Newspaper Clips

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Hindustan Times ND 14/03/2015 P-3

Is CNG worsening city's air pollution? IIT to find out

hindustantimes
the air we breathe

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NEW DELHI: The spurt in vehicles running on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) may have contributed to the rise in particulate matter (PM) pollution in Delhi, especially particles of less than 2.5 microns in size.

A definite answer, however, will come when the Indian Institute of Technology completes its source appropriation study for Delhi by September this year.

The findings of the study may be interesting as the authorities have tried to avoid the issue of CNG's contribution in the increase in pollution levels in Delhi.

The Central Pollution Control Board had done a study done a few years ago on CNG contributing to vehicular pollution in Delhi but its final findings were not made public because of outcry by environmental groups.

As the issue has not been debated, there has been negligible upgrade in CNG technology for vehicles.

Unlike many of the western cities like California and Beijing which has introduced CNG engines, India has not been able to develop engines that run on natural gas. Technology improvement in CNG can improve air quality in Delhi as every 10th vehicle on the road runs on natural gas, said a scientist with Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) that has done some road vehicle density studies in the Capital.

Both the cities had been able to reduce pollution from natural gas for vehicles through technology upgrade.

In 2010, the Central Pollution Control Board's source appropriation for air pollution study attributed about 7% of particulate matter pollution from CNG-run vehicles. Of the total pollution PM load in the Capital, the study said 52% was because of dust.

The study said that CNG vehicles contributed to about 10% of the total nitrogen dioxide load in the capital.

"The CNG does not contribute much to PM 10 (which is widely monitored). But it plays an important role in the circulation of smaller particulate pollution of 2.5 and 1 microns. These facts are known in the scientific community but have not been disseminated to people," said a senior CPCB scientist.

The PM 2.5 is monitored only at few locations in Delhi and PM 1 is not monitored. The CPCB 2010 study had said small particulate matter penetrate deep into the lung and can reach the alveolar region causing heart ailments. These fine particles cover a large surface area, absorbs toxic compounds such as heavy metals and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH) organic compounds containing high content of carbon, the study said.

Since 2010 when the CPCB study was done, Delhi has witnessed increase in CNG vehicles, especially small commercial cargo and passenger vehicles, popular known as Gramin Seva vans providing last-mile connectivity.

As many as 6,153 CNG vans have been registered in Delhi since 2010 under the gramin seva category and another 6,460 under the phatphat seva..

About one-third of 80,000 passenger auto-rickshaws in Delhi are post 2010 era. In addition, about 62,000 three-wheeler light commercial vehicles running on CNG have been registered mostly after 2010, the transport department data shows.

Times Of India ND 14/03/2015 P-17

3 IITs still headless, process to begin afresh

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HRD ministry's decision has come after 10 candidates were shortlisted for the three IITs. It has decided to call 37 candidates for interaction on March 22

New Delhi: After a long delay, appointment of directors of IITs of Ropar, Bhubaneshwar and Patna looks set to begin from scratch as HRD ministry has decided to call 37 candidates for interaction with search-cum-selection committee headed by HRD minister Smriti Irani on March 22.

HRD's decision has come after 10 candidates were shortlisted for the three IITs. Sources said the selection process—initiated a little less than a year back—was vitiated as one of the 10 shortlisted candidates was not among those who were called for interaction with the search-cum-selection committee. "He was made part of the process later," the source said. The entire episode has already resulted in work reshuffle of officers in the ministry as Amarjit Sinha, additional secretary in-charge of technical education has been asked to look after statistics.

However, at least two members of the search-cum-selection committee are reluctant to be part of the process afresh. "We have not yet made up our mind if we should continue. But to go back to drawing board is like showing no confidence in our work so far," one member said. But sources in the ministry say, "We are not asking for fresh names but want to interact with 37 of them afresh. If same ten people are found eligible we have no problem. No new names are being introduced as has already been done." It is likely that HRD minister, as head of the search-cum-selection committee, will take an active interest in the fresh selection.

Meanwhile, three IITs that were established during UPA I continue to suffer. IIT, Patna is being run by director of IIT, Kharagpur and IIT, Ropar director K Surappa is on extension till new director is appointed. IIT, Bhubaneshwar's routine administration is being done by senior faculty member Sujit Roy.

Tribune ND 14/03/2015 P-9

BTech in civil engineering at IIT-Mandi soon

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MANDI, MARCH 13

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mandi will soon start a course in civil engineering.

