

Newspaper Clips

September 12, 2010

Hindustan Times, ND
12-Sep-10 p-8

DIGVIJAYA NOW TAKES A DIG AT KAPIL SIBAL

Press Trust of India
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

JABALPUR: After his potshots at Home Minister P. Chidambaram, Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Saturday appeared to snipe at HRD Minister Kapil Sibal seeking his attention on school education rather than higher education.

“The need at the moment is that the HRD ministry should pay more attention to the development of school education and skill development centres rather than higher education and I have full faith that they will look into the matter,” Singh said.

Sibal has become the fresh target of Singh after he took on Chidambaram, attacking his strategy to tackle Maoists.

He had even called Chidambaram “intellectually arrogant”.

Earlier this week, Sibal had hit back at his detractors, who had accused him of rushing an education bill, by invoking Rajiv Gandhi and said the former PM had wanted that the task of imparting quality education should be achieved in a few months.

“If people say that we are in a hurry, then I would like to state that Rajivji had said it in 1985 that this should be achieved in a few months,” Sibal had said.

Sibal's remarks were seen as an apparent rebuff to detractors like K. Keshav Rao, who attacked his ministry's policies in a Rajya Sabha debate that forced the government to defer the Education Tribunal Bill.

Hindustan Times, ND 12-Sep-10 p-9

IIT body slams pay 'betrayal'

MEMORANDUM Faculty federation accuses ministry of not implementing key promises

Charu Sudan Kasturi

■ charu.kasturi@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The apex faculty body of the Indian Institutes of Technology has accused the government of not implementing key pay-related promises made almost a year back to convince them to end an unprecedented standoff.

In a memorandum submitted to the human resource development ministry, the All India IIT Faculty Federation has argued that many of the concerns that brought them to the streets last year remain unresolved, sources told HT.

The federation represents the 4,000 teachers across the IITs and last year led an unprecedented protest over pay concerns that crippled the institutes for days, with teachers skipping classes for the first time.

The memorandum, sent on Thursday, requested that the Federation be allowed to present its concerns at the IIT Council meeting on Friday. But federation sources claim they received no response. "We had even asked the directors to hear us but they said they did not have time," professor M. Thenmozhi, president of the Federation said.

You assured us that all issues in the sixth pay commission implementation at the IITs ... would be resolved as soon as possible.

the memorandum

HRD Minister Kapil Sibal said he was unaware of the memorandum and added that his officials would handle these concerns. He also said that any concerns on promises made last year should be addressed.

The federation, which met here on Wednesday, plans to consult faculty of each IIT to prepare a strategy to take forward their opposition to what a senior professor dubbed a "betrayal".

Sibal had last October called a meeting with the federation at his residence to defuse a two-month-long standoff as some of India's most qualified teachers fought a battle that they argued was about "respect".

"You assured us that all issues in the 6th pay commission implementation at the IITs ... would be resolved as soon as possible. This was followed by

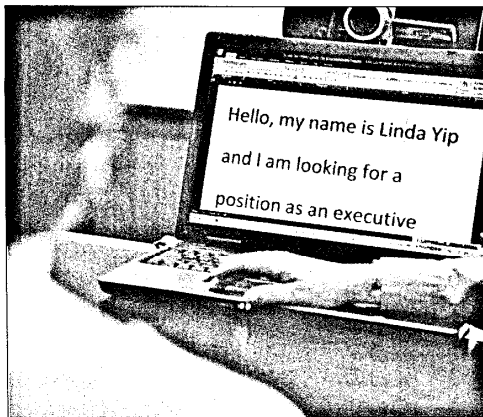
a meeting with directors of IITs who also assured us that all our concerns will receive immediate attention," the memorandum says. However, almost one year after that meeting "no tangible progress has been made on any front till date," it adds.

The faculty have been demanding a withdrawal of norms stipulating a minimum period a teacher must serve at the IITs for promotions.

They have also been demanding a performance-related incentive scheme, common medical facilities for serving and retired teachers and representation on the IIT Council.

Hindustan Times, ND 12-Sep-10 p-15

Bio-datas get new networking skills



■ The notion of a 'good CV' has evolved with the idea of a 'good employee'. Job seekers are now tailoring their resumes to suit the job they are applying for. MCT

CURRICULUM VITAL Job seekers are adding website links and even video clips to their CVs

Neha Dara
■ neha.dara@hindustantimes.com

There was a time when 'workaholic' was the best sort of vice to list on your CV. It was a quality that made an employee dear to his company — if you were wedded to the job, you were good value for money.

But the definition of who makes a good employee has changed, and so has the concept of what makes a good CV.

"As organisations try to become more productive, they want people with a specific skill set," says Asim Handa, country manager for FutureStep, a talent acquisition company. "They look for well-rounded people now, not workaholics, because they feel such people can contribute more." Since the need has changed, people have started designing their CVs differently. "You can no longer have a 'one size fits all' CV," says Sanjay Modi, managing director of the job portal MonsterIndia.com.

The CV should be modified to suit the job you're applying for, highlighting qualifications, experience and exposure that fit the bill, he adds. "You need to understand the job description you're applying

for. A tailor-made CV also reflects your greater insight," says Harveen Singh Bedi, who heads the resume development business of Naukri.com. Another thing recruiters are seeing more of is the online presence, says Pradeep Bahirwal, vice president of talent acquisition for Wipro Technologies. People mention their blogs, websites and LinkedIn profiles. "Before we meet the person, we already know a lot about them," says Bahirwal.

Over six million Indians are on LinkedIn. The company's internal survey shows that users who have more complete LinkedIn profiles are 40 times more likely to find a job. "Now every professional is like a small business and their profile is a manifestation of their personal brand," says Arvind Rajan, international vice-president of LinkedIn.

The problem with a conventional CV is that it offers no context. "A profile, on the other hand, tells me what other people say about the person, who s/he's connected with, and common contacts we may have," says Rajan. In addition, for those in creative fields, it links to their portfolios and showcases their work. Says Akshay Mahajan, a freelance pho-

tojournalist, "My website is my CV. It gives my professional background, links to my earlier work and a slideshow so the prospective employer knows everything he needs to right away."

Even those who stick to the conventional two-page format include links to blogs or online photostreams. "As a writer, I find that including a link to my Flickr stream tells people I can take the photos to back my work, and that works in my favour," says Madhu Reddy, a financial consultant-turned-writer.

Not just a resume and network, even the activities you undertake can improve your job chances. "Our recruiters join forums to find people who are active participants. It helps to zero in on a likely candidate," says Bahirwal. Handa explains how this helps. "Someone who regularly blogs, for instance, has a use-

ful additional skill that can be put to use. Maybe they can write in the company newsletter. It's useful to highlight hobbies and other skills." These interests also offer potential employers a glimpse into the job-seeker's personality. "We take our cues from that information," says Handa. "If someone's into sports, we know he is most likely disciplined."

