Newspaper Clips
July 20-21, 2014

July 20

Hindustan Times ND 20/07/2014 P-10

Percentile clause wrecks dreams of 85 shortlisted IIT aspirants

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NEW DELHI: At least 85 students have been denied admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) even after being shortlisted because of failing to be in the 20 percentile bracket of their respective board.

These rejections come after first and second round of counselling for admissions. The number could further increase after the third round.

The government had introduced a new format for IIT selection in 2013 that pushed students to do better in their board exams. In this format, only the top-20 percentile students from each board could be eligible to get admission in the IITs. Before 2013, the only eligibility criteria for admission to IITs was to get a 60 percent in the board exams.

Govt had introduced a new format for the exam that pushed students to do better in board exams. PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

However, academicians feel that there should be an urgent review on the format that was introduced two years ago.

Former president of IIT Delhi Faculty Forum Sanjeev Sanghi told HT: "It has been two years since the format was introduced. It is time we go for a review and fix it at a certain level. The percentile system does not work favourably for boards that give very high marks."

President Asks NITs to Promote Scientific Temper in Their Students

Press Trust of India, July 19, 2014

http://gadgets.ndtv.com/science/news/president-asks-nits-to-promote-scientific-temper-in-their-students-561486

President Pranab Mukherjee on Saturday asked NITs to work towards promoting scientific temper in their students and said the academic curricula must have an industry focus.

Speaking at the inauguration of the golden jubilee celebrations of National Institute of Technology (NIT) in Tiruchirappali, he said that to address faculty shortage, vacant positions must be filled on priority basis and external talent injected by hiring experts from the industry, laboratories and foreign universities on short-term basis.

"Academic curricula must have an industry-focus. Industry interface cell must be set up to establish linkages with the local industry and industry associations," he said.

Pointing out that e-classrooms must be made available for smarter dissemination of lectures, he said that knowledge and innovation are the underpinning of progress and prosperity in the 21st century.

"In this age of globalisation, we can derive competitive advantage only from an eco-system that is conducive to new

learning, research and innovation. NITs must work towards promoting scientific temper in their students," he said.

The President also underscored that thrust of research must be to erase backwardness, besides wiping out deprivation.

"Innovations must improve the state of the underserved, who want a positive difference in their lives. Institutions

like yours must support ingenious ideas that promise betterment for those aspiring to rise up the socio-economic

ladder - help a farmer till the soil better, an artisan perfect his craft or a small entrepreneur improve the

productivity of his venture," Mukherjee added.

Earlier, the President offered prayers at offer prayers at Punnainallur Sri Mariamman Temple in Thanjavur.

Over 240 private technical institutes closed down in 3 years

Last Updated: Sunday, July 20, 2014, 10:12
http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/over-240-private-technical-institutes-closed-down-in-3-years_948726.html

New Delhi: Over 240 private technical institutes across the country had to be closed down in the past three years due to dwindling demand for seats and quality of education.

Several private institutes have come up but the demand for streams, poor infrastructure and quality of education imparted remain an area of concern, Parliament was informed last week.

In this regard, Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Smriti Irani said in a written reply that "during the last three years, 242 private institutes were ordered to be closed down by AICTE", and 31 of these during the current fiscal year.

Less demand for such institutes in rural areas due to migration of students to urban centres, less demand for certain engineering programmes and problems in filling up seats and attracting good faculty were some of the reason for their closure, she said.

During 2013-14, 115 institutes were closed down while 96 were asked to wind up in 2012-13.

Andhra Pradesh topped the list with 52 such institutes being asked to close down in 2012-13 and 53 in 2013-14.

Maharashtra came next with 28 institutes in the state being asked to shut down.

According to the HRD Ministry, as of today 184 private institutes are running in the country.

University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) expert committees inspected 85 of them, pointing out deficiencies in infrastructure and lack of qualified faculty, the minister said.

She said AICTE has reconstituted a committee under the chairmanship of former Supreme Court Justice B N Srikrishna to prescribe guidelines to private institutes for charging tuition and other fees and admission of students in technical colleges.

U.S. varsity considers tie-up with IIT-M in sports analytics

http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/us-varsity-considers-tieup-with-iitm-in-sports-analytics/article6229295.ece

The College of Business at the University of South Florida (USF) is exploring the option of a tie-up with Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, for a programme in sports and entertainment analytics.

