Newspaper Clips
March 24-28, 2018

March 28

Female enrollment in IITs to be increased to 20% by 2020-21 by creating supernumerary seats

https://kashmirreader.com/2018/03/28/female-enrollment-in-iits-to-be-increased-to-20-by-2020-21-by-creating-supernumerary-seats/

NEW DELHI: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has informed that it has undertaken several schemes for the benefit of girls and women to enhance their accessibility and provide more opportunities such as provisions of various scholarships and fellowships exclusively for single girl child and women.

The UGC is also implementing schemes for development of women's studies in Indian universities and colleges, setting up of women hostels for colleges and universities, capacity building of women managers in higher education, establishment of day care centre in central and state universities. Further, in order to encourage girl education, a sub-committee under Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) has been constituted to look into the issues related to girls' education. The interim recommendations of the sub-committee inter-alia, include setting up of residential degree colleges and polytechnics for women in the district head quarters, exclusive women university in each state and providing free education to girls upto PG level, etc.

Also under the GoI Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), support is offered to increase access, equity and quality of higher education. Till date, the scheme has approved central assistance for 232 women colleges across states and union territories under various components such as through various components, such as creation of model degree colleges (MDCs), new colleges (professional and technical), equity initiatives, upgradation of colleges to MDCs, infrastructure grants to colleges, etc.

Approval under the scheme is dependent upon submission of each state higher education plan (SHEP) which is submitted by the state after analysing its higher education requirements in terms of access, equity and quality.

As informed by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the council has taken pro-active measures to attract girls in technical education through measures such as providing relaxation in land norms, FDR and processing fee for setting up of technical institutions especially for girls. Additionally, the Pragati scholarship scheme provides scholarship for girls in AICTE approved Institutions.

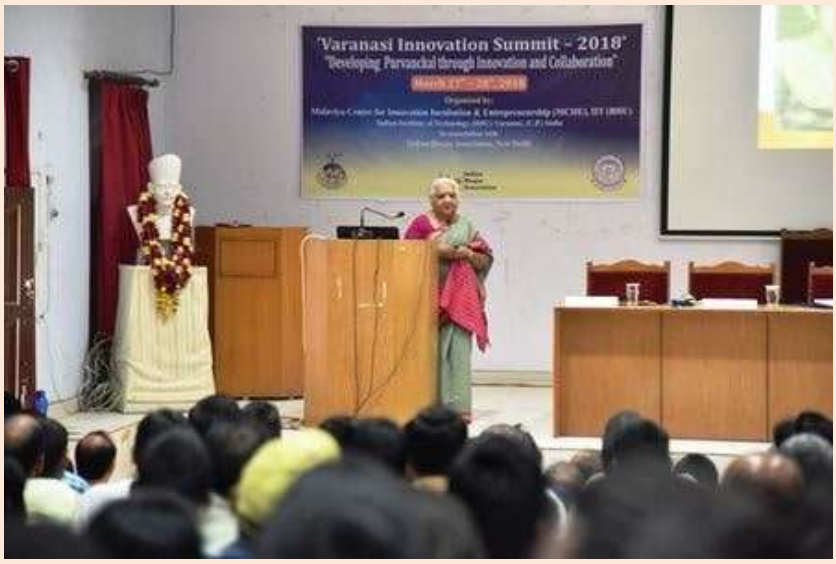
Further, the low representation of female enrollment in Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) was reviewed by a committee constituted by the joint admission board (JAB) and on the recommendations

of the committee, it has been decided to increase female enrollment in IITs from 8% in 2016 to 14% in 2018-19, 17% in 2019-20 and 20% in 2020-21 by creating supernumerary seats.

March 27

सौर ऊर्जा की उपयोगिता बढ़ाने पर हो शोध

https://www.livehindustan.com/uttar-pradesh/varanasi/story-research-on-enhancing-the-utility-of-solar-energy-1872797.html



आईआईटी बीएचयू के मालवीय उद्धमिता एवं नवप्रवर्तन केंद्र व भारतीय बायोगैस संगठन ने मंगलवार को इनोवेशन समिट 2018 का आयोजन किया। संस्थान के प्रोगोपाल त्रिपाठी सभागार में नवीन . ऊर्जा पर चर्चा हुई। मुख्य अतिथि बर्ली संस्थान इंदौर की ट्रस्टी निदेशक पद्मश्री जनक पलटा मैकगिलिगन ने कहा कि ऊर्जा का सबसे लम्बा चलने वाला स्रोत सौर ऊर्जा है।

