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EDUCATION BODY MEET POSTPONED

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 16

The meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education (the highest advisory body on education), called by the HRD ministry to evolve a consensus on the proposed common national examination for science and engineering for Central institutes, has been postponed to June 6. The meeting was earlier scheduled to be held on April 23.

The decision comes days after the All-India IIT Faculty Federation (AIIITFF) strongly opposed the proposed changes to the existing IIT-JEE entrance examination pattern. The CABE meeting is understood to have been postponed as the HRD ministry is fearful that several states could also endorse the faculty's stance and oppose the proposal of common entrance test, scheduled for implementation from 2013. A state education ministers conference has also been called on June 5, a day ahead of the CABE meet, to seek their views on this and other issues. Sources stated that the proposed common national examination for science and engineering for Central institutes was scheduled to come up for discussion in the CABE meeting. However, on April 11 the proposal hit a roadblock as the meeting of HRD minister Kapil Sibal and IIT directors with IIT faculty members remained inconclusive.
Govt bans use of live animals for edu, research

Mumbai: The Union ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) has banned the use of live animals in dissection and other experiments in educational and research institutions. But scientists conducting new molecular research will be exempted from the ban.

Based on the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1960), the MoEF has issued guidelines to the University Grants Commission, ministry of health and family welfare, Pharmacy Council of India and the Medical Council of India to discontinue dissection and experiments with live animals in universities, colleges, research institutes, hospitals, laboratories and instead use alternatives like computer simulation.

The MoEF says that the central government is duty-bound to use alternatives to avoid unnecessary suffering or pain to animals.

It states that effective alternatives in the form of CDs, computer simulations and mannequin models are available; they are not only effective but substitutes for animals in teaching anatomy or physiology but are also superior learning tools in teaching pharmacy or life sciences.

The guidelines were framed based on the duties of the Committee for the Purposes of Control and Supervision of Experiments and Animals (CPCSEA), which has been constituted under the provisions of Section 15 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1960).

The committee comprises seven nominees – three nominees appointed by CPCSEA and the remaining four from educational institutions.

“The animal experiments should be stopped in all institutes except for the purpose of new molecular research. Sometimes, in laboratories, a lot of work is repeated and animals become unnecessary victims. Only scientists researching on a new molecular theory can experiment on animals. In medical and pharmacy colleges, there is unwanted cruelty towards animals which can be avoided. These guidelines mention imprisonment for five years and monetary penalty,” said Mangal Jain, a nominee of the Institutional Animal Ethics Committee (IAEC), which is appointed by CPCSEA.

Hoshang Bilimoria, also a nominee appointed by the CPCSEA, said the guidelines were a welcome change.

“CPCSEA should give the nominees the power to inspect animals housed in educational institutes, experimentation centres or technical laboratories without prior intimation to the institutes. Cross-checks should also be maintained through other members,” said Bilimoria.
Scientists hit ‘gold’ with inkling of yellow metal cure for breast cancer

By Dinesh C. Sharma in New Delhi

LIKE most fellow Indians, Dr Surinder P. Singh loves to possess gold. But his fetish for gold has nothing to do with making jewellery or keeping it safe as a secure investment. He is interested in gold for treating cancer.

Singh is leading a team of Indian researchers which has found that gold nanoparticles can be an effective means of delivering cancer drugs.

The researchers have used gold nanoparticles to deliver chloroquine — a widely known anti-malarial drug which has recently been found to possess anti-cancer properties as well — for treatment of breast cancer.

The novel combination of chloroquine and gold nanoparticles uses only minuscule amounts of gold. Typically, a dose would consist of a few thousand gold particles — with a combined weight of every tiny fraction of a gram. Nanoparticles are so small that it takes about 500 nanoparticles to span the width of a human hair.