Two months ago, Vivek Ravishankar, 23, and his partner started Interviewstreet.com, a site that allows recruiters to set customised tests. "Once a candidate clears the test, the company knows this is someone who meets a benchmark." Depending on the requirement, Ravishankar says, companies set tests to evaluate everything from coding capabilities to psychometric evaluations.

Monster has also launched a video/audio resume, that allows users to add sound/video clips to their CVs. "This is useful in a field like the BPO sector," says Modi, "where people are hired on the basis of their communication skills." Handa feels 'visumes' are the likely future. "As software becomes more accessible, we'll have more people recording and editing short professional clips that better represent who they are."

THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES YOU UNDERTAKE IMPROVE YOUR JOB CHANCES — RECRUITERS LOOK FOR SKILLS THAT CAN BE PUT TO USE

IS COLLEGE WORTH IT?

MONEY FOR NOTHING

Some high achievers don't think a university degree is a good investment. They should know

Sarah Kaufman
weekend@hindustantimes.com

Across the region and around the country, parents are kissing their college-bound kids and potentially up to \$200,000 in tuition, room and board goodbye.

Especially in well-educated areas, like the nation's capital, this is expected, it's a rite of passage, part of an orderly progression toward success.

Or is it herd mentality? Hear this, high achievers: If you crunch the numbers, some experts say, college is a bad investment.

"You've been fooled into thinking there's no other way for my kid to get a job ... or learn critical thinking or make social connections," says hedge fund manager James Altucher. Altucher, president of Formula Capital, says he sees people making bad investment decisions all the time and one of them is paying for college.

College is overrated, he says: In most cases, what you get out of it is not worth the money, and there are cheaper and better ways to get an education. Altucher says he's not planning to send his two daughters to college.

"My plan is to encourage them to pursue a dream, at least initially," Altucher, 42, says. "Travel or do something creative or start a business. ... Whether they succeed or fail, it'll be an interesting life experience. They'll meet people, they'll learn the value of money."

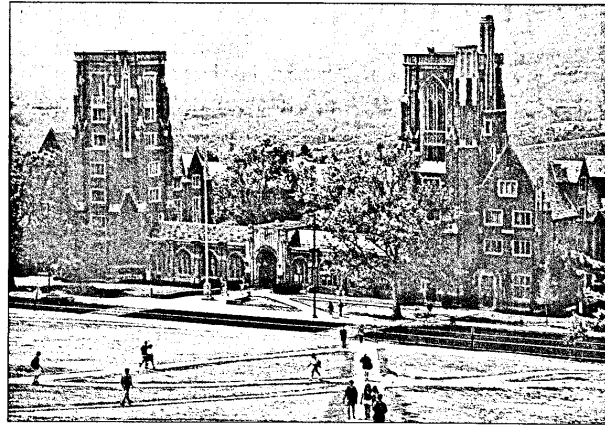
Certainly, you'd be forgiven for thinking this argument reeks of elitism. After all, Altucher is an Ivy Leaguer. He's rolling in dough. Easy for him to pooch-pooch the status quo.

But, it turns out, his anti-college ideas stem from personal experience. After his first year at Cornell University, Altucher says his parents lost money and couldn't afford tuition. So he paid his own way, working 60 hours a week delivering pizza and tutoring on top of his course load.

He left Cornell thousands of dollars in debt. He also left with a degree in computer science. But it took falling at several investment schemes, losing large sums of money and then studying the stock market on his own analysing Warren Buffett's decisions so closely he ended up writing a book about him for Altucher to learn enough about the financial world to survive in it. He thinks he would have been better off getting the real-world lessons earlier, rather than thrashing himself to pay for school and shouldering so much debt.

It's cold comfort, but the loans put him in good company: The hundreds of billions of dollars of national student-loan debt has now overtaken American credit-card debt, the Wall Street Journal recently reported, using numbers compiled by FinAid.org, a Web site for college financial aid information.

"There's a billion other things you could do with your money," Altucher says. One option: Invest the money you'd spend on tuition in Treasury bills for



• Cornell University. Cornell alumnus and hedge fund manager James Altucher says paying for college is a bad investment

your child's retirement. According to Altucher, \$200,000 earning 5 percent a year over 50 years would amount to \$2.8 million.

Few families have that kind of money lying around. But if you can give your child \$10,000 or so to start his own business, Altucher says, your child will reap practical lessons never taught in a classroom. Later, when he's more mature, college might be more meaningful.

The hefty price tag of a college degree has some experts worried that its benefits are fading.

"I think it makes less sense for more families than it did five years ago," says Richard Vedder, an economics professor at Ohio University who has been studying education issues. "It's become more and more problematic about whether people should be going to college."

Now take a key argument in favour of getting a four-year degree, the one that says on average, those with one earn more than those without it. Education Department numbers support this: In

2008, the median annual earnings of young adults with a bachelor's degree was \$45,000; it was \$30,000 for those with a high school diploma or equivalent. This means that, for those with a bachelor's degree, the middle range of earnings was 53 percent more than for those holding only a high school diploma. But a lot of college graduates fall outside the middle range and many stand to make considerably less.

"If you major in accounting or engineering, you're pretty likely to get a return on your investment," Vedder says. "If you're majoring in anthropology or social work or education, the rate on return is going to be a good deal lower, on average."

"I've talked to some of my own students who've graduated and who are working in grocery stores or Wal-Mart," he says. "The fellow who cut my tree down had a master's degree and was an honors grad."

The unemployment rate among those with bachelor's degrees is at a longtime

high. Back in 1970, when the overall unemployment rate was 4.9 percent, unemployment among college graduates was negligible, at just 1.2 percent, says Vedder, citing Bureau of Labor statistics. But this year, with unemployment at 9.6 percent, unemployment for college grads has risen in far greater proportion, to 4.9 percent. In other words, it is more than half the rate for the general population. The bonus for the educated, Vedder says, is "less pronounced than it used to be."

"The return on investment is clearly lower today than it was five years ago," he says. "The gains for going to college have leveled off."

Before hackles are raised about boiling the salutary effects of higher education down to their cost, there are obvious disclaimers: Education is a priceless thing. Many high-school graduates are not ready for independence and adult responsibilities, and college provides a safe place for them to grow up. For a fee.

5
DROPOUTS WHO CREATED HISTORY AND MADE BILLIONS

MICHAEL DELL
Founded Dell Computers

BILL GATES
Founded Microsoft

LARRY ELLISON
Founded Oracle

STEVE JOBS
Founded Apple

PAUL ALLEN
Co-founded Microsoft

But what about the lessons offered by the success stories that have unfolded along a different path? To the non-degreed billionaires' club headed by Microsoft's Bill Gates (Harvard's most famous quitter) and Apple's Steve Jobs (left Oregon's Reed College after a single semester), add: Michael Dell (University of Texas dropout), Microsoft co-founder and Seattle Seahawks owner Paul Allen (quit Washington State University) and Larry Ellison (gave up on the University of Illinois).

