

# Newspaper Clips

September 11, 2011

Mahamedha ND 11/09/2011 P-9

**आईआईटी रुड़की के नए निदेशक नियुक्त**  
रुड़की(सं.)। आईआईटी रुड़की में नवनियुक्त डायरेक्टर प्रो. प्रदीपतो बनर्जी अब आईआईटी के नए निदेशक होंगे। प्रो. बनर्जी आईआईटी बम्बई में इलेक्ट्रिकल विभाग में कार्यरत रहे हैं।

Deccan Chronicle Hyderabad 09.09.11 P-3

## **IITs in a fix over HC's rural ruling**

■ Four per cent rural weightage struck down, entry to integrated courses delayed

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, SEPT. 8

About 3,000 students, who were selected for the prestigious IITs in Basar, Nuzvidu and Idupulapaya this year, are caught up in legal tangles and face the risk of losing an academic year.

Classes for these students were scheduled to begin from September 7, but the officials are not in a position even to give admissions for the selected students.

The fate of these students, who are SSC toppers and secured more than 550 marks out of 600, hangs in the balance more than three months after the SSC results were declared, while their counterparts with lower marks are happily pursuing Intermediate courses in corporate and other private junior colleges.

### **Jinx might cost, students a year**

■ Admissions have not begun, even though classes were to begin by September 7

■ The fate of many — SSC toppers among them — who had obtained admission to the course now, hangs in the balance

IITs have been facing legal problems since their inception in 2008, thanks to the hasty decisions and lack of vision of its administration.

For the third time in a row, the admission policy devised by the Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies, which runs the IITs, has got caught in legal controversies.

While it was the "grading on the curve" admission method that was controversial in the first year, it was taking the rural mandal as a unit that created problems in the second year and was struck down by the AP High Court. This year, the four per cent weightage for rural students was recently struck down by the court.

"We have decided to file a petition in the HC seeking clarity on its judgement whether it is applicable from this year or from next year. We can go ahead after we get clarity from the court. We expect to get clarity by Monday," said Prof Raj Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, RGUKT.

With the officials planning to challenge the HC orders by filing review petitions, students are worried about their future.

Business Line ND 11/09/2011

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## IIM-B eases internship norms for students with work experience



**Sushma UN**

*Bangalore, Sept. 10*

Summer internships, as part of the post-graduate programme at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore (IIM-B), are now optional for students who come in with at least 34 months of work experience.

The students will have the option to work on other projects in campus or outside, or pursue other plans during April-May, the period when students usually take up summer internships. It has not been decided yet whether these students have the option to take up extra credit courses in campus during that period.

"We had some students come back after the internship and telling us that the work they did during the eight weeks was similar to the work they did before joining the course at IIM; so we decided to give them an option to take up the internships this year," Ms Sapna Agarwal,

Head, Career Development Services at IIM-B, told *Business Line*.

### **EARLY DAYS**

About 25 per cent of the 375 students in the current batch come with work experience of over 34 months, but it is still early to see how many of them will opt out of the summer internship, she added.

The series of pre-placement talks at IIM-B by companies who will recruit students for summer placements in April-May 2012 started in mid-August and the interviews will start from 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011, Ms Agarwal said. About 130 companies across sectors like consulting, finance and management are expected recruit students for the summer placements this year.

Summer internships, for eight weeks during April-May, are otherwise compulsory for all first-year students pursuing the post-graduate programme at IIM-B.

# IIT-M sets up counselling unit to prevent suicides

## Experts called 'Happiness Envoys' will talk to students either over phone or face to face

Vasudha Venugopal

**CHENNAI:** To address the rising number of suicides among its students, IIT-Madras has set up a counselling unit with a tele-counselling facility on the campus.

This initiative by the Madras Guidance and Counselling Unit (GCU) and Medall Behavioral Health Services will offer counselling services to students on an anonymous basis, round the clock. "We do not wish to call it counselling because we do not want people to think they are being counselled," says Parthasa-

rathi Pati, head, GCU.

Counselling experts called 'Happiness Envoys' will talk to these students either over the phone or face to face, as preferred by the students and help them vent their frustration and problems.

Open chat rooms, discussions and seminars on time management, orientation courses for freshers on 'Life at IIT-M' and 'life after graduation,' are also planned. The service will help students talk about things that affect them, and the professional counsellors will help them evaluate their options.

### The issue of suicides at the IITs will figure on the agenda of council meeting scheduled for September 14

"Students from diverse backgrounds come here to study. Many have been toppers throughout their schooling. Here when they compete with their equally accomplished peers, they often get depressed and do not talk about it," says Mr Pati.

The unit is trying to reach out particularly to M.Tech and Ph.D. students, who, according to Mr Pati, face pressures of a different kind. "They mostly are not engaged in extra-curricular activities. Being recruited is what they most eagerly look forward to, failing which, many get very upset. Also, last year, students face a lot of stress in completing their projects without which they cannot join companies," he adds.