"Our studies, done in breast cancer cell lines, have shown promising results. Gold nanoparticles help targeted delivery of the drug and we can monitor the drug's effect on tumours through scanning," explained Dr Singh, a scientist at Delhi-based National Physical Laboratory, who led the study along with professor Pinak Chakrabarti of Bose Institute, Kolkata. The team also included Prachi Joshi and Soumyananda Chakraborti. The research results would be published soon in scientific journal Colloids and Surfaces.

"We plan to conduct more studies before taking up trials on animals and eventually cancer patients," Dr Singh said. AIIMS may collaborate for further studies.
Lost in transition

Many pending bills in Parliament seek to legalize the privatisation of higher education. This means opening newer avenues for profits at the cost of social good.

The Supreme Court ruling sanctioning the legality of the Right to Education has also mandated every private school to ensure at least 25% enrolment from the economically weaker sections. The caveat is that the fees will be subsidised by the government, and the target will be reached progressively in the coming eight years.

Soon after, the human resource development minister appealed “with folded hands” to pass 14 bills that have been pending before Parliament since UPA 2 assumed office. The basic thrust of both these developments is to legalise the further privatization and commercialisation of education. The government is willing to pay up to Rs 19,000 per annum per student from the weaker sections to private schools. While the elite schools may be unhappy, budget private schools would make a windfall profit. Already, according to the Annual Status of Education Report, private schools enrolment has sharply grown from 18.7% in 2006 to 25.6% in 2011. Studies across the states have shown that the per pupil expenditure in such schools is vastly below that of the government schools, while they charge as fees, anything between five to 12 times more.

The Universal Right to Education, international experience shows, can never be achieved, without a network of State-run ‘neighbourhood schools’. This has laid the foundation in all developed countries. Our Bill also does not provide for children below six years, with the government refusing to attach anganwadi to primary schools. Many of the pending bills on higher education seek to legalize this approach of the government subsidising private education players. The case of Andhra Pradesh, which has 705 engineering colleges with the capacity of 200,000 students. However, only 2,05,000 qualified after the entrance examination, leaving an excess capacity of 75,000. There are only 29 such government colleges with a mere 5,276 seats, the rest are private. With the government subsidising the fees of 60,000 students, AP has spent Rs 3,824 crore in the last fiscal alone, compared with the budget of only Rs 1,067 crore for technical education. If all eligible students are to be covered, then Rs 5,000 crore is required. This is for one state alone. Consider that the initial requirement to start a government college is only Rs 50 lakh. Instead of starting government colleges, such high subsidies to private colleges, apart from providing them with land and loans, only means the creation of new avenues for profit-maximisation. In addition, the government continues to drag its feet on legislating social control over such private business enterprises with regard to fees structure, syllabus, teachers and staff salaries etc. The salaries of teachers in aided, budget private schools are, at least, four to seven times lower.

This is precisely the thrust of the neo-liberal reforms that seek to prise open newer avenues for higher private profits at the cost of social good. The economic gain from the export and import of higher education is an essential element in the General Agreement on Trade in Services. According to the Planning Commission, 88% of funds required for the approved expansion of higher education in the 11th Five Year Plan (FYP) were to be generated through the infamous public-private partnership (PPP) route. The Appraisal Report to the 11th FYP states: “Private initiatives in higher education, including viable and innovative PPP models, will, therefore, be actively promoted. The current ‘not for profit’ prescription in education sector should be re-examined in a pragmatic manner.”

Private participation in enlarging the coverage of mid-day meal schemes, fully funded by the government, is being encouraged and a major part of the expansion of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan will take place through PPP!

Professor Tilak of the National University of Educational Planning and Administration has detailed the measures the government is contemplating for legalising such large-scale privatisation and commercialisation. (Economic and Political Weekly, March 31, 2012). He concludes that higher education in India has moved from a system embedded in welfare socialism to a system based on a neo-liberal market philosophy. Sadly, the transition seems to be complete and dangerously irreversible. Today, there are 73 private universities and nearly 900 degree colleges compared to none a decade ago. Private higher education today accounts for about four-fifths of enrolment in professional education and one-third overall. Contrasting this with the US where less than one-fourth are enrolled in private institutions.

