Newspaper Clips
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March 24

Times Of India ND 24/03/2015   P-1

IIT heads' selection process too casual, says Kakodkar

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Mumbai: "It is too casual a process for the appointment of directors of IITs," said nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar in his first remarks on record after his run-in with the HRD ministry over the appointment of directors of the IITs at Patna, Ropar and Bhubaneshwar.

Union minister Smriti Irani had called for a fresh process to interview 36 candidates in a single day. "What was done before was okay. Looking at all 36 candidates in one day is not right. There

> **Looking at all 36 candidates in one day is not right. There is a fundamental difficulty with the process. How do you ensure that you make the correct selection?**
>
> **— Anil Kakodkar**
> CHAIRMAN OF IIT-BOMBAY'S
> BOARD OF GOVERNORS

is a fundamental difficulty with the process. How do you ensure that you make the

correct selection?" Kakodkar told **TOI** on Monday.

"IITs are far too important to the country to have such a casual process for the appointment of its directors. It has to be dealt with seriously. How can one be party to such a process?" he said. Kakodkar had quit as chairman of both the IIT-Bombay board of governors and the standing committee of the IIT Council on March 12. He later decided to continue, but did not attend Sunday's search-cum-selection committee meeting.

▶ Continued on P 12

'If they want me to continue, I will'

▶ **Continued from P 1**

The panel had earlier shortlisted 12 candidates. The list was later scrapped.

"The last meeting of the IIT-Bombay's BoG is over and therefore I wanted to step down. If they want me to continue I will. I am a responsible person," said Kakodkar, who was associated with IIT-

Bombay for almost a decade. He was the chairman of BoG for three terms. When asked if he would attend any meeting of the search committee for appointing the three directors, he said, "This process is over." However, he said he would continue in the post till May before moving on.

A senior member of one of the

Anil Kakodkar

IIT boards said, "Usually, shortlisted candidates are called for the interviews. We have been following this process, and have managed to produce some of the greatest directors in the past. Now the Centre is trying to bring about changes in a well-established and successful system."

Deccan Herald ND 24/03/2015 P-10

Rankings: Holistic action needed

Every year when rankings of universities in the world are published, attention is drawn to the fact that no Indian university is placed in a respectable position in the list. This year also it is no different with no Indian institution of higher learning found among the top 100. The prestigious Times Higher Education rankings, published last week, had no representation from India among the world' best. India's top institutions figure only in the list of universities from emerging countries, that too very low down. Others like the OECD's PISA and the QS rankings have also shown year after year that Indian universities do not make the grade. Countries like China and Brazil have their universities in the top hundred. They also improve their rankings every year. Two Chinese universities jumped 10 places this year, while those from India were slipping even from their low positions.

Excellence in education, especially technical education, is an essential requirement for development. India can realise its growth and development ambitions only if it improves its standards of education. It is well placed to do that with a large population which has the largest number of young people in the world. What is called democratic dividend will mean nothing if our schools, colleges and technical institutes cannot offer good education. Rankings are done on the basis of teaching standards, teacher-student ratios, teachers' qualifications, research facilities and output, citations, spending per students and many other factors. Indian universities lag far behind the others in the world by these criteria. The response in the country is to criticise the ranking system and attribute commercial motives to it. It is also stated that universities like Harvard and Cambridge, which top the rankings, have reached their positions after hundreds of years of being in the field. But why do our institutions not improve after being in the field for many decades?

"Excellence in education is essential for development."

Inadequate investment and lack of commitment to excellence adversely affect all the elements which give a good university its ranking. Politicisation and mismanagement of the higher education system are other reasons. Heads of universities and premier technical institutions like the IITs are humiliated and even made to resign by political authorities who have no sense of education. Appointments are not based on the best norms. Even institutions at the highest level do not have the freedom of operation that they need to achieve excellence. Unless the problems that plague education from the primary school to the top level are addressed and resolved, we will only be stuck in the past.

Manned mission to Mars delayed by 2 years

Washington: Mars One's ambitious mission to send four people to colonize the red planet in 2024, which includes three Indians among its 100 finalists, has been pushed back by two years. Mars One, a Netherlands-based nonprofit, aims to send four people on a one-way trip to the red planet every two years.

Three Indians, 29-year-old Taranjeet Singh Bhatia, who is studying computer science at the University of Central Florida, Ritika Singh, 29, who lives in Dubai, and 19-year-old Shradha Prasad from Kerala, are among the 100 finalists for the Mars mission announced last month. Out of these 100 finalists, 24 will train to go to the red planet.

The four-member crew will now depart for Mars in 2026 and land near the outpost in 2027.

The delay was necessitated by a lack of investment funding, which has slowed work on a robotic precursor mission that Mars One had wanted to send toward the Red Planet in 2018, Mars One CEO Bas Lansdorp said. The robotic mission aims to launch a lander and orbiter to Mars, to test out technologies needed for human settlement. PTI

Times Of India ND 24/03/2015   P-23

Felled tree to be reborn after 125 years

© Jamie Grill/Tetra Images/Corbis

London: A giant redwood tree that was felled 125 years ago in the US state of California to satisfy a drunken bet is all set to be reborn with scientist cloning the stump in the UK. The Fieldbrook Redwood Stump, whose stump is 35 feet in diameter, towered as high as a 30-storey building over the course of nearly 4,000 years in the US would have been the biggest tree alive today had it not been so ignominiously felled in 1890.

The tree was felled to satisfy a drunken bet about making a table big enough to seat 40 guests from a single slice of tree-trunk, The Independent reported.

The tree is about to be reborn as a clone planted on the coast of Cornwall, possibly as early as this spring.

Scientists have managed to cultivate cuttings from the Fieldbrook Redwood Stump, which is 35 feet in diameter, and 10 of its clones are now growing as knee-high saplings in the plant nursery at the Eden Project, near St Austell in UK. This new plantation will be a library of the tallest, oldest living things on Earth. "The notion of putting back trees that have their own story has huge appeal," one of the scientist said. "There are lots of ancient trees in Britain that have a piece of history attached to them."

The Fieldbrook stump is a Californian coast redwood which was felled under the orders of William Waldorf Astor, a wealthy American living in Britain, who became embroiled in a barroom bet about making a table seating 40 from a single cross-section of a tree. PTI

The Fieldbrook Redwood Stump was felled in 1890 to satisfy a drunken bet. The tree is about to be reborn as a clone planted on the coast of Cornwall

Costa Rica has used only renewable energy in '15

For 75 Days, Central American Country Has Relied On Hydroelectric Power, Not Burnt Any Fossil Fuel

Ben Tufft

© Layne Kennedy/Corbis

Costa Rica has achieved a clean energy milestone by using 100% renewable energy for a record 75 days in a row.

The feat was achieved thanks to heavy rainfall, which powered four hydroelectric plants in the first three months of the year, the state-run Costa Rican Electricity Institute said. No fossil fuels have been burnt to generate electricity since December 2014, in the state which is renowned for its clean energy policies.

While Costa Rica is a small country, with a population of about 4.8 million people, it has

GREEN PARADISE: The Rio Celeste Falls in Costa Rica

made great strides in its use of renewable energy. Last year 80% of the energy used came from hydropower, while geothermal energy made up about 10% of the mix in the volcano-strewn nation. Currently 94% of Costa Rica's energy needs are met by renewables.

New geothermal projects are already in the planning stages, to ensure that the Central American state does not have to rely on fossil fuels in the future.

The government approved a US $958 million geothermal project in mid-2014. The first plant, when completed, is expected to produce 55 megawatts of electricity, enough to power 55,000 homes. A further two 50 megawatt plants will be built nearby.

Jake Richardson, of Clean Technica, said it was important the country did not become too dependent on hydropower.

"It's good news that more geothermal will be coming on board, as there are obvious downsides of being too reliant on hydropower, especially run-of-the-river systems, which can be hindered by seasonal changes in water flow," he told Science Alert.

"Droughts can also severely impact power supplies. And there are also some environmental downsides to hydroelectric

dams more generally, namely the impact on riparian ecosystems and passing fish."

It helps that Costa Rica, which aims to be carbon-neutral by 2021, has excellent infrastructure. The World Economic Forum ranked the country second in Latin America, behind Uruguay, for its electricity and telecommunications infrastructure in its 2014 Global Competitiveness Index.

In a sign of how committed Costa Rica is to renewables the government has decided not to exploit rich oil deposits — discovered along the country's Caribbean coast — for environmental reasons. THE INDEPENDENT

March 23

Kakodkar skips meeting to choose three IIT directors

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New Delhi: After claims that the earlier process was vitiated, the search-cum-selection committee to choose directors for three IITs – Ropar, Patna and Bhubaneswar – made a few changes in the shortlist finalized earlier. However, the meeting on Sunday was not attended by Anil Kakodkar despite taking back his

Anil Kakodkar

resignation from the post of chairperson, board of governors, IIT-Bombay.

Two other members of the search committee – M S Ananth, former director, IIT-Madras, and Lila Poonawalla, chairperson, IIT-Ropar – also did not attend the meeting. H M Nerurkar of Tata Steel was not there but he had not attended the earlier meeting as well where the short-listing was done.

"Attending a meeting where their earlier decision was to be changed would have meant acknowledging there was something wrong in the earlier short-listing," a source said.

The meeting was chaired by HRD minister Smriti Irani and attended by Ashok Misra, former director, IIT-Bombay, M Anandakrishnan, chairperson, IIT-Kanpur and S K Roongta, chairperson, IIT-Bhubaneswar.

For the full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com

Kakodkar, 3 others skip meeting

IIT SELECTION COMMITTEE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 22

IN what has come as a snub to the Smriti Irani-led Human Resource Development Ministry, nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar did not attend the meeting of the selection committee to conduct repeat interviews of candidates on Sunday to pick directors of three Indian Institutes of Technology.

The panel, however, went ahead and zeroed down on three names, which have been forwarded to President Pranab Mukherjee.

Kakodkar, a member of the selection committee and

IIT selection panel members leave after a meeting with HRD Minister Smriti Irani in New Delhi on Sunday

chairman of the Standing Committee of the IIT Council (SCIC), had resigned as chairman of the Board of Governors of IIT-Bombay on March 12, following a "disagreement" over the selection of an IIT director. After his resignation, the HRD Ministry reached out to him, saying

his resignation had not been accepted and that it was "glad" that he had agreed to withdraw his resignation.

The selection committee, chaired by Irani, had reached a consensus on the choice of directors for IIT-Patna and Bhubaneswar but there was no agreement on IIT-Ropar, and

the process involving 12 candidates was later cancelled. All 37 in the original short-list were then called for a new round of interviews on March 22.

According to sources, several other members of the selection panel had also expressed unhappiness over the ministry's decision to re-start the entire process . Three other members of the selection panel — Lila Poonawala, M S Ananth and H M Nerurkar — did not attend Sunday's round of interviews.

Kakodkar was earlier chairman of an 11-member committee constituted by the HRD ministry in 2010 to "recommend autonomy measures to facilitate IITs to scale greater heights". He could not be reached for comments.

Respect talent

Autonomy is the answer for institutions of excellence

IF several competent heads of respected institutions resign due to differences with the HRD Minister, it calls for a review of the way she functions. If it's a coincidence that Directors of IITs are deciding to hang their boots, almost at the same time, it's a different matter. In either case, the issue should not be politicised. In a vibrant democracy, where the best should get an opportunity to head an institution, especially those that bag some respectability in the field of education, where poor standards have prevailed for over six decades as a norm, all efforts should be made to retain talent at the IITs and IIMs.

The differences, or the so-called ego clashes, should not cost either the environment of academic excellence or regard for erudition. This has been India's cultural tradition and the present government claims to be a great votary of maintaining traditions. Since the ecology of professionals is often not in tune with the aspirations and compromised stance of the politicians, institutions of higher education, like the IITs and IIMs, have been clamouring for greater autonomy for years. The present government should pay heed to this demand for the future growth of these institutions. As such, this government wants institutions of excellence to proliferate. Greater autonomy will avoid the proliferation of clashes too.

People who spend a life-time in pursuit of excellence in their respective fields, like the Director, IIT, Delhi, and the Chairman of the IIT Bombay Board of Governors, Anil Kakodkar, an eminent scientist, do not like to be instructed on demands that may be unfavourable to an upcoming institution, in this case, the selection of the right candidate as Director, IIT Ropar. Decent people avoid confrontation. At the same time, we are sticklers to hierarchy and tend to believe that a person of eminence can't be replaced. This country has no dearth of talent, but new faces should not be brought in by showing disregard for those who have given a life time to building institutions. And certainly not by those whose competence is questionable.

Indian Express ND 23/03/2015   P-12

A leadership vaccum

Their headlessness illustrates the mess in premier scientific research and higher learning institutions

IT SHOULD be seen as worrisome that the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) has not had a full-time director for almost eight months now. India's Green Revolution owes its origin to the high-yielding Kalyan Sona and Sonalika wheat varieties that were bred from this institute in the mid-Sixties. Even in recent times, IARI scientists have developed blockbuster varieties like Pusa-1121 rice (generating annual export earnings of over $ 3 billion) and HD-2967 wheat (planted in an unprecedented 8 million hectares this year). Given the challenges before Indian agriculture — be it from climate change, growing land and water resource constraints, or limited scope for minimum support price increases — the importance of publicly-funded research in boosting crop yields and reducing production costs is obvious. It is all the more surprising, then, that an institution like the IARI is headless. Worse, the agriculture ministry claims it hasn't found anybody "suitable" to be director after taking eight months to conduct the interviews from the time the post was advertised.

The IARI's is not an isolated case, though. The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research — India's largest R&D organisation — is without a regular director general since January 2014, while about a quarter of the 38 laboratories under it have "acting" heads. The Centre is yet to appoint a chief for the Defence Research and Development Organisation after the "termination" of the Agni missile systems architect, Avinash Chander, on January 14. Nor did it seek a timely replacement for V.M. Katoch after he retired as Indian Council of Medical Research director general last month. No less illustrative of the mess in the country's premier scientific research and higher learning institutions is the recent resignation — which the ministry says he has since withdrawn — of Anil Kakodkar as chairman of the governing board of IIT-Bombay, following a similar move by IIT-Delhi director R. Shevgaonkar in December. The apparent trigger in both cases was "disagreement" with the human resource development ministry.

Such a leadership vacuum, resulting from indifference or political interference, should be seen to be unacceptable for national institutions that have contributed enormously both in terms of research and high-quality manpower generation. The Narendra Modi government must, first and foremost, ensure that the autonomy of these institutions, extending to the selection of their chiefs, is protected. Why should the HRD minister be part of a search-cum-selection committee for choosing IIT directors? We need publicly-funded institutions for cutting-edge research and technology development, but these should be more on the lines of Germany's Max Planck Institutes or the Argonne National Laboratory in the US, which are independent as well as world class.

A mathematical vaccine against rumour

Not every day do we get a response from a mathematician working on computer science. In response to my column, "Virus in the viral content" (February, 23, 2015), Amitabha Bagchi, Associate Professor, Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Delhi, shared a study done by his team on rumour control strategies on social networks. What made his response unique was that it provided a mathematical model to tackle the malaise of rumour and reaffirmed faith in credible news ecology.

