

Sugar & oil boards in govt offices, schools ‘excellent step’ for healthy India: Experts



The recent move by the Ministry of Health to install sugar and oil boards in government offices as well as schools is an excellent step towards developing healthier workplaces and building a healthy India, said experts on Saturday. Taking to social media platform X, ICMR - National Institute of Nutrition informed that the Ministry of Health

“has urged all govt offices to prominently display Sugar Boards” in the push for building healthier workplaces. The boards consist of informative posters and digital boards highlighting the harmful impacts of the amount of sugar and oil present in popular food items, including samosas, kachori, pizza, pakoras, banana chips, burgers, soft drinks, and

chocolate pastries. It also displays the effects of these foods on the human body as well as shares the recommended amounts of fat and sugar for individual intake. “Excellent step to create awareness about hidden fat and sugar in foods. Clear, front-of-pack labelling of ultra-processed foods and diversifying diets

through Public Distribution System (PDS), school meals will also support this move for healthy India,” said Soumya Swaminathan, former Chief Scientist of the World Health Organisation (WHO). The FSSAI noted that the move is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a healthier India! It added that the “innovative behavioural change strategy” will help tackle the “widespread promotion of sugar and oil boards”. “These boards are vital in helping everyone make informed choices and stop obesity,” said FSSAI on X, adding that it will also help boost its Eat Right India (ERI) movement. The World Health Organization (WHO)

recommends a reduced intake of added sugar throughout one's life. In both adults and children, WHO recommends reducing the intake of free sugars to less than 10 per cent of total energy intake. The UN health body suggests a further reduction of the intake of free sugars to below 5 per cent of total energy intake. In May, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) issued a directive to schools to install “sugar boards” in schools. Health experts noted that the public health measure also aligns with global nutrition goals, and will help India fight the menace of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers.

Rajeev Jayadevan, Convener, Research Cell, Kerala State IMA, told IANS that excessive consumption of sugar and oil, along with lack of physical activity, is a major driver of obesity and NCDs. “Early nutritional awareness is crucial. Providing clear labelling and dietary education in schools empowers children to make healthier food choices before these chronic conditions set in,” Jayadevan said. “Sugar hides in beverages, fruit juices, and processed snacks, while oil, a calorie-dense substance, is heavily used in fried foods, fast food, and even home cooking. Promoting moderation in their use is an important step in preventing NCDs across the population,” he told IANS.

IIT Delhi launches MRI research facility to foster innovation in medical imaging



The Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) on Saturday announced the launch of a cutting-edge Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) research facility to boost innovations in medical imaging. Established under the Institute of Eminence (IoE) initiative, the facility is equipped with a 1.5 Tesla clinical-grade MRI scanner. It is the first of its kind among leading engineering and technology institutions in India, dedicated exclusively to research and

teaching. Unlike conventional MRI setups embedded within hospital ecosystems, this facility is designed to foster unrestricted innovation in medical imaging, particularly in the field of MRI. This facility will enable cutting-edge research in various areas across applications in MR imaging, including the development of new contrast agents, acquisition sequences, optimisation of imaging protocols, development of MR-compatible devices, and integration of artificial

intelligence in image processing. “This new research MRI facility will enable research and innovation in imaging and support IIT Delhi's efforts to create new knowledge at the interface of science, engineering, and medicine to make an impact in healthcare,” said Prof. Rangan Banerjee, Director of IIT Delhi. Located within the Centre for Biomedical Engineering (CBME) at IIT Delhi, the facility will initially support research using phantoms and, with appropriate regulatory approvals, will extend to clinical studies involving volunteers. It will also serve as a hands-on training platform for students enrolled in IIT Delhi medical imaging courses, enhancing their practical exposure to advanced imaging tech-

nologies. According to CBME's Prof. Anup Singh and Prof. Amit Mehndiratta, who led this visionary initiative, the dream to establish such a facility “was visualised five years ago”. The facility will offer a new dimension to teaching and learning in medical imaging at the varsity. It was initiated on July 9 and the first MRI safety session was conducted by the B-MEC Imaging Pvt. Ltd., who installed the MRI scanner. “This advanced imaging facility will help several researchers from different disciplines at IIT Delhi. This will also open up several opportunities for research collaborations with medical institutes in NCR and across India,” said Prof. Vivek Buwa, Dean of Planning, IIT Delhi.

