

Newspaper Clips September 4-5, 2010

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1/3rd IIT faculty slots vacant

NITIN MAHAJAN

NEW DELHI

Sept. 3: Despite claims of expansion, inclusion and maintaining high standards in higher education sector of the country, IITs, the premiere engineering institutes in the country, are facing a massive shortage of teachers with over one-third positions lying vacant.

Official statistics reveal that the highest number of vacant posts of teachers lie in IIT Kharagpur at 299 followed by IIT Mumbai at 222, IIT Roorkee at 194, IIT Madras at 138 and IIT Delhi

at 78. The vacancies in IIT Kanpur stand at 69, IIT Guwahati at 65 and IIT Ropad at 48. Official sources stated that the situation of vacancies was somewhat similar at all 15 IITs in the country.

An internal study conducted by the Union human resource development ministry has revealed that the institutes have one of the poorest teacher-student ratio when compared to its counterparts in other countries. The IITs have a teacher-student ratio of 1:15 while other international prestigious organisations have

much better teacher-student ratio like Harvard 1:7, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Hong Kong and National University of Singapore have a ratio of 1:5. While University of Michigan, has a ratio of 1:6.

Official sources stated that presently there was a provision for maintaining a teacher-student ratio of 1:10 at IITs. However, in all about 34.2 per cent of all teachers posts are lying vacant in IITs across the country. With the government proposing to open up the higher education market

for international educational institutes, the situation is expected to worsen.

“The foreign players will also affect the existing faculty strength as they will try and recruit teachers from India as well,” sources said.

In an effort to prevent this expected exodus the HRD ministry has already proposed more incentives for IIT faculty members. A performance-related incentive scheme for existing teachers and faculty has been proposed which will also take into account the performance of teachers in research work and publications.

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'Uranium reserves to be over by 2050'

RASHME SEHGAL

NEW DELHI

Sept. 3: Energy experts warn that an acute shortage of uranium is going to hit the nuclear energy industry. Dr Yogi Goswami, co-director of the Clean Energy Research Centre at the University of Florida warns that "the proven reserves of uranium will last less than 30 years."

Current nuclear plants consume around 67,000 tonnes of high-grade uranium per year. With present uranium deposits in the planet having been estimated at 4-5 million tones, this means the present resources would last 42 years.

But if there is going to be a stepping up of nuclear energy plants, as seems to be the case, then the likelihood is that that the time span is going to be considerably reduced. Dr Goswami who is the inventor of the a new thermodynamic cycle for solar thermal power now called the Goswami Ther-

With the shrinking uranium reserves, Dr Stefankos believes solar energy provides a safer alternative

modynamic cycle, says, "by 2050, all proven and undiscovered reserves of uranium will be over."

"Other options for producing uranium will be available. For example, three parts per billion of sea water is uranium but the costs of recovering this uranium are so high that it is unlikely to prove an unviable option," he said.

Dr Goswami agreed that atomic fuel was limitless if a government went in for breeder reactors. But from the 400 nuclear reactors being used in the world, "I do not know of a single government using them at present." Dr Goswami also expressed his scepticism at the thermal breeder reactor technology based on thori-

um. At present, India is the only country currently pursuing this because of its substantial thorium reserves.

His views were seconded by Dr Lee Stefankos, a professor of electrical engineering and director of the Clean Energy Research Centre at the University of South Florida. Dr Stefanakos, who has been carrying out research in the areas of solar thermal energy conversion, photovoltaic systems and hydrogen.

Dr Stefankos also feels that nuclear energy is not one of the major producers of energy. With the shrinking uranium reserves, Dr Stefankos believes solar energy provides a safer and in the long run, a much cheaper alternative.

An Indian scientist pointed out, "India is investing thousands of crores in expanding a nuclear energy program even though they were warned that high grade uranium is as much a dwindling resource as are coal and gas resources."

Asian Age ND 04-Sep-10

Educating classes



OF CABBAGES & KINGS

— Farrukh Dhondy —

"My mother sang 'I'm in heaven...' celebrating her love. And, aged 4, I thought she was celebrating death."

From *Yaadein* by Bachchoo

THE BIGGEST debate the present British Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government faces, its first real challenge, is over its policy on schools. The education secretary of the new government, Michael Gove, is attempting to implement the coalition's first and most radical policy in two steps.

Firstly, he has offered successful schools in the state sector — which means schools whose pupils don't pay fees but go to schools paid for by the Central government through the administration of the local government — to choose to become "Academies". This would give them a status which would free them from their own local government's control.

What does that mean? In practical terms it would mean that these schools and their governing bodies and head teachers could determine the school's structure and the pay structure of their staff. They would have more control over the ethos and curriculum of the school and they could more easily hire and fire teachers for not coming up to the mark.

Breaking loose of local government would mean in practice that the school got more money from Central government which it could use on staff and equipment. The policy of freeing "good" schools, by and large those which have achieved high exam results and been praised by the inspecting authorities as working under sound administration, is opposed by the teach-

ers' unions. They fear that Academy status would grant the head teacher and the governors' powers of hiring and firing which would be an assault on the job-security of the classroom teacher. It would also undermine the pay structures that the unions have patiently and painstakingly negotiated with local authorities over the years. Schools would be allowed to offer teachers a wage according to market prices and forces — a shortage of physics teachers? Pay them more than teachers of French or English — unless those are in short supply too.

Mr Gove's second radical innovation, going much further than the plan for "Academy status" is allowing anyone — parents teachers, businessmen — to set up their own school, meet with government requirements and be financed by the state. Mr Gove's calculation is that the Central government gives each local borough money for the number of pupils that go to school there. The number of pupils, determined by the yearly birth and immigration and emigration rate in that borough, will remain the same whichever school they attend. So the Central government will not spend much more money but will achieve the ideological conservative (and now coalition) goal of allowing free market forces to enter schooling. The groups of parents, who set up their own school and attract the children of other parents, will be allowed to appoint their own head teachers and staff and determine the policy of the school.

The British school system has always been divided into several layers. The post-Second World War Labour government, elect-

ed on a wave of anti-class feeling, set up universal secondary education, compulsory for all children up to the age of 15. The schools were at the time divided into four layers. At the bottom were the trade schools, dedicating to turning out apprentices to the metal, wood and industrial crafts and trades. Then came the "secondary moderns" designed to absorb into education and teach routines and disciplines to the majority of working class children. Then the top layer for the general public were the grammar schools which chose the best of pupils at the age of 11, subjecting them to tests of English, maths and general knowledge, selecting and separating them and then training them to join the professional classes.

At the top, not paid for by the state, were the "Public schools" (the paradox being that the private schools were called "public"). These were, as the world has been taught to appreciate, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Marlborough and the rest.

Under the 1964 Labour government of Harold Wilson, an education secretary called Anthony Crosland initiated a radical policy of amalgamating the state schools into a single layer of secondary "serve-all" schools, appropriately called Comprehensives. His aim was to put all young Britons into the same educational melting pot at the age of 11 and then allowing them to demonstrate their merit and sink or swim. The ablest would get the best results. The less able would be inspired by their cleverer or more fortunate and literate contemporaries.

It was a noble vision but it left out the fee-paying public schools which would retain their status as the perpetrators and markers of class.

The Indian school system was not modelled on the British. Undoubtedly, the school to which I went in Poona, now Pune, was a paradigmatic attempt by its Anglican Christian founders to emulate the

structure, systems and ideals of some British equivalent.

My parents paid the fees. We wore ties and blazers and were, as a student body, divided into Houses named after British Bishops, competing against each other in football, hockey, cricket, athletics and swimming. We were aware that there were grander schools to which richer boys and girls were sent, boarding in the hills and being groomed and pedigreed for high office and social favour.

Below that layer of commanding aspiration there was no school system orchestrated on the British model. Indian nationalism, ambition and the demand for literacy in the market caused successive governments over the period of independence to legislate for compulsory education which was layered into the English-speaking schools and the "vernacular" ones.

No Indian government now or under the present democratic dispensation will be able to legislate to bring any uniformity into this Indian school system. There can be no Anthony Crosland, seeking to level the opportunities of all citizens and succeeding in creating a vast meritocracy. There can be, because the countries start from very different dispositions, no Michael Gove of India, someone who himself was not privileged by birth to be a public school boy (as were his colleagues in government, the Prime Minister David Cameron, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne and the deputy prime minister Nick Clegg).

Or am I wrong? Will there in some Indian government soon be a Prime Minister and education minister who can, as the Chinese Communist government has, muster the determination to work towards a uniform educational system in which the pupils of Doon school compete in the same league, linguistically, academically and socially with the pupils of, say, the local school of Sawant Vadi, Karwan Jilla? Not likely, but possible.

Pioneer ND 04-Sep-10

EX-IAF OFFICER'S SON HELD FOR DUPING IIT ASPIRANT

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Rajender Nagar police of central district on Friday arrested the son of Shaurya Chakra winner retired-Flight Lieutenant of Indian Air Force (IAF) for allegedly cheating an IIT aspirant of ₹6 lakh on the pretext of securing him a confirmed seat in IIT Kharagpur.

The police said that the arrested person, identified as Vijay Kumar, claimed himself to be the vice-president of Microsoft in Gurgaon besides an alumni and guest lecturer of IIT Kharagpur.

Investigators said that the accused had cheated several other IIT aspirants and also a few students who are pursuing IIT engineering degree from different IITs. The police recovered 150 fake experience certificates of Microsoft, which he used to sell for Rs 50,000 each, fake identity cards of vice-president of Microsoft, Dell Corporation, Dy SP (CBI) and a few other forged documents, with which he used to cheat people.

