

Newspaper Clips

June 19, 2013

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What are the top priorities of the HR Ministry today?

While there are many priorities before the Ministry, the three areas requiring top-most attention are:

- Improving learning outcomes at all levels;
- Meeting the shortage of faculty/teachers at all levels;
- Industry-academia linkages to ensure better employability of our graduates as also skilling of our youth.

Implementing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act - 2009; strengthening secondary education; reducing the gender, social and regional gaps in enrolment, dropouts and improving school retention; improving quality of education through the use of ICT; achieving literacy targets and a synergy between literacy and skill development are some of the priorities in the school sector.

In higher education, increasing our Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) from the present 18.8 per cent to 25.2 by 2017 and reaching 30 per cent by 2020 is a major priority. A national mission on teachers and teaching is also being launched to address current issues such as a lack of availability of qualified teachers and to attract talent into the teaching profession.

My Ministry has notified the National Vocational Qualification

Framework (NVEQF), where professional education imparted by the technical institutions under the university system and polytechnics under the technical boards will provide basic skills required for transforming students as employable.

The Ministry is setting-up an 'Academia-Industry Interface Council': What is the agenda of the Council?

The Academia-Industry Interface Council is an important initiative where we want to promote cutting-edge research, improve the quality of teaching-learning

processes and improve employability of our graduates. The corporate sector can collaborate with the academia with varying funding commitments - ranging from direct ownership and management of institutions to collaborating with higher education institutions in research, faculty development, infrastructure creation, student scholarships and governance. The recommendation by the Narayana Murthy Committee to set up the 'Council for Industry and Higher Education Collaboration' (CIHEC) to facilitate industry-institute collaborations is indeed the way forward.

etc have helped in improving the overall entropy within the system. We have taken several policy decisions to introduce finishing school programmes as supplementary training schools to enhance employability.

With an aim to strengthen the industry-academia tie-up, the government has announced a series of measures including the setting up of an 'incubation fund'. How is that shaping up?

I feel having an industry incubation fund is worth considering though the operational and logistics details need to be worked out. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) also has initiated a scheme where one crore rupees will be provided for starting an incubation centre on the campus if there are matching grants available from the industry. The institute will need to provide about 2500 - 3000 sq ft on the campus for this to happen. Cluster colleges can also participate in this. Research parks, such as the one we have at IIT-Madras, will also play an important role.

How is the Ministry addressing the employability gap in Tier 2 and 3 cities?

We have set up several new higher and technical institutions, including polytechnics during the XI Five Year Plan, which covers the Tier 2 and 3 cities. In addition, the Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP) is bringing about a quality infusion and strengthening the soft power of our state engineering institutions. Recognising the need for IT skills of different sectors, we are setting up 20 new Indian IT institutes in this plan period.

What steps has the government taken to create universities of an international repute in India as there aren't many Indian institutions in the top world rankings?

We need to enhance the

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research capabilities of our institutions and also make them centres of 'knowledge creation' rather than 'knowledge dissemination'. The

The Ministry will also launch the National Employability Enhancement Mission (NEEM) through AICTE. What is its objective?

The objective of NEEM is to offer on-the-job practical training to enhance the employability of a person either pursuing his/her graduation/diploma in any technical or non-technical stream or someone who has discontinued his/her degree or diploma course to increase employability. Any society/trust/company registered under section 25 of Companies Act, 1956 shall be eligible to apply for registration as a NEEM agent. We believe this initiative will bring the educational institutes and industry together for training, internships and consequently better employability.

Ministry of Human Resource Development is in the process of enabling institutions to have collaborations with other institutions globally, so as to help them evolve as 'centres of excellence'. We are also establishing 50 centres of excellence in frontier areas of science.

Calling for greater private sector involvement, you once said that the industry should engage itself more in terms of not only funding, but also skill-development, innovation and entrepreneurship. How can these be achieved?

The target to enhance access to higher education by creating ten million additional seats aligned to the skill needs of the economy, calls for more innovative and viable modes of funding higher education. NVEQF offers students an alternate path that can offer employment and provides an opportunity to acquire a degree or diploma. Having said that, we all know that skill-building can only be imparted by the industry or its associates. We need a greater involvement of the industry not only in providing skills, but also in promotion of innovation and encouragement of entrepreneurship among our youth.

