Newspaper Clips
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Stir at IISER Resolved

http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/thiruvananthapuram/Stir-at-IISER-Resolved/2015/05/08/article2802418.ece

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:The protest staged at Indian Institute of Science, Education and Research (IISER), Thiruvananthapuram, by its students, demanding basic equipment and facilities, has been resolved. The management has promised that the necessary equipment would be purchased at the earliest.

The students said that they had to wait for months together to get the purchase orders issued. According to them, it was eight months ago that they provided a list of their requirements. However, what usually takes only a month, and just one meeting with the purchase committee, dragged on.

The students had approached their faculty and Dean, who could do little, as it was the administration which was delaying the purchase, they said. The administrative department said that the time was spent in studying their demands.

Among the list of equipment needed was a rotary evaporator, which is a basic equipment needed in a chemistry research lab. Of these, the rotary evaporator had been under repair. The instrument providers, after inspecting the 'Rotavapor', had suggested replacement of its parts. However, the cost of importing the parts being comparable to the cost of the instrument itself, the administration had assigned a committee to study the order.

The students had approached IISER Director V Ramakrishnan on April 20 and he had reportedly assured them that the matter would be considered for resolving. But, as the students could not see any progress, they had to meet the Director yet again on May 5. They were then told that the purchase orders would be issued in three days.

The Director said that there were some administrative issues, which delayed the process. "There were administrative procedures that had to be completed. We met up with the students and explained the issues. They were satisfied with the explanation. Now purchase orders have been issued, and there are no complications," he said.

The protest would have carried on indefinitely, had the administration not issued purchase orders. There are a few more equipment, which have to be procured, and if, yet again, the administration delays it, the students might stage yet another protest.

Dainik Jagran ND 08/05/2015 P-13

कचरे में धंस जाएगा काली नदी का वजूद

संतोष शुक्ल, मेरठ

- रिमोट सेंसिंग एजेंसी की रिपोर्ट, दर्जनों स्थानों पर खंडित हो गई धारा
- रासायनिक कचरे ने नदी का प्राकृतिक भूजल रिचार्ज सिस्टम बंद किया

पौराणिक ग्रंथों में कलकल करती सरस्वती नदी का वजूद हजारों वर्ष बाद फिर मिला। हमारे सांस्कृतिक मानस में सैकड़ों वर्षों से बहती सरवस्ती के मिलने से भले ही हमें अपनी सभ्यता की महानता पर गुमान हो रहा हो, लेकिन तीन सौ किलोमीटर की यात्रा में सैकड़ों गांवों को जीवन देती आई काली नदी शायद हमारी आंखों के सामने ही अपना वजूद गंवा देगी।

रिमोट सेंसिंग एजेंसी की रिपोर्ट से खुलासा हुआ है कि काली नदी में भूजल के प्राकृतिक स्रोत बंद पड़ गए हैं। नदी की ऑटो रिचार्ज प्रणाली पूरी तरह निष्क्रिय हो गई है। इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ हाइड्रोलोजी, रुड़की की रिपोर्ट बताती है कि काली नदी में इकोलाई बैक्टीरिया को खाने वाले बैक्टीरिया खत्म हो चुके हैं, जिसकी वजह से जल अपना गुणधर्म खो चुका है। सेटेलाइट इमेज बताती है कि काली में गिरने वाले सभी छह नालों ने नदी को लुप्त होने की पटकथा लिख दी है। खेतों और उद्योगों की ओर से नदी पर अतिक्रमण का खेल जारी है। पर्यावरण वैज्ञानिक वीसी गोयल कहते हैं कि काली देश में सर्वाधिक विपन्न अवस्था में बह रही है। नदी पर वजूद खोने का खतरा है।

