

## Newspaper Clips

### September 17, 2010

Times of India ND 17-Sep-10

p-10

# No radioactive source in DU labs, physics students hit

## AERB Withdraws Permission As Varsity Doesn't Respond On Gamma Irradiator Sale, Experiments In A Limbo

Manash Pratim Gohain  
& Neha Pushkarna | TNN

New Delhi: The decision of Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) to withdraw the permission given to Delhi University to use any radioactive source in its labs is likely to affect around 350 postgraduate students of physics department. Radioactive source is also used by 45 students pursuing MTech while the MSc final

year students also have a special paper on nuclear physics. The move comes after the varsity failed to submit its reply on the auction of a gamma irradiator that exposed Mayapuri scrapyard and other parts of the city to radioactive radiation earlier this year.

For the past two months physics students have not conducted most of the experiments. According to officials, the first-year curriculum of MSc physics has compulsory

lab work on nuclear physics.

For students in the chemistry department, however, the decision will not have any immediate bearing. A K Bakhshi, head, department of chemistry, said, "Our MSc curriculum doesn't have any experiments based on photo or radiation chemistry. Research can be affected but we do not really have anyone working on the effect of radiation currently. Even the gamma irradiator, which con-

tained Cobalt 60, had not been in use for over two decades." Rejecting the university's request to allow it to continue using radioactive source in its labs, AERB chairman S

#### RADIATION FALLOUT

S Bajaj said DU had sought more time from AERB but the board's standing committee — that reviews unusual occurrences at radiation facilities — has decided against it.

The board has withdrawn the authorization to the varsity to use radioactive source in laboratories.

Exposure to radioactive material Cobalt-60 in the scrap market in Mayapuri, in west Delhi, had led to the death of one person in April this year. Though the three-member internal inquiry committee submitted its report in July, the university has just been sitting on it. The contents of the report will be made public

only after it is placed before the executive council (EC) of the university. Surprisingly the vice-chancellor has not convened monthly meeting of the EC since March 25.

"An EC meeting could not be called because of other problems related to semesters. Moreover, we are in a transition phase. Everybody is waiting for the new panel and the new VC," said vice-chancellor Deepak Pental. He added: "However, it is our internal

report and it's already with me for about a month now. Nobody can wish it away. We may now convene a meeting soon." The university administration had formed the probe committee in May that had a deadline of one month. However, the committee completed its inquiry only in July.

Though five EC members had sent a requisition for an urgent meeting a couple of months ago to discuss the matter of Cobalt-60 leak, nothing

finally materialized. S C Panda, an EC member, said, "We had written to the VC for convening a requisition meeting, but he never heeded to our request. Only an emergency meeting was convened once during this period." He added, "Probably, his close allies have been indicted in the report due to which he has conveniently delayed the tabling of the report. He should have taken up the report on an urgent basis."

toireporter@timesgroup.com

Times of India Ahmedabad 13.09.10 p-4

# Team including city scientists wins Indo-UK biotech challenge award

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Gandhinagar:** A three-person Indian scientists team, two of them from Ahmedabad, has won the Indo-UK Biotechnology Challenge Award for 2010. The event was held at Nottingham University, UK, on September 3, 2010, at the inaugural function of Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences Conference.

The event organised jointly by Nottingham Business School, IIM Bangalore and IIT Kanpur, had the winners selected by a team of experts led by Stephano Pessina, executive chairman and co-owner of Alliance Boots. Revealing this, a senior science and technology department official told TOI that the award would "encourage Gujarat-based scientists who wish to come up with innovative business ideas in pharmaceutical sector." He added, "A healthcare and pharmaceutical business plan competition, it was organized to promote entrepreneurship in pharmaceutical sciences."

The award-winning team was led by Ashwani Nangia from Hyderabad Central University, a pro-



Ashwani Nangia   Monika Verma   Shivprakash Rathnam

fessor of chemistry with two decades of experience. The other two persons are from Ahmedabad — Monika Verma, CEO of Avance Phytotherapies, and Dr Shivprakash Rathnam, CEO of Synchron Research Services. The team presented their proposal entitled "Chalk2Salt", which involves converting the physico-chemically poor drugs into better drugs with improved properties for better therapeutic value. The proposed business plan was in the area of pharmaceuticals, more specifically about solid-state form discovery and optimisation of drug delivery, solubility, dissolution, and stability of solid form.

The USP of the business plan was to translate lead drug candidates to the market and re-formulate existing drugs as improved medicines. "The team name Chalk2Salt means that we can take something as insoluble as chalk powder in water and make it freely soluble like salt," Dr Rathnam told TOI.

The business strategy was worked out by Verma, who has a decade long experience, and the developmental idea was planned by Dr Rathnam, with over 20 years of experience in drug development, regulatory and clinical research.

"The team demonstrated that collaborative research between academics and industry is a viable way forward in India for creation of new technologies," Dr Rathnam said. He further said, "Our business plan suggested shift in from salts to cocrystals, an intellectual advance to new research area of pharmaceutical cocrystals, offering superior products. In current economically tight climate when pharmaceutical firms are downsizing R&D operations, cocrystals offer a ray of hope to discover new therapeutic applications for known drugs."

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi; Date: Sep 17, 2010; Section: Front Page; Page: 1;

# Most water purifiers don't remove viruses: Study

## Only 2 Out Of 8 Indian Brands Pass NIV Test

Umesh Isalkar | TNN

**Pune:** Despite loud promises that these gadgets suck out disease-causing bugs from drinking water, most purifiers sold across India do not completely eliminate water-borne viruses like Hepatitis E, says Pune-based National Institute of Virology.

A study by the government-funded body that conducts research on communicable diseases and viruses evaluated eight domestic brands. It found only two — one equipped with a hollow fibre membrane and the other with a gravity-fed filter — could completely remove the viruses. However, NIV refused to divulge any brand names.

The study also found that no standards existed for virological evaluation of water purification devices in India and called for well-defined parameters.

The NIV relied on the United States Environment

### FALSE CLAIMS ON PURITY?

#### THE STUDY

- ▶ 5 litres of distilled water spiked with Hepatitis E virus (HEV), then put through purifiers
- ▶ The 'purified' water was reduced to 2-3 ml concentrate. This was subjected to Real Time-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) for detection of HEV
- ▶ Each purification device was tested twice

#### THE FINDING

Of 8 domestic water purifier brands, only 2 could completely remove the virus. NIV refused to reveal any names



Protection Agency's guide, standard and protocol benchmark for testing microbial purifiers.