What India's youth can't unsee: myopia

India is one of the world's youngest countries with a median age of less than 29. That translates into well over 350 million young Indians between the ages of 10-24. This is a motivated generation, aspiring for an exciting and fulfilling life ahead. But it is also faced with a growing health problem that it is scarcely aware of. Myopia, commonly referred to as short-sightedness is a visual dysfunction that limits the ability to see distant objects clearly or without the aid of glasses. Myopia usually sets in early, affecting school-going children. In 2010, just over 28% of the world's population had myopia. This is predicted to rise to 34% by 2020 and nearly 50% by 2050. In some Asian countries, 70% of those aged 17 or above are myopic. A study done in Delhi by AIIMS revealed that 1 of 6 or 17% of children between the ages of 5 and 15 is myopic. According to UN data, countries where myopia prevalence was estimated and measured as low in the past, such as India, will have major increases by 2050. What's worrying is that myopia is being diagnosed earlier in school-going children and is rising in severity. In fact, a child with one short-sighted par-

ent has three times the risk of developing myopia, or six times the risk if both parents are myopic. Additionally, more children and teens with no previous family history of myopia are now being diagnosed with the condition. Many of these children also tend to become inverted as they grow up. What is driving this? For one, children are now spending more time indoors, hooked to phones, computers and tablets. Outdoor activities have reduced considerably as a result. A greater focus on studies and extra-curriculars further reduces outdoor time. Factors such as these are depriving children's eyes of critical visual stimulation and development, that is achieved only when looking at distant objects when outdoors, and even resulting in a ‘myopic eye’. Studies show that increased outdoor time can be protective against myopia onset. Clinical trials from Taiwan and China indicate that 40 to 80 minutes of additional outdoor time during the day in primary school children reduced myopia incidence by 23% to 50%. Clearly, the long-term preventive option is to have children spend more time outdoors. But in today's agenda-driven lifestyle, that may be easier said than done.

Another option is to wear glasses. While glasses work for most people, for extreme cases and complications, a more long-term and preventive ‘surgical’ solution is required. For ‘super normal’ vision One of the better options is to undergo a laser vision correction procedure, commonly known as LASIK. Laser vision correction has been around since the 90s, but in recent years it has evolved to a highly sophisticated, automated and technology-driven procedure that provides not just normal but even ‘super normal’ vision. Modern LASIK is a bladeless and painless procedure that requires no more than a few seconds to complete its work on the eye/s. Its safety and efficacy is so well-established that institutions such as the Indian Air Force and even Nasa find it good enough for their pilots and astronauts. Technology is now bringing even further advances — this one is called a ‘customised LASIK procedure’. Each eye has an optical fingerprint that is unique, with its own minute or subtle imperfections. Diagnostic devices map these imperfections, convert it into data to be utilised by the laser's computer to form the treatment profile (which maps out the distribution of laser pulses).

New weekly injection to offer steady Parkinson's medication, cut need for daily pills



A team of scientists in Australia, led by those of Indian origin, has developed a new once-a-week injectable drug that could transform the lives of more than eight million people living with Parkinson's disease, potentially replacing the need for multiple daily tablets. Frequent dosing is a burden, especially for elderly patients or those with swallowing difficulties, leading to inconsistent medication levels, more side effects, and reduced effectiveness. To address this, the team from the University of South Australia (UniSA) developed a long-acting injectable formulation that delivers a steady dose of levodopa and carbidopa -- two key medications for Parkinson's -- over an entire week. The biodegradable formulation is injected under the skin or into muscle tissue, where it gradually releases the medication over seven days, noted the researchers in the paper published in the journal Drug Delivery and Translational Research. The newly developed injectable could significantly improve treatment outcomes and patient adherence, said lead researcher Professor Sanjay Garg, from UniSA's Center for Pharmaceutical Innovation. “Our goal was to create a formulation that simplifies treatment, improves patient compliance, and maintains consistent therapeutic levels of medication. This weekly