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MM PALLAM RAJU,
MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, in an exclusive interview with **VIREN NAIDU,** discusses the Ministry's various initiatives to foster employment and employability

WE need to transform our institutions from centres of knowledge dissemination to hubs of knowledge creation

Many students who venture into the corporate world aren't job-ready. How can they increase their 'employability quotient'?

The current university education framework develops the student's analytical, reasoning and logical skills, so that he/she is in a position to find meaningful employment. Our university curricula are redundant. It is also true that there are gaps in our education system. Various initiatives to promote industry interaction, mandatory internships, setting up of research parks,



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BTech degree in humanities marries streams, subjects

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: The 40 students who will be enrolled for BTech in humanities from Delhi University in the 2013-14 academic session will get the option of studying at multiple colleges during their undergraduate course. They will also get to choose their own papers under the Meta College concept. Interestingly, one half of their semester will be spent outside the classroom in developing innovations, meeting people, and learning something new.

The ambitious Meta College is an initiative with no precedent in the university system in the country. Launched by DU under its Cluster Innovation Centre in October 2012, CIC is now preparing to admit its second batch for which the application forms will be available online from June 27. The application forms will be available on the website of CIC till July 15.

Only those first-year students who will enrol them-

TEST DATES

Management studies, French, German, Hispanic studies, Italian studies | **June 26**

Music | **July 4, 5**

BEEd, Hindi patrakarita | **June 23**

BTech/BS in innovation (with mathematics and IT), BTech in humanities | **July 21**

selves in a course in a regular DU college or School of Open Learning during the ongoing admission process under the four-year undergraduate programme are eligible to apply. Those who do well in the entrance test will be called for an interview for final selection. The entrance test and interview will carry a value of 75 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively.

The current crop of 40 students pursuing BTech in humanities has reached their second semester in which they have chosen to study subjects of their interest at different colleges of the university. Students in the

first semester studied common papers in mathematical awareness, art of communication, impact of technology: philosophical implications and cultural diversity and linguistic plurality besides research methodology.

In the second semester, these students choose individual papers at North Campus colleges like Shri Ram College of Commerce and Hindu College as well as off-campus colleges and even departments. No more than five students are allowed to study in the same college.

There are students in the first batch like Pallavi Tirky who first took admission in English (honours) in St Stephens and then shifted to BTech in humanities and is at present working on a project on of turning the tribal stories into books for children for which that also had a workshop with Katha. Then there are her peers who are working on various other research projects and who have also worked with policemen and doctors on human skills and sciences.

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Now, suicide-proof ceiling fan

Cardiologist's Contraption With Springs Set To Prevent Deaths

Manjari Mishra | TNN

Jabalpur: When German engineer Philip H Diehi invented the ceiling fan in 1892, he had no clue that apart from providing comfort during summers, his invention will very often be put to use to commit suicide. But there could soon be a remedy.

A Madhya Pradesh cardiologist has invented a suicide-proof ceiling fan. R S Sharma, a professor at the Government Medical College in Jabalpur, calls it "a simple contraption rigged up by using plain common sense".

The inspiration came from a real life experience when a teenaged boy in his neighbourhood committed suicide after failing the Class XII examination. His inconsolable mother kept cursing the day she replaced the table fan with a ceiling fan in his room, Sharma recalled.



Figure in %; Source: National crime records bureau 2011

That set the doctor thinking—how to design a ceiling fan with built-in safety features so that it can't be used as a tool of death. A week of

hard thinking and several trips to the welders and mechanics later, Sharma had come up with a solution.

The device has a hollow metal tube inside the fan's shaft to which the motor and blades are attached. Hinged to the shaft are four heavy springs designed to take an additional weight of 25 kg besides the motor and the blades. The moment the limit set for the optimum weight is exceeded, the springs uncoil, leading to a soft landing of the person without stretching of the neck or straining the noose, explained Sharma.