According to the data provided by the HRD Ministry, IITs reported two suicides in 2010, four in 2009 and five in

2008. But this year, the figure stands at seven, three of which were by IIT-Madras students. The issue of suicides at the IITs, report sources, will definitely figure on the agenda of the upcoming IIT council meeting scheduled for September 14.

The calls received by Sneha, a voluntary organisation in the city that works in the area of suicide prevention, increase significantly during exams, before and after results. "We receive around 25 calls a day then. Most have to do with feeling low of not being able to live up to expecta-

tions. In reputed institutes, where the performance is evaluated throughout the year, with results depending on others' performance too, the students find it difficult," says P.V. Shankar, a volunteer. Lack of experience in communicating in English and home sickness are also reasons students cite for feeling low, he adds.

"Increasingly, we are also getting calls from parents worried about managing the fees or their wards landing a job," he says. The helpline number of Sneha, open 24/7, is 044-24640050.

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BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH FT FINANCIAL TIMES

# Me, my DNA and I



**MY BEAUTIFUL GENOME: EXPOSING OUR GENETIC FUTURE, ONE QUIRK AT A TIME**  
Lone Frank  
OneWorld  
\$18.99  
Pp 312



Clive Cookson

**A** DECADE OR so after scientists triumphantly revealed a first draft of the human genome, the 3bn biochemical letters that make up our DNA, the script is turning out to be far harder to decipher—and therefore to use—than the enthusiasts led us to believe.

But the huge research effort to understand the complexity of the genome is throwing up new insights into the nature of humanity, as the Danish science writer Lone Frank shows in *My Beautiful Genome*, her excellent look into the postgenomic world. To illustrate the issues, she takes the ultra-personal route of undergoing as much genetic testing as she can. This technique worked well for Masha Gessen in *Blood Matters* (2008) and David Ewing Duncan in *Experimental Man* (2009), and it succeeds for Frank too.

The era of consumer genetics, which moved testing beyond specialist laboratories into the mass market, began three or four years ago when companies such as deCODEme and 23andMe launched personal genotyping services.

Frank explains their limitations well. For a start, the companies only decode less than one-thousandth of the genome, focusing on the mutations in individual letters of the genetic code known as SNPs (usually pronounced "snips", which stands for single nucleotide polymorphisms).

Consumer-oriented tests scan about a million SNPs looking for variants that scientists have shown to be linked to disease,

usually through research projects that compare the genomes of patients with a control group of non-sufferers. As Frank discovers when she undergoes a SNP scan from deCODEme—and as I have found myself—the results are generally reassuring. For the most dreaded genes, those that predispose to Alzheimer's, her results are "out-right fantastic".

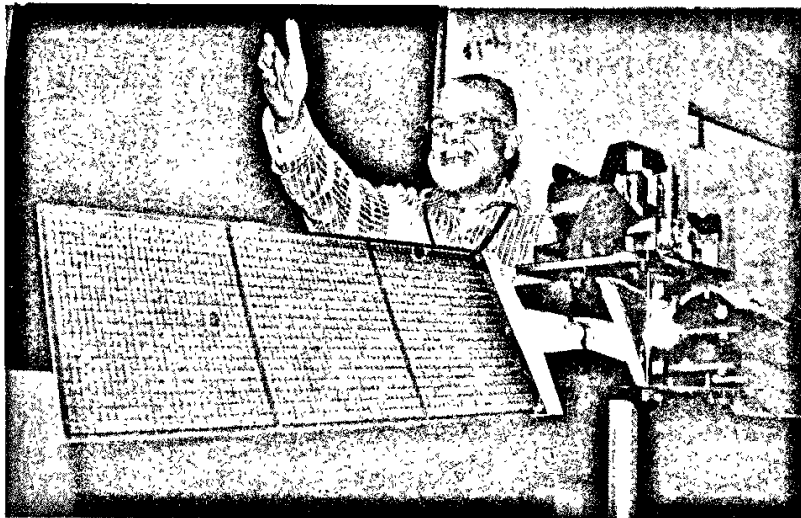
But Frank is not satisfied with mere

SNPs. She wants to have her full genome read but this is still at the research stage and would cost thousands of dollars, compared with a few hundred for a SNP scan—if she could find a lab to do it. And many experts believe that existing knowledge of the links between genes and disease lies mainly in SNPs, with little extra insight to be gained from the rest of the genome.

So she moves on to more specialised tests for conditions that she knows run in her family, such as mental illness and breast cancer. However, Frank fails to pick up any conclusive information—demonstrating the limitations of genetics rather than her failure as an investigative writer. In the process she has fascinating discussions with several of the world's leading geneticists and offers sharp and colourful observations.

