Newspaper Clips
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Deccan Chronicle Hyderabad
12.03.2012 P-3

MODERATE RISE IN STUDENTS TAKING IIT-JEE, AIEEE

Hyderabad: The IIT-JEE and AIEEE engineering entrance tests in the country which are going to be abolished from next year, have witnessed a slight increase in the number of applicants this year. It was not a sharp one as expected, as this is the last time that both these exams will be conducted.

The Union ministry of HRD has decided to replace both these entrance tests with a single national common entrance test, called Iseet, from 2013.

While the applicants for AIEEE increased from 11.14 lakh last year to 11.45 lakh, for IIT-JEE it increased from 4.75 lakh to 5.05 lakh, a rise of about 31,000 applicants. This is a slight increase given the fact that the number of applicants had increased more than 20 per cent during the last few years.

Though the HRD ministry is yet to provide clarity on the Iseet syllabus and pattern of the exam, the coaching centres in the city have geared up to train students in the new format hoping that it will not make a difference to students' exam preparation.

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LOW-COST TABLET

Military testing norms for Aakash withdrawn

BY PRASHANT K. NANDA & SURABHI AGARWAL
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NEW DELHI

The human resource development (HRD) ministry has asked makers of the low-cost Aakash computer tablet to meet international product certifications for such devices, withdrawing an earlier order that set stringent standards on **DataWind Ltd**, the maker of the first tranche of Aakash devices.

The ministry has asked DataWind to produce international certifications on the testing and specification standards, according to two government officials, who declined to be named.

In the first tranche and the forthcoming bidding process to select a new maker for the low-cost device, the manufacturers will now need to get certifications from labs such as the Underwriters Lab in the US and Europe's BVQI lab.

"We have taken a practical stand. The Aakash tablet will be a much better product than what we have seen so far, without violating the ₹2,276 price point," said N.K. Sinha, additional secretary in the HRD ministry.

The latest prescribed standards, published by the International Electrotechnical Commission, include specifications for withstanding rough handling and standards for safety, voltage and energy efficiency.

The modified Aakash tablets are likely to come in by the month-end or early April, according to one of the two government officials cited above.

In December, two months after the Aakash tablet was introduced, the Indian Institute of Technology, Rajasthan (IIT-R), which was asked by the government to source the product, imposed stringent standards on Canada-based DataWind for making the device. These standards were not a part of the original tender and were similar to those specified by **Hewlett-Packard Co.** for its series of rugged notebooks and tablet computers that cost more than ₹1 lakh. The Aakash tablet is expected to be priced at about $45.

"The latest test criteria proposed by IIT-R still has a mix of military criteria," Suneet Singh Tuli, chief executive of DataWind, said in an email.

Tuli said Aakash and its specifications are being reviewed and tested by an independent lab. "Once the tests are complete, we'll be able to take a position on this new criteria and move the project forward," he said.

DataWind stopped supplying the Aakash tablets after IIT-R imposed the strict standards. Tuli declined to disclose how many tablets his firm delivered to the government. "The ministry or IIT-R will provide specific numbers," he said.

Sumanta Mukherjee, lead analyst (personal computers, peripherals, accessories and information technology channels) at CyberMedia Research Infotech Practice, said if there were no standards, it would be easy for companies to deliver products at a scale and price. "But the moment you impose standards, and international ones at that, you are raising the bar, and matching the government-mandated price point could be very difficult," he added.

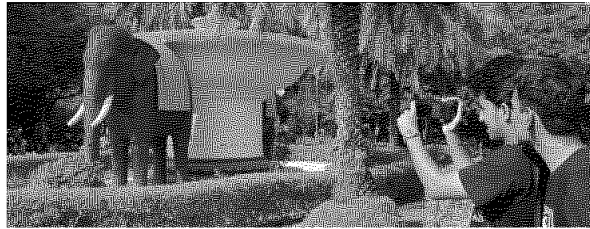*prashant.n@livemint.com*

Hindu Chennai 12.03.2012 P-2

COLOURS OF CHENNAI

Now showing on TV: Life in IIT-Madras

Vasudha Venugopal

CHENNAI: For all those who thought life for the students of IIT-Madras was about juggling between books, laboratories, exams and placements, and an occasional blast at a fest, a different picture of their everyday life might soon emerge. They'll get to see, for example, how on weekends at midnights, students of different hostels gather to play the famous 'Wolf/mafia,' a guessing game with a lot of logical reasoning that goes on till the morning; or, how a student came up with a new project, 'A bicycle that balances itself.'

