

Newspaper Clips

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IITs tweaking seats for programmes in line with demand

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/services/education/iits-tweaking-seats-for-programmes-in-line-with-demand/articleshow/58523440.cms>

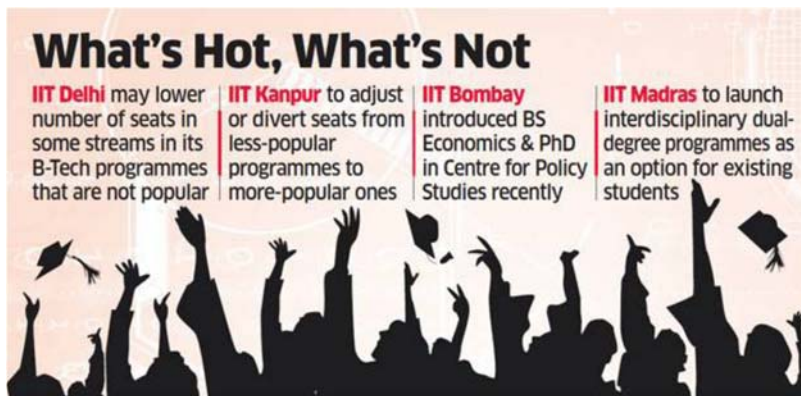
Some of the country's premier technology institutes are tweaking the number of students in some of their courses, and/or, introducing new or interdisciplinary programmes in keeping with a government directive to plan their courses based on popularity and employability.

Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Delhi and Kanpur, for example, plan to reduce the number of seats in unpopular courses and divert them to popular ones. The latter may even stop its nuclear engineering technology programme due to lack of interest from students.

"As the employment opportunities are limited under this programme, we are looking at merging this with mechanical engineering," said Manindra Agrawal, deputy director at IIT Kanpur. "A call would be taken soon on this," he said. "Another reason for merging this programme with mechanical engineering is the fact that we have not been able to get teaching faculty," Agrawal said.

IIT Kanpur is also reducing the number of seats in metallurgical engineering, which is not seen to be so popular, and offering as many seats in more popular programmes.

The ministry of human resources development (MHRD) recently told all centrally funded technical institutions, including IITs, to close centres and end courses that have seen a decline in the number of applicants in the past three years. The ministry also told them to introduce new courses and disciplines only after analysing market opportunity, employability and requirement of higher education.



IIT Delhi is considering lowering the number of seats in some streams in its BTech programmes that are currently not popular. However, the total number of seats under BTech at IIT Delhi would not reduce as the institute plans to increase seats in more popular programmes. "The popularity of a programme much depends on the employment prospects," said V Ramgopal Rao, director at IIT Delhi.

He said the institute does not plan to shut down any centre.

An IIT Bombay spokesperson said the issue of revision in seats allocation or closure of any discipline does not arise because all the seats get allotted in the joint counselling process. The institute is considering new programmes in line with government directive. It introduced BSc Economics and PhD in Centre for Policy Studies from the autumn session of 2017.

The proposal for new programmes is mooted by the programmes committee of a departments, which, in turn, is examined by the programmes committee of the institute for possible recommendation to the senate.

Senate takes the final decision. IIT Madras, too, does not plan to reduce the number of seats in any course or stream. It also has no immediate plans to introduce new programmes, said V Jagadeesh Kumar, dean (academic courses).

However, IIT Madras is introducing interdisciplinary dual degree programmes as an option for existing students to choose. "We also plan to start online MTech programmes for industry personnel," Kumar said.

IITs to develop knowledge hub for safety critical systems

<http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/kolkata-240115>

A networked knowledge and research centre aimed at safety and reliability of electronics and hardware will be launched at IIT Kharagpur, a statement said on Thursday. Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) in partnership with the Ministry of Railways, under its IMPRINT programme, is setting up FMSAFE, India's first knowledge centre on Formal Methods on Safety Critical Systems. The MHRD-supported IMPRINT is a Pan-IIT + IISc joint initiative to address the major science and engineering challenges in the country. Formal methods are a new genre of techniques which use logic based on Artificial Intelligence theories to prove the correctness of software and electronic systems before they are deployed in safety critical applications. A coordinated formal methods programme in India will help indigenous developers to aim for a high degree of safety assurance essential for global competence. "What will be needed is a deep understanding on what is safety critical in Indian operating contexts and developing design and validation practices accordingly. This is what the new centre aims to catalyse," said Pallab Dasgupta, who will lead the FMSAFE centre at IIT Kharagpur. The FMSAFE centre will function as a networked knowledge and research centre and students working on cutting edge projects under this centre will spend time at all three IITs. The centre will be led by Dasgupta from IIT Kharagpur along with Sandeep Shukla from IIT Kanpur and Supratik Chakraborty from IIT Bombay.