"Yes," answered Prof. Bagchi to my question on whether a counter-offensive could work in the case of rumours and propaganda. He wrote: "A few years ago, a PhD student of mine and I did some work in this area. We modelled rumour as a message spreading through a social network (not necessarily an online social network). Our contribution was a new idea: an "anti-rumour" which was a message that circulated through the network and had the effect of being a vaccine, i.e., when the anti-rumour reached a person in the network, it erased the person's belief in the rumour, if such a belief existed, and prevented that person from believing in the rumour in the future, if the belief did not already exist. Through mathematical analysis and simulated experiments, we found that such an "anti-rumour" can effectively contain rumour, especially if enlightened citizens who are also part of the social network, work to spread such a message."

A S PANNEER SELVAN

Leveraging trust in friends

He shared the research paper, "Towards Combating Rumors in Social Networks: Models & Metrics", published in the journal, *Intelligent Data Analysis*. The paper was written by Rudra M. Tripathy and Amitabha Bagchi, both from IIT Delhi, along with Sameep Mehta from IBM Research-India. In this paper, they studied different methods for combating rumours in social networks actuated by the realisation that authoritarian methods to fight rumours have largely failed. Their major insight is that in situations where populations do not answer to the same authority, it is the trust that individuals place in their friends that must be leveraged to fight rumour. In other words, rumour is best combated by something, which acts like itself, a message that spreads from one individual to another. They called such messages anti-rumours. They studied three natural anti-rumour processes to counter the rumour. They proposed several metrics to capture the properties of rumour and anti-rumour processes. The metrics were geared to capture temporal evolution as well as global properties of the processes. They evaluated their methods by simulating rumour and anti-rumour processes on a large data set of around 10 to the power of five nodes derived from the social networking site, Twitter, and on a synthetic network of the same size generated according to the Barabasi-Albert model.

They point out that the propagation of the anti-rumour does not depend primarily on the authoritativeness of the source that issues the anti-rumour but on the trust users place in their friends in the social network. Three models — the Delayed Start Model, the Beacon Model and the Neighbourhood Model — have different trajectories and impact on our societies. In the Delayed Start Model, the local authority discovers a rumour some days after it started and decided to combat it with an anti-rumour. In the Beacon Model, the researchers assume that the social network contains a set of vigilant agents, beacons that are on the lookout for the spread of rumours. "Once a beacon receives a rumour it immediately starts spreading anti-rumours to combat the rumour. This strategy corresponds to a semi-centralized scenario where coalitions of authorities may proactively decide to seed the network with vigilant users who can both detect rumours and respond to them," they argue. They also point out that in the Beacon model, the initial set of beacons are chosen by some authority, whereas in the Neighbourhood model, the beacons are self created with some probability during the rumour spreading process.

I am not going into the mathematical details, the matrices used by the researchers, the research methodology, and the way Twitter data and synthetic data were used to arrive at some of the conclusions. In all the three models, they observed a sharp growth in the rumour process after a slow start. Using numbers and data, they show that once the growth of rumour starts to decline, within a very short span of time the rumour is completely removed from the network. Hence, they contend that once we detect the rumour — no matter in which way — due to fast growth power of social networks we can conquer the rumour.

Based on this study, Prof. Bagchi wanted *The Hindu* and other responsible news organisations to take the lead by allocating resources to combat harmful rumours. He wrote: "If an individual tweets that a rumour is not true, maybe his friends will not believe it, but if an individual retweets a tweet from *The Hindu*'s official Twitter handle his friends will not only believe it, but the more enlightened amongst them will actually see it as their social duty to propagate this message."

Financial Express ND 23/03/2015   P-12

Recognising the hottest techies in the country

The Startup Mashup is an event that allows technology folks to double their salaries; to be held on March 28

MyRefers (www.myrefers.com), a referral-based jobs marketplace, along with *The Financial Express*, will present the first edition of the Startup Mashup (www.thestartupmashup.com) on March 28. The event—powered by Nasscom 10k start-ups—will be held at IIT Delhi. The highlight of the event is to connect the highly-referred best technology brains from top-tier engineering and management colleges to some of the biggest start-ups. The day-long event is designed in a unique format and filled with real-time challenges to help the participants get their dream job offers in a fun way. The concept of the event is to recognise the hottest techies in the country across technology (web and mobile), data science, product management and UX, and get them linked to the hottest start-ups such as Gaadi.com, Cardekho.com, 91Mobiles, Limetray, Groupon, Ibibo and Acquia, to name a few.

The Startup Mashup event is open to anybody who has got a big referral or is an alumni from premier institutes such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, Delhi Technological University (formerly Delhi College of Engineering), National Institutes of Technology, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Indian Institutes of Management, etc. Based on the theme 2X of Everything, the Startup Mashup is a platform to celebrate skills and knowledge of the tech brains in the country. While working in a start-up, one gets 2X of everything, including me-time, flexi work hours, no hierarchical jobs, fun culture, perks, etc, and the participating start-ups are topping up the salaries to 2X for the winning hottest 'techie' in the country. The start-up CEOs and CTOs will share their stories and will even work closely in mentoring and guiding the challengers in solving some real-life problems. There are going to be exciting rewards from Goqii, Groupon and Microsoft, including a trophy, certificates, and even the opportunity of working with the best start-ups in the country.

The rewards will include 2X for candidates earning less than ₹10 lakh currently; 1.5X for candidates earning between ₹10-20 lakh; and ESOPs or bonuses to candidates with a CTC of above ₹20 lakh; and much more to the top five winners across each category (i.e. top 20-25 candidates in total). For the remaining 175-200 people at the event, there will be exciting job offers and rewards based on the results of their interviews.

The Startup Mashup event, powered by MyRefers and presented by *The Financial Express*, has partnered with Microsoft, GroupOn and Goqii as gifts, lifestyle and fitness partners; BITS Pilani, IIT Delhi E-cell and NIT Kurukshetra as alumni partners; and YourStory, F6s and *Exhibit* magazine as online and trade media partners.

Reform medical education, transform healthcare

If India can initiate some radical changes in medical, nursing and paramedical education, dramatic changes will be visible in three years

Dr Devi Shetty

India can become the first country in the world to dissociate healthcare from affluence. This can only happen by closely linking healthcare delivery with medical education. According to World Bank data, Cuba produces the largest number doctors per capita in the world (6.7 per 1,000 against 2.5 per 1,000 in the US and 0.7 per 1,000 in India) and its health indices are better than that of the US, which spends the most on healthcare. India is short of 3 million doctors and 6 million nurses, as per a PwC study, and its paramedical training programme is virtually non-existent. It is unfortunate that in 65 years post-Independence, we have never even once studied our manpower requirement for healthcare.

CURBING MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY

Every 10 minutes, a young woman dies during childbirth somewhere in India and 3 lakh children die the day they are born. India's infant mortality rate (42 per 1,000 live births) and maternal mortality rate (178 per 100,000 live births) almost matches that of sub-Saharan countries, and the situation will not improve simply because government spends more money. We simply don't have the number of medical specialists needed to reduce these rates.

For 26 million childbirths per year, we need to perform at least 5.2 million Caesarian sections. For successful childbirth following a C-section, we need over a lakh each of gynaecologists, anaesthetists, paediatricians and radiologists. We only have around 30,000 gynaecologists and 20,000 anaesthetists and radiologists.

NUMBING NEGLECT

No surgery on a human body can be done legally without an anesthetist. Only 30% of India's population has satisfactory access to proper anesthesia services, of which 80% are urban beneficiaries.

Top 10 causes of death like heart disease, resistant TB, brain stroke, mental illness leading suicide, liver disease, accidents and cancer cannot be legally retreated by a doctor without a postgraduate qualification. Consider our figures for just two specialties — India has only 4,000 gastroenterologists and 1,400 neurosurgeons. The US has 20,000 undergraduate seats and 37,900 postgraduate seats. In most developed countries, postgraduate seats are twice the number of undergraduate seats. However, in India we have close to 50,000 undergraduate seats and 14,000 postgraduate seats in clinical subjects.

EMPOWER NURSES

India runs MBBS-centric healthcare. Indian policies prevent anyone other than a doctor with an MBBS degree to touch a patient. Primary healthcare in most countries is taken care of by nurse practitioners or physician assistants. In India, a nurse with over 20 years of experience in a cardiac ICU is not allowed to prescribe basic drugs. But in the US, nurse anesthetists administer anesthesia in 67% of cases. The government should consider offering dispensing rights to nurse practitioners or AYUSH doctors working at the public health centre to dispense 47 basic drugs after rigorous training and certification.

The nursing profession in India is on the verge of extinction because career progression is limited in the field. Admissions to nursing colleges have come down by nearly 50%. Soon we may have to import nurses at exorbitant salaries from countries like the Philippines or Thailand.

TRAIN PARAMEDICS

Healthcare is not about just doctors and nurses. For holistic healthcare, there should be four nurses and four paramedics behind every doctor. Of the 20 fastest-growing occupations in US, 15 are in paramedical healthcare. Unfortunately in India, none of the 15 training programmes exist. Paramedics like physician's assistants can add significantly to very sick patient care.
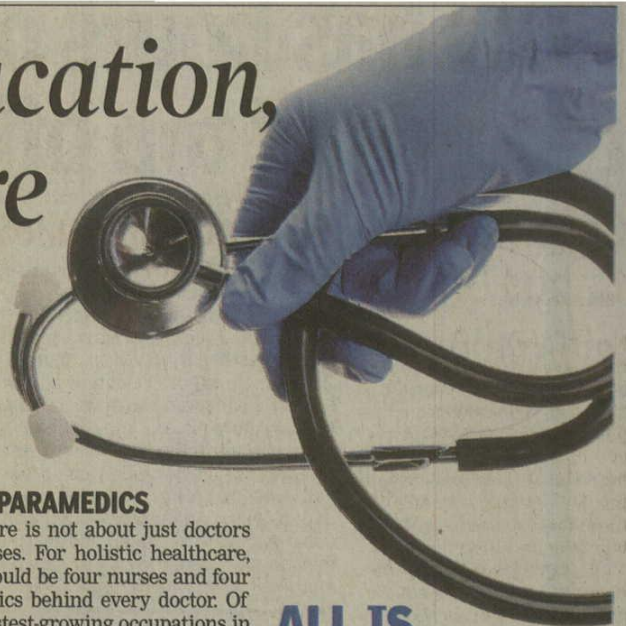
Instead of only looking to increase the healthcare budget in India we should look at reforms in medical, nursing and paramedical education, which will have a big impact in less than three years. Pumping more money into a defunct system will only increase corruption.

THE PRESCRIPTION

The first step is to equalize undergraduate and postgraduate seats in India. This can be done without incurring any cost, by just increasing the number of postgraduate seats in medical colleges and giving the National Board of Examination the status of a statutory body and extending postgraduate medical education beyond medical colleges.

State-owned medical universities should be empowered to innovate and train adequate number of medical specialists, nursing and paramedics to meet the healthcare needs of the state. Today they are restrained and treated like examination conducting agencies.

The Mumbai-based College of Physicians and Surgeons (CPS), which was the first Indian medical university established 103 years ago, can convert the entire basic cadre of MBBS doctors from government hospitals into diploma degree holders in broad specialties like gynecology, pediatrics, anesthesia and radiology in just two years and with no additional investment. The CPS only requires state government recognition.

Unless community health centres are staffed with adequate number of medical specialists with postgraduate diplomas, infant and maternal mortality rates will not decline. The government's target should be to reduce both by 50% within five years. As a collateral benefit, the rest of healthcare delivery in India too will get transformed. Building more institutions like AIIMS will not create this effect. It is time to act now. Otherwise, we will end up reinforcing Einstein's definition of stupidity – "doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results".

The author is chairman, Narayana Health

ALL IS NOT WELL

Shortage of skilled manpower in government hospitals (in %)

%	Category
79.8	Paediatricians
79.6	Physicians
74.9	Surgeons
69.7	Specialists in CHCs
65	Obstetrician/Gynaecologists
50	Lab technicians
27	Pharmacists
25	Nurses in PHC and CHC

PHC-Primary Health Centre
CHC- Community Health Centre

MISSING DOCS

Thousands of specialist seats lie vacant in various departments

TOP FIVE CAUSES OF DEATH	SPECIALIST TO TREAT	PRACTISING SPECIALISTS		PG seats - India		PG seats - US
		India	US	Current	Required	
Heart disease	Cardiologist	4,000	22,020	268	3,200	800
Diarrhoeal diseases	Paediatrician	20,000	56,262	1,200	10,500	2,640
Chronic lower respiratory disease	Pulmonologist	1,200	5,726	329	2,000	511
Strokes	Neurologist	1,100	13,156	171	2,800	700
Flu/pneumonia/TB	Pulmonologist	1,200	5,726	329	2,000	511

HRD Minister Smriti Zubin Irani launched Grievance Redressal Portal of UGC

http://indiaeducationdiary.in/Shownews.asp?newsid=34047

Report by India Education bureau, New Delhi: The Union Minister of Human Resource Development Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani launched the UGC's Students Grievance Redressal Portal in New Delhi today.

The Students Grievance Redressal Portal is a new initiative taken up by the University Grants Commission under the leadership of the Union Minister which facilitates the students / complainants to lodge their grievance, send reminders and view the status of action taken regarding their grievances.

The basic aim of the portal is to ensure transparency in admission, prevent unfair practices in higher education institutions and provide effective mechanism for redressal of the grievances. Each University has a dedicated Nodal Officer for redressal of grievance and as soon as the student lodges a complaint, the email ID, mobile number and other contact details of the Nodal Officers can be viewed. The Nodal Officer will also be responsible for redressal of the grievances related to the affiliated colleges under that University.

The Nodal Officer on behalf of the University will ensure time bound redressal of the grievance failing which every 15 days an automatic reminder will be sent to the Nodal Officer for closing the grievance. The Nodal Officer can contact the complainant whose details will also be visible to him/her for any clarification, if required. The UGC alone will monitor the grievances. The dashboard of the Administrator will automatically display the status in a graphic manner, the time taken for redressal of the grievance, pending grievances and the classes of grievances.

The grievances can be lodged for a variety of reasons like admission process in totality including reservation policy, publication/non-publication of prospectus, discrimination of students on the basis of caste, creed and race, untimely conduct of examination, non-declaration of results, lack of students amenities, and non-payment of scholarships/fellowships, victimization of students and sexual harassment cases etc.

Students can access the portal at www.ugc.ac.in in the Student Grievance link.

March 22

Notice period over, IIT-Delhi director still can't leave

RUHI TEWARI
NEW DELHI I MARCH 21

THREE months after he resigned, and even as his notice period comes to an end, IIT-Delhi Director Raghunath K Shevgaonkar is yet to be relieved by the Smriti Irani-led Human Resource Development Ministry.

Shevgaonkar had resigned on December 22 amid controversy, seeking to be relieved by the first week of January. He has now served his mandated notice of three months.

"Yes, it (notice period) is over. How can I leave till I am formally relieved? I have not received anything yet," Shevgaonkar told *The Sunday Express*, adding that he had even reminded the ministry, but did not hear back from them.

