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IITs may compete as single unit for place in global rankings

Press Trust of India

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All the 13 IITs may compete as a single unit at the global level for a place among the best in the global ranking list.

Giving an indication in this regard, Higher Education Secretary Ashok Thakur said the idea is to position the IITs as a single unit much like the IIT brand which has become an entity in itself for finding a place among the top three best institutes the world over.

International ranking agencies such as Times Higher Education and QS World University Ranking would be informed accordingly, he said.

Central universities and other institutes could follow on how the IITs position themselves in the ranking list, he said.

Thakur's comments came after a "retreat" of the IIT directors here today attended by HRD Minister M.M. Pallam Raju and some other PSU heads.

Thus far, none of the

Indian institutes feature among the top 100 in the world ranking.

Panjab University is the highest ranked Indian institution clubbed in the group of universities, ranked between 226-250, by Times in its latest report.

The absence of the IITs in the global ranking list has been a matter of intense debate in various forums despite their academic reputations. President Pranab Mukherjee too has expressed concern over these institutes not featuring in the top league.

NODAL TEACHERS

Thakur had earlier said that nodal professors will be engaged by IITs to coordinate with international ranking agencies to help place the country's institutes among the best.

The standing committee of IITs has also constituted a committee to guide the IITs and other institutes as well on improving their rankings.

Indian Express ND 17/01/2014 P-6

COMBINED MIGHT

INCREASINGLY sensitive to global academic rankings repeatedly showing Indian institutions in rather unflattering light, the Union Human Resource Development Ministry has come up with a bright idea. With top notch institutes like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) also now trailing behind, the government is now toying with the idea of having them compete as a single entity — representing the 15 institutes. Confident that the combined might of the IITs will fetch them high scores, the ministry is strongly advocating the idea which was even taken up at a meeting minister Pallam Raju held with all IIT Directors on Thursday.

IITs may compete as unit for rankings

New Delhi: All the 13 IITs may compete as a single unit at the global level for a place among the best in the global ranking list. Giving an indication in this regard, higher education secretary Ashok Thakur said the idea is to position the IITs as a single unit much like the IIT brand which has become an entity in itself for finding a place among the top three best institutes the world-over. International ranking agencies such as Times Higher Education and QS World University Ranking would be informed accordingly, he said. Central universities and other institutes could follow on how the IITs position themselves in the ranking list, he said. — PTI

IITs to pool resources to raise global rankings

BY PRASHANT K. NANDA
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NEW DELHI

Much like students who swot, plan and work for years towards gaining admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the 16 engineering schools themselves have pooled their resources to ensure a high ranking for brand IIT in global education rankings.

The plan was midwived by the ministry of human resource development, presumably stung by the absence or poor position of the IITs, globally recognized as top engineering schools, in all international rankings. The ministry is convinced the plan will catapult the IITs, which will participate in the ranking exercise as one entity, into the Top 10.

"All IITs will go as a single entity, and we believe that it will bring them to top 10 ranks globally," higher education secretary Ashok Thakur said after the meeting with the IITs. Thakur said that their poor ranking dents the image of India overseas.

According to the UK-based Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings of 2013, there is no Indian university in the top 200 institutions in the world. The US has 77 in the top 200 and the UK, 31. Five Indian institutions are in the top 400, including four IITs.

Currently, the IITs don't participate in rankings and global agencies rank them based on the data available on their websites.

As part of the new proactive process of participation, the IITs will set up chairs (dedicated professors and officers) in charge of the work, Thakur explained. They will tabulate all types of data including that on research, placement, patents applied for and issued, consulting work, and other achievements, and submit these to global ranking agencies.

The government is also taking the help of two higher education ranking agencies, THE and QS (both from the UK), to train the chairs at the IITs on how to go about formally participating in the world ranking. "We will have a workshop of nodal professors with ranking agencies on how to present themselves. IIT Delhi has already set up a committee and all others will set up committees soon," Thakur said.

Once successful, other central government-funded institutions will follow the IIT model, the secretary said.

"All central funded institutions such as the NITs (National Institutes of Technology) and central universities, will have nodal professors whose responsibility will be to provide up-to-date data about the institute. We will also tell others through the UGC (University Grant Commission) to do the same. Unless you give complete data, then the true picture will not come," said another senior officer at the human resource development ministry, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Thakur also said that his ministry is in touch with THE to bring out an India-specific ranking for top institutions.

