

# Newspaper Clips

June 15, 2012

Tribune ND 15/06/2012 P-2

## **CET will encourage coaching, graft, IITs tell PM's adviser**

**ADITI TANDON/TNS**

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 14**

Ahead of their meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh tomorrow, IIT faculty federation representatives today told his Adviser that the proposed common test for admission to engineering colleges from 2013 (CET) would spawn corruption in the school system and lead to more coaching.

In their 45-minute meeting with PM's Adviser TKA Nair, the faculty argued for complete exclusion of school marks weightage from the all-India merit list for engineering admissions. They said Class XII marks should be used as cut-off to determine the eligibility of students to take CET and not for admitting them.

The faculty said the current CET structure would put poor and rural students at a disadvantage and lead to a greater boom in the coaching business.

"By giving 40 per cent weightage to school marks, you are encouraging corruption in the school system. Already there's rampant

### **IITSPEAK**



■ Class XII marks should be used as cut-off to determine the eligibility of students to take CET and not for admitting them

■ The current CET structure will put poor and rural students at a disadvantage and lead to a greater boom in the coaching business

■ By giving 40 per cent weightage to school marks, corruption in the school system will become rampant

cheating in state board exams. Once you agree weightage for school marks, you open the doors for the rich and the powerful to manipulate the system to their wards' advantage. You open doors for corruption and bribery," said Prof YN Singh of IIT Kanpur, who attended the meeting.

The faculty said the PMO was positive and asked them to explain the advantages and disadvantages of the system. "We told them that the advantages were minor and the disadvantages major," Prof Singh said.

The faculty also discussed the issue of erosion of IIT

autonomy by saying that the IIT Senates had objected to the formulation of normalisation of school marks as proposed in the new CET.

"We told the PMO that the proposed formulation can't work. Marks awarded by state boards and even the CBSE differ annually within zones, whereas the normalisation formula proposed in the CET assumes there would be no major fluctuation," Prof Singh said.

The faculty went at length to oppose the multiple-choice question (MCQ) nature of both JEE Main and Advanced as proposed in the CET.

# IITs take their 'woe' to PMO

## Want new admission test after 2014 or later

**NEW DELHI:** A delegation of IIT Faculty federation, who are opposing the government's 'one nation, one examination' proposal for admission into Central funded engineering colleges, including Indian Institutes of Technology, on Thursday placed their concerns before the Prime Minister's Office.

"We are encouraged by the meeting and are hopeful of a positive outcome," secretary of All India IIT Faculty Federation (AIITFF) A K Mittal said after the meeting here.

After hearing the delegation, PM's advisor TKA Nair assured that their concerns would be placed before Manmohan Singh and the Human Resource Development Ministry, a delegation member said.

In a statement later, the AIITFF demanded that since the new CET was decided upon without proper consultation process, each IIT should be given the choice of accepting the proposed test as it is or with specific conditions or riders or reject it and have its own admission processes.

It said that the existing test pattern for IITs and other engineering colleges like JEE and AIEEE should continue at least till 2013 and any changes in the test format should be introduced only from 2014 or later.

The federation insisted that board performance should be used as cut-off only, instead of giving weightage to it after a process of normalisation as has been proposed under the proposed common entrance test.

"Since there is really no fair basis for board normalisation, do not include directly the board performance in merit list preparation. If at all it is to be considered, then give only small weightage (may be 10 per cent) to start with and then gradually increase it over five years to a maximum limit of 30 per cent," the statement said.

The IITs advance test should be subjective type just for the candidates aspiring to join the IITs. "This test will be held on a day different from the main test and will be administered to only shortlisted candidates from the main test by IITs only," the federation said.

**DH News Service**

## IIT faculty body urges PM to repeal CET plan

**New Delhi:** The IIT faculty federation, opposed to the proposed common entrance for admission in IITs and other centrally-funded technical institutes, met senior PMO officials and sought a rollback of the decision on Thursday. The federation is expected to meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh rescind on Friday.

"We are encouraged with the meeting and are hopeful of a positive outcome," A K Mittal, secretary of All India IIT Faculty Federation (AIITFF), said after meeting PM's advisor TKA Nair.

Sources said that the meeting assumes significance in the wake of HRD minister Kapil Sibal virtually ruling out going back on the Centre's new proposal.

The HRD minister, who is currently on a visit to the US, has said that the government has no intent to impinge on the IITs' autonomy.

The government had on May 28 announced that from 2013, aspiring candidates for IITs and other central institutes like NITs and IIITs will have to sit under a new format of common entrance test, which will also take the plus-two board results into consideration. **TNN**

## IIT ROW: FACULTY PANEL MEETS ADVISOR TO PM

**Vanita Srivastava**

■ Vanita.shrivastava@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** A four-member delegation of the the All India IIT Faculty Federation on Thursday met PM's advisor T K A Nair to discuss the new format of the IIT entrance exam. It said the meeting was "fruitful".

"We raised our problems in going ahead with the new entrance exam format from 2013 and related problems including the board marks issue," federation president Prof K Narasimhan said, adding Nair had agreed to communicate their concerns to the PM and the HRD minister.

A delegation comprising representatives of the seven old IITs will meet the PM on Friday.

Meanwhile, a letter by IIT Kanpur director Dr Sanjay Dhande addressed to the chairman of IITs' council and the chairman of board of governors of IIT Kanpur reveals that the recommended process was in contradiction to the senate's stand.

It said the senate had on June 8 discussed the recommendations of the IIT council on the admission from 2013. "The recommended process is in contradiction of the senate's stand...", Dhandhe wrote.

Mail Today, ND  
15/06/2012 P-2

## IIT faculty visits PMO on JEE row

**THE Prime Minister's Office** was apprised of the concerns regarding the new format of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) on Thursday as a delegation of about five IIT faculty members met the adviser to the PM TKA Nair.

During the meeting, which lasted for about 40 minutes, the members of the All India IIT Faculty Federation are reported to have pressed more upon the year of introduction of the entrance test and also the inclusion of Board marks for admission purpose.

The delegation also demanded that the HRD Ministry should now seek the approval of the IIT Senates on the new format of the JEE. They also said that IITs should be given the choice of accepting the test on their own terms or rejecting it altogether.

"The meeting was fruitful as Mr (TKA) Nair heard us out and seem to even agree with us on some of our concerns. Even he felt that maybe 2013 was too early to introduce the new format of the JEE," a member of the Federation who did not wish to be identified said.