Musings about the canteen food, the exhilaration of weekend night-outs or even ennui of the long days spent working on projects — IIT-M TV, launched last week, will

Tejas and Pramod working on IIT-M Television.
— PHOTO: K. V. SRINIVASAN

feature everything interesting that happens on the campus.

There are certain things that can only happen at IIT-Madras, says Tejas Balasubramanya, a chemical engineering student and also the convener of the online channel. For instance, as part of the initial ice breaking treasure hunt 'Queen of Sheeba,' an annual

ritual organised by senior students in August last year, first year students stood at Ascendas Towers asking visitors for their fried-chicken tubs while a few called random phone numbers and pleaded with their owners to let them borrow their SIM cards — all to comply with the rules of the game. Shouldn't videos of such fun

events be made and uploaded? It is a question that IIT-M TV attempts to answer.

Videos of deer roaming around freely in the wee hours of the morning, or students practising the 'insti-logo' that ranges from 'put me the pen' to 'that was awesome-max,' the online channel will feature everyday happening in the campus. Two major highlights of the initiative will be the showcasing of the best farewell videos made by former students and the presentation of the 'IIT-M heritage' the way students see it. "It is not only about the only Maple tree in the campus or how old the campus is, but about places, including the various canteens and hangouts and the hidden routes," says K. Pramod, who first came up with the initiative.

Students interested in filmmaking will make these videos, which will be edited by experts and uploaded on You Tube. "Former students keep asking us what kind of music we play here and what projects we are up to. This will be a good channel to keep them associated with us and also to give aspiring IITians more reasons to come here," says Tejas.

So will they leak out confidential election results or student grievances? "Not as of now," says Tejas. The institute had, a few months ago, launched its online newsletter, that made huge news with a post that reflected the experiences of a homosexual student in the campus. It also has Vox Populi, which has videos of students voicing their opinions on various issues, including the quality of food at the canteen and the nature of jobs that they prefer. "IIT-M TV will also give the viewer a slice of life at IIT-Madras."

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New tech to run ultra-fast Internet

Connection Speed Could Be 2,000 Times More Than What We Experience Today

Madrid: Lightning-quick Net speeds, more robust connections and a big increase in network capacity at little extra cost may now be possible, thanks to the ground-breaking fibre-optic technology, under a new project.

The project, known as Sardana, involving a consortium of European universities and research institutes, has demonstrated speeds of up to 10 Gigabits per second (Gbps), around 2,000 times quicker than the fastest Internet speed today.

Researchers also showed that such speeds can be

achieved at relatively little extra cost using existing fibre infrastructure. Though still in the experimental stages, the fully optical technology would mark a giant leap forward in fibre network performance.

"We are proposing a new access network architecture using fibre to the home that provides new functionalities and extended performance," said Josep Prat, researcher in optical communications, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), Spain and the scientific coordinator of the project.

According to some esti-

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WAIT, SPEEDY RELIEF IS HERE

mates, yearly global internet traffic will need to be measured in Zettabytes (one trillion Gigabytes) within the next three years, a four-fold increase from today and the data equivalent of all the movies ever made passing through operators' networks every five minutes, according to a university statement.