वैश्विक वरीयता सूची में जगह बनाएंगे आईआईटी

नई दिल्ली (एजेसी)। वैश्विक शिक्षण संस्थानों की वरीयता सूची में सर्वश्रेष्ठ संस्थानों में जगह पाने की दौड़ में देश के सभी 13 भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) एक संस्था के तौर पर शामिल हो सकते हैं।

उच्च शिक्षा सचिव अशोक ठाकुर का यह बयान बृहस्पतिवार को यहां आईआईटी निदेशकों के 'रिट्रीट' के बाद आया है जिसमें मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री एमएम पल्लम राजू भी उपस्थित थे। ठाकुर ने कहा कि आईआईटी को एक इकाई संस्था के तौर पर आईआईटी ब्रांड की तरह रखने का विचार है जो दुनियाभर के तीन शीर्ष सर्वश्रेष्ठ संस्थानों के बीच जगह पाने की कतार में है। उन्होंने



■ सभी आईआईटी एक संस्था के तौर पर हो सकते हैं दावेदार

कहा कि टाइम्स हायर एजुकेशन और क्यूएस वर्ल्ड यूनिवर्सिटी रैंकिंग जैसी अंतरराष्ट्रीय रेटिंग एजेंसियों को इसी अनुसार सूचित किया जाएगा। ठाकुर ने बताया कि आईआईटी संस्थान वरीयता सूची में किस तरह रहते हैं, उसी तर्ज पर केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय और अन्य संस्थान भी तय कर सकते हैं।

गौरतलब है कि अभी तक दुनिया के 100 शीर्ष संस्थानों में भारत का कोई भी संस्थान नहीं आता। आईआईटी संस्थानों की अकादमिक साख के बावजूद दुनिया के सर्वश्रेष्ठ संस्थानों में उनका शुमार न होना हमेशा से बहस का विषय रहा है। राष्ट्रपति प्रणब मुखर्जी भी इन संस्थानों के सर्वश्रेष्ठ शिक्षण संस्थानों की सूची में शामिल न होने पर चिंता जता चुके हैं।

Hindu ND 17/01/2014 P-13

IITs to collaborate with companies, increase intake of foreign students

Anita Joshua

NEW DELHI: Eager to make a mark on international ranking lists for educational institutions, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) on Thursday decided to step up inter-disciplinary research collaborations tailored to meet the national development agenda and open the premier engineering institutions to more foreign students at the post-graduate and research levels.

This was agreed at a retreat of IIT Directors, hosted by the Union Human Resource Development Ministry, which was also attended by senior heads of public sector undertakings like Oil & Natural Gas Corporation and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd, besides the Indian Council of Medical Research.

In advocating greater intake of foreign students, the IITs see a double-advantage. First, it will help internationalise IITs. As per the report of the IIT Ranking Committee — which was presented and accepted at the Retreat — IITs are “weak, almost nowhere, on internationalisation” as per the criterion of

- **IITs are weak, almost nowhere internationally, finds panel**

- **New steps aimed at increasing visibility of IITs globally**

the ranking agencies.

Like their own alumni who have returned from foreign universities to work in India but continue to fondly recall their campus days overseas, the hope is that foreign students of IITs would become IIT brand ambassadors.

Indigenous equipment

As for collaborations, a pan-IIT approach would be adopted both with the various PSUs and ICMR. In the case of ICMR, the effort would be to develop surgical implements in India to contain the cost of treatment. More than the monopoly that some international companies have over surgical implements, a bigger issue pertains to mindset. With some IITs having already begun work on this front, the directors said that many an

Indian doctor was reluctant to use indigenously developed implements on the premise that lives are at stake.

As for ONGC and BHEL, it was decided that workshops would be organised to help identify requirements of the two specific industries. According to officials, ONGC has indicated interest in increasing research investment in IITs to have these institutions as “research referral units” for the oil company. Again, the effort would be to adopt a pan-IIT approach so that ONGC does not have to scout for which IIT is best positioned for collaboration in a particular field.

Design schools

Also, the IITs have decided to set up design schools “to develop a design spine in engineering education.” As per a concept note, this would be done by not just making design an autonomous field of education by establishing centres or departments for design in IITs but also ensuring that design thinking percolates into other areas of expertise.

HT Mumbai

IIT-B alumni announce scholarship for juniors

MUMBAI: The 1964 batch of students of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, on the occasion of their golden jubilee celebrations, announced a scholarship fund, under which the needy but meritorious students of the institute will be provided a one-time financial assistance of Rs50,000 for buying equipment they may require for their studies at the institute. **HTC**

Delhi govt seeks nominations for governing bodies of colleges

NEW DELHI: Delhi government will invite nominations for appointment of five members in the governing bodies of 28 colleges funded by it or affiliated to Delhi University unlike earlier when it chose them directly.

The nominations would be sought by public advertisement appealing prominent academicians, persons of repute to recommend names of persons who have background in financial, administration or persons of exemplary administrative acumen or alumni of the institutions or persons of repute who have been asso-



ciated with premier institutions of higher education, education minister Manish Sisodia said.

The government will also write to heads of pre-

mier institutions of the country, like IITs and IIMs urging them to nominate people who can contribute to the better management of educational institutions located in Delhi so that they emerge as centre of excellence in times to come, he said.

