Teach India Module Imparts English Skills To Many To Prepare Them For Better Jobs

When you enter the class, you leave difference at the door. Volunteer teacher Monika Chadha coaxes a hesitant Ilyas Ahmed, 25, out of his chair, encouraging him to get contact details and job profiles from classmates in an exercise designed to teach communication skills and gather business information.

Ahmed, along with 18 others, is in one of the classes being held at 40 centers across NCR as part of Times of India's Teach India module for teaching spoken English. The classes, held in association with NGOs, are meant for youth between the ages of 18 and 35. Its purpose practical — enhance their employability.

If at one centre, they create business cards, critique each other's efforts and practise greeting each other; at another, they play to break the ice. Over the three-month-long course, the students will polish their communication skills, figure out how to tackle job interviews and emerge more confident when they hit the job market.

The students are a mixed lot. Ilyas is a computer operator and has taken up night shifts to make it to NGO Udyan Care's Badarpur centre. Ashok is a carpet seller and has taken off work to ensure he can make the most of this opportunity. Others have a variety of jobs.

ON A MISSION: Karandeep Bhagat at a class in Kakrola in west Delhi

Kumar, who, everyone agreed, had produced the best business card for the owner of Sai Tours and Travels, wants to move on from his position as customer care executive and find a government job. He has little interest in his family's building material store.

It's work and fun. In a classroom at Kakrola in west Delhi, students are playing. "My name is Yash Kumar and I stay in Dwarka Sector 14," says Yash Kumar as he catches a ball introducing himself and passes it on. "My name is Rahul," says his classmate, before throwing the ball to another of the 20 students. Volunteer teacher Karandeep Bhagat finds his class an easier lot. "We're not learning, we're playing. We're here to play," he laughs off and the class responds in chorus, "English!"

The classes will also help students with the fundamentals — grammar, sentence construction, vocabulary. Monika Chadha, 31, who was once a science teacher, gently corrects their grammar, pushes them to think in English — "You can't hammer the grammar," she says and guides them on expanding their vocabulary. As Dinesh Sharma, 18, in class XII and a dancer who has performed in pubs says: "It's difficult to understand fast rap songs and I can't lip sync with those on stage. Lekin abhi teen mahine badh dekhna, ek dum faraata!" he assures his Kakrola class. (In three months, I'll be fluent!)

No matter what the vocation, English is a must, says Kiran Singh, 20, who wants to be either a teacher or start her own beauty parlour. The same faith is expressed in a Gurgaon class. The course will help in multiple ways, says 19-year-old Sonia Khan, pursuing fashion designing, as she lauds her class at Gurgaon's Kalakshetra.

Most students in the Kalakshetra centre are either in class XII or pursuing graduation. For Rajan Kumar, part-time watchman who is also pursuing graduation through correspondence, the Teach India initiative is perfectly timed. "My chances of getting good job will increase manifold. It's been just three days of attending classes, but I feel the difference."

There's much belief in the power of the Teach India initiative. Ashutosh Shelat of Search Years, one of the many NGOs partnering with the Times of India on the Teach India initiative, adds: "It will definitely help underprivileged students enhancing their chances of getting a job."

At another centre in Uttam Nagar, dogged determination is on display. Class topper at a Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, Rukaiya Saffi is only nervous about conversing in English. "I can understand, but have trouble speaking English," says the 17-year-old wannabe Chemistry teacher. Chanchal Rani, a masters in Hindi, wouldn't pass up this chance. "When people ask me directions in English, I can't help them. I want to be able to do such simple things on my own," says 21-year-old Rani. She's reached the right place. As the board outside says — it's "A for Aasaan".

 Everyone speaks English. I feel I don't know English and am not comfortable. Learning it gives you confidence.

Ashok Kumar

25

I want to be a chartered accountant. I might get better opportunities if I enhance my English-speaking skills.

It would help me get over my hesitation.

Mamta

18

I can understand but have trouble speaking English.

I will practise with my friends what I learn here.

in class

Rukaiya Saffi

17

Education is useless without English. You have to learn English and then you can get a good job, go anywhere.

Ilyas Ahmed

25

Whether I become a beautician or a teacher, I need to learn English to get ahead.

Kiran Singh

20

This class is shaping up very well. Seeing the shell they were in when they started and considering that most of them are from a Hindi background, it's really encouraging to note that they are speaking two-three sentences in English now.

Monika Chadha | TEACHER (ABOVE)
Health ministry opposes HRD’s joint exam plan

By Nikhil Kanekal & Prashant K. Nanda

NEW DELHI

The health ministry has opposed a proposal by the human resources development (HRD) ministry to integrate entrance exams for engineering and medical courses to ease the burden on students.

