



Schools ordered not to delay issuing TCs

Rashmi Belur

There are several cases where students have lost an academic year due to the delay in issuance of transfer certificate (TC) from school authorities. This is a catch-22 situation because the new school where the student wants to apply will not admit him/her without a TC from the school in which he/she studied earlier. Now, the state department of public instructions has issued an order stating that schools should not

delay the TC-issuing process. Even if the student requests for a TC in the middle of the academic year, the school should consider it as an emergency and issue the TC immediately. "If we find any negligence in issuing the TC, the headmasters of both schools, that is from where the TC is needed and the school that the child wants to join will be held responsible," said an official from the department.

As per the order, this applies to state government and aided schools. "We cannot impose this on private schools, but we want them to consider the TC request as a special case and help students complete their education," the official said.

Authorities must ensure speedy TC processing to avoid stalling students' education

According to the order: "If a child wants to get out of the school where he/she is studying currently and join another school within the state or outside the state, it is the child's right to get the TC. This applies only for primary education."

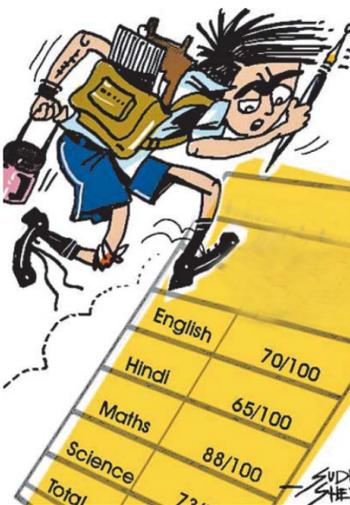
In case the process gets delayed, the head of the new school, that is, where the student wishes to study, must continue the process of getting the TC by communicating with the authorities of the child's

school. Also, the student must be admitted as 'temporary admission' till they get a TC from the old school.

"If the authorities of the school failed to issue the TC even after a month, the same should be brought to the notice of the deputy director of public instructions or the block education officer, and they should take action as per the classification control and appeal (CCA) rules," said the official.

The department had issued this order based on Schedule 15 of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009. As per the Act, no child should discontinue education because of the delay in issuing a TC.

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Heightening Almatti dam could flood Maharashtra

Rajahmundry: Expressing concern over the Krishna Water Dispute Tribunal allowing increase in the height of Almatti dam in Karnataka, a noted expert and environmentalist from Andhra Pradesh has said the ruling could result in floods in several parts of Maharashtra.

"The height of Almatti Dam cannot be increased because it will lead to inundation of large tracts of area in Maharashtra's districts on the upstream side of the dam. This flooding will further accelerate in the years to come because of heavy rainfall caused by climate change and increased deforestation," said T Shivaji Rao, director, Centre for Environment Studies, GITAM University.

Moreover, engineers in charge of maintaining the upper dams like Koyana, in western Maharashtra, will have to release excess water to save their own reservoirs, resulting in inundation, said Rao.

Late last month, the tribunal allowed raising the height of Almatti dam to 524.25 metres from 519.6 metres. The Maharashtra government has also apprehended that the increase in dam height would cause floods in the state.

The tribunal's award is erroneous and may lead to serious environmental damage. Hence, a public debate is needed before an ecologically sound decision is taken by all concerned, including the Tribunal, the states concerned and the Centre, added Rao. ■

Aspiring young models opt for facial sculpting to look good

The non-surgical procedure is becoming a trend among teens who want to make it big in modelling

Soumita Majumdar

With several teens in the city aspiring to join the fashion industry, the option of facial sculpting has only paved way to make their dreams come true. Because today, a blunt jawline or a bulging cheekbone can easily be fixed.

City-based cosmetologists have recorded a huge number of youngsters, between the age groups of 15 and 25, making a beeline for their clinics, opting for facial sculpting, mainly through fillers.

