IIT alumnus launches tablet for interactive learning

Our Bureau
Coimbatore, Jan. 2
Rohit Pande, a graduate of Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, launched his latest innovation Classpad, a new generation tablet for personalised and interactive teaching and learning at IIT Delhi.

According to Mr Pande, Classpad would facilitate personalised and interactive learning in the classroom and make education accessible to every student depending on his/her intelligence level and talent.

"Using Classpad, teachers would be able to transfer classwork to the students' tablet effortlessly, share their own content and conduct tests/assessments without any hassle. Students can also attempt assessments and get immediate results and enhance their learning techniques," he said.

FEATURES
It is a touch-screen gadget with a 7-hour battery life, 1.3 Ghz processing speed and a built-in memory of 4 GB expandable up to 8 GB.

Addressing the participants at the launch, Mr Rohit Pande, Chief Executive of Class-teacher Learning Systems, said that the education system in India did not differentiate students learning capabilities.

"Everyone is taught at the same level. The software installed in Classpad tests students' problem solving, creativity and application of language skills and helps categorise them as fast learners, average and slow learners. This in-built artificial intelligence in Classpad will assist in reducing the monotonous repetitive sessions in the classroom. Teachers can now complete their syllabus within schedule and get considerable time to focus on slow learners," he said.

TWO MODELS
Available for students in standard 3 to 12, Classpad will serve as an interactive e-reading device, with the capability of storing dozens of books.

It can also be integrated with existing school platforms and be easily connected to the interactive whiteboards.

Classpad is available in 2 models: Trolley model for multiple student usage and one Tablet per Child model.

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IIM-A set to choose its own director

ANUBHUTI VISHNOI  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

IIM-Ahmedabad will be the first IIM in the country to choose its own director. Set to formally accept the revised Memorandum of Association (MoA) proposed by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), the Union HRD Ministry will allow increased autonomy to the management institute.

Prof Samir Barua, who is currently IIM-A's director, will complete his term later this year and his successor is likely to be selected through the new procedure which will encourage active participation by the IIM.

As per the revised MoA, the IIM's Board of Governors — and not the ministry — will set up a search-cum-selection committee on its own and this committee will then shortlist three candidates for the post of the IIM director.

The IIM-A BoG will forward these names to the HRD Ministry which will then be able to choose a director only from amongst these shortlisted candidates.

The IIM's BoG will also be able to select its own chairman in a similar fashion. This new process marks quite a departure from the selection process in effect until now.

IIMs have for years been engaged in a tug-of-war of sorts with the government for more autonomy.

"IIM-A will be able to select its own director under the new MoA. The IIM-A director will soon complete his term and the new director will come in through the new selection process. This will go a long way in bringing more autonomy to IIMs," HRD Ministry sources said.

As of now, it is the ministry which forms a search-cum-selection committee in collaboration with the IIM BoG and also chooses one of the candidates shortlisted by the committee, allowing the government to wield its influence right from the beginning of the selection process.

While this process allows no room for the IIM or its BoG any say in the appointment of its director, the new process promises to be initiated and driven by the IIMs themselves.

Incidentally, the IIT Review Committee headed by R C Bhargava had also recommended the same.

"We recommend that the director of each IIM be selected and appointed by the Board of each IIM, with the conditions of service being approved by the pan IIM Board. The process of selection should be determined by each Board. We also recommend that the selection field should be broad-based to attract the best available talent," the Bhargava Committee said in its report.
AFFAIRS
University all set to undergo total administrative reform

Shaswati Das
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NEW DELHI: Delhi University is all set to witness an all-round administrative revamp. From basic administrative functions such as tabulating attendance to extra curricular activities for students, a complete metamorphosis is under way.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT
DU V-C Dinesh Singh stated that the management would soon review the procedure to ensure fairness and transparency. "There have been several problems with this system. We have received a lot of complaints from students about its unfairness," said Singh.

However, teachers in DU begged to differ. "First, for students who are not academically strong, we try and ensure that they get a sufficient buffer so that they can pass their main exams. Also, reviewing internal assessments will not leave any incentive for students to take their assignments and tests seriously," said a professor.