"On careful consideration, (the health ministry) is not—at this stage—in favour of an integrated entrance examination for medical and engineering streams," the directorate general of health services (DGHS) said in an affidavit it filed in the Supreme Court on Friday.

The affidavit was in response to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) backing the HRD ministry’s proposal. DGHS, the counselling agency for students eligible for medical and dental seats, reasoned that it requires careful coordination among various agencies to ensure seats are optimally made available to candidates who clear a joint exam. It said it is not ready to deal with the “eventuality of vacancies arising on account of a candidate giving up his medical seat in order to opt for an engineering seat”.

nikhil.k@livemint.com
Probe into Gzb ‘ragging’ death still to be over

Laft Kumar | TNN

Ghazlabad: Investigation into the alleged case of ragging, in which a 20-year-old BTech student of SRM University campus was allegedly pushed to his death from his hostel building on August 15 this year, is yet to be completed. A Ghazlabad police officer, however, said that investigation into the matter is still on.

“I cannot say at this stage how long the probe will go on,” he said, adding he was not aware that the ragging helpline of the University Grants Commission (UGC) had, a day before the student’s death, informed both the university and the police that ragging beyond all limits was going on on the campus.

The first year BTech student, Abhishek Sah, who had celebrated his 20th birthday in the college hostel on August 7, was the only son of Jain Kant Sah, an electrical engineer working in a public sector company in Ranchi. Sah had contacted the prime minister’s office on August 17, requesting that the Uttar Pradesh police be asked to investigate the case seriously.

The same day, an official of the PMO wrote a letter, no. 2/3/2010-PMPS/208895 to the UP chief secretary, requesting that appropriate action be taken in the matter.

The Speaker of the Jharkhand assembly had also written to UP chief minister, Mayawati, requesting that investigation in the case be expedited.

According to the report filed at the Niwari police station by Sah, “My whole life has become barren and meaningless after Abhishek’s death. My son had on some occasions called me to say that he was being ragged at the university.”

Sah then told his son to meet the director and dean of the university Manoj Kumar Pandey. “My son then called me to say that the dean had told him that the ‘ragging was only a matter of a few days more and that things would soon become easier’,” Sah said.

In the report, Sah said that Abhishek was first brutally beaten by a second year student, Siddharth Kumar, and four others and then pushed from the third floor of the hostel building.

When asked about this, Pandey said, “We have made inquiries and found that Abhishek accidentally fell to his death.” Asked if anyone had seen Abhishek fall, Pandey said there were some labourers who heard him fall. He did not reply when asked why the incident can’t be termed as a case of suicide.

When asked why the college had not taken any action when the UGC informed the university on August 14, he replied, “I will not discuss with you anything more regarding the case. Thank you.”

All attempts to contact the district police chief, Raghuvir Lal, failed.

Teacher booked for punishing student: A 45-year-old teacher, employed with the Royal Public School at Roop Vihar near Rohini, was booked under section-33 of the Juvenile Justice Act after the parents of a 10-year-old child alleged that the teacher had subjected the boy to corporal punishment. According to Chhaya Sharma, DCP (outer), the police registered a case on October 10 at Aman Vihar police station after the MLC report found the teacher’s fingerprints on the boy’s body. The victim is a resident of Meer Vihar. TNN
The Indian Tablet

Despite its IT prowess, India has lagged in hardware innovation. But now Rohan Shravan, CEO of a start-up in Bangalore, is set to launch an Android OS-based tablet to take on the iPad and the slew of other tablets in the works. With top US technology sites taking a positive stand on it so far, Shravan could turn out to be a trailblazer.
Youth skip reading books to surf net, watch TV: Study

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: Hindi is the most preferred language for leisure reading (33.4%), followed by Marathi (13.2%), Bengali (7.7%) and English (5.3%).

But, reading is still not the most preferred activity among Indian youth as they spend more time watching TV and surfing internet. A literate youth spends on an average 98 minutes daily viewing TV, 32 minutes reading newspapers, 44 minutes going through magazines, 70 minutes surfing the net and 61 minutes listening to radio. Significantly, 62% of the total literate youth (206.6 million) live in rural areas, and the rest (126.1 million) in urban centres.

Of the total literate, 44% are women. Community-wise speaking, 82% of literate youth are Hindus, 13% Muslims, Sikhs and Christians make up 2% each. Another interesting find is that OBCs make up 40% of the literate youth, followed by general castes (27%), SC (23%) and ST (10%). Most of the literate OBCs are from southern, western and central Indian states.

The findings — one of the most comprehensive study of reading habits among youth (13-35 years) conducted by National Book Trust and National Council for Applied Economic Research — have revealed that girls show more interest in reading books during their leisure time. However, more boys read newspapers than girls.

Around 77% of literate youth is interested in music and films, 72% in news and current affairs, 59% in religious and spiritual topics, 35% in science and technology and 34% in environmental pollution.