Success sans sheepskin isn't only for the technology set. David Geffen, co-founder of DreamWorks, bowed out of several schools, including the University of Texas. Reckless owner Daniel Snyder dropped out of the University of Maryland.

Perhaps these are unique individuals, in whom a driving entrepreneurial spirit outstripped the plodding pace of book-learning.

Or perhaps they point to a new model. "There's nothing you can't do on your own," says Altucher.



ITs oppose plan to scrap JEE

Seven ITs have opposed a proposal to scrap the Joint Entrance Examination, stalling HRD minister Kapil Sibal's suggestion for a single aptitude test to replace multiple exams.

'Punjab's farmers could grow crops on the moon, if needed'

He served four terms as sarpanch of his village. Today, Parkash Singh Badal is serving his fourth term as chief minister of Punjab. A sprightly 83, Badal tells *Dinaya A* about his daily 90 minutes on the treadmill, a job that keeps him going and his weakness for caramel custard. Excerpt:

You joined politics close to independence, making it 60 years as a politician. How has it been?

■ In our time, people didn't join politics to become ministers or chief ministers. When we launched the Shiromani Akali Dal, it was not because we wanted to rule the state but to safeguard the interests of our people. Both my father and my grandfather were into politics at the village level. You succeeded your father as sarpanch. Will your son succeed you as CM?

■ Dynastic politics is a reality all over the world, be it the Kennedy family or Bush family and it can't be wished away. It's natural and easier for a doctor's son to be a doctor because that is the kind of atmosphere he is most conversant with. Similarly, a politician's son is most naturally a politician. I am happy Sukhbir is relating to issues of the state. As for his becoming CM, I will let the party decide.

Has coalition politics added a new dimension to politics today?

■ Yes, it has. I feel at the state level, regional parties fare better than national parties. For example, there's a Congress-led government at the Centre. If we have a Congress government in the state too, who will fight with the Centre if they do something against the state? Punjab didn't get Chandigarh, our water problem wasn't resolved — all this because the Congress government here remained silent.

FOR THE RECORD

PARKASH SINGH BADAL

One of Punjab's biggest problems is that foodgrain is rotting out in the open. What solution do you have in mind?

■ This is because of Centre's mismanagement. If we procure grains from farmers, it is on behalf of the Centre. They have to ensure adequate storage space, or else, grain should be moved out of the state.

But you have to deal with it. You have said you're ready to distribute the grain for free. Do you mean it?

■ It's the Central government's grain. If they allow, we are ready to put in a mechanism in place for distribution.

Is this sort of situation demoralizing for farmers?

■ As it is, farmers are demoralized because they don't get good returns for their produce. The Centre has complete control of agriculture, be it expenditure or income. And Central policies have always been anti-farmer. Consequently farmers here are under heavy debt. The Centre should evolve some formula so that farmers get adequate minimum support price.

We have tried to do all we could, including giving free power and water to farmers. They could be motivated to diversify crops. But they will grow other things besides wheat and paddy only if they see any profit in it. If the government could fix the minimum support price for other crops and also market them, farmers would be better off.

And now, Punjab's farmers are ready to farm in Brazil? Tell us about this.

■ Yes, Sukhbir has gone with Sharan Pawar to explore the possibilities. Brazil has fertile land but they say they don't have the famous Punjab farmer. As you know, our farmers can grow crops even on the moon, let alone Brazil or any other country.

You have said that farmland will not be acquired without farmers' consent.

Is that practical and possible?

■ Yes, it has been possible. We give them adequate compensation for the land. There has never been such a revolt in Punjab, be it for acquiring land for colleges or for Mohali airport. In fact, some farmers have requested that their land be taken if their neighbour's land is bought by the state.

There have been reports about the revival of militancy in Punjab. Do you fear a return to the old days?

■ We are a very vulnerable border state. In the past few months, we have recovered RDX, and caught suspected terrorists. Because of constant vigil and God's grace, things are under control. These things can't happen without local support, which, thankfully, the neighbouring country is not getting from Punjabis now.

Do you fear that youth will take to militancy again?

■ Punjabis suffered enough in those dark days; they won't like that to happen again. The root cause of Sikh militancy was injustice to Sikhs — Operation Blue Star and the 1984 riots. Those issues have still not been resolved. So, I fear the youth can go astray if they are brainwashed. As it is, they are grappling with poverty, unemployment and illiteracy.

Well, what are you doing to tackle poverty, unemployment and illiteracy?

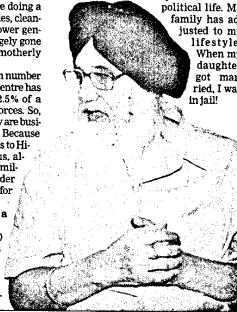
■ There are more colleges and universities in Punjab than ever before. We have got an IIT in Mohali now. We are doing a lot to improve healthcare facilities, cleaning rivers, potable water and power generation. But our efforts have largely gone waste due to the Centre's stepmotherly treatment of us.

Punjab has sent the maximum number of people to the Army. Now, the Centre has stipulated that not more than 2.5% of a state's population can join the forces. So, millions have become jobless. Why are businesses not investing in Punjab? Because the Centre has given special status to Himachal and Kashmir but not us, although we have suffered during militancy and are a vulnerable border state. Why is there still no justice for 1984 riot victims?

You appear very energetic for a man in his 80s?

■ I get up at 5 am and devote 90 minutes to running and weights training in my personal gym. I stay away from sweets although I can't resist caramel custard. But it's my job that keeps me go-

ing. Some people take drugs to feel the high — I get it from this "government job". I work 365 days a year and have enjoyed every moment of my political life. My family has adjusted to my lifestyle. When my daughter got married, I was in jail!



Times of India Mumbai 11.09.10

P-1

IITs clear decks to roll out doctors

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Recognizing the long-standing demand by many IITs and the recommendations of various committees, the IIT council on Friday gave its consent to the institutes to start courses in medicine. Also, of the total faculty strength in any IIT, foreign nationals can be hired to fill up to 10% of teaching positions.

The IITs have to undertake a slew of procedures before they can start medicine courses. To begin with, they will have to seek the approval of the Medical Council of India (MCI). The HRD ministry will also have to amend the Institutes of Technology Act to allow them to offer the medicine course.

A proposal by IIT Kharagpur to open a medical college and hospital has been in the

Sweeping Changes

- ▶ IIT council to amend Institutes of Technology Act to enable IITs to offer medicine courses
- ▶ MCI approval will be sought
- ▶ Health ministry against IITs' plan to start medical courses
- ▶ IITs to allow foreign nationals as faculty in 10% of posts. Also, postgraduate students could be admitted from abroad

pipeline for the last few years. However, the health ministry is not in favour of IITs starting medical courses. Instead, it has suggested that they should consider launching PhD programmes involving collaborations between engineering and medical science.

