Newspaper Clips
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Millennium Post ND 03/06/2015 P-6

IIT-M row: SC panel summons HRD secretary, IIT director

MPOST BUREAU

Chennai/ New Delhi: The National Scheduled Castes Commission (NCSC) on Tuesday issued notices to the Union Human Resource Development secretary and IIT-Madras director, asking them to appear before it on June 8, amid a political row over de-recognition of a students' body comprising mostly dalits.

In the midst of bitter face-off, IIT-Madras authorities held talks with the students' group, Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle (APSC), to end the confrontation that has left the campus in turmoil and decided to convene a meeting of its Board of Students later this week or early next week to discuss the controversial de-recognition.

The NCSC notice came after IIT-M defended its action against APSC in response to a notice sent by the panel in which the institute said there was no curtailment of "freedom of speech" or imposition of ban on any stu-

IIT-M students protest against HRD Minister Smriti Irani and IIT-Madras management on the institute's campus in Chennai on Tuesday

dent organisation.

It claimed the registration of student organisation was "withheld temporarily" as it had issued pamphlets and put up posters publicly with the name of IIT-Madras, in violation of the norms.

The Commission had taken suo motu cognisance of the de-recognition of the student body last week for allegedly violating the institute's code of conduct

following a complaint that it was critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"We have issued notices to the Union HRD Secretary and IIT-M Director calling them for a discussion on the case on June 8. The notices were issued today," NCSC sources said.

Meanwhile, IIT-M authorities met representatives of the APSC in Chennai for an amicable end to the tussle.

Hindu ND 03.06.2015 P-11

IIT-M emergency meeting on June 5

Meera Srinivasan

CHENNAI: The Indian Institute of Technology – Madras (IIT-M) has decided to convene an emergency meeting of the Board of Students to discuss the recent de-recognition of one of its student bodies, which has sparked a national controversy.

The meeting has been scheduled for June 5, said members of the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle (APSC) who met the institute's director-in-charge on Tuesday, as IIT-M director Bhaskar Ramamurthy is out of the country.

While a meeting has been convened there is no shift in the institution's position on the issue, according to student-members. The IIT-M management has not responded to APSC members' demand to re-recognise the study circle.

"The management should lift the unconstitutional ban on the study circle and the dean of students should apologise," said APSC member Akhil Bharathan.

Prior to APSC members' meeting with the director-in-charge on Tuesday, nearly 30 members and supporters of the APSC held a protest on the campus, raising slogans against the IIT-M management and the Ministry of Human Resource Development that sought the institution's comments on an anonymous complaint letter, before the dean of students wrote to the group informing members about the decision to de-recognise the group for "misuse of privileges." Police personnel deployed outside the IIT-M gate stopped media crew and said the press was not allowed inside. When contacted, IIT-M officials told journalists that they had left no such instruction with the police.

Amid contradicting messages from the police and institute officials, mediapersons stood outside the gate for nearly two hours until APSC members came outside the campus to give interviews. There was considerable police presence on the campus that looked empty, as hundreds of students are away on summer vacation.

Meanwhile, police arrested over 180 protestors — including members of the Revolutionary Students' Youth Federation — outside the IIT-M gate where they raised slogans in support of the APSC. At 10.30 a.m., agitations began on Sardar Patel Road outside the IIT-M out gate, with over 100 RSYF members present. The police team on vigil forced the protestors into police vans, even as traffic bottlenecks developed in the area.

Members of the Students Federation of India also staged a protest atop the flyover opposite the IIT-M. Police arrested and removed them from the spot. The protests went on till 2 p.m. with a few political parties also joining the agitation against the IIT management. The arrested were lodged at a community hall nearby and later released, police sources said.

(Additional reporting by Petlee Peter)

Millennium Post ND 03/06/2015 P-6

IIIT-A dismisses prof accused of sexual harassment

ALLAHABAD: A year after he was accused of sexual harassment by a student, an associate professor has been sacked by IIIT-Allahabad as a probe panel found his response unsatisfactory.