On Friday morning, the delegation (made up of representatives of the seven old IITs), is scheduled to meet the PM.

*Mail Today/New Delhi*

Asian Age ND  
15/06/2012

P-4

## IIT FACULTY MEETS PM ADVISER

**New Delhi:** The IIT faculty federation, opposed to the proposed common entrance for admission in IITs and other Centrally-funded technical institutes, on Thursday met senior PMO officials and sought a rollback of the decision. "We are encouraged with the meeting and are hopeful of a positive outcome," secretary of All-India IIT Faculty Federation A.K. Mittal told news agencies after meeting the PM's adviser T.K.A. Nair. The federation is also expected to meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Friday.

## SINGLETEST

# IIT delegation hopeful of rollback decision

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The leaders of the All IIT Faculty Federation (AIIITFF) on Thursday demanded a rollback of the decision of common entrance test for IITs and other Centrally-funded institutes, announced by HRD Minister Kapil Sibal last month.

The AIIITFF delegation, which met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's adviser TKA Nair, said: "We are encouraged with the meeting and are hopeful of a positive outcome and looking forward to meet PM," said AK Mittal, AIIITFF secretary. The federation will meet the Prime Minister on Friday.

The federation has opposed the proposed one-nation-one-test for admission to the IITs, NITs, IIITs and other Centrally-funded technical institutes.

The meetings assume significance in the wake of Sibal virtually ruling out a rollback of the Centre's new proposal. AIIITFF had written to the Prime Minister on May 31 saying that "each IIT is an individual and independent academic entity and should reserve its right to follow its own norms with regards to admissions and other academic matter".

On the other hand, the IIT

Alumni Association is still waiting to hear from the PMO as they too have sought an early meeting with the Prime Minister to sort out the matter.

Both, the faculty federation and alumni association, are hopeful that their regular appeals for retaining autonomy of IITs may be acknowledged soon.

"It must be noted that on all academic matters, the IIT Council is empowered to provide valuable advice/recommendations. Finally, the IIT Senates will need to discuss such advice/recommendations and either ratify and accept it or reject it with proper justifications," said a presentation made by the AIIITFF to the PMO.

At the same time, the faculty members have proposed that any changes should be only from 2014 or later. "Current test pattern (JEE, AIEEE, other State CETs) should continue at least for the year 2013. Sufficient time (at least two years) must be provided for kicking major changes in any admission process. On the board examination results to be considered for merit list under new format there is really no fair basis for results normalisation, and it should not be included at all for merit list," AIIITFF said.

# IIT faculty federation seeks roll back of common entrance test

ET

NEW DELHI: The [IIT](#) faculty federation, opposed to the proposed common entrance for admission in IITs and other centrally-funded technical institutes, today met senior PMO officials and sought a roll back of the decision.

"We are encouraged with the meeting and are hopeful of a positive outcome," secretary of All India [IIT Faculty Federation](#) (AIIITFF) A K Mittal told reporters after meeting PM's advisor T K A Nair.

The federation is also expected to meet Prime Minister [Manmohan Singh](#) tomorrow expressing reservation to the common test.

Today's meeting assumes significance in the wake of HRD Minister [Kapil Sibal](#) virtually ruling out going back on the Centre's new proposal.

[AIIITFF](#) had written to the Prime Minister on May 31 saying that "each IIT is an individual and independent academic entity and should reserve its right to follow its own norms with regards to admissions and other academic matter".

Sibal, who is currently on a visit to the US, has said that the government has no intent to impinge on the autonomy of the IITs.

The government had on May 28 announced that from 2013, aspiring candidates for IITs and other central institutes like NITs and IIITs will have to sit under a new format of common entrance test, which will also take the plus-two board results into consideration.

Sibal had claimed that it was approved without dissent at a council consisting of the IITs, the IIITs and the NITs.

Delhi IIT alumni association today shared a letter with the press and addressed to HRD Minister Kapil Sibal which shows IIT Kanpur's dissent over the council's decision of adopting the new test format.

# Statesman ND, 15/06/2012

P-4

## **IIT faculty delegation meets PM's advisor**

**NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE:** Members of the All India IIT Faculty Federation (AllITFF) today met Mr TKA Nair, advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, on issues related to the Common Entrance Test (CET). The faculty members are likely to meet the Prime Minister tomorrow.

The representatives of the federation told Mr Nair that the autonomy of the IITs should be kept intact and any changes should be implemented only from 2014 or later. They said the current test pattern of JEE, AIEEE, other state CETs should continue at least for 2013 and sufficient time of at least two years must be provided for kicking in major, sweeping changes in any admission process of such high stakes.

Mr A K Mittal, AllITFF general secretary, said after discussions if at all the Class XII Board exam results were to be considered little weightage (may be 10 per cent) should be given to start with and then gradually it can be increased over 5 years to a maximum limit of 30 per cent. Till then the government should make all efforts to bring in homogeneity in the various boards across the country. **sns**

# One nation, one test, warring IITs



## Smart caFE

VIKRAM CHAUDHARY

Last month the ministry of human resource development, under Kapil Sibal, decided to switch to a common entrance test for all the IITs, NITs and IIITs from 2013 onwards—a fact that has split the IITs. The new pattern also includes class XII marks in the selection process. Let's get into the details of the devil.

### What is IITJEE?

The Indian Institute of Technology Joint Entrance Examination is an annual college entrance examination. It is one of the toughest engineering entrance exams globally, with a success rate of 1 in 45. In fact, such is the competition level that most students begin preparations as early as in class IX, thanks mostly to the various coaching centres across the country which promote such training classes. Candidates who qualify in the IITJEE can apply for admission to the Bachelor of Architecture (BArch), Bachelor of Design (BDes), Bachelor of Technology (BTech), Dual Degree (Integrated Bachelor of Technology and Master of Technology), Integrated MSc (Master of Sciences) and Integrated MSc Tech (Master of Sciences and Technology) courses in 15 IITs, ISM Dhanbad and IT-BHU. Currently, IITJEE is an objective-type test with multiple choice questions, a pattern that the IITs themselves wish to change in favour of more subjective inputs.