उन्होंने कहा कि इसकी उपयोगिता के लिए नवीन विधियों की खोज करनी होगी ताकि कम लागत में प्रचुर ऊर्जा मिले। उन्होंने सौर ऊर्जा व जैविक खेती को लाभदायक बताया। विश्व में मेगा किचन के निर्माता दीपक गढ़िया ने कहा कि खाद्य सुरक्षा, ऊर्जा, पानी से संबंधित समस्या का समाधान जरूरी है। आईआईटी के पूर्व निदेशक प्रोएसएन उ .पाध्याय ने कहा कि युवा ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों का विकास करें। बीएचयू के पूर्व कुलपति प्रोपंजाब सिंह ने कहा कि किसान जब सशक्त होगा तो देश मजबूत होगा। . हम युवाओं को गांव से बाहर जाने से रोकें और उनमें खेती के प्रति लगाव पैदा करें। तब हम देश को विकसित राष्ट्र बनासकते हैं। आईआईटी बीएचयू के अनुसंधान और विकास के डीन राजीव प्रकाश ने नवीन ऊर्जा के स्रोत पर युवाओं को कार्य करने के लिए प्रेरित किया। स्वागत प्रोप्रदीप मिश्रा ने तथा . प्रदीप श्रीवास्तव ने दिया। .धन्यवाद डॉ

बीएचयू में एप बेस्ड साइकिल सेवा शुरू

https://www.livehindustan.com/uttar-pradesh/varanasi/story-ape-based-bicycle-service-started-in-bhu-1872783.html

आईआईटी बीएचयू में मंगलवार को एप बेस्ड साइकिल सेवा की शुरूआत प्रोफेसर राजीव संगल ने की। परिसर को प्रदूषण मुक्त करने की दिशा में उठाये गये इस कदम के तहत इस सेवा का लाभ विश्वविद्यालय के छात्रछात्राओं के अलावा शिक्षक और कर्मचारी भी कर सकेंगे। इसका लाभ लेने के - लिए प्रति तीस मिनट का किराया एक रुपये देना होगा।

बीते 27 फरवरी को आईआइटी बीएचयू और बंगलुरू की कंपनी जूमकार में इसके लिए समझौता हुआ था। खास यह कि एप के माध्यम से साइकिल बुक होगी तथा मोबाइल से इसका लॉक खुलेगा। इस सेवा का नाम पीईडीएल है। कंपनी इस नाम से पुणे, कोलकाता, बंगलुरु, नई दिल्ली, जयपुर, हैदराबाद और मुंबई में सेवा दे रही है।

कंपनी के एरिया बिजनेस मैनेजर गुंजित सिंह ने बताया कि कंपनी ने अभी बीएचयू कैंपस के लिए पूरा प्लान बनाया है। एप बेस्ड रेंटल साइकिल सर्विस विदेशों की तर्ज शुरू की गई है। साइकिल लेने, उसका किराया देने, उसे वापस जमा करने का पूरा सिस्टम हाईटेक और एप बेस्ड है। साइकिल एडवांस मॉडल की गियर बेस्ड हैं। बीएचयू कैम्पस से शुरूआत के बाद कंपनी इसे जल्द ही वाराणसी सिटी में भी शुरू करने के लिए नगर निगम से बात कर रही है।

ऑनलाइन पेमेंट, मोबाइल से बुकिंग

कंपनी की सभी साइकिल यूनिसेक्स मॉडल की हैं। जिसे लेडीजजेंट्स दोनों चला सकते हैं। प्रत्येक - साइकिल में डिजिटल लॉक लगा है जो जूमकार एप के क्यूआर कोड के से खुलेगा। हर साइकिल

जीपीएस सिस्टम है। इससे कंट्रोल रूम से साइकिल की लोकेशन ट्रैक होगी। साइकिल के रेंट का पेमेंट पूरी तरह से डिजिटल है। शुरुआत 80 पीईडीएल साइकिल से की गई। कंपनी इन हाइटेक साइकिल को हैंडल करने के लिए कैंपस में एक ऑफिस भी खोल रही है। इसमें एक वर्कशाप भी होगा ताकि साइकिल में खराबी आने पर उसे ठीक किया जा सके।

IIT-Hyd to research on how aging conceptualised in IVF

http://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/Young-Hans/2018-03-27/IIT-Hyd-to-research-on-how--aging-conceptualised-in-IVF/369746

IIT-Hyd to research on how aging conceptualised in IVF

Hyderabad: The Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad (IIT-H) will undertake a study on the ways in which aging is conceptualised within in-vitro fertilization (IVF) by researching on elderly couples conceiving and birthing children through the method, it was announced here on Monday.