injection could be a game-changer for Parkinson's care,” Garg said. “Levodopa is the gold-standard therapy for Parkinson's, but its short lifespan means it must be taken several times a day.” The injectable gel combines a US FDA-approved biodegradable polymer, PLGA, with Eudragit L-100, a pH-sensitive polymer, to achieve a controlled and sustained drug release. The team noted that the release of both levodopa and carbidopa steadily over a week could help maintain consistent plasma levels and reduce the risks associated with fluctuating drug concentrations. Extensive lab tests confirmed the system's effectiveness and safety. More than 90 per cent of the levodopa dose and more than 81 per cent of the carbidopa dose were released over seven days. Notably, the implant degraded by over 80 per cent within a week and showed no significant toxicity in cell viability tests. In addition, the formulation can be easily administered through a fine 22-gauge needle, minimising discomfort and eliminating the need for surgical implantation. Garg said the technology could also be adapted for other chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes, neurodegenerative disorders, pain management, and chronic infections that require long-term drug delivery.

Teachers need to be taught too...

One of the most important resources in any educational institution is a team of competent and well-performing teachers. It is imperative that they are equipped with in-depth knowledge and pedagogical skills in order to bring in innovation in the education system. Therefore, teachers' professional training plays an important role and must be a priority area for any society. English teachers in government primary schools are not specialised in the subject and have little formal training. To address the issue, intensive professional training programmes are being conducted in the State with the following objectives: To help the teachers prepare a comprehensive strategy for teaching English at the pri-

mary school level. To enable them to transact curriculum through a learner-centred, participatory approach to ensure quality teaching. To improve teachers' competence in understanding and teaching the language with the help of textbooks (for classes I to VIII). To encourage them to involve themselves in skill development and continuous learning. Recently, an online survey was conducted to assess the impact of English training for primary school teachers with the following questions as the premise. To what extent did the professional learning have an impact on their classroom teaching? What were the changes observed in the

classroom as a result of the learning? Over 1,000 teachers took part in the survey which had 20 questions. About 86% of teachers who participated in this survey were from rural areas. Majority of them taught the sixth and eighth grade. Nearly 68% of teachers stated that the month-long training has helped them in teaching English better and with confidence. A majority said that the students had shown an increased interest in learning than before, as the teachers applied various interactive methods of teaching the language. It was observed that the teachers had developed fluency in the language after the sessions and tried to use more English in their classrooms. However, a few

teachers said that “Children definitely needed the mother tongue to grasp the meanings of abstract terms.” So, even after the training, they used the mother tongue to explain various concepts. A majority of teachers now use additional material to supplement textbooks. They make use of charts, flashcards, pictures, dictionaries, newspapers, storybooks, etc, for improving the language skills of the students and making the subject interesting. On the job challenges The teachers cited a lack of resources as the constraint to use ICT (information and technology) tools in the classroom. At the most, they are able to use mobile phones to show videos and play rhymes and songs. As for the learning among students, the teachers mention that most of the students in upper primary

use dictionaries, read aloud with clear pronunciation and talk on simple topics in English. However, only a few students have comprehensive skills, they are able to read small passages and answer the questions given. And very few students can use familiar words, frame their own sentences, and write short paragraphs. This qualitative improvement in student learning is the litmus test to measure the real impact of teachers' professional learning. Teachers need to set realistic targets and strive to uplift the disadvantaged learners. Their professional development is necessary to ensure better learning and job satisfaction. In-service training is one of the means of achieving the same. Such programmes help in bridging the gap between the pre-service curricula and

classroom reality. Pre-service training courses alone may not fully prepare teachers to face the classroom challenges. There are plenty of issues like irregular attendance among students, isolated working environment in case of rural areas, lack of support from parents, and very little time and material to design activities. One of the ways of helping the teachers is by providing them with opportunities for ‘learning on the job’. In-service training should enable them to share good practices. It must promote learning and help teachers develop pedagogical and linguistic competence. Providing training alone may not be helpful. Therefore, we must also develop strong mechanisms to examine the extent to which teachers' professional learning has impacted the classrooms.

