

Newspaper Clips June 24-27 2017

June 27

Experts dwell upon transition metals in organic synthesis

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/chandigarh/experts-dwell-upon-transition-metals-in-organic-synthesis/428207.html>



(From left) Prof SK Mehta, GIAN coordinator; Arun Grover, Vice-Chancellor, Panjab University; Prof Raghuram Rao, Director, NIPER, Mohali; and Prof Roderick Bates from Nanyang Technical University, Singapore, during a workshop at Panjab University in Chandigarh on Monday. tribune Photo: Pradeep Tewari

The second phase of the MHRD Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) programme began here today.

It commenced with one-week international workshop on 'Transition metals in organic synthesis' by Professor Roderick Bates from Nanyang Technical University, Singapore.

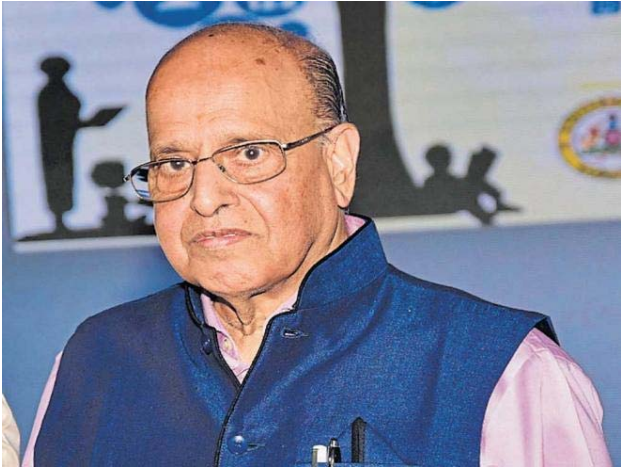
SK Mehta, local GIAN coordinator, welcomed the guests and elaborated the objectives of the GIAN programme. Six GIAN programmes by faculty from the USA, Germany, the UK and Canada were organised during first phase in 2016. Prof Raghuram Rao, Director, NIPER, Mohali, was the chief guest. He deliberated on the enormous headway of metals in the organic synthesis, emphasising upon the role of organometallics as an emerging field.

Complementing the organisers for their meticulous and superlative efforts, Panjab University Vice-Chancellor Arun K Grover, in his presidential remarks, delivered a note on the genesis of the GIAN programme and motivated the participants to follow in the footsteps of the legends and to aim for higher echelons in their research objectives for inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research activities at national and international level.

Deepak Salunke, course coordinator, highlighted the contents of the course.

Kasturirangan-led panel to prepare final draft of education policy

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/619470/kasturirangan-led-panel-prepare-final.html>



The Centre has appointed eminent scientist K Kasturirangan to head a nine-member committee to prepare a final draft of the much-awaited national education policy (NEP).

This comes about a year after a report of a committee, set up under former Cabinet secretary T S R Subramanian, ran into a controversy over some of its recommendations, including the suggestion that university students must “abjure” politics on campuses. The Subramanian Committee was asked to formulate the draft for an NEP.

Following the controversy, the Ministry of Human Resource Development declared the Subramanian Committee report as “further input” for the NEP and continued holding consultations with various stakeholders. Smriti Irani was the then HRD minister.

Kasturirangan headed Isro from 1994 to 2003 and was the director of the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, from April 2004 to 2009. His term as the chancellor of JNU ended last month.

Kasturirangan was also a member of the erstwhile Planning Commission and a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha from 2003–09. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1982, Padma Bhushan in 1992 and Padma Vibhushan in 2000. “The council (Kasturirangan Committee) will begin its work immediately,” the MHRD stated on Monday.

Though it was not clear if the panel has been given a deadline for completing the task, a source said that it may take five to six months for preparing a final draft of the NEP. The MHRD has received “thousands of suggestions” from educationists, teachers, students and other stakeholders.

June 26

Blackouts at IIT Kharagpur: Initiative rolled out to engage students, help them deal with depression; but is it enough?

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/blackouts-at-iit-kharagpur-initiative-rolled-out-to-engage-students-help-them-deal-with-depression-but-is-it-enough-3747995.html>

In April this year, at the end of her four years at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur, 23-year-old Arushi Kesarwani saw something that she had rarely seen in her time there. At exactly 7 pm, the electricity was turned off, deliberately.