“Sports analytics, especially player analytics, could play a big role in a team’s performance,” said Balaji Padmanabhan, department chair, information systems & decision sciences department, College of Business.

Currently, USF runs a programme in sports and entertainment management and a project with Tampa Bay Lightning, a National Hockey League team in Florida. A tie-up with IIT would help expand their horizons, Mr. Padmanabhan said.

When contacted, a senior professor at IIT-M said although there was an interest on their side, there was a long way to go before anything crystallised.

Hindustan Times ND 20/07/2014 P-05

DU teachers, admin continue to spur over course, salary

HT Correspondent
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NEW DELHI: With just one more day left for colleges across Delhi University to start the new session, the university administration on Saturday convened a meeting of the academic and the executive councils to finalise the course structure of the second and the third-year students.

But the war of words continued as members of the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) continued to allege that the vice-chancellor and his office had an irresponsible attitude of violating the act, statutes and ordinances that are supposed to be followed in the process.

"The academic council, which is the authority to design courses, was not consulted on the model of re-structuring. The committees of courses were also deprived of their right to decide on the best possible papers by making it mandatory to select papers only from the erstwhile four year undergraduate programme (FYUP)," alleged Nandita Narain, DUTA president.

Teachers and members of the academic council complained that they were denied time to apply their mind as emergent meetings were called for by the university administration. The detailed agenda was also announced only a few hours before the meeting.

"It is evident that the administration has not taken serious note of the distress caused to students and the shame brought to the institution due to the violation committed by it in pushing the FYUP, which finally resulted in scrapping of the course," added Narain.

> IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT TAKEN SERIOUS NOTE OF DISTRESS CAUSED TO STUDENTS AND SHAME BROUGHT TO THE INSTITUTION DUE TO THE VIOLATION COMMITTED BY IT IN PUSHING THE FYUP.
> NANDITA NARAIN, DUTA president

Another indictment raised by the teachers was the delay in the payment of the summer salaries of adhoc teachers. "The VC denied 12 elected members the right to move a resolution to ensure the rejoining of all Adhoc teachers," said Harish Khanna from DUTA.

Amid all the confusion, the University is set to reopen on the Monday and students hope that the hostility within the administration and the teachers does not affect their academic result.

Times of India ND 20/07/2014 P-14

Plumbing only goes so far. Now, net needs good Indian content

Srinivasan Ramani calls himself the "internet plumber" of the 1970s. As the former head of National Centre for Software Technology (now, C-DAC Mumbai), he and his colleagues nurtured the internet in India and watched it transform the country. Recently, Ramani, 75, became the first Indian to be inducted into the Internet Society's prestigious Hall of Fame. The unassuming tech enthusiast, who grew up in Chennai, tells Sandhya Soman that it feels nice to be on the list after 30 years of pathbreaking work

FOR THE RECORD

How did you move from research work in Artificial Intelligence at IIT-B to computer networks?

I went to Carnegie-Mellon University as a post-doctoral research associate in 1971 and ran into ARPANET, a precursor to internet. A packet switching network like the ARPANET worked well with noisy telecom lines, and lines that failed frequently. I was excited that such communication networks could easily be set up in any developing country. Artificial intelligence was moving a bit slowly, and (computer) networking was zipping along. So I decided to spend time working on networks when I returned.

How did computer networking fare in India in those early days?

In the '70s and '80s, many didn't know the difference between software and knitwear. But Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), where I worked, was a well-established lab and my boss, professor R Narasimhan, was aware of its potential. So it wasn't difficult to sell the idea. I recruited young colleagues, formed a small team as part of the newly formed National Centre for Software Development and Computing Techniques (NCSDCT), and developed network software for a computer made in Hyderabad. But technology is best demonstrated by application. So we decided to run a connection between NCSDCT and VJTI (one of the oldest engineering colleges in India) in Matunga. The link became a meaningful demonstration of early networking in India.

How did this link pave way for bigger projects and finally, the first internet connection in 1987?

