

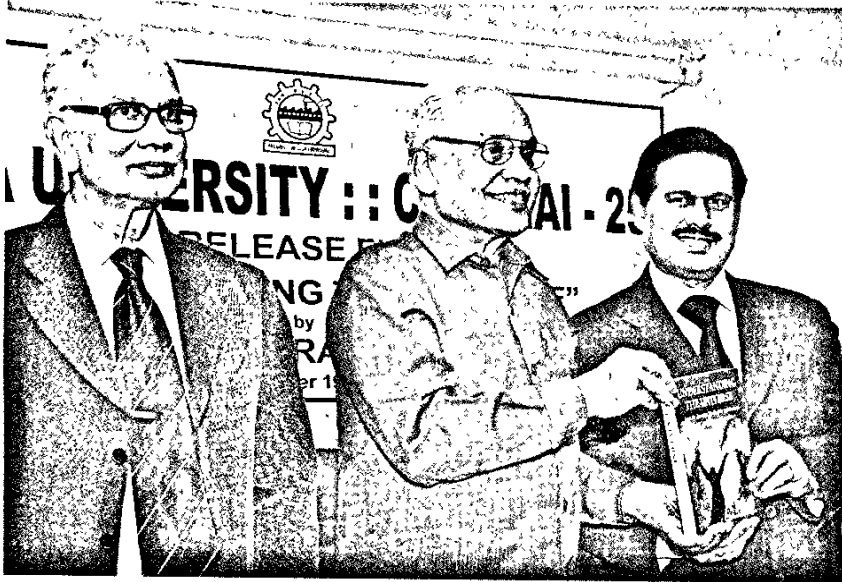
Newspaper Clips

September 22, 2011

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IIT-Kanpur chairman vents ire on engineering colleges

“If I had the authority, I will close down 50 per cent of them”



THROWING LIGHT: IIT-Kanpur Chairman M. Anandakrishnan (centre), handing over the book authored by P.C. Chandrasekaran (left), at a function in Chennai on Monday. The first copy is being received by Anna University Vice-Chancellor P. Mannar Jawahar. — PHOTO: K.V. SRINIVASAN

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: Institutions of higher education have become the playground of corrupt politicians and professors are being kicked around like football, said M. Anandakrishnan, Chairman, Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur, on Monday.

“If I had the authority, I will close down 50 per cent of the engineering colleges as they have ruined technical education,” he said at a book release function at Anna University-Chennai.

Recalling that teacher-student relationship used to be the benchmark of higher learning in the olden days, Mr. Anandakrishnan, who served as Vice-Chancellor of Anna University for two terms, said it was unfortunate that the vast expansion of technical education had been “mindless.”

The engineering colleges

gave the syllabus to students and functioned like tutorial colleges, he alleged. He got angry whenever he saw advertisements in neighbourhood newspapers stating they would coach students in thermodynamics, civil engineering and other engineering subjects. “Are we producing robots?” he asked.

Earlier, Mr. Anandakrishnan released a book by former dean of postgraduate studies at Anna University P.C. Chandrasekaran.

In his speech, the author said that his book, ‘Understanding the Universe - From the Quantum Word of the Infinitesimal to the Cosmic Realm of the Infinite’, dealt with the origin, evolution, composition and structure of the universe. The target audience was university students from diverse disciplines and lay readers with a modest background in science and mathematics.

Mint ND 22/09/2011 P-30

OTHER SPHERE
ANURAG BEHAR

PROFIT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Pick up any list of the world's best universities and go through those names. You can go through the top 500—not just top 10 or 20. You will not find a single for-profit university.

It's useful to remind ourselves of what most of us already know: the Harvard and Yales of the world are all not-for-profit organizations. They won't survive a year in the absence of their large endowments, and substantial annual grants.

The point is simple, high quality higher education is not and cannot be a for-profit enterprise. This is not an ideological issue; it is merely an economic implication of what is required to have high-quality higher education. Three of these requirements are: deep and broad-based research, a good student faculty ratio and a multidisciplinary faculty ranging from humanities to applied domains. There are other requirements, but these three in themselves are sufficient explanations for the not-for-profit nature of high quality higher education enterprises.

I wrote about this issue in these columns about a year ago. What has prompted me to write again is the news that I read in *Mint* and other dailies. The Planning Commission has suggested the country permit establishment of institutes of higher learning that can be run for profit. These reports quoted a Planning Commission approach paper, "The not-for-profit tag in higher education

For our problems of quality and equity in education, the government has to invest more money and improve its performance

sector should perhaps be re-examined in a more pragmatic manner so as to ensure quality without losing focus on expansion and equity."