Frank can also be devastating about herself, as when she undergoes personality tests and is told: "Your agreeableness couldn't be lower... Then there is your low score on altruism and sympathy." I do not know whether Frank is really disagreeable and unsympathetic but, given the underlying warmth of her writing, I doubt it.

The conclusion summarises beautifully the latest evidence about the malleability of our DNA in response to social and environmental circumstances. "My genome is not a straitjacket but a soft sweater to fill and shape, to snuggle up and stretch out in," Frank writes. "So who am I? I am what I do with this beautiful information that has flowed through millions of years through billions of organisms and has, now, finally been entrusted to me."



**'Megha' challenge:** Dr K. Radhakrishnan, Chairman of ISRO, with a model of Megha-Tropiques, during a press conference at Antariksh Bhavan, ISRO's headquarters, in Bangalore in Saturday. — K. Bhagya Prakash

# Indo-French climate satellite set for Oct 12 launch

**Our Bureau**  
Bangalore, Sept. 10

Megha-Tropiques, the novel Indo-French climate satellite, is planned for launch on October 12.

The 1,000-kg satellite - a combination of the Sanskrit 'megha' or cloud and the French word for the tropics - will give a better understanding of the crucial convection systems, humidity in the tropics, said ISRO's Chairman, Dr K. Radhakrishnan.

ISRO and French National Space Centre (CNES) equally share the project that was conceived in the late 1990s.

The satellite, with around Rs 80 crore worth of Indian contribution including the satellite bus and launcher, is being moved to Sriharikota on September 14 for launch on a PSLV rocket, Dr Radhakrishnan announced on Saturday.

## INCREASE FREQUENCIES

According to Dr R.R. Navalgund, Director, Space Applications Centre at Ahmedabad, it was now a

challenge to forecast tropical weather or rainfall even three-four days in advance due to the vagaries of tropical atmosphere; the temperate zone countries could do 12-day forecasts. Megha-Tropiques was expected to change this.

Dr Navalgund said the present satellites had a repeat visit over a region once in 35 days; this satellite would return six times a day.

"Everyone is eagerly looking forward to having these frequencies." It would be put in an orbit of over 800 km from Earth's surface and was built to last five years.

The role of the project was enlarging and it was set to join the Global Precipitation Constellation Mission (GPCM) being put up by the US and Japan.

The GPCM itself had got postponed and Megha-Tropiques would give its sponsor countries a scientific edge.

## LOW-EARTH ORBIT

It carries four key instruments, one called MADRAS

being developed by ISRO. A national and an international team of 21 investigators each would study the data.

Dr V. Jayaraman, former Director of Earth Observation Systems at ISRO HQ and the National Remote Sensing Centre, Hyderabad, who was closely involved in the project, said this was the first of its kind in the low-Earth orbit and there was worldwide expectation of it.

The payload development had been honed over the last six years.

What started as a bilateral project is going to be a multi-lateral one.

The turbulent tropics were the missing link in understanding global warming, climate change, and phenomena such as El Nino and La Nina.

Megha-Tropiques should give an integrated global picture of the tropics 20 degrees north and south of the Equator, in a band ranging from South-East Asia through Africa and South America. Its data would form a big scientific base for the country.

Hindustan ND 11/09/2011 P-5

# डीयू का बीटेक प्रोग्राम 6 अक्टूबर से होगा शुरू

नई दिल्ली | प्रमुख संवाददाता

दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा शुरू किए गए क्लस्टर इनोवेशन सेंटर में छात्र मैथेमेटिक्स और आईटी के साथ इनोवेशन में बीटेक या बीएस कर सकते हैं। इस वर्ष 6 अक्टूबर को लांच होने वाले इस कोर्स की अवधि चार साल है। इस कोर्स को बनाने के पीछे छात्रों के लिए लक्ष्यों और उद्देश्यों को पाने के लिए पहले से बेहतर और आधुनिक विषयों के विकल्प देना है।

कोर्स में मैथ्स और आईटी जैसे विषय होने पर छात्र इस तथ्य को समझ सकते हैं कि यह दोनों विषय एक-दूसरे के साथ

जुड़े और एक-दूसरे के लिए जरूरी हैं। साथ ही छात्र मैथ्स विषय के महत्व व केन्द्र में होने और मैथ्स के साथ अन्य विषयों को समझने के लिए आईटी विषय के इस्तेमाल के फायदे को भी जान सकेंगे। इसके साथ ही मैथ्स और कम्प्यूटर साइंस जैसे विषयों की गूढ़ जानकारी के लिए छात्र जेनेटिक और मॉलीकुलर बायोलोजी या मैनेजमेंट और इकोनॉमिक्स या इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स में से किसी एक विषय पर गहन अध्ययन कर सकते हैं। कोर्स के हर सेमेस्टर के लिए 5000 रुपये फीस है। इसके अलावा इस प्रोग्राम में छात्रों के लिए कई आधुनिक सुविधाएं उपलब्ध होंगी।