कचरे में डूबा रिचार्ज का स्रोत

मुजफ्फरनगर के गांव अंतवाड़ा से निकलकर कन्नौज तक बहने वाली काली नदी दो दशक में जहरीली धारा बन गई। किनारों के आसपास दर्जनों औद्योगिक इकाइयां कचरों को सीधे नदी में डालती हैं। मुजफ्फरनगर से मेरठ पहुंचने से पहले ही इस नदी की धारा पूरी तरह ठहर चुकी है। कचरों के साथ अतिक्रमण से यह नदी कई स्थानों पर सिकुड़ चुकी है। सीएसई की शोध रिपोर्ट बताती है कि काली नदी में रासायनिक एवं भारी तत्वों की मात्रा ने रिचार्ज सिस्टम को ठप कर दिया है। जहरीले रसायनों की वजह से नदी के किनारों पर वृक्षों की संख्या अत्यंत कम रह गई है। भयावह बीओडी लोड होने से नदी में ऑक्सीजन शून्य है। खेतों से बहकर नदियों में नाइट्रोजन की मात्रा बढ़ने से जलीय पौधे पैदा हो रहे हैं, जो जल की शेष आक्सीजन को निगल रहे हैं।

2012 में आइआइटी रुड़की एवं जिला प्रशासन की टीम ने नदी का सर्वे कर पाया था कि आसपास के पांच सौ से ज्यादा तालाबों एवं जलस्रोतों में रिचार्ज की क्षमता खत्म हो चुकी है।

UGC asks universities to include column for transgenders in forms

Universities have been requested to include a column for transgender category in all application forms.

http://indianexpress.com/article/india/education/ugc-asks-universities-to-include-column-for-transgenders-in-forms/

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has written to all universities to include a column for the transgender category in all application forms.

Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Vijay Sampla told Rajya Sabha that universities have been requested to include a column for transgender category in all application forms/academic testimonials and all other relevant documents processed by them, as well as by their affiliated colleges.

UGC has also informed that it has issued directions to all its bureaus to ensure that the forms/proformas of all the schemes being operated by it have a column for the transgender in gender category, he said in reply to a question.

The Minister said the Supreme Court in its judgement in 2014 had directed that ‘hijras’, eunuchs, apart from binary gender, be treated as “third gender” for the purpose of safeguarding their rights under Part III for the Constitution and laws made by Parliament and state legislature.

IIT graduate transforming cotton farmers' life in Gandhi's Gujarat

150-member team of Volun-Teach identifies places for plants to be set up.

http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/iit-graduate-cotton-farmers-gandhi-gujarat-spinning-machines/1/436171.html

IIT-Madras graduate Kannan Lakshminarayan dusted a few copies of "Young India" to find Mahatma Gandhi's vision and initiate cotton farmers to use miniature spinning machines right in their village where they grow the crop and increase their income.

Following this, the middleman was out, the long-drawn value chain was short-circuited while farmers became spinners first and subsequently, weavers and even garment makers. In 1920, Mahatma Gandhi had written in "Young India": "I feel convinced that the revival of hand-spinning and hand weaving will make the largest contribution to the economic and the moral regeneration of India. The millions must have a simple industry to supplement agriculture."

The beginning was made from Maharashtra's Vidarbha region, more known for cotton farmers' suicide. It is now set to take root in rural Gujarat following the efforts of a group of businessmen in Ahmedabad who work to empower farmers and their families at their doorstep to produce yarn from their own cotton.

Volun-Teach (voluntary teaching) is the group of businessmen from Ahmedabad that is helping set up plants with miniature spinning machines made by Kannan's Microspin Machine Works in the largely cotton-growing North Gujarat and Saurashtra regions.

The plants will be of farmers, by the farmers and for the farmers. "We have formed an entity called Mahek Producers Company, which is essentially a 'producers company' envisaged under the Companies Act in an amendment implemented two years ago."

"Under this, only those who are 'primary producers' engaged in an activity connected with or related to primary produce can be the share holders," explained Ravin Vyas, a volunteer of Volun-Teach. Some 150-odd Volun-Teach volunteers regularly visit villages and teach youngsters. "During one such visit, we identified two villages - Bunav in North Gujarat and Gohilwad region consisting areas of two districts of Saurashtra, where they grow only cotton," Vyas told Mail Today.

