GOVT TO FUND EDUCATION OF GAMES MEDAL WINNERS

Press Trust of India
• htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The central government has decided to bear all educational expenses of students who win medals in the Commonwealth Games.

"The government will bear all educational expenses of youth participants of Commonwealth Games who have won medals at the Games whether he/she is studying in CBSE or non-CBSE schools, colleges or universities," HRD Minister Kapil Sibal said.

He said the government will bear the educational expense till they wish to continue study and the support will include tuition and hostel fees.

The objective, he said, is to motivate and encourage more and more students to perform well in sports and bring laurels to the country in sporting events like Asian Games and Olympics.

A number of students are participating at the Games which would conclude on October 14.

While the educational expenditure for college and university-level students will be borne by UGC, the CBSE will meet that of school-going children, Sibal said, adding, both UGC and CBSE will soon work out "exact modalities".

The minister also said the UGC and CBSE will also formulate suitable schemes of financial incentives to support talented sportspersons among students and strengthen sports infrastructure in schools.
‘Many distance learning courses not recognised’

Charu Sudhan Kasturi
charu.kasturi@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Several courses offered by popular distance education institutions like Sikkim Manipal University and Punjab Technical University are unapproved, India’s apex technical education regulator has warned students.

The All India Council for Technical Education has warned students across India to avoid these courses because degrees earned at the end of these programmes will be unrecognised. The AICTE member secretary has issued a public advisory recently, council member secretary D.K. Paliwal confirmed.

The decision came after the AICTE received several complaints from students and other stakeholders of institutions — including SMU and PTU — running technical education programmes through distance mode, the sources said.

Thousands of students across India are enrolled in various distance education programmes offered by SMU and PTU, which are among the country’s best known and most popular institutions for distance education after Indira Gandhi National Open University.

AICTE acting chairman S.S. Mantha said the council under its policy approved distance education programmes only in MBA and MCA. “Any other programme offered through distance education has not been approved by us,” Mantha said.

**AICTE BLACKLIST**

- AICTE has warned students to avoid courses by popular distance education institutions because the degrees will be unrecognised.
- Many distance education course do not have the required approval by a joint committee of the AICTE, UGC and the Distance Education Council.

SMU offers a slew of engineering, technology and hospitality-related programmes through the distance mode. PTU also offers a BSc in information technology.

Any institution can start a distance education course only after it is approved by a joint committee of the AICTE, University Grants Commission and the Distance Education Council.

PTU Dean Dr N.P. Singh, however, said the varsity had obtained approval from the joint panel. “The AICTE advisory is unwarranted as it will create confusion among them,” he said.

“We went through the entire process of applications. Our programmes were recognised by the DEC but face the AICTE’s concerns because of technicalities which are not in our hands,” SMU academic director V. Sivaramakrishnan said.

Paliwal however told HT that at the last meeting of the tripartite committee, SMU and PTU requests for recognition to various programmes were rejected.
Copycats from IIT-Kanpur?

Two Papers By Researchers Pulled From Journal; Institute Orders Probe

Mathang Sheshagiri | TNN

Bangalore: In one of the most blatant cases of plagiarism to hit the elite IITs, Bio-technology Advances, a review journal, has retracted two papers from IIT-Kanpur after the researchers allegedly stole chunks of their manuscript from several sources, including journal articles and Wikipedia.

The two retracted articles — “Microbial production of dihydroxyacetone” and “Molecular imprintsing in sol-gel matrix” — are from researchers at IIT-Kanpur’s department of biological sciences and bio-engineering.

The journal’s retraction notice in the upcoming November-December 2010 issue states that the two-year-old articles were pulled out “at the request of the editor as the authors have plagiarized part of several papers that had already appeared in several journals. One of the conditions of submission of a paper for publication is that authors declare explicitly that their work is original and has not appeared in a publication elsewhere. Reuse of any data should be appropriately cited. As such this article represents a severe abuse of the scientific publishing system. The scientific community takes a very strong view on this matter and we apologize to readers of the journal that this was not detected during the submission process.”