Senior police officials said that Vijay Kumar was apprehended from his Najafgarh residence on Thursday by a

150 fake experience certificates of Microsoft were recovered from Vijay Kumar. He used to sell these for ₹50,000 each. Fake ID cards of vice-president of Microsoft, Dell Corporation and DSP (CBI) were also seized from his possession

police team led by Rituraj, Inspector ATO of Rajender Nagar police station, under the supervision of S Sarvanan, ACP/Karol Bagh. Investigators said that the arrest came following investigations into a complaint lodged by one Rajiv Ranjan Kumar, a lecturer from Bihar saying that he was cheated by the accused by promising admission to his son in IIT-Kharagpur.

The complainant told the police that his son Animesh

Ranjan had come to Delhi after passing Class XII for entrance coaching and during his stay, he came into contact with the accused, who claimed to be an engineer and IIT pass-out. "He cheated him of ₹6 lakh on the pretext of getting his son admitted in BTech in IIT Kharagpur," a senior police official said.

"The complainant also alleged that they had first paid him ₹3 lakh in advance and the rest amount was paid after Kumar gave him fake admission receipts of IIT Kharagpur and its hostel," a senior investigating official said, adding they are also suspecting the involvement of Kumar's father Ram Prasad, a retired flight lieutenant.

During interrogation, the official said, Kumar revealed that he used to target IIT aspirants and influence them by showing fake degrees and projecting himself as an engineer and a topper of IIT-Kharagpur. He also allegedly used to tell aspirants that he had a good rapport with the Deen of the institute and can easily manage admission on management quota.

SPECIAL PAY SETBACK FOR TOP IIT, IIM PROFESSORS

Charu Sudan Kasturi

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NEW DELHI: Top IIT and IIM professors will miss three years of a special pay grade they were promised, under a human resource development ministry order that has triggered fears of faculty protests among institute authorities.

Unlike all other pay hikes for faculty that are being implemented with effect from January 1, 2006, the special pay grade for 40 per cent professors at these institutes will be valid only from August 18, 2009.

The faculty selected in the 40 per cent will, as a consequence, not receive the extra pay as arrears but will receive pay according to the rules applicable to other professors for the 2006 to 2009 period.

The academic grade pay – which defines the rank of a teacher within a pay band – for professors is Rs 10,500 a month and Rs 12,000 a month for those selected in the 40 per cent. The special pay was incorporated for the best among professors to discourage stagnation and retain them in the face of lucrative industry offers. These professors are picked based on research work, publications, teaching feedback and other parameters.

IIT directors have articulated their concerns over the August 26 order to the ministry amid fears of a revival of unprecedented faculty protests that rocked IIT campuses last year, top institute sources told HT.

"This order has the potential to create problems once again. But I am sure the government also has its compulsions," a director said.

Ministry sources said the order was just a "clarification" to help implement the new pay structure. "The special category of professors did not exist in 2006, so how can IITs expect to be paid for something that didn't exist?" an official argued.

But a senior professor at IIT Bombay pointed out that the order specifically hurt those who would be selected in the best 40 per cent. "None of the current salaries existed in 2006. Is the government trying to say that these 40 per cent professors became worthy of the extra pay on some arbitrary date the ministry set," he questioned.

Hindustan Times ND 04-Sep-10

DEVELOPMENT DRIVE

ISRO eye on tribal plan in Red zones

Chetan Chauhan

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NEW DELHI: The Planning Commission has sought the help of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in monitoring the panel's Rs 14,000-crore plan for Naxal-affected tribal and backward regions, which got Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's in-principle approval on Friday.

According to panel sources, ISRO will provide satellite pictures of the work undertaken under the plan, which is likely to be considered by the cabinet in a fortnight.

"The satellite data can help us in finding whether the work for which the money is given is actually carried out or not," a senior panel functionary said.

With ISRO's help, the panel will also identify areas where special projects for water harvesting or improving agriculture productivity can be implemented. "The information provided with ISRO will be shared with people at the ground level to prepare a scientific plan that is workable".

This is the first time the plan panel has sought ISRO's help to monitor central government

PM on airport

After pleas for an early clearance for the long-pending Navi Mumbai airport project, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Friday said he would personally look into it and resolve the matter at the earliest.

The assurance was given to a Maharashtra Congress delegation led by Chief Minister Ashok Chavan.

HTC

programmes. The integrated action plan for tribal and backward areas has a different approach, as most of the money would be provided for the project planned at the district level. It contrasts with most government schemes where the money is provided for plans devised at the state or the central level.

The panel has proposed to provide Rs 2,400 crore directly to 60 districts identified as beneficiaries under the plan. These Naxal-affected districts are in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

Hindustan Times ND 04-Sep-10

Urban slum population to cross 100mn by 2017

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NEW DELHI: As India's economy takes impressive strides, its urban slum population is also registering an alarming rate of growth and will cross 100 million by 2017 from the estimated 75.2 million in 2001.

The projections are in a report prepared by a government committee headed by Dr Pranob Sen, principal adviser, Planning Commission.

According to the report, India's urban slum population is expected to touch 93.06 million by 2011. The report was formally accepted by the housing and poverty alleviation ministry — the nodal agency dealing with slums — on Friday.

"Such a trend was expected due to increase in urbanisation," said Housing Minister Kumari Selja.

The committee, set up by the ministry to study the slum definition and estimate urban slum population in the country, has also revised the census 2001 figure, which projected India's urban slum population at 52.4 million.

The ministry was of the opinion that the figures did not



■ India's urban slum population is expected to touch 93.06 million by 2011, a report prepared by a government committee has said.

FILE PHOTO

reflect reality as it covered just the 1,743 cities and towns with a population of more than 20,000 as against the 5,161 cities/towns in the country. The Office of Registrar General, India (RGI) — the agency which conducts the census — also did not include non-notified slums, thereby keeping a sizable number of slums outside the purview of welfare schemes.

The revision of slum figures, Selja said, would be of great help while implementing the Rajiv Awas Yojana — the gov-

ernment's flagship project to make India slum free.

The Sen committee has also changed the definition of slums for the ongoing census. As per the new definition, even small clusters of 20-25 households living in a contiguous area and exhibiting slum like characteristics — like little or no access to basic civic amenities like water, sanitation and sewerage — should be categorised as slums. Earlier, the cluster size for identification of slums was 60 households.

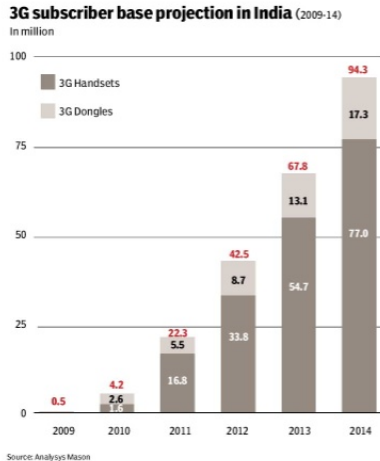
PANKAJ AGRAWAL analyses what 3G services will mean for an average mobile user
If telcos persist with premium pricing, their user base will be limited to a few early adopters

What not to expect from 3G



FEW people want to read more about 3G in India. It has been such a long undulating path of hope, expectation and despair over the last 4 years that 3G has become something of a mirage for waiting consumers. We can also be reasonably sure that our average mobile consumer does not know what exactly to expect from 3G. Will it really transform his currently aggravating user experience of trying to complete a voice call without any drops or allow him to find a mobile game, which he likes without repeatedly initiating the download and getting billed for it each time? Will he really be able to make those video calls being promoted by nubile celebrities, will that new mobile health application really help him get rid of the years of excess, or will he be able to watch that YouTube clip on his mobile browser?

It's widely accepted that unless telcos really work on developing an ecosystem around 3G services, just having access to spectrum will not change much in the lives of an average mobile consumer or in the topline of telcos. The key reason for this market structure is the difference between 3G and the earlier generations of communication technologies. When GSM and CDMA technologies were introduced, their value proposition of mobility over a fixed line connection was crystal clear, and as soon as the price points came down, the market hit the tipping point. However, from 2G to 3G, the key difference is the ability of the newer technolo-



gies to support higher data speeds, which on its own is a clear use case for only a niche section of the population.

The first beneficiary of the higher data speed will be the mobile broadband market (dongles, embedded devices and modems). CDMA operators have had a real first mover advantage in this market, with their launch of EVDO dongles and they are already adding about 2 million subscribers per annum. This market can grow for EVDO operators, but for 3G

(HSPA) operators, the amount of allocated spectrum (5 MHz) very quickly starts becoming a bottleneck. One way for the 3G operators to address this issue is to increase the contention ratio (number of simultaneous users), but then the end user experience starts mimicking its current experience with 2G and the additional \$3.64 billion paid for pan-India 3G spectrum starts going down the drain.

The other challenge is the limited growth in PC sales among residential users. Un-

like some of the developed markets like the US where telcos are subsidising embedded 3G notebooks, in India the telcos are not going to assume inventory risk. This means the customers should not expect fancy notebooks at Rs 4,000 with the launch of 3G, as the credit risk is very high and there is a constraint on the 3G data cards that can be supported in the limited spectrum. We expect this market to grow to about 17.3 million data cards by 2014. The other use of better ac-

cess speed is in enhancing the user experience in browsing and content download. This is where device vendors, content companies and the ecosystem starts becoming very important. Unlike in dongles, where the ecosystem has limited differentiators that it can offer (e.g., mobile TV services bundled with a 3G dongle), in handset-based browsing, the entire user experience and hence revenue upside is dependent on seamless content consumption, hence requiring strong

device-service integration. The reason why 50% of global mobile Internet data over smartphones goes through Apple devices, although they account for only 14.4% of the total smartphone base, is Apple's control over the end-to-end content consumption value chain. It may not be advisable for Indian telcos to try to replicate the Apple model, but all the ecosystem elements have to be in place to enhance end user experience and drive value out of 3G. In the current scenario of

telcos with stretched balance sheets, mobile device subsidy by telcos can also be ruled out. With the not-so-subtle and repeated hints coming from major telcos about 3G being a premium service, the content and monthly data plans may also be at a premium, at least in the initial year of 3G's introduction.