IIT director Timothy A Gonsalves said this while talking to mediapersons here today.

He said they were expanding the area of education and would start BTech in civil engineering with a batch of 25 students from August this year.

The main focus would be on the mountainous regions of the state, he said, adding that they would also intensify their research in the field of agriculture and apple cultivation.

The director said under a unique interaction programme with foreign universities, 21 students from the US would be coming to IIT-Mandi for two months from March 15.

He said research done by the faculty was accepted worldwide and each faculty member had published their work in various international journals, which was an achievement for the recently established IIT.

The director said a student from the institute was contributing for the success of Tejas, a light combat aircraft, since 2013, while Pradeep, another student had recently topped the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE).

Gonsalves said 116 BTech students, eight MS and three PhD students would be awarded degrees on the second convocation to be held on March 15.

He said Governor Kalyan Singh and Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh would be the guest of honours.

IIT Director Timothy A Gonsalves addresses mediapersons at Kamand in Mandi on Friday. PHOTO: JAI KUMAR

Irani's visit cancelled

Union Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani's scheduled visit to attend the second convocation of IIT-Mandi on March 15 has been cancelled as she was preoccupied with the ongoing Parliament session

Dainik Jagran ND 14/03/2015 P-15

नोएडा में कारपोरेट इंस्टीट्यूट खोलेगा आइआइटी कानपुर

विक्सन सिक्वेरिया, कानपुर : आइआइटी कानपुर के नोएडा परिसर को कारपोरेट इंस्टीट्यूट के रूप में विकसित किया जाएगा। सेक्टर-62 स्थित इस परिसर में निर्माण शुरू हो चुका है। सालभर में यहां पर गेस्ट हाउस, शोध केंद्र व लेक्चर हाल बनकर तैयार हो जाएंगे। नोएडा में कारपोरेट इंस्टीट्यूट बनाने का उद्देश्य उन प्रोफेशनल्स को वहीं पर

कारपोरेट के प्रोफेशनल्स को मिलेगा प्रशिक्षण

प्रशिक्षण मुहैया कराना है, जिनका कानपुर परिसर में आना संभव नहीं है। पांच एकड़ की जमीन पर तैयार हो रहे इस प्रसार परिसर में कंपनियों में काम करने वाले प्रोफेशनल्स को प्रशिक्षण दिया जाएगा। आइआइटी कानपुर के प्रोफेसर नोएडा परिसर जाकर उनका मार्गदर्शन करेंगे। इस कोर्स की सीटें व प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम की समय सीमा अभी तय नहीं की गई है। आइआइटी निदेशक प्रो. इंद्रानिल मन्ना ने बताया कि नोएडा परिसर में गेस्ट हाउस, शोध केंद्र व लेक्चर हाल बनाने की योजना है। वहां पर कारपोरेट सेक्टर में काम करने वाले प्रोफेशनल्स के लिए प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम आयोजित किए जाएंगे। यह प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम कारपोरेट सेक्टर के साथ मिलकर तैयार किए जाने की योजना है, जिससे प्रोफेशनल्स को इसका लाभ मिल सके। आइआइटी कानपुर के पूर्व निदेशक डा. संजय गोविंद ढांडे के कार्यकाल में नोएडा में प्रसार परिसर बनाने के लिए जमीन ली थी लेकिन इस जमीन पर वर्षों से निर्माण कार्य नहीं हो पाया।

Indian, US scientists still at loggerheads

Hindustan Times (Jaipur)

THIS DISCREPANCY NEEDS MORE IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING. WE WILL NEED WIDER VIRIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS AND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL RESEARCH TO COME TO ANY CONCLUSION OR ESTABLISH THAT MUTATION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SEVERITY

NEW DELHI: A day after the Indian scientists dismissed the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) study which stressed on more surveillance keeping in mind the new mutations in the HINI virus strains, the MIT researchers said they stood by their study.

They said it was based on what was deposited by Punebased National Institute of Virology (NIV) in the database of Global Initiative of Sharing Avian Influenza Data(GISAID).

GISAID is a platform designed and maintained by scientists from various disciplines in influenza research including veterinary and human virology, bioinformatics, immunology and clinical analysis.

“We stand by our commentary. Based on the sequence of A/ India/ 6427/ 2014 strain NIV deposited in the GISAID our results are indeed accurate. Furthermore, the NIV reported GISAID database A/ India/6427/2014 sequence and that of A/North Carolina/04-2014 are not similar but different. Anyone can go to the GISAID and look up this information and arrive at the same conclusion,” Dr Ram Sasisekharan, the main author of the research said.