Education reforms: Why India should not get lost in 'high' fees issue

<http://www.financialexpress.com/education-2/education-reforms-why-india-should-not-get-lost-in-high-fees-issue/654700/>

In the case of the IITs, the plan has been to allow them to even decide on their own fees. A Bill for reforming medical education has been proposed by NITI Aayog and that is under consideration.

Periodic statements on the need to prevent private schools from overcharging students, apparently oblivious to the amount the government spends on its schools or the quality of teaching there, tend to overshadow the progress being made on education reform. So, for instance, while the issue of reservations is a serious one—and the government continues to try to impose it on the IIMs—the proposal to replace the IIM Council where the government was represented by a coordinating council which will have eminent people as members (apart from the IIM directors) is a good step; dropping the President from the Visitor, with powers to recommend administrative action, is also a good move. In the case of the IITs, the plan has been to allow them to even decide on their own fees. A Bill for reforming medical education has been proposed by NITI Aayog and that is under consideration.

While many committees have recommended restructuring of UGC and AICTE, in an interview to The Times of India, education minister Prakash Javadekar has said the government is set to roll out a graded autonomy framework—institutes that are graded higher would enjoy more autonomy, followed by the middle-rung ones, with the government regulating only the third rung of institutes. Also, the minister is also of the view that universities would have a limited role in regulating colleges, with institutes free to decide their curriculum, examination, and hiring of new teachers.

What this means is that while a Delhi University will be free to decide its own curriculum, within this, if a Lady Shri Ram or a Hindu College—both were graded 'A+'—want to offer their own curriculum, they can do so. The grading system, of course, will take time since while there are 799 universities, 39,071 colleges, and 11,923 stand-alone institutes, the accreditation agency NAAC still has a long way to go in completing grading. Sooner, rather than later, encouraging non-government ratings also has to be a priority.

Establishing a National Testing Agency which will ensure CBSE does not have to conduct four major entrance tests is a good idea—it conducts the JEE MAINS for engineering, NEET-UG for medical, UGC-NET for entry-level teaching jobs in universities & colleges and UGC-funded research fellowships, and CTET for school-level teaching jobs. But even if CBSE were to concentrate on only schools, it doesn't help—while CBSE had 11 lakh students for Class XII, UP alone had 26 lakh students registered for its state board exam—the result has been grade-inflation unrelated to student quality, especially in many state boards.

A good solution would be to encourage colleges/universities to opt for a national SAT-type test to decide on admissions. And, at some point, the minister has to acknowledge you can't create world-class institutions if you have a reservations policy. Without a solution to that, India's education-reform path will always be incomplete.

Top Varsities to Get More Autonomy: HRD Ministry

<http://examswatch.com/top-varsities-to-get-more-autonomy-hrd-ministry/>

In a bid to incentivise excellence in higher education, the government is considering plans to give full autonomy to top universities in framing the curriculum and hiring the faculty. The best institutions which have been consistently getting A grade or B+ grade by NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council), have been given more freedom of action. Middle level institutes will have 50% autonomy and the third level of institutes more regulation.

This is being done so that the varsities can excel further, scale to further heights and it will be a competition among the best institutes. It will also be a challenge for the middle level institutes to become better. The university will get 30 days to approve proposals of autonomous institutions affiliated to it. Also, it has been assured that the education will not become expensive. It would be reasonable. However, autonomy is about giving them academic freedom. Simply because no one wants that such institutions get stuck in Red Tapism.

The autonomous colleges, barring the degree awarded in the name of the university, have been given the freedom to decide every other aspect such as curriculum, conduct of examination, hire of professors or introduction of new courses. It was also informed that a major shift in policy is underway that is intended to incentivise research, innovation and quality learning.

Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar in an exclusive conversation told that the higher education regulators UGC and AICTE had become "stumbling blocks" which requires undergoing reformation. The idea is to do away with governmental or university-level interventions that hurt functioning of good institutions.

The ministry wants more autonomous colleges selected on merit based on NAAC rating and (National Institute of Ranking Framework) NIRF rankings. The specifics of how the plan for graded autonomy based on rankings will roll out have also been finalised. The decisions have been taken in line with reforms worked out for regulatory authorities like University Grants Commission and All India Council for Technical Education.

