

Newspaper Clips **March 31- April 3, 2017**

April 3

Teacher's question delay in 7th Pay Commission publication, threaten nationwide stir on April 19

<http://www.india.com/education/teachers-question-delay-in-7th-pay-commission-publication-threaten-nationwide-stir-on-april-19-1987181/>

University and College Teachers are upset about delay in official publication of UGC Recommendations for the 7th Pay Commission and have approached HRD Ministry.



The 7th Pay Commission continues to be the largest attraction with the working service class of the country. However, the ongoing secrecy and delays has created a strong discontent. More so within the teaching community. The University and College Teachers yesterday approached the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry regarding the delay in publications of the recommendations submitted by the University Grants Commission in regards the UGC's Seventh Pay Review Committee recommendation. The teacher's body is really upset about the same and have threatened to call a nationwide stir on April 19 to protest the same.

The teachers have approached the HRD Ministry questioning the secrecy. The spokesperson and President of The All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Association (AIFUCTO), Kesab Bhattacharya, has written to the HRD demanding a meeting with the office to further discuss the recommendations suggesting that the UGC has already made these recommendations in the month of February. Accordingly, AIFUCTO has requested that the recommendations be made public at the earliest. Failing the same, the President has threatened a nationwide agitation on April 19, 2017.

AIFUCTO President Kesab Bhattacharya added, "The unprecedented secrecy on the report by the government is creating a great confusion among the teachers fraternity of university and colleges of the country." Keeping in view the same, the body has asked HRD to invite them for a discussion over the issue to avoid further precipitation of the issue.

The teacher's are still waiting for the recommendations and understanding of how the implementation of the 7th pay commission would affect their monthly salaries.

IIT-Kgp page-turner: Free library of 65 lakh books (and counting)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/iit-kgp-page-turner-free-library-of-65-lakh-books-and-counting/articleshow/57980996.cms>

If you own a smartphone, you probably have a tonne of apps for work and play. Now, IIT Kharagpur has developed an app that will bring the world's knowledge at your fingertips. The country's premier tech institute has launched a mobile app that brings as many as 65 lakh books, journals, periodicals and research materials — not just to students, but to anyone who has a smartphone.

The ministry of human resources development had entrusted IIT-Kgp with the ambitious project of setting up the National Digital Library (NDL), currently the country's largest library repository. NDL started as a pilot project in April 2015. From a humble beginning through a PC to demonstrate the proof of concept, it is now on its way to becoming a full-blown digital library and generating a movement of making educational contents available to the entire nation at its fingertips. The library is inclusive and open for use by anybody who registers, completely free of cost.

As of now, the app is just meant for Android users, though an iPhone version is coming soon. Launched a month ago, the app has already been downloaded 1,00,000 times from Google's Play Store and has received a lot of encouraging comments and suggestions from users.

Some significant contents available on the repository are NCERT textbooks, textbooks of eight state education boards, JEE, GATE and UPSC question papers, NPTEL and spoken tutorials, papers/theses from IISc, ISI, 9 IITs, two IIMs and three IISERs, publications from eight laboratories of CSIR, publications from two laboratories of ICAR and Krishikosh, IEEE, PubMed, LibriVox (audio books), South Asia Archive, World e-Book Library, OECD, INFLIBNET, Satyajit Ray Society and many more.

NDL has also collaborated with Europeana (The Umbrella Library of Europe for Culture & Museum). There was an initiative called Digital Library of India, which was started more than 12 years back with a charter to digitize one million rights-free books and make them available. This has also been integrated in NDL.

"NDL has launched its Android app and is on its way to launch an app for Apple soon," said Partha Pratim Das, a senior faculty member and co-ordinator for the NDL app project. Schools and colleges can go for institutional registration, wherein a nominated person of the institution, called 'Institutional Nodal Person' can collect the details of students, teachers and non-teaching staff of the institution and get them registered in bulk on the web client, ndl.iitkgp.ac.in. On approval of the application by the NDL team, the institutional nodal person shall get e-mail intimation. The institutional nodal person can then register students, teachers and non-teaching staff of the institution, Das explained.

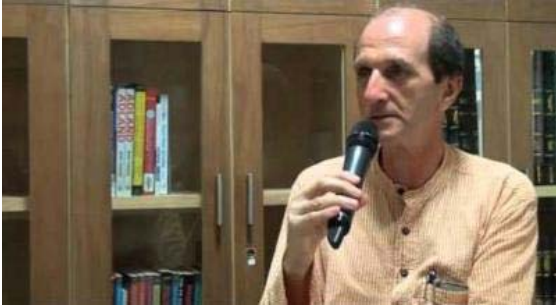
The repository can be accessed from anywhere in the world through the app or web versions. The app has features to search, browse, filter, tag, comment and view metadata. The desktop/laptop version — which already has 9 lakh users — is also enabled with an 'Advanced Search' feature.

