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Eight Indian institutions among top 500 world universities, IISC leads the pack

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-eight-indian-institutions-among-top-500-world-universities-iisc-leads-the-pack-2150498>

Eight higher educational institutions from India have been listed in the top 500 universities in the world by the QS rankings in 2015.

This was disclosed by Union Minister for Human Resource development [Smriti Irani](#) in the [Lok Sabha](#) on Monday.

Two of these institutions' the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi are ranked 147 and 179 respectively in the QS World University Rankings for 2015-16. The other six were IITs in Bombay (ranked 202);T Kanpur (271); Kharagpur (286); Madras (254); Roorkee (391) and Guwahati (460)

Irani said Indian higher education institutions would need to work on improving their perception index if they have to better their global rankings.

Isc scientists develop drug delivery system to target hepatitis C virus

Lab experiments carried out on mice recorded 77% reduction in hepatitis C virus levels in mice

<http://www.bangaloremirror.com/bangalore/others/IISc-scientists-develop-drug-delivery-system-to-target-hepatitis-C-virus/articleshow/49988722.cms>

The drug delivery system travelled accurately to the affected cells in the liver of mice injected

From the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have found a way to effectively treat the chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection, caused by a blood-borne virus that infects the liver to cause diseases like cancer and liver cirrhosis.

They have achieved a major breakthrough in nano-drug delivery systems by engineering a nanovector which can specifically home in on liver cells and destroy the viral RNA in HCV infections. It also promises to significantly decrease the drug dosage to cure the patient of the disease.

Nanovectors are like ultra-microscopic vehicles that are able to carry drugs to specific locations and target the precise cells which are the villains of the infection. This, they do with minimal or no harm to surrounding healthy tissue. HCV infects more than 13 crore people worldwide; and although existing antivirals cure 90 per cent of infected patients, there is currently no vaccine. Around five lakh people die every year due to chronic HCV infection.

A major problem in the treatment of this disease is the growing drug resistance of the virus and the side effects of the antiviral therapy that limit the dosage that can be safely used.

The study recently published in the journal *Nanoscale* demonstrates the functionality of a special class of drug delivery molecules called poly (propyl ether imine) or PETIM dendrimers - hyper-branched polymer molecules that can be used

to carry other molecules like drugs or nucleic acids.

"The major hurdle that we face (in drug therapy) is the targeted delivery of any drug" says Saumitra Das, professor at IISc's department of microbiology and cell biology, who is the corresponding author of the study. "Having a specific delivery system allows us to reduce the dosage of the drug and make it more effective."

In this proof-of-concept study, the scientists have modified PETIM to specifically deliver anti-HCV siRNA (molecules that degrade a specific RNA of HCV) to liver cells. The researchers were able to demonstrate that PETIM produces a 77 per cent reduction in HCV RNA levels and specifically travels to the liver of mice injected with the dendrimer.

One of the unique and most important features of PETIM when compared to other dendrimer molecules is that it is non-toxic to the nearby cells.

While anti-viral siRNA therapy is plagued with problems of siRNA stability, PETIM conjugated siRNA were shown to be completely stable and were properly taken up by the affected cells.

The researchers said that in principle PETIM can be modified to target other cells of the body too.

"PETIM, till today is the most non-toxic dendrimer that has been developed" explains Abirami Lakshminarayanan, PhD student at the departments of organic chemistry and microbiology and cell biology, who is the study's first author.

The study also highlights the inter-disciplinary nature of research involved in the development and characterisation of PETIM, with scientists across departments in collaboration.

"This is a unique effort where biologists, organic chemists, physicists and computational biologists have come together to solve problems in healthcare" explains Saumitra Das.

New education policy to come up next year: Smriti Irani

Economic Times

NEW DELHI: The government would come up with a new education policy next year, the Lok Sabha was informed today.

HRD Minister Smriti Irani said the proposed new education policy would "fructify next year", amid a series of questions on the involvement of stakeholders from the grassroots level to frame the new policy.

"The government has undertaken an unprecedented collaborated, multi-stakeholder and multi-pronged consultation process for formulating the new education policy. (The consultation process) included online, grassroots and national level thematic deliberations," she said during Question Hour.

Irani stressed that the consultative process included over 2 lakh gram panchayats, over 6000 blocks and several urban bodies.

Responding to a supplementary, she said results of better co-ordination between CBSE and state education boards will be seen from next year onwards. Her attention was pointed towards the different syllabi being followed by various state boards and the CBSE.

Irani said the 'e-pathshala' project has ensured that all CBSE books from class I to XII are available for free online and through a mobile phone application.

