

Newspaper Clips

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आईआईटी में तकनीक-संस्कृति का मेल

नई दिल्ली। भारतीय संस्कृति और तकनीक के मेल को लेकर अब आईआईटी दिल्ली अपनी तरह की एक नई कवायद में जुटा है। डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ ह्यूमेनिटीज एंड सोशल साइंसेस अपने छात्रों के साथ मिलकर 15 ऐसे वीडियो तैयार कर रहा है जिसमें भारतीय खोजों और तकनीक व कल्चर का मेल प्रदर्शित किया जाएगा। आईआईटी डायरेक्टर प्रो.आर.के शिवगांवकर की माने तो 'एचयूएल 290' कोर्स एसाइनमेंट के तहत तैयार की जा रही यह वीडियो न सिर्फ लोकल एरिया नेटवर्क पर बल्कि यू ट्यूब पर भी अपलोड की जाएगी। प्रो. शिवगांवकर के अनुसार तकनीक के ज्ञान के साथ-साथ छात्रों में लर्निंग स्किल्स, अंग्रेजी का ज्ञान और आपसी संबंधों को बढ़ावा देने के उद्देश्य से संस्थान लगातार ऐसे कार्यक्रमों का आयोजन कर रहा है। ऐसी ही कोशिश के तहत सेंटर फॉर रिसर्च एंड एजुकेशन फॉर सोशल ट्रांसफॉर्मेशन, कालीकट, केरल के सहयोग से की गई थी।

Alumni ask new HRD minister to look afresh at IIT entry test pattern

NEW DELHI: The alumni association of the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, has sent a letter to the new Union human resource development minister M M Pallam Raju to look into the changed pattern of IIT-Joint Entrance Exam, which underwent changes during ex-HRD minister Kapil Sibal's tenure.

"With a change in command in the HRD ministry, we are re-energising our drive to make the government understand that the new IIT-JEE pattern will solve none of the three problems Sibal had identified, rather the new pattern does exactly the opposite," said Somnath Bharti, president of IIT-D Alumni Association.

Students are stressed due to multiplicity of entrance tests, heavy dependency on coaching institutes and lack of interest in school education.

"These problems cannot be fixed by disturbing a well-established entrance examination to the premier-most institutes of India," he added.

Sibal had proposed that 40 per cent marks should be

counted from class 12 board exams, and the rest through the common entrance test.

The proposal was criticised by a section of the IITs, which felt that the autonomy enjoyed by the IITs while conducting their own JEE has been taken away.

Students were of the view that with board marks being counted, it will be difficult for them to prepare for the entrance exam and score well in boards too.

Finally, it was decided that students who score in the top 20 per cent of their board exams will take the main or multiple-choice exam. The format will be implemented from 2013.

"Restricting the eligibility to JEE (main) to top 20 percentile of school boards, we believe is pro-rich and will be detrimental to the interests of students from rural India," Bharti had said earlier.

The association members have sought an appointment with Raju to discuss the matter.

DH News Service

Fix flaws in IIT-JEE reforms, alumni to ask HRD minister

Bhavya Dore

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MUMBAI: Alumni of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are looking to take up the contentious matter of entrance exam reforms once again, now that the new human resource development minister M Pallam Raju has taken charge. They are seeking an appointment to bring to his notice what they claim are flaws in the revised system. A letter from alumni was sent to the minister's office on Wednesday.

In July the IITs agreed to a two-part exam and the use of board exam marks as an eligibility and not admission criterion.

It was decided that from next year students would have to clear both exams and be within the top 20 percentile of successful candidates in their Class 12 board to get admission.

He said that the SC had earlier said that the criteria for an entrance exam cannot be uncertain – in the case of a student's IIT admission, the top 20%ile eligibility would vary from year to year depending on relative performance.

Further, a student might be declared ineligible after clearing both exams because he/she was not in the top 20 per-

IIT DECISION

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"There are judgements which come in the way of the new structure and format of the new IIT-JEE," the letter addressed to the minister says.

It continues, "We are looking to your help to remedy the situation and to help IIT retain its high standards."

The alumni had vehemently opposed the ministry's attempts at changing the JEE claiming the plans interfered with the autonomy that IITs enjoyed. They also said that the IIT brand would be diluted on account of the changed admission procedure. So, a compromise was made, with the IITs agreeing to a two-part exam with board marks as an eligibility, not admission criteria.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME

Studying at IITs just a click away, online courses soon

Vanita Srivastava

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NEW DELHI: In an effort to meet the growing demand of the IT industry, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) may start an online certification for engineering disciplines. The initial plan is to start a certified programme in two major disciplines by 2013.