Shevgaonkar's resignation had stirred up a row, with some reports claiming he had quit amid pressure from the HRD Ministry to release nearly Rs 70 lakh to former IIT-Delhi faculty Subramanian Swamy, who is now a BJP functionary, as salary dues for the period between 1972 and 1991.

HRD Ministry officials, however, had claimed he resigned after an inquiry was set up on IIT-Delhi's Mauritius venture. The ministry had

SHEVGAONKAR'S resignation had stirred up a row, with some reports claiming he quit amid pressure from the HRD Ministry to release nearly Rs 70 lakh to Subramanian Swamy, a former IIT-Delhi faculty member

said the MoU between the Mauritius Research Council (MRC) and IIT-Delhi for setting up an International Institute of Technology Research Academy (IITRA) in Mauritius "violates the IIT Act".

While sources had then claimed Shevgaonkar was not being relieved since the inquiry was on, ministry officials now say there is no such probe being conducted and there is no clarity on why there has been a delay in relieving him.

Shevgaonkar recently wrote to the ministry stating that his resignation letter dated December 22, 2014 may be accepted on completion of the notice.

IIT-D Director continues office after notice expires

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/iit-d-director-continues-office-after-notice-expires/articleshow/46667603.cms

NEW DELHI: Amid the prevailing uncertainty over his continuation as the IIT-Delhi Director, R K Shevgaonkar today reported to work and held meetings with faculties even as the three months notice period following his resignation ended yesterday.

He was in good spirits and held post as a "true director", said one of the faculties who met him.

Shevgaonkar had resigned on December 22 amid controversy, seeking to be relieved by the first week of January. He has now served his mandatory notice of three months.

His resignation had stirred a controversy with more than two years of his tenure left as reports suggested that he was under pressure from the Ministry.

The Ministry had later denied reports suggesting that he resigned after he was allegedly put under pressure on some issues which included paying nearly Rs 70 lakh to former IIT-D faculty and now BJP leader Subramaniwan Swamy as his "salary dues" between 1972 and 1981.

Questions have also been raised about his role in setting up of an extension research campus in Mauritius. An enquiry is already underway about the MoU signed in this regard.

Strong bonds between industry and academia are critical for the emergence of a vibrant startup ecosystem. IIT Madras has taken pioneering steps that are beginning to deeply influence startup growth and innovativeness, and others are beginning to follow its lead

IIT-M IS INDIA'S STANFORD

BROADENING ALLIANCES: Sai Praveen (L) and K R Rahul, founders of Clozerr, a platform that helps discover restaurants nearby and enables businesses track customers' loyalty points, in front of the IIT Madras Research Park

IIT Madras Research Park

AREA
11.42 acres

PHASE 1
0.4 million sq ft

PHASE 2
0.8 million sq ft

LAUNCHED IN MARCH 2010

RESIDENTS

R&D companies
60

Incubatee companies
40

Startups under Rural Technology Business Incubator
30

Bio incubator startups
4

Centres of excellence and innovation centres
4

Incubators
4

STARTUPS
- Vortex Engineering
- DesiCrew Solutions
- Uniphore Software Systems
- Ather Energy
- HyperVerge
- Swaayambhu

- Renault-Nissan
- TCS
- Cognizant
- Titan Innovation
- Amada

FACILITATORS
- IIT-M Incubation Cell
- Rural Technology Business Incubator
- Villgro
- TiE

LARGE COMPANIES
- BHEL
- Caterpillar

NUMBER OF PATENTS

Filed
63

Granted
18

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If you look at some of the more prominent e-commerce and marketplace ventures of today – be it Flipkart, Snapdeal, Zomato, Quikr, Ola, or Housing – you will find that many have founders who did engineering degrees at IIT Delhi or IIT Mumbai.

But the future of the more technology focused startups – the kind that institutions like Stanford produce in droves – may actually be IIT Madras, and the phenomenal success of some companies like Zoho may be early evidence of that. This has to do with the culture of technology research and industry-academia interaction that the institution has fostered for years, and which has touched a new high with a massive research facility that was launched five years ago.

The IIT Madras Research Park was an idea conceptualized by Ashok Jhunjhunwala, professor at the electrical engineering department of IIT-M, and M S Ananth, the then dean of academic courses and later the director of the institute, to create a bridge between innovations created in the classroom and industry. It is spread across 1.2 million sq ft, houses almost 100 entities – research companies, innovation arms of large corporates, startups and incubators – and has already facilitated filing of over 60 patents.

"We realized that the rewards of R&D are significantly higher if we enable R&D personnel from industry to work jointly with our faculty and students on new ideas," says Bhaskar Ramamurthi, director of IIT Madras and a member of the board at the Research Park.

INNOVATIVE STARTUPS

The success of the ecosystem can be seen in the quality and utility of the innovations produced by its residents. Take Vortex Engineering, which is working towards financial inclusion using disruptive ATM technology. The company claims many firsts – first biometric ATMs for MNREGA, first ATMs to work without AC, and first commercially viable solar ATMs. Narayanakumar R, the chief development officer of Vortex, is all praise for the ecosystem. "Our research activities here have resulted in almost nine patents for the cash technology used in our ATMs," he says.

Ather Energy is building a smart electric scooter at the Park. Swayambhu Biologics is a biotech firm that uses a patented microbial composting process that results in creation of nutrient-rich biomanure along with the advantage of managing distillery effluents and helping industries achieve zero discharge. IIT-M's Rural Technology Business Incubator incubated Swayambhu in 2012 and gave them much needed resources, equipment and space at the Research Park. Uniphore, incubated at IIT-M in 2008 and which has filed six patents, has leveraged the institution's technical expertise to develop Akeira, a virtual assistant like Apple's Siri. Akeira can be used on any basic phone and its interactive feature keeps farmers informed of advisory messages.

Startups say the presence of R&D divisions of large companies in the same facility enables them to feed into their expertise. TCS has an innovation lab at the Research Park. TCS CTO Ananth Krishnan says the engagement model, the intellectual ambience, and proximity to faculty and students have been a huge positive. "We also get an opportunity to engage and mentor startups doing interesting work," he says.

The environment, though still in its nascent stages, has striking similarities with that of Stanford, which has long had a unique and powerful relationship with Silicon Valley. A study by Stanford academics Charles Eesley and William Miller three years ago estimated that Stanford alumni and faculty members had founded 39,900 companies since the 1930s, creating 5.4 million jobs and generating annual revenues of $2.7 trillion. Its students and alumni have founded companies like Hewlett-Packard, Intel, Cisco to the more recent Google, LinkedIn, Mozilla, Netflix, Paypal, YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat.

UNIQUE MODEL

IIT-M says it has differentiated the model to suit the Indian context. Director Ramamurthi says the Research Park is perhaps the only one that measures the extent of collaboration with clients through a "credit system". The system assigns points to clients for different joint activities, ranging from joint patent development to supporting student interns. "Unlike Stanford, where the research ecosystem is for academia-industry linkages, while entrepreneurship development happens across the board, IIT-M's facility has succeeded in combining research and entrepreneurial elements in one ecosystem," says Rajan Srikanth, co-president of Keiretsu Forum, an angel investor.

Nagaraja Prakasam, mentor in residence at the N S Raghavan Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning at IIM-Bangalore, says the IIT-M Research Park ecosystem is creating ventures of high technical quality that are solving real-world problems, going beyond internet and mobile consumer ventures. Prakasam is an investor in Uniphore and is in talks with several other ventures for similar relationships.

Shripathi Acharya, managing partner at seed funding venture AngelPrime in Bengaluru, says he would advise startups to have a presence at the Research Park for multiple reasons -- professionalism that comes with being present in such a location, the peer learning that happens at the growth stage, and the visibility that it brings to their ventures.

The Research Park could soon get additional muscle with the IIT Alumni Club proposing an 'IIT Alumni Industry Interaction Centre' at the facility. The centre hopes to help fledgling ventures in their market penetration stage. "As alumni we want to enable this interaction," says Suresh Kalpathi, president of the Club and chairman of Kalpathi Investments.

The biggest proof that the IIT-M model is working is perhaps the fact that others are now looking at replicating it. Devang Khakhar, the director of IIT Bombay, says his institution has set in motion plans for a research park. "We have set up a committee to get it going, land has been earmarked within the campus, and talks are on to garner support from industrial stakeholders," he says.

UNIVERSAL JOURNEY

Mangalyaan will continue orbiting around Mars for six more months

Vanita Srivastava
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NEW DELHI: Mangalyaan — the country's first spacecraft to Mars — will complete its six-month mission on March 24, but is expected to orbit around Mars for another six months even after its assignment duration expires.

Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) chairman, Dr Kiran Kumar, told HT the mission would technically end next week. "The spacecraft will remain operational even after that as there is no fuel constraint. This will help us delve deeper into the seasons and climate on Mars. We have been able to capture some beautiful images of Mars and have got ample data. Analysis of the data is being done and once this is final, it will be made public," Kumar said.

On September 24, 2014, India created history by becoming the first country to succeed on its first Mars mission when the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) slipped into the orbit of the Red Planet.

India joined the United States, European Space Agency and the former Soviet Union in the elite club of Martian explorers with the MOM. The five payloads on the spacecraft were scheduled to carry out experiments for six months.

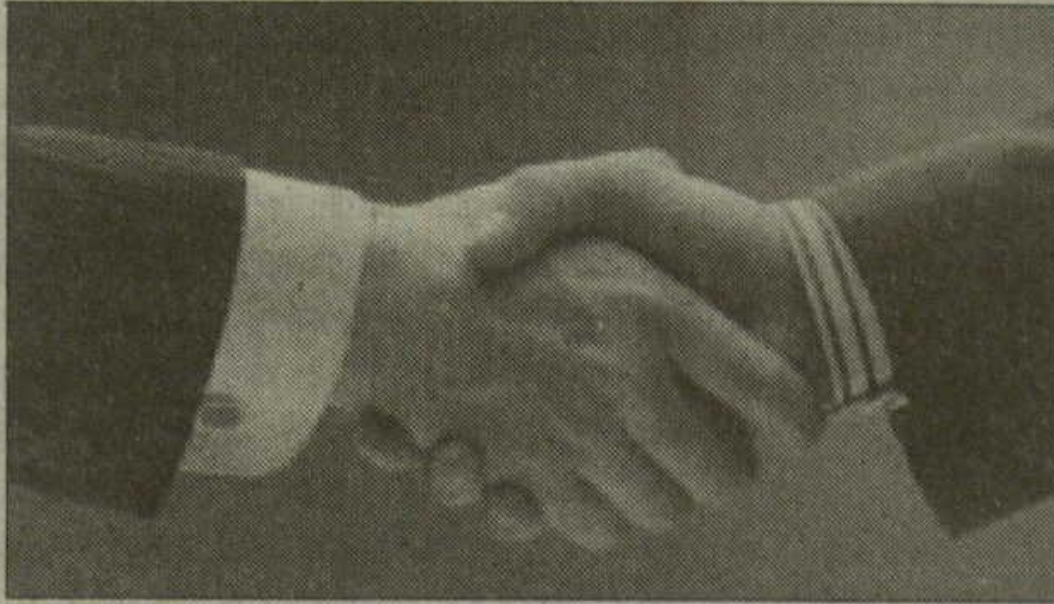The Isro chief said the next challenge for the spacecraft would be the blackout period for Mars in June. "The next challenge for the spacecraft will be in June next year when all three - Mars, Earth and Sun - will be in one line. There will be no communication with the spacecraft for nearly 14 days."

The blackout would be experienced between June 8 and 22 and during the period, the spacecraft would be in fully autonomous mode and no data would be transmitted to or from it.

■ **Image of a dust storm on Mars sent by Mangalyaan**

REWIND

November 5, 2013: Mangalyaan — Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) —launched by Isro

November 2013: MOM spent the month in Earth's orbit

September 24, 2014: Date since Mangalyaan has been orbiting Mars

March 5: Some images of Mars sent by MOM were uploaded on social media one day before Holi

Virat Vaibhav ND 22/03/2015 p-15

आईआईटी कानपुर– भेल के बीच समझौता

भाषा

क्रनपुर। आईआईटी कानपुर और भारत हैवी इलेक्ट्रिकल लिमिटेड (भेल) के बीच अत्याधुनिक तकनीक विकसित करने के काम को लेकर एक सहमति पत्र (एमओयू) पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए। भेल के कार्यकारी निदेशक (रिसर्च एंड डेवलपमेंट) डॉ. उमाकांत चौधरी और आईआईटी कानपुर के रिसर्च डेवलपमेंट के डीन प्रो मनीन्द्र अग्रवाल ने सहमति पत्र पर हस्ताक्षर किए।   आईआईटी कानपुर द्वारा जारी एक बयान के अनुसार इस समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर के दौरान आईआईटी के डायरेक्टर प्रो

इन्द्रनील मन्ना और बीएचईएल के डायरेक्टर (आर एंड डी) टी एन राघवन भी उपस्थित थे। सहमति पत्र के तहत कंबशन प्रोसेस, थर्मो डायनामिक्स, फलूड मशीन और मैकेनिकल डिजाइनिंग के क्षेत्र में शोध कार्य किया जाएंगा। भेल के राघवन ने इस अवसर पर कहा कि यह समझौता भेल को मजबूती देगा क्योंकि आईआईटी कानपुर के विज्ञानी इलेक्ट्रिकल फील्ड में काफी अच्छा शोध कार्य कर रहे है। भारत की नवरत्न कंपनियों में शुमार भेल ने इस अवसर पर आईआईटी में एक चेयर स्थापित करने की भी घोषणा की है।■

March 21

Pioneer ND 21/03/2015 P-14

CELESTIAL EVENT

Sun in the shadow

Thousands around the world scan the skies for a glimpse of the solar eclipse

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Longyearbyen, March 20

Thousands of people on Friday flocked to get a glimpse of the solar eclipse, with leaden skies marring the view in most places except Europe's remote north where spectators described the sight as "amazing."

Die-hard eclipse enthusiasts who flew in to the Faroe Islands and Norway's Arctic Svalbard archipelago, the only places where the less than three-minute total eclipse was visible, were rewarded with the best views.

"We had clouds... but it was still fantastic," said Ole J Knudsen, an astrophysicist from Denmark's Aarhus University, who watched from hills high above the Faeroes capital Torshavn. "You could see the shadow come up behind the

clouds. For 20 to 30 seconds the sky was covered and it became dark and there was a collective shock that you could hear from all the spectators," he said.

"It was worth all the money." More than 8,000 tourists had gathered in the Faeroes, a Danish autonomous territory in the North Atlantic. The views were equally breathtaking in Svalbard's main town Longyearbyen.

To a background din of yelping sled dogs and in bracing bracing -20 Celsius morning air, Kathy Biersdorff, from Calgary in Canada, and her companions shouted out what they saw: "Crescent shadows! Diamond ring! Chromosphere! Moon's shadow." "I've never seen so many phenomena during an eclipse," she said.

But elsewhere, most of those

who headed outside to watch the moon pass between Earth and the sun were left disappointed by cloud cover. An eclipse of varying degrees was first visible across northern Africa, most of Europe, northwest Asia and then the Middle East.

