

Newspaper Clips

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Govt issues ads to pick IIT directors

**BASANT KUMAR
MOHANTY**

New Delhi, Feb. 27: The government has started issuing advertisements to select IIT directors in addition to the present practice of inviting nominations that has come under court glare for being opaque and arbitrary.

The HRD ministry, which oversees the premier tech schools, has brought out advertisements in newspapers to select the directors of IIT Delhi and Roorkee. Both posts will fall vacant soon.

The IIT Council, the institutes' highest decision-making body, resolved last month that apart from inviting nominations, advertisements would be put out in newspapers and websites of the HRD ministry and IIT alumni associations.

"The appointment process will be more open and transparent with this method (ads). More aspirants from within and outside the country can apply," said IIT Guwahati director Gautam Barua, who is a member of the council.

Nominations are invited from various institutions and eminent persons. A search-cum-selection committee goes through the names and draws up a shortlist. Under the IIT act, the director of each institute is appointed by the council with prior approval of the President, who is the Visitor to the tech schools.

But the nomination system was challenged around three years ago through a petition filed in Madras High Court, which questioned the process and asked why advertisements could not be issued to fill such posts.

E. Muralidharan, an alumnus of IIT Madras, had challenged the appointment of M.S. Ananth as director of the IIT.

"The HRD ministry never follows a transparent system while appointing the IIT directors. It is always done in a clandestine manner. The head of the institutions and other eminent persons recommend their favourites for such posts. As a result, many deserving candidates never get a chance

to apply," Muralidharan had said in his plea.

A single-judge bench of Justice K. Chandru had criticised the government for limiting the appointment process to nominations. The ads for the Delhi and Roorkee IITs are being seen as a fallout of the court rap.

The directors of the IITs will be appointed the same way. There are 16 IITs and 13 IIMs in the country.

However, vice-chancellors of central universities will continue to be appointed through nominations, again from "eminent persons" alone.

Muralidharan wondered why. "One cannot understand why the government will not advertise the posts of vice-chancellors when it is advertising the posts of directors of IITs and IIMs. This is baseless," he said.

The appointment of vice-chancellors in 15 central universities in February 2009, for instance, had generated a controversy amid allegations of nepotism and corruption.

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Isro gets a booster on its way to the moon

TEAM TOI

Indian Space Research Organization (Isro) must be over the moon. The budgetary allocation for the lunar mission has shot up from Rs 25 crore to Rs 80 crore. And for the manned space programme, the hike is tenfold — from Rs 10 crore to Rs 100 crore. Overall, the space department has got Rs 5,700 crore, up from Rs 4,000 crore. The allocation for launch vehicle technology has been raised to Rs 1,755.51 crore.

The finance ministry, Planning Commission and Space Commission have cleared the Rs 14,300 crore manned space flight programme. According to the Budget report: "It is currently under process for Cabinet approval."

RR Navalgund, director of Ahmedabad-based Space Application Centre, a part of Isro, said: "All background work has been done. The project has received go-ahead in principle. It is in the implementation stage."

Pranab takes an agro stand

TEAM TOI

Rattled by soaring food prices and falling farm productivity the FM has announced a slew of measures to boost the farm sector and vowed to deepen the process of attracting more private investment in agriculture and agro-processing.

He announced an increase in bank lending for farm sector as well as interest subsidy to farmers who pay short-term crop loans on time. "I propose to enhance additional subvention to 3% in 2011-12. Thus effective rate of interest for farmers will be 4% per annum," Pranab Mukherjee said. Banks have also been asked to step up direct lending for agriculture to small and marginal farmers.

He also announced launch



PLOUGHING IN MORE

of National Mission for Protein Supplements and National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. The government plans to promote organic farming and combining modern technology with traditional farming to maximize crop yields and sustain productivity.

Mukherjee also announced the setting up of vegetable clusters in four major urban centres to meet growing demand. To extend the Green Revolution to the eastern region, he announced an allocation of Rs 400 crore. Steps to raise storage capacity, cold chains

and mega food parks were also announced. Cold chains and post-harvest storage facilities have been given infrastructure status that is expected to attract private investment.

Mukherjee also provided Rs 300 crore to promote 60,000 pulses villages in rainfed areas for raising productivity and strengthening market linkages. Another Rs 300 crore was set aside for palm oil cultivation.

Analysts said some of the moves were bold but overall it is unlikely to impact the farm sector in a significant manner.