The study was conducted by senior deputy director and head of NIV's hepatitis division Vidya Arankalle and scientist Vikram Verma. It got financial support from Indian Council of Medical Research and the ministry of health and family welfare.

The Bureau of Indian Standards has already appointed a committee to look into the NIV report.

A meeting on water purification equipment, held on April 28 by BIS, was attended by representatives of NIV, NEERI, Eureka Forbes, Unilever, Ion Exchange and Whirlpool India.

▶ **'Need national policy', P 17**

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Sep 17, 2010;Section: Front Page;Page: 1

# 30 law colleges derecognized by Bar Council

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: Bar Council of India has decided to derecognize at least 30 law colleges. Another 20 have been sent notices to improve infrastructure in a bid to improve the country's legal education system.

In addition, unlike in the past, BCI has decided to approve only 20 of the 70 applications that came in for setting up new law colleges.

BCI sources said the number of colleges issued notice could increase as the council is still drawing up the final list. Derecognition will be effective from the next academic year.

BCI has already discontinued the system of permanent recognition and has decided that law colleges will have to apply every year for renewing recognition.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi; Date: Sep 17, 2010; Section: Times City; Page: 5;

e-paper

# Life will not be same from Oct 3

## A Lowdown On What To Expect During 12 Days Of Commonwealth Games

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** As the city prepares to shift to the Games mode, starting October 3, life of the Delhiite is all set to change. From no vegetable vendors allowed near your home, massive jams and crowded Metro trains for your commute to work and markets shutting early to a fortnight-long holiday bonanza for school and college students, the Commonwealth Games will bring this and a lot more.

Here, we tell you more about the life during the 12-day-long mega sporting event.

**Cars from NCR:** Those entering from any of the 13 major borders may have to face delays as Delhi Police plans to intensify checking of both private and commercial vehicles. The transport department, too, is going to come down heavily on polluting vehicles entering the city. For this, it will be setting up special checking centres. The traffic police and transport department have clarified that there is no plan to block entry of cars which are registered in states other than Delhi.

**Commercial vehicles:** The movement of commercial vehicles — like trucks, tempos and goods autos — will be restricted on all roads in the vicinity of the venues. During the day, commercial vehicles will not be allowed on some roads. In other parts of the city, however, the normal restrictions will continue. And at night, trucks will be allowed to ply as usual. The cops have tied up with neighbouring districts to ensure that trucks not bound for Delhi don't enter the city.

**Games lanes:** On about 180 km of roads across the city, the extreme right lane will be converted into a dedicated Games lane, meant for use only by athletes and delegates. The roads will be blocked at the time of their movement and the reduced road space will certainly cause jams. The affected routes include stretches like Kamal Attaturk Marg, SP Marg, Mother Teresa Crescent, Panchsheel Marg, Khelgaon Marg, Africa Avenue Road, MB Road, parts of Ring Road in south, central and north Del-



**READY FOR D-DAY:** IGI Stadium, which will host the wrestling and gymnastics events, is all lit up

hi, NH-24, NH-8, Ma Anandmayee Marg, Surajkund Road, Vinay Marg, Nizamuddin bridge, Captain Gaur Marg, Lodhi Road and Bhishma Pitamah Marg. The restrictions will begin on Sept 20 and continue till Oct 14. Those entering the lanes will have to pay Rs 2,000 as fine.

**Public transport:** Govt plans to shift 1,600 BlueLines to rural areas from Sept 25. On routes near Games venues, only low-floor DTC buses will be allowed to ply. But with a large chunk of the 5,000-strong low-floor fleet being taken away for Games use, the city could face a shortage of buses. Those headed for the events, however, will be given a free ride as DTC will run special shuttle services from 52 focal points. The buses will assemble at five hubs — ISBT Anand Vihar, Kashmir Gate, Nehru Place, Shivaji terminal and Dhaura Kuan — from where another set of buses will be operated at regular intervals. In addition, Delhi Metro will also run trains at increased frequencies on all lines which can be used to reach the stadia.

**Office hours, public holidays:** With the venue for the opening and closing ceremonies, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, expected to be packed to capacity with 65,000 spectators on Oct 3 and 14, the government plans to declare both these days as public holidays. The Delhi government, however, has no plans to close down government offices for

the remaining days. Chief secretary Rakesh Mehta dismissed rumours of changing office timings from 7 am to 4 pm during the Games.

**Markets and early closure:** You may have to scrap shopping plans on the days earmarked for the opening and closing ceremonies. Markets around the main Games venues will be asked to stay shut on the two main days and close early in the evening on all other days. The idea is to prevent congestion and ensure better security. Even as Delhi Police



claims it has not asked markets to down shutters yet, some traders associations said they have been asked to do so. Traders in CP, for instance, which forms part of a cycling route, say the market will be closed for five days. "Besides the opening and closing ceremonies, we have been told that no vehicle or person will be allowed during the first half on October 9, 10 and 14," said Atul Bhargav, President of New Delhi Traders Association.

Others, meanwhile, are

still waiting for some clarity from the cops. Said Praveen Khandelwal, general secretary of Confederation of All India Traders: "We have been asking the police for some clarity on this issue but have not been told anything."

**Schools and colleges:** For both school and college students, the Games mean a long holiday as the break will extend from October 1-17 and October 1-15, respectively. Education minister Arvinder Singh Lovely explained that the 12-day long Dussehra holidays in schools have been extended to cover the Games period.

**Courts open:** The traffic police's proposal to shut down courts during the Games to reduce congestion didn't find favour with the Court authorities. Thus, the SC and HC will stay closed only between October 9-13, which is the routine annual break. The lower courts have no such break and hence will stay open.

**Parking lots:** Even as parking attendants and contractors across the city have been warning people about closure of parking lots across the city from Sept 23 to Oct 14, the police and MCD have clarified that there are no such plans. "There is no proposal to shut parking lots anywhere in the city during the Games," said Deep Mathur, press and information director, MCD.

But in markets and crowded areas located around Games venues, parking lots will be closely monitored to

ensure that there is no spillover onto main roads. "No on-street parking will be allowed on any road falling on CWG routes," said Satyendra Garg, joint commissioner of police (traffic).

**Vendors and hawkers:** MCD and NDMC are coming down heavily on vegetable vendors, illegal dhabas and other street food vendors near Games venues and in markets. Also affected are cobblers, press-wallahs, street cloth stalls and paan shops. The agencies say they will allow only licensed vendors, which account for only 5-10 percent of the unorganised sector. Delhi Police will assist the agencies and also verify vendors and hawkers in each locality.