### What is AIEEE?

The All India Engineering/Architecture Entrance Examination is the largest entrance exam in the world conducted on a single day. Close to 12 lakh students appeared for AIEEE last year. Students get admission to various National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and state-level institutes after clearing AIEEE. AIEEE is conducted

by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

### What is the nature of the common entrance test being suggested as a replacement?

The proposed common entrance test is called the Indian Science Engineering Eligibility Test (ISEET). According to sources, it is modelled on the lines of SAT and is expected to do away with multiple entrance examinations and thereby reduce the stress levels of students. ISEET will have two papers on the same day: ISEET Main (objective type) and ISEET Advance (problem-solving ability). The results will be based on a student's performance in the

### How have different IITs responded to ISEET?

As many as five IIT senates have opposed the move, seeing this as taking academic control away from IITs. IIT Kanpur has been quite vocal against ISEET and has even decided to hold its own admission test. IIT Delhi might choose to opt for a separate admission process too, and IIT Bombay doesn't buy the government's plan either. IIT Kharagpur's director Damodar Acharya, though, has made it publicly clear that the institution does not have any objection to the Centre's move to conduct a common entrance test. He says that the new format would help rural students get admission into the

IIT Madras and IIT Guwahati have, until now, backed the government.

As for IIT Kanpur's bold move, if it finds itself standing alone, it may have to toe the government's line over time. It also remains to be seen whether IIT Kanpur can separate itself from JEE legally.

### Is the bold claim on the ISEET website, that the test will "reduce the stress levels of students", justified?

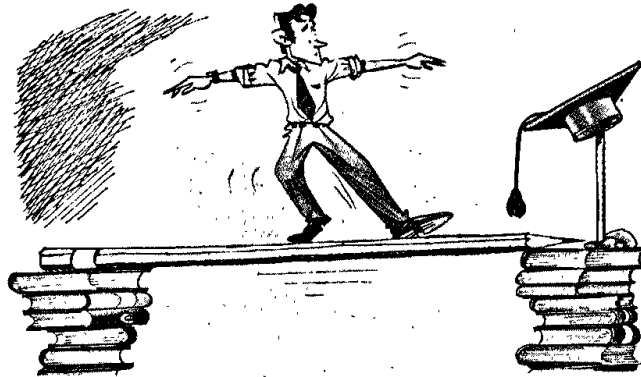
Supporters of a single test argue that, at present, students have to prepare for various tests and this results in higher stress levels for them. Taking only one test will reduce the stress. Detractors of the new formula contest that taking two competitive tests in a single day (Main and Advance) will be psychologically draining. Plus, if an engineering aspirant misses out the test on the stipulated day, he/she stands to lose a full year under the new system while the older one offers more alternatives.

As for the IIT Kharagpur director's contention that the new format would help rural students, it is counter-argued that there is no proof of the same. On the contrary, ISEET Advance (problem-solving and aptitude test) might prove to be difficult for such rural students who have not had quality schooling.

As for holding IITJEE primarily responsible for the mushrooming of coaching centres, our columnist K Vaidya Nathan wrote on June 13: "There is a wrong impression created that the IITJEE is primarily responsible for pushing students towards coaching. A study published in the *Journal of Indian Education* has revealed that three out of four students in a set of Delhi schools enrolled in science streams were taking private tuitions or attending coaching classes for taking the board exam. A non-government organisation pointed out earlier this year that even primary school students in many states seek coaching or private tuitions." Today, education is a costly affair all-around.

### Will the number of students who take ISEET far exceed those taking AIEEE and IITJEE?

Close to 5 lakh students take the IITJEE and 12 lakh take the AIEEE. Considering that there is an overlap between the students who take both these exams, the number of ISEET takers may not be higher, unless the 40% weightage for board exam results attracts more students to the new test.



ROHINIT PHORE

class XII board exam (40% weightage), ISEET Main (30%) and ISEET Advance (30%). However, the weightage given to board scores can increase.

Different states' board exams can and do have different scoring patterns (critics say 95% in Tamil Nadu board is probably not as good as even 85% in CBSE board), so the HRD ministry has proposed a mathematical 'normalisation'—a committee headed by T Ramasami, secretary, Department of Science & Technology, has demonstrated with the help of the Indian Statistical Institute that school scores across various boards can be normalised through a statistical process. But critics argue that the HRD ministry should standardise class X and class XII board exams before they decide to use them for any entrance exams!

ISEET will be conducted by CBSE.

IITs, by helping reduce the importance of coaching. "The proposed new JEE system would help students from rural areas and girls as with their effort and performance in school they will get a chance to enter into professional education," he said.

But this statement contradicts the stand taken by the IIT Kharagpur senate. The IIT Kharagpur faculty has added that the trust IITJEE has earned over many decades is due to the evolution of its processes and the unflinching devotion of IITs' faculty and staff, so any test leading to ranking in IIT admissions must be wholly owned by IITs. Although the HRD minister Kapil Sibal has said that the government has no intention of infringing on the autonomy of the IITs, the Faculty Federation and Alumni Associations of the IITs want the Prime Minister to intervene in the matter.

# theirview



## THE SCEPTIC

Sandipan Deb

is a senior journalist and editor who is interested in puzzles of all forms.

# The sublimity of brand IIT

**Fairness is the cornerstone of the IIT system; the aim of any change has to be to maintain that purity**

On this Kapil Sibal-IIT controversy over the single engineering entrance test issue, I used to be on the "Save JEE, save IIT" side, but now, I must confess, I am not. I just think all parties should mull it over a bit more. What Sibal is suggesting has several good points which the other side is refusing to acknowledge. However, if he bulldozes his proposal through, it may not fully serve its stated purpose and could even hurt the IIT system in the long run.