"Overall, it's an average Budget and lacks the reforms agriculture needed. These steps cannot give you sustained growth in agriculture," said Ashok Gulati, director, International Food Policy Research Institute.

Costliest planet: Earth valued at £3,000 trillion

London: Earth is worth £3,000 trillion, according to an astrophysicist who claims to have created a formula to calculate the value of a planet.

The astrophysicist, Greg Laughlin, came up with the figure by calculating the sum of the planet's age, size, temperature, mass and other vital statistics – and Earth came out as the most expensive.

"The formula makes you realize just how precious Earth is and I hope it will help us as a society safeguard what we have," he said.

Mars was only valued at £10,000, while Venus is said to be worth less than a penny. There are about 1,235 other planets in the universe, most of which weren't given a high price tag because of their inhospitable climates. **PTI**

Times of India ND 01/03/2011
P18

D-School to shop abroad with ₹10cr

TEAM TOI

New Delhi: Delhi School of Economics (DSE) is in a celebratory mood after two of its centres — Centre for Developmental Economics (CDE) and Ratan Tata Library (RTL) — were jointly granted Rs 10 crore in the 2011-12 Union Budget announced on Monday.

The CDE, which comes under DSE's department of economics, mainly offers postgraduate, MPhil and PhD programmes. CDE officials feel that the grant can be used for inviting faculty from abroad. "It's not possible to comment on the actual utilization of the grant as that can be planned only after we receive it. We had made a representation to the finance ministry as we needed funds to be able to invite faculty from abroad. Due to inflation and an increase in the total number of students after implementation of the OBC quota, running the institute has become costlier," said managing director of CDE, Sunil Kanwar.

The students are also ex-

cited at the news of the allocation. Though in comparison to other institutions, the allocation is small, they feel that the grant will play an important role in the development of the centre. Bidisha Barooah, a PhD scholar at CDE, said, "Though our centre is well-equipped and has all kinds of facilities, the grant will help us in further up-

Anindya Chattopadhyay



UPGRADING FACILITIES: CDE, Ratan Tata Library in for a major revamp

grading our infrastructure and improving academic performance. The sum allocated is not very huge in comparison to grants given to other educational institutions, but we have to take into consideration the fact that the number of students at the institute is far less than those studying in the IITs or IIMs."

Times of India ND 01/03/2011 P25

Western cures not suitable for Indian body type, finds study

Rupali Mukherjee | TNN

Mumbai: Indians should develop their own medical guidelines to tackle ailments like diabetes and heart disease, as the protocols currently used in India to treat them are more suited to westerners, says a latest International Journal of Obesity study.

Experts say Indians face a higher risk of diabetes and heart disease due to dietary habits and lifestyle than Americans and Europeans, yet much of treatment protocols for these diseases are borrowed from the West.

The study says prevention and management strategies for such disorders should be more aggressive and tailored for Indians because of the differences between two ethnic groups — Indians and Caucasians. Dr A Misra and L Khurana's review on "Obesity-related non-communicable diseases: South Asians v/s White Caucasians" provides a comprehensive view of how differences (physiological, biochemical and attitudinal factors) between the two ethnic groups may lead to diseases like diabetes, hypertension and cholesterol-related ailments among South Asians.

"Imbalanced nutrition, physical inactivity, perinatal

Experts say Indians face a higher risk of diabetes and stroke due to dietary habits, yet much of treatment protocols for these diseases are borrowed from the West

adverse events and genetic differences are also important contributory factors," says the review.

Other differences between South Asians and white Caucasians include lower disease awareness and health-seeking behaviour, delayed diagnosis and religious and socio-cultural factors. All these factors result in poorer prevention, less aggressive therapy, poorer response to medical and surgical interventions, and higher morbidity and mortality in the former.

It says recent guidelines advocating lower cut-offs of obesity and abdominal obesity for South Asians as compared with international guidelines are expected to help physicians in better and more effective preventive management. "In view of the data, prevention and management strategies should be more aggressive for

South Asians for more positive health outcomes."

Dr Misra, chairman of Fortis Hospital's diabetes and metabolic disease centre, says, "This is the first study of its kind that gives a complete picture of the risks, development of disease and associated complications." He said Indians are several times at risk of developing these problems compared to Americans or Europeans. "There are hardly any national guidelines on prevention and management of obesity-related diseases. We should become aggressive on these fronts."

Experts say this becomes even more serious considering that over half of diabetics in the world live in India and China. The two countries have outpaced the developed economies, experts say.