Placement Depression Hits IITians

Wide disparity between the highest and lowest salaries offered to students and high family expectations are creating stress among IIT students

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New Delhi: Sometime in early November, a 21-year-old student at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, developed heart-burn and palpitations besides being unable to sleep at night — classic symptoms of depression. He wasn't alone. Ahead of placements, which start Tuesday at the leading IITs, many students are afflicted as the stress of landing a top-paying job takes a toll.

By the middle of November, the campus grapevine and the media make much of salaries in excess of ₹1 crore being offered to batch mates in pre-placement offers (which precede the final ones).

"Since my parents heard this, they have been calling me and checking on the trend of final placement in terms of salaries," said the final-year student of mechanical engineering mentioned above.

The wide disparity between the highest and lowest salaries offered to students — as much as ₹2 crore including stock options to ₹8 lakh — is key to what's emerging as a mental health issue for students and the schools that are meant to nurture them. Family expectations add to the stress.

"Parents who are not well informed do create tremendous pressure on students. Students as well as parents should be level headed and understand that crore-plus salaries are offered to only a handful and not all get this," said IIT Guwahati director Gautam Biswas.

Babu Vishwanathan, placement advisor at IIT Madras, said many students change subjects in pursuit of higher salaries. "The hefty packages compel many students to switch to computer science stream as most students from this department get the highest compensation packages," said Vishwanathan.

Dean Sivakumar M Srinivasan said November is "pressure cooker" for both students and faculty.

Students who have ranked at the top throughout their semesters are especially prone to placement depression when they fail to get

Placement Blues

- ♦ **Stress starts** with entrance coaching, admission test, continues with academic grind and worthwhile placement
- ♦ **Placement pressure** stems largely from parents and peer group
- ♦ **Widening gap** between highest and lowest pay packages also leads to stress
- ♦ **November** is dubbed 'pressure cooker' month
- ♦ **Not many** students willing to seek counselling to deal with stress and depression at IITs

♦ **Parents who are not well informed do create tremendous pressure on students. Students as well as parents should be level headed and understand that crore-plus salaries are offered to only a handful and not all get this**

GAUTAM BISWAS
IIT GUWAHATI DIRECTOR



picked up on the first or second day. "Even though these students at the end of placements may secure better offers as offered by Day 1 and 2 companies, these students are highly stressed out on discovering that they do not figure in the early slots," said Shashi Mathur, professor in charge of the training and placement cell at IIT Delhi.

Getting selected by a top recruiter becomes critical for many.

"Students link performance to their personality and identity. This turns out disastrous for them. At least 10% of (IIT Delhi) students face an identity crisis," said IIT Delhi student counsellor Rupa Murghai.

The stress starts during entrance coaching and the exam itself, then continues with the academic grind and getting a worthwhile placement. And, because of the years-long toil, they miss out on developing some coping skills.

"With the growing competition and extreme emphasis on ranks, marks and placements, our education system has transformed into more of an examination system," said Shobhana Mittal, consultant psychiatrist at Cosmos Institute of Mental Health & Behavioural Sciences (CIMBS) in New Delhi.

"When there is a mismatch in the expected and actual pay packages, a lot of distress ensues. Expectations of parents and also students' own expectations at times are very high to live up to."

As the IIT Bombay student newsletter Insight recently said: "The issue of depression is real across the IITs."

According to an IIT Madras student counsellor, 75% of all students who seek help suffer from clinical depression

The IIT tried an unconventional approach, switching off the power supply to the hostels for an hour to force students to attend a group therapy session.

"Pep talks and motivational talks are frowned upon at IITs — students are shy of coming out in the open," said the IIT Kharagpur teacher.

A more nurturing environment is essential to help them.

"In the two rigorous years that a kid spends preparing for IIT-JEE, he/she tends to lose touch with his/her emotional side," said an IIT Bombay counsellor. "Having tenderness around the campus could help change that."

The schools are aware of the matter and are trying to do something about it. But the problem is students typically don't want to reveal too much of their anxieties, said a teacher at IIT Kharagpur.

"We are concerned as more and more companies like McKinsey, Google and Goldman Sachs are either completely or partially going off the campus," said a professor at IIT Madras placement cell who requested not to be named.

As of now, Goldman Sachs and Google conduct online tests for students through the IIT placement cells. But placement officials fear that gradually the hiring would shift to online, nullifying the role of the placement cells.

A campus recruiter at a major management consulting firm

IITs Watch Out for Cos Flouting Norms as Placement Begins Today

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New Delhi: IITs are keeping a sharp eye on companies flouting placement guidelines even as the war for talent at IITs begins on Tuesday amid rising concerns over some top rung companies taking to off-campus placements.

Under the umbrella of All IITs Placement Committee (AIPC), older IITs including Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Roorkee, Guwahati, Kharagpur, and Kanpur, will jointly take a strict stand against any recruiter found flouting placement guidelines or indulging in misconduct.