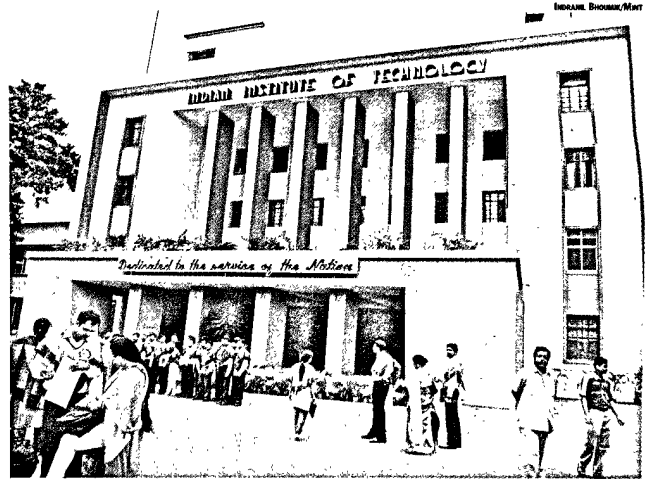
To start with Sibal's rhetoric—the "one nation, one test" slogan, with its implicit promise that this will significantly reduce mental and financial stress on engineering aspirants who have to currently sit for a multiplicity of tests. The truth is, Sibal is merging only two tests, JEE and AIEEE—which are for centrally funded engineering institutes, namely the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and the Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs). State governments are free to adapt or reject the proposal for their own colleges, and several may reject it (Tamil Nadu already has). And private institutes are anyway out of its ambit. However, the other side is also wrong when it fumes that now the student will be stressed out even more because his future will depend upon his performance on just one day, when he appears for the common test. The test will be initially held twice a year, and later, three or four times annually, giving the student the chance to improve his scores. This is fair.

The proposed test will have two parts—the JEE-Main and the JEE-Advanced. JEE-Main will test the candidate's critical thinking and reasoning ability. JEE-Advanced will be on physics, chemistry and maths, like the current JEE and AIEEE are. Now,

the twist. The marks the student gets in JEE-Main carry 50% weightage, and his class XII board marks carry the rest 50. Only the top 50,000 churned out by this formula will be considered for an IIT seat. Of these 50,000, the top 10,000 performers in JEE-Advanced will get into IIT. For NITs and IIITs, the ranks will be calculated thus: 40% weightage to class XII marks, 30 to JEE-Main, 30 to JEE-Advanced.

Why tinker around at all? Quite simply, there is widespread agreement that the quality of the IIT student has dropped over the years. Ask anyone who has taught in or been hiring from IITs. The common complaint about current IITians is that they seem less bright and less equipped with soft skills than those who graduated till 15 or 20 years ago. Also, mostly everyone agrees on the reason for this: brutally focused coaching classes, which thrive on the IIT craze Indian parents suffer from. So at the age 15 or 16, lakhs of teenagers are thrust into a system which emphasizes rote learning over everything else—not only any conceptual understanding of a subject, but even a normal life (sports, films, hanging out with friends, dating). This system produces hordes of cyborgs who are good for only one thing—cracking JEE. Also, in this desperate race, the student pays hardly any attention to the formal schooling system and the board exams.

I believe the JEE-Main concept is a great idea, since it will test the candidates' general intelligence and coaching classes can't help much there. Also, IITs will have full freedom to set the JEE-Advanced paper and IIT admissions will be decided purely on the basis of performance in this paper. Of course, you'll qualify for consideration by an IIT only after you've passed through the board



marks+JEE-Main filter.

So why should not Sibal's proposal be supported wholeheartedly? After all, JEE needs to be reworked, since the coaching classes have subverted the current format. What, however, is dangerous, is the board angle.

The government has solved the problem of comparing marks from different boards by choosing percentile scores obtained and not actual marks. But the real apple and orange are the IIT entrance test and a board exam: they are very different in objective, format and skills required. IITs already have a 60% cut-off in the board exams; that is enough weightage by itself. Under the new system, someone whose brain is superbly geared for engineering, may not get a chance to be considered for an IIT seat because, even though he has scored 99 percentile in his science subjects, in Hindi, he has 51. This is wrong. Also, in state board exams, cheating and question paper leakages are not uncommon. It is

often possible for the politically powerful and the rich to manipulate results. Indeed, at one time, IITs used to grant automatic admission to the top 10 rank holders in any board. This was scrapped, precisely for these reasons.

Lastly, will the coaching classes become less powerful? Yes, but not significantly. They are already adapting, providing coaching for board exams too, and their fees will only go up. Life isn't going to get much easier for the engineering aspirant.

It is imperative that the weightage given to board marks be lowered, halved at the very least, both while selecting the 50,000 that IITs will choose from, and for admission to NITs and IIITs (where the boards have a 40% weightage). Perfect fairness is the cornerstone of the IIT brand. The overriding aim of any new system has to be to maintain that purity.

Comments are welcome at [theirview@livemint.com](mailto:theirview@livemint.com)



# Senate meeting on reforms likely to be held on June 27

Bhavya Dore

■ bhavya.dore@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The senate of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) is expected to meet on June 27 at a special meeting to discuss the contentious issue of the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) reforms from next year. Reforms, which include using board exam marks in a first level of screening and having a single engineering admission test, were announced by the human resources development ministry last month.

The IIT-B senate members will debate and vote on the IIT council's decision on whether to adopt the reforms after the insti-

## MEMBERS TO VOTE ON IIT COUNCIL'S DECISION

■ The IIT-B senate members will debate and vote on the IIT council's decision on whether to adopt the reforms after the institute's director Devang Khakhar gives his final approval for the date.  
 ■ "The meeting will most likely be

on June 27. The director had earlier indicated he would be free during this week," said a faculty member on Tuesday

■ IIT-Kanpur had passed a resolution last week, opting for its own admission test following displeas-

ure with the new test format. Next year's two-step JEE will be conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education, not the IITs.  
 ■ IIT-B had delayed the meeting as the campus was shut for the holidays

tute's director Devang Khakhar gives his final approval for the date. "The meeting will most likely be on June 27. The director had earlier indicated he would be free during this week," said a faculty member on Tuesday.

IIT-Kanpur had passed a resolution last week, opting for its own admission test following dis-

pleasure with the new test format. Next year's two-step JEE will be conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education, not the IITs.

IIT-B, which has yet to make a stand on the issue, had delayed the meeting as the campus was shut for the holidays.

The IIT-B senate had passed

a resolution in March, opposing the reforms on various grounds. In May, an internal committee forwarded a proposal to remove board exams from the equation, suggesting a two-stage screening process.

In the mean time, an article, due to appear in the forthcoming issue of scientific journal

Current Science, by an IIT-B faculty member has flayed the reforms.

"Institutions should have the freedom to use their own criteria, duly generated from their internal debates and from suitably empowered academic senates or councils, for admission," writes Anurag Mehra in the Current Science piece.

"The government should therefore refrain from enforcing ideas, such as a "single, national admission test", that affect institutional academic autonomy and mandates."

IIT-B director Devang Khakhar denied a date had been set for the meeting and said there was no update on the issue.