"With the exponential growth in mobile usage, the NDL app will enable access to rich digital content of libraries across the country and even foreign repositories to users even in the remotest of areas, which is unique not just in the Indian, but also in the global context. The world has never seen a digital repository like NDL, which is focused on education,"

said P P Chakraborty, director of the institute. "NDL integrates contents of any domain as long as the content has some learning value to somebody. The NDL team is also conducting a lot of cutting-edge research in natural language processing, machine learning, search technologies, metadata engineering, experience tracking and data analytics to provide state-of-the-art facilities to users," he added.

IIT-Gn Professor receives Padma Shri award

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/iit-gn-prof-receives-padma-shri-award/articleshow/57979888.cms>



President of India, Pranab Mukherjee, presented Padma Shri award to guest faculty at Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, (IIT-Gn) Professor Michel Danino at the Civil Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on March 30.

The fourth highest civilian award in India was given to Danino, a French-born Indian citizen, for his contribution towards literature and education. Danino said: "While I feel deeply honoured, the award has also evoked in me a stronger feeling of responsibility and commitment to contributing to what I have been pursuing in the last 40 years."

Danino has been a guest professor at the IIT-Gn since 2011, where he has been teaching courses which give a broad panorama of Indian culture and civilization. He played a key role in establishing the Archaeological Sciences Centre at the IIT-Gn.

April 2

Hindi Cell to support groups: Suicide attempt shakes IIT-Delhi

<http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/hindi-cell-to-support-groups-suicide-attempt-shakes-iit-delhi-4595760/>

Director V Ramgopal Rao said the institute is taking many measures to deal with the issue,



In light of the attempted suicide by a first year Engineering student of IIT-Delhi, the Director of the institute has written an email to all students. In it, he says that the incident should “shake all our conscience from slumber” and that there was a need to “collectively address the problem” and “build a support system” for students. Talking to The Sunday Express, Director V Ramgopal Rao said the institute is taking many measures to deal with the issue, including activating the Hindi Cell to help students from the Hindi-speaking belt.

“The student is now stable and the institute is closely monitoring the situation. However, this incident should shake all our conscience from slumber... We are putting in place mechanisms to proactively reach out to students based on their performance in academics and attendance. For example, parents of this particular student were called to IIT-D just a few months ago and were apprised of the issues their child was facing. The Timble attendance system is also a step in this direction. But this is not sufficient,” he wrote in his mail.

“We need to collectively address the problem and build a support system... When you see someone in depression, or see something wrong in what one is doing, please do let the administration know,” he wrote. Rao said Timble was an app started by faculty members. “It’s a mobile phone-based attendance system. So when students enter the class, their mobile phones are registered. It shows their face at the start of the class, and also at the end. So it won’t work if students are not within a certain circle,” he said.

“We’re also making counselling compulsory for certain students who are not doing well, and making peer groups through which students can help each other,” he said.

Main tomorrow, over 10.2 lakh students to appear in IIT-JEE exam

<http://indianexpress.com/article/education/main-tomorrow-over-10-2-lakh-students-to-appear-in-iit-jee-exam-4595738/>

The exam is being conducted at 1,781 centres in 109 cities.

Over 10.2 lakh students will appear for the Joint Entrance Examination-Main (JEE-M) at 1,781 centres across the country on Sunday for admission in engineering colleges, including the IITs.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) conducts JEE-M, an all-India level engineering entrance for admission into IITs, NITs, IIITs, deemed universities and other Centrally Funded Technical Institutes (CFTI).

The exam is being conducted at 1,781 centres in 109 cities.

JEE-M is conducted in two parts- Paper I and Paper II.

Paper-I (BE/B Tech) will be conducted in both computer-based (online) and paper-pen (offline) mode while Paper II (B Arch/B Planning) will be conducted in pen-paper mode only.

Candidates who want to appear for JEE-Advanced 2017 will have to clear the JEE-M test first.

The HRD Ministry has notified two changes in the JEE pattern for 2017.

There shall be no weightage for class 12 marks in calculating the ranks in the JEE (Main) examination.

For the candidates to qualify for IITs/NITs/IITs and such other CFTIs whose admissions are based on the JEE (Advanced) /JEE(Main) ranks, they should secure at least 75 per cent marks in class 12 exams, or be in the top 20 percentile.