To begin with, IIT Madras will coordinate the programme, but all other IITs are being contacted to become partners. Besides IITs, IT and industry partners will also be part of this programme.

The certification programme will be a direct offshoot of the ambitious National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) project, which was launched a few years ago. The project — jointly carried out by IITs and IISc — provided a large number of courses online for students and teachers across the country by providing a new national curriculum.

“To begin with we will confine the programme to include two major areas of engineering — IT and computer science. This would gradually be expanded to other engineering and science disciplines. The initial topics for the certification programme would include programming, data structure and

IIT MADRAS WILL START PROGRAMMES IN INFORMATION TECH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE NEXT YEAR

algorithms,” coordinator of NPTEL Mangala Sunder Krishnan told HT.

“It will essentially fulfil the demand for more employable graduates for IT industry,” Krishnan said, adding, “This will be different from other online programmes because of a strong element of monitoring. We are proposing centrally invigilated exams with IT partners lending support in the management and conduct of the programmes in a very direct way. Also we do not envisage any entrance criteria. We only want the applicant to have a professional degree or being a student of a higher education programme.”

Krishnan added the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology, under the HRD ministry, is fully supportive of the programme. NPTEL is funded under the Mission, which has a larger vision for creating content and innumerable opportunities for quality improvement.

New JEE format: More IIT aspirants likely to join coaching centres

Institutes expect student enrolment to go up 80% in 2013; to increase fees

KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai, 31 October

Three months after the joint entrance examination (JEE) was tweaked to introduce the new formats — JEE Main and JEE Advanced — coaching institutes claim students have begun flocking to them for enrolment.

While some coaching institutes have already registered a rise in numbers, others predict enrolments for the coming academic year would be up anywhere between 50 per cent and 80 per cent. To make the most of it, most coaching institutes are planning to hike the annual fee upwards of ₹10,000 per student. On an average, the annual fee is about ₹50,000 per student.

Kota-based Career Point Infosystems expects an over 50 per cent increase in the number of students. "With the new format, we are taking care of the board as well as competitive examination preparation for students. Institutions which do not focus on both will lose enrolments. There will also be a hike in fees by around 20 per cent," said Pramod Maheshwari, CEO, Career Point Infosystems, Kota.

Career Point Infosystems, the only listed coaching institute, expects 20,000-25,000 students



HIGH DEMAND

- A few institutes are already registering a rise in the number of enrolments
- ₹50,000 is the average fee that coaching institutes charge
- The fee now is expected to be raised by over ₹10,000
- Institutes that provides coaching for both IIT-JEE mains and advanced, will be in demand
- Kota-based Career Point Infosystems expect over 50 per cent increase in the number of students

next year against 15,000 students enrolled this year and last year.

FITJEE, says it is expected that more enrolments will be registered. While it refused to give a number, it says the enrolments are estimated to be very high. Also, academic fee will certainly see an increase, says FITJEE.

In July 2012, it was decided that from 2013, the JEE would be held in two parts — Main and

Advanced. Those applying to the IITs would have to appear for JEE-Main. Only the top 150,000 who qualify would be eligible for taking the JEE-Advanced, which would be held a few weeks after the Main exam.

The new test is an amalgamation of the All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE) and the IIT-JEE, where the Main exam will be equivalent to AIEEE, and

Advanced will be equivalent to the IIT-JEE. JEE is the qualifying examination for admission to the IITs. For admission to the IIT, based on the JEE-Advanced, a student should be ranked among the top 20 percentile of his/her respective Class XII Board. Currently, a student scoring 60 per cent in their Class XII Board is eligible for a seat in the IITs. There are 32 Boards in India with different patterns of examination and evaluation.

While JEE-Main will be held by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), JEE-Advanced will be held by IITs.

Admission to National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) will be based on JEE-Main scores.

Several deemed universities can also use JEE-Main exam scores to admit students after fixing a minimum percentage criteria.

"At present, we have 1,200 students. We have already begun admissions for the next academic year and we see the numbers at 2,200, an increase of over 80 per cent," said Chandan Dikshit, planning and strategy head at Rao IIT Academy, an

IIT-JEE coaching institute.

According to Dikshit, tutorials that train students for both Main and Advanced will be in demand. Besides, tie-ups between coaching institutes and colleges or schools will help students, so that they don't waste time travelling to coaching centres to attend classes.

Industry players said with CBSE set to handle the JEE Main paper, the examination is likely to be tough.

Industry players say with CBSE setting the JEE main paper, the level of the test may get difficult

The process of tweaking the examination pattern began when the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) concurred that due to the culture of coaching classes, the schooling system has been thrown out of the window. So much so that students do not attend schools due to the pressure of such training programmes.