- ▶ Security nod a must, P 15
- ▶ IITs' in-house shrinks, P 16

IITs get nod to start medicine course

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Recognising the long-standing demand by many IITs and recommendations by various committees, the IIT council on Friday gave its consent to the institutes to start courses in medicine.

But the IITs have to follow a slew of procedures before they can start medicine course. To begin with, they will have to seek approval of the Medical Council of India. The HRD ministry will also have to amend the Institutes of Technology Act to allow them offer medicine course. A proposal by IIT, Kharagpur, to open a medical college and hospital has been in the pipeline for the last few years. However, the health ministry is not in favour of IITs starting medical courses. Instead, it has suggested that they should consider starting PhD programme, involving collaboration between engineering and medical science.

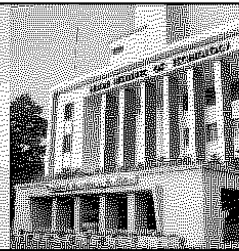
IITs can now undertake inter-disciplinary research in the field of medicine, bio-engineering, biotechnology and related subjects.

NEW FRONTIERS

► IITs will have to seek approval from Medical Council of India

► HRD ministry will need to amend Institutes of Technology Act

► Up to 10% of the IIT teaching staff can be foreigners



In another major decision, of the total faculty strength in an IIT, up to 10% of the teaching staff can be foreign nationals. The move comes in the wake of the fact that IITs have been facing a severe faculty crunch for a while. Though there are 4,267 vacancies, only 2,983 have been filled. However, security clearance is required ahead of hiring of a foreign national at a salary that is on a par with his Indian counterpart.

► IITs, IIMs get in-house shrinks, P 10

Financial Express ND 12-Sep-10 p-12

Are scanners worth the risk?

Susan Stellin

THE next time you go through security at the airport, you might be told to empty your pockets, put your hands over your head and stand still while an X-ray machine looks for anything hidden under your clothing. If this body scanning option sounds unappealing, you have another choice: an "enhanced patdown" conducted by a US Transportation Security Administration employee, which some travelers have described as "quite intimate".

The new screening measures have been hotly debated, but mostly in theory. If you somehow missed the hoopla, there are two

types of machines being installed, which have raised concerns about privacy, health risks and even their effectiveness at catching terrorists. The more controversial "backscatter" devices project an X-ray beam onto the body, creating an image displayed on a monitor viewed in another room. The "millimeter wave" machines, which are considered less risky because they do not use X-rays, bounce electromagnetic waves off the body to produce a similar image.

Unlike metal detectors, these machines can detect objects made with other materials, like plastic and ceramic. But they can't see anything hidden inside your body, or detect

certain explosives.

So why bother? "This is all done to keep the traveling public safe," said Nicholas Kimball, a TSA spokesman. Maybe so, but there are still questions about how effective these machines are at achieving that goal.

What these images reveal is also unclear. Another concern is whether the images can be saved or transmitted. The main concerns are

how much radiation the scanners give off (the manufacturers say the amount is very low), whether the scanners might malfunction and emit more radiation than they are supposed to, and what the health effects may be for travelers. Since there is no precedent for routinely screening so many people with X-rays, there are a lot of unknowns. Other medical experts are worried that the government has not adequately evaluated the health risks of such extensive X-ray screening, particularly for children, pregnant women, cancer patients and people sensitive to radiation. NYT

Google's Android to be world No 2 in 2010: Report

REUTERS
San Francisco, 11 September

Google Inc's Android software will become the world's second most popular operating system for cell phones this year, leapfrogging rival offerings from Microsoft Corp, Research in Motion and Apple Inc, according to a new report.

By 2014, Android will account for nearly 30 per cent of all cell phone operating system sales, according to the research firm Gartner, putting it in position to challenge Nokia Corp's Symbian software, which has reigned as the top mobile operating system for years.

Symbian will have a 30.2 per cent share of the global market in 2014, according to Gartner, compared to Android's 29.6 per cent.

Gartner said it expects a variety of less-expensive Android devices shipping in the second half of 2010, to boost Android's growth,

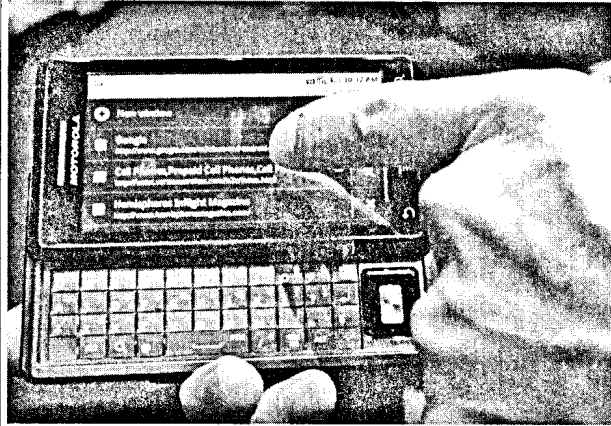
allowing Android to grab the No 2 worldwide rank nearly two years sooner than the firm had initially expected.

The market for mobile phone software has become a prime battleground for technology companies, as consumers increasingly use their phones to access the Internet, listen to digital music and play video games.

Apple jump-started the market for high-end smartphones with the launch of its iPhone in 2007.

For Google, the world's No 1 Internet search engine, making the transition to mobile phones is key as it seeks to maintain and expand its nearly \$24 billion online advertising business.

Google's Android software, which it offers free to cell phone vendors, has experienced dramatic growth since coming to market two years ago. More than 200,000 Android phones, from companies including Motorola Inc, HTC Corp and



The new Droid phone, a Motorola Inc and Verizon Wireless phone based on Google Inc's Android 2.0 system, at a media event in New York. PHOTO: REUTERS

Samsung Electronics, are sold every day, Google CEO Eric Schmidt said recently. Android became the No 1

operating system for US smartphones in the second quarter, according to a report last month by industry

tracker NPD. Nokia's Symbian operating system has maintained the No 1 spot

worldwide, thanks to the company's broad distribution of its handsets. But Nokia has struggled to deliver a high-end smartphone to compete with the likes of the Apple iPhone or devices based on Google's Android.

On Friday, Nokia announced that Microsoft's Stephen Elop would replace Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo as chief executive in a bid to revive the Finnish handset company's fortunes.

Gartner projected that Apple's iOS software, which is only available on Apple's iPhone, will add nearly 3 percentage points of market share to achieve a 17.1 per cent slice of the global market by 2011, but will slip back to a 14.9 per cent share in 2014.

Blackberry-maker Research In Motion will see its share fall from 19.9 per cent in 2009 to 11.7 per cent in 2014, Gartner said, while Microsoft's Windows Phone software will decline to 3.9 per cent in 2014 from 8.7 per cent in 2009.

Business Standard ND12/09/2010^{P-2}

US hopes to work with India on H1B, L1 visa fee rise issue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Washington, 11 September

The US hopes to work with India to address its concerns over the recent increase in H-1B and L1 visa fee in order to find an "acceptable alternative solution" to the critical issue that threatens to hurt the bilateral economic ties, a top Obama administration official has said.