“Till now government used to appointment five persons of its choice in these governing bodies without properly checking their background and their contributions. It created discretion and there was no transparency,” Sisodia alleged.

Hindustan Times ND 17/01/2014 P-16

Candidates demand re-evaluation of CAT scores, may move court

Vanita Srivastava

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NEW DELHI: A day after the declaration of the Common Admission Test (CAT) 2013 results, thousands of candidates have alleged wrong evaluation.

An online petition has got more than 2,000 signatures where candidates have sought re-evaluation with some even threatening to take a legal course.

A similar social media page on Facebook—CAT 2013 discrepancy—has more than 1,100 members. The CAT results are used for admission to the IIMs and many business schools.

“Most of us have filed RTI asking the normalisation method used and answers to various questions answered by test takers. We will first look for an amicable way but if it does not work, then we have to file a petition in court,” Leel Abhishek, who started the online petition told HT.

“There are technical glitches this time,” he said.

“The normalisation process

➤ MOST OF US HAVE FILED AN RTI ASKING THE NORMALISATION METHOD USED AND ANSWERS TO VARIOUS QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY TEST TAKERS.

LEEL ABHISHEK, online petitioner

is flawed. There should be more transparency. We get to know only our scaled score, whereas we should know our raw score as well,” says another petitioner.

“An unexpected score in any of the two sections, mostly in verbal, was seen by test takers. These are the people who scored 99 percentile in quantitative aptitude but a meagre 20 something in the verbal section and some of them have got unexpected score in quantitative section as well.”

Dr Rohit Kapoor convenor of CAT 2013 told HT: “We have received the complaints and are replying to them individually.”

Hindustan ND 17/01/2014 P-15

अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी ने किया महत्वाकांक्षी योजना का खुलासा

सबसे बड़ा रॉकेट बना रही नासा

लंदन | एजेंसियां

अमेरिका की राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी नासा अब तक का सबसे बड़ा रॉकेट बनाने की योजनाओं पर काम कर रही है। यह रॉकेट इनसान को मंगल ग्रह पर ले जाएगा। नासा ने खुद यह खुलासा किया है। नासा के प्रस्तावित विशालतम रॉकेट के सामने चांद पर इनसान को ले जाने वाले रॉकेट बौने साबित होंगे।

प्रस्तावित रॉकेट मंगल ग्रह पर मानवयुक्त अभियान को साकार करने की दिशा में महत्वपूर्ण कदम होगा। नासा ने बुधवार को अपने 'स्पेस लांच

स्पेस लांच सिस्टम	छोटा संस्करण	बड़ा संस्करण
 <p>इस प्रस्तावित रॉकेट के दो संस्करण होंगे</p>	<p>70 मीट्रिक टन भार प्रक्षेपित करने में होगा सक्षम</p> <p>321 फीट लंबा होगा नासा द्वारा तैयार छोटा राकेट</p>	<p>130 मीट्रिक टन भार प्रक्षेपित करने में होगा सक्षम</p> <p>384 फीट लंबा होगा यह राकेट</p>
<p>सितारों का सपना</p>	<p>● वर्ष 2017 में प्रस्तावित स्पेस लांच सिस्टम का होगा पहला प्रक्षेपण परीक्षण ● यह इनसान को चांद पर ले जाने वाले सैटर्न रॉकेटों से कई गुना बड़ा होगा</p>	

सिस्टम' की कई रोमांचक तस्वीरें सार्वजनिक कीं जो कक्षा में 130 टन भार उठाने में सक्षम होगा। उम्मीद है कि

इनसान को मंगल ग्रह पर ले जाने में इसकी भूमिका होगी। पहली बार 2017 में उड़ान भरने की संभावना है।

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Panel that stripped 44 varsities of top tag quits

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: The P N Tandon Committee which reviewed 126 deemed universities in 2009 and found 44 of them unfit to have deemed university status has resigned.

The committee had categorized deemed universities into three groups. Group A with 38 was found fit to retain deemed university status, another 44 in group B were found lacking in certain parameters and were given three years to make up for the deficiencies. Group C consisted of 44 deemed varsities. The panel felt these institutions could not redeem themselves and hence did not deserve deemed university status. Group C universities have challenged the Tandon Committee report in the Supreme Court.

According to sources, the committee consisting of Tandon, Goverdhan Mehta, M Anandakrishnan and Mrinal Miri told the HRD ministry that it had been functioning for a long time and would like to resign. However, HRD ministry sources said the resignation is yet to be accepted. "We will try to convince Mr Tandon and others to rethink their decision. They have made impeccable contribution," a ministry official said.

