Newspaper Clips

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P-9

IIT-M PUTS APPOINTMENTS ON HOLD

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NEW DELHI: The Chairman of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has put on hold a series of recent appointments made by the Institute under outgoing director MS Ananth amid questions over an alleged rush in making the appointments.

Professor MM Sharma, a veteran chemical engineer who took over as chairman of the Board of Governors (BoG) of the IIT last month, is learnt to have returned a list of proposed appointees to faculty and administrative posts. Sharma, sources said, has told the IIT to convene a meeting of the BoG first.

HT was the first to report, on May 6, concerns within the HRD ministry over a flurry of appointments Ananth was proposing in his last few weeks in office.

Ananth is quitting office on July 31.

Hindu ND 03/07/2011 P-9

IIM-Indore to launch integrated course for Class XII students

Final selection will be made through an aptitude test and interview

INDORE: Indian Institute of Management-Indore will launch from this academic year a five-year integrated post-graduate programme (PGP) in management for students passing Class XII or equivalent courses.

This is perhaps the first time that an IIM is launching a programme at the undergraduate level.

"Beginning with 120 seats, eligibility criterion for this programme is 60 per cent aggregate marks at secondary/X Standard and higher secondary/10+2 level or equivalent for general category students," IIM-Indore Director N. Ravichandran said.

As per the norms, OBC, SC/ST students' eligibility percentage would be 55 and seats would be reserved for them from the total 120, he said.

Final selection of students would be made through an aptitude test and personal interview, Mr. Ravichandran said.

The annual fee will be Rs.3 lakh for first three years. In the fourth and fifth years it would go up to Rs.5 lakh. Fee relaxation for reserved classes will be as per the norms, he said, adding that board and lodging charges will be separate.

PGP syllabus will cover subjects like mathematics, statistics, logic, computer sciences, introduction to literature and political science, history, exposure to biological sciences, languages, soft skills including leadership and personality developments, he said.

Asked what prompted IIM here to start this course, he said, "So far students were joining master's programme after doing engineering, B Tech and other courses. We think the right time for selection of students for management is after Class XII. We anticipate that the course would be a success and later on other IIMs would adopt our module." — PTI

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IIM plan: AICTE chief questions straight-out-of-school MBAs

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NEW DELHI: The chief of India's apex technical education regulator on Saturday questioned the benefits of courses like the programme announced by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Indore that offer specialisation in management immediately after school.

"Courses where students go straight into studying management after school raise questions because these students have no domain knowledge which they can build upon," SS Mantha, All India Council for Technical Education chairman, said, responding to questions on the five-year integrated Post Graduate Programme in management announced by IIM Indore. The IIMs do not require AICTE approval to start or run diploma courses. But Mantha's concerns in response to queries on what he described an "interesting experiment" reflect a wider unease within sections of the academic and scientific community over super-specialised programmes at the undergraduate stage.

Scientists in recent years have similarly questioned government supported biotechnology programmes at the undergraduate level, arguing that super-specialisation without a strong base in fundamental subjects is counterproductive for students.

> **Super-specialisation programmes at undergraduate stage are invariably market driven...**
> Senior scientist, IISc

"Super-specialisation programmes at the undergraduate stage are invariably market driven — but what happens to these students when the job market for that highly specialised niche trade shrinks," questioned a senior scientist at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

Contrary to claims made by IIM Indore on its website, it cannot offer "a degree equivalent to a Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA)" after three-years if students want to quit the five-year integrated postgraduate programme midway. The IIM can only offer diplomas — and not degrees. IIM Indore director N Ravindran confirmed that students who quit the programme after three years will receive diplomas — and not degrees.

