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Cheats use bluetooth, cell cameras in AIIMS exam

5 Arrested Include MBBS Student, Doc

Dwaipayan Ghosh & Raj Shekhar | TNN

New Delhi: Cheating in entrance exams has become sadly commonplace, but this gang took technological sophistication to another level. First, two of them scanned the question paper — for the first All India Post Graduate Medical Entrance Examination conducted by AIIMS on Sunday — using mobile phones strapped to the wrist, concealed under shirt sleeves.

The images were then transmitted to a control room and downloaded. The paper was solved, and the answers dictated to candidates who had bluetooth devices stitched near the collar and were wearing minute earphones to avoid detection.

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has arrested five persons, including the main accused, identified as Mohit Chaudhry, a second-year MBBS student studying in Ujjain.
Revive Research

Fundamental changes required to boost Indian R&D

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's candid admission at the 99th Indian Science Congress, that countries such as China had overtaken India in scientific research, can play out in two ways. The statement will be forgotten in due course, or it could spur the beginning of a much-needed scientific revolution in the country. As things stand, the quality and output of research and development in India are abysmally poor. That total R&D spending as a percentage of GDP has remained stagnant at a measly 0.9% exemplifies this point. China directs around 1.42% of its much larger GDP towards R&D. The US, the largest economy in the world, spends around 2.6% and aims for 3%. The sizeable allocations stem from an appreciation of the critical role scientific research plays in the advancement of a country. It is the failure to acknowledge this fact that has brought Indian science to this pass.

It is welcome that the PM has promised to double the percentage of R&D spending by the end of the 12th Plan period. But this by itself will not suffice. Fundamental supply-side changes need to be made to incentivise research across the board. The peculiar system of having specialised research institutes while universities serve as factories to produce degree-holders needs to end. New data shows that India published only 2,33,027 scientific papers in 2010 compared to 9,69,315 research articles by China. In order to increase research output it is imperative to create the right ecosystem. Universities must enjoy autonomy in hiring staff, designing programmes of study and attracting funding for research, but also hunt in packs by collaborating with each other.

To institute such a system in India, the debilitating stranglehold of the bureaucracy on the higher education sector needs to be broken first. Cleansing universities of red tape and politics should be followed by an objective system of audit that links grants to performance, with research being a critical criterion. With autonomy, universities will have the freedom to hire the best talent and work closely with industry to develop areas of research competency. Biotechnology, IT and telecommunications, pharmaceuticals and green technology can all emerge as core competencies for Indian research.

The private sector too must see the benefits in allocating greater resources towards R&D. Off-the-shelf technology might be expedient in the short term, but retaining the edge in manufacturing requires long-term investment in cutting-edge R&D. Public-private partnerships could be an omnibus through which Indian research receives a fresh lease of life. If India is to realise the goal of a knowledge economy, it must focus on laying the foundation of a quality research infrastructure.
Satyam sues ex-directors, PW

Chairman Nayyar Says Damages For Fraud Could Be In Excess Of $210m

Hyderabad: Three years after the multi-crore Satyam scam first came to light, Mahindra Satyam has dragged Satyam’s discredited founder B Ramalinga Raju, along with the company’s erstwhile board of directors, some former Satyam employees as well as auditing firm Price Waterhouse (PW), an arm of audit and consulting firm Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC), and its affiliates and partners to court.

Mahindra Satyam, as Satyam is known after being taken over by the Mahindras in April 2009, informed the sources on Monday that it had filed a suit in the city civil court of Hyderabad against the former Satyam board, some employees and PW and affiliates for perpetrating fraud, breach of fiduciary responsibility, obligations and negligence in performance of duties. The company also said that it was seeking undisclosed damages from them.

According to sources, the company has sued nearly 125 PW and PwC partners across US and India offices in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kelkara and Mumbai along with its various subsidiaries including Levelock & Leaves.

The former Satyam employees to be sued include its then chief financial officer Venkatramana Varma, and former internal auditor Prabhat Gupta, who were also jailed as well as former Satyam Finance vice-president Banakrishna Reddy and other finance department employees like V Verkadapati Ramachandran Seshadri.