"The decision, taken by the IIIT-A Board of Management, has been communicated to Associate Professor CVS Shiva Prasad by the institute's director Somnath Biswas vide letter dated May 28," the institute's spokesman Pankaj Mishra said.

The allegations were levelled by an M.Tech student in May last year who also later lodged an FIR at Dhoomanganj police station of the city.

The professor was out of station when the FIR was lodged but he surrendered before police in July and was sent to jail. Mishra said the decision to dismiss the faculty member was taken after the probe panel set up by the institute did not receive a satisfactory reply to its numerous notices sent to the associate professor. **AGENCIES**

Hindustan Times ND 03/06/2015 P-4

Students to fill exam forms at time of admission

HT Correspondent
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NEW DELHI: Starting this year, Delhi University students will have to fill up their examination forms at the time of admission itself.

The student will have to fill separate forms for two semesters at the time of admission and submit examination fees for both the semesters also. The fee will then be immediately sent to the examination wing by various colleges.

For instance, a student taking admission in Part 1 of a particular course shall fill up separate examination forms for Semester I and II along with his/her admission forms and so on for rest of the semester.

This rule will apply to those who are reappearing on account of either essential repeat or improvement in advance in the examination form.

The examination wing will then scrutinise the forms, which will be stored by the respective colleges. The data in the examination forms of students for respective semesters will be opened and used by the examination wing before the start of the exam.

Also for special cases, where the result of a student is changed, the principal of the college shall be authorised for the submission of examination forms.

Further, the dean of examinations has strictly asked colleges to notify this information on the college website and also on their college notice board.

REGISTRATIONS TO DATE

1,81,093
Total registration

98,617: Fee Submitted

65,805: General applicants

21,181: OBC

9,574: SC

1,859: ST

79: Applying under visual impairment

33: Application under hearing impairment

97: Application under locomotor disability and cerebral palasy

Students will have to fill separate forms for two semesters at the time of admission this year.
ARUN SHARMA / HT FILE

HRD मिनिस्ट्री में दो सेक्रेटरी का ट्रांसफर

[ईटी ब्यूरो | नई दिल्ली]

ब्यूरोक्रेट्स के एक बड़े बदलाव में मंगलवार को स्मृति ईरानी की अगुवाई वाली एचआरडी मिनिस्ट्री के दोनों सेक्रेटरीज का ट्रांसफर कर दिया गया। डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ पर्सनल एंड ट्रेनिंग ने 17 टॉप ब्यूरोक्रेट्स की अदला-बदली की है। इसमें सिविल एविएशन, पावर और कॉमर्स मिनिस्ट्रीज में नए अधिकारी नियुक्त किए गए हैं।

एचआरडी मिनिस्ट्री में सेक्रेटरी वृंदा स्वरूप और सत्यनारायण मोहंती को क्रमशः सेक्रेटरी, कंज्यूमर अफेयर्स और सेक्रेटरी जनरल, एनएचआरसी के तौर पर ट्रांसफर किया गया है। स्वरूप और मोहंती दोनों ने एचआरडी मिनिस्ट्री में एक वर्ष से भी कम बिताया है। विमेन एंड चाइल्ड डिवेलपमेंट सेक्रेटरी विनय शील ओबरॉय अब डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ हायर एजुकेशन में नए सेक्रेटरी होंगे, जबकि 1981 बैच के सुभाष चंद्र खुंटिया जो अब तक पेट्रोलियम मिनिस्ट्री में स्पेशल सेक्रेटरी थे, उन्हें अब डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ स्कूल एजुकेशन एंड लिटरेसी में सेक्रेटरी बनाया गया है। गुजरात काडर के दो आईएएस अधिकारी कॉमर्स और पावर मिनिस्ट्री में चार्ज लेंगे। 1981 बैच की अधिकारी रीता ए तेवतिया अब राजीव खेर की जगह नई कॉमर्स सेक्रेटरी होंगी। खेर इस महीने रिटायर हो रहे हैं। तेवतिया के बैचमेट प्रदीप कुमार पुजारी नए पावर सेक्रेटरी बनाए गए हैं। वह पी के सिन्हा की जगह लेंगे, जिन्हें कैबिनेट सेक्रेटरी बनाया जा रहा है। तमिलनाडु काडर के 1981 बैच के अधिकारी राजीव नयन चौबे नए सिविल एविएशन सेक्रेटरी नियुक्त किए गए हैं।