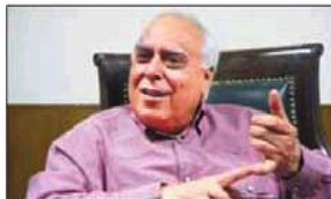
Vanita Srivastava

In the world of education, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) is a globally recognised Indian brand and so it is hardly surprising that there is so much rush to join them. I went to IIT, so did my husband and father. To keep that 'tradition' alive, I wanted my son to join IIT. And like many other parents, I moved to Kota, considered the 'Mecca' of IIT coaching, with my son. But what I saw there was alarming: students bunked regular school and prepared only for the IIT entrance exams.

My son was in Kota for six months and during that period, he attended school only twice — just to give his exams. It was only after he fared badly in his half-yearly school exams, I realised that I should allow him to go back to school full time. Yes, IIT is a prestigious tag but the cost of keeping a young child out of school could be disastrous: what if, even after trying his best, he failed to crack the tough entrance test?

## Restoring the balance

The new IIT admissions plan gives schools their due importance



■ He's got the right idea: Sibal

Thanks to that experience, I now understand why human resource development minister Kapil Sibal is so keen to implement a new admission system, which will take into account a candidate's score in his Class 12 boards. The new JEE pattern will give

schools their due importance. Although the main exam would be a filtering exam, by giving 50% weightage to board marks, it gives students a solid reason to take school education seriously.

Going back to my experience in Kota, I remember the downcast face of a boy who scored 96% in his Class 12 boards but failed to clear the IIT entrance exam. Isn't it strange that even after scoring 96% in the boards, the child was so unhappy? Such reactions only prove that there is something wrong in our school system: it is not helping students realise their dreams.

If our schools had the skill to groom a child for competitive exams, why would a child go for coaching? At the same time, we should not blame the coaching institutes for

damaging our educational system because the fault lies within us. In fact, many of our schools have tie-ups with coaching institutes. However, the proposed IIT admission system will not end the coaching business. But, at least, they would be forced to put equal stress on school exams. Many old-timers remember the old JEE pattern when school exams were as important as the IIT entrance tests.

The normalisation of marks a student gets in his/her board exams on percentile basis is a good concept, but it should not be introduced without any empirical data. Moreover, 2013 is too early to transport any solution from the laboratory to the field.

It would be an injustice to all those students who have been preparing for two years on a particular pattern and will now face a different marking system. At the same time, the go-it-alone approach that some IITs are taking would also be difficult to sustain.

■ vanita.srivastava@hindustantimes.com

# Powered by electrical car, IIT-B students all set to win the race

**115KM AN HOUR** A team of 60 students has built the car to participate in Formula Student, a competition in the UK in July

HT Correspondent  
 ■ hitmetro@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** Low to the ground, with a sleek body and shiny metal parts, the formula one-style race car launched by students of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) on Thursday, had all the trappings of a professional race car.

Students claimed that EVO 1, as the car is called, is the first electrical race car built by students in the country.

Following the launch on Thursday, the car will be showcased alongside other student race cars at Formula Student, a competition in the UK in July. Previous cars built at the institute have all been fuel-powered cars.

IIT-B students decided to design an electrically-powered car this time with a view on sustainability. "We chose to build an electric car because that's where the global industry is going," said Prateek Sharma, a final year student and project manager of the IIT Bombay Racing Team.

The team, comprising 60 students from various departments, had previously built an all-terrain vehicle, which won multiple awards at a national competition in February. The EVO 1 was built with industry sponsorship at a cost of Rs15 lakh. The car can achieve a maximum speed of up to 115km per hour and weighs 280kg.

"We are delighted we have come so far," said Rangan Banerjee, dean of research and development at IIT-B. "I have seen the passion with which students have been working and learning by doing."

IIT-B students will be taking part in Formula Student after a three-year gap.

## ABOUT EVO 1

**Evo 1**, as the car is called, is the first electrical race car built by students in the country, claimed the IIT-B team

Following the launch on Thursday, the car will be showcased alongside other student race cars at Formula Student, a competition in the UK in July. Previous cars built at the institute have all been fuel-powered cars

The team, comprising 60

students from various departments, had previously built an all-terrain vehicle, which won multiple awards at a national competition in February

The EVO 1 was built with industry sponsorship at a cost of Rs15 lakh

The car can achieve a maximum speed of up to 115km per hour and weighs 280kg.

"We chose to build an electric car because that's where the global industry is going."

PRATEEK SHARMA, IIT-B student and project manager of the team

"We are delighted we have come so far. I have seen the passion with which students have been working."

RANGAN BANERJEE, dean of research and development at IIT-B



■ The team of IIT-B students poses with the electrical car on Thursday.

PRAFUL GANGURDE

## Senate meeting on reforms likely to be held on June 27

Bhavya Dore  
 ■ bhavya.dore@hindustantimes.com

**MUMBAI:** The senate of the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) is expected to meet on June 27 at a special meeting to discuss the contentious issue of the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) reforms from next year. Reforms, which include using board exam marks in a first level of screening and having a single engineering admission test, were announced by the human resources development ministry last month.

The IIT-B senate members will debate and vote on the IIT council's decision on whether to adopt the reforms after the insti-

### MEMBERS TO VOTE ON IIT COUNCIL'S DECISION

- The IIT-B senate members will debate and vote on the IIT council's decision on whether to adopt the reforms after the institute's director Devang Khakhar gives his final approval for the date.
- "The meeting will most likely be

tute's director Devang Khakhar gives his final approval for the date. "The meeting will most likely be on June 27. The director had earlier indicated he would be free during this week," said a faculty member on Tuesday.

IIT-Kanpur had passed a resolution last week, opting for its own admission test following dis-

pleasure with the new test format. Next year's two-step JEE will be conducted by the Central Board of Secondary Education, not the IITs.

IIT-B, which has yet to make a stand on the issue, had delayed the meeting as the campus was shut for the holidays.

The IIT-B senate had passed

on June 27. The director had earlier indicated he would be free during this week," said a faculty member on Tuesday

a resolution in March, opposing the reforms on various grounds. In May, an internal committee forwarded a proposal to remove board exams from the equation, suggesting a two-stage screening process.

In the mean time, an article, due to appear in the forthcoming issue of scientific journal

Current Science, by an IIT-B faculty member has flayed the reforms.