आईआईटी के प्रोफेसर के खिलाफ रिसर्चर से धोखाधड़ी का मुकदमा दर्ज

<http://www.livehindustan.com/news/merrut/article1-IIT-professor-named-for-cheating-case-against-researcher-813057.html>

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) रुड़की के सहारनपुर कैम्पस के प्रोफेसर के खिलाफ अपने ही रिसर्चर से धोखाधड़ी करने के आरोप में थाना सदर बाजार में मुकदमा दर्ज किया गया है। आरोप है कि प्रोफेसर ने रिसर्चर के शोधग्रंथ को लेकर अपने नाम से जर्मनी में किताब का प्रकाशन करा दिया और उसकी रायल्टी भी खुद ले रहे हैं। इसके अलावा उसके शोध पत्रों को भी अपने नाम से ही प्रकाशित कर दिया है।

मुजफ्फरनगर के सिविल लाइन निवासी डॉ. आलोक त्यागी ने आईआईटी रुड़की के सहारनपुर कैम्पस से 2006 में पीएचडी प्रारम्भ की थी। उनके गाइड डा. धर्मदत्त (डिपार्टमेंट आफ पल्प एण्ड पेपर टेक्नोलॉजी) थे। 2012 में उन्हें डिग्री अवार्ड हो गई थी। 2014 में आलोक त्यागी को जानकारी मिली की सेलुलोज प्रोडक्शन एंड बायोडिकेयिंग आफ सार्टिंग पेपर नामक किताब जर्मनी के लेप लेम्बर्ट पब्लिशिंग इयूशलैंड द्वारा प्रकाशित की गई है। इसकी कीमत करीब 62 सौ रुपये है। इसका लेखक डा. धर्मदत्त ने स्वयं को दर्शाया है। जबकि यह उनके ही शोधग्रंथ की हूबहू कॉपी है। इसका खुलासा होने के बाद आलोक त्यागी ने 17 अप्रैल 2014 को नोटिस भेजा और बताया कि उनका यह कृत्य घोर अवैधानिक एवं कपटपूर्ण है। इसका कोई संतोषजनक जवाब उन्होंने नहीं दिया। इसके बाद रुड़की आईआईटी के डायरेक्टर से भी इस संबंध में शिकायत की गई। लेकिन वहां से भी इस संबंध में कार्रवाई नहीं हो सकी। इसके बाद एचआरडी में शिकायत करने पर वहां से मिले निर्देशों पर रुड़की आईआईटी में जांच के लिए कमेटी का गठन किया गया। लेकिन कमेटी द्वारा भी समझौता करने के लिए ही दबाव बनाया गया। अब डा. आलोक त्यागी द्वारा इस मामले में आईआईटी के डा. धर्मदत्त तथा रमेश चन्द रस्तोगी (सीएमडी खटीमा फाइबर्स लिमिटेड) और डा. ए कुमार के खिलाफ आईपीसी की धारा 420, 465, कॉपीराइट एक्ट 1957 की धारा 63 के तहत सदर बाजार कोतवाली में मुकदमा दर्ज कराया गया है।

सिविल सूट भी साकेत में किया दायर

डा. आलोक ने बताया कि उनके द्वारा इस मामले को लेकर दिल्ली साकेत कोर्ट में भी सिविल सूट दायर किया जा चुका है। इसमें 10 अप्रैल की तिथि लगी है। इस सिविल सूट में डा. धर्मदत्त और रमेश चन्द रस्तोगी और जर्मनी के पब्लिशर लेप लेम्बर्ट पब्लिशिंग इयूशलैंड तथा आईआईटी रुड़की को पार्टी बनाया है।

मुझे वर्जन देने की अनुमति नहीं --डा. धर्मदत्त

इस मामले में आरोपी बनाये गये डा. धर्मदत्त से पूछे जाने पर उन्होंने कहा कि वह आईआईटी रुड़की के कर्मचारी हैं और वह अपना कोई वर्जन नहीं दे सकते। क्योंकि उन्हें किसी को कोई वर्जन देने की अनुमति नहीं है।

New AMU VC says will help in pending varsity audit

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/varanasi/new-amu-vc-says-will-help-in-pending-varsity-audit/articleshow/58526095.cms>

After almost five decades, Aligarh Muslim University has got a "local" vice-chancellor Tariq Mansoor, who was the principal of the university's Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College. He will be taking charge when incumbent VC, Lt Gen (retd) Zameeruddin Shah, retires on May 17.

Speaking with TOI, soon after the notification of his appointment, Mansoor said his priority would be to maintain discipline in the university and get rid of all criminal elements who are giving a bad name to the institution.

Responding to a question on the impending audit of AMU regarding academic, research, financial, and infrastructural ordered by the UGC, the newly-appointed VC said he would ensure that all help is extended to the probe team and everything is done in a transparent manner. Such an audit can prove beneficial to the university also, he added. "Whatever deficiencies the audit points out will be taken care of," said Mansoor. He said he would ensure total transparency in AMU's working. He said he would ensure students get a secure environment for pursuing their studies. Maintaining that there is only a handful of students who create problems on the campus, Mansoor said his priority would be to get rid of such elements.