Worth the money

Spain's Canary Islands were one of the first places the partial eclipse was visible, early Friday. "We can see perfectly well the disc of the moon... It is one of the most marvellous astronomical spectacles you can see," Alfred Rosenberg, an astrophysicist at the Canaries Astrophysics Institute said from the island of Tenerife.

In Stockholm, a crescent-shaped sun shone through overcast skies as temperatures dropped, prompting people in the city's business district to stop and take pictures with their smartphones.

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

China rolls out world's first hydrogen-powered tramcar

Beijing: The world's first hydrogen-powered tramcar has rolled off the assembly line in China's eastern Shandong Province.

Liang Jianying, chief engineer of Sifang Co, a wholly-owned subsidiary of China South Rail Corporation, said on Thursday the new tram is the only hydrogen powered vehicle in the field and makes China the only country to have mastered the technology.

Hydrogen fuel cells are a new clean energy source, widely used in the automobile industry, but lagging behind in the field of rail transit. "It took two years for Sifang to solve key technological problems, with the help of research institutions," state-run Xinhua news agency quoted Liang as saying without mentioning when the tram would be operational.

The tram can be refilled with hydrogen in three minutes and can then run for 100km at speeds as high as 70 kmph. "The average distance of tramcar lines in China is about 15km, which means one refill for our tram is

© John Harper/Corbis

The tram can be refilled with hydrogen in three minutes and can then run for 100km at speeds as high as 70 kmph

enough for three round trips," Liang said, adding the overall running costs will be greatly reduced. Each tram has over 60 seats and can carry 380 passengers. PTI

Funding will be based on performance: UGC official

http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/puducherry/funding-will-be-based-on-performance-ugc-official/article7017540.ece

Funding by the University Grants Commission (UGC), henceforth, will be based only on performance, UGC Vice-Chairman H. Devaraj said here on Friday.

The commission has proposed a long-term plan to bring in excellence in universities, he added.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a Workshop on Choice-Based Credit System here, Mr. Devaraj said for the last 60 years grant-in-aid and funds were released to universities as general development assistance. The universities were accountable for the grants and funds allocated to them. The next 15 years will be a tough period and the performance of universities across the country will be assessed with the aim of ensuring that at least one university figured in the world's top 200 Universities. Mr. Devaraj said that 35 universities in the country had applied for excellence status. A total of seven universities were selected and a few of them, Anna University, had been shortlisted. They have been called to make a presentation. Universities with Potential for Excellence would be eligible for grants worth Rs.150 crore, he said.

The UGC has revised its guidelines in accordance with National Skills Qualification Framework and is giving priority to skill-based courses, he added.

"The commission has proposed a long-term plan to bring in excellence in universities"

March 20

The MOOC point

M. BALAKRISHNAN

Massive open online courses could radically change higher technical education

EVEN a casual observer of Indian higher technical education would notice that we face two grave challenges. Our 3,300-plus engineering colleges produce 1.2 million-plus graduates each year but not even a small fraction of the required qualified teachers. And, the significant investment by the government in new IITs and NITs, whose mandates extends beyond teaching to research, has a slow take-off, primarily because of the sluggish growth of the research ecosystem. Interestingly, used innovatively, MOOCs (massive open online courses) could significantly help address these seemingly disparate challenges.

MOOCs are a "revolution" in scaling quality instruction as they enable a "star" teacher to reach out to a large number of learners at different locations and with varying paces of learning. They consist of a set of short-duration videos that illustrate one or more concepts, which, when "learnt" sequentially, constitute a course. To complete the two-way interaction essential for learning, each course has a discussion forum which is moderated by the instructor and/or by a group of teaching assistants. Assessment is the third major component of typical classroom learning. MOOC platforms are supported by a set of automated assessment tools that enable one to handle massive enrolment. In its most prevalent form, MOOCs are not real-time — recording is done offline and then made accessible to students — though efforts are on to provide near real time options. To give the course structure, material is released on a weekly schedule and assessments are synchronised to ensure continuous learning.

MOOCs are still not a substitute for classroom learning if there are enough qualified teachers. In fact, in many prestigious institutions, MOOCs are being used in "flip" mode: students listen to video lectures as "homework" and class time is interactive and used for problem-solving. Clearly, in the Indian context, this experimentation is a luxury that only a few elite institutions can afford. But MOOCs form a platform that helps quality instruction reach a large number of geographically distributed students at low costs. The asynchronous nature of instruction accommodates considerable "classroom" heterogeneity that arises from unequal background exposure, differing speeds of analysis and absorption as well as varying time periods for which students can sustain concentration. The ability to rewind and replay as well as pause to refer to the background material are game-changers. Further, short 12- to 15-minute videos, typical for MOOCs, are a real boon. A scalable and instant online assessment mechanism could enhance the effectiveness of self-assessment. This, supplemented with peer-learning in discussion forums, could significantly impact learning outcomes.

Now, consider the large technical universities, like Uttar Pradesh Technical University (UPTU), which have hundreds of affiliated engineering colleges with a unified curriculum and academic calendar. We, from autonomous institutions, always looked down on this system as a stumbling block to the growth of quality education. But today, they have the financial muscle to hire the best instructors to provide quality education through MOOCs. Consider the economics: a typical undergraduate programme consists of around 10 courses offered over two semesters, with an enrolment of 25,000-plus in each course. With an annual average tuition fee

Money has always been a bad word in education — the best talent should go to teaching because it is a 'noble' profession.

of around Rs 1,00,000 per student, even 1 per cent of this amount for a course would mean Rs 2.5 crore for a single MOOC. I can easily visualise a top MIT professor wanting to offer a course at UPTU! The technology is available; only the will is needed. Such a change could create a new era of "star" teachers — MOOCs are to teachers what film reels are to actors and TV to sports stars and yoga teachers. Note: the real innovation is to mainstream MOOCs so that tuition fees can be tapped to attract talent. This has still not happened in the US, where MOOC platforms are struggling because they don't have access to tuition-fee dollars.

The ministry of human resource development has been setting up a large number of IITs and other teaching-and-research institutions. Their geographical spread is based on the expectation that they will act as catalysts for the development of their regions. But in the absence of a vibrant research ecosystem, the growth of newly recruited young faculty is severely hampered. MOOC platforms provide a unique opportunity to aggregate geographically dispersed students and offer research-level courses. The infrastructure — the National Knowledge Network — has already been created and only policy support is required for permitting cross-registration for pre-PhD courses and assessment by remote instructors. This could promote an unprecedented new wave of research collaboration among Indian institutions.

Money has always been a bad word in education: the best talent should go to teaching because it is a "noble" profession. This contradiction is even more obvious today, when the average pay package of a graduate is a key determinant of institutional preference. But not long ago, money was a bad word in sports, too. By mainstreaming MOOCs, we could change technical education. Of course, mindsets have to change — a vice chancellor earning Rs 80,000 as her basic salary will have to award a contract of Rs 2.5 crore to the Sachin Tendulkar of teaching data structures.

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Learn In India

Education mess will ruin India's potential, it's time to loosen political and bureaucratic chokehold

The ministry of human resources and ddevelopment seems to be climbing down from its high horse on foreign-language teaching after the row over German as well as its face-off with IIT Bombay chairman Anil Kakokdar, who has withdrawn his resignation following 'disagreement' over selection of an IIT director. Yet, these climbdowns only serve to illustrate the structural mess that India's higher education management is in. The ham-handed rollback of four year undergraduate courses in Delhi University and the subsequent showcause notice to its vice chancellor Dinesh Singh is another case in point.

While India's global competitors have moved to greater autonomy and institutional freedom in education – it's taken for granted that this is a prerequisite for improving education standards – India's universities remains hostage to political and bureaucratic whims. In countries such as the US, the UK and Australia, the state's role is limited to setting broad standards and providing funds while institutions are free to manage themselves. But in India, the government's insistence on micro-managing education fits the pattern of the socialist-era mai-baap sarkar rather than the brave new liberalised economy of today.

The result is that despite historically strong intellectual traditions and growing Indian economic power, not one Indian university could make it to the top 100 in world reputation rankings recently released by Times Higher Education. In elementary education too, that only an estimated 48% of class V children can read a Class II-level text is an indictment of Indian education.

At a time when Narendra Modi government is focussing on a manufacturing push to the economy with its 'Make in India' slogan, the drag in education is a major constraint. China became the factory of the world by taking over global manufacturing. But with technological changes reducing workers on the factory floor, the ability to produce skilled talent is now crucial. In a country with the world's largest proportion of young people, economists have long talked about the demographic dividend. But if our universities don't match up to the best and a significant proportion of Indians remain functionally un-educated, this dividend will turn into a demographic disaster. 'Learn in India' is not only as important as 'Make in India', it is essential for the success of the latter. It is time to shift mindsets, liberalise higher education and encourage institutional autonomy and creativity to keep pace with a rapidly changing world.

Virat Vaibhav ND 20/03/2015   P-4

आईआईटी–बंबई के संचालन मंडल से काकोदकर हटे

भाषा

नई दिल्ली। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय उस वक्त एक और विवाद से घिर गया जब परमाणु वैज्ञानिक अनिल काकोदकर ने भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी-बंबई) के संचालन मंडल से इस्तीफा दिया। ऐसा लगता है कि उन्होंने कुछ आईआईटी निदेशकों के चयन को लेकर मंत्रालय के साथ मतभेद की वजह से इस्तीफा दिया है। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री स्मृति ईरानी ने किसी मतभेद से इंकार किया गया है और कहा कि वह अपने पद पर बने रहेंगे। स्मृति ने कहा, कि कोई मतभेद अथवा विवाद नहीं है।

आशंका है कि निदेशकों के चयन को लेकर मंत्रालय के साथ मतभेद है इस्तीफे का कारण

उन्होंने इस्तीफा दे दिया है लेकिन उनके साथ मेरी फोन पर बातचीत के बाद उन्होंने पद पर बने रहने को लेकर सहमति जताई। उन्होंने कहा कि वह आईआईटी-भुवनेश्वर, पटना और रोपड़ के निदेशकों को अंतिम रूप देने के लिए 22 मार्च होने वाली सर्च पैनल की बैठक में शामिल होंगे। काकोदकर ने कहा कि मैंने अपना त्यागपत्र दिया क्योंकि मैं आगे बढ़ना चाहता हूं। उन्होंने मतभेदों के बारे में टिप्पणी करने से इंकार कर दिया।∎

FYUP canned, VC on course for sack

After Having His Way For 4 Years, Dinesh Singh Is In A Spot

STORMY TENURE

2010

October 29, 2010 | Dinesh Singh appointed VC

2012

January 3 | TOI breaks story about Singh's plan to introduce four-year-undergraduate programme

April 27 | Singh announces launch of FYUP in 2013-14 session

April 30 | DUTA alleges teachers and students not consulted

December 24 | Academic Council passes structure of FYUP; 6 members dissent

December 26 | Executive Council passes structure; 3 members dissent

2013

March | DU decides to scrap BA, BSc, BCom, BBS, BFIA and BA(H) in business economics under FYUP

March 5 | Dean of colleges writes to all heads of departments to get syllabi ready in 15 days, which includes a weeklong spring break

April | Students protest against FYUP, college staff associations send resolution against it to DUTA

April 22 | Faculty of science approves physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, anthropology, geology, food technology and biomedical research courses

April 26 | Faculty of Arts clears more than 40 courses in 70 minutes

April 26 | English syllabus passed with dissent; not shown to course committee members till the start of the meeting

April 26 | HRD minister Shashi Tharoor tells Rajya Sabha that DU is fully prepared to launch FYUP

July 3 | MPs across party lines question HRD ministry's failure to stop FYUP

July 21 | First day of classes under FYUP

August 22 | 10,000 students vote against FYUP in referendum

2014

April 3 | FYUP rollback on BJP manifesto

May/June | Teachers' representatives from DUTA and NDTF meet HRD minister Smriti Irani

June 16 | UGC writes to DU to review/reconsider FYUP

June 18 | DU writes to MHRD

June 20 | UGC writes to DU to roll back FYUP, migrate first FYUP batch to three-year programme and follow three-year structure from 2014-15 session onwards

2015

January 2015 | HRD minister Smriti Irani forwards papers to President Pranab Mukherjee's office questioning Singh's conduct as VC on three key allegations against him

March 17 | MHRD issues show-cause notice to VC asking him why he should not be removed from office

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New Delhi: After a turbulent four years at the helm, Dinesh Singh could become the first Delhi University vice-chancellor to be sacked. Singh, whose five-year term ends in October, faces serious allegations of not only steamrollering the controversial four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP) in the 2013-14 session but also misusing funds released to implement OBC expansion for buying laptops.

In a first for any DU vice-chancellor, the ministry of human resource development on Tuesday served a show-cause notice on Singh with the approval of the university's Visitor (President Pranab Mukherjee), giving him 15 days to explain why he should not be removed from his post.

Singh's tenure has been marked by a string of controversies, the most notable of which is the FYUP fiasco with its illegal courses and poorly-designed syllabi. There have been complaints about the way the programme is being rolled back, and the recruitment and general treatment of teachers.

The more vocal of DU teachers have demanded Singh's sacking for long. DU

SACKED VCs

July 2011 | Ghulam Mohammad Vastanvi from Darul Uloom Deoband University

May 2014 | A V George from Mahatma Gandhi University, Thiruvananthapuram

September 2014 | R S Kasana, acting VC of Hari Singh Gaur Central University, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh

Teachers' Association even issued a white paper entitled "Grave illegalities, academic erosion, administrative breakdown: Abuse of office during tenure of vice-chancellor Prof Dinesh Singh."

DUTA president Nandita Narain said, "This university today is fatally wounded by this regime. It has destroyed everything one holds in value here—whether it is the academic standards or the statutory process—by protecting corruption and targeting serious teachers."

Narain said Singh's most damaging step was to appropriate the power of appointment. "The statutes said envelopes must be opened in the Executive Council but the VC got himself an all-time authorization from the EC to open the envelopes. The people he has appointed through that dubious process are being sent as experts everywhere with a pre-prepared list of people to be appointed."

Narain said she's worried about the fate of ad hoc teachers. "Of the 150 recent appointments, about 100 have been displaced, some of them have served for five to seven years and have excellent academic credentials."

The HRD ministry has asked Singh to explain the "misappropriation" of funds released to implement OBC expansion, a sizeable amount was also moved from the neglected School of Open Learning. The show-cause notice also asks Singh to explain why BTech courses were started by DU as part of FYUP without obtaining clearance from All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

All India Students' Association, which led the fight against FYUP, and Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad welcomed the ministry's move to serve a show-cause notice. Describing Singh as the most controversial VC in the history of the university, Saket Bahuguna, Delhi state secretary of ABVP, said, "Singh lies exposed now. Along with him, the team which compromised the interests of the student community and played with their careers should also be punished. Merely sacking them from their posts will not be sufficient. Criminal proceedings should be initiated."