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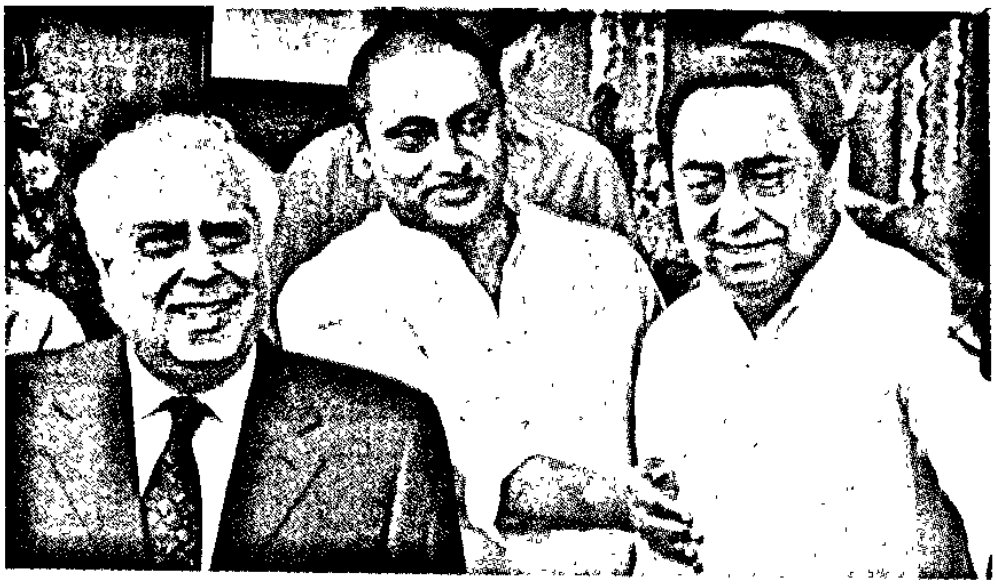


Looking beyond education: (From left) Mr Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for HRD, Telecommunications and IT; Mr N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister; and Mr Kamal Nath, Union Minister for Urban Development, at the inauguration of the Institute of Management Technology at Shamshabad in Ranga Reddy District near Hyderabad on Saturday. — P.V. Sivakumar

Sibal to B-schools: Look beyond jobs, pay packets

Our Bureau
Hyderabad, July 2

Specialisation in pure arts, science or commerce will soon be a thing of the past in education.

The Centre is in the process of allowing greater flexibility in choosing subjects from secondary education to university level, according to Mr Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Telecommunications and IT.

Speaking to reporters after inaugurating the Institute of Management Technology's (IMT) campus here on Saturday, Mr Sibal said that the flexibility in education was likely be introduced at 'some level' in about a year.

"Why can't a science graduate do a course in music or history? Multidisciplinary education will also increase employability and skills," he said.

"We are working on the concept. The Council for Boards of Secondary Education is talking to boards of all States.

"It should be possible to have a vocational certificate from CBSE along with normal studies soon," he said.

Earlier speaking at the inaugural function, Mr Sibal said business schools should move focus away from placements and fat salaries.

The management institutions should provide solutions to problems in health, education and elimination of poverty.

"There is also need for more number of institutions to spread management education," he added.

Mr Kamal Nath, Union Minister for Urban Development and President of IMT, said the institute would cater to the changing needs of management education in the context of globalisation.

The Chief Minister, Mr N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, said Andhra Pradesh was becoming a knowledge hub with all major educational institutions preferring to come to the State.

Apple and Microsoft beat Google for Nortel patents

Nortel Networks sold more than 6,000 patent assets to a consortium of technology and telecom giants for $4.5 billion in cash

Chris V Nicholson

NORTEL NETWORKS, the defunct Canadian telecommunications equipment maker, says it has agreed to sell more than 6,000 patent assets to an alliance made up of Apple, Microsoft and other technology giants for $4.5 billion in cash. The group of companies, which also includes Research in Motion, Sony, Ericsson and EMC, beat out Google and Intel for the patents and patent applications that Nortel had accumulated when it was still one of the largest telecommunications equipment makers in North America. Nortel, which filed for bankruptcy in 2009, said in a statement last week that it had sold its last remaining patents, covering businesses including wireless and networking technology and semiconductors, in an auction that it called "very robust."