While the company did not peg any specific number to the damages it was seeking, Mahindra Satyam chairman Vinod Nayyar told TOI that the figure would definitely be in excess of the $210 million that the company had to cough up to settle its legal liabilities. These include the $125 million US class action suit settlement, $70 million Upsidensuit settlement and the $10 million settlement with the US market watchdog SEC.

“Though we haven’t specified the damages because we don’t know the exact magnitude of damages, some are known to us and easily quantifiable. And then there are damages resulting from loss of business and reputation that add up to quite a bit and are difficult to quantify,” Nayyar said. “Obviously we have angst against the previous management and auditors who had a fiduciary responsibility. It is only right and fair that they should compensate the company,” Nayyar added.

On why it took the company three years to get around to legal action, Nayyar pointed out that they had to first clear existing liabilities and also settle some formalities before proceeding with legal action, which took some time.

Of course, the company also has another sword hanging over its head — the income tax liabilities running into thousands of crores. While the I-T department has issued notice demanding Rs 2,114 crore for assessment years 2002-03 and 2007-08, the company is already embroiled in a legal battle with the IT department over a tax demand of Rs 617 crore.

When the fraud broke-out on January 7, 2009, after Raju’s confessions to cooking the company’s books for years, he was the chairman, his brother Bama Rao was the company’s managing director and Ram Mynampati was executive director.

The Satyam board then boasted of directors of the likes of management guru Ram Charan and Harvard professor Krishnan Palepu, the inventor of Pentium chip Vinod Dham, then Indian School of Business dean M Ramnathan Rao, US-based academician Mangalam Srinivasan, former IT Delhi director V S Raja and former cabinet secretary T P Prasad.

Currently all the 10 Satyam cases are still on trial, including two PW partners S Gopalakrishnan and Tulluri Srinivas. The company has also already set aside its intention to recover the Rs 11.2 crore it paid as commission to independent directors during financial year 2008-09 because it incurred losses.

Incidentally, Palepu was paid a management consultancy fee of over Rs 65 lakh during the same year over and above the sitting fee of Rs 12 lakh that was paid to each independent director.
NEW DELHI: The world’s first hydrogen-powered three-wheeler, HyAlfa, was showcased at the 11th Auto Expo here.

Part of a development project dubbed DelHy 3w, a fleet of 15 HyAlfa will run on an experimental basis at Pragati Maidan. The HyAlfa has been jointly developed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, International Centre for Hydrogen Energy Technologies, Mahindra & Mahindra and IIT-Delhi, with support from the ministry of new and renewable energy.
After VC’s visit, DU colleges get their act together

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NEW DELHI: A week ago, Delhi University (DU) vice chancellor Dinesh Singh walked into some colleges to be greeted by students loitering around the campus.

Not only had teachers refrained from taking class, timetables of most courses had not been put up on the notice boards as well.

However, within hours a notice was issued to some of the defaulting principals and other colleges had been asked to send in copies of the timetables for the rest of the semester.

It was then that the colleges decided to up their ante.

“We have received the timetables from a majority of the colleges. We are glad that colleges have taken cognisance of the matter because it is an extremely serious issue if the principals themselves are lax about conducting classes in a regular fashion. This is the semester system and it is time that colleges get serious about things such as timetables and regular classes,” said a senior DU official.

While principals of some of the colleges that the vice chancellor visited refrained from commenting but they lashed out at him for the surprise inspection on January 2.

However, some of them have been quick to respond to the notice.

“We have uploaded the timetables of all courses on our website and the hard copies of the same had been sent to the dean’s office three days after we got the notice. The same was also announced in all the classes and all the students have been told about the timetable,” said Rajendra Prasad, principal, Ramjas College.

SRCC principal PC Jain said, “We sent a copy of the timetable to the dean of colleges as soon as we received the notice. The government in essence employs us and we must perform as we are expected to. If we don’t we are being unfair to the students. Even if the vice chancellor had not paid a visit, classes should have been going on smoothly and on time.”
DU grants students 520 marks out of 500 in exams

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NEW DELHI: The impossible seems to have happened at the University of Delhi.

More than 30 students of Chemistry (honours) across all colleges of the university have got more than the maximum marks that were scored on. A look at the result shows that a student has earned 520 marks out of 500.