**Law and order:** The 80,000-strong force of Delhi Police will be out on the streets. More than half the force will be on Games duty, but this doesn't mean that Delhi will be left unguarded. About 12,000 new recruits will be the replacements. The cops are taking over all venues, the Games Village and training sites for sanitisation. Vigil will be maintained at markets and crowded areas, tourist hangouts and vital installations. Visitors could be frisked in outdoor spaces and even asked to establish their identity and vehicles will also be checked on arterial roads. The festivities will be muted. "There is no restriction on holding Durga Puja and Ramlila. However, melas will be allowed only after October 14," said Rajan Bhagat, Additional DCP. QRTs and 80 troops of central paramilitary forces have also been called in.

**Access to sports complexes:** Over the past six months, entry to DDA's sports complexes have been difficult for members. At competition venues like Yamuna sports complex and training venues like Siri Fort, members will not be allowed to use the services till the end of the Games. The complexes, which were closed for members from Aug 16, will be opened on Oct 16. Sources said the members have been asked to use nearby DDA sports facilities in the interim. They have also been given the choice to adjust the membership fee for the period against later use.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi; Date: Sep 17, 2010; Section: Times City; Page: 8;

e-paper

# Prez to decide Jamia appointments

## Varsity Has Forwarded Report On Wrongful Recruitment Of 14 Teachers

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia on Thursday decided to forward the Aggarwal report on discrepancies in faculty appointment at its AKJ Mass Communication and Research Centre (MCRC) to the President of India for further action. The inquiry report states that 14 appointments of faculty members were 'bad in law' and that action should be initiated against those responsible.

The executive council (EC) — the highest decision-making body in the university — resolved to accept the fact-finding report in totality. Accord-



UNDER SCANNER

ing to EC members, it was observed that the report should be forwarded to the President,

who is the visitor of the university, to seek opinion on the legality of the appointments. It also recommended that action should be taken against those responsible for the wrongful appointments.

An independent inquiry was instituted by the EC in its meeting on April 29 to look into the alleged discrepancies in appointment of teachers during the tenure of vice-chancellor Mushirul Hasan. Retired Delhi high court judge S K Aggarwal conducted the fact-finding inquiry.

It was after ministry for human development resources received several complaints

that it wrote to the university to comment on the allegations. Sources in the university said that following an internal inquiry, one case of discrepancy was identified and forwarded to the President. The President then asked MHRD to check on all the appointments made during that period. Thereafter, on MHRD's direction the university decided to conduct the inquiry which detected 14 cases of wrongful appointment.

As per the complaints, teachers appointed do not fulfil the University Grants Commission's (UGC) recommended qualifications for univer-

sity teachers. On whether the teachers will be asked to forfeit their job, an EC member observed that the fault was at the university administration's end and so the teachers should not be victimized.

In fact, the EC while forwarding the report to the President also stated that teachers had been working for a year-and-a-half and their performance has been satisfactory. While vice-chancellor Najeeb Jung didn't wish to comment, he said, "Performance-wise the teachers has been doing a good job. Whatever the EC and the President will decide will be implemented."

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi; Date: Sep 17, 2010; Section: Green Cover; Page: 11;

e-paper



Increasing and indiscriminate use of pesticides poses serious health risks to farmers and end users of the food. But there is little hand-holding or awareness on the ground, says a nationwide survey

ardous," says Shetty. "Our surveys show that nothing has changed on the ground."

There is little thought to integrated pest management and pesticide stewardship, let alone adopting safer alternatives. "Farmers, who are the end users, do not have basic knowledge of how to use pesticides. For instance, the optimum dose of monocrotophos per litre of water is 1.2ml to manage the paddy pest, but our survey respondents in Raichur and Bellary admitted to using 4.5 ml per litre," says Shetty. "Our recent surveys showed that in some parts, especially Punjab, farmers are mixing pesticides. About

important to triple-rinse empty pesticide containers before recycling or disposal, it can remove 99.99% of pesticides," says Shetty. "The issue of obsolete pesticide stocks has not even been addressed. India has at least 200 tonnes of obsolete pesticide. The cost of safe disposal of such obsolete pesticide is, in some cases, much higher than the cost of their procurement."

### Drifting Danger

The pesticide poisoning in Kerala and Karnataka districts, particularly among cashew plantation workers, is a case in point. The aerial spraying of endosulfan in the plantations has severely afflicted the farmers, leading to congenital abnormalities, mental retardation, cancer and infertility among other conditions. Endosulfan was also found in the blood samples of children living nearby.

While the use of endosulfan as a veterinary drug has been banned in India, following the wipeout of vultures, its use as a pesticide continues. Any kind of pesticide used in fields drifts and contaminates the soil and water sources near by but precautions need to be taken.

"Recently, we started visiting district hospitals to check on pesticide poisoning cases. Mild poisoning in the form of diarrhoea, giddiness, headache and breathing problems were reported but largely, farmers are unaware of the long-term health impact," Shetty explained. While only 5% of the farmers use integrated pest management (IPM) in India, the huge Rs 7,000 crore pesticide market is growing at 3.2% every year.

### Residual Effect

A report released by the School of Natural Sciences and Engineering in 2008, 'Crop Protection Stewardship in India: Wanted or Unwanted' and published in the journal Current Science, says the pesticide residue problem has affected agriculture widely. Small cardamom consumes more than 100kg per hectare per year of phorate in Kerala. The pesticides used are quinalphos, monocrotophos, chlorpyrifos, fenitrothion, methyl parathion, endosulfan and emisan. But because of the high pesticide residue in the crop, the export of cardamom has reduced by 80%. Many other crops have also been rejected internationally due to high residues.

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17.71% of respondents in the selected districts were using a cocktail of pesticides."

Labelling has not worked in any of these districts because none are in local languages, nor do they use pictograms. Nor is there any information on product hazards, appropriate modes of storage and handling. About 68% of the respondents covered only their faces with towels or cloth to avoid the pungent smell but used no other protective gear, says Shetty.

Besides, most respondents said they reused emptied pesticide containers for storing kerosene and diesel. "It is im-

# ARE PESTICIDES TURNING INTO POISON SPRAY?

Jayashree Nandi | TNN

L usciously sweet but dig a little deeper and export-quality grapes from Pune will reveal a darker truth, a slow poison of sorts. Until last year, the vineyards there used to receive around 20 rounds of pesticide spraying but with demand abroad going up, Pune's grape growers are now resorting to no less than 25 rounds. Further down south, in the cotton fields of Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, the crop receives 25-30 rounds of pesticide.

If the massive endosulfan

poisoning in Dakshin Kannada and Kerala was not pointer enough to the problem, research by the School of Natural Sciences and Engineering at the National Institute of Advanced Studies in Bangalore throws up disturbing trends in pesticide usage nationwide.