She remembers that some exams had ended that day. And now suddenly, there were no lights and no WiFi, so instead of sitting in their rooms and working as they usually did, students came out of their hostels in large numbers and spent their time doing nothing in particular. Some were playing *antakshari*. Many of them were walking around campus, and some were sitting in small groups outside their hostels, chatting and laughing loudly. Kesarwani walked around the stadium with her friends, listening to a DJ who was playing music there. “There was big *junta* there and it was fun,” she says laughing.

When the electricity was turned on 40 minutes later, everyone went back to their hostels and continued with what was left of their day. But Kesarwani remembers thinking that being outside like that felt different. She had got caught up on other things, other than assignments and reading.

This decision for a deliberate blackout came after the painfully sad stories of three students from the campus committing suicide this year (there have been two more suicides at IIT Delhi), obviously telling of a deep problem in educational institutions that we’ve known exists, but have never stopped to seriously address, perhaps until this year.

The perceived success of this one-day event at IIT Kharagpur convinced authorities that they should bust out impromptu decisions like this more often. The institute, in what is being seen as an unusual move, has decided to make these blackouts a regular practice.

Students say that the blackout/digital Sabbath is not yet an everyday session as a lot of websites have reported. But hostel wardens are going to turn the power off for an hour occasionally (“not to save electricity or cut costs,” *Hindustan Times* said helpfully), encouraging students to leave their rooms, devices and books and go out and talk to their friends. As Manish Bhattacharya, the dean of student affairs at IIT Kharagpur put it, this rule is for every student. “Once the lights are turned off, all the students are expected to come out of their room. Normally those students who spend maximum time in their room and do not interact with others, they are also forced to come out of their room and mingle with others,” he told *Quartz*.

When I first told friends about IIT Kharagpur’s new idea, most of them laughed. Some of the comedy came from us not having any idea what these sessions would be like — would students simply be forced to sit in the courtyard of their hostels and talk to each other while their warden watched over them? Would they go to sleep? Would they rather work?

Satinder Kaur, who is in her second year at the college clears up quite a bit of my confusion about the logistics. She says the blackout happened once (in April), where students were encouraged to go to the stadium on their campus while a DJ played music there. It hasn’t happened again since then, but Kaur has heard this is going to be done once a month, starting in the new academic year.

To Kesarwani, her college’s decision to have such sessions instinctively seems like a good idea. “When you start talking to your friends, there’s a very high chance you’ll realise that they’re going through something similar, or that they’re facing

the same kind of pressures. It's a reminder that these things will pass too," she says. She believes they're important conversations, especially when you're in such a competitive place with hardly ever a moment when you don't come under pressure. And that pressure doesn't have to be only academic. We saw this in the disturbing death of Manjula Devak, a 29 year-old IIT-Delhi PhD scholar who killed herself late last month, who was harangued for dowry by her in-laws. But the Kharagpur initiative hasn't necessarily found a lot of takers.

The idea of being encouraged to go listen to a DJ at the college stadium makes Kaur uncomfortable. "There are too many people," she says, and that's not her idea of fun. At the April event, she had stayed back in the hostel courtyard with her friends and had her own fun there. What was nice was having that alone time with them.

Kaur doesn't think having an evening like this, where there is a DJ night, is necessarily a solution to depression and stress; she says people who are depressed aren't going to go for the DJ night, and seeing a counsellor on campus would work better. Kesarwani herself knows students who say that they'd much rather be finishing their work, since the assignment deadlines aren't going to go away. Even at the one day event in April, some people were irritated because the electricity was turned on after 40 minutes (rather than 30, like they'd been informed).

"It's (the blackout) something we've been thinking about too," says Purna Singh, who's in her final year at IIT Gandhinagar and will graduate later this year. But like Kaur, Singh isn't so sure, and nor are her friends. "Most students were concerned about the time to finish their submissions," Singh says. Then, after a pause, she adds to what has seemed a bit comical to everyone outside of the IITs reading about the enforced socialising aspect of this rule, "We aren't so sure about this idea of a forced interaction either. What if someone just prefers keeping to themselves?" What they would like to see are more open spaces for people to interact in, places that they'd automatically add to their daily rhythm and visit with friends.