Prof Tilak says: “A 30-40% enrolment ratio seems to be the critical threshold level for a country such as India to become an advanced nation.” In 2009-2010, the government’s gross enrolment ratio was only 15%. Even this low percentage gives all of us a reason to be proud that in every effort at expanding the frontiers of knowledge the world over, Indian youth are playing an important role. The second language in Silicon Valley is Indian language. Imagine, if this enrolment percentage were to, at least, double, the potential of India to lead the global civilizational advance would be unquestionable.

It is time to recollect the Report of the 1948 Commission on University Education headed by Dr S Radhakrishnan, which said: “As we claim to be a civilised people, we must regard the higher education of the rising generation as one of our principal concerns... Many of these proposals would mean increased expenditure, but this increase, we are convinced, is an investment for the democratic future of a free people.”

Instead of investing in the future by improving State-run education, qualitatively and quantitatively, UPA 2 is eager to subsidise and promote unregulated commercial schools.

Sitaran Yechury is CPI(M) Politburo member and Rajya Sabha MP

The views expressed by the author are personal
Supercomputer to simulate brain for disease fight

London: Scientists say they are building a 'human brain', using the world's most powerful supercomputer that will simulate the entire mind and thus help fight against brain diseases like Alzheimer's.

The 'brain' is intended to combine all the information so far uncovered about its mysterious workings — and replicate them on a screen, right down to the level of individual cells and molecules, says an international team behind the project.

The scientists hope to complete it within 12 years.

If it works it could be revolutionary for understanding devastating neurological diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, and even shedding light into how we think, and make decisions, the Daily Mail reported.

Switzerland-based Henry Markram, who is leading the team which includes UK-based Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, said, "The complexity of brain, with its billions of interconnected neurons, makes it hard for neuroscientists to truly understand how it works. Simulating it will make it much easier, allowing them to manipulate and measure any aspect of the brain."

Housed at a facility in Dusseldorf in Germany, the 'brain' will feature thousands of three-dimensional images built around a semicircular 'cockpit' so the scientists can virtually 'fly' around different areas and watch how they communicate with each other.
Crowd-Sourcing Expands Power of Brain Research
Social Networking in Science: Using imaging technology globally to zero in on key genes

BENEDICT CAREY
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

In the largest collaborative study of the brain to date, scientists using imaging technology at more than 100 centres worldwide for the first time zeroed in on genes that they agree play a role in intelligence and memory. Scientists working to understand the biology of brain function — and capacity for those using brain imaging, a blunt tool — have been badly stalled. But the new work, involving more than 200 scientists, lays out a strategy for breaking the deadlock. The findings appear in a series of papers published online Sunday in the journal Nature Genetics.

"What's really new here is this movement toward crowd-sourcing brain research," said Paul Thompson, a professor of neurology at the University of California, Los Angeles, and senior author of one of the papers. "This is an example of social networking in science, and it gives us a power we have not had.

The genes, which influence elements of brain size, may have subtle effects on how people think and behave, though many other factors, including education and general health, play a role in intelligence and could easily offset the effect of any single gene.

Still, size matters, in brain research at least as much as in brain function.
"Like this work a lot, because these guys finally did what needed to be done to take a real stab at merging imaging and genomics," said Dr. Matthew R. State, a professor of psychiatry at Yale, who was not one of the collaborators.

Brain imaging studies are expensive and, as a result, far too small to reliably tease out the effects of common gene variations. These effects tend to be tiny, for one thing, and difficult to distinguish from the background "noise" of other influences.

And brain imaging is notoriously noisy: not only does overall brain size vary from person to person, for instance, but so do the sizes of specialized brain regions like the hippocampus, which is critical for memory formation.