Mumbai's Lilavati Hospital endocrinologist Dr Shashank Joshi said the study is relevant as Indians have not been medically recognized. "We need treatment, prevention and screening methods and medicines suited to our body types," said Dr Joshi, also the president of All-India Association of Advancement for Research in Obesity. "It is time we have national policy guidelines on treatment, etc, suited to Indians."

Times of India
ND 01/03/2011P26

Modified bug makes diesel from sunlight, water and CO₂

Cambridge: A Massachusetts biotechnology company says it can produce the fuel that runs Jaguars and jet engines using the same ingredients that make grass grow.

Joule Unlimited has invented a genetically-engineered organism that it says simply secretes diesel fuel or ethanol wherever it finds sunlight, water and carbon dioxide.

The company says it can manipulate the organism to produce the renewable fuels on demand at unprecedented rates, and can do it in facilities large and small at costs comparable to the cheapest fossil fuels.

What can it mean? No less than "energy independence", Joule's website says, even if the world's not quite convinced.

"If our claims are half right, this revolutionizes the world's largest industry, which is the oil and gas industry," Joule chief executive Bill Sims said. "And if we're right, there's no reason why this technology can't change the world."

But there's skepticism Joule can live up to its promises. National Renewable Energy Laboratory scientist Philip Pienkos said the company's technology is exciting but unproven, and their claims of efficiency are undercut by difficulties they could have just collecting the fuel their organism is producing.

Timothy Donohue, director of the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Centre at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said Joule must demonstrate its technology on a broad scale. "There are really good ideas that fail during scale up," Donohue said. AP

More money to keep investors happy



EDUCATION

24% rise in outlay gives a boost to education stocks

AS THE finance minister increased the education outlay by 24 per cent, the stocks of education services companies cheered the move, with a few touching an intra-day high by rising between 2.5 per cent and 5 per cent.

For instance, Chennai-based Everonn Education touched an intra-day high of Rs 593.50, up 4.8 per cent. Core Project and Technologies saw an intra-day high of almost 3 per cent at Rs 302.80. Others such as NIIT, Edserv and Educomp Solutions also rose during the day.

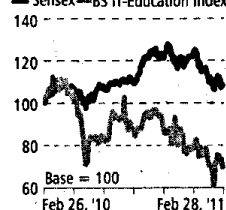
The allocation for the sector has been set at Rs 52,057 crore, up from Rs 31,036 crore in the previous year.

In the 2010-11 Budget, the outlay was raised by just 15 per cent, from Rs 26,800 crore in 2009-10.

The Budget increased the allocation for Sarva Shiksha Ab-

hiyan, a scheme for providing education to children in school, by 40 per cent, pegging it at Rs 21,000 crore for the next financial year, from Rs 15,000 crore in the current year. A new scheme was also announced to-

— Sensex—BS IT-Education Index



day for 'vocationalisation' of secondary education. Besides, there would be a scholarship scheme for SC/ST students in classes IX and X.

Private sector players have welcomed the Budget and anticipate a larger role for themselves. "With an increase in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan budget, we definitely see a much larger role for the private sector in K-12 and the Teacher Training space built around the public-private partnership model," said Sanjeev Mansotra, chairman, Core Projects & Technologies. National Knowledge Net-



work, that was approved last year, is targeting to connect 1,500 educational and research institutes by an optical fibre backbone by March 2012. Out of this, 190 institutes are expected to be linked this year.

Bhupendra Bangari, COO of BDO, a global advisory firm, said, "It is a budget for growth, investment, infrastructure and education." According to Ban-

gari, the finance minister balanced the fiscal deficit well while providing funds and impetus to investment, infrastructure and education to maintain the India growth story.

In addition, special grants, totalling around Rs 700 crore, have been announced to recognise excellence in universities and academic institutions. The institutes to get grants include

new centres of Aligarh Muslim University at Murshidabad in West Bengal and Malappuram in Kerala; Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University; IIT-Kharagpur; Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu; IIM-Kolkata; Maulana Azad Education Foundation; Centre for Development Economics and Ratan Tata Library,

Delhi School of Economics; and Madras School of Economics.

As for skill development, the NSDC (National Skill Development Council) is on track to create a 150-million skilled workforce ahead of 2022. While Rs 658 crore was already sanctioned for 26 projects under the NSDC head earlier, the Budget approved an additional Rs 500 crore for 2011-12.