In what is turning out to be a big failure of the software being used by the university, the total maximum marks are indicated as 500 instead of 550. Manually adding up the marks clears all confusion as it becomes clear that the marks should have been out of 550.

“The computer should have pointed out this problem. Usually a computer will point out any errors in the tabulation of individual marks, but if this did not happen then the university should question the efficiency of the software,” said Naveen Gaur, who teaches physics at Dyal Singh College.

According to Gaur, teachers filled out OMR sheets to indicate the marks of each student this year.

“The university has failed at two levels. First, it did not spot that the maximum marks were wrong and second it did not notice that students were getting more marks than the maximum marks,” added Gaur.

University officials dismissed the faux pas as a minor error.

“This is a small error that will be rectified soon. It is not a big deal,” said a university official, who did not want to be named.

Meanwhile, the semester results declared this year have come under fire from teachers.

While the results have proved to be much better than usual, teachers have alleged that marks were given out freely to even those who did not deserve them, to enhance the acceptability of the semester system.

It is noteworthy that three students scored 99% in the Economics (honours) first semester results that were declared at the end of December.
Tables Will Not Replace PCs

Michael Dell is transitioning tech major Dell into a services powerhouse taking on established players in a challenging environment. And India is at the core of this strategy. In an interview with ET's Jayaadevan PK & Pankaj Mishra, he discusses tablets, outsourcing & India business.

Michael Dell
Chairman & CEO, Dell

On the future of personal computing...
If you had to build a personal computer today, you would either go the tablet route or the thin and light laptop route. What would be the deciding factors here? How will you differentiate your offering?

On tablets vs traditional computers...
We just built a new tablet called the Venue 8, which is an eight-inch device and it's about 15mm thick. It's a very nice device, and it's a very thin device, unlike the iPad, which is about 9mm thick. People are saying 'Why would you build a tablet?' Because the tablet is going to replace the traditional PC.

Onelif explains the saying...
If you are standing on a cliff and you are looking down, you will say 'I am on the edge of the world.' But if you hang off a cliff, you will realize you are out of the world.

On smartphones replacing laptops...
Smartphones don't replace laptops and laptops don't replace smart phones. They actually do different things.

On manufacturing costs...
We have manufacturing costs that are very competitive in the rest of the world. But they are higher in the US. We are building a new plant in Austin, Texas. That will help us bring costs down in the US.

On Dell in India...

Dell is looking to expand its India business, with new products and services. The company plans to focus on the growing demand for cloud services and outsourcing. Dell India's CEO will talk about the company's strategy in India and how it plans to compete with its competitors. The interview will also cover Dell's thoughts on the Indian IT market and how it plans to adapt to the changing landscape.

If you are only focused on PCs, your market size would be quite small. Hardware, including data centre and security is bigger

For manufacturing in IT sector to really take off, we need ingredient suppliers and they are not at the scale in a competitive way

We have a large social media listening centre where we listen to over 2 billion conversations a year
A re-look at private institutions

R. S. Grewal

Higher education in India faces a major dilemma. Although the private sector accounts for 91 per cent of seats in engineering, 64 per cent in management studies, 95 per cent in pharmaceutical studies, 92 per cent in medicine and 94 per cent in hotel management, its role is still viewed suspiciously by many in the country. The government has categorised elementary education as a “merit good”, while the higher education is considered as a “non-merit good”. The implications of this policy are that funds available for higher education are rather limited, raising serious issues related to access to institutions of higher learning. Considering the Indian demographic environment, the government has no choice but to rely upon the private sector to meet the burgeoning demand. Therefore, the privatisation of higher education in India has not come about due to an ideological commitment, but has been forced upon it.

The regulatory bodies in India have not been prepared for this sudden change and view the entry of the private sector with scepticism. They are suspicious of the monopolisation of higher education by the private sector. The entry and the conduct of some of the private sector players, who see an opportunity to make a quick buck, further aggravate the matters. A tendency has developed amongst the bureaucrats and the regulatory bodies to paint all private institutions with the same brush. Adversely, a pseudo “caste system” has been created amongst all the public institutions, irrespective of the quality of education being provided by them, being considered a notch above the private sector institutions.