"It is an issue the administration is hoping to work with (India) to see if we can come up with an acceptable alternative solution," US Trade Representative Ron Kirk told the popular 'Mercury News' of the Silicon Valley. "We'd like to see if we can find a way so that it is not as offensive to some of our important partners like India as it is perceived to be," Kirk said.

His remarks came in response to a question on the recent fee hike for H-1B and L-1 visas for foreign companies, particularly outsourcing giants from India, which has created an uproar in India.

The fee for H-1B visas — which soared from \$320 to \$2,320 — will help pay for a \$650 million effort to increase security along the US-Mexico border. India's IT industry says the move will cost them \$200 million a year.

"It (the visa fee hike) has not been well received in India," Kirk said.

"We have heard from a lot of our colleagues (in India). It will hopefully be a subject of our (US-India) Trade Policy Forum (sponsored by Kirk's

office and India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Anand Sharma) in a couple of weeks," said the US Trade Representative.

Kirk also appeared to be dissatisfied with the steps taken by the US Congress with regard to H-1B visas, said to be the life line of the Silicon Valley.

'The visa fee hike has not been well-received in India'

He argued that while this was an economic issue, the Congress took this as an immigration matter.

"The reality is the Congress is zealous about its right to determine immigration policy. We see this as an economic issue but the Congress feels it should be seen as a part of our overall immigration policy," he said.

Pioneer ND 12/09/2010

P-7

Now, Sibal on Digvijay radar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Home Minister P Chidambaram, it's Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Kapil Sibal who seems to be the latest target of attack by leaders from within his own party, the Congress.

First, it was Congress MP K Keshav Rao who spearheaded the attack against Sibal's Educational Tribunal Bill during the Monsoon Session of the Rajya Sabha. On Saturday, it was Congress general secretary Digvijay Singh's turn to snipe at the HRD Minister.

After openly criticising Chidambaram on his policy to handle the Maoists and his remark on "saffron terror", Singh found faults with Sibal's policies. He asked the Minister



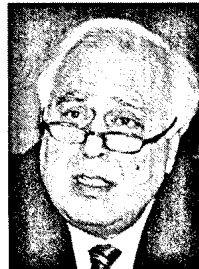
FRESH SALVO: Digvijay Singh

to focus more on development of school education and skill development centres than higher education.

"The need at the moment is that the HRD Ministry should

THE NEED OF THE HOUR IS FOR HRD MINISTRY TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO SCHOOL EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT CENTRES RATHER THAN HIGHER EDUCATION. I HAVE FULL FAITH THEY WILL LOOK INTO THE MATTER

pay more attention to the development of school education and skill development centres rather than higher education and I have full faith that they will look into the matter," Singh



IN LINE OF FIRE: Kapil Sibal

said in Jabalpur on Saturday. Digvijay's remark came a day after the HRD Minister announced IIT reforms plans.

Singh had earlier differed with Home Minister on the

counter-Maoist strategy and said, "He (Chidambaram) is extremely intelligent, articulate, committed and a sincere politician — but extremely rigid once he makes up his mind. I have been a victim of his intellectual arrogance many times, but we still are good friends."

Following Chidambaram's remark about "saffron terror", Congress' chief spokesperson Janardan Dwivedi too ticked him off saying terrorism can have only one colour and that is black. He was joined by Digvijay, who said saffron stood for courage and valour and cannot denote terror.

On his part, Sibal was forced to defer the Educational Tribunal Bill after Keshav Rao led the Opposition attack against the Educational

Tribunal Bill. Rao had said, "This kind of hasty legislation for a subject like education does not augur well and his (Sibal's) thoughts run faster than the deeds of his Ministry".

Sibal suffered a major embarrassment after the other members of the House joined Rao in finding faults with the Bill, finally forcing the Minister to defer the Bill. Subsequently, the Minister met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and gave a vent to his feelings.

Sibal had hit back at his detractors, who had accused him of rushing the Bill, by invoking Rajiv Gandhi and saying the former Prime Minister had desired that the task of imparting quality education should be achieved in a few months.

Pioneer Lucknow
09.09.2010 p-5

IIT faces faculty crunch, moots full-time foreign teachers

New Delhi: Facing a massive shortage of well-qualified teachers, the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) have mooted a proposal for hiring foreign nationals as permanent faculty members.

With one-third teaching positions lying vacant, the proposal as a solution to meet the unprecedented staff crunch is expected to be deliberated at the next IIT council meeting here on Friday, IIT officials said on Wednesday.

The move, if accepted, would enable the premier engineering and technology institutes to appoint foreign teachers on permanent positions, up to 10 per cent of the faculty strength.

In 2007, the IITs had been granted permission to hire foreign nationals as faculty members, but only for a maximum period of five years on contract basis.

IIT-Kharagpur leads the pack with 299 vacancies followed by IIT-Bombay with 222, IIT-Roorkee with 194, IIT-Madras with 138 and IIT-Delhi with 78. Others are not far behind either.

There are 69 vacancies in IIT-Kanpur, 65 in IIT-Guwahati and 48 in IIT-Ropad. In fact, the situation is the same in all the 15 IITs in the country.

IITs have contended that the presence of foreign faculty on their campuses would expose graduating students to globally distinguished professors, besides lending a true international flavour in the campuses and reducing brain drain.

Appointment of foreign faculty could also give a boost to IITs' plan to enrol foreign students for the post-graduate programme. IITs have already requested the Human Resources Development (HRD) Ministry to enrol foreign students to the extent of 25 per cent of the total student strength.

IIT medicine foray sparks debate

'Should IITs teach medicine when students' interest in sciences is declining?'

ADM TANDON/TNS

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 11

The IITs' decision to teach medicine has baffled many at a time when students' interest in pure sciences is declining. National Council for Applied Economic Research recently reported that barely 13.4 per cent of class XI and XII graders wanted to pursue science in higher education.

The question then is why IITs, top technical institutes which must develop core science competencies to strengthen India's knowledge society, should teach medicine which is not their strength.

HRD Minister Kapil Sibal explains the shift in terms of the need of new knowledge in areas of medicine and sci-

POINTS TO PONDER

- It is reported that barely 13 per cent of class XI and XII graders wanted to pursue science in higher education.
- The question is why IITs, top technical institutes, should teach medicine which is not their strength.
- Kapil Sibal explains the shift on the plea that medical technologists would be needed in future.
- Health Ministry uneasy with the move and says it won't serve India's interests.

ence and the fact that medical technologists would be needed in future. That's also the thought of Prof Yashpal, author of the report on higher education reforms in India, who said he was delighted at the IIT decision.