पेनसिल्वेनिया यूनिवर्सिटी के डीन बने विजय कुमार

न्यूयार्क (भाषा)। स्वतंत्र रूप से काम करने वाले रोबोटों पर अपने उल्लेखनीय काम के लिए प्रसिद्ध एक भारतीय-अमेरिकी विशेषज्ञ को प्रतिष्ठित यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ पेनसिल्वेनिया में डीन के पद पर नियुक्त किया गया है। कानपुर स्थित भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) के छात्र रहे विजय कुमार आगामी एक जुलाई को यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ पेनसिल्वेनिया स्कूल ऑफ इंजीनियरिंग एंड एप्लाइड साइंस के डीन का पदभार संभालेंगे। यह घोषणा यूनिवर्सिटी के प्रेजीडेन्ट एमी गटमैन और प्रोवोस्ट विंसेंट प्राइस ने की। पहले व्हाइट हाउस में अपनी सेवाएं दे चुके कुमार को स्वतंत्र तौर पर काम करने वाले रोबोटों के विकास और सामूहिक व्यवहार के लिए जैविक रूप से प्रेरित एलगोरिदम से जुड़ा काम करने के लिए जाना जाता है। वह 2012-14 के दौरान व्हाइट हाउस के ऑफिस ऑफ साइंस एंड टेक्नोलॉजी पॉलिसी में रोबोटिक्स एवं साइबर भौतिक प्रणाली के सहायक निदेशक के तौर पर काम कर चुके हैं।

Times Of India ND 20/03/2015 P-4

4,000 careers hang on AICTE nod for BTech

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New Delhi: The four-year undergraduate programme isn't over for about 4,000 students. They had signed up in 2013 when DU renamed its undergraduate courses in applied sciences 'BTech' from the humble 'BSc'. The four-year duration and the BTech prefix made the courses seem like an easy and cheap route to an engineering degree. But the new nomenclature was just a sleight of hand: the courses weren't approved by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and still aren't, although the 27 colleges that offer them applied for approval in late February.

"The colleges applied by February 27, a deadline set by the university," said S K Garg, principal of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya College which runs BTechs in computer science and electronics. But he's not sure if they meet AICTE requirements. "We have adequate faculty and infrastructure, but as per DU standards. Our teachers have MSc and PhD degrees; AICTE requires MTechs. Then our laboratories are for the BSc syllabus."

STILL IN FYUP

A BTech computer science student at a North Campus college pointed out: "AICTE demands proper infrastructure, updated syllabus and MTechs for teachers."

Most colleges offer BTech courses in computer science or electronics, or both, but Bhaskaracharya College of Applied Sciences is running five. "We had a hearing yesterday. AICTE had queries about our polymer science course. Our teachers gave them our syllabus," said principal Manoj Khanna, adding they are being extra cautious. "We're organizing workshops with the help of industry."

A principal saddled with two BTech courses said he's "optimistic" about getting approval because he expects AICTE to recognize that this was the result of "systemic failure". "This is for just one batch and most colleges are running one or two courses. The career of 4,000 students is at stake."

But if AICTE doesn't oblige, those thousands will pay a huge human cost. "We'll be just 12th-pass and our four years in college would've been a waste," says Ritesh Kumar Gupta, BTech computer science student at Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies.

CASE AGAINST SINGH

STATUTORY VIOLATIONS

➤ FYUP violates 10+2+3 pattern set in National Education Policy

➤ Union Cabinet approval not taken for increasing course length by one year, which would have cost an additional ₹1,000 crore at least

➤ Condition of taking UGC approval six months before start of a new course not followed. Executive Council approved draft ordinances on courses on June 7, 2013, barely a month before starting FYUP courses and after the process of receiving admission applications had started

➤ Ordinances on FYUP not sent to the Visitor (President of India), nor submitted to the government

➤ Violations in restructuring of courses for 2013 batch after rollback of FYUP

➤ On January 1, 2014, Ordinance XV(D) to prevent sexual harassment replaced by new Act on the subject without allowing Executive Council to examine whether some elements of the ordinance should be retained

RESERVATION POLICY

1. Instead of treating university and its colleges as a unit each for appointing OBC teachers, DU treated each department as a cadre and could not hire the required number of OBC teachers

2. In a counter-affidavit submitted to the Delhi high court, DU tried to defend its policy by stating that it is a "state" under Article 12 of the Constitution, therefore not bound to follow government orders

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

1. **4,500 teaching posts** (more than 50% of positions) in various departments and colleges not filled from October 2010 to 2013 despite reminders from UGC. Teaching done by ad hoc and guest lecturers

2. DU misled Parliament on the number of vacancies. When more than **4,000 posts of assistant professor were vacant** in 2013, Parliament was told that only 356 vacancies existed

FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES

➤ **62,600 laptops** bought for FYUP students and teachers with "OBC grants" meant for DU departments and colleges

➤ OBC grants misused for Academic Congress (September 6-7, 2012), which was organized without sanction from any statutory body. DU allocated

Dinesh Singh

₹2.1 crore for the event and hired an expensive caterer who charged ₹500 per person

➤ In 2014, grants meant for upgrading teaching facilities spent on Antardhvani, a cultural festival

➤ Shunglu Committee Report asked CBI to investigate DU chief engineer but Executive Council denied permission

29-YEAR GAP

Government initiates process to bring in a new education policy

BY PRASHANT K. NANDA
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....
NEW DELHI

The human resource development (HRD) ministry will consult half a dozen ministries to prepare and monitor the progress of a national policy on education, which will help shape the country's education and job scenario for the next several years.

The National Democratic Alliance government has initiated the process of bringing in a new education policy after a gap of 29 years. The broad contours of the policy have been uploaded on mygov.in and suggestions will be taken till the end of the month before they are taken to a joint task force.

Other than HRD, the ministries of information technology, commerce, labour, social justice, tribal affairs, health and youth affairs will be taken on board for finalizing the draft and monitoring it, an HRD ministry official said on Thursday. A labour ministry official said collective policy making will help in reducing duplication. The labour ministry has more than 11,000 industrial training institutions and was involved in a tussle with the HRD ministry over the certification process two years ago.

India got its first national policy on education in 1968 under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and the second came in 1986 under Rajiv Gandhi.

The new education policy will set the tone of India's competitiveness as a young demography,

> **Quality, skill and technology adoption will be the main themes under the proposed policy**

help the government's "Make in India" mission and keep in mind the Digital India thrust given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, *Mint* had reported on 26 January.

"The ministry had asked the industry input by 31 March, following which they (ministry) may take it to the task force," said Shobha Misha Ghosh, head of education wing at industry lobby Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci). "I believe education and skill needs to be seen together while preparing the national policy," she said.

Under the proposed policy, quality, skill and technology adoption will be the main themes and the HRD ministry will take all decisions with due consultations with state governments. Keeping in mind the 31 March timeline, the second ministry official said that the ministry has called a meeting of the state education ministers to discuss the broad contours of the policy.

India has more than 220 million students in schools and over 29 million in higher education, at least 90% of them under the jurisdiction of states.

Strengthen Industry-Higher Education Relationship

ROHIN KAPOOR

"The 'Make in India' initiative, aimed at making our country a manufacturing hub, depends to a large extent on the deepening of the academia-industry alliance," President Pranab Mukherjee recently said.

The statement highlights the importance of collaboration between academia and industry in the modern-day world, which in the long run may even have direct implications on the country's prospects. Given India's ambitious target of becoming a global superpower, the procedure and periodicity of such an interaction needs to be streamlined to truly realise our demographic dividend.

India is home to some of the most respected higher education institutions and corporates, which need to set up a permanent channel of dialogue in order to ensure that the human capital providers and utilisers are in sync. We are liv-

ing in a world of constant change where technologies, machines, software and everything else is rapidly evolving.

The requirements of industry are changing by the day and we thus need to improvise on the curricula and training in order to make our youth more employable and stay relevant.

Talent shortage: Where we stand globally

According to Manpower's Talent Shortage Survey 2014, India ranked third among the top 10 countries where a high percentage (over 64%) of employers had difficulty filling captive positions. India is again placed second to Japan (81%) in terms of employer's talent shortage amongst the leading global economies.

A survey of industry-linked technical institutes by AICTE-CII in 2014 revealed:
■ To keep curriculum future-oriented and consistent with an ever-evolving business environment, participating institutes showed keen interest in industry linkages for "curriculum development"
■ In terms of "governance" and "services and infrastructure", participating institutes exhibited considerable interest in increasing collaboration with industry

The findings highlight that there is a perception amongst corporates about the shortage of talent in the country. Academia has expressed its desire to collabo-

rate with industry and therefore needs to initiate steps in the right direction.

Initiatives taken by the Centre

In its effort to promote linkages between academia and industry, a number of schemes have been initiated by key central government regulators. Some of the prominent ones include:
■ AICTE's Industry Institute Partnership Cell acts as a liaison centre between industry and various departments of technical institutes and universities
■ National Facilities in Engineering & Technology with Industrial Collabora-

tion was started to encourage collaboration between industry and institutions for product development, basic research and consultancy
■ UGC's Encore initiative aims at enhancing faculty resources in universities by involving professionals from PSUs and research organisations

Besides increasing awareness levels among institutions about the importance of industry collaborations in the modern world, these schemes have also contributed towards upskilling of students and teachers

How can higher education institutions help bridge the gap?

Higher education institutions and corporates need to take a step forward to embrace each other. The possible role of universities could be:
■ Establish a dedicated cell for corporate interface consisting of senior academicians, administrators and students
■ Effectively utilise their alumni network to build strong relationships and open communication channels with corporates
■ Proactively seek suggestions from the corporates on curricula, pedagogy, syllabus, training etc and engage with the regulators to implement them
■ Build a pool of students and teachers to work on real-life corporate projects. Sim-

ilarly, invite senior members from the industry to address students and teachers on various topics

Role of industry

Industry needs to take the responsibility of bridging the skill gap by taking the following steps:
■ Sponsor chairs of excellence or offer scholarships to bright students
■ Reach out to academia seeking out solutions for real life issues and challenges
■ Offer incentives to students and teachers to intern or research with them
■ Establish a department to consult academic institutions on the latest technologies, processes or tools driving recruitment so that syllabi can be fine-tuned

Steps need to be strengthened

The shortage of skilled workforce across industries is likely to pose a complex challenge to India's growth story. We are expected to become the world's largest higher education market in terms of enrolment and value and therefore immediate steps need to be taken to reform. Although industry and academia have been interacting intermittently in the past, it is time to strengthen this relationship by a few notches.

The writer is senior manager, Deloitte in India

IISc comes up with a plan for disposing its garbage

Project launched on pilot basis in January this year

http://www.deccanherald.com/content/466659/iisc-comes-up-plan-disposing.html

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has embarked on a full-scale project for treating and disposing of solid waste generated within the Institute by itself, thus setting an example for others.

An initiative of the Centre for Infrastructure Sustainable Transportation and Urban Planning (CiSTUP) at IISc, the project involves simple measure such as segregation of garbage at source. It also proposes to set up a solid waste management cell (SWM cell) at the Institute. The cell, an advisory body, is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that any waste leaving the campus does not go to the landfills and is in a form that could be used by recyclers. Clearly defined roles have also been laid down for a department right from its chairman to its students.

The project titled 'Solid Waste Management Initiative for IISc (SWaMII),' has received good reviews from IISc director and would be implemented in a phased manner by April. A draft of the project is with Deccan Herald.

The different kinds of waste or 'waste streams' of various departments have been identified as - organic or wet waste, dry waste, sanitary waste and e-waste. They have been clearly demarcated to ensure easy disposal or recycling.

For example, plastic bags and bottles are classified as dry waste; soiled food covers and containers will fall in the same category if they are rinsed and dried. The draft also highlights different levels of sorting, processing and handling for each kind of the waste.

Starting at the office level, colour-coded bins would be used for disposal of the different waste streams. The waste will then be sorted and emptied on a daily basis into large segregated common department bins that have also been colour-coded accordingly. A collection van will transport the waste at a fixed time each day from all the departments to a primary processing facility (PPF). This facility will be set up within the SWM cell to

collect, process and store waste until it is either given to recycling vendors or treated in house. Dedicated staff and supervisor will be trained for the purpose.

Pilot project
The project is presently being implemented on a pilot basis in the department of civil engineering since January 2015 with very positive results. A solid waste management committee had been formed and training sessions had been conducted for housekeeping staff.

An analysis of the pilot implementation showed the generation of three kg of sanitary waste per week, 19 kg of plastics and 29 kg of paper. All of these then are given to recycling vendors. Another 10 kg of wet waste generated is used in a compost bin within the department.

2015 batch vows to leave a mark on IIT-Kharagpur

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/2015-batch-vows-to-leave-a-mark-on-IIT-Kharagpur/articleshow/46627524.cms?

KOLKATA: Students who will pass out of IIT-Kharagpur this year have decided to donate the caution money they had deposited at the time of admission to help their alma mater develop infrastructure and beautify the campus. The 2015 batch comprises 2,000 odd students from BTech, MTech and dual-degree programmes.

The idea first struck Ashutosh Atal, a third-year mining engineering student. He networked with the final-year students and a vote was held on campus to see if the majority of the students agreed. Barring a few 'nays', the idea got a thumping majority.

Students thought that giving up Rs 6000 each was not a big deal and yet, when put together, the amount was sizeable enough for some constructive work. A few ideas were thrown up in consultation with the authorities about what could be done with the money. The student body thought that instead of just randomly deciding on this, the ideas should be put to vote. That has also been done.

"It has finally been decided that the money will be used to develop a square in the heart of the campus. There will be a grand pillar clock. It will be surrounded with fountains, park furniture, artistic landscaping complete with lighting and finally, a music recording studio for the music society of the institute," said student vice-president Punj Rajan.

"We consciously decided on a gift that would give the campus a facelift because it's an old campus and needs modern-day beautification. We wanted to create a physical landmark to remember the 2015 batch," said Atal.

The initiative has been christened '2015 Class Gift' and has already got the administration excited. "The idea is marvelous and I am looking forward to see this iconic structure. This idea of permanent structure will be an epitome of the eternal bonding that students for generations have shared with the institute," said Siddhartha Mukhopadhyay, Dean (Alumni Affairs & International Relations).

Centre meddling in affairs of IITs: Academicians

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Centre-meddling-in-affairs-of-IITs-Academicians/articleshow/46628431.cms

MUMBAI: The controversy created by the resignation of nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar as chairman of IIT-B board of governors has not gone down well with the scientific and academic community in the country. With two resignations from the IIT system pending with the ministry of human resources development (MHRD) for approval in less than four months, the situation is more than worrying, say academicians. Kakodkar resigned last week but he has been asked to continue in the post. R K Shevgaonkar, IIT-Delhi director also had resigned in December over reported differences with the MHRD. Since his resignation is yet to be accepted by the MHRD, he continues to hold office.

"Both are distinguished personalities in their fields. The directors are selected after a rigorous process and to lose out such people with vision is a major loss to the premier institutes of learning," said a professor.

A senior member of one of the IIT boards said that the ministry is trying to bring about changes in a well-established and successful system. "We have been following a process, which has produced some of the greatest directors in the past. Usually, shortlisted candidates, who are in single-digit numbers, are called for the interviews. Calling 37 applicants for interviews sounds absurd. To top it all, the minister (Smriti Irani) is not capable of handling any situation in a mature way. She lacks people's skills and also comes across as arrogant," alleged the member.