"Hanging causes dislocation of atlanto axial (upper cervical segment of the spinal cord) and compression on medulla oblongata (upper neck bones) that control vital centres of respiration and heart. But the victims are not aware of it. They normally die due to compression of ca-

rotid arteries (located on both sides of the neck which supply blood to the brain) and the resultant asphyxia. This death could be extremely painful and prolonged as the victim remains suspended in the air till the end comes," he said.

"With the stretchable shaft, the risk of 'feet-above-the-ground' position is eliminated. The maximum harm could be a few bruises," he said.

The professor has applied for patent and hopes this will be used in all homes and hostels. "Worried over the spiraling suicide graph in the IITs, a four-member committee had suggested replacement of ceiling fans with pedestal fans. All they have to do is to install this device which will cost only Rs 450 and breathe easy," said Sharma who is now working for an aesthetic design of his innovative contraption.

HT Mumbai

238 MORE SEATS UP FOR GRABS IN IITs THIS YEAR

Bhavya Dore■ bhavya.dore@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: More than 200 seats have been added this year at Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) across the country, taking the total number of seats available to 9,885. The new counselling brochure for students who clear the Joint Entrance Exam-Advanced (JEE-Advanced), put up on the website on Tuesday, contains details of seat availability, counselling process, etc.

Last year, 9,647 seats were allotted through the JEE-Advanced. This year, the figure has gone up by 238 seats.

“The newer IITs have started a few courses — that’s how the number would have increased,” said HC Gupta, chairperson for JEE 2013. “Starting new courses depends on individual institutes and their faculties.” The number of new seats available through the open category is up from 4,722 to 4,844.

The brochure also spells out the admission process for those who clear the exams when results are announced on June 23: candidates have to clear two exams and also be in the top 20 percentile of their Class 12 board.

HT New Delhi

PIL filed in SC on US surveillance of internet data
NEW DELHI: The issue of the US National Security Agency monitoring internet data of India on Tuesday reached the Supreme Court with a PIL filed seeking its direction to the Centre to initiate action against internet companies for sharing information with foreign authority in “breach” of contract and violation of right to privacy. The PIL, filed by a former dean of Law Faculty of Delhi University, professor S N Singh, alleged such large scale spying by the USA authorities is detrimental to national security and urged the apex court to intervene in the matter.

WANT TO GET INNOVATIVE?



HT Education Correspondent

Cluster Innovation Centre (CIC), a flagship centre of the University of Delhi started in September 2011 with the aim of interlinking academia, society and industry through innovative activities, offers four-year undergraduate programmes - BTech/BS innovation with mathematics and IT and BTech humanities (under Meta college concept). Admission to these courses will start soon.

Students enrolled in any of the regular courses at the university are eligible to apply for admission to the BTech/BS in innovation in mathematics and IT. To apply for BTech humanities, a student needs to be enrolled in any programme of study in any college, School of Open Learning or Non-Collegiate Women's Education Board. The entrance exam form for these courses for the current academic session are available from June 27, 2013.

The last date for submission is July 15, 2013. The entrance exam will be conducted on July 21, 2013. Admission to these courses is through a written exam followed by an interview of the shortlisted students. Forms can be taken from CIC or downloaded from www.cic.du.ac.in or www.du.ac.in

Govt plans to license 'brand Aakash'

CHANGE OF STRATEGY

The government, in its efforts to salvage the Aakash low-cost tablet project, is trying to build it as a brand. To that end it plans to license the brand name. Here's what it entails



- The brand name could be used by both government agencies and private firms to sell their products if they meet the minimum criteria
- Officials say the move will stop the ongoing practice of companies selling below-standard products in the name of Aakash
- Mandating certain basic specifications for the tablet will also help government agencies procure the devices while ensuring quality
- Telecom development agency C-DOT could be roped in to grant licences

For the name

Minimum specifications mandated for any product using Aakash name

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| 7-inch screen | 1 GB of random access memory | 4 GB of internal memory, expandable up to 32 GB | Device should run Android-based operating system, with an option for open to run Linux |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|--|

Any company meeting certain criteria would be able to use the brand

SURABHI AGARWAL
New Delhi, 18 June

Almost on the verge of being buried after a series of faux pas and controversies, the government is now trying to salvage its low-cost tablet project, Aakash, by turning it into a brand name. Any government agency or private company meeting certain criteria and specifications would be able to use the brand, according to government officials directly involved in the matter.