To solve the numbers problem, Dr. Thompson and three geneticists — Nick Martin and Margaret Wright, both of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research in Australia, and Barbara Franke of the Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Center in the Netherlands — persuaded research centers around the world to pool their resources and create one large database. It included genetic and extensive brain imaging results from about 21,000 people. The team then analysed the collective data to see whether any genes were linked to brain structure. As the study was being completed, the Thompson group learned that another consortium, led by Boston University researchers, was doing a similar analysis using its own large group. The two teams' findings did not completely line up. One found size-related genes that the other did not. But they agreed on two findings: one gene that correlated strongly with overall brain size, and another that correlated with the rate at which the hippocampus atrophies, or shrinks, with age.

People who carried one variant of the overall size gene had brains that were about 1% larger than those of people who carried another variant. The two variants are equally distributed — about half of people have one and half have the other. In a separate analysis in Australia, Dr. Martin and Dr. Wright found that size correlated with IQ. People with the larger brains scored slightly higher on a standardized test. The results are all averages, meaning that they hold for the group but say nothing about any individual. (Some very smart people have relatively small brains.)

The collaborators also found that about 10% of people carried a gene variant that correlated with a slightly accelerated rate of atrophy in the hippocampus. The hippocampus — there are two, each deep in the brain, one in the right side and one in the left, about level with the ears — are needed to form new memories. People with dementia often show pronounced atrophy in this region. The study was not set up to find a link between the gene variant and dementia, but experts suspect a connection.

The collaboration is not likely to lead to new treatments anytime soon, the authors said, and, as always, the findings will need replication before they are conclusive. It is more a beginning than an end, and it illustrates how far the field has to go to get any real traction — and what it will take.

"It means sharing your data, pooling everything," Dr. Thompson said, "and this is not usually how scientists work."

For feedback, write to us at et.technology@indiatimes.com
Why tough JEE gives us hope

MORE than half-a-million students appeared for the JEE-2012 and if they aren’t complaining, there’s a reason for it. The consensus in the IT-JEE coaching community is that this year’s examination was more difficult than last year’s.

That should get students very upset, but no. It’s the JEE tradition that the tougher the paper, the higher are your chances of making it past the country’s toughest competitive examination hurdle.

Here’s the reason why. As Manoj Sharma, Vice-President, Career Launching & Business Development of the famous Kota coaching institute, Resonance, puts it, “This year’s examination papers were more difficult than the previous year’s, so it is going to bring down the cut-off percentage. Last year, it was 67 per cent. This year, we are expecting it to be 45 per cent.”

“Though the students were aware of the difficulty level of the examination typically distributed,” he points out.

Elaborating, he says, “Paper II was easier than Paper I, while Paper I was easier than Paper III. The third paper had questions that were more straightforward.”

The difficulty level of Paper II was average, while Paper I was more difficult. As for Paper III, it was considered easy.

The overall difficulty level of the JEE-Mains 2012 examination was “moderate,” with Paper I being easier than Paper II and Paper II being easier than Paper III. The difficulty level of the examination typically distributed.

The Resonance Analysis of the JEE-Mains 2012 examination showed that the questions were “unfairly lengthy.” These questions could have been written better. Paper I was worth 80 marks and Paper II was worth 100 marks. Each paper had 45 questions and the whole exam was divided into two sections. Last year, both papers were of 360 marks each.

The difficulty level of Paper I was higher than Paper II and Paper III. However, the overall difficulty level of the examination was “moderate.” These questions were “unfairly lengthy.” These questions could have been written better.

Paper I was worth 80 marks and Paper II was worth 100 marks. Each paper had 45 questions and the whole exam was divided into two sections. Last year, both papers were of 360 marks each.

The difficulty level of Paper II was higher than Paper I and Paper III. However, the overall difficulty level of the examination was “moderate.” These questions were “unfairly lengthy.” These questions could have been written better.