Furthermore, government agencies, which provide grants for research and other academic activities, have framed rules and regulations that discriminate against private institutions. The emphasis is more on the “original” of the institution rather than on the quality of education being provided by it. There could be nothing more ironic where a business school (IBS) with international standards is not recognised by the regulator but has been granted by the visit of the President and the Prime Minister of India during their convocation and annual functions. This type of environment creates confusion in the minds of the general public which is not well versed with the nuances of the regulatory mechanism pertaining to higher education existing in India. Not many can distinguish between a state private university and a deemed to be university. Rather the phenomenon of creating deemed to be universities is peculiar to India and many foreign scholars and academic administrators fail to comprehend this concept. Invariably, they feel that a deemed to be university could become a fully-fledged university after fulfilling some conditions. It does not bode well for a country which is aspiring to become a great power and which is considered as a potential education hub for South Asia. Also, failure of bureaucrats to take timely decisions has resulted in a number of court cases that have compounded the matter further.

While some of the judgements have accepted that providing education is an “occupation”, others have held that it is an “industry”. Some judicial pronouncements have held that establishing and administering an educational institution for imparting knowledge to students is an occupation, protected by Articles 19(1)(g) and 26(g) of the Constitution. But the courts have also been cautious enough to rule that though providing education may be an occupation and a reasonable amount of profit could be permissible, they have been strictly against any form of profiteering. At the international level, even the WTO has accepted that provision of education is a service that can be traded and it has been included under the GATS. India, as a member of WTO, has accepted that position.

In such an environment, there is a need to educate the general public about the role and the status of private education providers. There are a large number of private institutions which are rendering yeomen service to the country, but the public gets swayed by the misdeeds of some of the black sheep in the private sector. The fact that the black sheep exist both in public and private sector institutions is often ignored. Now, the time has come where we need to identify the relative strengths of public and private sector institutions and help them complement each other to synergise the national effort in making India a powerhouse of knowledge.

The writer is Vice-Chancellor, Chitkara University, Himachal Pradesh

ADMISSION DEADLINE

From now, more information on Admission Deadline will be available online. Please visit The Tribune website at www.tribuneindia.com and click on "Education" in the "Weekly Specials" section to get details.

— Pervin Malhotra, www.careerguidanceindia.com
It is high time India developed a strong research ecosystem

Indian universities need sustainable financial support to carry out long-term research programmes. Inter-university research centres are also needed.

The writer is director, IIT Kanpur.

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B vitamins may boost mental wellbeing

OLDER adults who took vitamin B12 and folic acid supplements for two years had greater improvements on short- and long-term memory tests than adults who did not take the vitamins, according to the results of a new study from Australia.

The benefits were modest, but encouraging, indicating that the vitamins 'may have an important role in promoting healthy ageing and mental wellbeing, as well as sustaining good cognitive functioning for longer on a community-wide scale,' Janine Walker, the lead author of the study and a researcher at Australian National University, told Reuters Health by email.

The researchers asked more than 700 people, aged 60 to 74 years, to take a daily dose of folic acid and vitamin B12 or fake pills that resembled the vitamins. The study only included people who showed signs of depression, but were not diagnosed with clinical depression.

The vitamin dose included 400 micrograms of folic acid and 100 micrograms of vitamin B12. The participants didn't know which pills they were assigned to take.

"We felt that older people with elevated depressive symptoms were an important cohort to target given evidence that late-life depression is associated with increased risk of cognitive impairment," Walker said.

After 12 months, there seemed to be no difference between the groups in how well the people scored on mental tests, including memory, attention and speed.

Two years on, however, those who took the vitamins showed larger improvements in their scores on the memory tasks.

The difference in the improvements was small, the researchers write in their study, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

"For instance, on a short term memory test, those who took the fake pills improved their score from about 5.2 to about 5.5 over the two years. Those who took the vitamins increased their test scores from 5.16 to roughly 5.6. Short term memory is used to dial a number someone has just told you, while long term memory comes into play when you try to call that number a day or week later," Joshua Miller, a professor at the University of California, Davis, said. "It's difficult to translate the memory improvements on the tests into real life benefits. He said it's likely that some people had larger memory improvements, while others benefited very little.