"The size and dollar value for this transaction is unprecedented, as was the significant interest in the portfolio among major companies around the world," said George A Riedel, chief strategy officer of Nortel. Nortel delayed the auction once last month because of what it called "significant interest," and started the sale on Monday. Nortel said it hoped to close the transaction in the third quarter.

In April, Google made a stalking-horse bid of $900 million for the patents, some of which are related to the wireless technology known as long-term evolution. Networks based on that technology, considered crucial to the future of telecommunications, are created to carry large amounts of data like streamed video to mobile devices.

The Google offer was interpreted as a defensive move. The search giant was seeking intellectual property rights to shield itself from lawsuits as it moves deeper into the mobile business with its Android software.

Kent Walker, Google's general counsel, wrote at the time of the bid that it was supposed to "create a disincentive for others to sue Google."

"The tech world has recently seen an explosion in patent litigation, often involving low-quality software patents," Walker wrote.

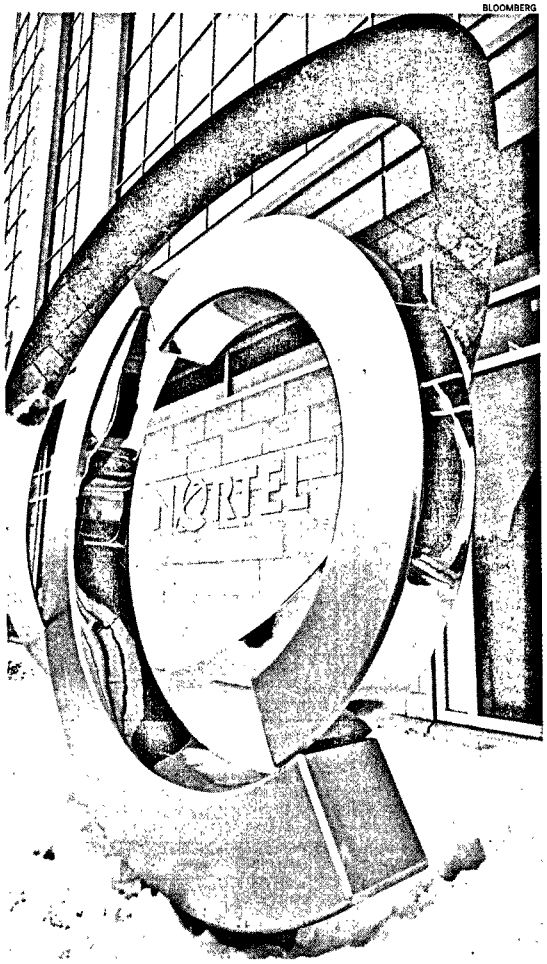
Now, thousands of crucial patents will be in the hands of rivals like Apple and Microsoft, both of which have shown themselves to be much more aggressive in patent litigation than Google.

Last Friday, Walker said in an e-mail that the auction's outcome was "disappointing for anyone who believes that open innovation benefits users and promotes creativity and competition."

The sale announced last week will require approval from courts in Canada and the United States, Nortel said. About 2,600 of the patent assets are American. A joint hearing has been scheduled for July 11.

Nortel, based in Mississauga, Ontario, was once a flagship Canadian company but filed for bankruptcy in 2009 after losing nearly $6 billion in 2008. Since then, it has sold its wireless equipment business for $1.13 billion to the Swedish company Ericsson, which walked away with $340 million worth of patents from the auction on Thursday. More recently, Ericsson bought Telcordia, an American telecom network equipment maker, for $1.15 billion.

