

Students preparing a mosquito repellent from natural oils



### EXPRESS FEATURE SERVICE

TODAY is National Science Day. In the build up to it, various national science institutions including, the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) and Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in the city held exhibitions, fairs, lectures, fests and a plethora of other events over the weekend.

IISER held 'Scifest '11' where about 120 under-

graduate students set up stalls, games and contests of many types. The fest that began on Saturday will conclude today. The event that saw the greatest footfall was 'Space City'. This idea brought together nine brains who worked on creating cities in the outer space for a time in future when life on earth will cease to exist. Sourav Sarkar, a first year student of IISER involved in designing the game, said, "It was done keeping in mind the challenges faced when mankind will have to look for habitation outside the earth, but

# Technical, but fun

Scientific temper ruled the roost at these events organised in observance of the National Science Day today

not on any other planet. It's more of a space station like set-up, where, due to lack of gravity, everything floats. But, in the long run humans will begin to have weak bones if such conditions prevail. The challenge is to use the principle of equivalence to solve such issues." Another such game is 'Just Not Cricket', where three teams of five players each participate. The teams make up any five rules, and then they play according to these different rules. "The teams certainly have some advantages, but they get cancelled out by fair-division algorithms," says Amit Kulkarni (name changed).

At NCL, poster presentations were made by about 300 Ph.D students in categories including biochemical science, materials, advanced materials, organic chemistry and chemical engineering. Five awards are to be given in each of these categories, depending on the number of entries for each of them. Awards for the best research papers published by the students will also be given out based on the impact factor of journals that they have appeared in. As many as 200 researchers have participated in this category, of which 20 will be awarded.

Saurav Pal, director of NCL, said, "This year the enthusiasm among the students has been amazing, as this year is also the International Year of Chemistry, declared by the Interna-

tional Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). Some of the papers that were submitted have the potential to be turned into state-of-the-art industrial research."

Today, a lecture will be delivered at NCL by on 'The Known and Unknown of Indian Summer Monsoon in a Changing Climate' by B N

Goswami, director of the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology. At IUCAA, drawing, essay and quiz contests were held for school students. The quiz questions were based on popular science, taking from various branches of science and engineering.



A student demonstrating rubrene, a fluorescent compound, which finds wide application for the use of tumours