The survey says, of the 83 million youth readers (comprising 25% of the youth population) about 39 million (47%) are urban and 44 million (53%) are rural. Fiction is the most preferred genre among youth (42%) followed by non-fiction (24%). Fantasy, comics and classics are the three most preferred genres of fiction, and the least preferred are romance and graphic novels. When it comes to non-fiction, religious/spiritual texts and biographies/autobiographies are the most preferred.
Hindustan Times ND 13/11/2010
clarification

UGC secretary NA Kazmi wrote a letter in response to the news item 'UGC in fresh storm over deemed varsity' that appeared in HT on November 11:
It is clarified that the UGC had planned an All India Vice-Chancellors' Conference arising out of discussions in a Parliamentary briefing with the Hon'ble HRM in December 2009. Then, UGC came to know about the AIU's 85th Annual Meeting to be held at Bharati Vidyapeeth, Pune. It was decided to make this a joint conference and to reimburse expenditure incurred on behalf of UGC to the host institution on actual basis as per norms, up to Rs 1 crore.

Our correspondent responds:

The report is completely accurate and stands vindicated by the UGC's statement. The UGC Act expressly prohibits the commission from disbursing funds to institutions such as Bharati Vidyapeeth not recognised under section 12(B) of the Act, which the UGC has therefore violated. The UGC did not hold the legally mandatory tendering process in picking the private service provider, the host institution run by a UGC member's family, in clear conflict of interest.
Asian Age ND 13/11/2010
P-5

common medical, engineering test

DGHS opposes Sibal proposal

S.S. NEGI
NEW DELHI

Nov. 12: After the health ministry, the director general of health services also opposed in the Supreme Court the proposal of HRD minister Kapil Sibal for having combined entrance test for medical and engineering admissions across the country from 2011 academic session. "The answering respondent (DGHS) submits that on careful consideration, it is not — at this stage — in favour of in integrated entrance examination for medical and engineering streams," DGHS in an affidavit said.

The DGHS said though it was also concerned that the students' problems, expenses and the stress arising out of multiple entrance exams should be "minimised" but had "reservation on an amalgamated" examination, because there were possibility of such system leading to a situation where students were forced to compromises on substantive merits.

The proposed amalgamation would present certain practical and logistical difficulties in counselling process. Candidates eligible to appear for both medical and engineering entrance exams might eventually secure a place on both merit lists, which would lead to blocking substantial number of seats in either streams creating difficulty in the counselling, the DGHS submitted.

As serious differences had emerged between HRD and health ministry on the issue, a bench of Justices R.V. Raveendran and A.K. Patnaik on Friday directed the health ministry, Medical Council of India and Central Board of Secondary Education to submit their replies to the DGHS affidavit within two weeks.

Earlier, MCI and CBSE had moved applications before the court supporting the HRD ministry's proposal for single entrance test for medical and engineering admission. However, the proposal was also opposed by the state governments and private colleges on the ground that apart from creating practical problems in conducting the combined exam, it would also lead to encroaching the rights of states and private colleges to have independent entrance test as education essentially was in the state subject.
I-bank offers max roles at IIM

Ahmedabad, Nov. 12: Indicating a buoyant job market, the IIM-A students on Friday got maximum number of internship offers from investment bank Royal Bank of Scotland on day one of the summer placements here.

Royal Bank of Scotland once again reinforced its faith in talent pool at Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A) by making highest number of offers, an official statement said. However, IIM-A did not divulge the exact number of students who bagged internship offers from the I-bank. The RBS last year had given 12 offers to the students.


Global management investment firm, T. Rowe Price, came to IIM-A for the first time reposing faith in the campus and its talent. The firms visit is being touted as exclusive to IIM-A. About 420 students will be participating in the summer placement of which four IIM-A students opted out of the process to join non-profit firms.

"IIM-A students are increasingly valuing placement services as a means of pursuing their dreams, rather than merely chasing monetary benefits," Ms Mukherjee said. The interviews for first cluster comprising three cohorts-international investment banks, global strategy consulting and private equity, venture capital and investment management firms, were conducted on first day. The next cluster of placements is scheduled for November 15, and top corporates are expected to land up at the campus. IIM-A will provide internship to a batch of 380 first year Post Graduate Programme in Management students.

—PTI
Cellphone app that counts calories:
Dieters, take heart. A new weapon in the
fight against fat is on its way: a mobile
phone application that counts calories from
a photograph of what’s on your plate. While
existing applications require users to type
in the food and the calorie information
themselves, software developed by Japan’s
NTT Communications evaluates the color
and shapes of food, then compares it with a
database and counts the calories.
Information on about 100,000 different
foods is stored on a server run by the
company and can be accessed by
smartphone. The application even registers
portion size and adjusts the count
accordingly.
Hindu ND 13/11/2010 P7

Third generation Synchrotron to be set up

Ananya Dutta

KOLKATA: The Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics is proposing to set up a third generation Synchrotron, which will be only the fifth such facility in the world, according to Institute Director Milan Kumar Sanyal.