If an average user cannot afford a mobile device that supports the actual 3G experience, cannot afford the monthly data plan charges and does not have the flexibility to experiment with content to find what he likes due to premium pricing, then the user base will be limited to a few early adopters and the current bunch of premium users. The average user may then have to wait for that elusive enhanced 3G experience. We expect that the mass market will begin to come into the 3G fold with dropping device and service prices by some time in 2012, and the total 3G user base (excluding dongles) will reach about 77 million users by 2014.

However, the wait for 3G will be worth it, at least for the 6-8% premium customers in India who will have a greater choice of devices, content, applications and services, and a step change in user experience. To make sure this finally happens, telcos will need a lot more focus on partnerships, product and service innovation, pricing and device service integration than ever before.

The author is associate director in the New Delhi office of Analysys Mason, a global telecom, media and technology consultancy

Economic Times ND 04-Sep-10

Geneva meet stresses action to save biodiversity

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI

AWAY from the centrestage occupied by the climate finance dialogue, an informal ministerial on biological diversity was also taking place in Geneva. Biological diversity, which gets far less attention than climate change, plays a crucial role in maintaining the "benign conditions" that are necessary for the well being and survival of the human species. The ministerial stressed the need for "immediate action" as "fate" of biodiversity "for the millennia to come" would be determined by the "action or inaction over the next decade or two".

The one-day Geneva meeting was attended by 11 ministers of countries that have held or will hold the presidency of the conference of parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Environment minister Jairam Ramesh was among those participating in the ministerial as India will hold the presidency in 2012-14.

The news is not good. The third Global Biodiversity Outlook, which was released in May, came up for discussion at the meet. The outlook is grim. It states that human actions are putting a strain on the environment, such that the "ability of the planet's ecosystems to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted". Worse still

CLIMATE TALKS

The one-day Geneva meeting was attended by 11 ministers of countries that have held or will hold the presidency of the conference of parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Environment minister Jairam Ramesh was among those participating in the ministerial as India will hold the presidency in 2012-14

the there appears to be no easing up on the pressures which are leading to loss of biodiversity. The issues of climate change and biodiversity loss are inextricably linked. Each can exacerbate the impacts of the other, but at the same time there are policy options that can address both issues.

In what was a cause for "extreme concern" for the ministerial, the Outlook states that "the consequences of current trends are much worse than previously thought." Should current trends persist over the next decade, several "tipping points" will be reached before the end of the century. This will cause "irreparable damage to the ability

of major ecosystems to continue providing their goods and services."

In view of the urgent situation, the ministerial in its declaration has appealed to world leaders to do more for biodiversity by committing themselves to a common long-term vision and short-term mission for biodiversity and to global, regional and national targets to be achieved. In order to ensure implementation of the new biodiversity strategy, the ministers called for a strategy for resource mobilisation. The aim is to ensure adequate and predictable financial resources, and technology transfer, to developing countries.

The Geneva ministerial has asked that equal attention be given to three objectives of the Convention—the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources.

This ministerial, being held just ahead of the tenth meet of the signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity, sought to underscore the importance of finalising a global biodiversity agreement at the October meet in Nagoya, Japan. The Geneva ministerial has also decided to support Tokyo's initiative to recommend to the UN to consider declaring 2011-2020 as the 'International Decade for Biodiversity'.



CHECKING SCHEDULE: A delegate at an informal ministerial meeting in Geneva. AP

Times of India ND 04-Sep-10

One nabbed for promising jobs, admissions to IITs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A man, who allegedly posed as vice-president of a software giant and cheated several IIT aspirants by promising them admissions and "secure" jobs later, was arrested on Friday.

The accused, Vijay Kumar, was apprehended from Najafgarh in southwest Delhi following investigations into a complaint filed by one Rajiv Ranjan Kumar from Bihar.

Rajiv was cheated of Rs 3.11 lakh by the accused for promising admission to his son in IIT Kharagpur. The accused's father reportedly retired as a flight lieutenant and had been a Shaurya Chakra awardee.

The complainant told police that his son Animesh Ranjan had come to Delhi after completing Class XII for the entrance exam coaching and it was during his stay that he came in contact with the accused.

"He induced and cheated



Vijay Kumar used to pose as a vice-president of a software firm and a former IIT-Kharagpur topper. He used to tell IIT aspirants that he shared a rapport with the dean of the institute and could get them admitted

Rajiv of Rs 3,11,300 on the pretext of getting his son admitted in the BTech course in IIT Kharagpur," a senior police official said.

During interrogation, it was revealed that Vijay used to target IIT aspirants and influence them by showing fake degrees and projecting himself as an engineer and a topper from IIT Kharagpur.

He also used to tell aspirants that he had a good rapport with the dean of the engineering institute and could easily manage admission in

the management quota. "He also allegedly posed himself as vice-president of Microsoft Company in Gurgaon, to impress his targets.

"He also made a fake CBI ID card to protect himself in case of any untoward situation," the official said.

"Several fake documents including CBI ID cards, engineering degree of IIT Kharagpur, appreciation letters from Microsoft, Gurgaon, were recovered from his possession," he added.

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Times of India ND 04-Sep-10

Remote logouts for safer e-networking

New York: Facebook is rolling out a new security feature that lets users log out of their accounts remotely from another computer.

To do this, go to "account settings" on your Facebook page and click on "change" next to "account security". There, you'll see where else your Facebook account is logged in, including the type of device and the city it's in or near. To log out of any of them, click "end activity".

Facebook is making this available over the next couple of weeks. It will be accessible on computers, but not mobile devices. The feature is similar to what Gmail offers to its users, and Facebook says it's

designed to help users keep their logins secure.

Not everyone will be able to use this new feature immediately, as it's being rolled out "gradually", Facebook said in an email message.

SECURITY CHECK

Someone whose account has been hacked could use this information to confirm that her account had been compromised and then reset her password. "It provides you with a visual indication of which devices currently have sessions open with your user profile," said Andrew Walls, research director with the analysis firm. AGENCIES

Times of India ND 04-Sep-10

Implantable kidney to make dialysis history

Device Consists Of Thousands Of Nanoscale Filters & A Bioreactor

Washington: An American team led by an Indian-origin scientist has unveiled a prototype model of the first implantable artificial kidney — a feat that one day could eliminate the need for dialysis.

The device, which would include thousands of microscopic filters as well as a bioreactor to mimic the metabolic and water-balancing roles of a real kidney, is being developed in a collaborative effort by engineers, biologists and physicians nationwide, led by Shuvo Roy, in the University of California, San Francisco, Department of Bioengineering and Therapeutic Sciences.

The treatment has been proven to work for the sickest patients using a room-sized external model developed by a team



NO REJECTION: Invention to do away with need for immunosuppressants

member in Michigan. Roy's goal is to apply silicon fabrication technology, along with specially engineered compartments for

live kidney cells, to shrink that large-scale technology into a device the size of a coffee cup.

The device would then be im-

planted in the body without the need for immune suppressant medications, allowing the patient to live a more normal life.

"This device is designed to deliver most of the health benefits of a kidney transplant, while addressing the limited number of kidney donors each year," said Roy.

A model of the implantable bioartificial kidney shows the two-stage system — thousands of nanoscale filters remove toxins from the blood, while a Bio-Cartridge of renal tubule cells mimics the metabolic and water-balance roles of the human kidney.

The team has established the feasibility of an implantable model in animal models and plans to be ready for clinical trials in five to seven years. ANI

New HIV treatment zaps infected cells only

Jerusalem: Israeli researchers have developed a new treatment for HIV that kills human cells infected with the virus and could lead to a breakthrough in treating AIDS, the Haaretz newspaper said on Friday.

Whereas current treatments focus on inhibiting the replication of the HIV virus, the new treatment destroys infected cells without damaging healthy ones, the newspaper said. The process makes use of peptides, or short protein segments, which vastly increase the replications of the virus once it enters a cell, causing the cell's self-de-

struction, Haaretz said, citing one of the researchers.

"The usual medications kill the virus that has entered the body during infection and the (peptide) treatment allows cells infected with the genetic load of the virus to be killed," Abraham Loyter, who carried out the study, was quoted as saying.

The study was published in the peer-reviewed British journal AIDS Research and Therapy in August.

They have registered an Israeli patent but the treatment must still be tested on animals and humans, Haaretz said. AFP

Times of India ND 04-Sep-10

'Infosys open to foreigner as chief'

New Delhi: Infosys chairman and chief mentor Narayana Murthy on Friday said the company is open to a foreigner becoming his successor.

"Well, given that we have a significant percentage of foreign holdings in Infosys, I don't think it should matter whether it is an Indian or a foreigner who chairs the company," Murthy told a private channel.

He was responding to a query on how Infosys' shareholders would react to a foreigner as his successor. "What they (shareholders) would look for is a person who can guide the company in a proper direction, who can manage the board well, who has the support of all the people in the company, so I don't think it would matter," he added.

The hunt for a replacement for Murthy has already started as he would retire in August next year after he turns 65.