EDUCATION PLUS

People Looting in the Desire to Remain Eternally young

Recently, in Kanpur city, people were cheated on the pretext of making the elderly young. In this shocking case, a fraud of Rs 35 crore was done to the elderly in the name of making them young. The people who were cheating had said that the Israeli machine would kill the soldiers. The fraud continued for almost a year in the name of making old people young. For fraud, people were misled by telling them the wonders of Israel's time machine and fabricated things related to oxygen therapy. fraudstersThe couple even had the audacity to 'treat' more than five hundred people by connecting them on the lines of 'network marketing'. In a way, this machine which can be called Jugaad, made people not only lose money but also caused health problems in the pursuit of becoming young. Many people got burnt on their faces or got white marks on their skin in the process of making them young. In fact, the mindset of remaining forever young is becoming prevalent among people. Now with the deliberate strategy of deception, people are changing regarding the acceptance of age. Psychology is responsible. It would not be wrong to say that beauty and staying youthful were once limited to the famous faces in the world of TV and cinema. Passion is now visible everywhere. Call it the ostentatious lifestyle of social media or the urge to remain young forever by squandering wealth due to being resourceful. The craze of doing anything to maintain physical beauty and youth has increased not only in our country but all over the world. The markets are filled with beauty enhancing products. Along with physical fitness, the number of people giving tips to stay young is also increasing. From the virtual world to the real world, there are no less people who are eager to know the methods of maintaining the firmness and glow of the skin. People with thug tendencies take advantage of this mentality. In the era of technical communication, the practice of inspiring or connecting others by sharing one's experiences has also started. To create youth in Kanpur. Those who cheated had won people's trust only through 'network marketing'. The fraudsters also lured the people who joined them into believing in the unbelievable promise of restoring youth. becoming youngPeople taking 'therapy' were promised a regular commission for connecting people through 'network marketing'. Not only this, as per the market strategy, the initial offering was kept at a low fee. People were told that after one year the scheme of Rs 90,000 would become worth Rs 3 lakh. It also promised that if a person does not take the complete 'therapy', the company will refund the entire advance money after one year. Knowing such things, many people started falling into this trap with the desire to become young. Interesting things which are used in daily lifeConsumers were also prepared for this fraud on the basis of the images seen in the promotion of any product. In the last few years, the market of beauty enhancement products and youth maintenance services is expanding not only in the country but all over the world. The situation has become such that people even hope for miraculous changes. This mood is creating an environment for fraudsters. It is a matter of concern that instead of naturally accepting age, the desire to remain young at every stage of age is making people prone to diseases. She is also bringing in the circle. People are spending a large part of their income on taking care of themselves. However, this awareness has nothing to do with overall health care. Recently, American industrialist Brian Johnson's insistence on remaining forever young also became a topic of discussion at the global level. Brian, who is determined to stay young, claims that he has reversed his age. Even at the age of forty-seven, he has started looking like an eighteen year old youth. The main reason for making this amazing claim is their 'Age Reverse' research, in which everyApproximately sixteen crore rupees are spent every year. Undoubtedly, due to this kind of mentality, intensive studies are also being done on this topic. Recently, scientists of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and 'BGI Research' have said that work should be done on the development of such technology on the basis of research. Which can help in preventing aging. Uneasiness regarding increasing age is also being seen in our social environment. In such a situation, the question arises that why has the fear of aging and the desire to maintain youth increased among people? This eagerness is the youthIt is promoting the market of food manufacturing products and this thinking is becoming a weapon in the elusive game of the market. Opening new avenues of fraud. Despite this, today a big market has emerged for anti-aging products. It is important to understand that the market has its own game, knowing which is the responsibility of the common man. This obsession with maintaining youth is also creating mental pressure on other people. As such . Psychological pressure that makes the mind sick. In fact, the pictures reaching the country and the world in just a click of a button through social media also made people eternally young. The idea of ??staying- ing has been promoted. Studies show that people of all ages are becoming victims of depression in the race to look beautiful on social media. Women and youth are badly trapped in the trap of beauty promotion. A few years ago a study revealed that women are most concerned about how they look. According to this study conducted by 'Weight Watchers', a British organization, a woman curses herself eight times a day. This feeling of despair is so deep that women find it difficult to connect with their lives. Almost all aspects seem inferior. The result is that people become victims of frustration and stress. The ostentatious virtual world has further nurtured this feeling. Psychologists also believe this. The way technology has reduced distances, it has also strengthened the feeling of competition towards each other. As a result, people are falling into the trap of staying young at all costs. There is a need for people to have a feeling of easy acceptance of their age.

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