The Rs 6,000-crore project is expected to be executed over a ten-year period during the 12th and 13th Five Year Plans. The project proposal and feasibility report will be submitted to Dr. Srikumar Banerjee, Secretary, Central Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), who will forward it to the Ministry, Dr. Sanyal said.

Synchrotrons are particle accelerators that produce light beams which are used in basic and applied research in various fields including particle physics, condensed matter, chemistry, nanoscience and medicine. Currently there are four Synchrotrons that use third generation sources in the U.S. (APS), Germany (PETRA III), Japan (SPRING-8) and France (ESRF).

Over the past two days, Directors of all four institutes were in the city for meetings with the senior officials of SINP and other installations of the Department of Atomic Energy.

"We hope that this Synchrotron will be the premier international facility to carry out basic and applied research in material and biological sciences," Dr. Sanyal said, adding that the international facility will attract the interest of other countries as well. Scientists hope that they will be able to produce beams of very small size (less than 50 nanometres) and high energy at the new facility. Currently, beams of about 100 nanometres are available to researchers, he said.

"With beams of that size and energy, we can see the molecular structure of the material being scanned," he explained.

In the Indian context, the facility will be very important for the automobile and pharmaceutical industries, Dr. Sanyal added.

Elaborating on the potential of research carried out at such installations, Dr. Gopal K. Shenoy, Senior Scientific Adviser of the Advanced Photon Source (APS) at Argonne in the U.S., said that Kaletra, an antiretroviral drug used to treat HIV patients, was developed at their institute.

"The current value of Kaletra is estimated to be $2 billion. We have estimated that it would cost the same to build APS today," Dr. Shenoy said.

The project is likely to take off by April 2012, but SINP will be focusing on capacity-building in the meantime. It will require 350 scientists and about 150 acres of land, Dr. Sanyal said.

A separate committee has been appointed to look for suitable land for the project and it is not necessary that it will be set up in West Bengal.

Currently the only Synchrotron facility in India is the INDES at the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology in Indore, which uses a second generation source.
Genetically modified sterile mosquitoes to fight dengue fever

London: Scientists have created genetically sterile mosquitoes which use sex to kill off others in their species, and researchers say early field trials suggest the idea could help to halt the rapid spread of dengue fever.

Scientists from a firm called Oxitec in the UK ran a small trial with the Mosquito Research and Control Unit (MRCU) in the Cayman Islands in the Caribbean. This found that releasing 3 million of the genetically altered bugs into a small area managed to cut the species population by 80% in six months.

Dengue fever, a disease which causes severe flu-like symptoms and can kill, is spread through the bite of infected female Aedes aegypti mosquitoes. "The idea is based on releasing sterile males who will go out and mate with wild females," said Luke Alphey, Oxitec's chief scientist and co-founder. "One of the main advantages is that the males actively look for the females — that's what they are programmed to do."

Larvae are produced but most die before they hatch and the rest survive only a short time as mosquitoes. The World Health Organization estimates there are 50 million cases of dengue fever a year, of which 25,000 are fatal, and about 2.5 billion people — two-fifths of the world's population — are at risk, mostly in Africa and southeast Asia.

There is no vaccine or treatment for dengue, and experts say innovative ways of dealing with its spread are urgently needed, since global incidence has risen sharply in recent decades.

French drugmaker Sanofi-Aventis is one of various groups seeking to develop dengue vaccines. It is testing its candidate in late stage clinical trials, but experts say it could be many years before a vaccine is on the market.

But while scientists believe the trial could lead to a breakthrough in stopping the disease, critics argue the mutant mosquitoes might wreak havoc on the environment. Agencies
Washington: Ever wondered how ramp models manage to walk in 10-inch heels without tipping over? The answer lies in physics.

Safe stilettos seems fairly straightforward: Two parts sacrifice and a dash of solid steel, said Fred Allard, creative director for Nine West, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of women’s shoes, reports Fox News. It turns out, there’s a formula to avoid tripping in heels: In 2004, researchers at the University of Surrey devised an equation that uses shoe size, the Pythagorean theorem, and several sociological variables to calculate how high heels can safely go.

Variables in the equation include aesthetic appeal of the shoe, experience in wearing high heels, how many months the shoe has been in style, and even the amount of alcohol consumed. The cost
Victims’ uncle, 3 brothers held

DEORIA KILLINGS I Beaten to death on suspicion of affairs

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, NOVEMBER 12

The three young women, whose bodies were found buried in a field in Nonapar village of Deoria district on November 4, were beaten to death just on the suspicion that they had boyfriends. The fact that the girls often went out together and returned after sunset was considered enough to justify the suspicion. This is what four men, arrested on Friday in connection with the murder, told investigators.