A "well-oiled system" of selection cannot be tampered with as it could prove dangerous for the community, said academicians. "The process of appointments of directors of the three IITs in Ropar, Patna and Bhubaneshwar could have been wrapped up easily. The posts are lying vacant for over six months," said a professor. "In the last meeting that the panel had, Kakodkar was reportedly ill-treated by the minister. He is not a person to have displayed a knee-jerk reaction, the trigger must have been of serious nature," said the professor.

March 19

Deccan Herald ND 19/03/2015   P-7

Kakodkar resigns from IIT Bombay Board of Governors

NEW DELHI: Former Atomic Energy Commission chairman Anil Kakodkar has resigned as chairman of the board of governors of Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai, presumably due to the differences of opinion with the Union Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani on the selection of directors of three IITs.

However, HRD ministry officials said Irani had a long telephonic conversation with the nuclear scientist and persuaded him to continue in his post till May end, when his term ends.

Till the time of filing this report, there was no independent confirmation from Kakodkar if he would be continuing in his post. He did not respond to phone calls and text messages.

"I have put down my papers because I want to move ahead," an agency report quoted Kakodkar as saying. The veteran scientist, one of the architects of the 1998 nuclear tests, refused to comment on whether there are differences between him and the minister over selection of the directors.

The controversial resignation

Anil Kakodkar. PTI

comes ahead of March 22 search-cum-selection committee meeting to pick up the directors of IIT Patna, Bhubaneshwar and Ropar.

The committee is chaired by Irani and Kakodkar is one of the members of the panel. On Sunday, all the 37 candidates who had applied for the post of director of IIT Patna, Bhubaneswar and Ropar would be interviewed.

This has been done because a previous shortlist of 13 candidates was rejected by Irani, who asked the officials to start the process afresh.

Most of the members of the search-cum-selection commit-

tees favoured selection of one senior professor of IIT Delhi as director of the one of the IITs, but the minister did not approve the selection and asked the members not to call him for the interview. All the three premier technical institutes have been headless for the last 10 months.

Reliable sources told Deccan herald that a sense of resentment is brewing among the panel members as a result of which some of them might not turn up at the interview.

DH News Service

स्मृति ईरानी से तंग आए काकोदकर का इस्तीफा

तीन आईआईटी के निदेशकों का नियुक्ति विवाद की जड़, कांग्रेस ने ईरानी के खिलाफ खोला मोर्चा

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। विवादों का केंद्र बना मानव संसाधन मंत्रालय एक नए विवाद में फंस गया है। प्रख्यात परमाणु वैज्ञानिक अनिल काकोदकर ने मंत्रालय के कामकाज के तरीके से तंग आकर आईआईटी बंबई के बोर्ड ऑफ गवर्नर्स के चेयरमैन पद से इस्तीफा दे दिया है। आईआईटी पटना, रोपड़ और भुवनेश्वर के निदेशकों की चयन प्रक्रिया झगड़े की जड़ मानी जा रही है।

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री स्मृति ईरानी पर आरोप है कि वह अपनी पसंद के लोगों को निदेशक पद पर बैठाना चाहती हैं। मगर इन नियुक्तियों से जुड़ी सर्च एंड सेलेक्शन कमेटी की ओर से चुने गए लोगों में ईरानी द्वारा बताए गए लोग नहीं हैं। इसे लेकर काकोदकर और ईरानी में मतभेद होने की चर्चा

आईआईटी बंबई के बोर्ड ऑफ गवर्नर्स का चेयरमैन पद छोड़ा, मई में खत्म हो रहा था कार्यकाल

है। काकोदकर का कार्यकाल मई में खत्म होने जा रहा है। मगर इससे पहले ही उन्होंने इस्तीफा दे दिया। कांग्रेस ने इस मुद्दे को लेकर ईरानी के खिलाफ मोर्चा खोल दिया है। पार्टी का कहना है कि स्मृति के नेतृत्व में पिछले नौ महीने में मंत्रालय ने विवाद पैदा करने के अलावा कोई काम नहीं किया है।

शेष पेज 13 पर ●

स्मृति ईरानी से तंग आए काकोदकर...

राज्यसभा में विपक्ष के नेता गुलाम नबी आजाद ने बुधवार को यह मुद्दा उठाया। कांग्रेस का आरोप है कि मानव संसाधन विकास क्षेत्र संकट में है। प्रधानमंत्री को खुद हस्तक्षेप कर इस मामले को सुलझाना चाहिए। सूत्रों का कहना है कि काकोदकर के इस्तीफा देने के बाद ईरानी ने मंगलवार शाम उनसे फोन पर बातचीत की थी। माना जा रहा है कि ईरानी ने उन्हें कार्यकाल तक पद पर बने रहने के लिए राजी कर लिया है। मगर 22 मार्च को आईआईटी के निदेशकों की नियुक्ति को लेकर सर्च एंड सेलेक्शन कमेटी की बैठक से काकोदकर के इस्तीफे से सरकार मुश्किल में फंस गई है। इससे पहले आईआईटी दिल्ली के निदेशक पद से आर शेवगांवकर ने इस्तीफा दे दिया था। तब भी मानव संसाधन मंत्रालय पर आरोप लगा था कि बार-बार परेशान करने के कारण शेवगांवकर ने पद छोड़ा है। स्मृति पर आईआईटी के निदेशक पद के लिए अपनी पसंद के आवेदक को नियुक्त करने की खातिर मंत्रालय के एक अफसर पर दबाव डालने का आरोप लगा था।

Indian Express ND 19/03/2015 P-1

Govt says we patched up with Kakodkar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 18

ON THE day *The Indian Express* reported that nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar had resigned as chairman of the Board of Governors of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, following a "disagreement" over the selection of an IIT director, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) reached out to him, saying his resignation had not been accepted and it was "glad" he had agreed to withdraw his resignation.

ANIL KAKODKAR

The matter was raised in the Rajya Sabha Wednesday with the Congress alleging "interference" in educational institutions and seeking a clarification. During zero-hour, Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad said it was a matter of serious concern that top people from educational institutions were resigning over alleged differences with HRD Minister Smriti Irani.

'We patched up with Kakodkar'

The government, in the meantime, reached out to Kakodkar, asking him to continue on his post. His term is due to end in May.

In a letter to Kakodkar, Higher Education Secretary Satya N Mohanty stated: "Your resignation has not been accepted at the government level. I understand that HRM (Irani) has talked to you on telephone in the meantime and requested you to withdraw your resignation. I am glad that you have graciously accepted withdrawal of your resignation letter because the institution stands to gain with your continuance and all of us are proud of your contribution to the institution. It is always a pleasure to see the right person leading an apex institution like IIT, Mumbai."

Kakodkar was not available for comment.

In Rajya Sabha, Azad wanted to know why Kakodkar resigned. He said this was not the first time that such a thing had happened. He cited the resignation of R K Shevgaonkar as director of IIT Delhi and the differences with Delhi University vice-chancellor Dinesh Singh.

"We feel there is a lot of interference by the government. Due to this, such institutions of excellence will be choked. Government should clarify what is the reason for these resignations in these institutions," he said.

"The Prime Minister says we will build top class institutions and will give more importance to IITs. These are prestigious educational and technical institutions which are India's pride and are regarded the world over. But top people are leaving these institutions due to differences," he said.

Congress spokesperson Rajeev Gowda said "the HRD minister has become a habitual offender of continuous interference" and urged the Prime Minister to intervene.

"Anil Kakodkar has resigned from IIT Bombay. It is one more blow to the HRD sector. Last few months have seen a continuous decline. Irani has sought to kill the very basic of independence and autonomy of higher education institutions... The absolute incompetence of HRD ministry is destroying institutions. The morale of India's top educational institutions is plummeting. I am anguished at seeing the HRD ministry rotting from the top," Gowda said.

On Wednesday, *The Indian Express* reported that Kakodkar, a member of the selection committee and chairman of the Standing Committee of the IIT Council (SCIC), resigned on March 12 after "disagreement" over the choice of an IIT director.

The selection committee, chaired by Irani, seemed to have reached a consensus on the choice of directors for IIT Patna and Bhubaneswar but there was no agreement on IIT Ropar, and the process involving 12 candidates was later cancelled. All 37 in the original shortlist have been called for a new round of interviews starting March 22.

Kakodkar has always been a strong advocate of the autonomy of IITs. He was earlier chairman of an 11-member committee constituted by the HRD ministry in 2010 to "recommend autonomy measures to facilitate IITs to scale greater heights".

In its report on a strategy to take IITs to "greater level of excellence and relevance", the Kakodkar committee had said: "Managing such a transition would naturally require complete autonomy so that IITs can adopt innovative and flexible management approaches to move forward on a promising new idea in a selective manner."

"Towards enhancing autonomy that would provide the IITs the necessary flexibility to support and deal with a new idea or take a new initiative and lead them towards world-class excellence, it is proposed that each institute be fully governed by its Board of Governors (BoG), including aspects like financial planning and expenditure rules, faculty remuneration, fees and number of faculty and staff, within the overall policy guidelines of the IIT Council in terms of expectations from IITs as world-class institutions, affirmative actions, technology directions and human resource development," the committee stated.

Tribune ND 19/03/2015 P-20

Irani persuades Kakodkar to stay

ADITI TANDON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 18

In the eye of a storm after Chairman of IIT-Bombay Board of Governors Anil Kakodkar resigned from his position yesterday, HRD Minister Smriti Irani today persuaded him to stay.

Irani called up Kakodkar, an eminent nuclear scientist, to withdraw his resignation, ministry sources said. "The letter of withdrawal of resignation by Dr Anil Kakodkar has been received. The HRD Minister called him to stay even though his term is ending in May", said sources close to Irani.

Kakodkar is learnt to have resigned yesterday before the expiry of his term in May over differences in the selection of IIT-Ropar Director. Currently, a Search and Selection Committee headed by Irani is in the process of interviewing candidates to fill three vacant positions of Directors of IIT Patna, IIT Bhubaneshwar and IIT Ropar.

Kakodkar, an eminent nuclear scientist, is member of the Selection Com-

mittee in his capacity as chairman of the Standing Committee of IIT Council. Kakodkar yesterday sent his resignation to the minister after serving nine years as Chairman of IIT Bombay.

Irani's term has been controversial with many top academicians resigning before the expiry of their terms. Last year, VS Ramamurthy, chairman of Board of Governors of Ropar, resigned because of disagreement over the reappointment of the institute's incumbent director by the selection committee headed by Irani.

IIT-Delhi Director Raghunath KS Shevgaonkar also recently quit after the HRD Ministry questioned him for opening a campus of the

Institute in Mauritius allegedly in violation of norms. Shevgaonkar's resignation is yet to be accepted.

NCERT Director Praveen Sinclair also quit recently two years ahead of her tenure and at a time when the NCERT is revising the National Curriculum Framework 2005. National Book Trust chief A Sethumadhavan was 10 days ago replaced seven months ahead of the expiry of his tenure.

The HRD Ministry had earlier written to President Pranab Mukherjee, Visitor of all Central Universities, against Delhi University V-C Dinesh Singh but the President had rejected charges against the V-C, who continues to stay. Importantly, even

Why the nuclear scientist quit

- **Anil Kakodkar**, an eminent nuclear scientist, reportedly resigned as the Chairman of the IIT-Bombay Board of Governors on Tuesday

- He reportedly quit over differences in the selection of the IIT-Ropar Director

- A search and selection committee, headed by HRD minister Smriti Irani, is in the process of interviewing candidates for three vacant positions of Directors of IIT-Patna, IIT-Bhubaneshwar and IIT-Ropar

Kakodkar's resignation to be final has to be accepted by the President who nominates chairmen of all IITs on the recommendation of the ministry.

Cong alleges govt interference

The Congress sought a clarification on the issue alleging government interference.

Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad said it was a matter of serious concern that top people from educational institutions were resigning allegedly over differences with Irani.

Azad mentioned previous instances where R Shevgaonkar resigned as IIT-Delhi Director, citing some "unforeseen situations" and Delhi University V-C had differences with the minister last year.

Hindustan Times ND 19/03/2015 P-12

IIT-HRD row: Four panel members back Kakodkar

Brajesh Kumar
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NEW DELHI: Nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar who quit as chairman of IIT Bombay's governing body following reports of differences with HRD minister Smriti Irani, was backed on Wednesday by four members of a panel that picks directors for the technical education institutions.

The former Bhabha Atomic Research Centre chief quit amid reports of disagreement with the minister over the selection of three IIT directors, sparking controversy as the Congress accused Irani of interfering with the autonomy of higher-education institutes.

Sources said Kakodkar had decided to stay on until the end of his tenure in May, but the disagreement between the IITs and HRD ministry is unlikely to be resolved soon as five of the nine members of the selection panel have informed the ministry they will not be available for the next meeting on March 22.

■ **Anil Kakodkar**

They participated in the first meeting to choose the directors of three IITs—Ropar, Bhubaneswar and Patna.

"I have better things to do," Lila Poonawalla, one of the panel members, told HT. Former IIT-Madras director MS Ananth, too, confirmed he would not participate in the next meeting.

Others who will be absent include former DRDO chief VK Saraswat, IIT Patna chairman Ajay Chaudhary and Kakodkar.

The first meeting of the selection committee ended inconclusive as differences cropped up over a candidate who was called for the interview but did not belong to the original 37 shortlisted.

The Opposition said it was a matter of serious concern that top people from educational institutions were resigning allegedly over differences with Irani.

"The absolute incompetence of the HRD minister is destroying institutions that have been nurtured over decades. The morale of India's education sector is plummeting," said Congress spokesperson Rajeev Gowda.

He also asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to step in and put the HRD ministry back on track.

The HRD ministry has been embroiled in a slew of controversies since the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power last year amid reports that it's being guided by inputs from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its student wing, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad.

IIT row: Cong slams Smriti Irani

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 18 March

As the Union HRD ministry was embroiled in another controversy with the noted nuclear scientist Mr Anil Kakodkar resigning as chairman of the IIT Bombay's Board of Governors allegedly due to differences with the HRD minister Ms Smriti Irani over selection of some IIT directors, the Congress today unleashed a blistering attack on the HRD minister, alleging that "the country's higher education sector is in a crisis due to Ms Irani's incompetence, interference, mismanagement, and ineptitude".

The Congress today raised this issue within and outside Parliament, with the Congress spokesman Mr Rajeev Gowda telling a press conference that the HRD minister has allegedly been severely undermining the independence and autonomy of leading institutions of national excellence. Condemning the HRD ministry over Mr Kakodkar's resignation, Mr Gowda charged that this was not an isolated instance of the HRD minister's alleged high-handedness and interference.

"The HRD minister has become a serial offender in blatantly subjugating the institutions of higher education by constantly interfering in their functioning ~ whether it is the UGC, the IITs and National Research Professorship Scheme in higher education or the Kendriya Vidyalayas on the issue of Sanskrit, Mrs Irani has sought to kill the very basic spirit of autonomy that guided the emergence of every one of these institutions of excellence," Mr Gowda, a former IIM professor, alleged.

"The absolute incompetence of the HRD minister is destroying institutions that have been nurtured over decades," Mr. Gowda charged, urging the Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi to "step in and take appropriate action to put the HRD ministry back on track for the sake of our youth and India's future".