Asked why Health Ministry was opposed to the idea (it said IITs' foray into conventional medicine was not advisable;

they should focus on PhDs in medical engineering, biotechnology, bio-statistics and e health), Prof Yashpal said, "Health Ministry doesn't understand education. You can't teach medicine without technology. All growth in medicine in the past 40 years has been in technology. Dr A. Seth, chief cardiologist, Escorts Heart Institute, said

the IITs could teach medicine provided they offered uniform curriculum, hospital and faculty standards set by the MCI.

That apart, Health Ministry is uneasy with the move and says it won't serve India's interests.

"If top technical schools start teaching medicine, who will AIIMS collaborate with for research? Seven new AIIMS-like institutes with focus on biotechnology are coming up. Who will they work with? Medical experts, too, are wary. "It's a ploy to get money from alumni and divert focus from JEE reforms." IIT faculty sources said. IIT Kharagpur has a School of Medical Science functioning for six years with about 15 seats. Barely five are filled annually.

Indian Express ND 12/09/2010 P-10

An empty hall in a mosque in Nigeen, a neighbourhood in Srinagar, has turned into a school, one of the several such community schools that have come up in the troubled Valley

IQBAL SONAULLAH
SRINAGAR

On the banks of Nigeen lake in Srinagar, young boys and girls assemble every afternoon in an empty hall on the second floor of a mosque. Colourful carpets cover the floor. A blackboard, covered in a thick film of white chalk dust, hangs on a window facing the lake. In each of the four corners of the room, students sit in semi-circles as young men give them lessons in English, mathematics and science. Occasionally, they shift to face the blackboard.

As the daily cycle of violence and shutdowns are keeping children out of schools, community schools such as this one in Nigeen are possibly the only way the Valley's children can make up for their wasted school days.

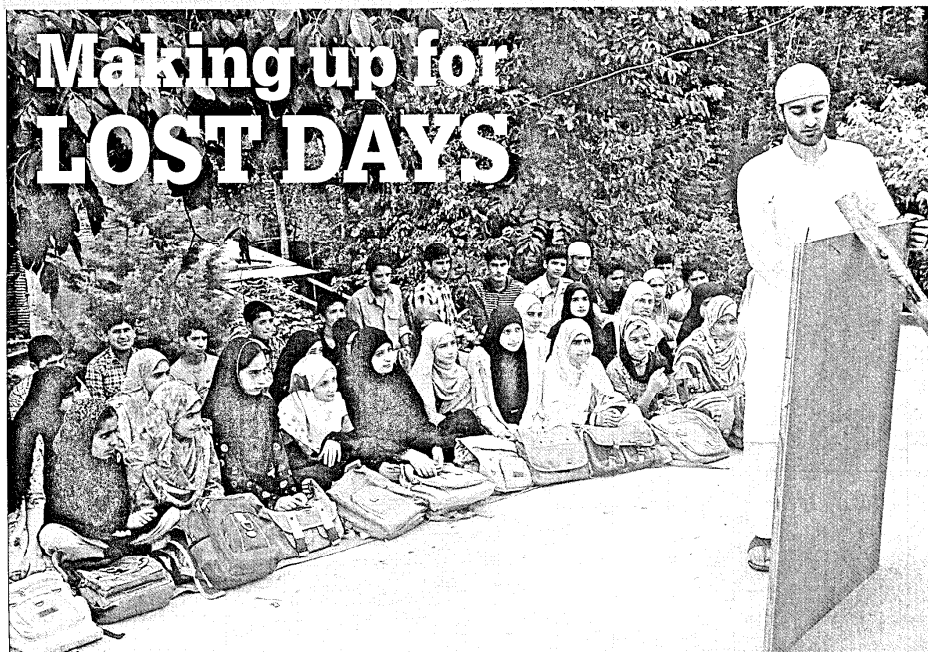
The community school in Nigeen, a locality in Srinagar, was set up a month ago by young graduates of the neighbourhood. It's an informal set up—no uniforms or attendance registers, no punishment for coming in late.

And the children seem to have taken well to this informal arrangement.

Shayim Farooq, 11, is in class six. He is lean and shy. When the community school was set up, Shayim was among the first to join. Soon, his other friends joined in. "I come here every day," says Shayim. "At first, it was difficult to understand new teachers. But now, it feels good," he says as his teacher, Nimmer Qayoom, writes a note in his book. Shayim smiles and says Nimmer is his favourite teacher.

"I like this school. We don't wear uniforms. Nobody makes us stand with our face to the wall or asks us to stand on one leg for coming in late," says Shayim.

While Shayim settles to a new routine, his teacher Nimmer, who teaches management at Kashmir University's Business School, too has had to reched-



A class in progress at a community school in Shopian. In Shopian town and adjacent areas, five such schools have come up in the last two months

ule his routine.

These days, as the University's lecture rooms remain locked, Nimmer joins his friends every afternoon at the mosque to teach the young students. "It is difficult to keep the schools open as long as the killings continue. But we cannot afford to let the education of our children suffer," he says. "There was no other alternative so we decided to teach our children ourselves. It is our responsibility."

Shayim's older brother Irfan Farooq, a commerce student, is among the volun-

teers who set up the community school.

While Irfan studies commerce through a distance education programme, he also runs a provision store in a by-lane in Nigeen. And as the shutdowns continue, Irfan says he has had to run his business from home as neighbours and customers from nearby localities come asking for provisions. He takes a break in the afternoons to help run the community school.

Nimmer and Irfan say they came up with the idea of the community school because anxious parents in their neighbourhood would always worry about

their children's lost school days.

"Whenever they met, they talked about their children and schools. Education was not the only worry; children had no routine. They had all the time to waste and would spend that roaming around the locality," says Nimmer. Their energies had to be channelised better, the two young men decided.

A network of such community schools has come up across the Valley. In Mehand, a remote village in south Kashmir, Bashir Ahmad, a 27-year-old research scholar, and some other young

men have come together to set up a community school. More than 400 students from Mehand and adjoining villages attend the school that is run in two shifts every day.

In Shopian town and its adjacent areas, five community schools have come up in the last two months. More than 300 children study in these schools.

The volatile north Kashmir district of Baramulla has gone a step ahead. There are seven community schools in Baramulla town alone. In the neighboring Sopore town, community members have set

up a school for higher secondary students.

These schools have no formal names nor do they advertise their presence. Usually, word gets around and parents bring their children to these schools. Teachers in the state government schools as well as those working in private schools volunteer to give lessons.

"We do not charge our students anything nor do we need anyone to sponsor us," says Mohammad Habib, a student of law who teaches at a community school in Shopian. "They are our children, if we do not care about them, who will?"

Indian Express ND 12/09/2010 P-10

A new skill

Mumbai's dabbawallas, known for their precision, are now trying their hand at computers

GARIMA MISHRA
PUNE

ONE LOOK at the thousands of steel dabbas and Raghunath Megde can tell you where each one will go and at what precise time. But ask Megde to undertake the relatively easier task of keying in his name on the computer and he's likely to scowl at you. But today, Megde smiles broadly and says he is getting there. Megde, president of Mumbai Dabbawala Association, is one of the 25 members of the association who have recently joined a six-month course in English and computers.