The project has been sanctioned with funding of Rs 25 lakh under the Wellcome UK Small Projects Grant for 2018 and is titled "A preliminary study of ageing and assisted reproduction in India".

The project will commence in April and includes fieldwork, a conference on 'Reframing the Biological Clock: Exploring Ethnographic Research on Ageing and Reproduction' in August with presentations from academics across the world, IIT Hyderabad said.

The conference will focus on ongoing research on aspects of the ageing reproductive body and how technology and society imagine childbirth and families in such a context. Research from Europe, the US and Asia will be presented at the conference, which will be hosted by IIT Hyderabad.

Anindita Majumdar, assistant professor, Department of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad, will be leading the research.

"The aim of the research is to contribute conceptually and through field data to ongoing, and future research on assisted conception, infertility and reproduction in India. This would include publications emerging from research, and the development of a larger research project that will look at the impact that societal and environmental factors have on increasing fears of declining fertility in urban India," said Majumdar.

This research firmly embeds itself within emerging issues of the "biological clock", and declining fertility which has long-term significance on demographic and population trends, as well as on the social care and responsibility of an ageing population.

Wellcome UK is a global charitable organization that supports scientists and researchers take on big problems, fuel imaginations, and spark debate. It supports over 14,000 people in more than 70 countries and is one of the world's biggest funders of biomedical research.

Award academic credits to students participating in Swachh Abhiyan: UGC

http://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/Young-Hans/2018-03-27/Award-academic-credits-to-students-participating-in-Swachh-Abhiyan-UGC/369749

Award academic credits to students participating in Swachh Abhiyan: UGC

New Delhi: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked all universities and colleges to consider offering academic credits to students for participating in the government's much touted Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

The commission in its meeting earlier this month had approved providing of two credits like any other 'Elective' under Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) to students in higher educational institutions undertaking 15 days (100 hours) summer internships under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan activities. "In this summer internship, it is expected that students will not only participate in overall cleanliness in villages or slums but would also help in setting up systems for sustaining cleanliness and sanitation efforts under the campaign.

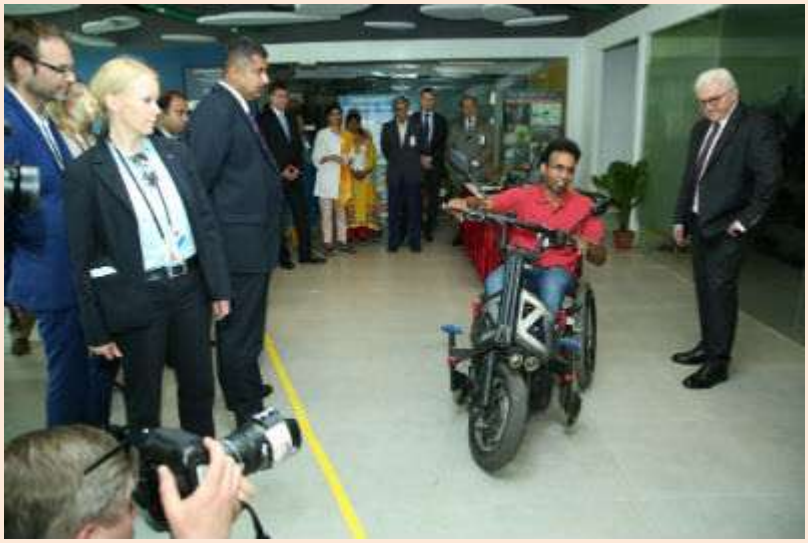
“These efforts are expected to provide a great learning experience in Indian context to students across the country and would help in improving overall quality of education," a UGC communication to varsities read.

The commission has asked varsities and their affiliated colleges to consider implementation of this elective course from the forthcoming summer session and give wide publicity so that vast majority of students opt for this elective course. "It is informed that UGC guidelines for Swachh Bharat - Swastha Bharat Scheme have enabling provisions for universities and colleges to collaborate and to come out with ways to make the Mission possible," the UGC letter read.