"Institutions should have the freedom to use their own criteria, duly generated from their internal debates and from suitably empowered academic senates or councils, for admission," writes Anurag Mehra in the Current Science piece.

"The government should therefore refrain from enforcing ideas, such as a "single, national admission test", that affect institutional academic autonomy and mandates."

IIT-B director Devang Khakhar denied a date had been set for the meeting and said there was no update on the issue.

# आईआईटी फेडरेशन ने रखे सात सुझाव

● अमर उजाल ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। आईआईटी फैकल्टी फेडरेशन के पदाधिकारियों ने बृहस्पतिवार को प्रधानमंत्री के सलाहकार टीकेएनैयर से मुलाकात कर उनके सामने प्रस्तावित संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा के संबंध में सात मुद्दों पर असहमति जताते हुए जरूरी कदम उठाने की मांग की। फेडरेशन के सचिव अतुल मित्तल ने बताया कि बांकीत सकारात्मक रही। शुक्रवार को इसी मुद्दे पर फेडरेशन के पदाधिकारी मनमोहन सिंह से मुलाकात करेंगे।

फेडरेशन द्वारा वर्ष 2013 से प्रस्तावित संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा के संबंध में नैयरको दिए गए पत्र में जिन मुद्दों को प्रमुखता से उठाया गया है उसमें आईआईटी की स्वायत्तता को ध्यान में रखते हुए विभिन्न सीनेटके सुझावों के आधार पर प्रवेश परीक्षा के पैटर्न में बदलाव किए जाने, परीक्षा को वर्ष 2014 से लागू करने, बोर्ड के अंक का इन्स्टीट्यूट केवल कट ऑफ के रूप में

● आज प्रधानमंत्री से मिलेंगे फेडरेशन के पदाधिकारी

● संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा के सात मुद्दों पर जताई असहमति

किए जाने की मांग रखी है। फेडरेशन ने यह भी सुझाव दिया है कि प्रवेश में बोर्ड के अंक का महत्व देना भी है तो उसे दस प्रतिशत से शुरू करके धीरे धीरे बढ़ाना चाहिए। फेडरेशन ने इंटर के विभिन्न बोर्डों के अंक के पर्सेंटाइल पर भी सवाल खड़ा किया है। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि यदि पूरे देश में एक ही परीक्षा कराने की बात है तो इंटर बोर्ड को भी एक करने की बात क्यों नहीं करते हैं। फैकल्टी फेडरेशन ने आईआईटी को छोड़कर बाकी सभी संस्थाओं में प्रवेश का आधार केवल मेन पेपर को बनाने का भी सुझाव दिया है।

## पीएम के सलाहकार से मिले आईआईटी फेडरेशन प्रतिनिधि

नई दिल्ली। आईआईटी में सिंगल एंट्रेंस टेस्ट का विरोध कर रहे ऑल इंडिया आईआईटी फेडरेशन के प्रतिनिधियों ने गुरुवार को प्रधानमंत्री के सलाहकार टीकेए नायर से मुलाकात कर इसकी खामियां गिनाईं। वे इस सिलसिले में शुक्रवार को प्रधानमंत्री डा. मनमोहन सिंह से भी मिलेंगे।

फेडरेशन के सचिव ए. के. मित्तल ने बताया कि बैठक सकारात्मक रही। हमने

सिंगल एंट्रेंस टेस्ट की तमाम कमजोरियों से प्रधानमंत्री के सलाहकार को अवगत कराया है। हमारी मुलाकात से पहले वे तमाम तथ्यों से पीएम को अवगत कराएंगे। उन्हें पीएम से सकारात्मक पहल की उम्मीद है। प्रतिनिधियों ने मुलाकात के दौरान सिंगल एंट्रेंस टेस्ट का कड़ा विरोध किया और मांग की कि आमूलचूल बदलाव के बगैर इसे लागू नहीं किया जाना चाहिए।

# एक परीक्षा के विरोध में पीएमओ पहुंची आईआईटी फैकल्टी

एजेंसी | नई दिल्ली

तकनीकी संस्थानों में एक संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा के विरोध में आईआईटी फैकल्टी फेडरेशन के सदस्य गुरुवार को प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय पहुंचे। उन्होंने अपने विचार पीएमओ के अधिकारियों के सामने रखे। वे शुक्रवार को प्रधानमंत्री से मिलेंगे।

प्रधानमंत्री के सलाहकार टीकेए नायर से चर्चा के बाद फेडरेशन के सचिव एके मित्तल ने कहा, 'हमने संयुक्त परीक्षा का निर्णय वापस लेने की मांग की है। हमारा मानना है कि हरेक आईआईटी स्वतंत्र संस्था है और प्रवेश तथा अन्य शैक्षिक मामलों को लेकर अपने मानदंड तय कर उनके आधार पर काम करने का हक रखता है। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल पहले ही संयुक्त परीक्षा के प्रस्ताव से कदम पीछे खींचने की संभावना से इनकार कर चुके हैं।

## फेडरेशन की मांग

- » हरेक आईआईटी को संयुक्त परीक्षा का प्रस्ताव मंजूर करने, कुछ शर्तों के साथ उसे स्वीकार करने या नामंजूर करने का विकल्प दिया जाए।
- » 2014 या उसके बाद से परीक्षा का बदलाव लागू किया जाए, 2013 में मौजूदा व्यवस्था लागू रखी जाए।
- » बोर्ड की परीक्षा के प्रदर्शन को केवल कट ऑफ की तरह लिया जाए न कि वेटेज दिया जाए।
- » बोर्ड परीक्षा के नंबर को वेटेज देना हो तो बहुत कम 10 फीसदी दें, फिर धीरे-धीरे बढ़ाएं।
- » दो स्तरीय परीक्षा में एडवांस परीक्षा केवल आईआईटी के लिए हो, बाकी के लिए मेन परीक्षा।

# प्रधानमंत्री से आज मिलेंगे आईआईटी शिक्षक

## आईआईटी फैकल्टी के सदस्य दिल्ली पहुंचें

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। इंजीनियरिंग संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा को लेकर सब तरफ से निराश आईआईटी शिक्षकों ने अब प्रधानमंत्री डा. मनमोहन सिंह का सहारा लिया है। शुक्रवार को उनसे मुलाकात करने के लिए चेन्नई, कोलकाता, कानपुर, खड़गपुर व मुंबई आईआईटी के फैकल्टी सदस्यों ने यहां पहुंचने के बाद दिल्ली आईआईटी में डेरा डाल दिया है।