BLOOMBERG



NORTEL, BASED IN MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO, WAS ONCE A FLAGSHIP CANADIAN COMPANY BUT FILED FOR BANKRUPTCY IN 2009 AFTER LOSING NEARLY $6 BILLION IN 2008. SINCE THEN, IT HAS SOLD ITS WIRELESS EQUIPMENT BUSINESS FOR $1.13 BILLION TO ERICSSON

In 2009, Nortel sold another unit dealing with enterprise solutions for $475 million to Avaya, a former AT&T unit that is now owned by private equity and which filed for an initial public offering of stock last month.

RIM, Canada's most prominent technology company since Nortel collapsed, said in a separate statement that it had paid about $770 million for patents at the auction. The sale of patents raised more than the rest of Nortel's disposals combined.

The company said it did not anticipate that holders of its common shares or preferred stock would benefit from the bankruptcy process. Creditor protection proceedings "will result in the cancellation of these equity interests," Nortel said.

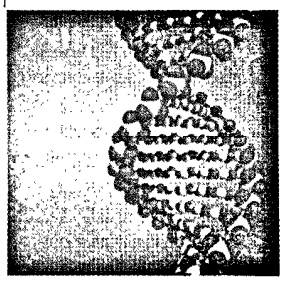
Nortel was advised by Lazard. Nortel's creditors' committee, which includes the Bank of New York Mellon and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, hired Jefferies as its financial adviser for the auction, which saw the patent assets reap five times the stalking-horse bid.

NYT

Financial Express ND 03/07/2011 P-6

BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH FT FINANCIAL TIMES

Science's 10 hottest fields



Clive Cookson

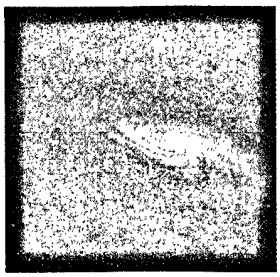
UNDERSTANDING THE GENOME

The sequencing of the 6 billion chemical "letters" of human DNA was completed in draft in 2000 and in final form in 2003. But clinical benefits have arrived more slowly than the initial hype suggested. This is mainly because the human genome actually works in a much more complex way than predicted by the late-20th-century model.

Twenty-first-century research shows that we have only 21,000 genes, one-fifth of the number predicted when the project started, and that just 1.5% of the genome consists of conventional protein-coding genes. Efforts are under way to understand the vital regulatory and other functions of the non-coding regions of the genome, once dismissed wrongly as "junk DNA".

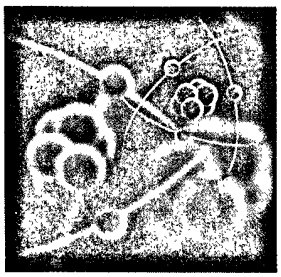
EXTRA PLANETS—AND EXTRATERRESTRIALS?

Astronomers have long theorised that many of the billions of stars in our galaxy must have orbiting planets. Since 1995 they have been finding these "exoplanets" at an increasing rate although those identified so far are much larger than Earth. More excitement will come with the discovery of Earth-like planets in Earth-like orbits around Sun-like stars, because of the possibility of extraterrestrial life. The next generation of space observatories should be able to examine these planets' atmospheres for the spectroscopic signatures of molecules produced by biological processes. There is even the remote chance that radiotelescopes may pick up signals from an extraterrestrial civilisation.



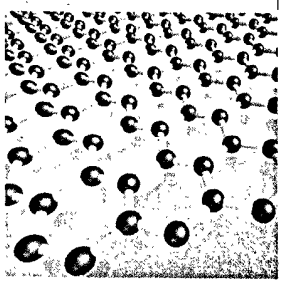
THE COMPOSITION OF THE COSMOS

Cosmologists are still coming to terms with the surprising 1998 discovery that mysterious "dark energy" is accelerating the expansion of the universe. Astronomers calculate that dark energy makes up 74% of the universe but they have no idea what it is. The marginally less mysterious "dark matter" makes up 22%—leaving just 4% for all the ordinary matter in the objects we can see directly. Dark matter is probably made of massive particles, which interact so little with ordinary matter that instruments have been unable to detect them. But the subatomic debris from smashing atoms together at Cern's Large Hadron Collider may offer a chance of identification in the future.