March 26

Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, visits IIT Madras Research Park

http://indiaeducationdiary.in/dr-frank-walter-steinmeier-president-federal-republic-germany-visits-iit-madras-research-park/



Chennai: His Excellency Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, visited Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) Research Park today (Sunday 25th March 2018).

The visit of the Federal President has its roots in the long and successful association between IIT Madras and Germany and the fruitful collaboration between Indian and German higher education landscape. Among the first IITs to come up in the country, IIT Madras was established with German assistance, way back in 1959.

He was received by Prof. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, Director, IIT Madras, Prof. Ravindra Gettu, Dean (Industrial Consultancy and Sponsored Research), IIT Madras, Mr. Rajendra Mootha, Chief Operating Officer of IIT Madras Research Park and Dr. Tamaswati Ghosh, Chief Executive Officer, IIT Madras Incubation Cell, among others.

IIT Madras is home to India's first university-driven Research Park, which was the perfect place for the Federal President to interact with young entrepreneurs, researchers and faculty, witness their innovations and see how the bridge between education and economy is being made. Before arriving in Chennai, he visited New Delhi and Varanasi where he interacted with students as well.

Speaking about the President's visit, Prof Bhaskar Ramamurthi said, "We are honoured that the President of the Federal Republic of Germany has chosen to visit the IIT Madras Research Park to interact with our start-ups and see for himself the strides taken by our Institute set up with German assistance. The German influence was instrumental in the strong collaborations IIT Madras developed with industry even from its early years, culminating in the country's first university-based Research Park and innovation ecosystem of global scale."

His Excellency Dr. Steinmeier was accompanied by Dr. Martin Ney, German Ambassador to India; Ms. Mukta Dutta Tomar, Indian Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany; Mr. Stephan Steinlein, Secretary of State, Foreign Office, Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Christian Hirte, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, Federal Republic of Germany, and Mr. Ralph Brinkhaus, Member of Parliament in the German Bundestag and Deputy Chairman of CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group besides other high ranking officials and dignitaries.

Some of the start-ups incubated at IIT Madras Incubation Cell gave a demonstration of their products to His Excellency Dr. Steinmeier. The start-ups include:

Ø Pi-Beam (Manufacturing solar/electric hybrid three wheelers)

Ø Neomotion (Innovative wheelchair for people with disability and elderly)

Ø Fabheads (3D printers, with special focus on carbon fiber products)

Ø Planys (compact underwater robots for immersed structure inspection & environmental survey)

Ø Detect (technology solution to the inspection needs of energy sector focusing mainly on the pipeline integrity management)

Ø Skillveri (multi-skill virtual training simulators for painting and welding),

Ø Merkel Haptics (first haptics company in India exclusively for touch related technologies, pioneer in providing 3D touch technology solutions)

He also visited the Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC), a multi-disciplinary R&D centre located at the Research Park. The HTIC is a joint initiative of IIT Madras and Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, and brings together technologists, engineers, doctors and healthcare professionals, industry and government to develop healthcare technologies for the country.

The IIT Madras Research Park is a national pioneering effort to catalyze collaborative research between industry and academia and enable technological innovation and nurture entrepreneurship. It houses the R&D and innovation wings of industry majors engaged in collaborative research and technology transfer with the faculty.

It moreover, hosts four Incubators (IITM Incubation Cell, Rural Technology Business Incubator (RTBI), Bio-incubator and MedTech incubator) and several of IITM's Centres of Excellence/Research Laboratories. It was modelled along the lines of successful Research Parks in Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University.

Since 2006, 140 start-ups have been part of IITM Incubation Cell, out of which 32 start-ups have raised Rs 707 crore (US$ 111 million) from investors. Furthermore, 63 IITM incubated start-ups are currently in the market, with a cumulative revenue of Rs 133 crore (US$21 million) generated in financial year 2016-17.

