demand for appointment of a regular director to Delhi.

At a press conference here, the alumni, staff and students of the 62-year-old institution said they planned to organise protests against the situation on Saturday in Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata. Over 400 of them sat on hunger strike in the campus premises on July 17.

The agitating staff said IIT Kharagpur had been without a head for over a year now, even though a selection committee constituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) had selected Partha Pratim Chakrabarti for the position in 2012.

MANDATORY CLEARANCE

Chakrabarti, a President's Gold medallist, has not been allowed to assume office without the mandatory clearance from the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). Chakrabarti, along with two other senior professors of the institution, is suspected to be involved in what has come to be known as the coalnet scam.

The coalnet project was awarded to IIT Kharagpur by Coal India Ltd in 2001 for developing Coalnet — a software to facilitate information sharing between the Ministry of Coal, Coal India Ltd and its subsidiary.

However, the project suffered multiple delays, rising



Protest: Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur alumni Arjun Malhotra (right) and B.K. Syngal address a press conference in New Delhi on Friday. — Kamal Narang

costs and also some suspected irregularities. The Central Bureau of Investigation had found that three professors had manipulated records.

However, members of the alumni, staff and students are backing Chakrabarti and have sought immediate clearance from the CVC. They claimed that the IIT Kharagpur Board of Governors, which cleared him of any wrong-doing, was a competent authority to make such as assessment.

HRD STEPS

On Thursday, HRD Minister Pallam Raju had said that all steps would be taken to ensure that normalcy returned soon in the campus.

He told reporters that the HRD Ministry was waiting for a report from the CVC on

the selected director. Raju is slated to visit to the campus on July 27 to attend the convocation function, and sources in the Ministry said that a director was expected to be in place before that.

The post of the director fell vacant on June 30, 2012, and there has been no permanent appointment to the post as yet.

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Punjab Kesari ND 20/07/2013 P-11

आईआईटी खडगपुर की साख पर लगा बट्टा

नई दिल्ली, (वार्ता): भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) खडगपुर, एलुमिनी एसोसिएशन ने कहा है कि पिछले एक साल से निदेशक के बगैर इस संस्थान को चलाए जाने से आईआईटी की साख पर बट्टा लग रहा है। इसलिए केन्द्रीय सतर्कता आयोग को शीघ्र ही कार्रवाई कर इस मामले को तत्काल निपटाना चाहिए। एलुमिनी एसोसिएशन ने सीवीसी के इस टालू रवैये के विरोध में देश के तीन महानगरों दिल्ली, कोलकाता तथा बंगलूर में शांति जुलूस निकालने का फैसला किया है और इस मामले में राष्ट्रपति से हस्तक्षेप करने का

अनुरोध करने का भी सोचा है। दो दिन पहले आईआईटी खडगपुर के छात्रों एवं शिक्षकों ने भी इस मुद्दे पर भूख-हड़ताल भी की थी। एलुमिनी एसोसिएशन के अर्जुन मल्होत्रा ने कहा है कि पिछले साल जुलाई में राष्ट्रपति पदक से सम्मानित प्रख्यात शिक्षाविद प्रो. पी.पी. चक्रवर्ती को आईआईटी खडगपुर के निदेशक पद पर नियुक्त किया गया था किन्तु सीवीसी ने अभी तक उनके खिलाफ जांच के मामले को निबटाया नहीं है जबकि नियमतः दो महीने के भीतर उसे अपनी रिपोर्ट दे देनी चाहिए।

SC RULING ON COMMON MEDICAL TEST

Experts: SC order to lead to reforms

COURT VS COUNCIL Students, parents angry over constant changes in rules

Apoorva Puranik

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MUMBAI: The Supreme Court's decision to quash the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance test (NEET) examinations for both undergraduate and postgraduate medical admissions came after over 115 petitions challenged its viability and discrepancies in various courts across the country.

A day later, academicians looked at the order with caution. The decision, experts said, has paved the way for reforms in medical education. "Scrapping the NEET for undergraduate admissions makes for a good decision, since boards across the country need to be standardised before such a centralised examination is taken up," said Dr Geeta Niyogi, Dean, KJ Somaiya Medical College and Research Centre, Mumbai.

But Dr Niyogi felt the NEET examination for postgraduate admissions should have been retained, as it would have ensured equal opportunity.

"Incidentally, NEET was never meant to be an entrance test but only an eligibility exami-

NEET PICKING



■ Medical college students

HT FILE PHOTO

- In 2010, the Medical Council and the Dental Council of India announced that a candidate had to qualify the NEET exam for admission to a medical or dental college
- Initially, states disagreed and there was no consensus. Finally, all, except Tamil Nadu

and Puducherry, agreed to the NEET

- Around 22-25 states and 7 private universities were using the NEET ranks in 2013

- It is expected that despite the SC ruling, 21 states will still use the NEET results this year, as it is too late to have another exam.

nation," said Bangalore-based cardiologist Dr Devi Shetty, who was a member of the MCI when the NEET was conceptualised.