While usage has gone up many fold, pesticide drift and methods of usage — including spraying of a chemical cocktail by farmers wearing little protective gear — continue to pose serious health risks to users.

According to P K Shetty, who

Farmers do not have basic knowledge of usage of pesticides, a survey by the National Institute of Advanced Studies found. Some spray a cocktail of chemicals that drifts into water sources nearby, while 69% said they only covered their faces with a towel

heads research at the School of Natural Sciences and Engineering, the field surveys conducted every year in around 28 pesticide hotspot districts have thrown up few changes.

"The government has banned DDT (dichloro-diphenyltrichloroethane) and some other organochlorides but there is no ban yet on endosulfan. In fact, India is one of the largest users of World Health Organization (WHO) class 1A pesticides, including phorate, phosphorus, phosphamidon and fenitrothion that are extremely haz-

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Sep 17, 2010;Section: Times Nation;Page: 13;

## Cancel MBBS seats of 88 with less than 50% in plus-2: HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Thiruvananthapuram: In a setback to self-financing medical colleges, the Kerala high court on Thursday upheld the Medical Council of India's rule that a candidate for admission to the MBBS course must secure 50% marks in qualifying exams (plus-two) and the entrance test (Common Entrance Test).

The order came from a bench of Justice Thottathil B Ravindran and Justice Bhavadasan on a bunch of petitions filed by some students whose admission had been objected to by the MCI

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**'Edu loan can't be denied citing low marks':** Coming to the rescue of a dalit boy who was denied educational loan because he had scored less than 45% marks, Madras HC has said it was unfortunate that banks were inventing reasons to deny loans to students. **TNN**

as they had not met the marks requirement.

As many as 88 students had secured admission in five colleges, four run by Christian managements and one under the Muslim Education Society, during 2007-2008 in violation of the prescribed norms. The MCI had directed the students to discontinue their studies following which they approached the Supreme Court. The apex court, in turn, asked them to knock the doors of the HC.

The HC found that there was a central statute that required the candidate to secure not less than 50% marks in English and a minimum of 50% marks in Physics, Chemistry and Biology taken together both in the qualifying examination (plus two) and the competitive exams.

The colleges, however, had ignored the rule while admitting the students.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Sep 17, 2010;Section: Times Nation;Page: 13

# Info panel chief ran up ₹23L travel tab in 5 yrs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Chief information commissioner Wajahat Habibullah spent over Rs 23 lakh on foreign travel to countries including Oman, Pakistan, Thailand and three trips to the US to promote transparency during his five-year stint.

The travel bills of other information commissioners taken together do not cross Rs 18 lakh, an RTI reply from the Central Information Commission showed.

The airfare for Habibullah's travel to speak at the Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah, and Harvard University at Boston was over Rs 7.83 lakh, the reply, contained in over 200 pages, showed.

Interestingly, the visit took place in March 2007 when austerity measures were imposed by the government. Other incidental expenses of this tour were Rs 31,200, the reply said.



Wajahat Habibullah

He undertook another four-day tour of the US in May 2008 to attend a conference in Miami and to address representatives of World Bank, IMF and Inter-American Banks. The air travel cost Rs 6.84 lakh and the incidental expenses were Rs 1.30 lakh, the reply accessed by Mumbai-based RTI activist Girish Mittal said.

Incidentally, Habibullah has been appointed by the World Bank as a consultant on its panel for arbitration

on RTI cases. He will take up the position next month after his retirement as CIC.

Information commissioner A N Tiwari went to Wellington, New Zealand, in 2007 for a three-day international conference of ICs. The airfare was Rs 2.74 lakh while the incidental expenses were Rs 20,000.

He went to Mexico City in 2008 to deliver keynote address at Mexico's National Transparency Week for which Rs 6.96 lakh was spent on air travel while incidental expenses were nearly Rs 41,000, the documents showed.

Former IC Padma Balasubramanian visited the UK to attend an international conference of information commissioners on which over Rs 3.31 lakh were spent. Balasubramanian was accompanied by another former information commissioner O P Kejriwal who spent nearly 1.80 lakh which is half the amount spent by her.

Publication: The Times Of India Delhi;Date: Sep 17, 2010;Section: Times Nation;Page: 14;

# Alumnus gives ₹18.6cr in assets to Madras univ

M Ramya | TNN

Chennai: India-born Rajasekar Sham, who specialised in nuclear medicine in the US, and his wife Lucila made extensive plans before attempting to end their lives two years ago. The couple cancelled their phone, stopped their social security benefits, and prepaid the year's income taxes. They also drew up their



Rajasekar Sham

wills bequeathing 50% of the money from their assets to the University of Madras, where Sham studied radiology.

The university on Thursday said it received the final installment of the donation. "Dr Rajasekar Sham's donation of Rs 18,60,86,747 is the biggest sum we have received from an alumnus," said the university's VC G Thiruvvasagam.

# Scientists create first artificial ovary

## Could Help Women Rendered Infertile By Chemotherapy Conceive

**London:** Giving fresh hope to women who are unable to have children, scientists have developed the world's first artificial ovary which is capable of maturing human eggs as effective as a real one.

Researchers at Brown University, who created the ovary in a laboratory from cells donated by hospital patients, said it can mimic a real ovary by growing over the eggs and allowing them to mature.

The breakthrough, the researchers said, could help cancer sufferers who become infertile from chemotherapy or other treatments which damage the reproductive system. This could allow eggs to be taken from women before they were exposed to

### Giant Leap

► Breakthrough could help cancer sufferers who become infertile from chemotherapy

► It could allow eggs to be taken from women before they were exposed to radiation and then developed in the artificial structure

► The artificial organs could also be used to help discover why some women find it difficult to conceive

chemotherapy or radiation and then developed in the artificial structure, the Telegraph reported.

Sandra Carson, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the

Brown University, said the artificial organs could also be used to help discover why some women find it difficult to conceive.

For the research, the scientists grew the donor cells into honeycomb shapes before placing human egg cells in the holes.

Within days the cells had enveloped the immature eggs and they were able to grow to full maturity, the point at which they would be released into the womb to be fertilized.

Detailing their study in the *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics*, professor Carson wrote: "An ovary is composed of three main cell types, and this is the first time that anyone has created a 3-D

tissue structure with triple cell line. "This is really very, very new and is the first success in using 3-D tissue engineering principles."

Professor Richard Fleming, director of the GCRM fertility unit in Glasgow, said the development could have "great practical implications" on fertility treatment by maturing eggs more reliably.