History of IIT Madras and Germany

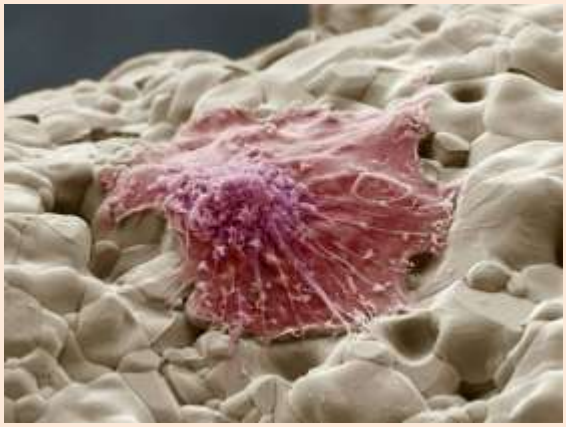
It all started during an official visit of the then-Prime Minister Shri. Jawaharlal Nehru to West Germany in 1956, when he was offered assistance by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to set up a higher technological institute in India. This resulted in the signing of the first Indo-German Agreement in Bonn in 1959, for the establishment of an Indian Institute of Technology at Madras.

The first Indo-German Agreement provided for the services of German professors and five foremen, training facilities for 20 Indian faculty members and the supply of scientific and technical equipment for the establishment of the Central Workshop and 20 laboratories at IIT Madras. In 1959, the Institute was formally inaugurated. The visit of Dr. Heinrich Lubke, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, in 1962 marked the beginning of the Indo-German Technical Assistance Program. Over the years, the association has grown strength to strength. Today, IITM has collaborations with several top educational institutions in Germany and also has an Indo-German Centre for Sustainability on Campus, which aims at developing the capacity and the capability to promote sustainable development in Germany, India and South Asia.

IIT-G researchers use silk scaffolds for bone regeneration

https://www.biospectrumindia.com/news/58/10650/iit-g-researchers-use-silk-scaffolds-for-bone-regeneration.html

The scaffold seeded with stem cells was found to differentiate into bone cells, facilitate growth of blood vessels and successfully integrate the newly formed bone cells with the native bone.



A group of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati has developed a scaffold made of silk composite functionalised with copper-doped bioactive glass to facilitate faster bone regeneration.

The scaffold seeded with stem cells was found to differentiate into bone cells, facilitate growth of blood vessels and successfully integrate the newly formed bone cells with the native bone.

The researchers were able to replicate the results in rabbits using functionalised non-mulberry silk composite. Rabbits with scaffolds implanted at the site of bone injury showed successful growth of bone cells and integration with the native bone at the end of three months.

The research team developed the silk composite by adding chopped silk fibre to liquid silk. Unlike pure silk, the silk composite has greater strength. The addition of bioglass further enhanced the strength of the composite.

The team plans to undertake trials on larger animals now, and is hopeful to get regulatory clearance soon.

MHRD nominates former NCERT director to UNESCO executive board

https://www.jagranjosh.com/trending/education-mhrd-nominates-former-ncert-director-to-unesco-executive-board-381086

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has nominated former NCERT director J S Rajput as India's representative to the Executive Board of UNESCO.

Ex NCERT Director has been nominated to represent India in Executive Board at UNESCO

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has nominated former NCERT director J S Rajput as India's representative to the Executive Board (EXB) of UNESCO, the ministry said in a statement today. Rajput, who was awarded the Padma Shri in 2014, recently completed a project aimed at achieving religious amity through education and is also known for regulating the B.Ed correspondence courses as the first chairman of NCTE and for starting the innovative two-year B.Ed course.

He has been awarded the Maharishi Ved Vyas award by the Madhya Pradesh government for his contributions in the education sector. Rajput's research publications in Physics earned him a professorship at the age of 31 years. He has published research papers in several specialised areas in education, guided doctoral-level researchers and has authored several books.

'Education of Muslims in India', a book he edited, was released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 15, 2015. The EXB has a four-year term and 58 seats. It is one of the constitutional organs of UNESCO and is elected by the General Conference.

The board examines the work of the organisation and the corresponding budget estimates. In practice, it is the main organ responsible for all policies and programmes of UNESCO.

The elections of members of the EXB for the term 2017-21 took place on November 8, 2017, in which India won with 162 votes in Group IV during the 39th session of the General Conference held from October 30 to November 14, 2017. The next meeting of the board is to be held at UNESCO HQ in Paris, from April 4- 17.

March 25

One in 5 students at IIT-Delhi is from Rajasthan

https://www.hindustantimes.com/jaipur/one-in-5-students-at-iit-delhi-is-from-rajasthan/story-B1Iz4irDwbMpnfJeId0e6H.html

A recent survey revealed the information.

One out of every five students in the 2017 batch at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, is from Rajasthan, a recent 15 km from Bhilwara in Rajasthan15 km from Bhilwara in Rajasthan.