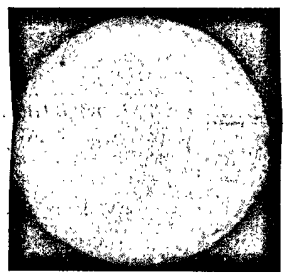
LEAP FOR QUANTUM COMPUTING

Quantum computing offers the possibility of a radical transition: a fundamentally different way of processing data. Prototype devices are beginning to emerge around the world. Last year, a team at Bristol University made a photonic chip that processes data according to the counter-intuitive rules of quantum physics, rather than conventional electronics. Because quantum particles can influence one another at a distance ("entanglement") and be in several places at the same time ("superposition"), they could in principle perform parallel calculations far beyond the capability of today's supercomputers. Governments and companies are investing hundreds of millions of dollars but formidable technical barriers must be overcome.



GRAPHENE, THE 'WONDER MATERIAL'

Graphene, first made in 2004 and recognised by last year's Nobel physics prize, is the "wonder material" of the 21st century. Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov succeeded in laying down two-dimensional carbon sheets just a single atom thick, which have astonishing physical and electronic properties. The superlatives are endless. Graphene has astonishing strength and the best heat and electricity conductivity of any known material. Hundreds of research teams are competing to investigate its use for everything from transistors to memory chips. But some people worry that the field is over-hyped, with insufficient attention paid to the difficulties of manufacturing devices in commercial quantities.



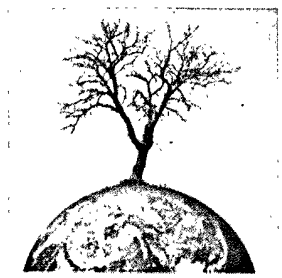
EMBRYONIC STEM CELLS AND REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

The field of regenerative medicine was ignited by the discovery in 1998 that "pluripotent" stem cells, capable in principle of becoming any type of specialised cell from brain to blood, could be grown from early human embryos. Despite opposition from some religious groups, embryonic stem cells have progressed into early clinical trials. Meanwhile some scientific attention has switched to an alternative way of producing embryo-like stem cells. These induced pluripotent stem cells, or iPSCs, are made by treating adult cells, usually from skin, with a biochemical cocktail that turns back their developmental clock to an embryonic state.

THE 'PLASTIC BRAIN'

The 20th-century idea of the adult brain as essentially fixed—incapable of rewiring itself—is changing into a new model of a "plastic" organ that adapts to changing circumstances. If the capacity of one brain region is underused, it can take over some of the functions of an overloaded region.

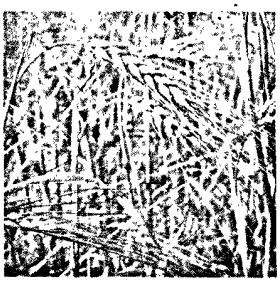
Recent research has shown that brand-new neurons can grow in at least one key part of the brain, the hippocampus. Neuroscientists are working with plasticity and this "neurogenesis" to find new ways of treating people with mental illness and to learn more about the brain—biology's greatest challenge.



GLOBAL WARMING: THE FUTURE

Climate change has risen to the top of the political controversy list. But if the majority of experts are right and human activities are driving the world toward a warmer and more unstable climate, then the question of how to reduce its potentially catastrophic impact is one of the most important fields in science.

Opposition has not cut significantly the funding for research. Scientists are working to convert the broad predictions of global warming into more specific, detailed forecasts of how particular regions will be affected. The time period during which weather forecasts morph into climate prediction—between one and 10 years ahead—is especially fertile ground.



PLANTS TO FEED THE WORLD

With the population set to pass 7 billion this year and rising to 9 billion in mid-century, the world faces a formidable challenge. If everyone is to be fed without appalling environmental consequences, the yield of staple crops must increase enormously. Some plant scientists are still licking their wounds from the onslaught against genetically modified crops.