For SC/ST students, the qualifying marks would be 65 per cent in the class 12 examination.

NITI Aayog for autonomy to scientific, research bodies

<http://www.millenniumpost.in/business/niti-aayog-for-autonomy-to-scientific-research-bodies-234519>

Top organisations such as Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will be given more autonomy in academic, administrative and financial matters, he said.

Government think tank NITI Aayog is preparing a Cabinet note on providing autonomy to science institutes so that they have a free hand in undertaking research and inducting experts at market salaries. "NITI Aayog is preparing a final Cabinet note for providing autonomy and flexibility to science departments and research institutions," a senior government official told PTI. Top organisations such as Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will be given more autonomy in academic, administrative and financial matters, he said. "These institutions will also be able to take a call on faculty hiring (including foreign teachers), salaries etc," the official added. The proposal is aimed at providing adequate autonomy to them so that they can go in for high level research which, at times, may not show immediate result. India spends about 1 per cent of its GDP on research and development. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had allocated Rs 37,435 crore in 2017-18 budget for scientific ministries. Jaitley in his 2016-17 Budget speech had said that regulatory architecture will be provided to 10 public and 10 private institutions to emerge as world-class teaching and research bodies. Higher Education Financing Agency will be set-up with initial capital base of Rs 1,000 crore, the minister had said.

April 1

IIT-B Collaborates with Next Education for two Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS)

<http://bwdisrupt.businessworld.in/article/IIT-B-Collaborates-with-Next-Education-for-two-Massive-Open-Online-Courses-MOOCs-/01-04-2017-115559/>

This course will provide an introduction to research-based and learner-centred pedagogies and expound on effective integration of ICT in school education.



Next Education India Pvt Ltd has collaborated with Indian Institute of Technology Bombay to offer two Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for teachers. The courses will commence on April 6, 2017. School teachers who aim to hone their skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are invited to register online for the courses. Both the courses will be taught by professors of IIT Bombay.

These courses, namely 'Pedagogy for effective use of ICT for school teachers' (MOOC1) and 'Pedagogy for effective use of ICT for computer science (CS) school teachers' (MOOC2) aim to help teachers tackle teaching-learning problems competently. Teachers who face myriad problems in addressing varying student interests and abilities, managing large classes, integrating digital tools in their lesson plan, using the right digital strategy for the right concept and so on, may apply for these courses.

Beas Dev Ralhan, CEO & Co-founder, Next Education India Pvt Ltd, said, "At Next Education, we firmly believe that teachers should be given formal training and right guidance to ensure the overall development of a child. Over the years of conducting teacher training and regular workshops, we have realised that there is a dire need to understand the effectiveness of technology than just implementing the new innovative methods of teaching. Through this association with one of the top institutions in India, we aim to fill the gaps in the teaching-learning ecosystem and expect to change the scenario for the better."

This course will provide an introduction to research-based and learner-centred pedagogies and expound on effective integration of ICT in school education. Participants will apply different strategies during the course to design materials and activities for topics in their own domain. The esteemed staff of IIT-B, namely Prof. Sahana Murthy, Prof. Sridhar Iyer, Prof. Gargi Banerjee and Prof. Jayakrishnan M will conduct the formal training and provide guidance to participants.

March 31

IITs Way Behind Top Two Universities in the World in Research; IISc Fares Better

<http://www.ndtv.com/education/iits-way-behind-top-two-universities-in-the-world-in-research-iisc-fares-better-1675839>

A computational analysis has revealed that even the best performing IITs, including the most coveted IIT Kharagpur and IIT Bombay are way far behind in research performance when compared to the two top ranking world universities, i.e. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT, USA) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU, Singapore). The study emphasized that for the IITs to feature among the top institute in the world a lot of effort and support was needed. The study was based on a computational analysis of research performance of 16 older Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). Currently there are a total of 23 IITs in the country.

As per reports in Press Trust of India, Vivek Kumar Singh, the study's lead author from the Department of Computer Science of the Banaras Hindu University said, "Of these two, NTU established in 1991 is younger than the five older IITs, which shows that the age of an institution alone does not necessarily matter for higher performance. If a new institution like NTU can achieve research performance levels to be included among top ranking world institutions, then why not some of the Indian IITs." He further added that IITs are still behind in research performance when compared to IISc (Indian Institute of Science).

In the study, research publication data indexed in Web of Science was analyzed. The data was examined to determine productivity, productivity per capita, rate of growth of research output, authorship and collaboration pattern, citation impact and discipline-wise research strength of the different IITs. The study noted that even though the IITs are the

premier institutes in the field of engineering and technology in the country, they do not rank high in the list of top universities in the world.

