

## Coolieization of India

This refers to the guest editorial by Gan- gan Prathap<sup>1</sup>. In April 2004, the Sri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources reported a study 'Assessment of Export Potential and Employment Im- pact of IT sector in India' under the super- vision of P. P. Gupta, former Secretary, Department of Electronics. That study concluded, *inter alia*.

'Although currently (2002–03) ex- change earnings from software produc- tion and exports are higher than out-goes on hardware imports, in the coming years production and import contents of hard- ware are likely to outgrow software pro- duction and exports and India is likely to be net importer by 2008.

'Although manpower demand and sup- ply position in IT sector both in terms of quality and number is comfortable:

'(i) IT enabled service sector needs mostly lower skilled jobs and this is the sector which is growing fastest. Lower skilled job scenario in IT is growing faster than higher skilled job scenario.

'(ii) 20% of IT manpower at a given time in the country is migrating abroad. Most of such manpower is possessing higher skills.

'(iii) Both the above observations in- dicate that the IT boom in its present form is generating a 'cyber blue-collar' force, with a brain-drain out of the coun- try of 'cyber white-collar' force. There is

also an internal brain-drain of white- collar workers who choose to become 'cyber blue-collar' because it is paying. This has negative implications on the quality of manpower available for other sectors, specifically the ones which are of strategic importance to the country.'

Our longitude-driven (cf. Kochar) high-wage-island IT sub-economy is, it would seem, fuelling a metropolitan con- sumer-boom not with high disposable in- comes of the many, but with the high incomes of the disposable few.

1. Prathap, G., *Curr. Sci.*, 2005, **89**, 1063–1064.

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## Back to basics

While the whole world is celebrating the International Year of Physics to commemo- rate 100 years of Albert Einstein's most important works in physics, let us pause and reflect on the relevance of this most basic of sciences.

Physics plays a key role in the future progress of mankind. It expands the frontiers of knowledge about nature and improves our quality of life. It requires deep thinking about simple things. A student of physics should have a fair amount of curiosity, imagination, innovation, problem-solving ability, grip over mathematics, ability to communicate ideas, etc. A study of this subject polishes all these qualities, sharp-

ens his/her analytical abilities and makes him/her more proficient in life skills. Physics students are observed to be quick learners and flexible in their career op- tions, which is the need of the hour.

Physics is closely linked to nature, and nature loves symmetry. Seeing the beauty and symmetry of Maxwell's electromagnetic equations, a physicist once remarked, 'Was it a God who wrote these lines?'

The mad rush for professional courses has taken some of the sheen off this once elite course. To embark on this exciting intellectual adventure and to make it an attractive career option for students, there should be strong focus on recruiting and

retaining outstanding science teachers in schools.

This year saw most of the academic institutions busy organizing lectures, work- shops, debates, quizzes, etc. to create and sustain the students' interest in physics. Let us hope to see physics back in all its glory in the coming days.

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## *Corchorus pseudo-olitorius* Islam & Zaid: wrong interpretation of the original paper and misquotation of the authors

This refers to the correspondence entitled '*Corchorus pseudo-olitorius* by Raju'<sup>1</sup>. It is not clear what the author in the opening sentence wanted to convey, 'It must be "Islam and Zaid" or "Islam *et* Zaid", and not otherwise'. Did he mean, 'Islam *et*

Zaid/Islam & Zaid' instead of 'Islam and Zaid'?

However, the purpose of my corres- pondence is not to seek clarification in the author's citation, but to point out that he did not interpret correctly our results<sup>2</sup> about

*C. pseudo-olitorius*. We did not even drop a hint that *C. pseudo-olitorius* Islam & Zaid originated as a result of natural hybridization between *C. olitorius* and *C. trilocularis*.

The following events occurred in 1958, when the Herbarium Collector, Babu