On her part, the HRD minister denied any controversy, making it clear that Mr Kakodkar will continue in his post as the IIT Bombay chairman.

"There has been no rift or controversy. He (Kakodkar) had put in his papers but has agreed to continue after my telephonic conversation with him," Ms Irani purportedly said, adding he will be attending the crucial meeting of the search-cum-selection panel on 22 March to finalise the directors for IIT Bhubaneswar, Patna and Ropar.

Mr Kakodkar's reported resignation as the IIT Bombay chairman last week came ahead of a crucial meeting of this 12 member panel ~ headed by the HRD minister ~ of which he is a member.

The Kakodkar resignation issue was also raised in the Rajya Sabha by the senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, who said it was a matter of serious concern that top functionaries of leading educational institutions were resigning allegedly over their rifts with the HRD minister.

"We feel there is a lot of interference by the government and due to this, such institutions of excellence will be choked. Government should clarify as to what is the reason for these resignations in these institutions," Mr Azad reportedly said. "The Prime Minister says we will build top class institutions and will give more importance to IITs. These are prestigious educational and technical institutions which are India's pride and are regarded the world over. But top people are leaving these institutions due to differences."

Outside the House, the Congress spokesman Mr Gowda told reporters that the Kakodkar episode was only the latest addition to a series of such "unfortunate developments" related to the HRD ministry during the 10-month-long Modi regime so far. "You had Dr Ramamurthy who was chairman of IIT Ropar resigning, Prof. Shivgaonkar, director of IIT Delhi resigning ....Is this the way to run the ministry," he said, alleging that the freedom and autonomy of leading national institutions were now under threat.

Holding that he was not raising the issue of "saffronisation" of education or "rewriting of history" now, the Congress spokesman maintained that the BJP regimes allegedly have a "history of interfering with the functioning of the country's top educational institutions".

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) also flayed the Modi government over the Kakodkar episode, charging that it again manifested "the consistent degradation of the higher education in India and particularly politicizing of centres of educational excellence by this government".

NDA to blame for Kakodkar's exit from IIT-B board: AAP

OUR BUREAU/AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 18

The AAP on Wednesday blamed the resignation of eminent scientist Anil Kakodkar as Chairman of the IIT-Bombay board of governors on the "consistent degradation" of higher education in India, particularly "the politicising of centres of educational excellence in the hands of the NDA government at the Centre."

Kakodkar, a member of the selection committee and chairman of the standing committee of the IIT Council, resigned on Tuesday, reportedly over some disagreement with Union HRD Minister

Anil Kakodkar

Smriti Irani's choice of candidate for IIT Director.

"This incident comes months after it was reported that the newly appointed Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology head, Vishram Jamdar, had filed his job application with the HRD Ministry, claiming that he is an 'RSS person', and was successful in getting the post," the AAP said.

The AAP also flayed the "BJP agenda of rewriting Indian history and slowly inject it into school syllabi", alleging that it is showing effects with schools openly carrying out membership drives for the party.

Hindustan ND 19/03/2015   P-10

स्वायत्तता का सवाल

परमाणु वैज्ञानिक अनिल काकोडकर के आईआईटी मुंबई के संचालक मंडल के अध्यक्ष पद से इस्तीफा देने से जो विवाद खड़ा हुआ है, उससे बचा जा सकता था। इस मुद्दे में कांग्रेस को राजनीतिक संभावना भी नजर आई और उसने संसद में यह मुद्दा उठा दिया। काकोडकर ने इस्तीफा इस वजह से दिया था कि वह कुछ आईआईटी में निदेशकों की नियुक्ति के मामले में केंद्रीय मानव संसाधन मंत्री स्मृति ईरानी से सहमत नहीं हुए। आईआईटी और सरकार के बीच टकराव का यह दूसरा मामला है, जो एनडीए सरकार के कार्यकाल में सामने आया है। इसके पहले आईआईटी दिल्ली के निदेशक रघुनाथ शेवगांवकर भी इस्तीफा दे चुके हैं। ये विवाद सरकार और आईआईटी की छवि के लिए ठीक नहीं हैं। आईआईटी ऐसे शिक्षा संस्थान हैं, जिनकी दुनिया भर में प्रतिष्ठा है। पूरी दुनिया में शिक्षा और कौशल के मामले में आईआईटी शायद सबसे बड़ा भारतीय ब्रांड है। भारत में और बाकी दुनिया में भी आईआईटी से पढ़े हुए लोग तमाम उद्योगों के शीर्ष पर मौजूद हैं। देश के अन्य किसी भी शिक्षा संस्थान के छात्रों का इतना अच्छा रिकॉर्ड नहीं है। यह इस बात का प्रमाण है कि भले ही कुछ कमियां हों, मगर आईआईटी संस्थान अच्छा काम कर रहे हैं।

भारत की शिक्षा व्यवस्था में इतनी ज्यादा समस्याएं हैं कि उन्हें ठीक करने में किसी भी मानव संसाधन मंत्री की सारी ऊर्जा लग सकती है। ऐसे में, उन संस्थानों को छेड़ने का क्या तुक है, जो अपना काम अच्छी तरह कर रहे हैं? वैसे भी यह कहावत है कि जो चीज ठीक काम कर रही हो, उसे सुधारने की कोशिश नहीं करनी चाहिए। खास तौर पर तब, जब ठीक करने के लिए और कई सारे संस्थान हैं। आईआईटी की उपलब्धियों के पीछे उनकी अपेक्षाकृत स्वायत्तता की बड़ी भूमिका है, इसी वजह से तमाम क्षेत्रों

> श्रेष्ठ संस्थानों और उनसे जुड़े सम्मानित लोगों को काम करने की स्वायत्तता देना देश में शिक्षा और शोध की बेहतरी के लिए जरूरी है।

के लोग आईआईटी से जुड़ना चाहते हैं। लेकिन बड़ी समस्या यह है कि सरकार से जुड़े लोग यह मानते हैं कि अगर वे किसी संस्थान को पैसा देते हैं, तो उस पर उनका नियंत्रण भी होना चाहिए। शेवगांवकर से विवाद भी नियंत्रण को लेकर ही हुआ था और काकोडकर के विवाद में भी यही मुद्दा है। नियंत्रण की इच्छा रखने वालों में नौकरशाह भी हो सकते हैं और राजनीतिक लोग भी। कांग्रेस इसे मुद्दा बना रही है, पर तमाम ऐसे संस्थानों में राजनीतिक नियुक्तियां करने का उसका भी रिकॉर्ड है। संघ परिवार से जुड़े लोगों को यह लगता है कि कांग्रेस के राज में उससे जुड़े या अपेक्षाकृत वामपंथी रुझान वाले लोगों का अकादमिक संस्थानों पर कब्जा हो गया है और अब उनकी सरकार है, तो उनका वर्चस्व होना जरूरी है। इस वजह से भी कई विवाद खड़े हो रहे हैं।

अकादमिक संस्थानों पर वर्चस्व का विचार ही मूलतः गलत है। अकादमिक संस्थानों को भी अकादमिक श्रेष्ठता को अपनी कसौटी बनाना चाहिए, इस या उस राजनीतिक विचारधारा या सरकार से रिश्तों को नहीं। हमारे यहां संस्थानों की स्वायत्तता की अवधारणा के रास्ते में तमाम रुकावटें हैं, जबकि यह प्रमाणित है कि दुनिया में जितने भी प्रतिष्ठित वैज्ञानिक, सांस्कृतिक, अकादमिक संस्थान हैं, वे राजनीतिक-प्रशासनिक दखलंदाजी से दूर रहे हैं। हमें अगर ज्ञान आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था में आगे बढ़ना है, तो संस्थानों और उनमें काम कर रहे लोगों को स्वायत्तता देनी ही होगी। श्रेष्ठ प्रतिभाएं भी ऐसे संस्थानों से ही जुड़ना पसंद करती हैं, जहां उन्हें काम करने की आजादी हो। श्रेष्ठता को अगर हमारे संस्थानों की कसौटी बनाना है, तो सरकार से जुड़े लोगों को अपना रवैया बदलना होगा। आईआईटी जैसे संस्थानों की प्रतिष्ठा धूमिल हो, तो यह किसी के लिए अच्छा नहीं है।

Times Of India ND 19/03/2015 P-14

Common counselling: IITs, HRD contradict each other

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New Delhi: A piquant situation has arisen on common counselling for IITs and NITs as IIT counsel told Delhi high court on Wednesday that it would not be possible to do it from the 2015 session. Ironically, HRD ministry has already given an affidavit in the court that common counseling will be done from this year.

IIT counsel told the court that though the software for common counselling is expected to be ready by March-end by National Informatics Centre, it may not be thoroughly tested to be put in use by June/July for admissions in the academic year 2015. Instead, IITs have suggested "synchronized admission counselling" for IITs and NITs, which will be done separately

ON COLLISION COURSE: Irani

by IITs and NITs. IIT-Bombay will be organizing Joint Entrance Examination (advanced) this year. IITs and HRD told HC that it will discuss modalities on March 24. The HC posted the matter for March 25.

Appearing for petitioner Rajiv Kumar, senior advocate Prashant Bhushan contended that it would be laughable if IITs take six to eight months to test the software. He also requested that director of IIT-Bombay be summoned. Pranav Sachdeva, also appearing for Kumar, told **TOI**, "We are

going to press for implementation from this year. It is contempt of court." He also said IITs are resisting it because they want to keep seats vacant and do not want the world to know that many students prefer NITs over IITs.

In its affidavit, HRD ministry in February said "... the common counselng / seat allocation in respect of IITs and NITs will commence from the academic session 2015-16 through the Joint Seat Allocation Authority." Five IITs — Bombay, Kharagpur, Delhi, Kanpur and Madras — are respondents.

After high court order for common counselling last year, HRD had formed a technical committee of representatives from IITs, NITs and NIC. Ministry sources say IITs stand in the court is intriguing for various reasons.

COMMON ADMISSION DATABASE NOT READY FOR COMMON COUNSELLING FOR IITs AND NITs, COURT TOLD

IITs not able to fix their software, doesn't sound right: HC

ANEESHA MATHUR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 18

THE admission process for IITs and NITs is likely to remain separate for yet another year as the software for the complete database of students who have cleared the entrance exam and are eligible for counselling is not yet ready.

In an order issued in August 2014, the Delhi High Court had directed that common counselling for IITs and NITs should be implemented from the 2015-16 academic year, after a PIL filed in 2010 had pointed out that a number of seats in the institutes were left va-

cant because students shifted from one to the other.

On Wednesday, the counsel for IIT-Bombay, which is organising this year's admissions process, informed the Delhi High Court bench of Chief Justice G Rohini and Justice R S Endlaw that the common counselling software would take "at least 3-6 months of testing" before it can be implemented.

Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, who appeared on behalf of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, also told the court that the National Informatics Center was scheduled to demonstrate the first phase of the synchro-

nised counselling software to the IITs on March 24, which would include a common portal to be used by the IITs and NITs to offer seats for admissions on the same date.

"IITs are not able to solve their own software problem, that does not sound right. What do you say to your clients?" the court observed after the counsel for the IITs said that the delay in implementing the common admission system was because the NIC had not provided proper software.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, who had appeared on behalf of the petitioner, also pointed out that the Ministry of Human Resource De-

velopment, in its affidavit filed earlier this year, had stated that the joint seat allocation process will be implemented from this year. Bhushan also pointed out that the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) had created a software to manage admissions last year, which had been rejected by the IITs.

The court has now directed the IIT admissions administration and the ministry to submit its report on the NIC demonstration on March 25, and has observed that the "directions" to have a common counseling system "have to be implemented".

HC had directed common counselling from 2015-16. EXPRESS

Indian Express ND 19/03/2015   P-1

CLIMBDOWN AFTER GERMAN VS SANSKRIT ROW

3rd and foreign language: HRD opens to debate

SHIFT ■ Sends note to states ahead of Saturday meeting on language norms

RUHI TEWARI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 18

IN an apparent climbdown months after it replaced German with Sanskrit as the third language in Kendriya Vidyalaya schools, the Smriti Irani-led HRD Ministry is looking at how "foreign languages can be prescribed as an additional tool" in a "highly competitive world" and whether the three-language formula should be "debated".

Both these issues are set to be taken up at a meeting of state education ministers and secretaries on Saturday to discuss the consultative process in formulating the new national education policy. In a detailed note on the "themes and questions for policy consultations" during the meeting, the ministry has listed 13 broad themes for school education and 20 for higher education.

When the Board of Governors of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), headed by Irani, scrapped German as

SMRITI IRANI

HRD opens to debate

the third language in October last year (German has been kept as an additional subject/ hobby class), the minister had cited the three-language formula and the Constitution.

According to this formula, schools should teach Hindi, English and one modern Indian language (preferably one of the southern languages) in Hindi-speaking states and Hindi, English and the regional language in non-Hindi speaking states.

Introduced in 1968, this formula was reiterated in the 1986 education policy, as well as in 2005.

But in its latest note, under the head of "promotion of languages" in school education, the ministry has said that a "multilingual society recognises the importance of education in languages".

Among the questions that have been listed are:

■ In a highly competitive world, at which level and how can foreign languages be prescribed as an additional tool?
■ What language would you like your children to learn in schools?
■ What should be the place of Hindi, English and local languages in school education?
■ Which language would be preferred as a medium of instruction in schools?
■ Should education in mother tongue and multilingual education in schools be encouraged?

The note also emphasises the importance of "mother tongue-based" education. "While there are some interventions for appointment of language teachers and promotion of classical languages, there is no comprehensive scheme or language policy and we need to have inputs on this dimension," it says.

The note says "there is a general perception that children learning through English-medium have an advantage over others while entering the world of work".

In an indication that there may be a revision of textbooks, the note also questions if there is a "need to improve secondary/ senior secondary textbooks" and how many languages should be taught at the secondary/ senior secondary levels.

Another issue that is likely to be discussed is whether abolition of Class X exams has "reduced learning levels" of students.

For higher education, a question that has been listed is if universities should "include foundation courses on cultural integration" and if "Indology studies" should be a part of the curriculum.

Educational institutions' profits not taxable: SC

Amit.Choudhary
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New Delhi: The Supreme Court has ruled that surplus income earned by educational institutions cannot be taxed, and imparting education not termed a for-profit activity simply because it yielded high returns.

Dismissing the revenue department's submission that an educational institution ceased to be a solely scholastic endevaour if it generated high profits, the court noted that their income was exempt from tax under the Income Tax Act.

"Where an educational institution carries on the activity of education primarily for educating persons, the fact that it makes a surplus does not lead to the conclusion that it ceases to exist solely for educational purposes and becomes an institution for the purpose of making profit," a bench of Justice T S Thakur and Justice Rohinton F Nariman said.

"A distinction must be drawn between the making of a surplus and an institution being carried on 'for profit'. If, after meeting expenditure, a surplus arises incidentally... it will not cease to be one existing solely for educational purposes," the bench added.

The court, however, said the government must examine activities of such institutions to ensure that the purpose of education is not taken over by a profit-making motive. "If they are not genuine, or are not being carried out in accordance with all or any of the conditions subject to which approval has been given, such exemption must be withdrawn," it said.