For the full report, log on to www.timesofindia.com

HT Kolkata

Open the windows for Indian universities

C Raj Kumar

Indian universities need fundamental reforms that will infuse dynamism and a renewed sense of purpose and to do that we need to re-examine the existing institutional structures, the regulatory processes and the governance paradigm of our universities. The single most important fact that distinguishes all great universities from the mediocre institutions is the quality of its faculty. Most Indian universities are ill-prepared to respond to the crisis of mediocrity that is institutionalised in the existing institutions. Even though this problem is universally acknowledged, no serious effort has been put in place to address this issue.

One of the most important reasons for not a single Indian university featuring among the top 200 in the world is that

our universities do not adequately contribute to research, knowledge creation, publications and the resultant citations. Research in any discipline requires significant funding and institutional support. But more importantly, it needs an environment that promotes a culture of research and creates opportunities for faculty to be inspired by each other's work and contribution.

The entire university system in India is based upon a command and control system that at every stage there is a multilayered, bureaucratic, government-led regulatory structure that not only controls, but also scuttles the freedom and liberty of academic institutions. This needs to change. The basic framework of most, if not all regulations in the Indian university system is based upon a deep and pervasive distrust that prevails across the regula-

tory bodies for the university administration and the faculty. Universities are expected to be dynamic institutions where new ideas get tested, mistakes made and lessons learnt. This process of learning and constantly reinventing is not possible, if regulations are made with the purpose of exercising controls leading to obstacles and hindrances for institution building.

The only way for Indian universities to change is to give more autonomy, independence and freedom so that they can find their own institutional space within India. Promoting excellence in Indian universities is not just a goal that is worthy of pursuing, but it is a policy imperative that needs to be achieved, if we are to harness the demographic dividend.

*C Raj Kumar is founding vice-chancellor,
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The views expressed by the author are personal

HT Delhi

Number of Indian students in UK varsities plunges by 50% in 2 yrs

Prasun Sonwalkar

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LONDON: The number of Indian students enrolling at British universities has dropped by nearly 50% in two years, rattling ministers and university officials who have been trying hard to overcome negative perceptions abroad about recent changes to the student visa system.

Decline in number of Indian students that started in 2011-12 has continued in the last academic year (2012-13), leading to a record 25% reduction overall, according to figures released by Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

The overall reduction in the number of Indian students — graduate and postgraduate — is

25%, but the drop is sharper in the case of those enrolling on first-year degree courses, which has almost halved in two years, from 23,985 in 2010-11 to 12,280 in 2012-13.

The figures reveal that India remains the second highest source of international students at British higher education institutions, after China, but the numbers have continued on a downward spiral since the 2011-12 academic year.

The overall figures of Indian students (graduate, postgraduate) at British universities in last three academic years are: 39,090 in 2010-11, 29,900 in 2011-12 and 22,385 in 2012-13, which amounts to a record 25% reduction.

The drop is likely to exacerbate the frustration of vice-chancellors

and other stakeholders who had warned of such a scenario for the last two years, amidst an increasingly competitive international market, and continuing efforts by the David Cameron government to cut immigration.

The consistent reduction in Indian students is mainly attributed to the scrapping of the post-study visa in 2012, which was popular among self-financing Indian students, who used it to recover some of the costs of their study by taking up jobs for two years after completing their course.

The steep fall in the value of rupee in the last six months is also expected to have contributed to lesser number of Indian students coming to the UK.

Deccan Herald

Hydrogen is fuel of future, says IISc professor

“As the major portion of the fossil fuels that we have been depending upon now will exhaust in the next 30 or 40 years, we have to look for alternatives. In this context, Hydrogen will be the fuel of future. But how do you produce, store and transport hydrogen in large scales is the million dollar question. Chemists worldwide are trying to find an answer to this,” said IISc (Bangalore) Honorary Professor (dept of organic chemistry), **Dr Srinivasan Chandrasekharan.**

He was delivering his inaugural address at a two-day national seminar on ‘Modern methods in chemistry,’ organised by Department of Chemistry, St Aloysius college here on Thursday.

Dr Chandrasekharan said that chemistry is partly responsible for the pollution worldwide. Hence, chemistry needs to be different from what it has been till now. Here comes the concept of ‘green chemistry’ or safe chemistry. Green chemistry means the same chemistry but doing the experiment or producing chemicals in a different way. A way less harmful to the environment, he stressed. “For example, if we are replacing harmful or toxic solvents with less toxic ones, we can make a change,” he explained.

The IISc professor called upon chemistry teachers to inculcate the message of green chemistry among the students right from the beginning to do away with the negative ‘pollutant’ image of chemistry which is rampant in society.

He noted that handling the need for energy and eco-concern would be the main challenges before chemistry tomorrow.

College Principal Fr Swebert D'Silva presided over. Vice Principal Ronald Pinto, Rajgopal Bhat and Richard Gonsalves among others also spoke.