STEP BY STEP

Modi Govt Releases Funds for TISS After 5% Cut

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New Delhi: The human resource development ministry has finally decided to release funds to the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and seven other deemed universities financially dependent on it after introducing a 5% cut that is meant to progressively reduce government funding to 50%.

The eight varsities will also be asked to ensure compliance with 12B rules of the University Grants Commission Act of 2015-16. 12B rules deal with the fitness of a university or college to receive government funding. The UGC has been asked to bring about compliance of these deemed varsities with 12B rules this year and the HRD ministry will review the same after six months to decide further course of action. Officials in the HRD ministry confirmed funds have been released to TISS and other affected deemed varsities and they would reach them this week. The government provides about ₹500 crore to the eight fully-funded deemed varsities as of now.

> **TISS took bank loans in March & April this year and dipped into its reserves to pay salaries & keep institute running**

As reported by **ET** first, TISS has been in the grip of a financial crunch after the HRD ministry and UGC framed a new policy for funding deemed universities and chose to withhold funds. TISS had to get bank loans in March and April and dip into reserves — essentially funds generated through consultancy work — to pay salaries and keep the institute running.

In a meeting held on May 27, the HRD ministry in consultation with the UGC, decided that while funds would be released to all eight deemed varsities, a 5% cut will be effected. However, government-controlled Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth in New Delhi, Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati, and Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dindigul, will be exempted from the 5% cut.

Economic Times ND 03/06/2015 P-18

CURSOR ▶ The Choice-Based Credit System proposed by the UGC is obtuse and destructive

Base and Anti-Choice, UGC

T K Arun

Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS) is a lemon some used ideas salesmen have sold India's policymakers in education. Instead of reforming and improving anything, the proposal, as outlined by the University Grants Commission (UGC), will swamp the little patches of excellence that still manage to survive in India's higher education and replace them with monochrome mediocrity that all students who aspire to excel will flee, by scholarship, loan, émigré uncle, hook or crook.

Choice is Welcome...

Why has the UGC embarked on this change? Here is the rationale, in its own words, "The education plays enormously significant role in building of a nation. There are quite a large number of educational institutions, engaged in imparting education in our country. Majority of them have entered recently into semester system to match with international educational pattern.

"However, our present education system produces young minds lacking knowledge, confidence, values and skills. It could be because of complete lack of relationship between education, employment and skill development in conventional education system. The present alarming situation necessitates transformation and/or redesigning of education

system...." And so on.

Just that first sentence automatically disqualifies its author for a sub-editor's position at this newspaper. Not that he will ever apply for one — he is too busy redeeming the country's higher education.
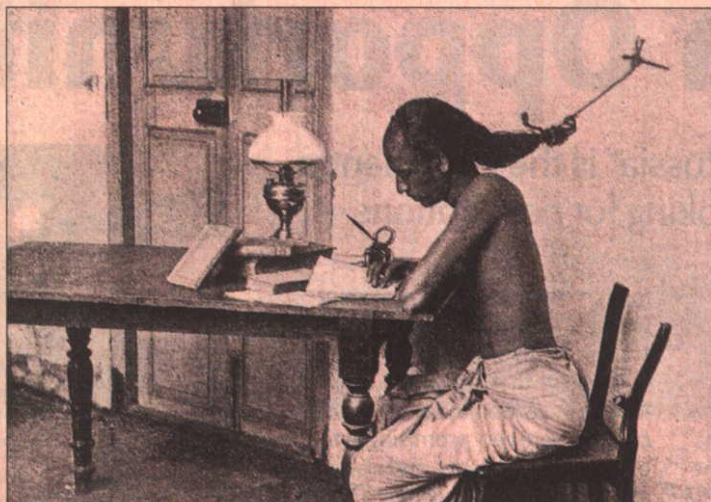
Let us go past the crudity of the language, and focus on the thinking it articulates. That is cruder — "complete lack of relationship between education, employment and skill development" is the problem it seeks to attack, using CBCS as its weapon.