A committee, formed under professor Idi Chandy of IIT-Madras, established a correlation between school performance and IIT performance, inferring students were doing better in school. Thus, to promote school education and to dissuade the coaching culture, MHRD had been considering changing the IIT-JEE format.

CURBING MALPRACTICES AT TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS

Plan panel to HRD: Form IIT Council-like apex body

Raids conducted across 15 States reveal a distance education racket

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

To curb rampant malpractices in engineering colleges and technical institutions across the country, the Planning Commission has asked the HRD Ministry to form an apex body on the pattern of Council of IITs or Council of NITs.

In a meeting on Tuesday, sources said, the Ministry was also informed about one of the largest raids conducted secretly across 15 States last week by the Punjab Police to unearth a distance education racket following a FIR by the Punjab Technical University (PTU).

Sources said Education Secretary Ashok Thakur agreed to the suggestion following insistence from all the stakeholders and expressed his willingness for setting up a Committee to look into all issues related to quality of engineering education in the country. This Committee will function on the line of Councils of IITs and NITs.

The representatives of Indraprastha University, Nagpur University, universities from West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh underscored the seriousness of the situation that even exams like JEE are affected by the exam mafia.

Talking over the issue,

TURNING A NEW LEAF?



- The representatives of Indraprastha University, Nagpur University, universities from West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh underscored the seriousness of the situation that even exams like JEE are affected by the exam mafia
- Pallam Raju said he would set up a Committee to 'grade' the institutes which will ensure that only the best ones will survive
- The stakeholders informed the Planning Commission that the examination mafia works from 10+2 exams onwards right up to the highest level and their services are available through all cities' agents

the new HRD Minister MM Pallam Raju told *The Pioneer* that the nexus of education mafia, including its clout in Andhra Pradesh is a serious issue and the challenge is to be dealt at the earliest.

On his plans to tackle it, Raju said he would set up a Committee to 'grade' the institutes which will ensure that only the best ones will survive. "We cannot hamper the quality of higher and technical education given the demand of the industry today," Raju said in a brief interaction with *The Pioneer* after taking over at Shastri Bhawan on Wednesday.

"Malpractices in the examination system are a front-line concern for almost

all the educational bodies in the country conducting examinations," said Dr Rajneesh Arora, Vice-Chancellor of PTU while urging the Education Secretary to form a special committee of stakeholders at the Centre and in States to go deeper into the issue and come up with recommendations.

The Union Cabinet during the Monsoon session had approved the amendment bill Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical Educational Institutions, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill. The Bill aims to check malpractices in technical and medical educational institutions.

All the major

Government technical universities were represented in the meeting, which discussed issues like need for technology, faculty shortages, curricular reforms, improving governance and proper conduct of exams.

The PTU informed about the initiatives taken by it and Punjab Government in cleaning up the examination system. The University informed that last week Punjab Police conducted a massive raid in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andaman, Bangladesh and Nepal. It seized hard disks, employee email ids and passwords from a private firm called Matrix Infosys involved in the racket. The FIR in this regard was registered on October 23, 2012 at Kapurthala Police Station under sections 406, 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120B.

In a major embarrassment for the Centre, the stakeholders including the academicians informed the Planning Commission that the examination mafia works from 10+2 exams onwards right up to the highest level of exams including engineering, medical, and other competitive exams and that their services are available through agents in almost every city. It was also discussed as how even international bodies conducting GRE and MAT are not immune to this malice and are struggling to find practical solutions.

IIM-C students can now have multiple job offers

KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai, 31 October

Two years after the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIM-A) tinkered with its placement process to make it better, the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM-C) has followed suit.

IIM-C has decided to introduce a functional preference system for its summer placements, shifting from spot offer system to a multiple offer system. Its summer placements begin November 5.

The new system will allow students to appear for interviews even after they secure job offers from other firms. This implies students can appear for multiple job interviews on the same day and have multiple job offers, too, and choose the best.

"We believe the new system will grant time to students to evaluate their options and take the right call. This helps them get the right job, and not just any job. The companies are also able to

select the best candidates from the available pool," said Krishanu Rakshit, IIM-C placement chairperson.

IIM-C says it becomes important when companies of a particular sector attend the process later in the day and students choose another firm out of peer pressure.

The new system will be beneficial for companies as well as the students, as students undergo lesser pressure during

the process and this helps them take better decisions, the institute said.

Rakshit said out of peer pressure, students tend to accept the first offer they receive, without much regard for the role offered or the sector where their interests lie.

The current process is not only stressful but also leads to a herd mentality.

IIM-C has also introduced the concept of a day-long break to give students some time to evaluate the choices they have at their disposal and take informed decisions.