"I am sure we will see in the years to come... one of the mem-

bers of the executive council become the chief executive officer. There is no doubt about that at all. "But, whether it is going to happen in the next two years, five years or seven years, that is not for me to comment," Murthy noted.

Earlier, Murthy had said that it would not be difficult for an outsider to succeed him.

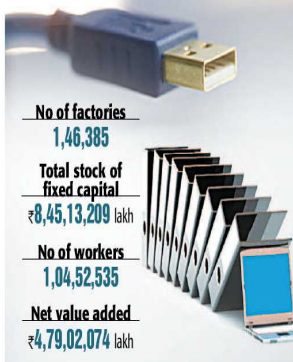
Infosys' nominations committee has started the search for Murthy's successor. The committee has ICICI Bank non-executive chairman K V Kamath, Cornell University professor Jeffrey Lehman and HDFC Standard Life Insurance chief executive officer Deepak M Satwalekar as members.

The search for a successor to Narayana Murthy comes at a time when India's top business group, the Tatas, has begun to look for a replacement for its chairman, Ratan Tata, who is to retire in December, 2012. AGENCIES

Economic Times ND 04-Sep-10

Govt to speed up data entry to make industry survey relevant

QUICK BYTES



Source: Annual Survey of Industries -2007-08

Rishi Shah & Surabhi
NEW DELHI

THE annual survey of industries is undergoing an overhaul as part of attempts to make information available without the current 18-month lag to make it relevant for policy makers and analysts.

Online filing of data will start from the survey exercise for 2009-10 that was kicked off earlier this month. This will help the government to come up with quick estimates of industrial activity within months of the fiscal year close.

"We will implement a system of online data filing straight from the field during this survey," said TCA Anant, chief statistician of India.

The exercise would help reduce the time lag by about four months, but Mr Anant said some amount of time lag would remain because of the inherent nature of the survey.

"There are issues about generating quick estimates using the data in some other way. Once we streamline

the process of data collection, it may be possible to start exploring those," Mr Anant said.

The annual survey gives a complete picture of industrial activity as covers all factories registered under the Factories Act, offering in-depth information on depreciation, interest costs, emoluments, and productivity of capital and labour. It covers factories that employ 10 or more workers using electricity and 20 or more without using electricity.

The widely followed index of industrial production is a short-term indicator of growth in mining, manufacturing and electricity.

Data collection for the survey starts at least six months after a firm closes its books of accounts for the fiscal year. Since the survey seeks very specific data, the process of collecting the data from each factory is long and cumbersome. At present, it is filed manually at the field offices and centrally compiled and analysed later.

The ministry has been steadily working to reduce the time lag in publishing the survey. It was earlier released after a lag of over three years, which it has

come down to 18 months.

Most analysts welcomed the move, but said checks must be brought in to ensure the veracity of data.

"The annual survey of industries gives crucial data which is much more reliable and comprehensive than that provided in corporate results or the IIP," said Mridul Sagar, chief economist, Kotak Institutional Equities.

"It would be a good move if the government is able to reduce the time lag as it would greatly increase its relevance for research purposes, such as productivity and technical efficiency changes, as well as for other users like policymakers," he said.

Aditya Bhattacharjee, professor at the Delhi School of Economics suggested quality checks to ensure the integrity of the data as well as a partial modification in the survey format.

"Assigning code numbers to individual factories retrospectively would be very helpful as it would help track their behaviour in response to policy changes, without divulging their identities," he said.

Economic Times ND 04-Sep-10

Dubai police chief calls BlackBerry a spy tool



AP
DUBAI

UNITED Arab Emirates' worries about spying by the US and Israel spurred plans to sharply limit BlackBerry services in the United Arab Emirates, Dubai's police chief said in comments that suggest a tough line in talks with the smart phone maker.

The UAE says it will block BlackBerry e-mail, messaging and Web services October 11 unless authorities can gain access to the encrypted data traffic — a demand by other countries warning of possible bans including India. The proposed UAE action threatens BlackBerry service for an estimated 5,00,000 local subscribers and could tarnish the country's reputation as the Gulf's business and tourism hub with potentially millions of visitors left without key BlackBerry services.

Dubai's police chief, Lt Gen. Dahi Khalfan Tamim, said that fears of espionage and information sharing by foe Israel — as well as UAE allies United States and Britain — helped prompt the possible limits on the popular BlackBerry.

Tamim told a conference on information technology that the proposed BlackBerry curbs are also "meant to control false rumours and defamation of public figures due to the absence of surveillance," according to a story posted Friday on the website of the UAE newspaper Al-Khaleej. Tamim, whose remarks are often considered to reflect the views of Dubai's leadership, did not elaborate on the spying accusations in the article. The police chief gained international attention as the pointman in the probe into the January slaying of a Hamas commander in Dubai, which Emirati officials have blamed on Israel's Mossad spy agency. UAE officials reportedly are still in talks with BlackBerry maker, Canada-based Research In Motion. Tamim's comments, however, point to a hard line by Emirates security chiefs who demand access to BlackBerry data. BlackBerry traffic is encrypted and routed through servers operated by RIM. The company has said it would not disclose details of discussions with regulators in any of the more than 175 countries where it operates.

This week, India gave RIM a 60-day window to offer ways for authorities to monitor BlackBerry traffic. Saudi Arabia last month allowed BlackBerry services to continue, citing 'positive developments' after talks with the company.

Economic Times ND
04-Sep-10

Promotion denial prime cause of attrition: Study



Our Bureau
NEW DELHI

THREE out of every five Indian professionals who quit their jobs do so due to lack of promotion despite their performance and almost half of them say flexible work hours could be an incentive enough to stay back, says a study conducted by workplace solutions firm Regus.

"One of the effects of the economic recovery is that many more employees have started quitting their jobs," said Madhusudan Thakur, country head, Regus.

The survey that tried to fathom the reasons that make employees quit also revealed nearly half of the respondents who wanted to leave their jobs said their decision was due to lack of communication and involvement by the company's top management.

Around 30% of the respondents said they did not want to stick around due to lack of company vision.

A fifth of the employees counted their boss taking credit for their own work among the reasons for quitting. An equal proportion of those surveyed felt that a shabby workplace was good enough reason to resign. This, according to the study, leads to stress among employees.

"Although bonuses and job perks were cut back to weather the economic storm, but as growth picks up, employees are flocking to businesses that promise them better work conditions," Mr Thakur said. The survey conducted among 15,000 professionals globally also asked workers what could companies do to avoid attrition of their best talent. As much as 42% of the Indian respondents said they look for ability to flex their work hours as top of their wish-list besides a pay rise.

Economic Times ND 04-Sep-10

10% of global reinsurers close doors on Indian cos

Move Triggered By Govt's Decision To Tax Premium Paid By Domestic Companies To Global Underwriters



PLAYING SPOILSPORT

Mayur Shetty
MUMBAI

NEARLY 10% of the world's reinsurance markets have closed down for Indian insurers following the government's decision to tax premium paid out by domestic companies to global underwriters.

Last year, the government made it mandatory for insurance companies to deduct tax at source for all reinsurance transactions. Insurance companies had earlier argued that reinsurance companies do not have any set-up in India and do not attract the provision of Section 9 of the IT Act which describes income deemed to accrue or arise in India. Companies which are dealing with underwriters in countries where there is a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) have found a way around the

problem, but a significant amount of reinsurance — almost 10% — is done outside the DTAA countries.

Several non-life companies based in the south have received notices from the IT department for recovery of tax on premium paid to reinsurance companies. "We have been arguing with the tax authorities that the tax should be subject to the difference between the amount paid as premium and the money received in the form of claims from reinsurance companies. However, the department continues to hold that all premiums are taxable"

Insurers say it is possible to avoid tax payments if the reinsurer is based in a country with which India has a DTAA. There are 79 countries with which India has a DTAA. Most of the reinsurance companies are based in European mar-

PARTY POOPER
Last year, the government made it mandatory for insurance companies to deduct tax at source for all reinsurance transactions. Several non-life companies based in the south have received notices from the IT department for tax recovery

kets. However, in recent years new reinsurance markets have opened up in the Caribbean and Hong Kong which are not part of the DTAA. Insurers say it might become uneconomical to do business in these markets because of the withholding tax.

The impact on the balance sheets of the non-life companies is limited, thanks to the high level of retention of premium in India. Overall, less than 15% of the premium collected from policy holders is paid to reinsurance companies. General insurers pass on risks to reinsurance companies under two types of contracts — facultative reinsurance and through treaties. Facultative reinsurance is when a local company passes on most of the premium collected under a policy because the risk is too significant for its balance sheet. This can be seen in the case of oil refineries and airlines. Besides this all insurance companies enter into reinsurance treaties to ensure that their balance sheet continues to remain protected beyond a certain level, if intensity of claims is very high in a particular year.

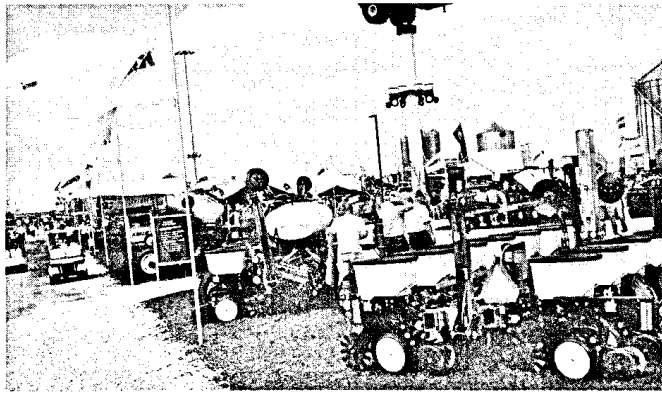
Technology, corporates marginalising small US farmers

K.V. Kurmanath

Boone, Iowa (US), Sept. 3
This small town in Iowa, which is in the top league of agriculture States in the US, gives a peep into the future of farming. Giant equipment, some that could easily pass off as battle tanks and surface-to-air missile launchers, monster-armed seed planters and harvesters, indeed are intimidating for someone from India.