If t h e y h ave d i f f f e r e n t sequence information for A/ India/6427/2014 strain then what they reported in the GISAID database, then we need an explanation as to why there is a discrepancy and how this happened? Since they are the one who deposited the sequence in question in the first place, he said.

“I hope everyone understands that it was NIV that placed the sequences (they refute) in the databases in the first place.”

While rubbishing the contention, NIV director Devendra Mourya said: “The commentary by MIT scientists in Host Cell & Microbes is based on the analysis of a single HA gene of a H1N1 virus A/India/6427/2014 strain that was submitted to GISAID by CDC Atlanta USA (screenshot below) and not National Institute of Virology Pune India which was the originating lab.”

IIT-K first to conduct 3D imaging of Taj

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kanpur/IIT-K-first-to-conduct-3D-imaging-of-Taj/articleshow/46559501.cms

Kanpur: IIT-Kanpur will soon conduct 3D imaging of Taj Mahal, an exercise not done by any IIT earlier. This job has been handed over to IIT-K by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), New Delhi more than a week back, on the basis of the institute's performance of 3D imaging of other historic places such as a temple in Bhithargaon four and a half years back.

This lengthy and technical exercise will be carried out to have a better understanding of how this historic monument was constructed and its layout. So far, there does not exist any model of this world heritage site. The 3D imaging of Taj Mahal will also assist in knowing how to reconstruct it (partially or wholly) in case need be or constructing a similar monument.

Bharat Lohani of civil engineering department of IIT-K will be heading the project. He had done 3D imaging of famous Bhithargaon temple, one cave each of Ajanta and Ellora and some of the institute (IIT-K's) buildings. He mentioned that he had been pursuing the project with ASI for quite a few years but the nod was received only 10 days back.

Talking about the challenges in the exercise, Lohani said: "The summer is about to start. The harsh weather conditions will pose a challenge in 3D imaging. Also Taj Mahal is frequented by people in large numbers each day and it is not an easy to do the work in the presence of visitors. Still the challenge would be met and the work will be executed by a qualified and trained team."

He said that a team having four or five members will be engaged in data capturing and data processing. Thereafter, the structure will be analysed.

Laser scanners, ladders and other devices would be used in the project.

"We want to start the exercise as soon as possible. I have arranged funds from HRD ministry. In next 15 days to one month, we will have funds. We will then hire a team and also include students in it. They will be trained and engaged in the project. This will be an exciting experience for all of us," Lohani said.

Seven to eight months will be required to complete the project, of which three to four months will be needed for data processing.

1) 3D imaging of Taj Mahal will be done by civil engineering department of IIT-K

3) Funds for it had been arranged through HRD ministry

4) The 3D imaging of Taj Mahal and its processing will be done to understand how this historic monument was constructed and its layout

5) Funds will be available in 15 to 30 days and the entire work may take months to complete

IIT-K research on for Artificial Liver that will cost 1000 rupees

http://www.prepsure.com/current-affairs/iit-k-research-on-for-artificial-liver-that-will-cost-1000-rupees/

Scientists at the IIT Kanpur Department of Biological Sciences and Bioengineering are working with the researchers at the Institute of Liver & Biliary Sciences (ILBS), Delhi to develop an artificial liver that will cost 1,000 rupees. According to Professor Ashok Kumar (Associate Professor of Bioengineering), clinical trials for the project are going on.

This artificial liver will not be translated in the body of the patients. Patients, who suffer from liver damage or other liver problems caused due to a prolonged disease, will use it as an external liver until their liver regenerates itself. The research has already reached an advanced level. The trial tests are being done on laboratory animals right now and human blood is also being used in the trials.

The development of bio-artificial (BAL) liver devices is on high priority as availability of human liver for transplants in patients is quite low. This BAL device will help patients with acute liver failure or end-state liver disease to perform hepatic functions for short term.

The bio-artificial liver device has a cryogel filter – a porous polymer synthesised in a cold bath at -12 to -20 degrees Celsius. The polymer matrics thus formed gives a suitable microenvironemt for cells to grow and develop tissue. Using the cryogel scaffold, the articular cartilage cells were allowed to grow like natural cartilage. The technique has worked well on plasma from liver patients in the lab already.