पता चला है कि राष्ट्रपति चुनाव की गतिविधियों के चलते आईआईटी शिक्षकों को प्रधानमंत्री के यहां से कोई निश्चित समय नहीं मिला है। शुक्रवार को उन्हें कभी भी बुलाया जा सकता है। दरअसल प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय के सूत्रों के अनुसार इस मामले पर आईआईटी शिक्षकों से मिलने से पहले वे मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री कपिल सिब्बल से मिलना चाहते हैं, क्योंकि सिब्बल ने आईआईटी शिक्षकों की मांग को अमेरिका जाने से पहले ही सिरे से खारिज कर दिया था। उसके बाद शिक्षकों ने सिब्बल पर संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा प्रणाली लागू करने के पीछे आईआईटी की स्वायत्तता भंग करने का आरोप लगाया था। अब शिक्षकों को बता दिया गया है कि फैसला सिब्बल का व्यक्तिगत नहीं है, बल्कि आईआईटी काउंसिल का फैसला है और वहां पर



► मंत्रालय के अधिकारी ने कहा, सीनेट नहीं, आईआईटी काउंसिल के फैसले को ही अंतिम मानेगी सरकार  
► शुक्रवार को देखा जाना है शिक्षकों की कितनी सुनी जाती है फरियाद

सभी आईआईटी के अध्यक्ष व निदेशक भी मौजूद थे।

मंत्रालय ने कानपुर आईआईटी के सीनेट की उस धमकी का भी तोड़ निकाल लिया है जिसमें संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा का बहिष्कार कर अलग से परीक्षा आयोजित करने का फरमान जारी किया गया था। मंत्रालय के अधिकारी का कहना है कि यह सीनेट के दायरे में नहीं आता और सरकार आईआईटी काउंसिल के ही फैसले को अंतिम मानेगी। अब देखना है कि शुक्रवार को आईआईटी शिक्षकों को कितना महत्व दिया जाता है। यदि परीक्षा को अगले वर्ष से टाला जाता है तो, आईआईटी काउंसिल को फिर से बैठक बुलानी पड़ेगी।

इस बैठक को लेकर छात्रों से कहीं ज्यादा कोचिंग सेंटरों में बेचैनी देखी जा रही है, क्योंकि अगले माह से कोचिंग चालू होनी है, मगर उनका पाठ्यक्रम कौन सा होगा, यह तय नहीं है। यदि इंटर के प्राप्तांकों का मूल्यांकन हटाया जाता है तो फिर आईआईटी कोचिंग सेंटरों को अपने पाठ्यक्रमों में बिना कोई परिवर्तन किए तैयारी करने वाले कक्षाओं की शुरू करने में कोई दिक्कत नहीं होगी। यदि फैसला नहीं टला तो कोचिंग सेंटरों को नई प्रवेश परीक्षा के हिसाब से नया पाठ्यक्रम तैयार करना होगा।

Tribune ND  
15/06/2012 P-7

## No Haryana quota in Delhi IIT extension campus

**TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE**

**ROHTAK, JUNE 14**

The IIT, Delhi, campus in Haryana would not have any reservation quota for students belonging to Haryana, said Congress MP from Rohtak Deepender Singh Hooda, who is also a parliamentary member of the IIT Advisory Council.

Deepender Hooda maintained that as per the IIT's policy, there was no state-wise reservation in admissions, irrespective of their location. It may be pertinent to mention here that IIT Delhi has decided to set up a campus in the Rajiv Gandhi Education City at Rai village of Sonapat district under its expansion plan.

### ONE-ON-ONE GUIDANCE

## Each Student to Get Mentored at IIM-Calcutta

**DEVINA SENGUPTA**  
BANGALORE

IIM-Calcutta is considering a proposal to get each of its 450 students mentored by a designated alumnus over the two-year MBA. The proposal is still in the making, but if passed by the institute, each student will get his/her personal mentor for better guidance, more case studies and research programmes to work on.

"We are yet to formalise the proposal where every student will have one alumnus as a coach, but the plan has been in the anvil for a while," said an IIM-Calcutta professor, who did not wish to be named. "If cleared, it will be rolled out in the next few months." The director of IIM-Calcutta did not respond to an email query sent by ET last Thursday.

The traditional ways of interacting with alumni only on special occasions never really worked for the oldest IIM, the professor said. The rationale behind the one-on-one guidance is that the inherent connect forged with an alumnus is stronger than

the link with a faculty member. A closer network between an alumnus and a student ultimately benefits all during the placement season and fundraising as well.

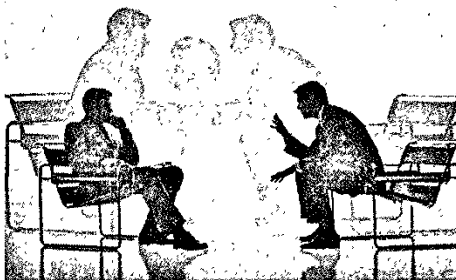
**Rationale behind the plan is that inherent connect forged with an alumnus is stronger than the link with a faculty member**

Sources in the institute say the idea came from the feedback generated by the students and from discussions on how to change mentoring from an unstructured practice to something formal.

IIM-Calcutta will not be the first top-notch management institute to have its students trained by alumni on an individual basis for the entire tenure. The alumni association at ISB is in the process of gathering preferences from 710 students out of a batch of 770 who want to be coached exclusively by one alumnus. A similar form has been sent to the alumni and the expertise of those who volunteer will be matched to the needs of the students.

Although this started as a one-on-one coaching, each mentor has trained two-three students in the last few years. In some cases, there have also been three coaches for one student at ISB. In case, a student is unhappy with his coach, he will get remapped and another coach gets designated.

Others like IIM Lucknow have an alumnus mentoring four students. "The faculty mentorship programme did not work earlier and alumni as coaches were brought in," Devi Singh, director at IIM-Lucknow, said. "Although recruitment is a different process, this form of training does have some impact on the placements."



# Lab-grown vein transplant is new milestone in stem cell research

**PAGE 1**  
**ANCHOR**

**Team led by Indian-origin doctor performs feat in Sweden**

**PRITHA CHATTERJEE**  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 14

**I**n a first, doctors in Sweden have transplanted into the body of 10-year-old girl a vein grown in the laboratory from her own stem cells.