"Every state needs to be the custodian of its health care, and the NEET examination contradicted this. If a student from Delhi goes to Arunachal Pradesh to study medicine via the 'one nation one test' method, he will go back home after he graduates instead of serving the state where he studied," said Shetty.

Students are angry at the constant changes in examination decisions.

"Till last year, we were not sure if the state government will accept NEET. Then we started preparing for it, keeping in mind its curriculum. With the new decision, we are not sure what exam to study for," said Chinmay Thorat, a medical aspirant.

"The scrapping of the NEET examination will lead to the earlier problems of dates of various entrance exams clashing," said Manjiri Hate, mother of a medical aspirant from Bhopal.

Parents are a worried lot, too.

Prajakta Paranjpe, parent of a medical seat aspirant, said, "NEET ensured that even if you

have a lot of money, you will still be rated on merit. Now we are back to the same rut."

When the NEET examinations were announced, it was welcomed by many, as it promised a more transparent system.

"Reforms in principle are good, but will this reform ensure end of corruption? What about the exorbitant capitation fee charged by private colleges? An examination being quashed doesn't change that," said Ashish Kapre, a lawyer representing some petitioners against the NEET.

Common test 'student friendly'

Rhythma Kaul

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NEW DELHI: A day after the Supreme Court quashed the national eligibility-cum-entrance test (NEET), one of its architects strongly defended it on Friday.

"Our expert team which planned this move had student and parent convenience, and merit and policy regulation in mind," then chairman of MCI Dr SK Sarin told HT.

The director of the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences in Delhi added, "A student needed to apply individually to at least 8-10 medical colleges

THE EXPERT TEAM ALSO BELIEVED THAT MERIT SHOULD BE THE SOLE CRITERION FOR SELECTING A COLLEGE

and move from one state to another to appear for entrance examinations. At times, the dates would clash and the candidate had no choice but to opt out of one or two exams. For parents also it was a task to take leave from work and accompany the child to various colleges. A common entrance exam would have saved the trouble."

The team also believed

that merit should be the sole criterion for selecting a college.

A candidate should not be deprived of studying in a good private college just because he or she does not have the money. There should be equal opportunity for all, said Dr Sarin.

"For 60 years, we were monitoring medical colleges, their staff and infrastructure. What we realised was that we needed to observe the entry and exit to regulate quality. The national exam was a step towards checking the entry that we were able to implement. We had planned a check at the exit level also but we were not able to implement it," said Dr Sarin.

Common medical exam may be back

TESTING TIMES



7 lakh
aspirants took
NEET this year,
3.66 lakh
qualified

381
medical colleges
47,588
seats in all

ON THE FLIPSIDE: MULTIPLE TESTS
70-80 entrance tests conducted

Capitation fees
₹25 lakh-50 lakh for MBBS
₹60 lakh-1 crore for post-graduation

"We are upset. (The court ruling is) a little demoralising because we wanted to clean up a number of things." — **Ghulam Nabi Azad**, health minister

**Nagendar Sharma and
Aurangzeb Naqshbandi**

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Friday made clear its intention to explore all legal and legislative options to reverse the controversial Supreme Court judgment scrapping the common entrance test for admission to medical and dental colleges.

"We will go to any extent to get the common entrance test restored," said an official. The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), which was held for the first time this year, was taken by more than 7 lakh students.

The options being explored by the government include filing a review petition in the Supreme Court and taking the matter to Parliament if unanimity emerges among political parties.

Health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad met officials in his ministry to discuss the judgment's

ramifications. "A lot of time and money was spent on conducting the NEET. The decision to scrap it is troublesome for students," he said, adding the judgment was against students' interests.

"The common test, apart from sparing students the agony of taking multiple entrance exams, would help end the confusion caused by seats blocked by students who are selected in many colleges and then opt for the best," said a government official.

The top court's verdict on Thursday to scrap the common entrance test restored the powers of private colleges to admit students as per their own norms. But the SC said this year's admissions will not be disturbed.

Indian Express ND 20/07/2013 P-9

Medical entrance: Govt may seek review

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JULY 19

THE Health Ministry is seeking legal opinion on whether it can move for a review of the Supreme Court's decision to strike down the common medical entrance test.

A day after the court ruled out the National Eligibility cum Entrance test (NEET), Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "Naturally there is a legal recourse. There is no other way. We have to see if we can go for the review or whatever else we are required to do."