This confusion between education and employable skills is elementary but widespread. Skills are transient. They change, when knowledge advances and makes new skills possible and necessary while making old ones redundant.

Education is about acquiring, interrogating and creating knowledge. Those who focus only on skills will end up like the computer training institutes of the 1990s, which taught people how to use Windows and Word or browse the World Wide Web.

Whether India should focus on skills or on knowledge creation is a matter of ambition, at the level of policy. If you aim for greatness, the aim of higher education must unwaveringly be set on advancing knowledge in myriad areas, of myriad kinds. Educated people can learn and unlearn skills as required. Those deprived of an education but merely train in skills will be shortchanged for life, when their skills are made redundant by the advance of knowledge.

And knowledge is not limited to science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Steve Jobs attributed the success of Apple's Macintosh computers to the classes he audited in calligraphy. Innovation comes from changing familiar patterns of cognition and such disruption comes from

a confluence of many things, including the aesthetics, the passion and the insights into the human condition offered by the arts, humanities and social sciences.

If the focus is on knowledge, what is wrong with CBCS? What it does is to allow students to complete a Bachelor's programme by acquiring a sufficient number of credits in different disciplines. There is nothing wrong with it. In fact, such a system is eminently desirable. It should be possible for a student to graduate with the requisite number of aggregate credits drawn from an assortment of disciplines, say, philosophy, game theory, music and history.

...But Not Uniformity

But CBCS does not stop there. In the name of transferability of credits across universities, it seeks to homogenise syllabi. This is both self-contradictory and destructive of academic and pedagogic innovation.

For credits to be transferable, two conditions are necessary and sufficient: each credit should represent roughly the same number of hours of study across universities and the qualitative outcome of that much of ac-

ademic effort should be similar across universities. Since choice, by definition, precludes uniformity, why should the credits sought to be transferred from University A to University B be based on the same course as is offered in University B?

Nor does uniformity of the syllabus guarantee qualitatively similar outcomes. It should be left to universities to work out the equivalence of one another's credits.

To mandate a uniform syllabus across universities is to render hollow the advocacy of choice. It is also to choke research and academic innovation. The bane of Indian universities is the colonial legacy of separating research from teaching. The major universities of the world advance the frontiers of knowledge and also teach. Their research rubs off on their teaching. Since research would vary across universities, so would the teaching. To preclude this in the name of transferability of credits is to suppress the natural cross-fertilisation of teaching and research and stunt India's academic potential. To no gainful end whatsoever.

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Students should, indeed, have choice in the courses they take to graduate, but that is no reason to impose soul-destroying homogeneity on India's universities

So much for modern scholarship

Hindu ND 03.06.2015 P-10

UGC seeks ATRs from varsities on Yoga Day

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The University Grants Commission (UGC) on Monday asked all universities under its watch to not only organise a series of activities on International Yoga Day on June 21, but also submit action taken reports (ATRs) on the preparations by the beginning of next week.

Though the UGC letter to the vice-chancellors uses the phrase "it is desired to adopt" the four listed activities, the very requirement for varsities to submit ATRs on the preparations by June 8 makes it almost mandatory for them to observe Yoga Day. For many a university, the day falls right in the middle of summer vacations and would entail pulling students and faculty in from their holidays. A similarly worded letter was sent by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to all its approved institutions on May 19; only ATRs on preparations were not sought. What has been sought by AICTE is a detailed report on the activities organised on June 21 after the day is through.