He said: "It is a significant step along a long pathway but really quite an important one.

"If you try to mature eggs in a petri dish the structure tends to collapse rather than sticking to itself. This is trying to improve the proportion of the immature eggs that get through to the mature stage." AGENCIES



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## **Cancel MBBS seats of 88 with less than 50% in plus-2: HC**

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Times of India ND p-18  
17-Sep-10

# India doesn't figure in world top-100 univs

Tirna Ray | TNN

**New Delhi:** India is nowhere in the recently released world university rankings. The three rankings — Times Higher Education World University Rankings, Academic Ranking of World Universities compiled by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and QS World University Rankings — are just out, but none of the Indian varsities have made it to the top 100.

While overall the US dominates all the three rankings, the QS rankings have China, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Israel, Taiwan and even Thailand ahead of India with IIT-Bombay in the 187th position. In the other two rankings, (Times Higher Education World University Rankings and Academic Ranking of World Universities) India finds no place in the top 200, but Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Turkey bag decent places in between the two rankings.

B K Mathur, dean, planning and co-ordination, IIT Kharagpur, however, dismisses the world university rankings as a subject for “coffee table discussions”. But at a time when India is being hyped as a future knowledge economy and the country is emerging as the new academic destination globally, isn't international benchmarking in education important for India? Mathur stresses, “It is not ranking but word of mouth that conveys our academic excellence to students. We have 50,000 alumni across the world, they are our ambassadors.”

However, agreeing that the world is watching us, Narendra Jadhav, member, Planning Commission, says, “Though the international ranking methodology is erroneous, Indian universities need to be open to international benchmarking. What they lack is a proper ‘management of in-

## WORLD'S BEST

### Times Higher Education World University Rankings — 2010-2011

- ▶ Harvard University
- ▶ California Institute of Technology
- ▶ Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- ▶ Stanford University
- ▶ Princeton University

### QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS — 2010

- ▶ University of Cambridge
- ▶ Harvard University
- ▶ Yale University
- ▶ University College London
- ▶ Massachusetts Institute of Technology

formation system’. Also, there needs to be greater awareness among universities to at least give out accurate information so that it reflects their true academic status.”

S K Barua, director, IIM-A, stresses that international benchmarking is becoming important and with the world becoming smaller and global student mobility increasing, “we need to realise that if we go up the ranking as a nation, education is going to give us inflow of foreign exchange. Besides, I believe that we have the potential to excel and if we are keen India can become the Mecca of higher education.”

Despite India's skepticism, rankings are becoming an important determinant. As Jonathan Adams, director of research evaluation, Thomson Reuters (Times Higher Education has tied up with Thomson Reuters this year), points out, “Well developed and information-rich rankings can be a helpful guide to students about relative standing of universities worldwide.”

Times of India Ahmedabad 13.09.10 p-5

# IIT-G goes global with teachers

## Hires 5 from abroad, in talks with others

Bharat Yagnik | TNN

**Ahmedabad:** The IIT, Gandhinagar (IIT-G) is going global with its teaching standards. This is the first IIT to take advantage of the recent decision of IIT Council allowing 10% of the total teaching staff of the institute to be foreign nationals. IIT-G, which was set up in 2008, has already inked agreements with five teachers from abroad. That is not all. The IIT-G authorities have also drawn up a list of 50 probabilities from foreign countries who would help the new institute to find its niche among the other IITs of the country.

"Our endeavour is to stand out among all the IITs and create a different identity for ourselves. We have aimed at getting the best faculty and the top students among all IITs," said Sudhir Jain, director of IIT-G.

The move gains significance in the light of a meeting between IIT directors and the HRD ministry held in Delhi last Friday. The IIT Council then took a major decision:



## Research opportunities a big draw

**B**eing able to head research teams and get an exposure in the field is proving to be a huge draw for the foreign teachers. "Apart from good remuneration, they will get a much deeper and better exposure in research and teaching experience. They can play a much larger role in the institute's academic activities," said IIT-G officials. "We want to get the best faculty to improve quality of education and draw best students. Experienced teaching faculties from foreign shores will be focused on upgrading our research work and teaching," said IIT-G director Sudhir Jain. TNN

Of the total faculty strength in an IIT, up to 10% of the teaching staff can be foreign nationals. The council also decided to allow 25% foreign students on a supernumerary basis in post-graduate courses, without affecting admission norms for Indian students.


IIT-G has already employed four NRIs who are now working at the institute as full-time faculty members.

The new names in IIT-G's 43-member faculty are: Ian Smith and Claude Petitpierre from Switzerland, Emmanuel Deriat from France, and Subhash Deodhar and Mukta Tripathy from the US.

The Swiss teachers, who are joining in December, will teach mechanical engineering at the institute, while Deriat will take up computer science subject. The two NRIs from the US will focus on management subjects.

Times of India Ahmedabad 13.09.10 p-12

# Indian B-schools see 4-fold rise in applications

HOME APPEAL	No. of GMAT scores sent to American business schools		
		By India	By China
	TY 2005	43,091	19,196
	TY 2006	53,163	26,116
	TY 2007	64,716	36,406
	TY 2008	81,978	50,358
	TY 2009	75,499	66,205
	TY 2010	65,361	80,669

\* TY=Testing Year; eg, testing year 2010 is from July 1 2009 to June 30, 2010

Anahita Mukherji | TNN

**Mumbai:** Ashok Sarathy, vice-president, GMAT Programme, feels this may have a lot to do with the emergence of high-quality management education within India. "There's been a growing interest in the local market among Indian management aspirants, with high-quality management programmes being offered in India. Indians are now seeing tremendous opportunity in their own economy and in Indian degrees," said Sarathy, speaking to TOI from the US.

Sarathy's views are borne out by the statistics. In testing year 2010, over 17,000 Indian citizens sent in their GMAT scores to Indian institutions. Meanwhile, only 1,743 GMAT scores from mainland China (and 5,184 from Hong Kong) were sent to Chinese B-schools in the same period.

While the last five years have seen only a marginal increase in GMAT scores sent by Chinese students to academic institutions in their own country (but a steady growth in those sent to the US), there has been an almost four-fold increase in the number of Indians applying to Indian management institutions—from 4,879 in 2005 to a whopping 17,087 in 2010.

The recession saw a dip in the number of GMAT scores sent to the US by Indians, from nearly 82,000 in 2008 to 75,499 in 2009. But in the same year the number of Indians sending their GMAT scores to Indian institutions peaked.