The Supreme Court verdict came as a blow to the ministry which had gone all out to turn NEET the sole key to enter any medical institution in the country. Officials said they are studying the judgment. "It is yet not clear if the apex court has opposed the principle of a common test or is it a mere techni-

cality about who holds it. Once we have studied the judgment and consulted legal experts we will take a call on what to do," said an official, who said the ministry is extremely concerned about the plight of aspiring medical students who have to traverse the entire country with their parents sitting for entrance examinations.

Over seven lakh students took the NEET this year for the undergraduate courses and more than 90,000 took the NEET for PG courses. NEET has been dogged by controversies ever since the ministry tried having a common entrance test. States like Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have been opposed to it. Private universities and colleges, especially minority institutions, have been citing their autonomy and minority character as reasons for their opposition.

(With PTI inputs)

HC directs DU to admit medical students who had missed deadline

ANEESHA MATHUR

NEW DELHI, JULY 19

IN A relief for students whose admission to the Faculty of Medical Sciences had been affected due to lack of information, the Delhi High Court directed Delhi University to accept MBBS/BDS applications under 85 per cent quota this admission season.

The court ordered that candidates who had submitted applications within the cut-off dates, but had failed to submit the separate application to the university, be admitted on the basis of marks of NEET (UG) 2013.

The counselling for admissions to the undergraduate medical programme is scheduled to begin July 22.

The order by Justice V K

Jain came on a plea by two students who claimed that since the Bulletin of Information issued by CBSE had not mentioned eligibility criteria for MBBS/BDS courses in DU, they had not been able to apply within the time limit.

“...all those who have already applied or who apply by 6 pm today i.e. July 19, 2013, should be permitted to appear in the counselling provided, considering their position in the merit list...,” the court said.

The court took note of the students’ argument that the university’s decision to extend the last date for submission of forms had not been published in any newspaper, and was merely put up on its website.

“Since the last date initially fixed by the university... was notified in newspapers, the decision to extend the time up to June 28, 2013, also ought to have been published in the newspapers...,” Justice Jain said.

Life may have existed on Mars 4 billion years ago

Indian Expert Finds Clues In Planet's Past Atmosphere

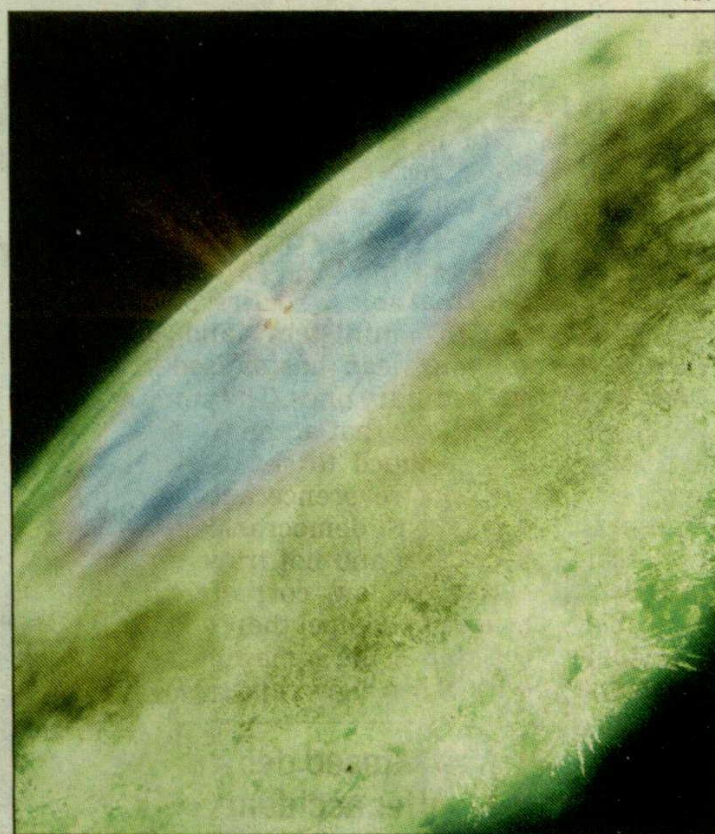
Kounteya Sinha | TNN

London: Life may have existed on Mars till about 4 billion years ago. After studying the first measurements of Martian atmosphere taken by the Curiosity rover, researchers, including an Indian-origin scientist, say the red planet lost its oxygen four billion years ago, possibly after a massive collision with an object as big as Pluto.

"This data is clear evidence of a substantially thicker atmosphere, hence a warmer and wetter Mars in the past than the cold and arid planet we find today," said Sushil Atreya, professor of atmospheric, oceanic and space sciences at the University of Michigan. The team of scientists said a mysterious — and catastrophic — event tore away its oxygen-rich atmosphere, leaving back only carbon dioxide.