The first ever IIT was established in 1951 at Kharagpur, followed by IIT Bombay in 1958, IIT Madras in 1959, IIT Kanpur in 1959 and IIT Delhi in 1961. All these IITs were established through foreign collaboration. In 1961, the Parliament passed the Institutes of Technology act which declared these institutions as institutes of national importance.

Almost three decades later, IIT Guwahati was established in 1994 which was followed by conversion of Roorkee University to IIT Roorkee in 2001.

In the period between 2008-2012, nine more IITs were established at Bhubaneswar, Gandhinagar, Hyderabad, Jodhpur, Patna, Ropar, Indore, Mandi and Varanasi respectively. Then during 2015-16 seven more IITs were proposed at Palakkad, Tirupati, Dhanbad, Bhilai, Goa, Jammu and Dharwad.

Since the IITs were all established at different times, they were all grouped into three different groups. The 7 IITs which were at least 15 years old fell in one group, the 9 IITs established during 2008-2012 were grouped together, and in third group were the recent 7 IITs established during 2015-16. The study excluded the seven recent IITs.

The study found that there was considerable difference in research performance levels of old IITs and new IITs. Explaining the possible reason for this difference, Singh said, "This can be explained by the fact that new IITs are quite young for a research performance comparison with old IITs. Some new IITs, particularly the IITI (IIT-Indore) show promising research performance."

Another important conclusion from the study was that the major chunk of research at the IITs is being done in physics, chemistry and mathematics disciplines and the institutes lagged in research in engineering.

5 reasons why MIT is better than IIT

<http://www.businessinsider.in/5-reasons-why-mit-is-better-than-iit/articleshow/57916606.cms>

The Indian education system is far behind when compared to other countries. The top notch institutions such as IITs and IIMs lag behind institutes such as Harvard, MIT, Stanford, etc.

When we look at undergraduate programmes and compare US with India, there is a stark difference in teaching methodology, practical approach, brain storming, etc. Even though India is now stressing on innovation at college level and bringing out several initiatives, it will take a long time to reach the point where a Harvard or Stanford sits.

Anil K Gupta, Michael D. Dingman Chair in Strategy and Entrepreneurship, University of Maryland, had once stated institutions like MIT and Stanford, the technology power houses of the US, the undergraduate students that are coming out really don't do any research. There could be a rare example of an undergraduate student who does any research. They are there to take classes and do projects; they are not there to do fundamental projects.

It is when you look at the graduate programs, PHD programmes and faculty research, that's where there is a big difference between what happens at MIT, Stanford, Princeton, and Harvard versus what happens at IITs and IIMs. As a research institution, IIT still has a long way to go.

IIT-B wins global innovation challenge

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/iit-b-wins-global-innovation-challenge/article17746114.ece>

Institute wins funding for project on affordable Internet in rural areas

Mumbai: An IIT Bombay (IIT-B) project facilitating broadband access in rural India has won a worldwide Mozilla innovation challenge.

As part of the prize, the premier technical institute has won \$125,000 (₹82 lakh) in project funding.

The non-profit tech company unveiled its contest, titled, 'Equal rating Innovation Challenge' in October last year. With 100 project entries from 27 countries across the world, the challenge focused on creating innovative and scalable ideas to make the internet available to all.

The IIT-B project, 'Gram Marg Solution for Rural Broadband', along with four other projects from different countries, made it to the semi-finals in January. The final results were based on an online community voting in Brussels on Wednesday.

Gram Marg, which translates to 'rural roadmap', is the brainchild of Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Dean of Faculty Affairs and Dr. Sarbani Banerjee, Institute Chair Professor of Electrical Engineering at IIT-B. The project seeks to bring over 6 lakh Indian villages online, and involves using unused white space in the television spectrum.

Cost effective

The judges appreciated the IIT-B team for its innovation. "What impressed me particularly about Gram Marg was the fact that they were able to bring the cost of the technology for delivering broadband over the TV white space spectrum down to a fraction of the cost," said Nikhil Pahwa, one of the judges and co-founder of Savetheinternet.in.

Mr. Karandikar, with a team of five members, has been working on the project for over three years. The solution has been piloted in 25 villages so far, by using simple household items and rugged transmitters and receivers to connect villages in hilly areas. According to the researchers, Gram Marg can be used to make "frugal" 5G connections in rural India.

Prof. Karandikar said the team now has its sights set on improving the project's efficiency. He said the solution now has to be decentralised for a greater reach. "We've created a platform, and proved with our experiments that this technology can launch services like e-governance and education. It is now up to policy makers to take this forward."