According to Pratibha Jain, overseas education consultant, there has been a huge change in the Indian market vis-a-vis the

## What Is GMAT

The GMAT exam was created in 1954 and is used by nearly 5,000 graduate management programs at approximately 1,900 business schools around the world to assess applicants. Candidates can appear for the exam all through the year at 530 test centres in over 111 countries. The GMAT exam consists of three sections—analytical writing assessment, quantitative and verbal. GMAT is a computer adaptive-test. This means that the questions in these sections are dynamically selected as you take the test; the multiple-choice questions will adjust to your ability level, and your test will be unique.

US. "Earlier, we had a student body which wanted to go to the US with no intention of coming back to India," she says. "But when the recession hit, Indian students realised that they were paying \$200,000 for an MBA in the US without getting any job there. Meanwhile, MNCs in India are hiring students from Indian B-schools like ISB Hyderabad and paying them a high salary, with which they can afford a good quality of life right here in India. Indians are extremely price-sensitive. Many have realized that when it comes to returns on investment, it might make sense to acquire a management degree in India or a place that is more cost-effective than the US." Jain also points out that the American press is sending out signals that Indians are not welcome any more.

# Financial Express

## ND 17/09/2010 P2

### 'Indian IT firms should diversify their export mkts'



Against the backdrop of rising anti-outsourcing sentiment in the US, the government said Indian IT firms should diversify their export markets and reach out to Europe, Africa and Asia in a bigger way. "We (IT companies) must diversify our export destinations to reach out to Europe, Africa and Asia so that there is the balanced approach in terms of export destinations," minister of state for communications & IT Sachin Pilot said.

Financial Express ND 17/09/2010 p19

## Railmajra IT Park receives good response

### fe Bureau

**Chandigarh, Sep 16:** The new IT Park in Railmajra, Ropar, has received a sizeable response to the Punjab Infotech invitation in August.

"The best part of the place is the visibility it provides to the location being on NH21 on Mohali-Jalandhar high-

way, and proximity to the international airport," says Maneet Malharoo of ADI Back Office, an IT company engaged in bio-solutions and clinic research. Harshveer Singh, CEO, Drish Infotech, which specialises in software exports and project training observes, "Manpower availability with a large number of

good technical colleges around would be the greatest advantage to be at Railmajra", The IT Park has earmarked nearly one acre for service apartments, state-of-the-art recreational facility, multiplex in the commercial space, offering uninterrupted power supply.

For Viney Johar of Con-

noisseur Infotech, a software product company, "The proximity to IIT Ropar is the biggest attraction for us since we require people with analytical abilities and IIT Ropar would be able to provide us not only the interns but opportunity to seek the help of its faculty in our R&D activities".

Indian Express, ND  
17/09/2010

p-4

## 'Plea against dilution of 10% relief to OBCs'

**KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL**  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

A FORMER IIT director on Thursday sought judicial clarification on 10 per cent relaxation in cut-off marks to OBC students in admissions to Centrally-funded educational institutions.

The Supreme Court had on April 10, 2008, ruled that "cut off marks for OBCs should be set no lower than 10 per cent below the general category". However, the Delhi HC on September 7 ruled that an OBC student

need not "secure marks within... 10 per cent below cut-off marks of the last candidate admitted in general category" to get admission.

P V Indiresan, a former director of IIT-Chennai, challenged the HC verdict, saying that it went against the SC's intention and the spirit of Central Educational Institutions (Reservations in Admission) Act, 2006 to "maintain a modicum of merit even in the admissions of the reserved categories".

The petition will be heard on September 27.

Indian Express, ND 17/09/2010

p-6

# Radiologist leaves his varsity Rs 18.6 crore

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

**CHENNAI, SEPTEMBER 16**

THE University of Madras, one of the oldest in the country, received an unexpected gift from an alumnus, a late radiologist who donated several crores of rupees to his alma mater before his death two years ago.

The alumnus, Rajasekaran Sham, a radiologist working in the US where he died in 2008 at the age of 68, left Rs 18.60 crore to the varsity where he studied decades ago when the all streams of education including medicine were under the university.

Interestingly, the university does not have any record of the former student, said V-C G Thiruvassagam on Thursday while formally receiving the last installment of the donation.

According to him, the doc-

tor and his wife Lucila — who died earlier — donated their assets to the Madras University and Nature Conservancy, a US-based organisation.

As the US levies high Estate Tax for such donations, the university sought the services of a professional legal firm to get a waiver as it fell under the non-profit organisation, without which it would have had to part with half of the amount, he added.

It all began last year when one Thomas J Osborne contacted the university authorities intimating that a former student passed away on December 2, 2008, leaving half of his estate to his alma mater as per a will made on October 30, 2000.

The money, Rs 18,60,86,747, would be used to construct three hostels and an indoor stadium, Thiruvassagam said.

## Asian Age ND 17-Sep-10 P11

**Ganesha says...**

### Vocational training must be encouraged



**GANESH NATARAJAN**

**T**here is a joke that goes around in Europe that a typical game of football is one where twenty two people kick the ball around for ninety minutes and at the end of the game Germany wins ! For any soccer fan, the truth of this statement does not need to be reinforced with Germany pulling off narrow victories against much fancied opponents time and again with their particular brand of efficiency and precision in playing the game.

An earlier conversation in Berlin after watching their impressive win over Turkey in the central square of the city on a giant screen in the company of half a million frantic Germans and Turks revealed that this well thought out strategy and excellent execution pervades all aspects of German life and work. This is most apparent in the way the country has thought through its famous dual system of vocational education, a process that we have much to learn from even as Indian services industry faces the daunting prospect of preparing eight to ten million skilled services professionals every year, with at least a million of those in IT and BPO. Guided by the Vocational Training Act created in 1969 and updated in 2005, the responsibility for creating talent is shared by the firms, the training schools and the young people and administered by the eighty Chambers of Commerce and Industry that have ensured its implementation across all sectors of the German economy.

As in everything to do with Germany, the system permits adequate room for innovation within a prescribed framework that has seen a national decree established for every profession with over 350 training occupations recognised, of which 250 are in the field of industry, trade and services. The contents of the educational curriculum, the apprenticeship in the industry and the intermediate and final examinations for each profession have been specified with more than 170,000 professionals working on a honorary basis in the examination boards. With an investment of over twenty-seven billion euro on vocational training with an average cost per trainee of nearly eighteen thousand euro per year, the country can be justifiably proud of the results they have achieved which is becoming a benchmark for the rest of the world.