HT.Com ND 14.03.2014 P-14

NASA CONFRIMS OCEAN ON JUPITER'S MOON

LOS ANGELES: Scientists using the Hubble Space Telescope have confirmed that theJupiter-orbiting moon Ganymede has an ocean beneath its icysurface, raising the prospects for life, NASA said on Thursday.The finding resolves a mystery about the largest moon in thesolar system after NASA's now-defunct Galileo spacecraft provided hints that Ganymede has a subsurface ocean during exploration of Jupiter and its moons from 1995 to 2003.

Times Of India ND 14/03/2015 P-21

Suddenly, water 'spouts' all over solar system

'Saturnian Moon May Be Best Place To Look For Life'

Kenneth Chang

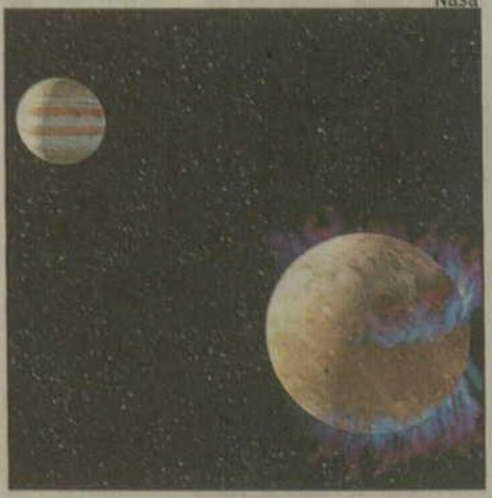
Oceans trapped under ice appear to be pretty common in the solar system and one of them, on a small moon of Saturn's, appears to be quite hot.

This week in the journal Nature, an international team of scientists reported evidence for hydrothermal vents on the Saturnian moon Enceladus, with temperatures of its rocky core surpassing 194 degrees Fahrenheit (90 degrees Celsius) in spots. The discovery, if confirmed, would make Enceladus the only place other than Earth where such chemical reactions between rock and heated water are known to be occurring today — and for many scientists, it would make Enceladus a most promising place to look for life.

"The most surprising part is the high temperature," said Hsiang-Wen Hsu, a scientist at the University of Colorado's Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics and lead author of the paper. "But that's the number we could derive."

Meanwhile, in a paper published Thursday in The Journal of Geophysical Research: Space Physics, another team reported signs of another under-ice ocean, on Ganymede, the largest of Jupiter's moons. Scientists are already convinced that there is a large ocean, also covered by ice, on another Jovian moon, Europa. NASA's Galileo spacecraft had also found hints of hidden water on Ganymede and on another of Jupiter's moons, Callisto.

Nasa



WET WORLD? A depiction of aurora on Ganymede, as it orbits Jupiter. Observations of the aurora suggest the moon has an ocean under ice

The new research, using the Hubble Space Telescope, fits with the earlier hints. "This is now stronger evidence for an ocean," said Joachim Saur, a professor of geophysics at the University of Cologne in Germany and the lead author of the Ganymede paper.

"Surprising is the understatement," Christopher P McKay, a planetary scientist at the NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California, said of the multitude of watery moons.

"After spending so many years going after Mars, which is so dry and so bereft of organics and so just plain dead, it's wonderful to go to the outer solar system and find water, water everywhere," said McKay, who studies the possibility of life on alien worlds. He was not involved in either of the papers.

For the Enceladus findings, Hsu and his colleagues based their conclusions on minuscule dust particles that NASA's Cassini spacecraft encountered as it approached Saturn and after it entered the orbit. Instruments on Cassini determined that the particles, less than a millionth of an inch in diameter, were high in silicon but had little or no metals like sodium or magnesium. Hsu said the dust was probably silica, a molecule of one silicon and two oxygen atoms, the building block of the mineral quartz. NYT NEWS SERVICE

IISc Tteam Studying how Insects Talk

http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bengaluru/IISc-Tteam-Studying-how-Insects-Talk/2015/03/14/article2712094.ece

MALLESWARAM: The way animals talk to each is the focus of Dr Rohini Balakrishnan, a professor and an ecologist at the Centre for Ecological Studies at the Indian Institute of Science.

Experiments in lower animals have shown that their voice boxes are absent or not well developed. Then how do these animals communicate with each other?

For the past 10 years, Rohini Balakrishnan's team has worked on different aspects of acoustic signaling and communication in crickets and katydids. The chorus of insect sounds we hear as dusk falls, when near vegetation, is usually from these creatures.