The 55-year-old Farm Progress Show has become an annual rendezvous for farmers in the US, equipment manufacturers and those involved in seed development, with thousands making a beeline to the stalls. Top names including John Deere, New Holland, Monsanto, Syngenta, Pioneer and Sukup have set up stalls. The next edition of Farm Progress Show would be held in Decatur in Illinois.

"Farming in the US is becoming computerised and robotised," Mr Steeve, a farmer from Central Iowa, told *Business Line*. It, indeed, is a para-



Latest farm equipment: Farmers at the Farm Progress Show on Thursday at Boone, Iowa, US. The three-day expo and field demonstrations attracted farmers from the US and 50 countries. The expo showcases latest technologies in seed and farm equipment by top names in the industry. — K.V. Kurmanath

dox. The show reflects a stark contradiction in US agriculture. Small farmers are facing the threat of extinction as bigger farmers and farm corporations are on the constant prowl for small parcels of land.

Several of the old farmers said equipment was turning unaffordable by the year, making them uncompetitive. The word 'small', however, is relative, when you compare with the smallness in India. While

the average small holding in India is about a hectare, farmers with below 1,000 acres are considered 'small farmers'.

"We are a dying tribe," Mr Steve admits. "I used to have 450 acres, but gave 350 of it on

lease because I can handle only 100," he said.

TWIN PROBLEMS

While the average age of farmers with small holdings is well past 60 years, the youth, who are interested in farming, are not in a position to find finances.

Ms Carol Kennon, a 71-year-old, farmer corroborates. "It has become increasingly difficult to be in race with technology. The equipment are becoming costlier each year, making it difficult for small farmers," she said.

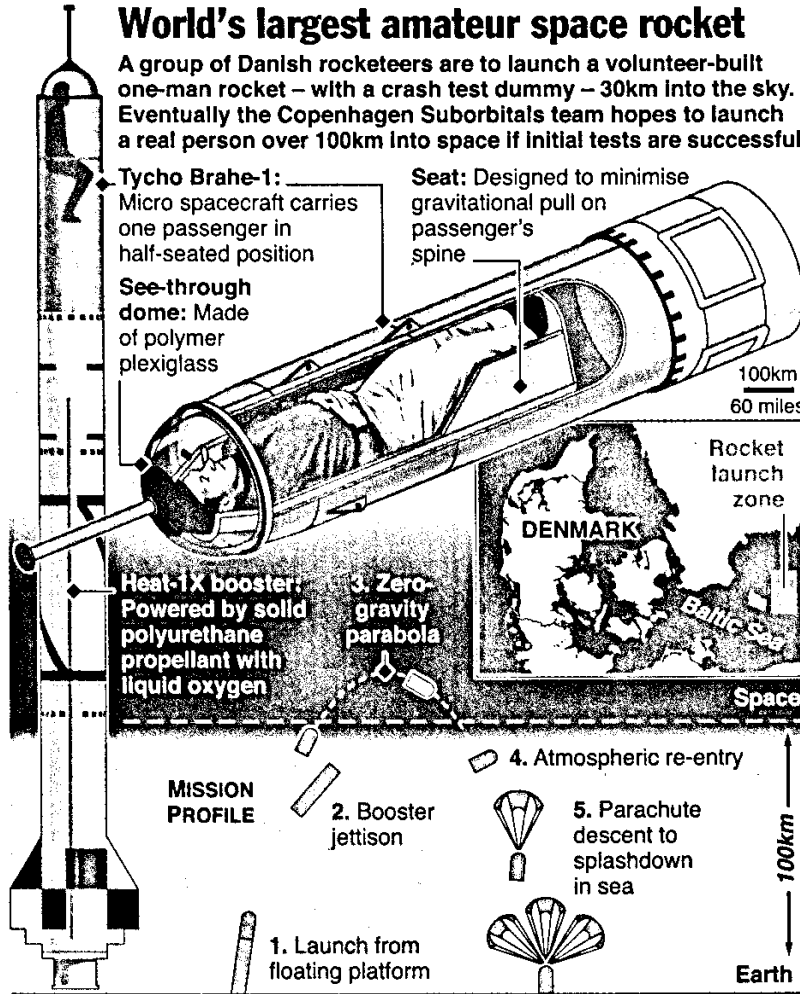
She, along with her 72-year-old husband, son, son-in-law and a handicapped grandson, manages 1,200 acres. (Managing means, they only can take care of the entire plot.)

"A good number of youth want to do farming and they are going to agriculture colleges. But what is lacking is investments," she said.

The big boys are ready to take over, Mr Steve said, when asked about how the future is going to be for small farmers.

World's largest amateur space rocket

A group of Danish rocketeers are to launch a volunteer-built one-man rocket – with a crash test dummy – 30km into the sky. Eventually the Copenhagen Suborbitals team hopes to launch a real person over 100km into space if initial tests are successful



5 SEP 2010

Business Line ND 05.09.10 p-12

Wanted: Candidates with warranty!



Professional certifications could signal higher skill levels of the candidate.

B. Venkatesh

Taking professional certification exams is neither easy nor cheap. It is small wonder that students in certain business schools are reluctant to take these exams in addition to their MBA. But why is it good economics for students to do these courses? Suppose you receive 100 applications for a job of a business analyst. Will you screen these applications to select candidates for the interview? Chances are you will request your human resources department to shortlist candidates who possess an undergraduate degree in engineering with an MBA from a top business school. You conveniently narrow your search to 20 candidates who might possess good analytical skills. You finally hire a candidate who has three professional certifications besides MBA. Why?

Information asymmetry

Candidates know more about themselves than you do about them. Unless you are clairvoyant, you are unlikely to find their true strengths and weaknesses during the interview process. You, therefore, suffer from information asymmetry.

It is the same problem you face if you buy a pre-owned car; the seller has more information than the buyer. Information asymmetry imposes high costs. How?

You may want to offer a low salary for the job, because you take the risk of hiring the wrong candidate. But low salary could keep the right candidates away and unintentionally attract the incompetent ones to the job! Companies attempt to reduce this cost by carrying a standard phrase in the recruitment advertisement: "Salary is not a constraint for the right candidate".

Professional certifications

Candidates can reduce the cost of information asymmetry by acquiring professional certifications. These certifications are akin to the warranty on, say, refrigerators. Typically, longer warranty period signals greater product quality, as it shows manufacturers' confidence in the product. Likewise, more professional certifications could signal higher skill levels of the candidate.

Students from top business schools who understand this equip themselves with handful of certifications. What does this mean to students of other business schools? Acquiring additional certifications is no longer about signalling — it is to keep pace with peers!

(The author is the founder of Navera Consulting. He can be reached at enhancek@gmail.com)

B-schools venture into green pasture

■ Demand for green managers prompts institutes to offer courses in environment-related disciplines

Rajiv Tikoo

New Delhi, Sep 4: Top engineering institutes and business schools across the country are going green with a vengeance. Seeing a growing market for green managers in the country, B-schools and universities are learning fast to offer management lessons in environment-related disciplines. While the Birla Institute of Management Technology (Bimtech) and the Institute of Chemical Technology have just introduced full-fledged MBA programmes in sustainability-related disciplines, IIM-Calcutta along with IIT-Kanpur and IIT-Madras has begun offering courses in green manufacturing this academic year onwards. IIM-Ahmedabad and IIM-Lucknow, too, have been including carbon courses in various programmes over the last years.

Elaborating that the green manufacturing course offered under the post-graduate programme for executives for visionary leadership in man-

ufacturing—a joint programme of IIM-Calcutta, IIT-Kanpur and IIT-Madras—focus on both technological and management aspects of greening, Shekhar Chaudhuri, director, IIM-Calcutta, adds, “It’s an imperative for managers to be equipped to lead on sustainability issues in today’s world.” An initiative of the National Manufac-

ie SUNDAY STORY

turing Competitiveness Council, the programme is supported by Japanese International Cooperation Agency (Jica) under a bilateral agreement between the two governments.

Going a whole hog, the Birla Institute of Management Technology or Bimtech has introduced a two-year, full-time post-graduate diploma in management (Sustainable Development Practices) this year. According to Bimtech director H Chaturvedi, “The programme aims to impart

skills to managers to tap into new opportunities arising out of the interplay between changing international policies and national priorities on development issues and the business responses to them.” The programme is modelled on similar ones offered by some of the leading foreign institutions like the Earth Institute at Columbia University and adapted in the Indian context after taking into consideration views of the industry thought leaders, adds programme coordinator Rahul Singh.

Mumbai-headquartered Institute of Chemical Tech-

nology just started a two-year MTech programme in green technology, which would seek to focus on green chemistry, environmental engineering and pollution prevention among other issues. Industry practitioners would have the option of pursuing it as a three-year part-time programme. Explaining the rationale for introducing the programme, GD Yadav, director, Institute of Chemical Tech-

nology says, “The chemical industry is an important industry to focus on from a sustainability perspective. Though the

chemical industry is one of the most polluting industries, it also has a big potential to offer sustainable solutions not only for healing itself, but also treating others.”