DU teachers protest against semester system

Staff Reporter

NEW DELHI: Objections against the proposed manner of implementation of the semester system in humanities and commerce courses were raised at a Joint Action Body meeting of teachers at Delhi University on Monday.

The implementation of the semester system in 13 Science courses in 2010 was marked by a prolonged struggle between the university administration and the Delhi University Teachers' Association which culminated in a

High Court order directing the courses concerned to be taught according to the semester system.

At the meeting "the latest illegalities, irregularities and procedural violations by the university authorities in their imposition of the semester system" were discussed. Opposition was expressed regarding the "administration undertaking to implement the semester system in this manner despite the matter being sub-judice."

The teachers also opposed the way the "university administra-

tion continues to ignore the important and legitimate concerns of the teaching community which have been systematically argued and well-documented."

About 100 teachers were present at the meeting from humanities and social science courses.

Mathematics teacher Nandita Narain of St. Stephen's College who was present at the meeting said: "The Academic Council is yet to pass the structure of the courses which are proposed to be taught in semester mode. Yet these courses are being pushed

through the Departments. Very limited time has been given for the framing of the course syllabi and shoddy directions have been given in this regard. The results of the implementation would be disastrous."

Lady Shri Ram College Assistant Professor of History Pankaj Jha added: "The issue has to be first debated and then implemented. No proper critique of the annual system has been put forward by any of the university authorities."

MINT ND 01/03/2011 P-26

FM raises education allocation by 24%

With an eye on providing access to secondary education Mukherjee also announced a scheme to offer vocational courses to secondary school students

By PRASHANT K. NANDA
prashant.n@livemint.com

NEW DELHI

The finance minister has raised the planned allocation for education in Budget 2011 by 24% with an eye on providing universal access to secondary education, increasing the number of scholars in higher education and skills training for the youth.

"Our demographic dividend of a relatively younger population compared with developed countries is as much of an opportunity as it is a challenge. Over 70% of Indians will be of working age in 2025," Pranab Mukherjee said while proposing the allocation on Monday.

Mukherjee said he is allocating ₹52,057 crore for the sector for fiscal 2011-12, including ₹38,957 for school education and ₹13,100 crore for higher education.

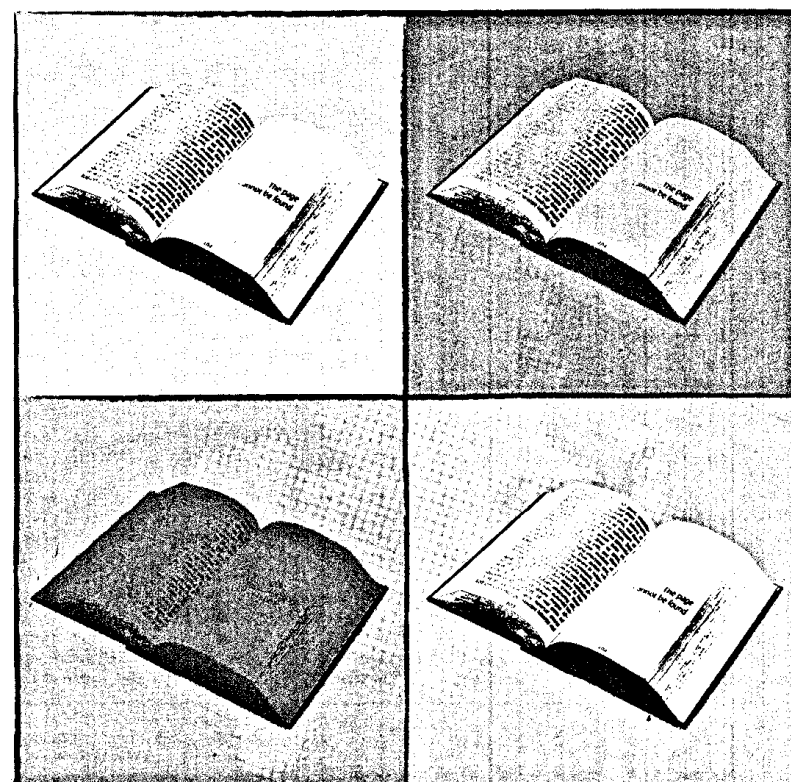
Total education outlay, including Plan and non-Plan allocation, rose 16% to ₹63,363 crore from ₹54,548 crore in the 2010-11 fiscal year.