The survey by BSP included 649 of the 851 students that enrolled at the premier technology institute in 2017. Of the 649 students, 566 were male while 83 female. The BSP is IIT Delhi's media unit and is run entirely by the student community.

Of the 649 participants in the survey, 134 were from the desert state, constituting nearly a fifth of the batch. Indicating a north-heavy representation, the survey states that 67% of the students in the batch came from north or central India. Among the surveyed lot, there was only one international student.

Besides Rajasthan, the biggest contributors to the batch were Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh with 93 and 63 students respectively. The state of Delhi sent 58 students to the batch.

Following the capital were Bihar and Maharashtra. While there were 52 students from the former in the batch, the latter contributed 47 students to the Delhi institute.

An earlier report that included students from IITs across the country, too, foregrounded the high contribution of Rajasthan to the institutes. Of the 10,576 students who were admitted to the IITs in the year 2016, 2,005 were from Rajasthan, said the Joint Implementation Committee report by IIT Guwahati, which organised the JEE Advanced 2016.

The desert state accounted for 18.96% seats in the IITs in the admissions that took place in 2016. According to a report of IIT Mumbai that organised JEE Advanced 2015, nearly 19.7% of the students who secured a place in the IITs were from Rajasthan.

Experts credit the lion's share of students from Rajasthan making way into the IITs to the massive coaching industry in Kota, which has now spread to other districts such as Jaipur and Sikar.

Vacant seats in premium institutes on the rise

https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/education/vacant-seats-in-premium-institutes-on-the-rise/article23347908.ece

IIT-BHU reports maximum vacancies

Of all the seats going unclaimed in IITs in the five years since 2013, the IIT-BHU has reported maximum vacancies, according to data compiled by the HRD ministry.

The number of seats lying vacant in the premium institutes has seen a rising trend in the five years, except in 2014, prompting the ministry to set up a panel which made several recommendations to address the issue. The committee, which was set up last year, submitted its report earlier this year.

According to the ministry data, of the nearly 11,000 seats across the IITs, a total of 274 seats remained vacant from 2013, which included 15 (in 2013), five in 2014, 39 in 2015, 96 in 2016 and 121 in 2017.

As far as IIT-BHU is concerned, it recorded maximum vacancies across all 23 Indian Institutes of Technology since 2013. It had 32 vacancies in 2017, 38 in 2016, 28 in 2015, three in 2014 and four seats in 2013. The Indian School of Mines (which was upgraded to the status of an IIT in 2016) recorded 23 vacancies each in 2016 and 2017.

The IIT-Kanpur and the IIT-Hyderabad had all their seats taken between 2013 and 2017, while the IIT-Delhi recorded zero vacancy between 2013 and 2015.

In 2016 and 2017, the IIT-Delhi had two seats vacant in each year. As far as IIT-Bombay is concerned, it had all its seats filled in 2013, 2014 and 2015, while it had two vacancies in 2016 and one in 2017.

“To minimise the vacancies in IITs, NITs and other Centrally-Funded Technical institutions (CFTIs), the HRD ministry constituted a committee to recommend suitable measures,” a senior ministry official said.

The committee recommended the institutions may review seats in each discipline based on employment opportunities, national requirement, available infrastructure and scope for future, he said.

“Some disciplines may be considered for closure or be kept in abeyance for a few years, if needed. New courses and disciplines may be introduced only after carrying out market opportunity analysis,” he added.

The committee also recommended streamlining the counselling process by having multiple rounds as well as taking other proactive measures such as launching helpline to facilitate students in making choices, officials said.

IIT-Kharagpur research team turns hemp fibre into clean fuel

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/iit-kharagpur-research-team-turns-hemp-fibre-into-clean-fuel/articleshow/63448955.cms

KOLKATA: Good news is in the air for all of us fretting over poor AQI. IIT-Kharagpur researchers have developed clean fuel out of chatai (mat), using microwave. You heard right, chatai or maadur (in Bengali) is the new source of ethanol and diesel — the two greatest airpoison inducers.
"There is an urgency to replace fossil fuels like petrol and diesel that are direct causes of pollution, global warming and climate change. Acres are being allocated for solar and wind energy; hydel power and geothermal projects have been deployed. But India's fossil fuel import bill still runs high due to non-availability of renewable energy sources on a large scale," said professor Saikat Chakraborty, lead researcher and faculty at the department of chemical engineering and P K Sinha Centre for Bioenergy at IIT-Kharagpur.