While these institutions are newcomers in the environmental domain this year, Teri University and Symbiosis Institute of International Business took the leap last year. Teri’s MBA in Business Sustainability positions itself as an MBA+ programme for integrating sustainable and ethical practices into traditional management disciplines like marketing, finance and strategy. Claiming that the university got a good response last year, which has further improved this year, Rajiv Seth, registrar, Teri University, adds, “We have an advantage over other green management programmes because we have the scope to leverage Teri’s environmental knowledge bank.”

■ Continued on Page 11



TURNING A NEW LEAF

- **IIM-Ahmedabad**
Course on carbon finance and environmental management strategies
- **IIM-Calcutta, IIT-Kanpur and IIT-Madras**
Post-graduate programme in green manufacturing
- **Symbiosis**
Two-year programme in energy & environment
- **Institute of Chemical Technology**

Two-year MTech in green technology

- **Birla Institute of Management Technology**
Two-year PG diploma in sustainable development practices
- **Amity School of Natural Resources and Sustainable Development**
Two-year MBA programme in Natural Resource Management
- **Teri University**
MBA in business sustainability

B-schools venture into green pasture

Similarly, Symbiosis’s two-year, full-time programme in Energy & Environment seeks to cater to the industry requirements by imparting economic, legal and technical know-how in energy and environment to aspiring managers. The programme also focussed on related issues like mitigation of climate change, loss of biodiversity and ozone layer depletion that, which influence busi-

ness decisions in the new global context. According to director Rajani Gupte, “We got a fantastic response to our summer internship for the first batch. We did not have enough students to cater to requests from companies.”

Even the Amity School of Natural Resources and Sustainable Development runs a two-year MBA programme in Natural Resource Management, which seeks to fo-

cus on development, conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and their measurable impact on economy.

Despite so many programmes, the trend is just about picking up in India. As of now, none of the Indian programmes is making it to the world’s top 100 MBA programmes with green content, according to Aspen Institute. The ranking is

dominated by American universities, which offer 68 of the top 100 programmes. The toppers include Schulich School of Business, York University, Canada; Stephen M Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, USA; Yale School of Management, USA; Stanford Graduate School of Business, USA, and Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame, USA.

GOOGLE SEARCH RATINGS UNDER SCRUTINY IN US

Texas attorney general orders probe into fairness of its search engine rankings

REUTERS
San Francisco, 4 September

Google Inc said it was the target of an investigation by the Texas Attorney General's office into the fairness of its search engine rankings.

The world number 1 search engine company said the probe is the first by a US legal authority into the fairness of its rankings, which can make or break commercial websites.

Google faces a similar probe by the European Commission, prompted by complaints from some small websites that felt they were unfairly hurt by low Google search rankings.

Texas attorney general Greg Abbott has asked for information about complaints from a number of companies, Google said on its website. Google specifically mentioned websites operated by Foundem, TradeComet and myTriggers as challenging its results, saying they competed with the search giant.

A spokeswoman for the Texas Attorney General confirmed the probe, but would give no further details. Google said it looks forward to answering questions from the Texas attorney general.

"We recognise that as Google grows, we're going to face more questions about how our business works," Deputy General Counsel Don Harrison said in a blog post. Harrison was not available for further comment.

In its statement on Friday, Google pointed out that two of the companies are represented by attorneys who also work for Microsoft Corp which has publicly encouraged companies to challenge Google's

business practices. Microsoft did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

TradeComet CEO Dan Savage said in an email that Google is trying to "distract from its own antitrust problems by pointing to others and their lawyers."

A myTriggers spokesperson added that its concern "is just the harm to myTriggers done by Google's anti-competitive conduct and bullying tactics."

Foundem did not respond to a request for comment.

FLASHPOINT

- Google faces a similar probe by the European Commission, prompted by complaints from some small websites that felt they were unfairly hurt by low Google search rankings
- Google specifically mentioned websites operated by Foundem, TradeComet and myTriggers as challenging its results, saying they competed with the search giant
- Google pointed out that two of the companies are represented by attorneys who also work for Microsoft Corp which has publicly encouraged companies to challenge Google's business practices

Privacy suit settled

Separately, Google has settled a federal lawsuit accusing it of privacy violations in connection with its Buzz social networking service, according to a court document filed on Friday.

To settle the lawsuit brought by a Gmail user, Google will set aside \$8.5 million for attorneys fees and donations to organisations focused on Internet privacy, according to the court filing.

In addition, "the settlement requires that Google undertake wider public education about the privacy aspects of Buzz," the filing said.

Launched in February, Buzz initially used an individual's email contacts from Google Gmail to build a social network of contacts that the rest of the world could see, which led to privacy concerns.

Google then changed the settings so that contacts were kept private by default.

The settlement filing comes as Google also said it would simplify and update its privacy policies, according to Associate General Counsel Mike Yang on the company's website (<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/09/trimming-our-privacy-policies.html>).

IT dept draws roadmap for e-development

KIRTIKA SUNEJA
New Delhi, 4 September

The Department of Information Technology (DIT) has decided to 'e-develop' six core areas – e-governance, e-industry, e-innovation, e-learning, e-security and e-inclusion – over the next five years.

The draft proposal of the five-year plan focuses on a multi-pronged strategy to achieve e-development: creation of e-infrastructure to facilitate and promote e-governance, promotion of electronics and information technology (IT) industry, promotion of e-inclusion, providing support for creating innovation, building knowledge networks and securing India's cyber space.

"Though the policy for the plan period had been done before, it is for the first time that we are doing a self evaluation of the activities and setting the targets. We expect the recommendations from the industry and public to be incorporated and everything to be finalised by the end of November," said a DIT official.

The draft said six working groups have been constituted to look into each core area and develop strategic documents. Each working group comprises 10 members, including representatives of the academia and the industry.

DRAFT PROPOSAL

- Identifies six core areas
- Each area to have working group with members from academia, industry
- Common services centres to be called Bharat Nirman Common Services Centres
- To increase hardware sectors contribution to GDP to 3.5 per cent
- Providing skill-based training to 10 million people by 2022

To achieve an inclusive growth in healthcare, the draft has suggested a tax rebate of Rs 50,000 to consumers in a block of three years, for buying computers. It also suggests a tax rebate of ₹1,000 per month for internet and broadband access.

In case of e-governance, the draft said, the strategy will be to identify non-technology related areas where DIT can intervene and conceptualise the next version of the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP 2.0). The DIT has decided to reposition the Common Services Centres (CSC) as Bharat Nirman Common Services Cen-

tres for delivery of public services to the rural populace.

The department has also decided to have at least one CSC in every gram panchayat across the country, by increasing its numbers from 100,000 to 250,000. Moreover, with state governments keeping aside 2-3 per cent of their annual budgets for IT, the draft said that this can be an opportunity for increasing private sector participation in NeGP.

The DIT, according to the draft, aspires to increase the electronics hardware sector's contribution towards GDP to 3.5 per cent from the present 1.86 per cent. On the human development front, the government has listed DIT as part of the skill development initiative and has been given a target to train 10 million people by 2022.

For providing cyber security, the draft mentions setting up of 'Cyber Security Assurance' framework to assist national level efforts in protecting critical information infrastructure. It aims to cater to the security assurance needs of the government and critical infrastructure organisations by enabling and endorsing actions.

"The implementations are still being worked out and it is only by the end of the year that we will be able to work out the resources and investments involved," the official added.

BUSINESS STANDARD ND 5.09.10**Reforms not backed by right machinery'**

K Keshava Rao / September 5, 2010, 0:28 IST



I congratulate the minister (Kapil Sibal) for one thing. He has been thinking aright on these reformist measures. But, unfortunately, it is not backed up by the kind of implementation machinery it requires. Be it in the Right to Education or the disputes, in all these kinds of things, it is not only the intentions but the wherewithal that you try to carry and organise which becomes important.

To my mind, you place education at the Central level because there is a fashion and a fad now that everything should be of the national level, national perspective or national outlook in a country of a stratified society.

We have been having a multinational approach, forgetting that the traditions of a 100-year-old university are different from the traditions of those evolving their traditions. Take for example, my own State, Andhra Pradesh. We are forgetting that the needs of the hills or Vizag are different from those of Hyderabad.

There is no subject in the entire administrative polity more important than education, which would govern and re-build a nation. Today the academic institutions are not academically-managed; they are man-managed. Who I need as a vice-chancellor is not the one who is academically well-versed, but an army chief or a DGP who can manage my students, who are interested more in the campus rather than academic classes. This often makes us worry and think as to what is happening in our field of education.

According to the standing committee report, the Supreme Court said you could not have a tribunal without a man from the judiciary. The Bill today says, if somebody resigns, you will have an ordinary man to preside over. These are the issues that a learned man, a legal luminary like the minister should understand. It is not one; I can quote 23 such things which violate the rules that exist in our state. It now puts the states against the Centre.

I am the founder of India's first open university, which is known as AP University. You must have an innovative mind of how to involve people. Education is not what you read in the books. That is why, I say, disputes are many and your Bill does not include all. What is surprising to me is that the standing committee did talk about 20-22 subjects that you just said you didn't agree with. That is the first objection I raise. Secondly, you are saying you talked with the universities. I am sure, 500 universities would not have come and said yes.

You said this was an experiment. But, if you are really able to understand, it is an experiment which needs mid-term correction. For example, you have introduced one thing. All those PhDs who have done their PhDs in eighties are no more eligible to teach, unless they have the National Talent Certificate with them. Only new people who have done their PhDs now can be lecturers, because their books have changed. I do not understand the rationale.

Number two, sir, is about the way you have hastened it. Within ten days, you have brought it! And, you wanted us to do within three days what the standing committee did and what your Bill would be! So, this kind of hasty legislation on a subject like education does not augur well for a democracy.