The four activities that universities and affiliated colleges under UGC and AICTE-approved institutions are expected to organise include a demonstration in the morning by yoga practitioners. Students and faculty members can volunteer to join these practitioners while others have to watch. Besides awarding prizes and certificates to the best participants, the UGC wants universities to organise online essay competitions and mount a "Yoga Exhibition on Yogic Postures" in a big hall on campus to generate awareness about the spiritual discipline.

The UGC had given universities a heads-up in April itself when it wrote to all universities asking them to organise promotional events ahead of June 21 after the government decided to give "practi-cal effect" to the United Nations resolution – adopted last year -- for observing the day as the 'International Day of Yoga'.

The government has drawn up elaborate plans for organising a mega-Yoga demonstration with the Prime Minister himself leading it on Janpath. Officials above the rank of under-secretary from all ministries have been requested to join Mr. Modi. The Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) has evolved a "common yoga protocol" for the day and brought out a video to help people practise for the day.

Sanjay Gupta is new C&MD of EIL

Hindustan Times (Delhi)

Sanjaytakenof Engineersover Guptaas C&MD Indiahas Ltd. (EIL). Prior to this, he was Director (Commercial) in the company. An engineering graduate from IIT Roorkee, Gupta has about 34 years of experience ranging from planning to implementation of mega grassroots projects.

IIT-B to develop smart weapons, train cops

http://www.mumbaimirror.com/mumbai/others/IIT-B-to-develop-smart-weapons-train-cops/articleshow/47520674.cms

During an emergency, a police team rushes to the spot wearing glasses with an attached camera that sends live stream to the control room. This isn't a scene out of a movie. These glasses are part of a technology called Etherhawk, one of the several prototypes designed by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at its Powai campus for use in crisis situation.

Having secured a Central government grant of around Rs 100 crore, the IIT-B is all set to launch the National Centre of Excellence in Technology for Internal Security (NCETIS) at the Powai campus, which will have the dual responsibility of developing deployable technology for the state and the central police forces, and training the state police, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).

The IIT-B received the approval of the funds from the Department of Electronics and Information Technology of the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology on Monday. Over the past two years, about 15 IIT faculty members from the electrical, mechanical, and aerospace as well as computer engineering departments have been working on development of technology prototypes.

Abhay Karandikar, professor of electrical engineering and in-charge of the centre, said that the NCETIS would act as a resource centre for the police forces to bank upon for their technology needs. "We will be researching and developing various prototypes suited to the particular needs of the state police, the CRPF and the CISF. We will also be there for consultation on equipment provided by other agencies," Karandikar said.

The state police will receive training from the IIT faculty members about the various equipment prototypes that can increase the level of preparedness and reduce the response time in case of an emergency. "The IIT-B faculty as well as researchers from other laboratories will be training the police on appreciation of technology," Karandikar said.

Joint Commissioner of Police (crime) Atulchandra Kulkarni confirmed that the Mumbai and Maharashtra police force will be a part of the process. "It is going to be an ongoing exercise and brainstorming that will be a part of several meetings that we will be having with IIT-B. We have shared our technology-related problems with them and have asked them to come up with solutions," Kulkarni said.

The IIT-B has designed several prototypes for use during crisis situations, including state-of-the-art communications system, modern imaging techniques and sophisticated weapons.

For instance, Etherhawk, an emergency communication system, can be used for public safety, disaster recovery, and defense, fire and rescue operations as well as improve accuracy on bomb detections.

"An officer will wear glasses with an attached camera which will send a live stream to the control room. This can ensure better planning," said Karandikar.

He added that the police are currently using an archival system of verbal communication through walkie-talkies, and Etherhawk can improve management of situations including terror attacks. Other prototypes include handheld explosive detector and robotic and autonomous vehicles.

Academia and industry come together for IITB's Research Park

Tuesday, June 02, 2015
http://indiaeducationdiary.in/Shownews.asp?newsid=34722

Report by India Education bureau, Mumbai: The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) will be soon setting up a Research Park on its Campus, with a partial funding from Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, to promote and foster the spirit of innovation.