They are Aneeta’s brother Ghanshyam and uncle Daddan, and Neeta’s brothers Manoj and Manohar. Deoria Additional SP Dr Jawahar said they had confessed to the crime. He added that no one from Sarita’s family was involved in the crime.

The police recovered the blood-stained shirt of Daddan from the bushes near the field where the bodies were buried. The shirt is part of Daddan’s uniform at a Mumbai firm where he worked. The sticks and spades used in the crime have also been found.

The girls, all from Singahi village, had disappeared on October 31, but their families did not lodge any complaint. The next day, Sarita’s head was found beside a railway track near the village. On November 4, the bodies were found. Almost immediately, the men from the families went missing. The women who were left behind did not turn up to claim the bodies.

Police sources said they got the first clue from persistent questioning of the women and arrested Daddan who did not take long to break down. He led the police to the other three accused.

Daddan told the police his nephew Ghanshyam told him that his sister was bringing a bad name to the family. He told Daddan that Aneeta and two of her friends went out every evening and returned late. Although no one had seen the boys, Aneeta’s routine had become a matter of shame, Ghanshyam reportedly told his uncle.

Deoria SP M D Karmadhar said Daddan kept a watch on the three friends for some time. On October 31 evening, about an hour after Aneeta went out, Daddan and Ghanshyam went out to look for them. They took along Neeta’s brothers. Daddan told the police that they found the three women in a field near the village. When they gave no satisfactory replies to their questions, the women were beaten to death.
Mumbai lab maps part of Human Protein Atlas

In Sequel To Genome Project, Researchers Use Building Blocks Of Life To Fight Cancer Cells

Malathy Iyer | TNN

Mumbai: The simplicity of Lab Surgpath’s office in Mumbai Central gives no indication of the cutting-edge work being done there. The tiny lab is bunched up in a corner of the large, bare office, but provide the answer when they are switched on: High-speed, high-definition images of normal and cancer cells start flashing rapidly on the screen.

It’s here that a part of the ambitious sequel to the Human Genome project—the sequencing of the complex human DNAs—is being played out. Called the Human Protein Atlas (HPA), the sequel’s Mumbai chapter is being handled by surgical pathologist Dr Sanjay Navani and his 10-member team of doctors.

With headquarters in Sweden, the Atlas is envisaged as a natural progression to the Genome project. The effort is to map each protein’s behaviour in normal and cancer tissues. Once the proteins and the genes on which they occur are correlated, it would be easier to spot an anomaly that causes a disease. Once the antibody for each protein is known, preparing medications would be easier—a concept gaining popularity through the term ‘personalized medicine’.

On November 15, 2010, when the HPA team presents the half-mark of its project in Stockholm—the sequencing of half the human proteome—Lab Surgpath’s team of pathologists will also take a bow. They have painstakingly validated and documented the profiles of over 10,000 antibodies that the Swedish team has so far produced.

“The validation is an online exercise, as India has stringent rules governing the transfer of biological samples,” says Dr Navani, who is among the handful of pathologists in the country practising surgical pathology (the study of human tissues under a microscope) and immunohistochemistry (in which proteins in tissue are detected using antibodies). So, teams in Stockholm’s Royal Institute of Technology and Uppsala University prepare slides of normal and cancer tissues. They use various antibodies generated within the project to stain the tissue: A dark stain would mean the sample has a particular protein while a lighter one would mean poor concentration of that protein.

At the Lab Surgpath office, pathologists such as Dr Shailesh Khan and Dr Tushar Patil study the stained samples and grade the antibodies on high-definition computer screens—their efficacy as well as their usefulness in diagnosing a particular form of cancer such as cancer of the ovary, breast, or others. “The HPA has provided us an excellent way to educate ourselves,” say Dr Khan and Dr Patil.

The team works in batches, and follows a system of cross-checking each other’s work.

“Some, a sample graded by Dr Naik could be further validated by Dr Patil or an international expert,” says Dr Navani, who until the start of the project worked with Breach Candy Hospital.

At present, the Human Protein Atlas site (www.proteinatlas.org) hosts 11,774 antibodies and 9,103,788 images. The project lead, Prof Mathias Uhlen, has been quoted in various fora as saying, “We are trying to map the building blocks of life.” His colleague, Fredrik Ponten, in an email interview to TOL, points out three stages of work: Preparing antibodies, matching them with the proteins in various tissues, and utilising the information to develop diagnostic tools and therapies.