Please look into the shortcomings and correct them. I am always moved by this minister because his thoughts run faster than the deeds that have to come through his own missionary, which is not there. So, there, we try to coordinate with both of them.

Please put yourself to the implementation aspects, and don't always talk about the quality because quality has never paid us; none of your Bills, RTI or this or any other, that has come before this House has yielded the desired results. Sir, the Education Bill has taken time not longer than necessary. I have never handled a file that talks about the curriculum, etc. All that it talks about is services, transfers, salaries and nothing else but those things. Sir, education minister is nothing but a first-class file pusher of the administrative system.

Excerpt from the speech of Congress MP in the Rajya Sabha, K Keshava Rao, on the Educational Tribunal Bill, August 31

HINDU ND 5.09.10

Call for public-funded institutions to allow free access to study material

Ajai Sreevatsan



Screenshot of Notemonk website.

CHENNAI: Books are our window to the world. They can make us laugh, smile, shed a tear or drive us mad while we try to understand that difficult mathematical derivation.

Sometimes books can also lead us to important questions about the copyright regime and its implications in the educational sphere.

When Prashanth Ellina, a software professional based in Bangalore, decided to offer free downloads of all the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks (Class I to Class XII), the copyright framework was the last thing on his mind.

The content on the site (www.notemonk.com) was itself from the NCERT's own website, which Mr. Ellina serially downloaded and designed a better interface to house the material. The NCERT's portal has been non-functional for nearly a year now as according to G. Ravindra, Director (Incharge), "many have been taking content from the site and publishing it. We will remove a few pages and put the books online again so that only students will be able to use it."

Apart from the textbooks, the Notemonk enables registered members to ask questions and interact on specific topics. Since each chapter is organised hierarchically, the discussion forums are topic-specific.

Some students have also uploaded digital photographs of their lecture notes. We are in the process of linking material to relevant educational videos on Youtube, he says.

When a Class 12 student in West Bengal answers queries in Physics from a Class 10 student in Orissa, Mr. Ellina says, "It shows the enabling aspect of the web."

What started as a need to "have a reference on my desktop" because it was "too much trouble to buy the textbooks from a shop" snowballed into a debate about copyright when the NCERT came calling.

In an email on June 11, Rajaram S. Sharma, Head of the Department of Computer Education, NCERT, said: "We appreciate your spirit of furthering the cause of education, which we all espouse. But you are hereby notified that your actions of uploading NCERT books on your site, is without permission from us and is a clear copyright violation. You may at best maintain a link to the books on the NCERT website after written permission."

Recommending a move towards a Creative Commons licence regime for critical educational resources, Prashant Iyengar, researcher at the Alternative Law Forum, says that not only the NCERT, but all public-funded educational institutions, must make their content free for everyone to access.

Since India is one of the cheapest markets for printing, it makes sense to make the content free, he says. Shortage of textbooks is a huge problem in most State-run school education boards. "Providing free content would be a huge leverage to disseminate educational content. It can be printed locally at low cost and in a timely fashion."

According to him, copyright should not come in the way of access to educational material and says Section 52 of the Indian Copyright Act offers various avenues for fair use. "Most people presume that the copyright owner has the right to do anything and everything. You won't have copyright without fair dealing. And copyright is subject to fair dealing, not the other way around," he adds.

Since the NCERT books are de facto standards across the country, the board is also extremely wary that distortions could creep in.

However, there is an aspirational element to the Internet. It is intrinsically more free and democratic than any real world institution. But even in the virtual realm, eternal vigilance is the price that has to be paid for the sake of freedom and open access.

HINDU ND 5.09.10

Learning tool that enables home schooling

Amruta Byatnal

Pune: Home learning may well become the norm again. Maharashtra schools are definitely gearing up for the educational revolution of sorts. In a step towards free and uncontrolled learning, Pune-based Pragatipath Educational Foundation recently launched myEshala.

myEshala is a learning tool that enables children to study the Maharashtra State (S.S.C.) curriculum from their home. Pragatipath Educational Foundation also runs the Millennium National School in Pune. The model of e-learning was tried and tested on the school's students first, before bringing it out as an open tool. The tool can be used independently and as a reinforcement to what has already been taught at school.

The tool, a demo copy of which can be downloaded from the website, www.myEshala.in, comprises of lesson-by-lesson lecture videos of all subjects as per the State (S.S.C.) curriculum, including Maths, Science, History, Geography, and English and Grammar. The lectures are designed and scripted by a young team of professionals. The website claims that each lecture has been tried, evaluated and reviewed by school teachers and students, making it effective, accurate and interesting. After small segments, preliminary testing is done to check learning levels.

A copy of myEshala is valid for a period of one academic year, between May 1 to April 30 every year. In this time period, one is free to use all the available lectures and attempt all the quizzes as many times as wanted. It is available at an annual fee of Rs. 3,500 for home use.

Available only for the English medium syllabus from Class 3 to Class 8 as of now, the Foundation aims to expand it to other classes and to Marathi medium within a few months. As mobile phone penetration in rural areas is better than that of computers, the tool will be made compatible for mobile phones within the next year, to reach out to rural students. The Foundation has also requested the Pune Municipal Corporation to integrate the tool in Corporation-run schools.

One broad aim of the Foundation is to encourage home schooling and enable children to give external exams. This will usher in more freedom from the current educational system, it believes.

HINDU ND 5.09.10

My teaching years were the most satisfying”

Special Correspondent *Manmohan recalls best years of his life*



Manmohan Singh

NEW DELHI: He has just completed six years as Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy, but Manmohan Singh still counts his time in the teaching profession as the best years of his life.

“My own years as a teacher have been the most satisfying and fulfilling in my life,” he told the National Teacher awardees on the eve of Teachers' Day. “Through teachers, flow the values and culture of a nation and its people.”

A fine balance

Dr. Singh noted that despite the age-old values of the country's education system, teachers needed to accept change in keeping with the times, maintaining a fine balance between traditions and innovation. One of those changes includes the abolition of corporal punishment in schools.

“The [Right to Education] bans corporal punishment and mental harassment. It also bans detention and expulsion. These provisions have led many teachers to question how discipline will be maintained in the classroom,” he said.

Free of trauma, fear

Over the past year, a number of high-profile cases of corporal punishment, even leading to death or suicide, have put the issue in the spotlight.

“The school environment should be free from fear, trauma and anxiety. No child, irrespective of caste, gender or community to which he or she belongs should dread the thought of going to school,” he added, pointing out that the attitude of teachers was crucial in making inclusive education schemes truly effective in the classroom.

Dr. Singh noted that teachers, although on the frontlines of educational reform, are often excluded from policy-making, governance and management of our educational system.

“We must, therefore, emphasise the empowerment of teachers, and that includes real opportunity for them to share policy perspectives and decision-making,” he said.

“They gain a sense of ownership over their work and their classrooms, when they are involved in the development of the curriculum, designing of the syllabus, making and selecting of teaching materials and in training programmes leading to their own intellectual and professional development.”

Hindu, ND 05-Sep-10 p-16

A starry-eyed mission

NASA's probe will plunge directly into sun's atmosphere

Narayan Lakshman

WASHINGTON: The sun — like a benevolent god, it shines down upon us and sustains all life on Earth, and god-like, it has also been beyond the reach of human endeavour. At least until now.

This week the National Aeronautical and Space Administration announced its most ambitious space exploration project yet — to send a probe to our nuclear-powered star by the year 2018.

In developing the path-breaking mission, called Solar Probe Plus, NASA said that it was hoping to encounter and study the sun “closer than ever before.” The unprecedented project is slated to launch no later than 2018 and will send a small-car-sized spacecraft across nearly 150 million kilometres to “plunge directly into the sun’s atmosphere” four million miles above the star’s surface.

The craft would have to withstand temperatures exceeding 2550 degrees Fahrenheit and blasts of intense radiation; and to do so it would be constructed using a revolutionary carbon-composite heat shield. If the mission succeeds, the spacecraft will have an “up close and personal view of the sun,”

- Experiments designed to solve key questions
- Preliminary designs approximately \$180 million

NASA said, and it would enable scientists to better understand, characterise and forecast the radiation environment for future space explorers.

Dick Fisher, director of NASA’s Heliophysics Division, said “The experiments selected for Solar Probe Plus are specifically designed to solve two key questions of solar physics — why is the sun’s outer atmosphere so much hotter than the sun’s visible surface and what propels the solar wind that affects Earth and our solar system?” He added that scientists had struggled with such questions for decades and this mission would finally provide answers. In particular, NASA noted that a mission to provide such measurements was first recommended in 1958 by the National Academy of Science’s “Simpson Committee,” and since then NASA had conducted several studies of possible implementations of a Solar Probe mission.

To make this historic project a reality, NASA said it had selected five science investi-

gations from a 2009 list of proposals that it had called for. The space agency said that the total dollar amount for the five selected investigations was approximately \$180 million for preliminary analysis, design, development and tests.

Among the selected proposals were studies that proposed to examine particles in solar wind, telescopes designed to make three-dimensional images of the sun’s corona, and projects that sought to measure energy fields, radio emissions, and shock waves in the sun’s atmospheric plasma.

An Indian-American scientist on the Solar Probe Plus team, Madhulika Guhathakurta, said “This project allows humanity’s ingenuity to go where no spacecraft has ever gone before... For the very first time, we’ll be able to touch, taste and smell our sun.” NASA noted that the Solar Probe Plus mission was part of its “Living with a Star” programme, designed to understand aspects of the sun’s and Earth’s space environment that affected life and society.