He said, "We will train farmers in operating the spinning machines that will be bought through debt financing." Microspin's founder and CEO Kannan said that besides farmers forming their own producers company, local entrepreneurs could set up the spinning machines and employ farmers in the units.

"A farmer or his family member employed at such units can make Rs.4,000-Rs.8,000 a month. This is an additional income for them, besides what they earn from their cotton crop," Kannan told Mail Today.

Vyas said: "Over 60 per cent farmers don't have own land but they work on farms. Such projects would help, as it could check migration to cities for work."

The concept has taken a big leap in Buldana district of Maharashtra where farmers' cooperative credit society has created an integrated spinning mill using Microspin machines.

Kannan said that this would "probably be the only place in the world where a farmer brings cotton to the in-gate and it goes out as a fabric from the out-gate."

This is possible because Kannan has evolved a new technology called BlowCard that "simplifies a part of the spinning process by integrating blending, blow-room and carding activities carried out in a conventional spinning mill. This has also reduced energy and infrastructural expenses besides the cost procuring finances.

Kannan claimed that the product is of higher value than the one produced in a conventional spinning mill. Besides, the miniature machines come for Rs.2 crore as against Rs.100 crore for a normal spinning machine. The entire chain would entail an investment of Rs.6 crore.

He said, "Only about five per cent of the income in the textile value chain goes to farmers." He added that as many as 1,200 clusters could be created in the country even if five per cent of locally made cotton was diverted to such projects and some 370 of these could be in Gujarat.

Rlys appoint IIT-K Prof as TMIR chief

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kanpur/Rlys-appoint-IIT-K-Prof-as-TMIR-chief/articleshow/47185232.cms

KANPUR: Banking upon IIT-Kanpur's vast expertise in the successful implementation of 'Railway Safety Mission' in 2003, the ministry of railways has now roped in Prof NS Vyas, former head of mechanical engineering department of IIT-Kanpur, as chairperson of Technology Mission for Indian Railways (TMIR). He will head the Mission Implementation and Coordination Committee (MICC).

Core research centre of the project will be set up at IIT-K, IIT-Delhi, IIT-Chennai and Bombay University.Prof Vyas has currently resigned as vice-chancellor of Rajasthan Technical University to take up the responsibility of the Tecchnology Mission. Alok Kumar, executive director, Railway Board, has been made co-chairperson of the mission.

The newly set up Technology Mission for Indian Railways (TMIR), a consortium of four ministries, viz ministry of railways, ministry of human resource development, ministry of science and technology and ministry of investment, will function through MICC.

The consortium is being set up on an Investment Sharing Model as a part of Technology Mission for Indian Railways to take up identified Railway projects for research. This was announced in the railway budget of 2015-16. The aim of setting up of Technology Mission for Indian Railways is to make an attempt to prepare fas track projects involving safety, metro-rail, high speed train, freight corridor and signalling system. The head office of the mission would be located in New Delhi.

The TMIR will monitor progress of research projects of the existing railway research centre at Kharagpur and four other upcoming railway research centres sanctioned in the railway budget 2015-16. The Railway Board feels that investment in the applied research will be fruitfully converted to technology development for actual use in railway working.

Talking to TOI, Prof NS Vyas informed that the purpose of setting up TMIR is to make a number of railway projects at a mega scale with an initial outlay of Rs 300 crore. He said that these projects will involve safety, metro-rail, high speed train, freight corridor and signalling system. "In addition to developing indigenous technology, we will look at adapting internationally available technology for Indian railways according to Indian conditions. The mission will give impetus to 'Make In India' concept as railways are the biggest engineering industry in the country. The efforts would be made to get more and more Indian manufacturers involved in R&D and protopying, and to set up international collaborations", said Prof Vyas.

Prof Vyas was also involved in the earlier technology mission on railway safety which was announced in the year 2003 by the then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He was the national mission co-ordinator which lasted till 2009 whereby several technologies were developed and transferred to the railways. The earlier technology mission was also executed in the consortium mode which involved the ministry of railways, ministry of HRD and a group of industries.