But there is an intensified effort, among public-sector laboratories and industry companies, to breed better plants for farmers. This involves both direct genetic modification to make plants more resistant to stress and disease and the use of genomic information to accelerate improvement through conventional breeding.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Population growth and people crowding into mega-cities has made the world more vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters. The fast-growing field of disaster prediction looks for clues that something serious is going wrong, in time for those affected to do something about it.

Although the research covers a very broad field, from the collapse of ecosystems to a crash in financial markets, mathematicians believe that at the fundamental level such events have much in common. Increasingly, powerful computers and mathematical models enable experts to identify signs of impending collapse that would previously have been lost amid all the data.

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Dainik Jagran ND 03/07/2011 P-17

नेत्रहीनों की लाठी बने आइआइटी के युवा

अविनाश चंद्र, नई दिल्ली

सरोकार

- आइआइटी दिल्ली के छात्रों ने नेत्रहीनों के लिए तैयार की हाइटेक 'स्मार्ट केन'
- प्रयोगकर्ता को रास्ते की सभी वस्तुओं की मिलेगी सूचना

'अंधे की लाठी' यूं तो मुहावरा है, लेकिन आइआइटी दिल्ली के आधा दर्जन युवाओं ने देश के एक करोड़ से ज्यादा नेत्रहीनों के लिए करामाती छड़ी तैयार कर उन्हें नई ताकत दे दी है।

स्मार्ट केन नामक यह हाइटेक छड़ी नेत्रहीनों को न केवल रास्ते में पड़ी सभी चीजों की सूचना देगी बल्कि उन्हें चोट आदि से बचाने में भी सहायक होगी। साथ ही यह छड़ी जेब पर भी ज्यादा भारी नहीं होगी और जल्द ही डेढ़ से दो हजार रुपए की कीमत में बाजार में मिल सकेगी।

आइआइटी, दिल्ली के कंप्यूटर साइंस व इंजीनियरिंग विभाग के रोहन पाल, वैभव सिंह, धीरज मेहरा, अनुराग गुप्ता, सौम्या जैन ने मेंटर प्रो. एम बालाकृष्णन के निर्देशन में यह स्मार्ट केन बनाने में सफलता प्राप्त की है। यह केन वाइब्रेटर की सहायता से प्रयोगकर्ता को आगे पड़ी वस्तु की ठीक-ठीक जानकारी प्रदान करती है। यह केन सामने से आने वाली वस्तु की स्थिति व दूरी आदि की भी जानकारी प्रदान करने में सक्षम है।

कई चरण में हुए इसके प्रायोगिक परीक्षणों के दौरान स्मार्ट केन से प्रयोगकर्ता के चोटिल व दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होने के मामले में 75-80 फीसदी तक की कमी देखने को मिली है। प्रो. बालाकृष्णन बताते हैं कि प्रयोग में आसान इस छड़ी में लीथियम-आयन बैटरी है जिससे इसे एक बार चार्ज कर 4-6 दिनों तक इस्तेमाल किया जा सकेगा। उनके अनुसार केन के इस्तेमाल से नेत्रहीनों की दूसरों पर निर्भरता भी कम होगी। केन की कार्यप्रणाली के बारे में प्रो. बालकृष्ण कहते हैं कि सामान्य छड़ी से जहां सिर्फ जमीन पर पड़ी वस्तु की ही जानकारी मिल पाती है और घुटने से ऊपर की रेलिंग, पेड़, कुर्सी, टेबल आदि के बारे में पता लगाना मुश्किल होता है। जबकि, स्मार्टकेन सभी दिशाओं में मौजूद वस्तुओं की सूचना देने में कारगर है। अवरोध के नजदीक आने पर इसका वाईब्रेटर तेजी से कंपन करने लगता है।