"For any given individual, there may or may not be an effect. But on a population level, a small increase in cognitive function can have very real ramifications on the functioning of the population as a whole and on the costs of healthcare," Miller said.

Miller said it's possible that certain subgroups of individuals might be more likely to benefit from folic acid and B12 than others. "What I believe the next thing we need to do is (study) the group that is most likely to benefit from this," Miller, who did not participate in this research, told Reuters Health.
हायर एजुकेशन में सुधार से जुड़ी तीन आहम बिल राज्यसभा में पेडिंग
संसद में बिल अधूरे, खबर कैसे हों पूरे
करिजी की उड़ान भरने के लंबे ख़ाब कहीं धूप-पूर न हो जाएं। यह सवाल हर उस स्टडेंट को कमा करता है जिसके भविष्य से जुड़ी तीन विधेयक संसद के श्रेयस्य में अनुमान हो गए। हायर एजुकेशन में बदलाव के मकसद से पैसा किए गए ये बिल लोकसभा में तो पास हो चुके हैं, पर राज्यसभा की मंजूरी अभी नहीं है। सेशन पूरा हो गया, लेकिन उन युवाओं के सामने अधूरे ही रह गए, जिन्हें कड़ी मेहनत के बाद कड़ी बेसिक से अपनी फ़िशी कंप्यूटर है।

मंज़िल कुंद्री || नई दिल्ली

हायर एजुकेशन में सुधार के उपर तरक्का के अवरुद्ध पर फिलाहाल ब्रेक स्तर नहीं आ रहा है। यह है इसमें जुड़े कुछ आहम विधेयक (बिल) को संसद में मंजूरी न मिल पाता। सरकार इसके लिए भी परेशान है कि इन बिलों को बहस से कई सूट्डेंट का भविष्य भी अपर में दिख रहा है।

विधेयक मानव संशोधन मंडल के जीत बिल लोकसभा में पास होकर साथि में नहीं है उन्में आईएआईटी बिल कांठीपुरम-2011, आईआईटी बिल बीएच-2011 और आईआईटी संशोधन बिल-2010 शामिल हैं। खास बात कि यह है कि इनमें से प्राथमिक बिल ऐसे हैं, जिनमें संशोधन को वैज्ञानिक दृष्टि से मिल पाने की वजह से संसद में अपने सूट्डेंट को दिहो तो ना पाए रहे हैं।

आईआईटी बिल कांठीपुरम-2011

यह विधेयक इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ़ इंजिनियरिंग ईरानियाई, हिलास को राष्ट्रीय दर्जा दिया जाने से पूर्व है। बिल पास होने से ही वैश्विक इंस्टीट्यूट का दर्जा मिल जाएगा। साल 2007 में दुसरे इंस्टीट्यूट के पहले वैच ने निकलने का निकलना का वैच आ गया है, लेकिन इसके राष्ट्रीय दर्जा न मिलने से इसके सूट्डेंट को दिप्रोही नहीं दी जा सकेगी।

एनआईटी अमङ्गें में बिल-2010

इस बिल के जारी देश के पाँच इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ इंजिनियरिंग विभाग (बोस्ल, कोन्कण, पूर, मोहाली और विश्वविद्यालय) को वैज्ञानिक दर्जा मिल जाएगा। इस दर्जे के बाद ही ये संसद में अपने सूट्डेंट को दिप्रोही दे सकेगे। ये संसद में पांच बार का कोर्ट करने के बाद भी दिहो नहीं दे पा रहे हैं।

आईआईटी बिल बीएच-2011

बीएच-2011 आईआईटी विभाग पर लोकसभा में पास हो पाया है। अब इसे राज्यसभा में पास होना चाहिए। यह विधेयक पास न होने की वजह से मोदी के आईआईटी को आईआईटी का दर्जा नहीं मिल पाए रहे हैं।

आर्थिक क्षेत्र अटक हैं बिल

मंडल के पूर्वी के निवासी तो संसद में हो हंगामे के बदले बिल लापता जाते हैं। मंडल को अब इसके बदल सत्र में पास होने का उच्चता है।