The main objective of IIT Bombay's Research Park will be to build an ecosystem where academic researchers from IITB and industry partners work in close collaboration on cutting edge research problems, technology challenges and product innovation. As an initial step towards it, a day-long Academia-Industry-Meeting (AIM) on the upcoming Research Park was organized recently on May 30, 2015 by the Institute.

The event kick-started with a welcome address by Prof. Devang Khakhar, Director, IIT Bombay. Giving an overview of the various activities at the Institute, Prof. Khakhar said, "The Research Park at IITB will mutually benefit the Industry as well as the Institute. It will play a pivotal role in removing the barriers between the industry researchers and academic researchers. We welcome suggestions from the Industry on how we can build-up a good Research Park."

Prof. Khakhar's talk was followed by a presentation on the upcoming Research Park by Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Professor Inâ€• charge, IIT Bombay Research Park. "Our vision is to establish an innovation hub through industry academia collaboration. The Research Park will undoubtedly increase our levels of engagement with the Industry. It will benefit the participating industries by providing them proximity to the intellectual capital of IITB in the form of its students and faculty. It will provide them access to IIT Bombay's state-of-the art facilities like labs, workshops, library and other ongoing activities. It will moreover, offer an opportunity to industry employees to enrol for the postgraduate programs of the Institute and participate in other academic activities like joint supervision of the students, engagements as adjunct faculty etc.," he elaborated.

The AIM was meant to provide an interactive platform for industry and IIT Bombay faculty to discuss possibilities for collaboration through Research Park. As the day progressed the event featured presentations by industry representatives on their in-house R&D activities as well as by IIT Bombay faculty members showcasing the R&D activities at the Institute. Sharing his experiences of establishing Research Park at IIT Madras, Prof. M.S. Ananth, former Director, IIT Madras and Distinguished Visiting Faculty at Chemical Engineering Department, IIT Bombay remarked, "Innovation and entrepreneurship are essential to strive in global economy. A Research Park promotes innovation, competitiveness and entrepreneurship. It helps convert ideas into innovative technologies. The Country definitely needs many more Research Parks."

The event also included a panel discussion on "Role of Research Park in fostering Academia-Industry Collaboration." The meet was attended by big names from the industry including Dr. Debasis Bandyopadhyay, Viceâ€• President & Global Head, Tata Consultancy

Services, Dr. R. Muralidharan, CTO, Tata Power SED, Dr. Rajkumar Singh, Senior Director, Bharat Forge, Mr. Kapil Bardeja, CEO, Nanosniff Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and many more.

IIT-Bombay student attempts suicide, saved by hostel mates

http://www.mid-day.com/articles/iit-bombay-student-attempts-suicide-saved-by-hostel-mates/16260166

The student's hostel mates say he tried to hang himself but failed; he then popped some pills and began to scream in pain, alerting other students

A student's attempted suicide rocked the IIT-Bombay campus on Monday. The 23-year-old student, who was pursuing his MTech in Earth Sciences was rushed to the IIT Bombay Hospital and then taken to to the nearby Hiranandani Hospital in Powai, where he is currently recuperating.

Hostel mates say the student had kept three suicide notes, but Powai police said no note was found. File pic

The incident comes in the wake of two students having allegedly committed suicide on the IIT campus since last September. The student was alone in his room in Hostel 5 when he allegedly attempted suicide. According to his hostel mates, he first tried to hang himself, but was unsuccessful and then immediately popped some pills.

"Due to the reaction of these pills, he started screaming in pain and we rushed to his room. He had a towel tied around his neck so we understood what was happening and immediately rushed him to the hospital on campus.

Also Read: Girl student at IIIT Hyderabad commits suicide

The doctors provided an ambulance which rushed him to Hiranandani Hospital," said one of the students. The incident took place around 7 am on Monday and he was taken to Hiranandani Hospital around 9 am in an unconscious state. With most students away on vacation, very few are currently on campus.