ATTENDANCE TO BE PUT UP ONLINE
Mistakes that usually creep in when attendance is tabulated may soon become a thing of the past. The university is planning to put the students' monthly attendance on its website.

"The students and their parents can check this attendance. Every time, attendance issues crop up at the end of the semester and we are trying to iron out the problems," the V-C said.

INTERNSHIPS
DU is also going to announce an internship programme for students. Students will be offered internships at the Vice Regal Lodge (the V-C's office) for a couple of days, wherein, they will be privy to DU's administrative work.

COMPUTERISED RESULT
DU has also switched over to a more technologically savvy method of computing results. That was why they came out with the semester results in record time. "This system has greatly reduced the scope of error," said HP Singh, DU proctor.
From 2013, 4-yr Hons course in DU

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: Delhi University is planning to add another academic year to its existing three-year undergraduate course starting 2013. The BA, BCom and BSc courses are likely to be structured in a way that even if a student opts out before completing four years, either a diploma or a lesser degree will be awarded. Students will also get to study a wider range of subjects in the first year before having a wider range of subjects, P 6

3-year PG course on family medicine soon

Family physicians — medical practitioners that were fast disappearing — are being revived. With India witnessing a rush of medical students keen on becoming “specialists”, the Union health ministry and Medical Council of India (MCI) has notified introduction of a new three-year post-graduate course — MD in family medicine. P 9

second year. In case a student wishes to drop out in the second year, he or she can opt for skill-based subjects and get a diploma. A student leaving in the third year will get a general degree while those completing four years will bag a specialized degree equivalent to a present-day Honours.

According to university officials, experts are working on a mechanism to address possible problems that the switchover may create. “The university is planning to introduce the four-year degree programme from 2013. Right now it is in the planning stage as we need to work out on a lot of issues. That is why we need to start early so that we are ready with our plans well on time,” Singh told TOI.

At ₹6k salary, Kerala univ asked Einstein to be VC

Thrissur: A legend of physics got a salary of ₹6,000 a month, how much more could he want? That is what physics genius Albert Einstein did when he was offered the position of Distinguished Professor of the University of Kerala in 1933.

The founder of modern physics, however, declined the offer, saying he wanted to join Princeton University in the US. The Kerala government, eager to make its university a centre of excellence, had offered 1.25 times the salary of Nobel Prize winner. The offer was accepted.

AHEAD OF TIME: The founder of modern physics, however, declined the offer

Ramaseswamy Aiyar. Aiyar was a shrewd administrator and multi-faceted scholar who kept abreast of contemporary developments, including those in modern science.

Citing records of the to-dos of the Kerala government, Monen says Aiyar advised the reigning prince Chithira Tirunal Balarama Varma, the last Maharaja of Travancore, to invite Einstein to decorate the prestigious academic post. Aiyar thought the prestige and status of the university would be elevated if a great scientist like Albert Einstein agreed to head it.

According to historian M G Sashibhushan, Aiyar had tried to bring not only Einstein but many other famous personalities from various academic disciplines as faculty at the university. “I have heard people saying of CP’s public announcement about the proposal first at the Sree Chitra State Council. But as far as I know, unfortunately, the copy of the letter sent to Einstein is yet to be traced,” Sashibhushan said.

Data from 1947 onwards shows that inflation rate in India has averaged around 6.4%. Extrapolating this to the time between 1957 and 1947, Rs 6,000 then would be equivalent to Rs 6.3 lakh per month today.
President inaugurates new SHAR Mission Control Centre

It will meet requirements for launch of GSLV Mark-III

Staff Reporter

NELLOR: President Pratibha Patil visited the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC SHAR) at Sriharikota here on Monday and dedicated the new Mission Control Centre to the nation.

She also witnessed a simulation of the launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) at the Mission Control Centre and various exhibits of the advances in space science and technology. The new centre has been developed with state-of-the-art facilities to meet the requirements for the launch of the Geo-Synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III and future missions of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Later, she visited the First Launch Pad, where the integration of the soon-to-be-launched PSLV-C19 was in progress.

In her address to ISRO scientists, the President said the entire country was looking forward to the successful flight-testing by the ISRO of the indigenous cryogenic stage on-board GSLV-I. "I understand that our next generation heavy-lift launch vehicle, GSLV Mark III, is also in an advanced stage of development."