Nasa said meteorite measurements indicate much of the atmospheric loss may have occurred during the first billion years of the planet's 4.6-billion-year history. Atreya, co-investigator on Curiosity's Sample Analysis at Mars (SAM) suite of instruments, said the scientists measured different gases and isotopes in samples of Martian air. Isotopes are variations of the same chemical element that contain different numbers of neutrons, such as the most common carbon isotope, carbon-12, and a heavier stable isotope, carbon-13, which contains an additional neutron.

SAM analyzed the ratios of heavier to lighter isotopes of carbon and oxygen in the carbon dioxide that makes up most of Mars' atmosphere today. Measurements showed that heavy isotopes of carbon and oxygen were more abundant in today's thin atmosphere compared with the proportions in the raw material that formed the planet. This provides not only supportive evidence for the loss of much of Mars's original atmosphere, but also gives clues to how the loss occurred, the scientists said. It suggests that the planet's atmosphere escaped from the top, rather than due to the lower atmosphere interacting with the ground.



FROST VIEW: An artist's impression of the snow line in the Sun-like star TW Hydrae, 175 light years away from us

In a first, snow discovered on star in far-off, infant solar system

Astronomers have discovered a snowy region in a far-off baby solar system, 175 light years away from the Earth. The snow line, located in the disc around the Sun-like star TW Hydrae, has been found in a far-off infant solar system for the very first time. The discovery promises to reveal more about the formation of planets and comets, the factors that decide their composition, and the history of the solar system. Astronomers using the Atacama Large Millimetre/ Submillimeter Array discovered the snow line in an infant solar system. The study was published in Science Express. PTI

'Alien space probes could be in our solar system'

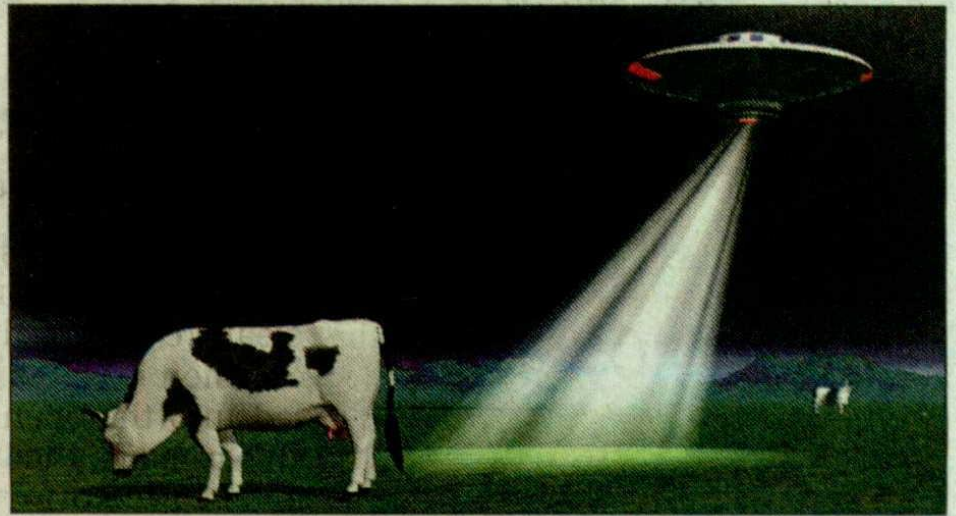
Rob Williams

Researchers from Edinburgh University have said 'self-replicating' robotic space probes from alien civilizations could already have arrived in our solar system.

The probes, which mathematicians Duncan Forgan and Arwen Nicholson referred to in their paper 'Slingshot Dynamics for Self-Replicating Probes and the Effect on Exploration Timescales', could be so hi-tech that they're invisible to human beings, the Scotland-based researchers said.

The two mathematicians analyzed the possibility that probes could travel through space in a study published in the *Journal of Astrobiology*.

The paper raises the question of whether alien races could have used the gravity of stars to "slingshot" probes in order to gain speed: a technique humans already use for probes, such as the Voyager. The Voyager



Clark Dunbar/Corbis

INVISIBLE TO HUMANS?

space probe uses a 'slingshot' technique but uses planets rather than stars.

The researchers also analyzed how a fleet of probes could 'self-replicate' and build new versions of themselves from dust and gas while traveling through space. Forgan said: "The fact we haven't seen probes of this type makes it difficult to believe that probe-building civilizations have exist in the Milky Way."

The research chimes with that of Jacob Haqq and

Misra who in 2011 suggested that alien objects could already exist in our solar system without us knowing — because we haven't looked hard enough for them.

The new piece of research once again raises the 'Fermi Paradox'. The paradox, suggested by physicists Enrico Fermi and Michael Hart, is the apparent contradiction between the high probability of the existence of alien civilizations and the lack of contact with such civilizations. THE INDEPENDENT