Paper I was worth 80 marks and Paper II was worth 100 marks. Each paper had 45 questions and the whole exam was divided into two sections. Last year, both papers were of 360 marks each.

The difficulty level of Paper III was lower than Paper II and Paper I. However, the overall difficulty level of the examination was “moderate.” These questions were “unfairly lengthy.” These questions could have been written better.

Paper I was worth 80 marks and Paper II was worth 100 marks. Each paper had 45 questions and the whole exam was divided into two sections. Last year, both papers were of 360 marks each.

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This year’s papers were more difficult than the previous year’s. It is going to bring down the cut-off percentage. Last year, it was 47%; this year, it may be 43%.

— MANOJ SHARMA, VP, Ques & Dev, Resonance (Kota)
चुनौतीपूर्ण रही आईआईटी-जेईई परीक्षा

हमारे संबंधदता

नव दिल्ली. महानगर की तैयारी के बाद देशके सर्वश्रेष्ठ इंजीनियरिंग कलाकारों में दाखलों का समान हिसेब की गई, लेकिन आपसी आईआईटी – जेईई 2012 में सामान बने. परीक्षा के तुरंत बाद ही कोरिंग बेड़े के करोड़ों के विकल्पों में अपने विकल्पों को प्रमाणित किए. एक्साम और एक्साम परीक्षा के तौर पर आईआईटी के उपरी एक तत्त्वों को आधारीत किया गया।

इस परीक्षा में हो रहा था कि कुल 17 देर 2 से 12 देर 5 में बीड़ अभ्यास किया गया, पहले देर 210 देर 198 अभ्यास का भाग। प्रतिविधान को 60 समारोह में (20 समारोह भौगोलिक विवाद, 20 समारोह राजस्वल विवाद, 20 समारोह गणना) निश्चित वहाँ पहले देर 380 अभ्यास के थे।

श्री आईआईटी, बड़ा (एम.बी.एल. बॉय, बॉयसेंट्रा) के अनुसार आईआईटी - जेईई 2012 को परीक्षा की सुलभ विवाद से सहभागिता की गयी और जिनकी गणना अन्तिम रही होगी. उन्होंने इस परीक्षा की अंतिम सर्ल लगी होगी।

पहले देर में कक्षा 11वीं का 35.71% और कक्षा 12वीं का 64.28% वेबेस्ट रहे. उनमें प्रकार दूसरे देर में कक्षा 11वीं का 33.83% और कक्षा 12वीं का 66.16% वेबेस्ट रहे। दोनों देरों में कक्षा 11वीं के 42 प्रश्न (142 अभ्यास) और कक्षा 12वीं के 77 प्रश्न (266 अभ्यास) बने।

श्री आईआईटी, बड़ा के अनुसार हर साल का लगभग कुछ समारोह विवाद हो रहे एवं कहने वाले थे कि कुछ समारोह विवाद सरल. कठिनाइयों का लगभग 45% हो रही है। जब तक उठाई गई तलाश की कठिनाइयों का लगभग 85% हो सकता है और जिन विवादों के 75% और उसने ज्यादा स्कोर किया है उनके द्वारा 100 में रेंक अंतराल करने की समस्या है। इस साल भी हमेशा की तरह परीक्षा में बदतर नवर आये और प्रत्येक विवाद से कम हो गईं। इस साल परीक्षा में 0-9 तक के कोट दिए गए और विवादों को कोई बाल पाया पेट द्वारा जबाब दे रहे थे. विवादों को प्रयास के बाद उनमें प्रयोग के लिए अनुमति थी। आईआईटी-जेईई 2012 का परिणाम हिन्दी के 18 मई 2012 को प्राप्त किया जाएगा।
बंगाल में कैद वैज्ञानिक रिहा कराएं पीएम