After the link was created, we got an opportunity to work on a satellite-based project with Space Application Centre and Telecom Research Centre. We connected Mumbai, Delhi and Ahmedabad through an Indian satellite in 1982 using packet switching. It gave us the confidence that we can make any connection. We didn't continue with satellites but chose to work with the more practical alternative, channels based on fibre optics. Being located in Mumbai helped as it had excellent telecom connection to the world. We were ready to use landlines and leased channels from VSNL for an unearthly amount of Rs 5 lakh a year when long-time supporter and secretary in the department of electronics, PP Gupta, approved a project for an academic network. ERNET (Education and Research Network) supported research at the five IITs, IISc in Bangalore, the NCST (which I headed) and the department of Electronics. It was NCST's team that set up ERNET's first email hub and an international gateway to the internet, connecting it first to Amsterdam in 1987, and soon after to the US.

How did internet change India?

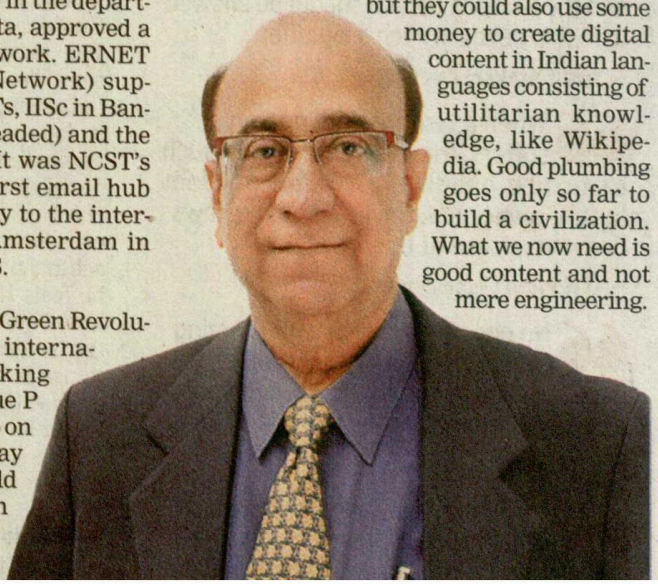
It was like living through the Green Revolution. In 1980, at India's first international conference on networking held in Mumbai, my colleague P Sadanandan prepared a demo on the automation of the railway reservation system. Gupta sold the idea to the government in 1984 and his company created the Indian railway passenger reservation system. It was exciting to see the flow of ideas at a conference touch lives of millions soon after. There were other changes, especially in the field of scientific research. Scientists found it easier to write for international research publications and to collaborate with colleagues abroad. I remember some of them sending jeeps to our office, for us to print out and send the latest research papers in them! Engineers, especially those who majored in computer science, were also excited. We trained engineers to create a talent pool just as the IT/ITES sector boomed and helped automate the banking sector.

What were the major challenges?

Telecom was under tight government control. When someone asked at the 1980 conference whether the department would allow people to use a modem on a telephone network for a dial-up connection, the answer was a 'no.' First it had to be tested in Delhi and approved. There were numerous application forms to be filled and approved. But the biggest problem was that it was illegal then to run the internet protocol suite, TCP/IP, as it was 'only American and not international'. We could lease individual telecom lines but could not make a network out of them.

What should be the focus of internet in India?

We need sufficient and interesting content in Indian languages. The government's plan for a broadband network in rural areas is good but they could also use some money to create digital content in Indian languages consisting of utilitarian knowledge, like Wikipedia. Good plumbing goes only so far to build a civilization. What we now need is good content and not mere engineering.



July 21

Hindustan ND21/07/2014 P-3

आईआईटी के छात्रों ने कैंपस में खोजे 70 तरह के पक्षी

नई दिल्ली | सुशील राघव

आईआईटी दिल्ली के छात्रों ने अपने कैंपस में 70 से ज्यादा प्रजाति के पक्षियों का पता लगाया है। इनमें 12 प्रवासी पक्षी भी हैं, जो दूर देशों से उड़कर यहां आते हैं। छात्रों द्वारा की गई पक्षियों की गिनती में यह आंकड़े सामने आए हैं।