There is growing awareness about the perfect shape for the face. It is said that the ideal shape of a woman's face is oval and that of a man's is square. "Now, youngsters even below 18 years of age, aspiring to join the fashion or film industry, approach me for facial sculpting," said Dr Chytra V Anand, medical director, Kosmoderma Skin and Hair Clinic.

Many of them approach cosmetologists after being rejected by modelling agencies. "We don't approve facial sculpting for youngsters below 18 years of age since their face is still shaping up. But many of them venture for facial sculpting with parental consent," added Dr Anand, who attends to at least two customers below 18 every week. Earlier, surgery was the only



Facial sculpting through fillers is a quick process, and it costs between ₹16,000 and ₹50,000

option for facial sculpting. But now, with the aid of fillers, the procedure has become much simpler. Just one injection and the customer can see the difference almost instantly.

"There is no need for anaesthesia and the only side effect is the swelling for about two hours post injection. The fillers contain hyaluronic acid and its effect lasts for one or two years. After this, the clients need another treatment," said Dr Anand. The procedure costs be-

tween ₹16,000 and ₹50,000 and the effects of fillers can be reversed with another injection. The entire procedure takes around 15 minutes, he said.

Laser treatment, botox injections, and fillers are the three quick-fix ways. And when it comes to facial sculpting, the only non-surgical option is the fillers. "We attend to many youngsters, mostly between 19 and 25 years of age. Most of them opt for nose elevation and prominent chin and

cheek augmentation. Lip augmentation is, however, common among girls," said Dr MK Shetty from Dr Shetty's Skin and Cosmetic Clinic. However, fillers can last 6-9 months and 18 months to 2 years.

While there are permanent fillers, they are not recommended because of their side effects. "Thus, many youngsters also take up surgery as a more permanent solution like implants for the nose," he added.

Facial sculpting is not the only thing that youngsters today are opting for, said Dr Susheel Gupta, founder, Body Craft Spa, Salon and Cosmetic Clinic.

"While jawline augmentation and lip enhancements for girls are very common through temporary fillers, young boys do approach us for skin tone improvement and complexion enhancement," he said. The trend is definitely on the rise, he added. dnasunday@gmx.com



Hundreds of pigeons from Bangalore, Raichur, Anandpur, Nandid, Akola and Bhopal will be participating in the pigeon race

—Rakesh Ravindran

Racing pigeons hit the blue skies of IT city

R Chitra

Racing cars and bikes have been a second nature to India's IT capital. But if you happen to witness a large flock of serene white and grey birds soaring high in the skies, it means Bangalore's pigeon-racing season has just begun.

Hundreds of homing pigeons across Bangalore, Raichur, Anandpur, Nandid, Akola and Bhopal will be participating in the much-awaited race.

"The beginning of any race is an awe-inspiring sight. To see pigeons flying out of their cages and soaring across the skies homeward always leaves me enthralled," said Edwin Gladson, vice-president, Karnataka Homing Pigeons Society.

The first of these races between Anandpur and Bangalore (180 km), held by Bangalore's oldest club—the Karnataka Racing Pigeons Club—got off to a great start with 350 homers or homing pigeons competing.

"However, this was nothing compared to the numbers of pigeons competing in Chennai, which is currently considered India's Mecca for pigeon-lovers. But the good news is racing has definitely picked up in Bangalore and will continue to grow," said Gladson.

No prize money

The cost of transporting, logistics, and training involved in moulding these birds would leave most people stunned. Unfortunately, this rare sport provides no monetary incentives. Once a pigeon-lover gets addicted to the sport, he has to shell out his own money to quench his thirst for pigeon racing.

"A modest lot with 30-50 birds would cost about ₹15-25,000. Of course, I know there are those who have no qualms about investing even ₹2-3 lakh for their lofts. But my deep-rooted belief is that this sport should become a sport of the common man.