Why was an Indian team selected for the process? Ponten says, “Our work can only be evaluated by skilled pathologists who understand the microscopical landscape. Dr Sanjay Navani was selected, based on his knowledge of surgical pathology and immunohistochemistry, which is fundamental for interpretation of what cells and tissues actually do.”

Dr Navani admits there was scepticism initially. “The field of immunohistochemistry itself is small in India. Here, we were training pathologists for the first time in the field. Yet, in the first month itself, we more than met the standards and volumes expected of us.” Ponten concurs: “The volume of images that are being evaluated every day at the Indian site is unheard-of in the rest of the world and, as such, adds to the uniqueness of this successful project.” More than 8 million images have been evaluated at the Mumbai site—the largest effort made by a single group of surgical pathologists ever.

Incidentally, the Atlas has spawned a rush for research work as well. The Swedish team, on special requests from research scientists in India who work in tandem with Dr Navani, has sent several samples of validated antibodies. “Such research in India is very expensive, but the Atlas team has been generous enough to share its samples with Indian students and researchers,” Dr Navani adds.
Sc frowns at health min for opposing joint engg, med test

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday frowned at the health ministry's opposition to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) proposal to hold a single examination for class XII passouts for medical and engineering colleges at the all-India level by integrating AIPMT and AIEEE.

When counsel for health ministry Aman Ahluwalia cited logistical problems in conducting a single test and subsequent counselling for students, a Bench comprising Justices R V Raveendran and A K Patnaik wondered as to how it could go back on its word.

CBSE's counsel, senior advocate Altaf Ahmed, drew the Bench's attention to the minutes of a joint meeting of representatives of both health and HRD ministries as well as CBSE, Medical Council of India (MCI) and Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) where everyone agreed to the proposal to integrate AIPMT and AIEEE.

The Bench said: "Your objection appears to be technical as you (the health ministry) had clearly mentioned in your affidavit that you shared the concern and commitment of CBSE to ensuring that the examination system is designed in a manner where it maximizes the choices afforded to candidates and minimizes the stress, expenses and inconveniences."

If that was so, then the health ministry must reconsider its objections within two weeks and convey its decision to the court, the Bench said.

An affidavit filed by assistant director-general (medical education) Mangla Kohli stated that the difficulties in a combined entrance examination were not insurmountable but required ironing out of lot of creases.

While the All India Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental Entrance Examination (AIPMT) is conducted to fill in 15% seats in MBBS/BDS courses in government medical and dental colleges against the all-India quota, the All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) is for drawing up a combined merit list for different categories of engineering colleges. CBSE conducts both AIPMT and AIEEE every year.
HRD ministry to give UGC event a miss

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: Despite the University Grants Commission’s contention that everything is hunky dory with the ongoing conference of vice-chancellors — jointly organised with the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) — the HRD ministry will give the event a miss.

Two senior officials — higher education secretary Vibha Puri Das and joint secretary Amit Khare — who were to speak at the event have decided to play truant.

Sources said, the secretary is very upset with the news of a grant of Rs 1 crore to a private institution for the event from non-plan fund. The ministry is likely to seek explanation from the UGC. “Expenditure from non-plan fund is scrutinised by the expenditure department of the finance ministry,” a source said.
Tipsy? App won’t let you post on social sites

London: Scientists have developed a new web application which they claim could stop one from writing e-mails or posting messages on social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter, when drunk.

Once installed, the software, known as the Social Media Sobriety Test, is programmed to post a series of simple problems that, while easy enough to do sober, are intended to be fiendishly difficult to complete when intoxicated.

Users are able to personalise it to choose which sites to block and then select the hours of the day that they are most likely to have enjoyed a few drinks. If one wants to access social media sites during these times, one will have to pass a randomly selected sobriety test such as “drag your mouse in a straight line”, “type the alphabet backwards”, or “follow the finger". PTI
Johannesburg: South Africa has transformed apartheid-era nuclear weapons into a tool for detecting cancer and heart disease, with a new technology that could ease global worries about nuclear arms trafficking.

After voluntarily dismantling its weapons programme, democratic South Africa used the leftover nuclear fuel to produce medical isotopes used by doctors for imaging technology.

South Africa is one of the world’s top three producers of molybdenum-99, better known as moly, used in 80% of the 50 million nuclear medical procedures performed globally each year.

Normally, moly is created with the same type of uranium as used to make nuclear arms, creating a headache for efforts to corral weapons-grade uranium.

But a new technique designed by the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation (Necsa) allows scientists to create moly using low-enriched uranium, rather than the highly enriched type needed for bombs.

“This is very exciting,” said Mike Setheko, chief of nuclear medicine at the University of Pretoria. “This is envisaged to have a huge impact.”