"AIPC ensures that companies should not be able to divide and rule," said Babu Vishwanathan, professor-in-charge for placement and training at IIT Madras. "If any of the company is rejected by one of the IITs all must stand together, otherwise the company will take undue advantage. If it is IIT Kanpur today it could be IIT Madras tomorrow," he said. A bigger concern for IITs, however, is the increasing tendency among top recruiters to follow an off-campus placement strategy, some placement officials said.

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A campus recruiter at a major management consulting firm

Rain Threat to IIT Madras Placements

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New Delhi: Placements at IIT Madras, this year literally rest in the hands of the rain Gods. Incessant rains in Chennai, which led to floods and waterlogging in several parts of the city over the past fortnight, have made recruiters unsure of the placement at IIT Madras. The institute was receiving frantic calls from companies coming for placements to the campus on Monday when schools and colleges in the city were told to remain closed due to rains. IIT Madras, however, said it is not affected much as of now and that the placements will take place starting Tuesday.

said it is taking more of their interview process online as it is not possible for them to reach all the IITs on one day. McKinsey, which has been one of the most preferred campus recruiters, is skipping the campus placement process at the IITs this year and is instead hiring graduates directly through its alumni network, website and social media.

A professor at IIT Indore, who did not want to be named, said that many companies soon could fol-

low the McKinsey model and may over a few years take the hiring off-campus. "Big stalwarts at campus placement seem to be ironing out the chink at the moment (with Google and Goldman Sachs partly going online with their tests). We are keeping a close watch as we want the placement process to go smoothly," said the professor.

"A vacuum is being created with Day 1 companies moving either off-campus or adopting PPO (pre-placement offer) route," the faculty member said, but added, "We see this gap is being slowly filled up by startups offering hefty packages."

TV Mohandas Pai, chairman of Manipal Global Education and board member at Infosys, said IITs should adopt a hands-off approach on placements. "The students should vote, maybe under the guidance of the faculty, to decide on who should come to the campus. Faculty should no way intervene or restrict choices of students," he said.

NP Padhy, IIT Roorkee professor-in-charge of placement, would not agree. "The placement problem cannot be resolved by the students as they are not accountable," he said.

Students are divided on the issue. A student representative of IIT Kharagpur said startups are still a favourite of most students. "But placements will be difficult for the students to handle as we all struggle with academics," he said.

Startups, however, have had some issues at IIT placements. Zomato has been blacklisted from IIT campuses for a year because its founder Deepinder Goyal lashed out at the placement procedure after IIT Delhi denied his firm a Day 1 slot in last year's placement.

Smriti Irani supports students' demand for night canteen at IIT-Gandhinagar, suggests 'anda paratha'

At the end of her address where IIT Kharagpur had a virtual presence, she said, "Let me tell IIT-Kharagpur that the next time you visit IIT-Gandhinagar please go and have anda paratha at the students' canteen."

<http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/ahmedabad/smriti-irani-supports-students-demand-for-night-canteen-at-iit-gandhinagar-suggests-anda-paratha/>

AT THE inauguration of the Union HRD ministry's much-acclaimed project GIAN (Global Initiative on Academic Network) at the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, its minister Smriti Irani politely but smartly declined Gujarat Education Minister's Bhupendrasinh Chudasama's demands for the state. Instead, she backed IIT-Gn students' demand for an overnight canteen at the newly-constructed campus and said she would recommend other IIT students to have its "anda paratha".

At the end of her address where IIT Kharagpur had a virtual presence, she said, "Let me tell IIT-Kharagpur that the next time you visit IIT-Gandhinagar please go and have anda paratha at the students' canteen."

Responding to the minister's requests, who had repeatedly addressed her as "sister", of giving something during her visit to the state and IIT-Gn campus, Irani said, "It is a strange thing when Bhupendrabhai said that I have to give something. Every brother present here knows that a sister only takes and never give anything. This would be a strange trend in Gujarat being a brother and that too an elder brother."

Chudasama, while addressing the student, said: "When she entered the compound she was very happy with the aura and atmosphere. I feel that through this event she is going to give us something else too... We had a request of IIIT in Surat. Just Before she reached here she called me up and said we have given IIIT to Surat. When the education minister is from Gujarat and the Prime Minister also from Gujarat then we do not lack anything. I request Sudhir ji to inform me about any other request he had."

Taking IIT-GN director Sudhir Jain too in her response, Irani said he was "very excited and applauding" on Bhupendrasinh's requests. She said, "Sudhirji, I tell you that if you want anything, I publicly announce that I support students demand for an overnight canteen on the campus."

What is GIAN?