Talking to a cross-section

of participants in the vocational education eco-system, the role of each player becomes apparent. The employers participate in the system with adequate time and some monetary commitment from their side because it enables them to build talent within the firm which they prefer to a training levy (we call it education cess) which would otherwise have been imposed. The training schools have been successful in building a high quality standard to enable participants and training in all parts of the EU, the students see this stream as a high reward process that provides them monetary independence at an early age and the government itself is providing its full backing because of the inherent employment and social benefits that have

**German government backs vocational education because of the inherent employment and social benefits which are already showing results.**

already begun to show results for the German economy.

The IT training streams in vocational education have a lot in parallel to the formal system in India and indeed the yeoman efforts done by Aptech and Niit in the early years of private sector participation in IT training with the basic IT operator courses having been enhanced to enable specialist professions like application development, systems integration, electronics technicians and IT economists for commercial applications to be developed. With an option of three days at work and two days in class every week or a sandwich program where every week of intensive courses is followed by two weeks work in the participating company, the training rigour is maintained and seen as superior to the standard training school process supported by a few projects in the industry which has been the Indian model of education.

The moribund state of the ITIs which are only now being focused on by worthy associations like the CI should not be the fate of services education and this will need Nasscom and the state governments to develop processes and programs and private sector to work in concert to address the enormous challenge. Maybe then we will see consistent success in the economy like the consistent German football team and not just streaks of individual brilliance that continues to characterise Indian cricket even today!

Ganesh Natarajan is vice chairman & MD of Zensar Technologies Ltd.



# Intel guru: Future phones will sense your mood

NOEL RANDEWICH

SAN FRANCISCO

**Sept. 16:** Ultra-smartphones that react to your moods and televisions that can tell it's you who's watching are in your future as Intel Corp's top technology guru sets his sights on context-aware computing.

Chief technology officer Justin Rattner stuffed sensors down his socks at the annual Intel Develop Forum in San Francisco on Wednesday to demonstrate how personal devices will one day offer advice that goes way beyond local restaurants and new songs to download.

"How can we change the relationship so we think of these devices not as devices

**Smartphones in the future will constantly learn via the use of sensors about who you are, how you live, work and play, going way beyond the functions of today's smartphones.**

but as assistants or even companions?" he asked.

Handheld devices could combine already common geographic location technology with data from

microphones, cameras, heart and body monitors and even brain scans to offer their owners advice that today only a friend or relative could give.

"Imagine a device that uses a variety of sensory modalities to determine what you are doing at an instant, from being asleep in your bed to being out for a run with a friend," Rattner said. "Future devices will constantly learn about who you are, how you live, work and play."

Rattner also demonstrated a television remote control that figures out who is holding it based on how it is held, and then learns the viewer's entertainment preferences.

The world leader for

decades in microchips for servers and desktop computers, Intel is hurrying to catch up in the lucrative market for smartphones like Apple's iPhone and Research in Motion's Blackberry.

Telephones with email, global positioning and media players are pointing the way to a future where ever more functions are packed into ever smaller mobile devices.

The smartphone industry, including technology giants like LG and Samsung, is likely to sell 270 million phones this year and grow 25 percent in 2011, according to market research company IDC.

"I think you can expect to see features that support context-aware computing

starting to appear in Intel products in the not-too-distant future," Rattner said.

But analysts say Intel faces an uphill battle getting its microchips into new phones as Nvidia, Marvell and Qualcomm have already made headway with cheap, lower-power processors based on designs by ARM Holdings.

Rattner conceded that questions about privacy and people's willingness to be intimate with their computers will have to be resolved before the future generation of smartphones he described takes off. "If you think identity threat is a problem today, imagine when your whole context is readily available on the Net," he said. — Reuters

**Asian Age  
ND  
17-Sep-10  
P-1**

## **Supreme Court**

### **Plea over OBC quota law in institutions**

**New Delhi, Sept. 16:** A petition was on Thursday moved in the Supreme Court contending that the Delhi high court has made a wrong interpretation of the apex court judgment on the quota law in educational institutions that 10 per cent difference in cut-off marks in admission for OBC candidates and general category was bad in law.

The petition filed by P.V. Indiresan, former director of IIT, Chennai, has sought a stay of the September 7 verdict which held that universities are entitled to only fix minimum eligibility criteria for admission in the reserved category at maximum 10 per cent below the minimum eligibility.

The high court had pronounced its verdict on a petition challenging the procedure adopted for admission by Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and the Centre for providing reservations to the OBCs.



# Oxbridge loses sheen

Cambridge and Oxford not among top five, lose ground to US universities

Cambridge fell from second spot in 2009 to joint sixth with Oxford.

**LEADING** British universities have tumbled down the world rankings, according to a study which found their reputation for excellence has been exaggerated for years.

The US took the top five places in the new global league, forcing Oxford and Cambridge into joint sixth. Just five UK universities featured in the top 50, and only 14 in the top 100, even though Britain has traditionally seen itself as a world leader in higher education.

University chiefs said Britain's disappointing showing was a "wake-up call" as the government prepares to make swingeing cuts to the higher education budget.

Previous university league tables have painted UK institutions in a more flattering light.

### Times Higher Education magazine carried out survey

Last week, a table crowned Cambridge the world's leading university — ahead of Harvard — and put University College London into fourth place.

But the team behind the table published on Thursday, the *Times Higher Education* magazine, claims those rankings rely too heavily on reputation and heritage and too little on hard measures of excellence. It says its own table, which puts greater weight on research influence and teaching quality, is more "detailed, rigorous and comprehensive".

In contrast, the other table is partly based on subjective surveys of 15,000 scholars and 5,000 employers.

Just three UK universities feature in today's top 10 — Oxford, Cambridge, and, in ninth place, Imperial College London. The next highest-ranked British universities are UCL, in 22nd place, Edinburgh, in 40th, and Bristol, in 68th.

Just 14 in total feature in the top 100, compared to 19 in last week's table. Some 29 are in the top 200, slightly down on the previous list's 30, and significantly lower than America's tally of 72.

## THE TOP 20 UNIVERSITIES

- 1 Harvard University
- 2 California Institute of Technology
- 3 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- 4 Stanford University
- 5 Princeton University
- 6 University of Cambridge
- 6 University of Oxford
- 8 University of California, Berkeley
- 9 Imperial College London
- 10 Yale University
- 11 University of California, Los Angeles
- 12 University of



All Souls College, Oxford University.

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Chicago  | 17 University of Toronto      |
| 13 Johns Hopkins University                      | 18 Columbia University        |
| 14 Cornell University                            | 19 University of Pennsylvania |
| 15 University of Michigan                        | 20 Carnegie Mellon University |
| 16 Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich |                               |

Big names whose rankings suffer in the new table include the University of Warwick. It was ranked 53rd last week but now drops out of the top 200 altogether.