The student's roommate, too, was not around at the time of the incident. Some students and two senior officials from IIT-Bombay rushed him to the hospital. "He is originally from Bihar and his brother stays in Delhi. His brother reached Mumbai early on Tuesday morning. We are taking turns to stay with him in case he needs help," said another student.

When mid-day contacted officials at Hiranandani Hospital, they confirmed that the student was admitted to the ICU on Monday morning. "He was brought in unconscious and a stomach wash was done, which showed some pills. He also had a towel tied around his neck but there are no major marks on his neck.

The pills have been sent for tests to check the substance," said an official. By late Tuesday evening, students said that their friend was conscious and talking and was moved out of the ICU to the general ward.

Suicide note confusion
The Powai police said no suicide note was found but the the student's hostel mates told mid-day that three suicide notes were found in his room. "He had addressed one suicide note to his mother, another to the police and the third to the institute authorities.

But we are not clear about what was written in them," said a student. An official from IIT-B said that one suicide note was found. "It seems he had written that no one was to be blamed for his actions. But only the police will know the details as they checked the room after the incident," said Rashmi Uday Kumar, IIT-B PRO. The authorities at IIT-B said they are regularly checking on the student's status at the hospital.

"He is doing decently well academically. We are still not sure why he took the step," said Kumar. Since this is the third such incident on the IIT-B campus since September last year, questions have also been raised on the counselling of students who are always under pressure to perform well. "Counselling in IIT is an ongoing process. Our counsellors also regularly visit hostels and talk to students to understand their problems if any," she added.

- See more at: http://www.mid-day.com/articles/iit-bombay-student-attempts-suicide-saved-by-hostel-mates/16260166#sthash.UC1Sxlgj.dpuf

On holiday, Panjab University professors take a flight to CERN or Chicago and there they work hard: V-C Arun Kumar Grover

http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/on-holiday-panjab-university-professors-take-a-flight-to-cern-or-chicago-and-there-they-work-hard-v-c-arun-kumar-grover/

Panjab University (PU) was ranked between 225-250 in the Times Higher Education (THE) World Rankings in 2013-14, the highest rank for any Indian institution.
- See more at: http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/on-holiday-panjab-university-professors-take-a-flight-to-cern-or-chicago-and-there-they-work-hard-v-c-arun-kumar-grover/#sthash.BFkw8H0c.dpuf

Panjab University (PU) was ranked between 225-250 in the Times Higher Education (THE) World Rankings in 2013-14, the highest rank for any Indian institution, and again emerged at the top along with Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore in 2014-15, though in the 276-300 bracket. Recently, the university earned a new laurel. It was named as a leading research institution in India with the highest citation impact by the noted international Science journal, Nature. **Vice-Chancellor (V-C) Arun Kumar Grover** *spoke to* **Srishti Choudhary** *recently in the midst of admission season about how the institution has achieved its research output, and what its plans are to keep this going. Edited excerpts:*

How has been your term as a Vice-Chancellor?

It has been a great learning experience. I knew that PU is amongst the good universities of the country. But I had not thought that it could be rated as the premier university of the country, that it was among the top universities, particularly, in science and technology. This I was aware of, that PU is a good traditional university for science and technology.

What do you mean by traditional university?

IISc, Bangalore is a research university, where people are inducted on the basis of their research potential. Nobody looks at whether you have done teaching in the past. TIFR, Mumbai is a deemed university. Once again, the teaching abilities are not taken into consideration. In a traditional university, they will asses you as a teacher first. Research has to happen side by side. But there is no condition imposed on you, that if you do not generate research for 12 months, your probation will not be continued.

Then how does one explain the citation impact? PU has a citation impact of 1.4, higher than 1.39 of TIFR and 1.11 of IISc, Bangalore.

One must see the citation in the context of PU and of all those universities in which there are some niche departments that are a part of international collaborations. If TIFR is part of the same international collaboration

as PU, the citation record of TIFR will be the same as that of PU. Whatever international experiments which TIFR participates in, PU also participates in it. But IISc is not a major partner in them in High Energy Physics.