PM compliments Sibal's dedication on handling HRD ministry



OUR POLITICAL BUREAU
NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Manmohan Singh signalled his full support and confidence in human resource development minister Kapil Sibal in his Teacher's Day address. Prime Minister Singh complimented the minister for his zeal and dedication in handling the "most important" ministry. This vote of confidence comes close on the heels of the attack by a Congress colleague in Parliament during the discussion on the National Educational Tribunal bill on the last day of the monsoon session. With the Prime Minister coming out Mr Sibal's support, the chapter on Mr Sibal's "isolation" within the party is expected to be closed.

"I compliment and pay tribute to my colleague Kapil Sibal for the zeal, dedication and enthusiasm that he has brought to bear on the work of this most important ministry of union government that the human resource development ministry is," the Prime Minister said during his address to the national award winning teachers on the occasion of Teacher's Day.

The HRD minister had to defer the Education Tribunal Bill, 2010, a key educational reform bills, which came under attack from Opposition members as also senior Congress leader K Keshava Rao in the Rajya Sabha. Even though the ministry has maintained that this was not a setback, a delay of three months for the passage of the bill was not something Mr Sibal had expected.

Mr Sibal had been keen to ensure the passage of the tribunals bill in the monsoon session as it would have expedited the process of taking up two linked bills. Together with the national educational tribunal bill, the Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill and National Accreditation Authority Bill form the basis of the HRD minister's reform plans for higher education. The Lok Sabha rules do not permit taking up of linked bills, till one of them has been notified. The HRD minister has avoided making any public recriminations against his party colleagues or the government's floor management in Parliament. However, the fact that a senior Congress leader chose to speak out against him would have caused some consternation. The Prime Minister's public praise, a clear signal of support, puts an end to the matter.

Coming as a boost, Mr Sibal used the occasion accorded by the Teacher's Day lunch to stress once again on the need for reform. Linking school education to the country's economic growth, Mr Sibal pitched for good pay packages for teachers to attract the "best minds". He said that the sector would witness investments to the tune of billions of dollars in the next two decades and become the fastest growing sector in the country.

"What you are doing in schools will directly impact the GDP of the country... The Growth Enrolment Ratio is presently 12.4 per cent and this should touch 30 per cent," the minister said at a lunch hosted by him for the national award winning teachers.

TIMES OF INDIA ND 5.09.10

Good teachers are costly, but bad teachers cost more

Teacher's Special!

WHAT is it about Teachers' Day that with every passing year the day is marked with increasingly less fanfare even as the hype associated with less relevant commemorative days such as Valentine's Day seems to increase exponentially? Perhaps it is a reflection of our skewed sense of priorities. But as another Teachers' Day dawns and I sit back and reflect on what has happened in the field of education in the year gone by, my first reaction is, well, there's been a lot of sound and fury for sure!

Whether it is the Right to Education Act that makes the right to education a fundamental right or the Foreign Universities Bill that allows foreign universities to set up shop in India or the Educational Tribunals Bill that sets up educational Tribunals to adjudicate disputes involving teachers and other stakeholders, or the decision to make 10th standard Board examinations optional, seldom has the once low-key education ministry, now re-named in keeping with the times, as the Human Resources Development ministry been more in the news.

What is missing in all this, however, is that even as so much time and effort seems to be going into increasing students' access to education, nothing remotely comparable seems to be going into improving the lot or the quality of the dispensers of education: teachers.

To be sure teachers today, especially those in government schools and colleges, are far better paid than during my grandmother's time when her village school master routinely nibbled the edges of the idlis she brought for lunch because he was too poor to afford a decent meal. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that compared to the top brass in the corporate sector the

**kaleidoscope****MYTHILI BHUSNURMATH**

top rung in our institutions of higher education earn a paltry sum. Facilities, whether for research or further study, or even what the corporate sector takes for granted such as air-conditioned offices, clean toilets and other material comforts, are non-existent.

The net result is that the teaching profession is not able to attract the best talent. Worse, in a world that respects only success and equates success with material success, there is a steady erosion of respect for teachers. The unspoken, but widespread, belief is that a person takes to teaching only because he/she could not get an opening elsewhere.

'Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition,' lamented

Jacques Barzun, the noted centenarian American scholar-historian. What can we do to change this? A great deal! Better salaries, more incentives and along with that, far greater accountability than at present. Teaching is a vocation, not a 9 to 5 job; a good teacher is like a good doctor, she has to be passionate about her calling and cannot look at it only as a means to earn a livelihood.

The unfortunate part is that government which is the main purveyor of education in the country has not woken up the need for action here. Almost the only person who has is Azim Premji, Chairman Wipro Ltd whose Azim Premji Foundation is doing pioneering work in education.

Writing in Business Today's 14th Anniversary Issue in 2006, Premji pointed out, 'The sad reality is that we teach for examinations that test the student's ability to recall information. As a result teaching becomes a didactic and mechanical one-way process—and children respond to this with rote learning. True learning happens when children construct their own meaning. One does not learn the laws of motion by remembering definitions. Rather, you learn when you observe motion, hypothesize, test, make inferences, validate, and so on. This process of learning by self-discovery, guided by the teacher, is what leads to true understanding.'

The equally sad reality is none of this will change unless we realise the need to look at both teachers and the taught as one integrated whole. Increasing access alone is of no use if we are not able to teach our children right. We will merely churn out vast numbers that are educated only in name or even if they are able to master the skills of passing exams, and brilliantly at that, remain singularly uninformed by what constitutes real education.

'Good teachers are costly, but bad teachers cost more,' wrote Bob Talbert, the iconic Michigan journalist. On Teachers Day that is a thought all of us, especially policy-makers, would do well to dwell upon.

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After MP rap over edu bill, PM throws a line to Sibal

Still Sees HRD Minister As The Man For Steering Education Reforms

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: After having had to beat a reluctant retreat over the Education Tribunals Bill in Rajya Sabha, HRD minister Kapil Sibal found some relief on Saturday with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh praising his handling of the crucial ministry.

The PM's words would be a much-needed succour to the minister whose complaint that the bill has fallen victim to poor floor management had been vigorously rejected by the team of parliamentary ministers led by Pawan Bansal.

Bansal, in fact, turned back to argue that ministers had to be mindful of UPA-II's lack of numbers in the Upper House.

Sibal's colleagues argued that the minister's decision not to accept even one recommendation of HRD standing committee, headed by Congress working committee member Oscar Fernandes, had not gone down well. The attack on the bill by Congress's K Keshava Rao led to both the Left and the BJP sensing a possibility of embarrassing the government.

What was remarkable, Rao's action was not deplored and Bansal went so far



PM with HRD minister Kapil Sibal during a meeting in New Delhi on Saturday

as to argue that a ruling party MP had the right to articulate his views and that he had done so himself in the past. As long as the MP did not violate the party whip, it was all right. The parliamentary minister said it made no sense to invite defeat on the floor of the House.

Given the Bill's unceremonious withdrawal, PM's compliments for Sibal for his "zeal, dedication and enthusiasm in

this most important ministry" would be a salve for the minister. It would also mean the PM still sees Sibal as the man for steering education reforms.

But despite the PM's words, Congress's internal jousting has hardly subsided. On Saturday, it was the turn of a veteran MP K Samba Siva Rao to lash out at Keshava Rao for "stopping the legislation." Keshava Rao has claimed that the HRD ministry's initiatives like the Right to Education were not rolling out on the ground.

Samba Siva Rao argued, "If there was something wrong with the bill, he (Keshava Rao) should have discussed it with the party leadership but not stop the legislation." He went on to say "People who are disciplined, committed to the party, sincere are taken lightly whereas those who create problems are being rewarded."

Though this can be seen as a criticism of Keshava Rao, the comment is also a criticism of the leadership for not taking into account views of MPs like Samba Siva Rao. "Attacking government's bill is like attacking the Cabinet that in its wisdom cleared the legislation," he told TOI.

It seems the last word on the tribunals bill has not been said as yet.

ASIAN AGE ND 5.09.10

Embattled mantri Sibal gets pat from PM

Encountering hostility and isolation within his own party, Union minister for human resources development Kapil Sibal appears to have at least Prime Minister Manmohan Singh firmly behind him. On Saturday, the PM showered the minister with praise for the work he has done as the country's HRD minister.

The encomiums for the embattled Mr Sibal came in the PM's speech before National Award-winning teachers at his residence here on Saturday, the eve of Teachers' Day. "I compliment and pay tribute to my colleague Kapil Sibal for the zeal, dedication and enthusiasm that he has brought to bear on the work of this most important ministry."

While the PM did not say as much, the need to draw attention to his Cabinet colleague's work has clearly arisen after a bill moved by him in the Rajya Sabha, the Educational Tribunal Bill, 2010, had to be deferred earlier this week. To Mr Sibal's considerable embarrassment, this happened after none other than party MP and Congress Working Committee member K. Keshava Rao launched an attack on the proposed legislation when it came up for discussion in the Rajya Sabha.

The attack was seen as an instance of the hostility Mr Sibal is experiencing at the hands of his own party MPs who accuse of being high-handed. It is noteworthy that the parliamentary standing committee's report on the proposed legislation was ignored by Mr Sibal's ministry while drafting it. While Mr Rao later claimed there was nothing personal where his criticism of the bill was concerned, it is noteworthy that the party has not rebuked him for them.

Mr Sibal though is not the only Cabinet member facing flak from his own partymen. Union home minister P. Chidambaram too has been busy battling Congressmen on his use of the phrase "saffron terror". AICC general secretary Digvijay Singh had responded by saying the party had never used this term.