There should be a spirit of camaraderie more than competing among the pigeon enthusiasts when it comes to breeding blue-blooded lines. It's a true, noble sport which needs more patrons than it has now," said Praveen Vijayaraghavan, who owns more than 250 pigeons in his loft.

The races from Akola and Nandid in Maharashtra to Karnataka ought to elicit considerable interest, because apart from the distance, the birds competing will also be the more seasoned long-distance flyers.

The last race mentioned ought to make you gasp in

awe—as the swiftest or the 'Derby' class winners are expected to make a whopping distance of 1,240 km between Bangalore and Bhopal.

"Pigeon racing is the pastime in Belgium and the government provides so many incentives to pigeon breeders. But here in India, everything, including the cost of the race, the prizes, and the breeding of birds, is taken care of by the pigeon lovers. The sport will go a long way if only there's a little more encouragement from other quarters as well," said Dr Noel Kannan, a dentist and pigeon enthusiast with more than 250 pigeons in his loft.

Unfortunately, this sport lacks support and funding from government, say pigeon enthusiasts

Interestingly, in every race there are various categories, such as the undisputed winners, who would later go on to become 'Derby winners, the 'also-ran' birds who come back one week later, the slow-coaches who come back six months later and the ones who never come home at all.

"If a breeder happens to release 30 birds in a race, that is 15 fledglings and 15 older or more seasoned birds, it can be categorically said that while eight or 10 birds come back within the stipulated time, three or four pigeons take their own time getting back home and one or two birds get killed or lose their way home," said pigeon racer Chelliah, who has bred pigeons for more than 50 years.

Another interesting fact is the fine-tuning of the homing instincts that nature has blessed these pigeons with.

"Training starts early on. First, the birds are taken for a 5-km drive and released to see how they come back home. This is followed by a 15 km and 30 km drive, and then finally from the starting point of the races. So if our birds are in Anandpur race, then the training would start one month earlier. It's time-consuming, money-draining and a strain on other family members. But nothing can beat the joy you get out of this sport—the happiness when you see your bird comes swiftly back home," said Vijayaraghavan.

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Revival of Sanskrit will raise India to new heights

Shilpa CB

"We need to be proficient in Sanskrit to access ancient Indian wisdom, which holds the answers to today's problems. This language is key to India's success in all fields," said scientists, management experts, technologists, at the Vijnana Sammelanam at the World Sanskrit Book Fair.

"Scholar Charaka had long said all happiness is rooted in good science and science was well-developed in India and China before it was officially acknowledged by the West," said Prof Roddam Narashima, scientist in aerospace and atmospheric phenomenon.

"India is not a rags-to-riches story, but merely a nation striking back to acquire its place in the world. It was always a performing civilisation until the mid-19th century when its



Students and their 'guru' at a 'Gurukul' stall at the World Sanskrit Book Fair organised by Samskrita Bharathi at National High School Grounds on Saturday

—KPN

economy was destroyed," said writer S Gurumurthy. "Revival of Sanskrit will help India rise to the top," he

added. Professor B Mahadevan said Sanskrit texts provide solutions to many problems that management ex-

perts grapple with. "We need inspirational leadership and there are many instances in literature that dwell

B Mahadevan
Professor

We need to get into Sanskrit to create a new world order, to be sustainable and inspirational

on this topic. We need to get into Sanskrit to create a new world order, to be sustainable and inspirational, he said.

"The way to popularise the language is to create content that will appeal to the youth, to use modern fora like blogs and podcasts to take information expressed in the language to the end-user," said Aruna Ramarathnam, a technology enthusiast. Manu Baligar, director of Kannada and Culture department, announced that Kannada books useful to youngsters would be translated to Sanskrit.

On the first day of the three-day fair, books worth ₹1 crore were sold. At the Pustaka Parishe, visitors can pick up a book free of cost and even donate books. Over 16,000 books were given away on Friday, the first day of the fair. About 25,000 Bhagavad Gitas were also sold. The 154 stalls are offering discounts and books are being sold by the sackfuls, said organisers.