In the related reports, I found two bits of welcome pragmatism from the Planning Commission. The first was the candid admission of the open secret that even now most private educational institutions are out to make a profit, although the current law prohibits them. The second was that private capital will not come to the education sector unless profit making is allowed, bar the rare bit of philanthropic capital.

That's where the pragmatism stops. Pragmatism, not ideology, should have also led them to stating that "since private capital, will (largely) not come without profit motive, it cannot solve the problem of quality and equity". Instead the approach paper seems to be constructing a new delusion that private for-

profit capital will help in improving quality and equity in higher education. Admittedly I am drawing only on these reports, and so may have misread the real drift of the commission. Though it doesn't seem likely, given the statements that I have read, but I would be happy if I am proved wrong. That's because this serious issue of the abysmal quality of our higher education is being side-stepped by deploying such an artifice.

You cannot fix someone's cardiac fitness by recommending a hair transplant. That's what this artifice amounts to. To address our problems in education, both school and higher education, there are just two ways ahead and both are needed. For cardiac fitness you have to eat right and exercise, there is no other way out. Similarly for our problems of quality and equity in education, the government has to invest more money and improve its performance.

Implementing these two, however, is very very difficult. The Planning Commission has good reasons to look for other paths. Getting more money for education is only possible if wasteful expenditure is controlled and economically distorting subsidies are reduced. Only through slow grinding changes on the ground can improvement happen in the government education system. This will not happen as a result of some policy or plan change.

Both the issues, of more money for education, and improving the government's performance, face resistance from entrenched political interests, massive execution challenges of scale and complexity and general apathy.

If you were to cut free electricity supply to agriculture, you will have a mass rebellion on your hands. Which political and socially influential group is willing


to take up cudgels for education? None; and that is the reality.

Governments and other bodies, have continually made efforts (with limited effect) to improve the school system. There have been almost no such efforts made in higher education. The only steps being the setting up of new IITs, NITs, IIMs, AIIMS, etc.

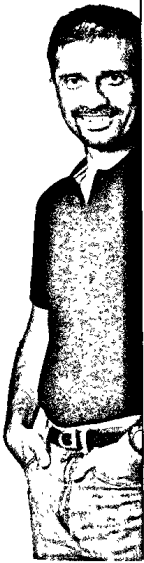
Creating this additional capacity is important, but even more important is improving the governance and functioning of the 500-odd existing universities and their affiliated colleges. This is not just a practical issue of improving the impact of what is already being spent, it also involves the larger problem that unless we improve the functioning of these institutions, we will continue to churn uneducated people whom we call graduates by the millions. The problem is severe in the basic undergraduate courses in sciences and humanities, which are almost completely ignored by any initiative for improvement and fresh capacity creation.

The Planning Commission can get all the wise advisers, and can think through this issue far better than most of us can, if only it would not get caught in the blind belief that "for profit" education can help in improve quality and equity of higher education.

Anurag Behar is chief executive officer of Azim Premji Foundation and also leads sustainability initiatives for Wipro Ltd. He writes every fortnight on issues of ecology and education. Comments are welcome at othersphere@livemint.com



To read Anurag Behar's previous columns, go to www.livemint.com/othersphere



Berlin researchers test driverless cars on city streets

It's the trend of the future

Since the industrial revolution, tedious human chores have steadily been handed over to machines. Going by this trend, the advent of fully computerised cars that drive themselves should only be a matter of time. A prototype has already been tested by researchers on Berlin's streets. They equipped a Volkswagen Passat with a range of built-in technology which allows it to see and manoeuvre through traffic on its own.

Technophobes may shudder at the vision of speeding driverless cars, navigating through heavy traffic. But how can they forget that in the end, it's driver error that causes most accidents?

Accidents can potentially be eliminated if a machine's in charge. Their recognition of and reaction to the environment can be much faster and more accurate than a human being's. Few would dispute that concentrating on the road is an ordeal with all-round traffic mayhem, speeding cars, and frequently ringing mobile phones. Surely nothing could be better than allowing well-tested technological devices to take care of road anxieties. Besides

avoiding other tetchy drivers and road rage, we will have more productive time and leisure. If automated cars that drove themselves became the norm, we would no longer have that drunk driver to worry about. For those who worry about machine malfunction, cars could be designed to stop themselves at the first sign of suspected

■ TIMES VIEW ■

error. They could also come equipped with an override function, which would allow human beings to take over if the need arose.