The minister stressed on providing universal elementary education (classes I-VIII) under the Right To Education (RTE) Act, which is being implemented jointly through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

The outlay for RTE-SSA has been pegged at ₹21,000 crore, and is expected to benefit nearly 180 million children pursuing elementary education as well as 8.1 million more who are outside the ambit of school education.

Mukherjee said the allocation for RTE-SSA is 40% more than the ₹15,000 crore allocated in the last fiscal.

However, according to data available with the human re-



source development ministry, the government allocated ₹15,000 crore just to SSA in 2010-11. When the RTE Act came into force on 1 April, 2010, another ₹4,000 crore was allocated, taking the total outlay for RTE-SSA to ₹19,000 crore.

Taking this into account, the hike in allocation for the government's flagship education scheme is only around 10%.

K.T. Chacko, director of the commerce ministry-run Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, said higher allocation would help implement the RTE Act and achieve the targeted gross enrolment ratio of 30% by 2020. "On the flip side, there is a marked dip in the allotment for upgrading existing facilities," he said.

Mukherjee also announced a scheme to offer vocational courses to secondary school students. "A revised Centrally sponsored scheme, Vocationalization of Secondary Education, will be implemented from 2011-12 to improve the employ-

ability of our youth," he said.

The 15 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will get ₹2,081 crore, while the 11 existing and two upcoming Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) will receive a total of ₹149 crore. The minister made a special one-time allocation of ₹200 crore to IIT-Kharagpur and ₹20 crore to IIM-Kolkata for research, as well as ₹50 crore each for upcoming centres of Aligarh Muslim University in West Bengal and Kerala.

Mukherjee said that to promote innovation and cross-institutional research, 1,500 higher educational institutions would be connected via optical fibre under the National Knowledge Network initiative. The network, which has already connected nearly 200 institutions, will complete its task in fiscal 2012, he said.

Anand Sudarshan, chief executive officer of Manipal Education, said allocation of more funds is good news, but he "would have liked to see addi-

tional policy support for individual and corporate contributions to endowments for scholarships, for enhancing faculty numbers and quality, and also for technology investments in furthering the cause of education".

The budget proposed a fund of ₹2,179 crore for the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, which aims to promote secondary education, and ₹450 crore to boost the use of information and communication technologies in schools.

A pre-matriculation scholarship for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students in classes IX and X was also instituted. "Pre-matric scholarship is good, but I was hoping for something concrete for vocational education and research at higher education," said Narayanan Ramaswamy, executive director at consulting firm KPMG. "Education is a big space and I did not find anything, which will entice and incentivise investment and promote education entrepreneurs."

Jansatta ND p-9
01/03/2011

विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए विशेष अनुदान

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली, 28 फरवरी। वित्त मंत्री प्रणब मुखर्जी ने सोमवार को आम बजट पेश करते हुए कई विश्वविद्यालयों और शैक्षिक संस्थानों को विशेष अनुदान देने का प्रस्ताव किया।

वित्त मंत्री ने पश्चिम बंगाल के मुर्शिदाबाद और केरल के मल्लापुरम में अलीगढ़ मुस्लिम विश्वविद्यालय के भावी केंद्रों के लिए पचास-पचास करोड़ रुपए के अनुदान का प्रस्ताव किया। इसके अलावा उन्होंने केरल के पशु चिकित्सालय और पशु विज्ञान विश्वविद्यालय को सौ करोड़ रुपए का एकमुश्त अनुदान, आईआईटी खड़गपुर को 200 करोड़ रुपए का एकमुश्त अनुदान, महात्मा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हिंदी विश्वविद्यालय के कोलकाता और इलाहाबाद केंद्रों की स्थापना के लिए दस-दस करोड़ रुपए और मौलाना आजाद शिक्षा प्रतिष्ठान के लिए 200 करोड़ रुपए देने का प्रस्ताव किया।

बजट में तमिलनाडु के श्रीपेरंबदूर स्थित राजीव गांधी नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ यूथ डेवलपमेंट के लिए 20 करोड़ रुपए, आईआईएम कोलकाता को वित्तीय अनुसंधान और व्यापार प्रयोगशाला स्थापित करने के लिए 20 करोड़ रुपए और दस-दस करोड़ रुपए दिल्ली स्कूल ऑफ इकॉनोमिक्स व मद्रास स्कूल ऑफ इकॉनोमिक्स को देने का प्रस्ताव भी किया गया है।