In July, Necsa delivered the first shipment of the new moly to a distributor in the United States, which accounts for half of the world’s billion-dollar market for this kind of nuclear medicine.

The new technology is more expensive, but the United States has given a $25 million grant to Necsa and its partner, the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, to make more.

That doesn’t mean drug distributors will be willing to pay the extra price, but Necsa chief Rob Adams said Washington’s worries about arms trafficking could change that. “What we will be expect-
Ministries fail to resolve joint engineering, medical test issue

The Ministries of Health and Human Resources Development, at loggerhead over the proposal to hold an integrated entrance test for medical (AIPMT) and engineering (AIEEE) admissions across Government colleges in the country, on Friday failed to again see eye-to-eye on the issue. The Health Ministry suggested "logistical" problems to accommodate its counterpart's request.

Taken by surprise over the conflict which first came out in open on October 29, the apex bench of Justices RV Raveendran and AK Pattnaik were taken aback by the Health Ministry's latest objection, where they felt that holding of common entrance would block either a medical or engineering seat. This, after the SC had given time to the Ministries to resolve their differences.

The latest affidavit by the DGHS stated, "Candidates eligible to appear for both medical and engineering examination may eventually secure a place on both merit lists... the counselling agency would have to contend with the eventuality of vacancies arising on account of a candidate giving up his medical seat in order to opt for an engineering seat."

The Bench failed to understand the reservations of the Health Ministry and asked, "Who will give up a medical seat to go for engineering seat...this is not an insurmountable problem." The Health Ministry stated that its reservations to the proposed amalgamation were on account of certain "practical and logistical difficulties in counselling", which the affidavit accepted as not being insurmountable.

The other department, CBSE, under the HRD Ministry, reiterated its demand to hold an integrated examination based on the common meeting held between Health, HRD and DGHS officials where all had given their consent.

The change of stand, especially by DGHS official, who now changed tack, clearly did not impress the Court. It said, "Should not the person (from DGHS) explain his/her conduct. You earlier gave statement supporting the proposal." The Bench gave two weeks to the Health Ministry to file an additional affidavit reconsidering its objections.

Two Kumbakonam fire case accused discharged

Six years after the tragic Kumbakonam fire in a school led to the death of 93 children, the Supreme Court on Friday discharged two of the accused, namely the Chief Education Officer and the Director, Elementary Education in the State.

Discharging the two accused at the very first hearing of the case, the Bench of Justices P Sathasivam and BS Chauhan noted that the two accused were not directly linked to the incident. "We do not want to underestimate the incident, but what is the proof you have to show their direct involvement."

The petitioner K Inbaraj, who was the original complainant in the case, had objected to the discharge of the duo — Chief Education Officer (Thanjavur) M Palanisamy and Director Elementary Education (Chennai) R Kanna. What weighed in their favour was the fact that the trial court had discharged them on July 29 this year, which was subsequently upheld by the Madras High Court on August 31.
Health Ministry opposes common entrance tests

NEW DELHI: The Union Health Ministry on Friday opposed the HRD Ministry's proposal to hold common entrance tests for medical and engineering courses across the country. In a counter-affidavit before the Supreme Court, the ministry said an integrated exam would pose “practical and logistical difficulties.”

The Ministry, in the affidavit filed through the Director General Health Services (DGHS), said: “DGHS respectfully submits that on careful consideration, it is not at this stage in favour of an integrated entrance examination for medical and engineering streams.” The affidavit was filed before a Bench of Justices R V Raveendran and A K Patnaik.

The Bench adjourned the matter for two weeks.
Future cities: Floating in sea like giant water lilies

London: Humans in the future could be living in floating mini cities that drift across the Pacific Ocean as if on giant water lilies.

The startling new concept has been thought up by Japanese technology firm Shimizu and is designed to be a way of harnessing green technologies and creating carbon-neutral cities.

The Green Float concept involves a number of cells, each one kilometre wide, that house between 10,000 and 50,000 people.

Each individual cell would be free to float on the Pacific Ocean near the equator but could also be joined together with other cells to form larger towns and even cities, the Daily Mail reported here.

A group or modules, a collection of cells, would become a country in its own right.

Most people in this brave new world would live in a kilometre-high ‘City in the Sky’ at the centre of each cell. More people would live in residential areas around the edge of the cell.

The central towers would be surrounded by grassland and forests and be self-sufficient in terms of food, while livestock and other farming would take place in ‘plains’ also surrounding the tower — all built on a lattice of 7,000-tonne honeycomb pontoons.

The towers would be built from super-light alloys with the metal deriving from magnesium in seawater, the paper said.

The imaginative plan is designed to create a future carbon-neutral society and the Shimizudevelopers claim that living on cells in this way would cut carbon emissions by 40%. The floating cells, each with a City in the Sky structure at its centre, can join together to form larger modules.