A combination of environmental factors seems to contribute to the method of communication. This team is actively exploring the dynamics of communication of species in a rainforest where the ambient acoustics may drown out the call of the individual, says a press note.

The team uses this information to produce acoustic simulation models that can create 3-D soundscapes: the forest viewed through its sounds and the ears of its inhabitants. In the rainforest where they have worked, their study has shown that the loud cacophony we hear often dissolves into silence when perceived through the ears of crickets!

A bird called the racket-tailed drongo mimics the calls of other animals and has a voice box as does the Asian elephant. The researchers are trying to understand why vocal variations are exhibited by these animals and to describe their vocal repertoires.

Research has revealed that during the breeding season, male crickets and katydids rub a small plectrum-like (a thin, flat piece of slightly flexible material) structure on one of their wings against a row of teeth on the other wing to produce a sound named "the calling song."

The IISc team has recorded these calling songs of crickets, and digitised and analysed them using computer programs that measure the frequency and timing patterns.

One of the team's aims is to use these digitised calls to identify species and individual insects. Using these acoustic signals to identify species could be less invasive than pitfall trapping or baiting, as the insects stay undisturbed after the researcher is done with sampling, unlike the other methods which involve researchers handling these fragile creatures.

Rohini Balakrishnan's team aims to develop and validate databases of acoustic signals of various species. Such databases could use these signals to identify different animals within specific groups of organisms, without actual physical contact. Periodic biodiversity monitoring with an automated recorder installed in an environment could help perform such biodiversity monitoring exercises.

"A detailed understanding of senders, signals, signal distortion and receivers would provide insights both into the functioning of complex natural communication networks and the evolutionary forces that do or do not drive them," she says.

Smriti Irani to inaugurate Association of Indian varsities' meet

http://www.niticentral.com/2015/03/13/smriti-irani-to-inaugurate-association-of-indian-varsities-meet-306673.html

Kurukshetra, Mar 13 (PTI) Union Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani will inaugurate a three-day annual general meeting of Association of Indian Universities' in the Kurukshetra University campus here on April 17.

"The three-day meeting from April 17-19 will be a platform to discuss important issues concerning the higher education in India," the Vice-Chancellor of the host university, DDS Sandhu said today.

The discussions among vice-chancellors and academicians during the meeting is expected to provide new direction to the higher education system in India, he said.

"The event is expected to provide some new guidelines for the reorientation and updating of the education system in view of the changing global scenario," Sandhu said. About 300 vice-chancellors and senior academicians will attend the meet.

ISM popularity dips ahead of IIT avatar

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/City/Ranchi/ISM-popularity-dips-ahead-of-IIT-avatar/articleshow/46557679.cms

New Delhi: Indian School of Mines--set to be converted into IIT from the next academic year--is facing rapid decline in popularity among students with hundreds of seats going vacant. Though admission to IITs and ISM are jointly done by the IIT through joint counseling on the basis of rank in the Joint Entrance Examination (advanced), it has been found that students no longer find ISM attractive. But the number of students getting admission through joint counseling is steadily falling: from 931 in 2012 to 815 in 2013 to approximately 750 in 2014.

Unlike in IITs, ISM also has a system of spot admissions. Simply explained, spot admissions take place after the entire process gets over. ISM brings out notices in local newspapers stating the number of vacant seats and inviting students who have cleared JEE (advanced) but failed to get through any IIT. Even with spot admissions every year, many seats remain vacant.

For instance, in 2012, 121 students were admitted through spot admission system yet there were 23 vacancies. In 2013, 169 admissions took place through spot system but eight seats could not be filled.

In case of spot admissions it has been found that contrary to popular perception, there are more students from general category than students from SC, ST or OBC category. "It means that there are more vacancy in the general category seats," a ministry official said. In 2012, of 121 students, 86 were from general category, 17 from OBC, 16 were SCs and two STs. In 2013, of the 169 students who joined through spot admission, 117 were from general category, 31 were OBC students, 25 SC and 4 ST students. In 2014, 210 students came to ISM through spot admission of which 147 were general category, 24 OBCs, 25 SCs and four STs.

It is also interesting that in ISM all spot admissions are in B.Tech, M.TEch or dual (B.Tech & M.Tech) degree courses. Not a single admission is in B.Sc or M.Sc courses.