नईदिल्ली, प्रेट्र : पश्चिम बंगाल में पहले एक प्रोफेसर और अब अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर के जीव विज्ञानि पार्श्वसारथी रे को जेल में बंद कर दिया गया है। देश और दुनिया की कई नामचीन हस्तियों ने रे को रिहा करने की युगहर प्रधानमंत्री मनमोहन सिंह से लगाई है। इस बारे में अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर के वैज्ञानिक नोम चोम्स्की, सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता अरुण राय, निखिल टे, वैज्ञानिक मुग़ल सूर और आभा सूर समेत कई अन्य वैज्ञानिकों ने पीएम को पत्र लिखा है। पत्र में इन हस्तियों ने पीएम से ममता बनर्जी सरकार की शिकायत की है और पूरे प्रकरण में उनसे दखल देने की मांग की है। पत्र में रे के साथ-साथ जादुबर्ग विश्वविद्यालय के स्नातक विज्ञान प्रोफेसर अरविकेश महापात्र की गिरफ्तारी का मसला भी उठाया गया है।

पत्र के अनुसार, महापात्र और रे की गिरफ्तारी से ममता सरकार स्वार्थ संदेश देना चाहती है कि अगर किसी ने भी विरोध का स्वर मुखर करने की कोशिश की तो उसे दबा दिया जाए। हस्तियों ने आशा जताई है कि राज्य सरकार की इस तरह की

* देश-विदेश की नामचीन हस्तियों ने ममता से लगाई गुहार

हरकतें लोकतंत्र के लिए खतरनाक हैं।

रे को 68 अन्य लोगों के साथ 4 अप्रैल को उस समय गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया, जब ये लोग पूरी कोलकाता के नोबादंगा इलाके में एक झोपड़ी पट्टी उजाड़े जाने का विरोध कर रहे थे। पत्र में आगे लगाया गया है कि रे सहित सात अन्य लोगों को पुलिस ने कई दिनों तक मैक्लूननी तरीके से हिरस्त में रखा। पार्श्वसारथी रे कोलकाता स्थित प्रतिष्ठित इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ साइंस एजुकेशन एंड रिसर्च (आइआईएएसआर) के संकाय सदस्य है। आण्विक जीव विज्ञान के क्षेत्र में अपने शोध के लिए वह न केवल देश बल्कि पूरी दुनिया में मशहूर है। पत्र पर जिन अन्य लोगों ने हस्तक्षेप किया है, उनमें आइआइटी के कई प्रोफेसर व एसएन बोस नेशनल सेंटर फॉर बैजिक साइंस समेत अमेरिका, देनमार्क, सिंगापुर और स्वीडन के कई वैज्ञानिक शामिल हैं।
Assembler Sues DataWind for Aakash Breach

HARSIMRAN JUHLKA
NEW DELHI

The fight over the world's cheapest tablet is getting murkier. Even as retail customers wait for delivery of Aakash, the Hyderabad-based assembler of the tablet, Quad Electronics, has sued DataWind alleging that the British Indian firm failed to procure its contracted inventory or pay for the tablets.

DataWind retorted saying it won't procure any more tablets from Quad and will settle the issue legally. Quad has served a legal notice to DataWind for non-payment of $1.12 million in dues, alleging that the British Indian firm failed to procure its contracted inventory or pay for the tablets.

"DataWind contracted us for 50,000 tablets and has failed to pick up its inventory breaching the contract," R Soin, founder-CEO of Quad Electronics told ET. Quad claims DataWind procured only 10,000. "Quad has manufactured 10,000 more tablets which are not sold yet," Soin said. DataWind's CEO Sameer Tulli returns the fire saying "only 10,000 units were picked up because that's all Quad manufactured."

"Non-payment of dues can be confirmed from the bankers, Bank of Bahrain & Kuwait and Barclays Plc involved in the letter of credit," Quad's Soin charged.