Under project GIAN or Global Initiative on Academic Network, institutes of higher education will host guest lectures by internationally and nationally renowned experts and evolve a comprehensive Faculty Development Programme.

The project was launched with two 10-day-long courses — 3D Digitization for Cultural Heritage at IIT-Gandhinagar, and Orthopaedic Biomechanics: Implants and Biomaterials at IIT-Kharagpur. These are two of the 201 courses approved under GIAN from 488 courses proposed by different higher education institutes, which include 31 state universities, 94 central universities, 5 management institutes and 7 AICTE engineering colleges.

MHRD has allocated Rs 35 crore for GIAN in the current financial year.

Under the scheme, 500 international faculty will be engaged this academic year and 1,000 in subsequent years. Nearly 200 Indian institutes will host GIAN courses this year. This number will grow to 500 institutes in the following years.

The long term goals of GIAN, include sharing of academic credits, availability of content through a National Digital Library, and forging academic and research collaborations.

- See more at: <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/ahmedabad/smriti-irani-supports-students-demand-for-night-canteen-at-iit-gandhinagar-suggests-anda-paratha/#sthash.OaCvA3Iu.dpuf>

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सर्वे का नतीजा IIT, IIM, NIT सहित 810 प्रमुख संस्थानों में से केवल 54 में महिलाएं लीडरशिप पोजीशन पर मौजूद

महिलाओं को लीडरशिप रोल देने में नामचीन शिक्षा संस्थान फिसड़ी



भारत के उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों में बड़े प्रशासनिक पदों पर महिलाओं की संख्या बेहद कम है। यह बात आईआईटी और आईआईएम सहित 810 संस्थानों के सर्वे में सामने आई है। ऐसे 810 संस्थानों में से महज 54 में महिलाएं नेतृत्व दे सकने लायक पदों पर हैं। यह 6.67% का आंकड़ा हुआ, जो अमेरिका (18%), ऑस्ट्रेलिया (21%) और ब्रिटेन (17%) से बेहद कम है।

भारतीय उच्च शिक्षा व्यवस्था में जेडर डायफरेंसिटी पर स्टैटिस्टिक मैनेजमेंट कंसल्टिंग फर्म एगुराइन एडवाइजरी ग्रुप ने ओ रिपोर्ट तैयार की, उससे पता चलता है कि किसी भी आईआईटी या आईआईएम में महिला डायरेक्टर नहीं हैं। सभी सत आल इंडिया इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ मेडिकल साइंसेज (एम्स), 31 नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी (एनआईटी) और छह इंडियन इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ साइंस एंज्नेरिंग रिसर्च (आईआईएसईआर) की बात करें तो केवल एनआईटी, पुडुचेरी में एक महिला डायरेक्टर हैं। सभी आईआईटी, एनआईटी, आईआईएसईआर और एम्स को मिलाकर नेतृत्व वाले पदों पर महिलाओं का अनुपात 5.47% है यानी डायरेक्टर लेवल के 73 पदों में से केवल चार पर महिलाएं हैं।

सर्वे में शामिल संस्थानों में राज्यों की प्राइवेट यूनिवर्सिटीज में लीडरशिप पोजीशन पर महिलाओं की संख्या सबसे कम रही। ऐसी 222 यूनिवर्सिटीज में से केवल 8 में महिलाएं लीडरशिप पोजीशन पर (3.6%) हैं। 126 डॉम्ब यूनिवर्सिटीज में से केवल 9 में लीडरशिप पोजीशन पर महिलाएं हैं, 325 स्टेट यूनिवर्सिटीज में से केवल 28 में ऐसी स्थिति है। केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालयों में

टाप पदों पर महिलाओं का प्रतिनिधित्व सबसे ज्यादा रहा और 9.8% विश्वविद्यालयों यानी 51 में से पांच का नेतृत्व महिलाओं के हाथ में है।

कयोकोन की सीएमडी किरण मजूमदार शां ने कहा, 'समाज में महिलाओं के खिलाफ माहौल बरकरार है।' शां एकमात्र महिला हैं, जो आईआईएम-बंगलुरु में बोर्ड ऑफ गवर्नर्स की चेयरपर्सन हैं। उन्होंने कहा, 'यह समस्या इसलिए और बढ़ जा रही है कि अब भी ऐसी तमाम महिलाएं हैं, जो टॉपम दर्जे की भूमिकाओं को स्वीकार कर ले रही हैं। उन्हें दबाव बढ़ाना चाहिए।'

शां ने कहा कि आईआईटी और आईआईएम में डायरेक्टर के पद के लिए बेहद कम महिलाएं अप्लाई करती हैं।

अमेरिका में महिलाओं की लीडरशिप पोजीशन 18% और ऑस्ट्रेलिया में 21%