The journal’s retraction notice in the upcoming November-December 2010 issue states that the articles were pulled out “as the authors have plagiarized part of several papers that had already appeared.”

IIT-K’s policy on plagiarism

The institute may initiate action against a person allegedly involved in plagiarism. These actions may be a disciplinary warning in the form of a written notice, reprimand or suspension, which may vary on a case-to-case basis, depending upon the degree of seriousness.”

listed among the publications of professor Ashok Kumar.

An embarrassed IIT Kanpur has constituted an inquiry committee. “This is a very serious issue. We cannot accept plagiarism of any sort. But at the same time we want to examine the case carefully. I have constituted a committee of eminent people to examine the issue and we will take action based on their findings,” IIT-Kanpur director Sanjay Dhande told TOI.

Is MS planning to bid for Adobe?

Steven Ballmer, Microsoft’s CEO, recently showed up with a small entourage of deputies at Adobe’s offices in the Bay Area to hold a secret meeting with Adobe’s CEO, Shantanu Narayen. The meeting covered a number of topics, but one of the main thrusts of the discussion was Adobe and its control of the mobile phone market and how the two companies could team up in the battle against Apple. A possible acquisition of Adobe by Microsoft were among the options.

Holly Campbell, senior director of Adobe’s corporate communications, did not deny the meeting took place when asked via e-mail. “Adobe and Microsoft share millions of customers around the world and the CEOs of the two companies do meet from time to time,” she said. “However, we do not publicly comment on the timing or topics of their private meetings.”

A source close to the development said the two firms had talked about the blockade that Apple had placed on Adobe’s Flash software for its hand-held devices and whether a partnership by Adobe and Microsoft could fend off Apple. MHT NEWS SERVICE
Hot bod on screen? Software to alter shape & size

Instead Of Actually Gaining Or Shedding Weight To Suit Roles, Tech Allows Easy Way For Actors To Appear Thinner Or Heavier On Film

Los Angeles: Goodbye, Hollywood diet. Scientists in Germany have created software that enables actors to appear thinner or heavier on screen. The program also alters muscle tone and body shape, according to the New Scientist.

The developers say their software will save money because special effects won’t be needed to change actors’ figures, so there will be no need to build different sets or buy different clothes. They also say it can help save time since it is done digitally.

Tecnica that Eddie Murphy won’t need a fastsuit if he were to shoot today for “The Nutty Professor”

In a conversation with The Hindu,ND on Thursday, Mr. Pittroda said 20 industry clusters and 20 university clusters would be identified to help “seed innovations” for promoting inclusive economic growth under this new initiative.

The modalities of creating and operating the proposed investment fund were now being explored. Tracing the “do-able” projects for the development of information infrastructure in India, he said, “We are a nation of a billion connected people. Nearly 700 million cell phones were in use across the country today. "Pretty soon, we will have 900 million," he said. "The real challenge now is to provide broadband. The current 10- million broadband connection should be scaled up to the required 100-million mark. "We can capitalize on the existing 800,000 km of fiber, in some of the densest broadband facilities to our scattered states, government, and rural areas. That’s one do-able. In the next three years, we should have set up 500,000 million connections and started rolling out 3G."
Chinese dissident awarded Nobel Peace Prize

Beijing, Oct 8: Liu Xiaobo, an imprisoned literary critic and democracy advocate repeatedly jailed by Beijing's authoritarian leaders at a time of growing official intolerance for domestic dissent, won the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday in recognition of his pursuit of non-violent political reforms in the world's most populous country.

Liu, 64, perhaps China's best known dissident, is currently serving an 11-year term on charges of "seditious subversion of state power".

Beijing wanted Chinese courts to win the Peace Prize. In awarding the prize to Liu, the Norwegian Nobel Committee delivered an unambiguous rebuke to Beijing's authoritarian leaders, who have targeted dissidents, intellectuals and human rights advocates.