Refuting, Tulli said the letter of credit is for banks to honour, not for DataWind. "Quad should show why they weren't able to submit required documents in a timely manner to get payment through letter of credit. They've been entirely paid for their services. It'll now be resolved in the UK courts," Tulli said. "We won't be picking up any more inventory from Quad. We've contracted other suppliers," he added.

Quad and DataWind's public spat comes even as thousands of buyers are posting messages on online consumer forums citing delays in delivery of the tablets, hawked online for Rs 2,999 each.

About three million pre-bookings for the tablets had been done on Aakashtablet.com, and through email by DataWind.

Many customers made pre-payments through cheques, six to eight weeks back. Quad also charged that DataWind has tied up with a customer of Quad for manufacturing Aakash II.

Faulty Keypad

- Quad Electronics has sued DataWind for $1.1 million in dues, alleging that the British Indian firm failed to procure contracted inventory or pay for the tablets.
- DataWind retorted saying it won't procure any more tablets from Quad and will settle matter in court.

Quad and DataWind public spat comes even as retail customers are posting messages on online consumer forums citing delays in delivery of the tablets.

- Quad has also charged DataWind with lying up with one of its customers for manufacture of Aakash II.

"They have been poaching talent from Quad to adopt the expertise required to manufacture the product," Soin points out.

Tulli added that Quad can't take DataWind's technology and sell it on its own. But Quad's Soin retorted saying that the contract has a clause for 'freedom of action' to manufacture similar products for any other original equipment manufacturer.

On the other hand, DataWind issued a media statement last week saying that "Quad Electronics has breached DataWind's intellectual property circumventing their relationship with IIT-Rajasthan, signed a direct agreement with them and then sold off their inventory in the open market."

Soin countered that DataWind is making baseless allegations about copyright infringement against "the 15-year-old Quad and an IIT." He also said there is "no direct arrangement between IIT-Rajasthan and Quad. "The pact which Tulli is talking about pertains to one we signed with IIT on convergence systems." It has also informed the Ministry of Communications & IT and IIT Rajasthan, regarding DataWind's default.
Be ready for changes in the IIT-JEE new format

Like every year, this time also the most competitive exam in the world saw changes, be it the pattern of the paper, number of questions, marking scheme or even how to mark the response sheet!

This unpredictable nature of the paper often is the biggest predicament for students, parents and teachers. Now, add to this the talk about the proposed single entrance test, Indian Science-Engineering Eligibility Test (ISEET) from 2013 and then things become more confusing for everyone, especially those slated to appear for their higher secondary next year.

Instead of being overwhelmed, let us try to decode and understand the current scenario.

To maintain their edge, the IITs have been constantly innovating and changing. Being an IITian myself, I have experienced the progressive wave of transformation that the IIT system has been undergoing firsthand. The case of IIT JEE is also no different.

Fundamentally IIT JEE tests a student’s ability to demonstrate his/her understanding of concepts in physics, chemistry and math and apply them in solving problems.

The pattern of the paper has changed in a subtle manner from the 90’s. IIT JEE has done away with lengthy and extremely difficult questions, but has instead focused on innovating with the presentation of questions and their marking scheme.

From multiple answer type questions (where there was no part marking this year) to integer type questions to long passage type questions to reasoning assertion questions (not this year), IIT JEE requires a student to be more than just a problem solving machine.

IIT JEE has this knack of preempting mistakes on the part of the students and now with a student having to mark the response sheet with a pen, certainty, confidence and exam temperament have become extremely important.

Most students nowadays don’t complain about the paper being out of the world but instead they rue about their careless mistakes or having missed out on that small thing that was to be noticed.

With subject and over-all cut-offs being announced beforehand, a carbon copy of their response sheet is also being provided to the students, things are clearer, certain and full proof than ever before.

The future of ISEET is still unclear right now and hopefully all the questions and doubts shall be clear in the days to come.

The one thing though that I am 200% sure of is that no matter what the exam, the pattern or type of questions, knowledge and concepts will always hold you in good stead. So, stick to the basics and keep things simple.