Ms. Patil said the country felt a sense of joy and pride following the success of Chandrayaan-1 and the remarkable discovery of water molecule on the lunar surface. "I am sure the country will rejoice and once again be proud when the Chandrayaan-2 mission places the lander-and-rover modules on the lunar terrain."

She said the overriding objectives of science and technology should be to utilise their application and research for the overall benefit of society. Pointing out that space-based applications revolutionised the way the government reached out to its citizens, she called for developing tele-agriculture to educate farmers about rainfed and dry-land farming and to help in higher agriculture productivity and increased incomes.

Observing that the role of observation systems in space and development of the latest technology as well as weather prediction systems would become of even greater importance in the years ahead for food, water and energy security, Ms. Patil said: "The impact of climate change and the occurrence of disasters require enhancing our early warning systems and response capabilities. This will have a direct impact on the people and their livelihood. In all these, the contribution of space technology is crucial."

She said space cooperation was an important aspect of India's engagement with other countries and the country enjoyed a niche among space-faring nations. Satellite navigation was also coming up as a new vista in the Indian space programme and expressed her delight at the fact that a constellation of seven navigation satellites would provide navigational services for civilian and strategic applications in the coming days.

Earlier, ISRO Chairman K. Radhakrishnan, SDSC SHAR Director M.C. Dathan and other senior officials of the ISRO and the Department of Space received the President.

Ms. Patil presented ISRO awards for 2008-09, including the Lifetime Achievement Award to the former ISRO chairman, K. Kasturirangan.
India to push ₹8,200-cr ‘super Bt cotton’

Two Bt cotton variants claimed by government scientists as ‘indigenous technology’ were found to be based on US biotech giant Monsanto’s Bt cotton gene, putting the credibility of the government-funded farm science under a cloud.

In a meeting chaired by agriculture minister Sharad Pawar recently, the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) has given the go-ahead for a multi-pronged project to develop a Bt cotton variety that will offer protection from multiple pests and diseases.

The project aims to create genes that would offer protection from jassids — a leaf hopping pest — and also give viral immunity to the cotton plant.

Part of the funds will also be used to create farm tools, such as cotton-picking machines.

“You could call this a super Bt cotton. There is a big market for Bt cotton and there is no reason why the government should not promote research. The recent scandal is a one-off case,” Swapan Kumar Dutta, ICAR deputy director general of crops told HT.

Dutta said the farm ministry, as a matter of policy, firmly believes in continuing research in genetic engineering. “The recent scandal is of no concern because the two varieties were withdrawn long back because of poor performance...,” he said.

Dutta said disciplinary action against the errant scientists had been left to the universities.

Bikaneri and NNH 44 were the only genetically modified varieties of Bt cotton developed through government-funded research to provide cheaper alternatives to farmers, while numerous other privately developed varieties eroded India’s royalty-driven ₹2,000-crore cotton seed market.

EARLIER, TWO VARIETIES OF BT COTTON CLAIMED TO BE ‘INDIGENOUS’ WERE FOUND TO BE BASED ON A US FIRM’S BT COTTON GENE.
Twin NASA probes in lunar orbit

On gravity-mapping mission; data to be used to model moon's interior

Reuters
Cape Canaveral, Fla., Jan. 2
Two robotic probes began orbiting the moon on Sunday in preparation for an unprecedented mission to map the lunar interior.

NASA's twin Gravity Recovery And Interior Laboratory, or GRAIL, spacecraft wrapped up 4-million-km journey to put themselves into lunar orbit on Saturday and Sunday.

Over the next two months, the probes' 55-km-high orbits will be adjusted to get them into optimal position to measure the pushes and pulls of the moon's gravity, data that scientists can use to model what is inside the moon.

"Pop the bubbly and toast the moon," NASA wrote on its Twitter feed after the first GRAIL spacecraft finished a 40-minute braking manoeuvre at 5 p.m. EST (2200 GMT) on New Year's Eve.

The second spacecraft followed suit 25 hours later. Both are needed for the intricate gravity-mapping mission scheduled to begin in March.

"Everything is looking good," NASA wrote as ground control teams received radio signals on Sunday confirming the second spacecraft's arrival. "It's going to be a great 2012."