He has used sunn hemp, the non-toxic annual cover crop, to make biofuel. In what is being called a "kitchen to cosmos" effort, Chakraborty and his team have used microwave for mass use of hemp biofuel by tapping the radiation to create clean energy.

Even though biofuel from the high-energy non-edible plant source has been possible, the main obstacle to its large scale use as a future fuel was its highly crystalline structure and long polymer chains, which make the fibres inaccessible to enzymatic and chemical treatments. The IIT scientists addressed the issue through the use of microwave radiation and converted non-edible lignocellulosic fibres of sunn hemp into biofuel precursors. The entire conversion which would have taken eight to 10 hours — has been completed in only 46 minutes using the microwave reactors in the lab.

"The research gives the hemp's chemical composition the necessary stability for conversion and deployment as liquid biofuels, which can be used for large-scale production by the transport industry," said Chakraborty.

Fellow researcher Souvik Kumar Paul explained, "A kg of sunn hemp fibres containing 756g cellulose produces 595g glucose, at 160°C, and 203g hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF), at 180°C, in 46 minutes. The glucose is separated and fermented, using yeast to produce 230g of ethanol-based biofuel which is used in automobiles as a biofuel-additive for gasoline. The platform chemical (HMF) can also be hydrogenated to furanic biofuels like dimethylfuran, which can be used as replacement for diesel."

While the industry potential of this invention has led the scientists to file for a patent, their findings have also appeared in ‘Bioresource Technology’ published by Elsevier.

Travel equals downtime for most commuters, says Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay study

http://www.newindianexpress.com/thesundaystandard/2018/mar/25/travel-equals-downtime-for-most-commuters-says-indian-institute-of-technology-bombay-study-1792001.html

NEW DELHI: What do people do while commuting by public transport? While over 50 per cent do nothing, 16 per cent talk to fellow commuters, 10 per cent read, six per cent sleep and an equal number listen to music.These are the findings of a study by two Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bombay researchers, conducted to find the impact of mobile devices on the way people travel and the economic impact of utilisation of travel time on the economy.

One of the key findings of the study was that a significant number of commuters, with or without smartphones, don’t engage in any activity at all.While the percentage was 51.6 per cent for people without smart phones, it was 29 per cent for those with the latest mobiles.

“Doing nothing was the most preferred travel time use by commuters in 40.5 per cent of the trips. This also included window-gazing and getting bored. Commuters reported snoozing or resting as the major multitasking activity in 7.9 per cent of the trips, whereas in 17.3 per cent they talked to other passengers,” said the paper titled 'Impact of information and communication technologies on multitasking during travel and the value of travel time savings: empirical evidences from Mumbai, India'.

“In 17.5 per cent of the trips, reading was reported to be the major multitasking activity with almost equal shares for both ICT- based and non-ICT (information and communication tehnology) based reading such as reading a newspaper or book etc,” added the survey published in Elsevier’s Travel Behaviour and Society.

In 4.6 per cent of the trips, the respondents used social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and WhatsApp or made phone calls.Meanwhile, in 7.9 per cent and 2.5 per cent of the trips, the traveller’s listened to music and playing games on their phones. Finally, it was observed that in 1.3 per cent of the total trips individuals worked during travel.

Non-participation in any kind of multitasking activity drastically reduced when the individual owned a smartphone. A similar trend was observed when they had high (more than one GB per month) internet usage.

“Through the study, we estimated how multitasking impacted value of travel time savings (VTTS), which refers to the benefits of faster travel that saves time. The results showcased a reduction of 26 per cent when compared to individuals who did not perform any activity while travelling,” said Arnab Jana, co-author of the research by the Centre for Urban Science and Engineering.

He said the changes in VTTS indicate that people who multitask value their travel time savings less in comparison with people who don’t.“Transportation schemes for reducing overcrowding can take into account the added benefit due to multitasking while evaluating these policies. Policy-makers could tap the same phenomenon and drive the shift towards public transport modes,” added Jana.

German president 'impressed' by IIT start-ups

http://www.deccanherald.com/content/666546/german-president-impressed-iit-start.html

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Sunday visited the IIT-Madras and interacted with start-ups from the prestigious institution.

The IIT-Madras was established with assistance from his country.

Steinmeier took time to interact with start-ups that have designed solar-electric hybrid three wheelers, an innovative wheelchair for people with disability and elderly; 3D printers with special focus on carbon fiber products; and compact underwater robots that can conduct environmental survey.