पक्षियों की गिनती चार सदस्यीय छात्रों के दल ने की, जिसका नेतृत्व इलेक्ट्रिकल इंजीनियरिंग के अंतिम वर्ष के छात्र सिद्धार्थ रंजन ने किया। वे बताते हैं कि 350 एकड़ में फैला आईआईटी दिल्ली का परिसर अपनी बेहतर जैव विविधता के लिए भी जाना जाता है। यही वजह है कि यह विभिन्न प्रजातियों के पक्षियों का घर बन गया है। उन्होंने बताया कि आईआईटी के विद्यार्थी कैंपस के अंदर और बाहर नेचर वॉक का आयोजन करते थे लेकिन इस दौरान दिखाई देने वाले पक्षियों का कोई रिकॉर्ड नहीं था। पक्षियों की आवाज, फोटो आदि का रिकॉर्ड बनाने के मकसद से पीएचडी कर रहे मनीष, अंतिम वर्ष के विद्यार्थी अखिला और अजय मीणा के साथ पक्षियों की गिनती की शुरुआत की गई। यह अपनी तरह का पहला प्रोजेक्ट है। सिद्धार्थ बताते हैं कि येलो वैट्टल्ड लैपविंग पक्षी पूरी दिल्ली में सबसे अधिक संख्या में हमारे हॉकी मैदान में आते हैं। सिद्धार्थ रंजन ने बताया कि यह गिनती पक्षी विशेषज्ञ जेएनयू के डॉ. सूर्यप्रकाश के मार्गदर्शन में की गई।

पक्षियों के फोटो लेने वाले मनीष के मुताबिक किसी स्थान का वातावरण कितना अच्छा है, इसे वहां रहने या आने वाले पक्षियों के जरिये जाना जा सकता है। वातावरण जितना अधिक अच्छा होगा, वहां उतने ही अधिक पक्षी आएंगे। पक्षियों का अध्ययन करने वाली अखिला के अनुसार पक्षियों की गिनती के जरिये लोगों में यह जागरूकता ला सकते हैं कि उनके आसपास कितने तरह के पक्षी रहते हैं।


ब्लैक रेड स्टार्ट


येलो वैट्टल्ड लैपविंग


रोजी स्टर्लिंग

इनका लगाया पता

- सर्दियों में आने वाले : ब्लैक रेडस्टार्ट, कॉमन बब्बलर, रेड ब्रेस्ट फ्लाईकेचर, टैगा फ्लाईकेचर, कॉमन शिफचैफ, ग्रीनिश वारब्लेर, ग्रीन सैंडपाइपर, कॉमन सैंडपाइपर, ग्रे हेडेड कैनेरी फ्लाईकेचर और लेजर व्हाइटथ्रोट
- गर्मियों में आने वाले : गोल्डन ओरिओले और रोजी स्टार्लिंग

साइट पर डाली फोटो, आवाज

पक्षियों की गिनती के दौरान कैंपस में दिखाई देने वाले सभी पक्षियों के फोटो, वीडियो और आवाज को दर्ज किया गया है। इन फोटो, वीडियो और आवाज को वेबसाइट <www.sustainable.iitd.ac.in> पर देखा और सुना जा सकता है। वेबसाइट अजय मीणा की देखरेख में बनाई गई है।

हिन्दुस्तान नया नजरिया

आईआईटी के छात्र तकनीक का तानाबाना बुनने के साथ अपने परिवेश को भी खुशनुमा बनाने में लगे हैं। आईआईटी दिल्ली के छात्रों की पक्षियों की गिनती करना इसकी बानगी है। पक्षियों की गिनती के जरिये वे कैंपस के पर्यावरण को बेहतर बना रहे हैं। यह छोटी सी पहल हमें बताती है कि अगर हम अपने आसपास की चाहरदीवारी को ही सुधार लें तो तस्वीर पूरी तरह बदल जाएगी।

इंजीनियरिंग के छात्रों का प्रकृति से इतना अधिक लगाव देखकर मैं बहुत खुश हूं। पक्षियों की गिनती के जरिये इन छात्रों ने एक अच्छे काम की शुरुआत की है। कैंपस में अब तक दर्ज पक्षियों की संख्या से मैं बहुत उत्साहित हूं। -डॉ. सूर्यप्रकाश, जेएनयू

IIT-B's budding engineers to turn journalists

Jul 21, 2014 |

http://www.asianage.com/mumbai/iit-b-s-budding-engineers-turn-journalists-964

In a bid to make Techfest, the annual science and technological extravaganza of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, a festival that ingrains social responsibility in students, the institute has decided to introduce a segment — a competition, which will focus on news collecting and reproduction of the same in the written or oral format. The entries will be judged by senior journalists from the mainstream media.