An inter-ministerial panel has finalised a set of specifications for tablets and is in the process of laying down a procedure to license the brand name Aakash.

"The entire Aakash project was a government of India initiative but several companies are driving mileage out of its publicity by selling anything in the name of Aakash," said Rajat

Moona, director general of the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), the government's technology research and development arm.

Private companies can 'license the Aakash logo' if they conform to the set specifications, Moona added. "The Centre for Development of Telematics may be roped in to award the licences, but the proposal is yet to be finalised."

The Aakash project was conceptualised in 2010 by the then Union minister of human resource development (HRD) Kapil Sibal as the world's cheapest tablet costing \$35 (₹2,060 today). This was to be indigenously developed as an educational tool for students. However, several controversies relating to the quality of the product and the delay in its delivery came up soon after the first Aakash tablet was unveiled in October 2011.

Recently, the HRD ministry

said in the future, the government might focus more on building the infrastructure and the educational content rather than developing the hardware. This indicates the government might not go ahead with the earlier plan of distributing five million Aakash tablets after the pilot project involving 100,000 devices.

While the HRD ministry is still to figure out its plan of action with regard to Aakash, the scope of the tablet has expanded beyond educational institutes to segments such as e-governance and other government departments, a government official said.

"To make it easier for a government department to procure such devices and to ensure that certain quality standards are met, we are mandating these minimum specifications," said the official, requesting anonymity.

According to CDAC's

Moona, while the basic specifications of the tablet will remain the same, the respective departments can develop applications relevant to their operations for the tablets.

The inter-ministerial panel will soon release the specifications after some final approvals, Moona added.

The comprises officials from the ministries of HRD, communications and information technology, along with several professors from various Indian Institutes of Technologies and CDAC.

As per the mandate, the tablet will have to have at least a 7-inch capacitive screen with one gigabyte (GB) of Random Access Memory, and 4 GB of internal SD card memory expandable up to 32 GB.

The tablet should be Android-based (Google's mobile operating system) with an option to also support open source software Linux.

Navbharat Times ND 19.06.2013 Education Times p-1

आईटी बोले तो 'आई तरक्की'

आईटी सेक्टर में ऐसे तमाम फील्ड्स हैं, जिनमें स्टूडेंट्स अपनी रुचि और नॉलेज के मुताबिक करियर बना सकते हैं। देश में स्किल्ड मैनपावर की कमी भी यही इशारा करती है कि आईटी का सेक्टर जॉब की दृष्टि से कभी कमजोर नहीं पड़ने वाला है। आइए देखें क्या है इस क्षेत्र में आपके लिए :



आंकड़ों के आधार पर बात की जाए, तो वर्तमान गति से चल रहे आईटी कारोबार को देखते हुए भारत में 2015 तक लाखों आईटी व बीपीओ एक्सपर्ट की जरूरत होगी। यंग जेनरेशन अगर अपने इंटरनेट के मुताबिक सॉफ्टवेयर से जुड़ा कोई कोर्स करती है, तो उनके लिए जॉब के विकल्प हमेशा रहेंगे।

सॉफ्टवेयर डिवेलपमेंट : सॉफ्टवेयर डिवेलपमेंट के

काम से सॉफ्टवेयर इंजीनियर और प्रोग्रामर्स जुड़े होते हैं। इनका काम सॉफ्टवेयर लैंग्वेज में सॉफ्टवेयर विकसित करना है।

सिस्टम एनालिस्ट : इस सेक्टर में कंप्यूटर डिवेलप करने का प्लान बनाया जाता है। ऐसे में अगर आप सिस्टम

एनालिस्ट के रूप में करियर बनाना चाहते हैं, तो सभी तरह के सॉफ्टवेयर और हार्डवेयर की जानकारी हासिल करनी होगी और उसे समय-समय पर अपडेट करते रहना होगा।