Most of the dabbawalas came into the profession with little or no education. "They have their own problems. When the delivery address is given to them in English, they have difficulty finding it," says Krishna Kumar, vice chancellor of Yashwantrao Chavan Open University, which is offering the course free of cost to the dabbawalas.

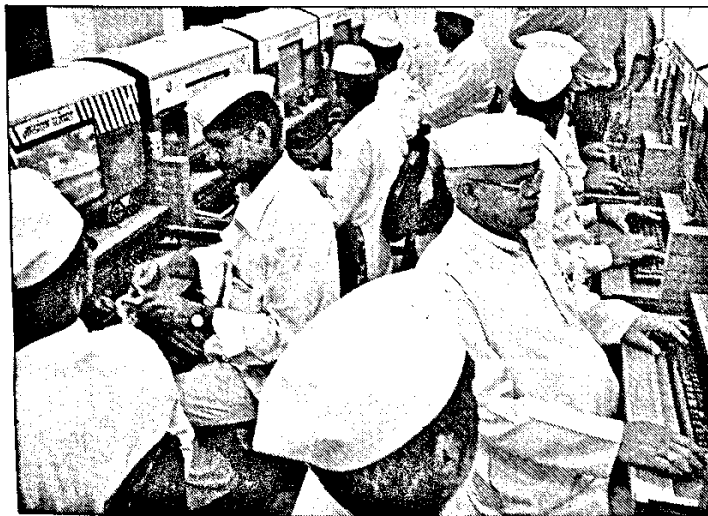
The class began on September 5 and Megde is confident that after six months, he will be able to speak a smattering of English. Even for a system that is known for its clockwork precision, Megde says basic sen-

tences—like, 'Sorry, I am late today' or 'I won't be able to come tomorrow'—will help the dabbawalas build a rapport with their customers.

The bunch of 25 students includes the nine directors of the Mumbai Dabbawala Association, the president and also the secretary. "I have promised myself that the day I finish this course, I will give a presentation in English to my classmates," says 65-year-old Gangaram Tilekar, secretary, who now knows how to write his name, address and cellphone number in English.

It was Pawan Agarwal, CEO of Mumbai Dabbawala Association, who came up with the idea. "Since Mumbai local trains are an inseparable part of their job profile, we have designed their computers in such a way that they look like train compartments," says Agarwal. The classes are held at Vikhroli, a Mumbai suburb, on two days of the week. And on the weekends, they are held for four hours.

"There are around 5,000 dabbawalas working for the association. We plan to open more centres in other parts of the city so that more dabbawalas can join the course," says Agarwal.



Mumbai's dabbawallas get a course in computers

DNA Mumbai 11.09.2010 p-3

INSTITUTES IN FAVOUR OF AN ADD-ON EXAM, DON'T WANT JEE SCRAPPED

IITs stall single aptitude test idea

Vineeta Pandey NEW DELHI

The idea of a single entrance/aptitude test replacing multiple entry-level examinations, as mooted by Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal, has been opposed by the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

There was no consensus on a single entrance examination—National Aptitude Test (NAT)—during a meeting of the IIT Council in New Delhi on Friday; also, the IITs were against the idea of completely scrapping their Joint Entrance Examination (JEE).

Institutes to offer courses in medicine

The IITs will now be able to offer new courses in medicine. The IIT council has decided to include the study of medicine in the system, as per the rules and regulations laid down by the Medical Council of India (MCI). This implies that the IITs will not teach MBBS courses without MCI clearance and an amendment in their own act. However, the IITs are allowed to start those courses that do not need a degree to practice like PhD in bio-medical engineering, bio-technology and e-health. This also includes areas requiring technology.

Seven out of 15 institutes favoured a separate “add-on” test in addition to NAT as proposed by the committee on examination reforms.

While members agreed that multiple-entrance tests

put pressure on students and their parents, no consensus could be reached on how to go about reforming the system.

“There was unanimity on changing the present examination system of JEE and

AIEEE and reduce the multiplicity of entrance exams. But the seven IITs, which included both new and old ones, did not wish to limit themselves to NAT and wanted an extra examination to select their students,” said IIT Guwahati director Gautam Barua.

Almost all IITs favoured giving more weightage to standard 12 examinations and allowing only the top students of each state to take NAT.

Keen on doing away with multiple entrance tests, Sibal set up another committee to suggest an entrance model for engineering.

Telegraph Kolkata 11.09.2010

MCI permission needed for courses

Rider in IIT medical nod

BASANT KUMAR
MOHANTY

New Delhi, Sept. 10: The IIT council, the apex decision-making body of the tech schools, today granted them permission to teach medicine but they need the approval of the Medical Council of India (MCI).

The announcement settles a year-long debate over whether "national institutions of importance" such as IITs need clearance from councils monitoring a specific field when the institutes step into unfamiliar territory.

The council, headed by HRD minister Kapil Sibal, said the institutes would have to seek the approval of the Medical Council of India to offer degrees for the practice of medicine. But they can launch inter-disciplinary courses involving medicine and engineering on their own.

"IITs can start degrees like MBBS, MD etc for practice of medicine with approval from MCI. If the degree is not aimed at practice of medicine, the IITs themselves can start such inter-disciplinary programmes," Sibal said after the meeting. The IIT Act of 1961 will have to be amended to include medicine as a subject to be taught in the institutes.

IIT Kharagpur has already proposed to start a medical institution in collaboration with Indian Railways, which will offer courses leading up to MBBS, MD, MS and PhD degrees.

The issue has been hanging fire for the past year be-

GREEN LIGHT

Proposals cleared by the IIT council

- IITs can start medical education courses with the approval of the Medical Council of India
- Norm-based funding, under which the institutes will get grants based on rules to be set by the government. Norms can be used for recruitments and promotions
- Induction of foreign faculty up to 10% of the total strength. The Citizenship Act will have to be amended to allow foreign teachers to take up permanent jobs
- Admission to foreign students in up to 25% seats in PG courses. These seats will be created over and above the existing seats

cause of divergent views within different ministries. Earlier this year, the HRD ministry had suggested that since the IITs are institutions of national importance, they need not go through the MCI to start courses in medical education. However, the health and the law ministries opposed this.

The law ministry said IITs had established themselves in engineering education but should not be given the status of top medical schools AIIMS and PGIMER, which do not need the MCI's approval to start courses. The health ministry also said the IITs can start courses in medicine if they meet the criteria laid down by the MCI, which governs medical education in the country.

For inter-disciplinary courses in bio-technology, bio-engineering and e-health, however, the IITs will not need the MCI's approval.

IIT Kharagpur says its medical courses will be unique programmes that will bring medicine and engineering together and produce doctors with high knowledge of mathematics, simulation, animation and engineering. They will be able to design low-cost technology for health care and deliver cheaper health care.