2 MONTHS TO BE IN POSITION
Over the next two months, the probes' orbits will be tweaked until they are flying in formation low over the lunar poles. As the spacecraft fly over denser regions of the moon, they will speed up slightly in response to the extra gravitational tugs.

By constantly measuring changes in the distance between the two craft, scientists can create a gravity map of the moon. The changes in speed will be as subtle as a fraction of a micron per second. A micron is about the width of a red blood cell.

The data will be used to model the moon's interior, a key piece of information still missing despite more than 100 previous missions to the moon, including six human expeditions during NASA's 1969-1972 Apollo program.

Scientists believe the moon formed when an object about the size of Mars smashed into Earth shortly after the formation of the solar system about 4.5 billion years ago. But questions about how the moon evolved remain.

One longstanding question is why the far side of the moon is so different from the side that permanently faces Earth. The near side is filled with large, dark plains formed by ancient volcanic eruptions, while the far side is virtually all highlands.

TO LAST 82 DAYS
The mission is scheduled to last 82 days, but if the solar-powered probes, built by Lockheed Martin Corp, survive beyond the next lunar eclipse in June, the $496-million mission could be extended for a more detailed mapping survey.

This undated artist rendering provided by NASA on December 21, 2011 shows the twin Grail spacecraft mapping the lunar gravity field. — AP
2011 में धीमी रही शिक्षा सुधार की सप्ताह शैक्षणिक सुधार से जुड़े कई अहम वित्तेयक नहीं हो पाए पारत

नई विद्या दुर्गा के उपर से जो अवसर देश के लिए नयी 2011 में नयाग संस्थान बनाने और समाज सुधार के लिए सभी संगठनों के लिए सही की जाने लगी। नई विद्या दुर्गा के उपर से जो अवसर देश के लिए नयी 2011 में नयाग संस्थान बनाने और समाज सुधार के लिए सभी संगठनों के लिए सही की जाने लगी।
आईआईटी ने मनाया 33वां स्थापना दिवस

रुड्सकी (ए)। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान रुड्सकी का 33 वां वार्षिक स्थापना दिवस के समारोह पर होमियोपैथिक डिस्पेसरी सेवा समिति विकास नगर में बड़ी धृष्टिगति से मनाया गया। कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अध्यक्ष डॉ. डायरेक्टर डॉ.पिला और एनआईएच डॉ. राजदेव सिंह अध्यक्षता एण्डी जॉर्जी ने न संचालन अथवा कुमार गुप्ता ने किया। कार्यक्रम का शुभारम्भ मुख्य अध्यक्ष इस दीप प्रज्वलित कर किया गया। इस अवसर पर ब्लड सर्कुलेशन योजना का उपयोग देशसभा द्वारा उद्घाटन किया गया।

उप निदेशक के पोल द्वारा समिति के वर्ष पूर्व मुफ्त सर्कुलेशन और अन्य सुविधाओं को चलाने हेतु विशेष कार्य की सहायता की। एनआईएच डायरेक्टर राजदेव सिंह ने कहा कि यह समिति वर्ष पूर्व अपने कार्य की जनता के लिए स्मार्ट डॉक्टर के संचालन व्यापक के पार है। वरिष्ठ वैज्ञानिक डॉ. इशारद मसूद व हर्ष प्रकाश काला ने कहा कि वर्ष पूर्व हज़ार मरीजों का इलाज मुफ्त में किया जाता है यही सच्ची सेवा है। सेवा समिति के अध्यक्ष एण्डी जॉर्जी ने कहा कि यह संचालन व दवाई के लिए जाता है। कार्यक्रम में डॉ. जानेश्वर रसौंदी, डॉ. जे.सी. टोपाल, डॉ. रम्या सिंह पंचार, अपनी सेवाते दे दी है। इस अवसर पर संस्थान के इंजीनियर शोल्ला चिंद्र स्टेट बैंक रुड्सकी शाखा चिंद्र स्टेट बैंक रुड्सकी शाखा चिंद्र स्टेट बैंक रुड्सकी शाखा बैंक रुड्सकी शाखा के साथ तमाम लीग मौजूद थे।