आइआइटी के अधिकारियों के मुताबिक इस केन के निर्माण में कुल लागत 10 हजार के करीब पड़ती थी लेकिन औद्योगिक निर्माण व लंदन के द वेलकम ट्रस्ट द्वारा मिले 450,000 यूरो की सहायता से यह बाजार में डेढ़ से दो हजार में ही उपलब्ध होगी। उन्होंने उम्मीद जताई की सरकारी सहायता से इसकी कीमत और भी कम की जा सकेगी।

45 फीसदी वाले भी करेंगे इंजीनियरिंग

एआईसीटीई ने दाखिलों में 5 फीसदी की छूट दी

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नोएडा/कानपुर। ऑल इंडिया काउंसिलिंग फॉर टेक्निकल एजुकेशन (एआईसीटीई) ने इंजीनियरिंग और मैनेजमेंट कोर्सों में दाखिले के लिए निर्धारित योग्यता में 5 फीसदी अंकों की छूट दे दी है। अब पीसीएम में सामान्य श्रेणी में 45 फीसदी और आरक्षित श्रेणी में 40 फीसदी पर बीटेक में दाखिला मिलेगा। उत्तर प्रदेश के जीबीटीयू और एमटीयू के कॉलेजों में दाखिले के लिए प्रवेश परीक्षा में न बैठ पाने वाले और कटऑफ के चलते रिजेक्ट किए गए छात्रों को बड़ी राहत मिलेगी। एआईसीटीई की इस छूट से बीटेक के साथ-साथ एमबीए और एमसीए कोर्सों में निराश छात्रों को दाखिला मिलेगा। एआईसीटीई के चेयरमैन एस.एस. मंथा ने कहा कि अर्हता कम करने का निर्णय ले लिया गया है इसकी अधिसूचना जल्द ही जारी कर दी जाएगी। दरअसल एआईसीटीई ने जनवरी 2011 में नए सत्र की योग्यता कटऑफ 50 फीसदी निर्धारित कर दी थी, जिसके कारण यूपी राज्य प्रवेश परीक्षा (एसईई) में हजारों छात्र शामिल नहीं हो पाए थे। साथ ही सैकड़ों छात्रों को डॉक्यूमेंट वैरिफीकेशन की प्रक्रिया में रिजेक्ट कर दिया गया था, जिन्हें अब सीधे दाखिला मिल जाएगा।

इस संबंध में शिकायतें और कई राज्यों के संस्थानों का दबाव एआईसीटीई तक पहुंचा तो 30 जून की कार्य परिषद की बैठक में यह निर्णय लिया गया। इस संबंध में एमटीयू के वीसी प्रोफेसर एस.के. काक का कहना है कि एसआईसीटीई की अधिसूचना के बाद ही इसे लागू किया जाएगा।

- अब पीसीएम में सामान्य श्रेणी में 45 फीसदी और आरक्षित श्रेणी में 40 फीसदी पर बीटेक में दाखिला मिलेगा
- इस छूट से बीटेक के साथ-साथ एमबीए और एमसीए कोर्सों में निराश छात्रों को दाखिला मिलेगा

60 हजार खाली सीटों को राहत

एआईसीटीई की इस छूट से खाली रहने के संकट से जूझने वाली 60 हजार सीटों पर कॉलेजों को राहत मिली है। दरअसल नए सत्र 2011-12 के लिए प्रदेश के 300 से अधिक इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेजों में एक लाख 14 हजार से ज्यादा सीटें हैं। एआईईईई और एसईई काउंसलिंग में शामिल 97 हजार से ज्यादा सीटों पर दाखिले के लिए महज 36 हजार छात्र ही दावेदारी में खड़े हैं। ऐसे में काउंसलिंग के बाद इंजीनियरिंग की 60 हजार से ज्यादा सीटें खाली रहेंगी। इन सीटों को कॉलेज संचालकों को खुद भरना होगा। इसमें यह छूट निजी कॉलेजों की बड़ी मदद करेगी।