Speaking about the initiative, Aman Mantry, media manager for Techfest 2014, said every year the festival has tried to introduce a new aspect for students to explore and excel in, hence the decision to have a journalism-based competition.

"The advent of social networking sites and online news media has seen many people becoming citizen reporters and writing on issues that affect them and the locality they live in. The initiative is aimed at encouraging student activism and making them realise the importance of being alert and accurate. The competition will expect participants to file reports, shoot videos and submit them before a deadline. We will have a panel of senior journalists to adjudicate each report and approve or disprove it based on its authenticity and completeness," said Mantry.

He added that the winner would not be decided on the basis of his or her writing skills but would on the basis of the issue taken up by them. The concept, he said, was being finalised and the dates for the competition would be announced on the Techfest website. The competition would be open for participants from all over the country.

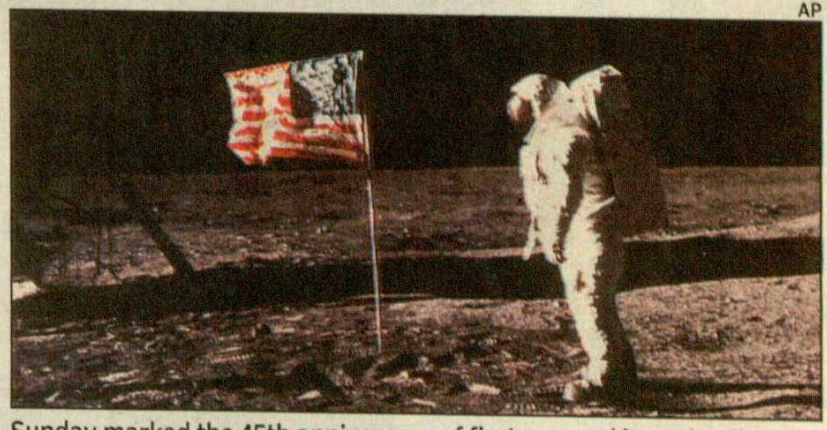
Techfest is one of the biggest student festivals in Asia and has been introducing new segments every year like music, art, acting, corporate and industry-related contests apart from engineering competitions.

Times of India, ND 21/07/2014 P-15

Revealed: US thought of testing N-arms on moon

Srinivas Laxman | TNN

AP



Sunday marked the 45th anniversary of first manned lunar landing

Mumbai: On July 20, 1969, when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin stepped on the surface of the moon they placed a plaque which declared: "Here men from Planet Earth set upon the moon. July 1969 AD. We came in peace for all mankind".

But, secret documents declassified by the US National Security Archive on Sunday to mark the 45th anniversary of the first manned landing on the moon reveal how the US at one time was exploring the possibility of conducting nuclear weapon tests on the lunar surface or in its vicinity.

The declassified documents titled 'Soldier, Spies and the Moon: Secret US and Soviet Plans from the 1950s and 1960s' reflect the covert side of the US and Soviet lunar programmes.

The lunar N-weapon test was the brainchild of the US Air Force (USAF) special weapons centre located at the Kirtland Air Force base in New Mexico. A study for the air force relating to this lunar atomic weapon project was carried out by the Armour Research Foundation of the Illinois Institute of Technology and is dated June 1959 – eight months after Nasa came into existence on October 1,1958.

The document justified a nuclear detonation on the moon's surface or close to it as it would "serve both scientific and military purposes". Politically, it said "positive effects would accrue to the nation first performing such a feat as a demonstration of advanced technological capability".

According to the document such an exercise would provide information on the space environment and the capability of N-weapons for a space warfare. But, subsequently for a variety of factors the USAF decided to scrap the plan.