Technology sceptics shouldn't forget that at present aircraft come equipped with an autopilot function, which in effect allows them to fly themselves. This hasn't made air travel any more unsafe than before – if anything, it's the contrary. It is high time that we rid ourselves of our fear of radical technological innovations.

Why cede human control?

Driverless cars – the fruit of Berlin University's research project – are being touted as the future of car mobility. The idea of a completely computer-controlled driverless car should provoke anxiety, not

satisfaction. Though technology enthusiasts may point at various road safety tests carried out by the car

human brain can? Machines do malfunction. They can also be manipulated by the tech-savvy enemies of the car-owners. In case of accidents by malfunction or design, fixing responsibility will be a tricky issue. Existing traffic rules presume human beings operate automobiles on the roads. When driverless cars take over, this whole system will need junking

Technology is meant to make life easier. That can't be equated with making humans parasitically dependent

■ COUNTERVIEW ■

Ajay Vaishnav

manufacturers in question, the thought of having a computer in charge at the wheel sounds both crazy and scary. We don't

need science fiction to convince us of the inherent dangers of trusting machines to the extent of ceding all human control.

Computer-driven cars may reduce deaths in accidents caused by human error or inebriated drivers. But what if the computers can't respond to unusual situations the way the far more adaptable

on it. While people would opt for car technology that enhances their joy of driving and aids them to better handle traffic, it's too much to assume they'll willingly relinquish total control. Driving is not just a necessity. In this car-crazy age, it is also a hobby. Many won't take kindly to so-called technological wizardry that robs them of this source of pleasure. Nor will the automobile sector be too happy. Its resources will be better spent improving engine technology and fuel efficiency of cars as they exist rather than be diverted to introduce a rather pointless 'innovation'.



Hindustan Times

Title : IIT experts' help to reduce noise level near IGI Airport

Author :

Location : NEW DELHI

Article Date : 09/22/2011

IIT experts' help to reduce noise level near IGI Airport

NEW DELHI: The centre informed the HC that it has sought help from IIT experts to reduce noise level near IGI. ASG AS Chandhok told this to the division bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justice Sanjiv Khanna. **IAN S**

हवाई अड्डे के पास शोर कम करने के लिए आईआईटी की मदद

नई दिल्ली (कास)। इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय (आईजीआई) हवाईअड्डे के आसपास हवाई जहाजों का शोर कम करके शांत वातावरण सुनिश्चित करने की कोशिशें जारी हैं। इसके तहत केन्द्र सरकार ने आईआईटी विशेषज्ञों से सहयोग मांगा है।

यह जानकारी बुधवार को एडिशनल सॉलिसिटर जनरल एस चंडिहोक ने चीफ जस्टिस दीपक मिश्रा और जस्टिस संजीव खन्ना की डिवीजन बेंच के समक्ष दी। उन्होंने बताया कि सरकार ने विशेषज्ञों को हवाईअड्डे के आसपास ऐसा तंत्र विकसित करने को कहा है, जिससे हवाईजहाजों के आने-जाने से होने वाला शोर कम किया जा सके। विशेषज्ञ इस शोर को कम करने का प्रयास करेंगे, खासकर रात के समय।

Rashtriya Sahara ND 22/09/2011

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एयरपोर्ट पर ध्वनि प्रदूषण कम करने के लिए आईआईटी से मांगी मदद

नई दिल्ली (एसएनबी)। केन्द्र ने बुधवार को दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट को बताया कि, उसने इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के निकट ध्वनि प्रदूषण पर अंकुश लगाने का तरीका ढूँढने के लिए आईआईटी की मदद मांगी है, ताकि एयरपोर्ट के निकट रहने वाले लोगों को ध्वनि प्रदूषण से राहत मिल सके।

मुख्य न्यायाधीश दीपक मिश्रा और न्यायमूर्ति संजीव खन्ना की पीठ को केन्द्र सरकार की तरफ से पेश अतिरिक्त महाधिवक्ता एस चंडियोक ने बताया कि सरकार ने आईआईटी और विशेषज्ञों से कहा है कि वे एयरपोर्ट के निकट ध्वनि प्रदूषण को कम करने के लिए एक तंत्र

विकसित करें।

अदालत को बताया गया कि उड़ानों के कारण ध्वनि के स्तर को कम करने की विभिन्न संभावनाओं की तलाश की जा रही है। इस पर अदालत ने एसजी से कहा कि वह हवाई अड्डे के निकट ध्वनि प्रदूषण के स्तर को कम करने के लिए केन्द्र की ओर से किए जा रहे प्रयासों पर विस्तृत हलफनामा दाखिल करें।