PU and TIFR participate in experiments at CERN, in Fermilab, USA and experiments at B-factory at Tsukuba, Japan. This is one frontier of High energy physics.

One at CERN is another frontier. Quark-gluon plasma is another frontier. The fourth is the Neutrino experiment. PU is a part of these four. Department of Science and Technology and Department of Atomic Energy have identified PU for opening a centre for High Energy instrumentation and detector development. Once that project gets located at PU, the department will get enriched because it is nurturing high number of High Energy physicists.

Did the four-year period, 2010-2014, counted for the Times ranking include old research papers as well?

Yes. It is not about papers that came out in this period but also the papers in which PU figures and which have a high citation. It is a mix of so many things. God particle came up in 2012. So, all those papers are being cited multiple times. Every theorist is cited. So, PU was already doing well, and discovery of God particle made it even better. When there was a lull and Fermilab was closed down for a while, and they were re-building CERN, PU and TIFR went on and joined the groups in B-factory in Japan.

The thing is that you have a job in the university, you have a job for life, you can decide to sleep, still you will get the salary. These professors at PU, or those at IIT-Guwahati, TIFR people, they are conscious that their productivity should not suffer. They should continuously be valued as a member of these collaborations. So, they keep working. So, when there is a holiday, when [other] people spend time here and there,what do High energy physicists do? Class khatam hoti hai. The next day they take a flight, and go to CERN or Chicago, and there they work hard. You are actually trying to make up for the time you could not do anything because you were doing teaching. That is how international faculty values them also, and they are continuously being included.

How many professors in PU are involved in High Energy Physics?

I cannot give you the numbers. But among the senior people, there is Jasbir Singh, Manjit Kaur, Madam Mohan Aggarwal, Vipin Bhatnagar, and they have recruited, two more new people. They are 7-8 people. There are older people, who continue to work, for example, Professor Suman Beri, Professor Kohli is retired. It is a culture that is alive. You visit the Physics department, Saturday and Sunday, the department is open. There are people sitting in the Physics canteen.

How have these rankings and the mention in Nature journal helped the University?

People who have been running down the university, their mouths are shut (laughs).

How do you plan to encourage students to take up Sciences? More students seek admission in applied sciences than pure sciences?

This is natural. People want a job quickly at the end of their education. People will go into science, only if the science can be done at a competitive level, so that you can participate in the excitement of science. Science done at a mediocre level, is not exciting. Peripheral science is of no satisfaction.

To have small fraction of the good quality people to pursue Science is good. We have to sustain Science at that level, and for that we need resources. University does not have access to those resources. But PGI has resources when it comes to Basic Medical Sciences, because it is a

- See more at: http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/on-holiday-panjab-university-professors-take-a-flight-to-cern-or-chicago-and-there-they-work-hard-v-c-arun-kumar-grover/2/#sthash.kDUY2EE5.dpuf

Central Institution. Doctors need back-up in the form of fundamental sciences, but PGI does not have a student workforce. But if our Basic Medical Sciences can work in partnership with doctors, researchers at PGI or scientists at IMTECH to make use of facilities that NIPER has created, then, teachers-researchers of PU can start doing science which is at the frontier. That is why, I tried to put all these institutes together, tried to break these barriers, so that we can attract at least some good students to pursue Sciences, particularly the integrated programmes of the university.

These programmes are good as feeders for the students to the TIFR, IISc and other institutes. But we also need to have good research done here. So we must start integrated Masters and PhD programmes. This is one thing I'm trying to sell to my colleagues. To kick-start that, smaller departments have to come together.

Has the government been generous in terms of giving funds following the international recognition?

The nation has to make a choice, whether PU has to be sustained as a premiere institution or let it go down the tube. The onus is on the Government of India. Because if you freeze our budget, in linkage to inflation, when we have 30 per cent of the positions vacant, how will we fill up those posts? The only onus on PU faculty is that they have to sustain their academic output comparable to the best national output.