The cells would create zero waste and recycle every product and covert waste into energy using new green technologies. Islands of waste would drift around the ocean and could be “harvested” to provide energy. To protect the inhabitants from large waves, strong elastic membranes would be attached to the lagoons around the outer edge of the cells. AGENCIES
Genetically modified sterile mosquitoes to fight dengue

London: Scientists have created genetically sterile mosquitoes which use sex to kill off others in their species, and researchers say early field trials suggest the idea could help to halt the rapid spread of dengue fever.

Scientists from a firm called Oxitec in UK ran a small trial with the Mosquito Research and Control Unit (MRCU) in the Cayman Islands in the Caribbean. This found that releasing 3 million of the genetically altered bugs into a small area managed to cut the species population by 80% in six months.

Dengue fever, a disease which causes severe flu-like symptoms and can kill, is spread through the bite of infected female Aedes aegypti mosquitoes. "The idea is based on releasing sterile males who will go out and mate with wild females," said Luke Alphey, Oxitec's chief scientist and co-founder. "One of the main advantages is that the males actively look for the females — that's what they are programmed to do."

Larvae are produced but most die before they hatch and the rest survive only a short time as mosquitoes. The World Health Organization estimates there are 50 million cases of dengue fever a year, of which 25,000 are fatal, and about 2.5 billion people — two-fifths of the world's population — are at risk, mostly in Africa and southeast Asia.

There is no vaccine or treatment for dengue, and experts say innovative ways of dealing with its spread are urgently needed, since global incidence has risen sharply in recent decades.

French drugmaker Sanofi-Aventis is one of various groups seeking to develop dengue vaccines. It is testing its candidate in late stage clinical trials, but experts say it could be many years before a vaccine is on the market.

But while scientists believe the trial could lead to a breakthrough in stopping the disease, critics argue the mutant mosquitoes might wreak havoc on the environment. AGENCIES
सेमेस्टर सिस्टम : डीयू के स्टेंड को यूजीसी का सपोर्ट

Hamara Mahanagar ND p-5
13/11/2010
आईटीआई को एससीलैंस भवन का तोहफा

गुुरांगव, गुुरांगव की आईटीआई को आज संगठन फॉर एससीलैंस भवन का तोहफा दिला जिसका उद्घाटन उद्घाटन के मुख्यमंत्री भूपेश बहुदर सिंह दुल्हन ने किया। इस भवन पर समाप्त एक करोड़ 20 लाख रुपये का काम आई है।

मुख्यमंत्री ने इस भवन का अवलोकन किया और वहाँ गई गई महासभा तथा उपकरणों के बारे में जानकारी दी।

मुख्यमंत्री को अपना काम करना गया कि इस भवन का निर्माण लगभग दो साल में पूरा किया गया है। भवन की तीन मंजिला तैयार किया गया है जिसका कुल क्षेत्र 17307 वर्गफीट है। भू-तल, प्रमाण तल व द्वितीय तल का क्षेत्र 5535 वर्गफीट है। इस भवन के भू-तल पर तीन वर्कशॉप और एक सुपरवाइजर रूप बनाया गया है।

प्रमाण-तल पर पाँच वेस्टिब्युल और एक स्वामित्व और एक सभागार का निर्माण किया गया है। इसी प्रकार द्वितीय तल पर पाँच वेस्टिब्युल और एक सभागार बनाया गया है।

भवन का तैयारी पूरी होते ही आईटीआई के शहीदों की प्रतिमा अर्पित की गई है।
आईआईटी रुड़की लिपितिक प्रतियोगिता शर्मानाथ

आईआईटी रुड़की देश के शर्मानाथ इंजीनियरिंग प्रशासन संस्थान के चौथे रेडियक लिपितिक प्रतियोगिता में एक चौथे स्थान प्राप्त किया। इस प्रतियोगिता में, शर्मानाथ इंजीनियरिंग प्रशासन संस्थान के छात्र ने अपने रेडियक लिपितिक डिजाइन का उत्तरदायी और क्रियार्थक सार में दिखाया। इसे जीतने के लिए यह प्रतियोगिता के बारे में अच्छी तरह से प्राप्त हुई थी। शर्मानाथ के इस सफलता के लिए उन्हें रेडियक लिपितिक प्रतियोगिता में अवार्ड मिला।

नवभारत टाइम्स ND 13/11/2010

सेमेस्टर सिस्टम : डियू के स्टेंड को यूज़ीसी का सपोर्ट

प्रेम दुर्गकुमार

लेखक की जीत को सबका सपोर्ट और भाग करना। इससे सेमेस्टर के लिए मौजूद लोगों को भी उम्मीद नहीं है कि अगली सीजन में सेमेस्टर सिस्टम का हालात सुधरेगा।