डाटा बेस : आज के दौर में किसी भी कंपनी के लिए उनका डाटा काफी मायने रखता है। डाटा के महत्व के कारण डाटाबेस प्रफेशनल्स की मांग तेजी से बढ़ने लगी है, क्योंकि आज हर छोटी-बड़ी कंपनी में डाटा मंटेन करने और उसे जरूरत के मुताबिक अपडेट रखने की कोशिश की जाती है।

सिस्टम ऐडमिनिस्ट्रेटर : सिस्टम ऐडमिनिस्ट्रेटर का काम है कनेक्टिविटी और इंटरनेट की सेवा प्रदान करना। आज हर छोटे-बड़े संस्थान में कंप्यूटर नेटवर्किंग के लिए सिस्टम ऐडमिनिस्ट्रेटर की जरूरत देखने को मिलती है।

ग्रेजुएट कोर्स : आईटी फील्ड में इस लेवल के पॉपुलर कोर्स हैं- बीएससी इन कंप्यूटर साइंस और बैचलर ऑफ कंप्यूटर एप्लिकेशन यानी बीसीए।

इसके अलावा आजकल बीटेक इंफॉर्मेशन टेक्नॉलजी या कम्प्यूटर साइंस का भी क्रेज देखने को मिल रहा है।



पोस्ट ग्रेजुएट कोर्स : मास्टर ऑफ कंप्यूटर एप्लिकेशन यानी एमसीए तीन साल का फुलटाइम पोस्टग्रेजुएट कोर्स है। इस कोर्स को करके स्टूडेंट्स सॉफ्टवेयर इंडस्ट्री की जरूरतों को पूरा करने के काबिल हो सकते हैं।

हार्डवेयर नेटवर्किंग के कोर्स : इस तरह के कोर्सों में कंप्यूटर को रिपेयर करने, असेंबल करने और खराब पुर्जों को बदलने की ट्रेनिंग दी जाती है। ऐसे कोर्स की अवधि सोलह से अठारह महीने होती है।

डोएक कोर्स : भारत सरकार के इंफॉर्मेशन टेक्नॉलजी मिनिस्ट्री के अंतर्गत कार्यरत स्वायत्त संस्था डोएक द्वारा संचालित विभिन्न लेवल के कोर्स करके भी आईटी की दुनिया में स्थान बना सकते हैं।

Hindu ND 18.06.2013 p-14

'Autonomy' threat looms large over Delhi University colleges

Vijetha S.N

NEW DELHI: A while ago, rumours of "autonomy" for Lady Shri Ram College of Delhi University had riled up quite a few people so much so that the administration was forced to take quelling measures.

Now, several worried teachers in the University believe that the Ministry of Human Resource Development will be awarding autonomy status to their best colleges like St. Stephen's, Lady Shri Ram and Shri Ram College of Commerce.

"Once the college has autonomy, it is finished," said Nandita Narain, Mathematics teacher at St. Stephen's.

"It is all about funding un-

der the National Accreditation and Assessment Council; colleges need to maintain an "A" grade and a lower grade will reduce their funding, bring the college to bankruptcy and then the government can arm-twist teachers," she added, explaining that the government was pushing for public-private partnerships in education to privatise education.

The scheme of grading has found opposition on many grounds. "People will be manipulated to arbitrarily award grading so that the college, which has built its reputation after many years of hard work will be forced to sell to the highest bidder," said Ms. Narain, rubbishing the assump-

tion that the colleges themselves were applying for autonomy. "I was in on the meetings of the governing council; there was not even a whisper about applying or even wanting autonomy."

Another reason why the teachers are genuinely worried despite a formal announcement is that the soon-to-be-implemented four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) in DU also started out as a rumour.

"We are being forced to run from pillar to post now after the new structure has been pushed through, we want to take precautions and fight against this now itself," said Abha Dev Habib, a stiff opponent of the FYUP.

Meanwhile, the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has sent out a formal statement saying that it will fight against the move. "The DUTA categorically objects to this perverse move to wean these colleges away from the University in the name of academic and administrative autonomy," said DUTA president Amar Deo Sharma.

"Instead of opening new institutions and expanding the higher education sector, the Delhi Government has found it politically convenient to appropriate DU's colleges. This has happened with the Delhi College of Engineering in the past with disastrous consequences," said DUTA secretary S.D. Siddiqui.