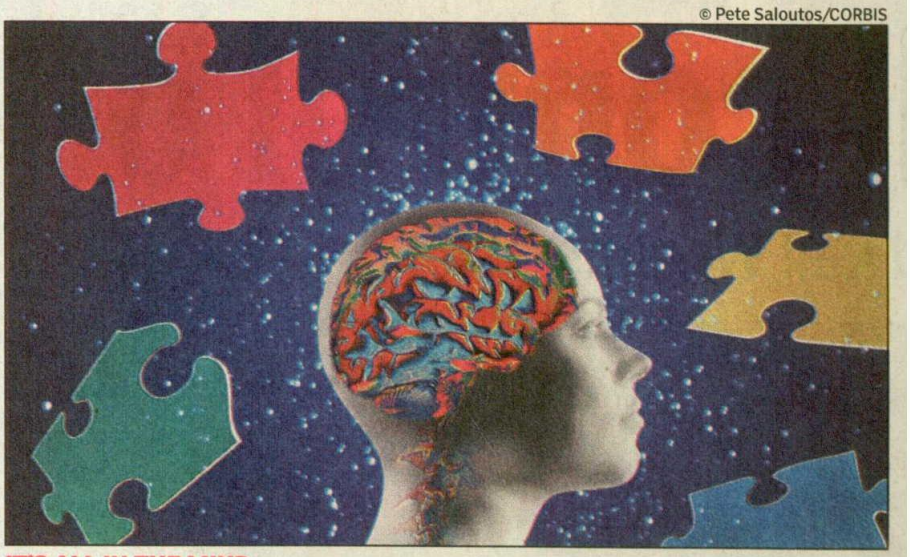
For the full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com

Times of India, ND 21/07/2014 P-15

That we use 10% of our brain is an urban myth?

'People Rely On Theory To Hide Shortcomings'

Ralph Blackburn



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IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

In a sombre and authoritative academic tone, Morgan Freeman's latest movie character delivers the following line: "It is estimated most human beings only use 10% of the brain's capacity. Imagine if we could access 100%. Interesting things begin to happen".

As a conceit for director Luc Besson's upcoming sci-fi thriller 'Lucy', this often-quoted idea has obvious Hollywood potential. It also drove the plot of the 2011 thriller 'Limitless', starring Bradley Cooper. But according to leading neuroscientists, the idea that we only use a fraction of our brain's computing power is nothing more than an urban myth.

Lucy stars Scarlett Johansson as a woman who is kidnapped and implanted with a drug that unleashes her untapped brainpower, allowing her to control time, execute bad guys with worrying ease, and deliver some vicious beatings.

But according to Barbara Sahakian, professor of clinical neuropsychology at the University of Cambridge, the idea that we only use a small percentage of our brain "doesn't make any sense". "It's impossible to work out how much of our brain we are using quantitatively. However, it is definitely much more than 10%," Sahakian said.

The 10% figure, she explains, is purely "artificial" and was first widely circulated in Dale Carnegie's 1936 best-selling book, 'How to Win Friends and Influence People'. It is thought that Carnegie simply made up a figure, to substantiate a point in his book.

The erroneous percentage could also come from a misunderstanding about how most of our brain cells work. According to neuroscientists, 90% of the cells in our brains are support cells, called glial cells, which provide nutrients to the other 10%, which are the neurons. Neurons are the cells which produce thoughts. In short, they are our grey matter.

Sahakian does agree that we don't always use our brains to their full potential, however: "Most of the time we are operating far below our maximum brain capacity due to various factors, including tiredness."

According to Barry Gordon, a neurologist at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, people like to believe the 10% myth so they can blame their shortcomings on supposed useless parts of their own brain. THE INDEPENDENT

Financial Express, ND 21/07/2014 P-15

Business not as usual

MBA programmes in recent years have introduced topics like ethics, governance, sustainability and CSR

BUSINESS management schools are changing their academic courses to bring in quality education. In the wake of the global economic scenario and changing market dynamics, management education institutions are trying to reinvent themselves with newer ways of understanding the global opportunities. Having an assortment of management courses, B-Schools are working on various methodologies which can be implemented in the face of increasing competition, virtualisation and globalisation across the sectors.

Modern management education is on a crossroads today, says T. Muralidharan, chairman, TMI group. TMI had recently done a survey of executives from top MBA schools. "When we asked them what percentage of what they learned was useful on the job, the answer was a shocking 5%. Amongst the subjects that scored the highest in terms of relevance—finance topped the list. The respondents were also asked if they were to go back to a B-school, which subject they would like to spend more time on—most of them voted for Interpersonal Relationships and HR", he explained.