The core team that performed the procedure was led by Dr Suchitra Holgersson, a transplant medicine specialist originally from Mumbai, and included four other doctors from India. The landmark

transplant was published in the British medical journal *The Lancet* on Thursday.

The procedure "could offer a potential new way for patients lacking healthy veins to undergo dialysis or heart bypass surgery without the problems of synthetic grafts or the need for lifelong immunosuppressive drugs", *The Lancet* said.

The child had a blockage in her extrahepatic portal vein, which was obstructing blood supply to her liver. Options



**Dr Suchitra Holgersson**

## MADE FROM WITHIN

- **PROBLEM:** Blockage in 10-year-old's extrahepatic portal vein, obstructing blood supply to liver
- **GRAFT:** 9 cm graft from a deceased donor, all cells removed until only hollow tube remained
- **RECREATION:** Stem cells of two kinds, endothelial and smooth muscle cells, extracted from girl's marrow
- **RESULT:** Manufactured vessel transplanted after incubation, blood flow resumes
- **COMPLICATION:** Blood flow obstructed nine months later, second manufactured vein transplanted

available to doctors included a liver transplant or taking a vein graft from the umbilical cord of a donor, which would have led to permanent dependence on immunosuppressants.

A third alternative was to graft another vein — usually from the leg or neck — on to the liver vein. But this procedure is associated with risks of lower limb disorders, and was not considered a viable option due to the girl's young age. Speaking to *The Indian Ex-*

*press* by phone, Dr Holgersson, a professor in the department of transplant and regenerative medicine at Sahlgrenska Science Park in Gothenburg University, explained the breakthrough procedure:

"We took a 9-centimetre graft from a deceased donor and removed all its original cells, leaving a hollow piece of vein. We then extracted stem cells of two kinds from the bone marrow — endothelial and

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Lab-grown vein transplant

smooth muscle cells — of the little girl, gave it necessary growth factors, and let it incubate for two weeks.

"This 'manufactured vessel' was then transplanted into the girl. 'Blood flow to the liver started immediately after the procedure, and since the stem cells were the patient's own, there was no fear of an adverse immune reaction either, and she needs no drugs," Dr Holgersson said.

A year after the procedure, the girl is a "happy child", Dr Holgersson said. "She had been repeating classes for the last few years, but now she goes to school regularly, her father says she has been doing somersaults, and she is very happy."

Dr Holgersson — a graduate of Mumbai University who moved to Sweden for an M Sc and has been working on transplant medicine for 25 years — and her team see the success of the procedure as a breakthrough that would pave the way for manufacturing other blood vessels and, eventually, organs. But she cautions against jumping to conclusions. Even in this particular case, blood flow from the artificial vessel was ob-

structed nine months after the procedure — when it started pushing against the colon — and a second manufactured vein had to be transplanted.

"We need proper controlled clinical trials, this was just one case. Especially in a country like India, with so many fly-by-night operators promising miracles, this achievement should be dealt with some caution before it is used commercially," Dr Holgersson said.

The team will travel to India in September to meet doctors and visit centres for likely partnerships in multi-centric global trials to develop the procedure further.

"If all goes well, we are also looking at the first manufactured lung transplant within a year at our centre. But now we think our success has to be validated by global trials, and considering the vast disease profile of India where stem cell procedures could help, if performed scientifically, we think it will be very good for India to participate," Dr Holgersson said.

An accompanying comment by doctors from the University College of London has, while acknowledg-

ing the promise of the procedure, raised questions about its cost. The procedure, estimated to have cost \$ 6,000-\$ 10,000, was funded by the Swedish government. UCL's Martin Birchall and George Hamilton added, however, that such procedures may get cheaper with wider use.

Indian experts hailed the achievement but cautioned against seeking "quick solutions". Dr N K Mehra, head of transplant immunology at AIIMS, said, "Many institutions were trying to achieve this feat and trials had been under way with animals, but this is the first significant breakthrough in humans. It will open the floodgates for a whole new channel of treatment with stem cells, and it is great that an Indian-origin scientist has managed it."

A senior official from the Indian Council of Medical Research said, "We are having a hard time regulating 'magic' stem cell solutions in chronic disorders in neurology and cardiovascular diseases. With such an achievement, we are moving to a whole new era of stem cells in manufactured organs and vessels."

Times of India ND 15/06/2012 p-21

# Vein made from own stem cells saves girl

## Team Led By Indian-Origin Researcher Raises Hopes For Bypass, Dialysis Patients

**London:** For the first time, scientists led by an Indian-origin researcher have successfully replaced a major blood vessel in a 10-year-old girl with a vein grown in a lab using her own stem cells.

The pioneering transplant, published in *The Lancet*, marks a further advance in growing body parts in laboratory and offers hopes for patients who lack suitable veins for dialysis or bypass surgery. In the landmark research, a team from the University of Gothenburg in Sweden took a vein from a dead man, stripped of its own cells and then bathed in stem cells from the girl, who



© Andrew Brookes/Corbis

The researchers took a vein from a dead man, stripped of its own cells and then bathed in stem cells from the 10-year-old girl who was suffering from portal vein obstruction. The hepatic portal vein drains blood from the intestines and spleen to the liver

was suffering from portal vein obstruction.

There was a "striking" improvement in her quality of life

after the transplantation, professor Suchitra Sumitran-Holgersson, who led the research, said.

The hepatic portal vein

drains the blood from the intestines and spleen to the liver. The blockage can cause serious complications like lethal variceal bleeding, enlarged spleen, developmental retardation, and even death. To date, attempts to restore portal blood flow using umbilical veins and artificial grafts to build a bridge around the blockage (called meso Rex bypass) have had mixed success.

The Swedish team took a 9cm segment of iliac (groin) vein from the dead donor and removed all living cells, leaving a tube consisting of just the protein scaffolding. This scaffolding was injected with stem cells ob-

tained from the girl's bone marrow. Two weeks after seeding, the graft was re-implanted during a meso Rex bypass procedure.

The girl had no complications from the operation and normal blood flow was immediately restored. In the year after the operation she gained good height and weight. But a year after the procedure, decreased portal blood flow was noted and a narrowing of the graft required a second stem cell-based graft to be done. Since, she has remained well and can walk long distances. She has not developed anti-donor antibodies despite not taking immunosuppressive drugs. 711