Streaming video from sites such as YouTube and Netflix will account for most of the traffic, alongside more widespread use of similarly bandwidth-demanding video conferencing and telepresence applications. IANS

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EDUCATION FUNDS

Azim Premji Trust to sell 35 mn Wipro shares

Funds from the sale, estimated at ₹1,530 cr, to be used to expand varsity and set up 'field institutions'

BY SRIDHAR K. CHARI
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BANGALORE

The Azim Premji Trust proposes to raise an estimated ₹1,530 crore to expand its activities in the field of education by selling up to 35 million shares of **Wipro Ltd.**

The estimate is based on Wednesday's closing price, when Wipro rose 1.16% to ₹437.15. The trust announced the move in a stock exchange release on Monday after market hours.

The Azim Premji Trust, controlled by Wipro chairman Azim Premji, holds an endowment supporting the Azim Premji Foundation.

In December 2010, Premji had transferred 213 million shares, an 8.7% stake in Wipro

ANIRUDDHA CHOWDHURY/MINT

Capacity building: *Wipro chairman Azim Premji.*

out of the 79.5% he held at the time, to the trust. The transferred shares were then worth ₹8,846 crore. The trust's chief endowment officer is K.R. Lakshminarayana, formerly Wipro's chief strategy officer, a post currently held by Premji's son Rishad Premji.

Foundation CEO Anurag Behar said over the phone that the sale of shares should be seen as a "portfolio management activity" and the funds raised will be used to expand the Azim Premji University and set up district

and state-level "field institutions" for teacher training and other capacity building activities in the education and development sector.

"This is not the start of the liquidation of the endowment. In our model, the foundation operates from the income of the trust, and this transaction is in the nature of managing the portfolio," Behar said.

The Azim Premji University, which started admitting students in July 2011 in a temporary campus, has about 100 students and about 40 faculty members, he said. It aims to move to a permanent campus on about 85 acres of land a few kilometres from Wipro's corporate headquarters on Sarjapur Road in Bangalore in two years, he said.

The foundation has already set up seven district-level and three state-level field institutions for training and capacity building, and this will be scaled up to about 60 in the next four to five years, he added. Each of these will have a school attached to it.

Ways to clean up space debris

TAMPA: Faced with increasing threats of space debris, the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) is actively exploring ways to clean up the outer space.

Donald Kessler, an astrophysicist at Nasa's Environmental Effects Office, said the space industry has been slowly developing ideas for over 30 years on how to proceed to clean up space junk, but none has ever been fully tested.

Space debris comes from asteroids, comets, meteorites and also defunct man-made space devices or their parts.

"Dead" satellites are an example of space debris, which poses increasing risks to functional satellites and the International Space Station.

Kessler, the first chief of NASA's Orbital Debris Program Office, said there are three fundamental issues to be resolved in relation to the cleaning up of space junk.
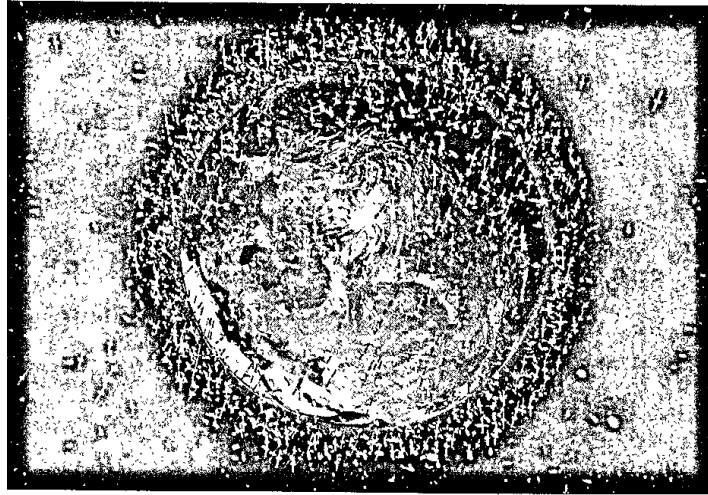
"One, how do we get to the objects inexpensively? Two, how do we grab an object that is likely spinning and not designed to be grabbed? Three, what do we do with the object after grabbing it," Kessler told Xinhua. Another factor to consider is that astrophysicists and scientists have been slow to address the topic.

To cite a case, Nasa does not annually spend any government funds with regard to the research and the cleaning up of space junk.