जानकारी हो कि अदालत ने इससे पहले वसंत कुंज निवासियों की याचिका पर सुनवाई करते हुए सरकार की खिंचाई करते हुए कहा था कि वह इस समस्या का समाधान करने के लिए कोई कदम उठाने में विफल रही है।

Hindustan ND
22/09/2011 P-3

आईआईटी विशेषज्ञ कम करेंगे एयरपोर्ट पर ध्वनि प्रदूषण

नई दिल्ली। इंदिरा गांधी इंटरनेशनल (आईजीआई) एयरपोर्ट के आसपास के बाशिंगों को उड़ानों की तेज आवाज से निजात दिलाने के लिए अब आईआईटी विशेषज्ञों का ही आसरा है। केन्द्र सरकार ने बुधवार को हाईकोर्ट को बताया कि एयरपोर्ट पर ध्वनि प्रदूषण को कम करने के लिए आईआईटी के विशेषज्ञों से मदद ली जा रही है।

चीफ जस्टिस दीपक मिश्रा व संजीव खन्ना की पीठ के समक्ष सरकार की ओर से अतिरिक्त महाधिवक्ता एस.एस. चंडीहोक ने कहा कि जल्द ही इन विशेषज्ञों की मदद से ध्वनि प्रदूषण को कम किया जाएगा। उन्होंने कहा कि एयरपोर्ट पर ध्वनि प्रदूषण, खासकर रात के समय में इसे कम करने के बाबत ठोस योजना बनाकर सरकार विस्तृत हलफनामा पेश करेगी। सरकार की दलील सुनने के बाद हाईकोर्ट ने 9 नवंबर तक सरकार को इस बारे में ठोस योजना बनाने को कहा है। उन्होंने यह जानकारी एयरपोर्ट के आसपास के गांव के लोगों की ओर से दायर जनहित याचिका पर सुनवाई के दौरान दी।

स्कूल में पिछड़ गए तो आईआईटी में नो चांस!

● अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

कानपुर। आईआईटी में दाखिले के लिए अब सिर्फ प्रवेश परीक्षा में बेहतर प्रदर्शन से काम नहीं चलेगा, बल्कि कक्षा एक से बारहवीं तक का पूरा प्रदर्शन भी परखा जाएगा। आईआईटी की संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा (जेईई) अब अमेरिकी पैटर्न पर कराई जाएगी। इसमें 50 फीसदी अंक एकेडमिक एक्सीलेंस (कक्षा में प्रदर्शन) के होंगे, ऐसे में स्कूल का खराब रिपोर्ट कार्ड दाखिले का गणित का बिगाड़ सकता है।

अमेरिकी तकनीकी संस्थान और विश्वविद्यालयों में दाखिले के लिए कोलैस्टिक एप्टीट्यूड टेस्ट (सैट) कराया जाता है। इसमें एकेडमिक एक्सीलेंस को भी महत्व दिया जाता है। इसे ध्यान में रखकर आईआईटी काउंसिल ने जेईई 2012-13 के बदले प्रारूप पर मुहर लगाई है। बुधवार को पत्रकारों से बातचीत में निदेशक प्रो. संजय गोविंद धांडे ने बताया कि देश में दो केंद्रीय और 42 स्टेट बोर्ड हैं। 42 बोर्ड से हर साल एक करोड़ विद्यार्थी पास होते हैं। इनमें 14 लाख इंजीनियरिंग में दाखिला लेते हैं। कुछ साल में यह संख्या बढ़कर 24 लाख हो जाएगी। ऐसे में यह बदलाव किया जा रहा है। निदेशक ने बताया कि इंडियन

● जेईई में विषय
ज्ञान के साथ
बौद्धिक क्षमता की
भी होगी परख

● एकेडमिक
एक्सीलेंस के होंगे
50 फीसदी अंक

● 2012-13 से
किया जाना है
पैटर्न में परिवर्तन

ये होगा नया फार्मेट

50 फीसदी अंक का एप्टीट्यूड टेस्ट होगा, जिसमें कंपटीटिव रीजनिंग और क्वालिटेटिव रीजनिंग के सभी विषयों के सवाल होंगे। यानी सिर्फ पीसीएम नहीं बल्कि हर विषय को परखा जाएगा।

स्टैटिकल इंस्टीट्यूट कोलकाता के दो प्रोफेसर सेंट्रल और स्टेट बोर्ड के अंकों का वेटेज और मानक तय कर रहे हैं। इसका ब्योग जैब के समक्ष रखकर एप्टीट्यूड टेस्ट और अंकों के वेटेज का अंतिम प्रारूप तैयार होगा।