Management education proliferated due to the increase in the number of graduates in the country. Often students not getting a job after graduation want to 'buy' two more years . This has led to an increase in the demand for MBA schools and the subsequent commercialisation of MBA schools. Muralidharan opined that students were being treated as customers and the focus was on the comforts on the campus vis-a-vis education.

Whatever may be the dissenting notes on management education, there is no denying that over the years Hyderabad has emerged as a hub of B-schools in India, with many of them providing quality education. The tallest among them is the Indian School of Business, which has been ranked 36th in the world in the 2014 Financial Times Global MBA Rankings. However, ISB is not accredited by the statutory body, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). ISB, in fact, has chosen not to apply for accreditation by AICTE as it offers neither a diploma nor a degree.

The other business schools include, in alphabetical order, Avanthi Degree and PG College, Badruka College Post-Graduate Centre (BCPGC) of Badruka Institute of Foreign Trade, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Chaitanya Bharthi Institute of Technology, Deccan School of Management, Hyderabad Business School, ICBM School of Business Excellence, ICFAI Business School, IIlm Business School, Institute of Public Enterprise, JNTU School of Management Studies, Institute of PG Studies and Research, KL University Business School, Magnus School of Business, MESCO Institute of Management & Computer Sciences, Osmania University—Department of Business Management, Princeton PG College, Pendikanti Institute of Management, Pragathi Maha Vidyalaya Post Graduate College, Priyadarshini College of Business Management, Sarojini Naidu Vanita Maha Vidyalaya, Ushodaya Institute of Management & Technology, Villa Marie Degree College for Women, Vivekananda School of Post Graduate Studies, Al Quarmoshi Institute of Business Management, among others.

A report from Global Foundation for Management Education (GFME) says business schools should focus on the common good and the connections between the individuals, business, and society. This brings us back to the design of institutions and to the role of managers: to influence morally imperfect individuals to cooperate and to generate socially desirable outcomes for the organisation and for society, the report adds.

Not to lose sight of the moral aspects of business, MBA programmes in recent years have introduced topics like ethics, governance, sustainability and CSR. Business school experts in finance, economics, statistics, accounting, law and regulation, governance and so forth, are in a unique position to serve society if they can combine efforts.

—*BV Mahalakshmi*

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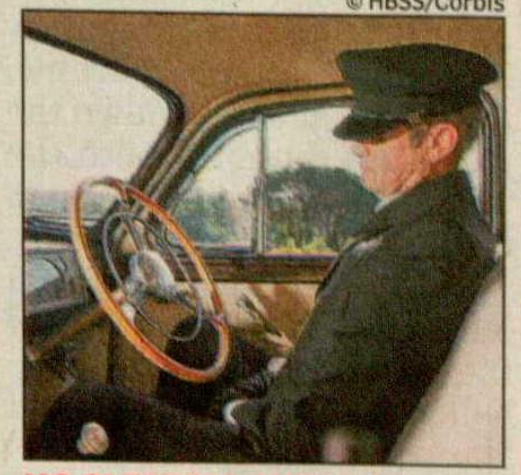
Soon, car seats to alert sleepy drivers

London: The dangers of falling asleep while driving may soon become a thing of the past, thanks to new smart car seats which can detect when a driver is beginning to nod off and alert them. These car seats are being developed by researchers at the Nottingham Trent University, UK.

Professor Tilak Dias and William Hurley of the university's Advanced Textile Research Group will be working with company Plessey on a feasibility study to investigate how to integrate an electrocardiogram (ECG) sensor system directly into the fabric of seats in a bid to save lives.

Researchers aim to embed a fabric-based sensor system within the seat which can detect the heart signals that indicate a driver is losing alertness. The data would be used to send a warning to the driver to pull over. Should the warning be ignored, the vehicle could engage systems such as active cruise control or lane departure technology to prevent accidents. The information could also be sent over a wireless network to a control centre to take further action.



NO SLEEPING OVER SAFETY

"Plessey has already demonstrated that cardiac signals can be measured unobtrusively using capacitive sensors mounted within the driver's seat; the requirement now is to improve the consistency and reliability of the data so that it can be used for the intended purpose," Dias said. PTI