According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, there were 8,934 student suicides in 2015. Of these, 2.8 percent were at the graduate level (including IITs). Back in April, various IITs across the country had suddenly woken up to the growing number of student suicides when an IIT Council met to discuss new initiatives that would help students deal with stress and depression.

The solutions ranged from the more standard parent-teacher meetings and counselling at IIT Delhi, to the setting up of centres for music, dance and art at IIT Guwahati, and then extended to less common initiatives like tree hugging, alternative therapy, and Reiki (with courses on the "theory and practice of happiness") at IIT Kharagpur. They're different from initiatives that some institutions abroad have taken — following multiple suicides in 2015, University of Pennsylvania for instance started a blog for students to discuss problems related to mental health, started a peer counselling programme, and encouraged the posting on "ugly selfies" on Instagram as a response to the perfectionism otherwise expected of students. In the same year, many colleges in the United States also showed a travelling exhibit to students, where over a 1,000 empty backpacks were arranged with stories and photographs of students who had committed suicide.

I went to a boarding school that had what we called 'Asthachal' every evening. We'd all climb up to a spot, and everybody would sit down, some on rocks and some under trees, and we would all watch the sunset in silence. It was calming in a way that not many other things were. IIT Kharagpur is probably right in choosing to give its students breaks like these, but perhaps institutions need to think beyond them. Colleges would do better if they asked students what they'd like, because they're the ones dealing with the pressure to stay afloat and appear like they have every aspect of their lives together. And to most, IIT Kharagpur's plan is welcome but not enough.

June 25

In Association with IIT Delhi, Third Dialogue India Conclave became hub of new ideas in higher education

<https://indiaeducationdiary.in/association-iit-delhi-third-dialogue-india-conclave-became-hub-new-ideas-higher-education/>



New Delhi: In Association with IIT Delhi, Dialogue India Magazine organized the third Dialogue India Conclave on June 24, 2017, in collaboration with IIT Delhi at IIT Delhi. AICTE was also a partner in this event. An exhibition was also organized to promote technological innovation in higher education in the program, in which many educational institutions from across the country displayed their technological innovation. These institutions have displayed their original and new technically ideas as models. The institutes participating in this exhibition were IIT Delhi, Riviera Mobile, Era Lucknow Medical College and Hospital, Lucknow, SCMS School of Engineering and Technology, Krishna Engineering College, RC Patel Institute of Technology, KCG College of Technology, Dronacharya College of Engineering, GLA University Mathura, Mehr Chand Polytechnic, Eastindin. Representatives from all these institutions displayed their technical efficiency and innovation. Awards were given to the institutions performing best in the exhibition. Two third prizes were given to KCG College of Technology and SCMC School of Engineering, and a second prize to the Era Lucknow Medical College. The exhibition of their various projects was also organized by the students of IIT Delhi in this program. About twenty students displayed their projects.

Whole day the scholars and academicians from all over India expressed their views on various topics. In the inaugural session of the program, MP Ramesh Vidhudi, was the chief guest. He emphasized value-based education by telling the distance between education and degree. He emphasized on self-disciplinary approach. At the same time, he told the various steps taken by the Modi government in the field of education. In the first session, Archana Dutta, former Director General, Doordarshan, Dr. Kamal Tawari, Former Secretary, Government of India, Prof. SK Atrey, IIT Delhi, Prof. V.K. Goswami, EX- VC Sunrise University, Sangam University, VP Asian Academy of Film and Television, Shri Pawan Sinha, Spiritual Guru, Need for improvement in higher education in India i.e., The Need of Wake up India for Reform and Transformation in Higher Education, Wake Up India: Innovate, Manufacturing, Globalization, presented their views on the subject and needed improvement in education Emphasized Along with changes in the present form of education, emphasis has been laid on improving primary education from primary level.