"While teaching physiology, there is a requirement of models, animators and simulators. The idea is to develop a new health care delivery system. The cost of medical tests is too high these days that patients cannot afford. The students at the proposed medical college will get knowledge in engineering which they can utilise to develop low-cost equipment," an IIT Kharagpur official said.

Medical education and research in technology are going hand in hand in all developed countries and in most developing countries, the official said. He gave the example of Johns Hopkins University, Imperial College London and Harvard Medical School, which have brought together the medical and engineering disciplines.

The official said the proposed medical colleges will start a medical outreach programme to provide health care advice in villages through a cellular phone network. For small ailments, patients can consult doctors over the network.

Free Press Journal Mumbai 11.09.2010 P-1

12th marks, aptitude test to be criteria

SIBAL VOWS TO ABOLISH JEE FOR IIT ENTRY

FROM OUR BUREAU
NEW DELHI

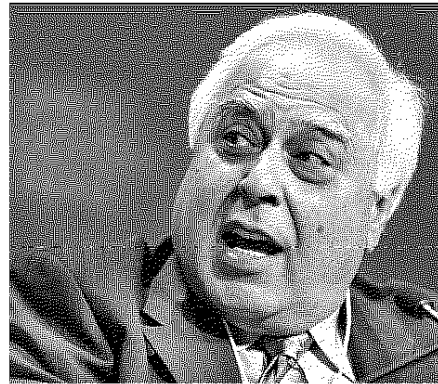
IN a direct confrontation with directors of the 15 IITs - which have decided to hold the IIT joint entrance examination for the year 2011 on April 10 - Union Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal on Friday re-asserted his resolve to allow admissions based on Class 12 marks without any examination.

His contention is that why should students study hard to get the best marks in the final school examination if they are of no use in admission to a college. The only concession he is ready to give is to allow an aptitude test, but he insisted that the class 12 marks would be the basic criteria for selection in IITs and other engineering colleges.

"There are two things. Firstly the present system of coaching must go as it is detrimental to quality of intake; secondly, the problem of children appearing for multiple entrance exams causes financial and psychological pressure on the children and their family," Sibal said.

"Weightage will be given to 12th exam marks, and those marks will be based on the performance through the year. It will automatically discourage coaching," he said.

He told reporters that modalities for change in the admission process are still being worked



out and as such he cannot give a time frame for implementation.

He also disclosed that he is pursuing a proposal for allowing the IITs to offer medical courses despite strong objections from the Health Ministry early this year. Such courses will, however, be launched only after the Medical Council of India gives the clearance, he said. Sibal said he was quite aware that IITs could not give degrees in medicine unless and until MCI gives the approval and that is what he is exploring right now. Unlike the courses offered by the medical colleges, he said the

Continued on page 2 *

SIBAL VOWS TO ABOLISH JEE FOR IIT ...

IITs medicine courses would be for cross boundary research. Sibal said the meeting also agreed in principle to admit up to 25 per cent foreign students at the post graduate level on a "supernumerary basis without affecting the present admission norms for Indian students".

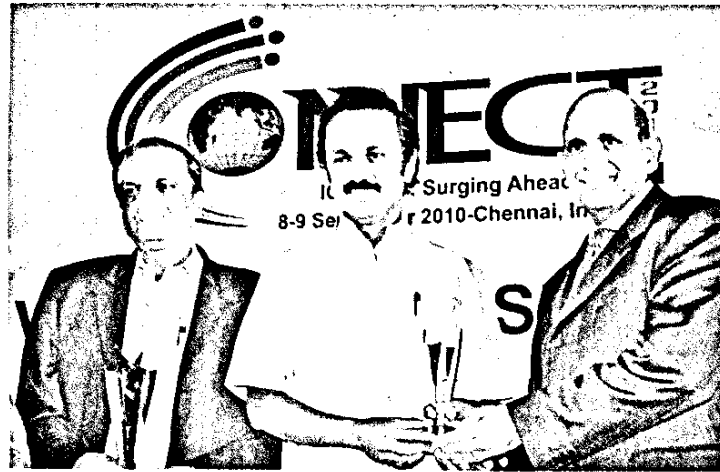
He is also exploring the possibility of having at least a 10 per cent foreign faculty in an IIT. "We need to get in touch with the Union Home Ministry for this," he added.

IITs have contended that the presence of foreign faculty on their campuses would expose students to globally distinguished professors besides imparting a true international character to the institutions.

Hindu Chennai 10/9/10 p-5

Stalin promises IT sector world-class infrastructure

Wants projects in SEZs speeded up



RECOGNITION: Deputy Chief Minister M.K. Stalin presenting the CII-ICICI Venture Connect Entrepreneur award to Madhava Reddy, founder-president and CEO, HTC Global Services, and Lifetime Achievement Award to R. Ramaraj, co-founder and CEO, Sify Private Ltd., at Connect 2010 in Chennai on Thursday.

— PHOTO: BIJOY GHOSH

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: Urging the IT industry to expedite their projects in SEZs in the State, Deputy Chief Minister M. K. Stalin on Thursday promised to provide the sector world-class infrastructure.

Addressing the valedictory of 'Connect 2010,' the annual ICT event hosted by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Mr. Stalin said the government was actively promoting IT SEZs and 19 of the 29 notified zones were functional. It was especially significant that Tier II cities were part of the overall growth in software exports that grew from Rs.161 crore in 1996-97 to Rs.36,680 crore in 2008-09.

The government was also focussed on making Chennai a destination of growth and development through projects such as greenfield airport, aerospace park, Metro Rail and Financial City.

"While growth is welcome, it creates its own problems of emerging bottlenecks...I assure you that the government will provide infrastructure of international standard," Mr. Stalin said.

State IT Minister Poongothai Aladi Aruna said Tamil Nadu had the highest number of IT SEZs in India and the ICT industry collectively provided direct employment to about 3.24 lakh people.

Noting that the future growth of the

sector lay in a broader and deeper integration with the State's strong base of auto, healthcare, entertainment industries, Dr. Poongothai urged the industry to go to tier-2 and tier-3 cities and create a level-playing field across the State.

S. Gopalakrishnan, Chairman, CII-Southern Region, said the IT industry would continue to grow and add jobs in the State.

The industry had done well in Tamil Nadu owing to support from the State government and academia.

S. Mahalingam, Chairman, Connect 2010, said some of the key ideas mooted included the need for creating a strong intellectual property foundation in the State, setting up of skill development centres and vocational institutes, and creating a world-class technology institute in Chennai for developing a conducive eco-system.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief Minister presented the CII-ICICI Venture Connect Entrepreneur of the Year Award to Madhava Reddy, founder-president and CEO, HTC Global Services, and the Lifetime Achievement Award to R. Ramaraj, co-founder and CEO of Sify.

Gopal Srinivasan, CMD, TVS Capital Funds, said the CII had instituted the entrepreneur award along with ICICI Ventures to recognise the contribution being made by IT entrepreneurs to the State's economy, employment generation and social development.