The start-ups, who had designed their products at the IIT-Madras Incubation Cell, gave a demonstrations to the German president.

Sources said he was "impressed" with the start-ups and lauded them for their contribution to science and technology. Later, Steinmeier visited the Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC) inside the IIT Research Park.

IIT-Madras was established in 1959 after the then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru signed an agreement with Germany to set up a higher technological institute in India.

This was the first Indo-German agreement and provided for the services of German professors and five foremen, training facilities for 20 Indian faculty members and the supply of scientific and technical equipment for the establishment of the central workshop and 20 laboratories at the IIT-Madras.

The German president's first visit after arriving from New Delhi was to Daimler Heavy Vehicles factory in Oragadam, 52 km from here, and undertook a detailed plant visit.

Daimler India, which produces medium to heavy duty trucks and buses under the brands of Bharat Benz and Mercedes Benz respectively, is a subsidiary of Daimler AG that is based in Germany.
"He (Steinmeier) has encouraged German political and economic partners to strengthen their commitment in India," the German Embassy in India said.

88 per cent UGC approved journals lack quality: Study

http://www.newindianexpress.com/thesundaystandard/2018/mar/25/88-per-cent-ugc-approved-journals-lack-quality-study-1792023.html

NEW DELHI: About 88 per cent of University Grants Commission (UGC)-approved non-indexed journals were found to be of low quality and lacked essential information or provided incorrect or false information such as incorrect International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and false claims about impact factor.

This was revealed through a critical analysis of the 'UGC approved list of journals' by researchers of Pune University, Banaras Hindu University and Rajasthan University of Health Sciences, that was published in the March 25 edition of Current Science.

The researchers developed a protocol with objective criteria of identifying journals that do not follow good publication practices.They studied 1,336 journals randomly selected from 5,699 in the university source component of the 'UGC-approved list' and analysed 1,009 journals after excluding 327 indexed in Scopus/Web of Science.

"Only 112, out of 1,009 journals (11.1 per cent) from the non-indexed journals in the university source category examined by us qualified in the analysis," the study said.

March 24

650 students register for IIT youth conclave

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/650-students-register-for-iit-youth-conclave-118032400456_1.html

Over 650 students from different institutions in the country, including the NITs and IITs, have registered for the first round of INAE Youth Conclave at IIT Kharagpur.

The three-day conclave, held for the first time in IIT Kharagpur, is aimed at engaging budding engineers from different disciplines in developing innovative technologies and solutions.

The conclave began yesterday.

The contestants are presented with situations which may be similar to some of the current problems faced by the society and expected to come up with new plans, innovative technologies or workable solutions to these problems, an IIT Kharagpur statement said.

The conclave was initiated last year by the Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE) and held at Birla Institute of Scientific Research (BISR), Jaipur.

The organisers have received 127 submissions for the three broad categories of problems. The largest number of submissions has come for a 'Swach Bharat Abhiyan' plan that asks students to find effective ways to segregate and dispose waste in apartments, the statement said.

The finals are slated for August 10-12 at IIT Kharagpur.

IIT Roorkee launches competition to design advance biotoilet

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/education/iit-roorkee-launches-competition-to-design-advance-bio-toilet/printarticle/63431158.cms

NEW DELHI: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee has launched a national competition to design a bio-toilet that would remove germs from human waste and recover resources such as energy, clean water, and nutrients. This solution is expected to operate “off the grid” without connectivity to water, sewer, or electrical lines and cost less than Rs 5 per user per day.

This contest is intended to help rejuvenate the Ganges and is being taken up as part of Cognizance 2018, the annual tech festival of IIT Roorkee. An initiative under ‘Aviral Ganga 2.0,’ the 'Reinvent Bio-Toilet Challenge' will be an online case-study competition that aims to create a bio toilet.

Further, to aid the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and perform extensive research of the river, Cognizance 2018 is also conducting a Quadcopter-based event for pollution monitoring. Participants have to build an innovative quad that should be efficient on all fronts and have considerable structural integrity. The winning models of both these events shall be forwarded to NMCG for implementation in their projects for cleaning Ganga.

"Cognizance is not just a technical festival, it is an amalgamation of ideas of hundreds of young technocrats from across the country,” said Ajit K. Chaturvedi, director, IIT Roorkee.