While the country as a whole comes second overall for higher education in a list of 26 nations — beaten only by the US — most leading UK universities do worse in Thursday's table than the one published last week.

Exceptions include Oxford, which remains in sixth place, and several smaller institutions such as Sussex, York and Lancaster.

Phil Baty, editor of *Times Higher Education World University Rankings*, said that for some universities, the table "may deliver an unpleasant wake-up call

that the days of trading on reputation alone are coming to an end".

Professor Steve Smith, president of Universities UK, said: "The tables may show that the UK remains the second-strongest university system in the world, but the most unmistakable conclusion is that this position is genuinely under threat."

Sally Hunt, general secretary of the University and College Union, representing lecturers, said: "Reputation alone will not be enough to compete with countries who enjoy the investment we so desperately need."

The list does not include any Indian university.

Daily Mail

# Diversify exports, Pilot tells IT firms

PBD BUREAU/PTI

NEW DELHI, SEPT 16



AGAINST the backdrop of rising anti-outsourcing sentiment in the US, the Government today said Indian IT companies should diversify their export markets and reach out to Europe, Africa and Asia in a bigger way.

"We (IT companies) must diversify our export destinations to reach out to Europe, Africa and Asia so that there is the balanced approach in terms of export destinations," Minister of State for Communications & IT Sachin Pilot told PTI.

Ohio state in the US recently banned outsourcing work to foreign companies, hot on the heels of the country's move to hike fee for H-1B and L1 visas. These moves are expected to hurt the \$50-billion Indian IT market, which garners a major chunk of revenues from American companies.

"It is very unfortunate that this kind of issues are coming up which the people are calling protectionist..." Pilot said while asserting that Indian IT sector is robust enough to overcome any challenge.

The outsourcing ban by Ohio has come as a disappointment to India, and Commerce Minister Anand Sharma said on Tuesday that the move is "not welcome at all."

Indian IT industry has made a notable contribution which is acknowledged globally, even in the US. It is Indian entities which are responsible for creating jobs, even now when there are big job losses, Sharma had said.

Sharma had also cited data suggesting that Indian IT companies have created over 2.5 lakh jobs in the US in the last three years.

# Small IT cos' valuation charm may fire up Deal St

Harish Rao  
MUMBAI

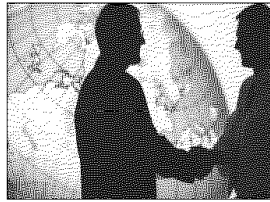
THE recent acquisition of Kale Consultants by French airline solutions provider Accelya Holding is expected to trigger a wave of impending consolidation among small-sized IT firms. Analysts are of the view that consolidation among such firms has been long due, but got delayed because of differences over valuations between promoters looking to sell out and potential acquirers.

"The trend has definitely begun and we could see a lot of deals happening in the coming months," said Kumar Parkala, global head of sourcing, KPMG India. "This is the only way they—small

IT firms — can grow, for margin pressures will put a question mark on their sustainability in the long run. These firms can hope for good valuations, because of the significant interest of vendors in the Indian market, which continues to remain buoyant."

There are certain stocks in this segment trading at attractive valuations and could be bought by investors with a long-term perspective. For instance, Allied Digital, whose consolidated revenues grew 5.8% on a quarter-on-quarter basis, has been a top pick for most IT analysts, as it is currently available at eight times FY11 earnings. On BSE, the stock closed at Rs 241.25, up marginally by 0.81% from its previous close.

In the case of Kale Consultants,



which specialises in the travel industry, the promoters were able to sell their entire 35.61% stake for around Rs 97.52 crore at a premium to the market price, as buyers were ready to pay a good price for unique solutions. On Wednesday, the stock closed at Rs 156.50, down almost 2% from its previous close, but has

gained close to 17% over the past three months. Grapevine is that the promoters of Sonata Software, too, have been looking for a potential buyer. However, when contacted, they refused to comment on the matter.

While the performance of large caps has improved on a quarter-on-quarter basis, small-sized IT firms have seen their revenues and profits decline sequentially due to billing pressure from clients, because of which they could not give a robust guidance.

There is not much headroom for growth as small firms lack expertise in establishing themselves in the niche segment. Analysts say that due to the specialised nature of the business, small players are finding it difficult to attract

new investments and scale up further. Also, many companies are not able to retain talent, as the attrition rates have been very high. Many of them have seen an increase in discretionary spending on a QoQ basis which has been impacting their revenues. The ability to get new business at the right price will continue to be a big challenge for most of the smaller players.

"Many of the small IT companies suffered, because of vendor consolidation," said Pankaj Pandey, head-research, ICI-CI Securities, who added that stock-picking will be key. "We would advise investors to look at Allied Digital and Sasken Communications, as they look attractive at current levels," he said.

harish.rao@timesgroup.com

Economic Times Kolkata 16.0910 p-10

## Beyond low-hanging fruit Time For IT To Reinvent Itself

**T**HE big, bad, American, protectionist wolf is threatening India's three little information-technology pigs: software, other IT services and business process outsourcing (BPO). Instead of crying wolf, Indian IT should emulate the example of the enterprising pigs in the original tale, who used their wits to best the big, bad wolf. Protectionist pandering is the stock of electoral politics and, in the midst of a bout of stubbornly unyielding unemployment, if American leaders try to fool their voters with tough talk against Indian body shops, Indian IT should shrug off the rhetoric like water off nano-fibre fabric. The US government outsourcing market might be big, but India's share of this pie is not, to begin with. So, India should not worry too much about a state like Ohio banning outsourcing of official work. And the World Trade Organisation's agreement on government procurement, which India has refrained from joining, would apply only to the US federal government, not to state governments. As for American companies stopping outsourcing, anguished over loss of American jobs, that is a prospect that also belongs to the world of fable. An American company has to worry first about its own stock price and the bottom line, not about the general state of unemployment. Apple became the second most valuable company in the US not by hiring droves of American workers but by capturing the value created by clever conceptualisation, design and engineering done in the US through mass manufacture in China. As the rest of the world increasingly gets educated, trained and ready to do business, American companies can hope to maintain their lead only by leveraging their own strengths, essentially in knowledge-intensive, high-value activities, and the strengths of other companies around the world, through unhindered trade.

It is up to Indian IT to be part of that process of value maximisation, if necessary through bold initiatives such as transformation deals in which they invest money upfront, as Tech Mahindra, in fact, has done. If the low-hanging fruit is over, grow long necks, jump higher or eat grass or spuds below the ground. Just don't cry.