The committee awarded Liu the prize "for his non-violent struggle for freedom of speech and for the advancement of human rights. The prize is in recognition of the role he has played in China's fight for democracy and freedom of speech."

The committee said Liu "has advocated peaceful political change in the country in the name of the Chinese Constitution and basic laws. He is a symbol of the spirit of China's 13th National People's Congress, which has consistently championed the principles of non-violence for political and social change."

Liu's wife, Liu Xia, also released a statement on Saturday, saying she had been unable to help him in the campaign because she was too busy with her own work.

The prize is in recognition of Liu's role in promoting human rights in China. The committee said it believed in the power of non-violent struggle and that only through non-violent means could the Chinese government achieve long-term stability.

The committee also praised Liu's commitment to the struggle for human rights in China, which has been marked by a series of crackdowns on dissidents and human rights activists.

South India to strengthen top slot in medical colleges

New Delhi, Oct 8: The lop-sided distribution of medical colleges in the country, skewed in favor of southern states, is only set to get further accentuated in near future.

Almost 50% of the new medical colleges approved in the last three years are likely to come up in three of the southern states - Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. Of the 43 medical colleges which have managed a green signal from the Medical Council of India since 2007, around 21 are proposed to be located in these three states alone. Already, over 60% of the existing medical colleges are concentrated in the four southern states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh.

As a result of this, the northern, eastern and central states are under-served even when it comes to healthcare services. "Increasing the seats with a skewed countrywide distribution would only increase regional disparity in healthcare services, with under-served areas remaining under-served," said N Ananthakrishnan, former head of department of surgery, JIPMER, Pondicherry, who has studied the problems plaguing the medical education space.

Experts attribute this mushrooming of colleges in a few states to the ease of getting a no objection certificate from these states and availability of contiguous land, along with a pro-active state government policy to promote private educational institutes.
‘Wicked’ problems and the IAS

The cognitive processes that Indian civil servants adopt to tackle complex real-world problems have much to offer B-school curricula, deficient in ways to tackle conflicted, unstable problems, says Sameer Sharma

Following the global crisis, Indian business schools, including those at IIMs and IITs, have seen a surge in the number of students taking up these courses. The trend is likely to continue, with more students from across the world choosing to study business in India. This is due to the country’s growing economy and the opportunities it offers in terms of job growth and innovation.

However, the challenge is not just about attracting students to these schools. It is also about ensuring that they are equipped with the skills they need to succeed in the job market. This is where the IAS, India’s most prestigious civil service examination, comes into play. The IAS is known for its rigorous selection process and its graduates are expected to have a strong foundation in various fields, including economics, law, and public policy.

The IAS examination is divided into two main parts: the Preliminary Examination and the Main Examination. The Preliminary Examination is held for three papers, and the Main Examination is held for two papers. The subjects covered in the Main Examination include Indian Polity, Economics, Geography, and Environment. The examination is designed to test the candidates’ knowledge and understanding of these subjects, as well as their ability to apply this knowledge to real-world situations.

In an article published in The Economic Times, Sameer Sharma, a renowned IAS officer, discusses the importance of the IAS in dealing with complex problems. He argues that the IAS officers are well-equipped to handle these problems due to their training and experience.

Sharma highlights the importance of the IAS in dealing with ‘wicked’ problems – problems that are complex, uncertain, and unstable. These problems are difficult to solve because they involve multiple stakeholders with conflicting interests.

The IAS officers are trained to handle such problems by using a variety of analytical tools and techniques. They are also trained to work in collaborative teams, which allows them to bring different perspectives to the table and find solutions that benefit all stakeholders.

Sharma concludes by saying that the IAS officers are well-equipped to handle complex problems, and that their skills can be applied to a wide range of situations. He encourages other organisations to learn from the IAS and adopt similar approaches to dealing with complex problems.

Author: Sameer Sharma
Views are personal.