

# Positioning affects decision making, say scholars

**HT Correspondent**

■ allahabad.htdesk@hindustantimes.com

**ALLAHABAD:** "During decision making, position affects simultaneously encountered choices", said Prof Maya Bar-Hillel, noted psychologist from The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel. She was delivering a talk here on the inaugural day of the three-day International conference on decision making (ICDM) that kick-off at Allahabad University's centre of behavioural and cognitive sciences (CBCS) on Saturday.

She explained how people tended to choose items from the middle location in super markets and why students guessed option B or C more in objective type exams.

Prof AK Singh, vice chancellor Allahabad University (AU) emphasised the importance of higher education and on conducting basic original research in different sciences to enhance national development.

A book edited by the faculty of CBCS, Ramesh Kumar Mishra and Prof Narayanan Srinivasan titled "Language-cognition interface: state of the art" was also released by him. A painting exhibition was also organised by the CBCS fraternity, contributed by the students was also put up on the occasion.

The day saw a series of talks by experts in the field of 'decision making', Daniel S. Levine from the University of Texas at Arlington, USA and Barbara Mellers from the University of Pennsylvania, USA.



■ Scientists listen attentively to a lecture at CBCS on Saturday.

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## Study reveals different cultural responses to unexpected gifts

**ALLAHABAD:** Everyone loves surprise gifts but the way an Indian or a Chinese perceive it is quite different from the way an American or an English see it.

Latest behavioural and psychological studies have found that western consumers are more receptive to unexpected promotional gifts than their East Asian counterparts. Psychologists have discovered that for westerners, an unexpected gift was found to reinforce feelings of control over their environment. However East Asians experience of surprise is closely connected to their motivation to seek emotional balance and their enjoyment of the gift increased when it was attributed to luck. The finding could prove useful for

the companies selling their products worldwide by helping them tailor-make marketing strategies. "The study showed that framing surprises as "good luck" or "good fortune" could enhance East Asians' enjoyment," said Prof Barbara Mellers, from the Psychology Department, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA who carried out this study along with her two other colleagues. In the city to attend the two-day International conference on "Decision Making" organised by Allahabad University's Centre of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences (CBCS), she said that the study explored different cultural responses to promotional gifts. **HTC**

# Experts discuss factors behind decision making

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Allahabad:** A conference on decision making, organised by the Centre of Behavioural and Cognitive Science (CBCS), Allahabad University, began on Saturday. The conference was inaugurated by AU vice-chancellor Prof Anil Kumar Singh.

Prof AK Singh emphasised the importance of higher education and conducting basic original research in different sciences to enhance national development. A book, edited by CBCS teaches Prof Narayanan Srinivasan and Ramesh Kumar Mishra, and titled 'Language-Cognition Interface: State of the Art' was also released. Students organized a painting exhibition.

The morning session was chaired by Daniel S Levine from University of Tex-

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as and Barbara Mellers from University of Pennsylvania. Prof Barbara spoke on surprise, whether it was a belief or emotion in the context of decision making. Prof Maya Bar-Hillel from The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, spoke

on position effects on simultaneously encountered choices during decision making. She explained how people tend to choose items from middle location in super markets. Prof Nicolao Bonini of University of Trento, Italy, spoke on

social preference and peripheral cues which fall under the class of social decisions. In the afternoon session talks focused on experience-based decision making.

Prof Benjamin Newell from University of New South Wales, Sydney, spoke on the boundaries between experience and description based choice.