Size of space debris can be as small as one centimetre. Astrophysicists and scientists have difficulty putting precise definitions to "large" space debris. However, usually an object of 10 centimetres or greater is considered "large".

International interest in cleaning up space debris has increased in recent years, especially since February 2009, when two artificial satellites collided at almost about 790 km over Siberia, creating over 1,000 pieces of space debris.

Kessler believes that an in-creasing frequency of collision of space junk will create "a permanent belt of space debris" that would be so thick that it would be a hazard to any attempted launched rocket or satellite. Two current possible ideas for cleaning up space debris are the use of powerful lasers, whose projected laser beams would push the space junk into lower orbits to be burnt up, and the creation of a matrix of nets to catch some of the space junk.

Kessler, however, thinks that neither concept would be a total solution, even if they worked as planned. Numerous companies in North America are working on various space junk clean-up projects.

One such company is the Star Technology and Research (Star) in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

STAR is the recent recipient of nearly $2 million from Nasa to create a spacecraft called ElctroDynamic Debris Eliminator (EDDE).

If successfully made and operated, EDDE would target non-functioning orbiting satellites that weigh one tonne apiece.

"EDDE will 'sail' on the Earth's magnetic field like a sailing ship in the wind, giving it unlimited range, using solar power. This is the breakthrough technology that makes possible the removal of all large, dangerous debris objects in low Earth orbit. We are working to develop the components that make EDDE possible," Star spokesperson Jerome Pearson said.
Agencies

Raj Express Bhopal 12.03.2012 P-11

यूनिवर्सिटी से संबद्ध होंगे सिर्फ 100 महाविद्यालय

कुकुरमुत्तों की तरह नहीं होंगे अब कॉलेज!

नई दिल्ली (एजेंसी)। अगर उच्च शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता को बेहतर बनाने की एक प्रमुख सिफारिश स्वीकार कर ली जाती है तो किसी भी विश्वविद्यालय से संबद्ध कॉलेजों की संख्या 100 से अधिक नहीं हो सकेगी।

विवि अनुदान आयोग (यूजीसी) और उच्च शिक्षा के विभिन्न घटकों के बीच इस विषय पर राष्ट्रीय आम सहमति बनी है। उच्च शिक्षा व्यवस्था को बेहतर बनाने के लिए सामूहिक कॉलेज (क्लस्टर कॉलेज) की अवधारणा को आगे बढ़ाने पर जोर दिया गया। कालेजों को उन्नत बनाकर उत्कृष्ट संस्थान का दर्जा देने पर भी सहमति बनी और इसमें ऐसे कालेजों को शामिल करने की बात कही गई जिन्हें नैक से 'ए' ग्रेड प्राप्त हो। उच्च शैक्षणिक संस्थाओं का अकादमिक और प्रशासनिक मूल्यांकन कराने पर भी जोर दिया गया हैं।

- 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के तहत केवल 10 प्रतिशत कालेज स्वायत्त श्रेणी के पात्र पाए गए। अर्थात देश के कुल 31,324 कालेजों में 364 कॉलेजों को यह दर्जा दिया गया।

- अभी देश में उच्च शिक्षा प्रदान करने वाले करीब 500 विवि और 31 हजार कालेजों में से 60 प्रतिशत शैक्षणिक संस्थाएं राष्ट्रीय मूल्यांकन एवं संबद्धता परिषद (नैक) से मान्यता प्राप्त नहीं है।

- अभी राज्य विवि से संबद्ध 5,936 कालेजों को यूजीसी से सहायता प्राप्त है। सरकार ने 'डीम्ड' दर्जे के बारे में व्यवस्था को सुदृढ़ किया है। शिक्षण संस्थानों को 'डीम्ड' विवि का दर्जा मिलना अब आसान नहीं रहा है। आंकड़े बताते हैं कि साल 2010 और 2011 के बीच एक भी शैक्षणिक संस्थान को 'डीम्ड' विश्वविद्यालय का दर्जा नहीं दिया गया।