Over 8,000 people from 500 districts, 24 states are attending. Among the attendees are 43 people from Jiree, a 'Sanskrit village' in Madhya Pradesh. dnasunday@gmx.com

Space beckons, but all we have to offer is our immortal atoms



URBAN JETSAM

DEAN WILLIAMS

"There can be no understanding between the hand and the brain unless the heart acts as mediator," says Brigitte Helm's character, Maria, in *Metropolis*, and in that one line lies the secret to our strange affair with space, the future and all the science fiction in between.

Our tryst with science fiction is one that is almost always governed by the heart. If our brain sought full control,

then we would have to accept the fact that man, at least, as we know him, will never make it past Europa. Human eyes will never look on the wonders of Andromeda or bow before the dark menace of Sagittarius A, our lot is our solar system, and the fringes of its expanse.

But if we accept that, then what of the glory of man traversing the stars finding new worlds and alien races? Why, even waging supreme wars

against space-faring foes? What indeed. Arthur C Clarke, Stephen Baxter, Ben Bova, *et al*, wrote of the wondrous universe and all it entails. The colonisation of Mars, the visits to Rama, and the search for superstrings, etc, have served to whet our appetite for space travel. But for all the talk of manned missions to Mars and terraforming the moons of Jupiter, we are slowly beginning to realise that the sheer cost of such projects almost immediately makes them pipedreams. Sure, at some point we will build a manned station on Mars, we may even build a base on Io or Ganymede, but not in our lifetime, and probably not in our children's either.

Tomorrow marks the 84th anniversary of the release of Fritz Lang's seminal *Metropolis*, and over the decades, our awe of the future and our cosmos has grown in quantum leaps

The future lies in robotics and nanotechnology. It lies in the ability to self-replicate. It lies in our working minds and not in our imagination. The use of asteroids to supply and launch self-replicating probes into deep space is not only viable, but the only way out of Sol and the galaxy itself.

Nasa long-since realised that sending men into space serves no purpose other than to boost a nation's ego. India, China and

Japan should realise it too. Satellites and orbital scientific labs serve a far greater purpose. They make life on Earth easier and they shed light on our eventual demise.

Almost everyone knows that the sun is not eternal. It will die, billions of years from now maybe, but die it will. And in its death rattle it will consume the Earth and all upon it. Of course, by then it is unlikely that we will still be

living on this planet; we would have used up all of its resources and raped it into oblivion. We will probably be on Mars, or Europa, or Titan. Who knows, maybe our robotic scouts will happen upon an alien race, benevolent or gullible enough to give us a transluminal propulsion system, or we ourselves may have mastered the Alcubierre drive. In that case, it's the stars for us.

The one thing the great science fiction writers realised was that no matter where in the universe we end up, humans will be humans. We will continue to create gods, even after our galactic exploration has rendered the old ones redundant; we will continue to war, suppress and oppress; we

will continue on our destructive way.

Lang's *Metropolis* may have believed in an underlying human sense of decency, as did Clarke's Rama series, and they may be right. Maybe in our search for the ends of the universe, we will find a new frontier within ourselves. One that does not despise, but rather nurtures; one that believes the end does not always justify the means.

It was James Blish's *Cities in Flight* that captured the moment of human clarity best. Mayor Amalfi stands on the cusp of creation; at the very point where universes will collide: "Outside there was not even blackness, only nothingness, something not to be seen."

And as he gets set to send his atoms into Creation, he remembers a line someone once told him. "We did not have the time to learn everything that we wanted to know". Amalfi called it the epitaph for man. But it is more than that. It is an understanding of our mortality. So the next time you look at the sun, bask in it, for it too will be gone. Long after you of course, but your atoms will be around to watch it die.

You can't take the heart out of space any more than you can turn back time, and that is what the von Neumann probes must carry with them on their journey...our hearts, because long after the brain falters, the steady beat of humanity remains.

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