Prior to this, Dialogue India magazine's group editor, Anuj Agarwal, told the need for this conclave that he was very disturbed to see this form of education in the private sector, and the scams in the name of education used to churn his mind, he also felt the lack of communication. Communication between government institutions and private institutions disturbed him, and this is why he came with this form of conclave. And this year he got the support of IIT and AICTE, and this form of conclave emerged. There are three different aspects, the first is the discussion on the burning issues in the field of education, the second is the new projects by the students and the third presentation on the technical and innovation paper presentation.

The second session was on the role of private institution promoter / owners in quality foreign education and innovation, in which commander VK Jaitley, eminent journalist Mr. Ved Pratap Vaidik, Maj Gen Dilawar Singh, Professor Navin Rampal, and Prof. IIT Roorkee. Sonal Atrey and Mrs. Sheila Tawari were the speakers. The role of private education providers in this session was discussed in detail. And many important ideas came to the solution of the challenges faced by them. According to Shri Vaidik ji, there is a time for change in education and the time for revolution for education has come. It is time to start a movement in the field of education.

In the third session, discussions regarding the need to change Indian value system, its relevance and higher education, and emphasis on the need to restore Indian values to education were done. In this session, Commander VK Jaitley, Prof. S. K. Atrey, Dr. Sudhir Singh, Dr. Valmiki Prasad, Dr. NK Jain, and Prof. Seema Sharma discussed Indian values on higher education. And there was a consensus on whether education cannot improve in India without the restoration of Indian values.

In the last session, Union Minister of State for Women & Child Development, Smt. Krishna Raj was the Chief Guest. She also emphasized the re-establishment of Indian values. Congratulating Mr. Anuj Agrawal, the group editor of Dialogue India, she also congratulated the magazine on the ranking of private institutions. Mrs. Krishna Raj said that such programs should continue even further.

All guests in the program were welcomed by the group editor of the magazine, Anuj Agarwal and Managing Editor Dr Sarika Agarwal.

A part of the conclave was also a paper presentation on technology and innovation. More than 30 papers were presented from various institutes from all over the country on technical and innovation. Several other institutions including Sandip Foundation Sejaul and Birla Institute of Technology Meresa, YMCA Technical University, Faridabad, Annamalai University, Chennai and many other institutions participated in this paper presentation and presented new and original ideas through their papers.

The ambassador of various countries also joined the program. The victorious contestants of exhibition received their winning cheques by Palestinian and Slovenian ambassador Mr. Faik H.H. Hamza and Boris Jolosvik.

In the program, the mesmerizing presentation of a dance drama was given by Kathak dancer Anu Sinha's group, and it was based on the famous work of Jai Shankar Prasad Kamayani. There was also a session that all the suggestions should be given to Government. At the end of the session Managing editor Dr. Sarika Agarwal and group editor of the magazine Anuj Agarwal expressed gratitude to all the guests and expressed commitment on continuing such dialogue.

June 24

Infosys builds driverless golf cart with IIT Delhi, to invest in AI

http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/infosys-builds-driverless-golf-cart-with-iit-delhi-to-invest-in-ai-117062400693_1.html

Firm also seeks to skill more of its people in emerging areas such as drones, robots and cloud



Infosys is testing a driverless golf cart built jointly with the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi using open source technologies, to demonstrate its capability and to tap growing global opportunities for autonomous and connected vehicles.

Vishal Sikka, chief executive of Infosys spoke about the “How, What and Why” of adopting greater automation and AI at the 36th annual general meeting and disclosed the company's attempt to create a pool of thousands of engineers with capability to work on projects in artificial intelligence and tap business opportunities.

“Autonomous driving is something every automobile company will get into, and we are trying to build talent around this,” Sikka said, highlighting the Infosys self driving golf cart at its Mysuru campus was built using open source technologies. “Advances in AI are automating more and more cognitive work that people perform.”

He added that Infosys is part of Toyota Motors’ connected cars project, and would look to skill more of its people in emerging areas, such as drones, robots and cloud.

Sikka, who completes three years as the first non-founder CEO of Infosys, says the company has been able to slowly make the shift towards building software led services model that generates high growth and high margin business in areas such as mainframe modernisation and API economy.

He said that the company's software offerings such as NIA, Panaya, Skava and Edgeverve grew 42 per cent in the last fiscal, with NIA, the artificial intelligence platform being implemented with over 70 customers.