IIM-C has decided to introduce a functional preferences system, shifting from spot offer to multiple offer

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53 pc IT engg graduates unemployable, rues HRD Minister

Promises to focus on improving quality of students and teachers

NEW DELHI: Newly appointed Human Resource Development Minister M M Pallam Raju on Wednesday observed that more than half of the total engineering graduates from Information Technology stream fail to meet industry standards for employment and assured that his ministry would work towards remedying the situation.

"Only 17 per cent of IT engineering graduates are ready for recruitment by industry, 30 per cent can be trained and a whopping 53 per cent do not meet industry standards. This is alarming, we need to work on it," he told reporters after taking charge of the HRD Ministry.

Answering a question on engineering colleges making fast money through the education



Pallam Raju

route, the minister regretted that "Technical education has become a business".

He was categorical that his Ministry would encourage only institutions which deliver quality.

Praises Sibal

Hailing his predecessor Kapil Sibal for his "unprecedented" initiatives in different areas such as capacity building in higher education sector, the Minister said he would focus on consolidating and carrying forward the path set out by Sibal.

"We will give a fillip to the new institutions. We will also

focus on consolidation of the existing IITs and IIMs," he said.

Expressing concern about eroding values among the youth, he said his Ministry would give a thrust to value education in schools.

"The youth are disillusioned with society, while the role of parents and gurus (teachers) has been diluted. There are distractions as well due to technology. The country has a rich heritage based on value system. It is important to make this heritage a part of education and strengthen our democracy through value system," he added.

Enabling teachers to impart quality education was another area which his Ministry would focus on, he said.

On several bills of the HRD Ministry pending in Parliament, he said he would involve his colleagues—Ministers of State Shashi Tharoor and Jitin Prasad—in bringing parliamentarians on the same page and get the pending bills passed.

DH News Service

Courses on moral values top new HRD Minister's priority list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The new HRD Minister MM Pallam Raju on Wednesday said he was particularly inclined towards introducing courses on moral values in school education system. At the same time he also rued the fact that in spite of so many technical institutes in the country only 13 per cent are industry-ready and thus the ministry has to work on overcoming such issues seriously.

After taking over as the HRD Minister he said the need of the hour is to introduce chapters on moral values in course curriculum and underlined on introducing chapters on moral values to help the present generation imbibe good values passed through generations.

"We had chapter in school like moral values, moral studies and I think things like that has to be build into the curriculum and I think it is important to guide the teachers towards imparting these values," Raju said after taking his first meeting with the Heads of the HRD Bureau.

"Our focus would also be on skilling programmes. These initiatives have to be broad-based because vocational skills will be needed by the workforce. According to a feedback only 13 percent of technical graduates are industry-ready

RAJU GREETED WITH POMP AND FLAMBOYANCE

New Delhi: A mega ritual preceded at Shastri Bhawan before the new HRD Minister MM Pallam Raju assumed charge. Amidst a host of his supporters and officials Raju's room was brightly lit for the occasion with a priest performing *havans* as Raju invoked the blessings of Lord Venkateshwara in his room. Raju turned down two black coloured pens when given to sign the taking over papers and instead sought a green ink or green pen. He was accompanied by his father who was wheelchair. The Minister's chamber itself wore a new look as the furniture was repositioned according to Vastu Shastra guidelines. Raju would be sitting facing south-east. According to Vaastu, a person sitting in this direction is blessed with power. Also, all others including top officers and journalists were allowed to enter the Minister's chamber only without footwear.

PNS

while 17 percent worth trainable. The rest 53 percent never meets the standards of the industry and thus we have to strengthen the faculty core in this area," Raju, an electronics and communications engineering graduate, said while interacting with the media.

On passage of several pending bills on higher education in Parliament, Raju said he would also reach out to

"everybody" to build a consensus and promised to consolidate "good work" initiated by his predecessor Kapil Sibal. Raju said, "It's time for me and my colleagues to take everybody onboard on the good intentions behind these initiatives (of Sibal) and to be able to get their help in taking these bills through."

Acknowledging that there are "apprehensions" about the contentious Foreign Education Providers Bill, Raju said he would study it but noted that "if collaboration with foreign players is something that will bring in value addition in some area, we will definitely look at it in open mind."

Asked if there were moves to extend the deadline for implementation of Right to Education Act by another two years given that infrastructure requirement in schools are yet to be met by several states, Raju said a review would be done soon. The deadline for meeting RTE provisions ends on March 31 next year.

Terming the examination reforms of Sibal in IITs as "well intentioned", he felt that though there are transitional challenges, the measures will be for the good of the students. "We will not dilute the standard of the examination and will make it a common thing so that kids do not have to slog out for different kind of exams," he said.