NDRI experts clone calf from buffalo urine

Hindustan Times (Chandigarh)

CALF, NAMED 'APOORVA' (UNPRECEDENTED), WAS BORN THROUGH NATURAL DELIVERY TO A SURROGATE MURRAH BUFFALO

KARNAL: In a significant development scientists at the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) have claimed they were successful in cloning a calf using cells from the urine of a buffalo for the first time. Named 'Apoorva' (unprecedented), the female calf, weighing 37 kg, is said to be normal and responding well.

The calf was born through natural delivery to a surrogate Murrah buffalo on February 5. The scientists had taken the donor cell from the high milk-yielding breed (MU-5345) from the institute's cattle yard.

Announcing the breakthrough on Friday evening, NDRI director AK Srivastava said the scientists had used the institute's indigenously developed hand-guided cloning technique where somatic cells from excretory material of a Murrah buffalo were taken to produce a clone.

"It's an instance of maiden success in the world in which excretory material was used to clone a species. The noninvasive cloning technology is another breakthrough achieved by NDRI," he added.

Srivastava said the institute's scientists could now determine the gender of the animal by cloning methodology. "The national cloning programme is aimed to meet the milk requirements of a burgeoning population," he stated. On May 2, 2014 a cloned female calf, Lalima, was also born to the same Murrah buffalo. Lalima was claimed to be the world's first calf cloned by using cells of an adult buffalo. Srivastava said the achievement was announced only after third party scientific validation by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources, Karnal completed its comprehensive DNA profiling. "This is done to maintain complete data of the given clone, which further helps in improving the complicated process of cloning," he added.

He said the aim of buffalo cloning was to produce clones of progeny tested bulls and highyielding lactating buffaloes. "Though India has the world's largest population of buffaloes, who contribute more than onehalf of the country's total milk production, the percentage of 'elite' buffaloes is very small and there's an urgent need to increase their population. The latest cloning breakthrough can go a long way in multiplying the number of the prime milch buffaloes in India," he added.

The team that conducted this successful experiment was led by SK Singla, an animal biotechnologist at the institute, with the other members being Chauhan, RS Manik, P Palta, SS Lathwal, Pankaj, Anuj Raja and Amol Sahare. The directorgeneral of the Indian Council of Agricultural Science (ICAR), Dr S Ayyappan, congratulated the NDRI scientists for the latest cloning success.

Several trees in IIT Mandi cut down for safe landing of President Mukherjee, says Facebook post

http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-several-trees-in-iit-mandi-cut-down-for-safe-landing-of-president-mukherjee-says-facebook-post-2068797

Various lush, ancient trees were chopped down on Friday in IIT Mandi for the safe arrival of President Pranab Mukherjee. The President is scheduled to arrive in IIT Mandi in Himachal Pradesh on Sunday for inaugural of the institute's convocation ceremony. According to a Facebook message posted by a student Shivam Mishra, authorities have shorn off many old trees surrounding the institute's helipad ground for an easy and safe landing of the President.

The institute is situated in Himachal Pradesh and is surrounded by lush-green trees. The public message which is being circulated on Facebook claims that the "trees were around 50 to 100 years old" and were axed down to "avoid any security threat".

The Facebook post stated:

Since this ground has facilitated many high profile visits to the city in the past as well, including P V Narsimha Rao, Sonia Gandhi, state Chief Ministers and most recently Mr. Narendra Modi, it is beyond comprehension, as to why they were cut down for the President's visit. At a time when concerns regarding environment are already at the most pressing level, the impact of this "cutting-syndrome" is beyond imagination. These trees were not cut down for any social welfare or development program, rather due to some inflated security concerns for the VVIP. We all welcome the honourable President, but not on the cost of the Nature. The trees which took years to grow, acting as the hills vanguards for so many decades were fell down within hours, and for what? Just for two hour long presidential visit? Is this at all justified?

Mishra also compiled a Facebook page titled 'Save Trees' to spread awareness about the issue. The message posted by him urged people to change their profile pictures to an image of a cut-down tree in IIT Mandi.

Check the page here: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Save-Trees/812861595461350?fref=nf

The post further stated:

This first experience which we witnessed so closely led us to imagine the number of trees falling every year in the name of these ceremonious visits. This shocking incident has forced us to speak out and make an attempt to gather some support to save trees, so that any insanity of this kind by the state administration could be prevented in future. But since this would be a long journey starting with a RTI application to the district administration, asking them to provide the details relating to this barbarous act, and on the basis of their reply the matter would be later taken up with the National Green Tribunal of India. Let us not allow our sensitiveness and responsibility towards the environment to be CHOPPED DOWN!