The court passed the order on a bunch of petitions filed by Queen Educational Society challenging an Uttarakhand High Court order allowing I-T authorities to tax its surplus income of around Rs 7 lakh for the assessment year 2000-01.

सफल रहा नासा का टाइको बैलून टेस्ट

■ 105,000 फीट की ऊंचाई तक उड़ा बैलून

एजेंसी|न्यूयार्क

नासा के नवीनतम अंतरिक्ष सेवा प्रदाता वर्ल्ड व्यू (डब्ल्यूवी) ने अरिजोना के पाइनल एयरफील्ड से टाइको बैलून का सफलतापूर्वक प्रक्षेपण किया। बैलून 105,000 फीट की ऊंचाई तक उड़ा और 98,425 फुट की ऊंचाई तक लगभग एक घंटा 45 मिनट तक मंडराता रहा। वैज्ञानिक अब इसका अध्ययन करेंगे।

गैसों का लगाएगा पता

यह बैलून अपने साथ सेंट्रल फ्लोरिडा यूनिवर्सिटी के प्लैनेटरी एटमॉस्फियर्स स्पीशीज सेंसर (पीएएमएसएस) परीक्षण तथा एरि पेंसिलवेनिया गैनन यूनिवर्सिटी (जीयू) के कॉस्मिक-रे कैलोरीमीटर (सीआरसी) को साथ ले गया था। पीएएमएसएस पहला मध्य-इंफ्रारेड अवशोषण स्पेक्ट्रोमीटर है, जो वायुमंडल में गैसों का पता लगाएगा। यह उपकरण स्वचालित है। यह प्रौद्योगिकी भविष्य में ग्रह मिशन के लिए इस्तेमाल में लाई जाएगी।

कॉस्मिक किरणों पर भी नजर

सीआरसी वायुमंडल में उच्च ऊर्जा वाली कॉस्मिक किरणों का पता लगाएगा और ब्रह्मांड किस प्रकार कार्य करता है, इसकी खोज में मदद करेगा। दोनों उपकरणों को ढूंढकर वापस वैज्ञानिकों को सौंप दिया गया है। नासा के अभियान प्रबंधक पाउल डे लियोन ने कहा, 'मैं उपकरण की कार्य प्रणाली व वर्ल्ड व्यू के प्रदर्शन से संतुष्ट हूं।'

'Researchers in the social sciences need support'

Gauri Kohli

The need to strengthen the country's research base has been much talked about. When it comes to research, the focus shifts to the science, technology and engineering domains. However, there is an urgent need to encourage research scholars in the field of social science and humanities and one way is through research grants offered by bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The format of the UGC National Eligibility Test/Junior Research Fellowship examination also does not incentivise those educated in more research-focussed postgraduate programmes, say experts.

Praveen Singh, deputy dean (planning), Ambedkar University Delhi, says: "This may be because of the centralised nature of the examination and large number of applicants. The alternative fellowship options available (though not many) through bodies like Indian Council of Social Science Research, Indian Council of Historical Research, etc. encourages those who have already made research their career option and done some preliminary work. Now, universities have also been provided funds to disburse to their research students. Though this does not amount to much – it ranges from ₹5,000-₹8,000 per student per month – there is minor improvement in research output."

So what is needed is decentralised management of fellowships, apart from increasing the number and amount of these (non-UGC) fellowships. "The decentralisation of fellowship selection and disbursement will also encourage universities to open up new or inter-disciplinary areas of research. UGC Junior Research Fellowship/National Eligibility Test are limited mostly to core disciplines of social science and humanities. Therefore, research in inter-disciplinary areas of knowledge gets undermined," Singh adds.

Batting for research scholars across streams, Professor Girishwar Mishra, former dean (research) for humanities and social sciences, Delhi University, says: "Scholars have to pursue research in the same social and economic climate and fulfill all the necessary requirements towards PhD degree as JRFs. They are enrolled on the basis of the entrance test conducted by the university. Their needs cannot be underestimated. Hence, they deserve better treatment."

WHAT RESEARCH SCHOLARS NEED

- Decentralised management of fellowships and an increase in the amount of non-UGC fellowships
- An increased number of fellowships through bodies like Indian Council of Social Science Research and Indian Council of Historical Research

IISc: Chennai highest per capita emitter of greenhouse gases

http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/iisc-chennai-highest-per-capita-emitter-of-greenhouse-gases/article7007913.ece

At nearly 39 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, Delhi has the highest greenhouse gases footprint in the country. Greater Mumbai and Chennai follow Delhi with 23 million tonnes and 22 million tonnes respectively. Ahmedabad accounts for the least (9 million tonnes) GHS footprint among the seven Indian cities studied by a team of researchers at IISc,

Despite the total GHS footprint being 17 million tonnes lesser than Delhi, Chennai has the highest per capita emission of carbon dioxide equivalent — 4.79 tonnes. Kolkata follows Chennai with 3.29 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. Chennai also emits the highest carbon dioxide equivalent per GDP — 2.55 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent per lakh rupees.

The results, based on the 2009-2010 data, were published recently in the journal *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* by a team led by Prof. T.V. Ramachandra of the Energy &Wetlands Research Group, Centre for Ecological Sciences, IISc, Bengaluru.

The paper has looked into all sources of greenhouse gas emissions — transportation, domestic sector, electricity consumption, industry, agriculture and livestock, and solid and liquid waste.

A sector-wise analysis revealed that transportation turned out to be biggest source of emission in cities where rail transportation was either absent or was just being put in place. Of the seven cities studied, Delhi turned out to be the highest emitter of greenhouse gases from the transportation sector. Vehicles in Delhi emitted over 12 million tonnes of greenhouse gases during the study period.

But as percentage contribution from all sources in a city, transportation in Delhi accounted for 32 per cent of greenhouse gases emission. It was 57 per cent in Hyderabad, 43 per cent in Greater Bengaluru, and 25 per cent in Ahmedabad.

"Lack of appropriate public transport system in these cities [Bengaluru and Hyderabad] and haphazard growth due to unplanned urbanisation has led to large-scale usage of private vehicles," notes the paper.

Contrast this with the three cities — Kolkata, Greater Mumbai and Chennai — where rail forms the backbone of transportation. Based on percentage contribution from all sources, transportation accounted for just 13 per cent in Kolkata, 17.4 per cent in Greater Mumbai and 19.5 per cent in Chennai.

The domestic sector was the next biggest contributor of greenhouse gases emissions. Electricity consumption for lighting and other household appliances, consumption of fuel for cooking were the major sources of domestic emissions. Again, Delhi topped the list with 11.6 million tonnes of gases emitted, which is 30 per cent of the total emissions from all sources in the city.

Chennai comes second with 8.6 million tonnes, which is 39 per cent of the total emissions by the city. Greater Mumbai is less than half with 8.4 million tonnes but 19 per cent of its total emissions. Greater Bengaluru and the other two cities — Hyderabad and Ahmedabad — account for half and one-fourth of Chennai's respectively.

When seen as percentage contribution from all sources in a city, the domestic sector emerged as the biggest contributor of emissions in all the three cities where rail formed the backbone of transportation — Kolkata (43 per cent), Chennai (39 per cent) and Greater Mumbai (37 per cent).

Electricity for commercial and other services such as street lighting and railways, accounts for 15-24 per cent of total emissions by cities except in the case of Hyderabad and Ahmedabad.

"Buildings with glass façade are energy guzzlers. These buildings were meant for European countries," said Dr. Ramachandra. "If normal buildings consume 1,300-1,500 units per person per year, those with glass façade consume 14,000-15,000 units per person per year."

Chennai figured as the top emitter (4.4 million tonnes) in the industrial sector. The emissions come from ammonia production for fertilizer industries, and petro products. There is "insufficient data" in the case of medium- and small-scale industries located within Chennai and other six cities.

Supreme Court upholds UGC norms on eligibility for teachers

http://www.asianage.com/india/supreme-court-upholds-ugc-norms-eligibility-teachers-509

The Supreme Court has upheld the regulations framed by the University Grants Commission prescribing minimum qualifications for national and state level entrance tests for appointment of teachers/assistant professor in colleges.

A bench of Justices T.S. Thakur and Rohinton Nariman dismissed a batch of appeals filed by PH.D/M.Phil holders challenging the regulations as revised by the Union government but said they would only be prospective.

In these appeals the constitutional validity of the UGC regulations (minimum qualifications required for the appointment and career advancement of teachers in universities and institutions affiliated to it) (the third Amendment) Regulation 2009 under which NET/SLET was to be the minimum eligibility condition for recruitment and appointment of lecturers in universities/colleges/institutions. Though the UGC exempted Ph.D and M.Phil candidates from the eligibility test, the Union government issued a circular including them in the regulations. While the high courts of Madras, Delhi and Rajasthan rejected the challenge, the Allhabad high court quashed the regulations. The present appeals are directed against these orders. Writing the judgment Justice Nariman said, "It is clear that the object of the directions of the Central government read with the UGC regulations of 2009/2010 are to maintain excellence in standards of higher education.

IIT Team Develops Affordable Dialysis Technology

http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/iit-team-develops-affordable-dialysis-technology-747639

Kolkata: Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur have engineered an indigenous, cost-effective kidney dialysis technology. The innovative technology was recently recognised with the National Award, a statement said today.

Haemodialysis is administered to patients suffering from various stages of kidney failure. Commonly referred to as "artificial kidney", it is a machine that uses dialysis to remove impurities and waste products from the bloodstream before returning the blood to the patient's body.

"Administering haemodialysis is a very expensive affair for an average Indian. Haemodialysis cartridges are not manufactured in India and are imported from Germany, Korea or Japan," said Anirban Roy, a research scholar at the IIT's department of chemical engineering and co-inventor of the technology.

The cartridges are formed of 7,000 to 15,000 hollow fibres of 180-220 microns inner diameter and 15-40 micron

thickness, and the challenge lies in spinning these clinical grade hollow fibre membranes to the specific dimensions, said Mr Roy.

"The present innovation is about a technology (using disposable syringe assemblies) that has been designed to spin such clinical grade fibres in India since the country does not possess the technology to spin hollow fibre membranes of such specifications."

"This technology does not use the conventional expensive spinnerets which are employed by the companies abroad," said Mr Roy, adding only four to five companies worldwide enjoy the monopoly in this business and all have their own patented technology.

"Due to this, each dialyser costs Rs.1, 000 to Rs.1, 500 and ideally three such dialysers are needed per week for each patient," he said.

The estimated manufacturing cost of such a dialyser developed by the IIT-Kharagpur team is expected to be around Rs.200-300, he said.

This is a project of national importance and was funded by the Department of Science and Technology, with two Bengaluru-based companies as industrial partners of the technology, said Mr Roy.

Animal and clinical trials of the product are awaited, although in-vitro (laboratory) tests have been completed.

The product won the runners-up prize at the fifth National Award for Technology Innovation in the category of polymers in public health care on February 21, said Sirshendu De, who is the principal investigator and co-inventor of the technology. He is a Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar awardee.

"This is a flagship project which perfectly fits in with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's slogan of 'Make in India'," said Mr De, professor at the IIT's department of chemical engineering, in a statement.

The developed process has been filed for an Indian patent and also for a US patent. The fibres match the clinical specifications of the market leaders, the researchers said.

This product, once commercialized, can equip India with the technology not only to sustain itself in the field of dialysis, but also to project itself as a major exporter of such haemodialysers to south-east Asian countries, Africa and South America, said the researchers.

IIT-KGP alumni develop a solar-powered cold storage system for Indian farmers

http://social.yourstory.com/2015/03/ecofrost-solar-powered-cold-storage/

IIT-KGP engineers have developed a solar-powered cold storage system that works at zero running cost as a solution to the wastage of agricultural produce in India. Developed at the Science and Technology entrepreneurship Park (STEP) of IIT-Kharagpur by mechanical engineering students Vivek Pandey, Prateek Singhal and Devendra Gupta, the micro cold storage system has been tested and proved in a farmland in Karnataka. ecofrost_machine The cold storage system will be developed under the banner of Ecofrost Technologies which is an agri-focused company creating solutions to overcome problems in cold chain infrastructure. The company envisions to disrupt the current state of food supply chain in India by empowering farmers, mandi owners and mobile cold chain players with clean technology for a sustainable

future. The project has been in the works for a while as this above 2013 video suggests but concrete plans for rolling out he unit are being made now. The team has setup a production unit in Pune which is up and running. The need for such solutions is huge. In India alone, 10 million tons of cold storage capacity is required to prevent the over 30% wastage of perishable produce. The current facilities are accessible only to the big farmers/middlemen who hoard when supplies peak, leading to huge price fluctuations. The bottom of the pyramid (BOP) i.e. the small farmer loses out, as they have to sell their produce at very low prices right after harvest. The product primarily designed for the rural segment serves their needs ideally, as it does not depend on grid electricity and after a 2-year breakeven, leads to over 40% increase in their profits. There is no running costs for this unit and it works on sustainable technology throughout the year. Using solar panels, a thermal storage methodology controls compartment cooling in tandem with regular cooling this micro cold storage increases the shelf life of agricultural produce. The power generated is sent to the compressor, running at various speeds to adjust to the cooling demand. Instead of batteries, there is a thermal storage unit which can store power for more than 36 hours for cloudy or rainy weather. The micro cold storage system has a capacity of 5 metric tons (and the price is yet to be finalized), mainly meant for horticulture purposes. A target to manufacture 20,000 cold storage units in the next five years has been set up from Pune unit. The team plans to sell units directly to farmers and create village-level entrepreneurs who will act as nodal points for cold storage in markets where a farmer can store his produce at a fixed cost

IIT fined for low-quality chilli in hostel food

http://www.hindustantimes.com/dehradun/iit-fined-for-low-quality-chilli-in-hostel-food/article1-1328209.aspx

The Haridwar district court has slapped `3 lakh as fine on the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee for preparing food with sub-standard chilli powder. 200 students had fell sick after eating the food.

According to the food safety department, Haridwar-based additional district magistrate (ADM) Ravneet Chima penalised the IIT-R on March 12.

On September 10, 2013 around 200 students, living in Rajendra Bhawan hostel, complained of stomach ache and vomiting after consuming meals cooked at the hostel mess.

The food safety department took notice of the incident and made a surprise inspection of the hostel's canteen on September 19.

"We gathered samples of edible items from the canteen and after inspection, it was found that the food items were unhygienic. We then served a show-cause notice to the institute authorities asking why they had not taken a licence from the food safety department,"
said food safety officer Dilip Jain.

The chilli powder, one of the collected food samples, was later sent to the food and drug testing laboratory at Rudrapur on March 10, 2014 where it was found to be of sub-standard quality.

It was again sent to the Pune-based national food and drug testing laboratory that said in its report that the chilli powder sample was not pure and harmful if consumed.

"On the basis of the Pune laboratory's report we registered a case before the ADM court on August 23, 2014 against three different authorities of the institute under various sections of the food safety and safety act (FSSA), 2006," added Jain. The authorities who were penalised include the chairman of the coordinating committee of hostels, chairman of the central purchase committee of the institute and chairman and chief warden of the mess working committee.

"The court slapped a fine of `1 lakh each on them," said Jain.