

Newspaper Clips

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HT Jaipur

IITs aiming to increase PhD enrolment

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are making various attempts to increase the number of PhD enrolments, including increasing the number of scholarships.

The Kakodhar Committee report had earlier recommended that the number of PhD scholars produced by IITs per year should be increased to 10,000 over the course of the next decade. The new IITs will also play a pivotal role in increasing the numbers.

The IITs are presently producing around 1,000 PhD scholars per year, in engineering and technology.

"This figure is not adequate for a country of our size. Without an adequate number of researchers we will not be able to advance in the sphere of technology," an IIT professor said.

Dean (academic research), IIT Madras, Saritkumar Das said that this year the number of PhD enrolments in the institute had increased to 550 from 363 last year.

This year, 156 PhD scholars graduated from the institute. In fact, the institute is expecting the enrolments to triple in five years.

"From this year a BTech student in his seventh semester can opt for PhD. We are also taking BTech students from outside for PhD programme. But more than the numbers, we are focusing on quality. For researchers academics is not the only career option. Corporate research has a lot of opening for scholars," he said.

Dean of academic affairs in IIT Kanpur, Dheeraj Sanghi, stressed on "marketing of science" and said that there has a 5% increase in PhD enrolments in the last few years.

"This has now increased to 8%. We propose to further increase it to 10%. While in 2012, 110 PhD scholars graduated, this year the number has increased to 120," Sanghi added.

Anurag Sharma, Dean academics, IIT Delhi said that this year there was an enrolment of around 450 for PhD programme. "This is around 8-10% more than last year, which is a positive sign. This has been made possible by several steps including an increase in number of scholarships. Also, now applications for PhDs can be processed anytime."

Dean, Postgraduate Studies & Research of IIT Kharagpur, AN Samanta too said that the number of PhD enrolments has increased from 357 in 2010-11 to 428 in 2012-13.

"Our aim is not just to increase the number but to enhance the quality also. I would say that the trend on our

campus is good," said Shiva Prasad, Dean (Academic Programme), IIT Bombay.

Agrees IIT Roorkee director professor Pradipta Banerji. "Every 2 years we will take 600 PhD students. We have to stabilise at a certain level to maintain quality."

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/1154225.aspx?s=p>

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Carrot for IIT directors

BASANT KUMAR MOHANTY, The Telegraph

New Delhi, Nov. 20: Any Indian Institute of Technology director whose performance has been outstanding will automatically get a second term provided they are aged below 65, the Union human resource development ministry has decided.

The new system will kick in when the directors of six of these premier tech schools, including IIT Bombay, end their tenures in June next year.

Separate search-and-selection committees will assess the performance of each outgoing IIT head under 65 years, and those they rate as "outstanding" would be straightaway offered a second term.

Earlier, the ministry used to advertise for a new institute director even before an incumbent's term had ended. If the outgoing director wanted a second term, he or she had to apply afresh and compete with the other candidates in the interview.

Now, the selection panel will first visit the institute and assess the director's performance under several heads such as teaching, future planning, research, industry linkage, encouragement of multiculturalism and the tech school's international ranking.

The director will have to make a presentation on how the tech school has progressed under his or her leadership in the past five years. The panel will then visit select departments to verify the director's claims and seek feedback from the teachers and members of the institute's board of directors.

If the five-member panel does not rate the director's performance as "outstanding", the ministry will advertise the post, seeking applications. The outgoing director can still apply, the sources said.

An IIT director welcomed the decision, saying the possibility of a renewed five-year term will encourage the directors to focus on excellence.

"Ten years at the top position is a significant amount of time and a director can do a lot. But the panel's assessment of a director's performance may be questioned by some people as it will be a subjective decision," the director said.

Ministry sources, however, argued that since the panels will have five members, questions of bias might not be raised.

A former IIT director, however, said the new system would encourage the directors to appease the faculty members.

"Since the selection panel will receive feedback from the faculty, the director will not take any tough decision

(that might annoy the teachers). The administration will concentrate on appeasing the faculty,” he said.

He suggested that instead of the selection panel, it’s the institute’s board of directors that should receive feedback from all the stakeholders, including the alumni, students, the state government and industry, to make a fair assessment of the director’s performance.

Other than IIT Bombay, the directors of the IITs in Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Ropar and Gandhinagar will end their terms next June. The ministry is setting up a separate selection panel for each of these institutes.

However, two members will be common to all the panels: the Union human resource development minister who will head the committees, and the chairperson of the standing committee of the IIT Council, the tech institutes’ highest decision-making body.

Other than that, each panel will include two members nominated by the IIT Council’s standing committee, and the chairperson of that particular institute’s board of directors.

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HRD sets up panel to screen graft complaints

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: Faced with regular instances of allegation of corruption and other misdemeanors against the heads of central educational institutions like IITs, IIMs, NITs and central universities, the HRD ministry has set up a committee for initial scrutiny of complaints against them and other senior functionaries.

The ministry has argued that whenever the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) gets a complaint it directs the ministry to conduct an investigation and give the report usually within 12 weeks. The ministry said its vigilance wing also receive complaints from other sources as well against officials, including certain vice-chancellors of the universities and chairmen of the NITs/IIMs/IITs.

It said, "In the absence of any special mechanism in place to look into the allegations investigation is assigned to ministry officials. Some of the

heads of the institutions, including vice-chancellors against whom such complaints are lodged and investigation is ordered by the CVC, are renowned academics and a fact finding enquiry against them by an officer of the ministry who are not of sufficient higher level often embarrasses not on-



Kapil Sibal

ly the person investigated against but also the officer conducting such an inquiry."

The ministry said it has also been found that many complaints are found to emanate not on merits of the allegations but out of inter-personal academic rivalries. The new committee will conduct a preliminary scrutiny of such complaints and also consider the response on the allegations levelled in the complaints to decide whether a full-fledged inquiry is called for.

The panel will consist of people who are still active in the university system and have sufficient experience.

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

GITAM becomes remote centre for IIT Bombay

By Express News Service - HYDERABAD

Gitam University Hyderabad campus has become a remote centre of IIT Bombay to organise workshops, Dr Ch Sanjay, director of the Hyderabad campus, has said.

The decision was taken by IIT Bombay after it rigorously tested the facilities and infrastructure of the university.

The participants of IIT Bombay's two-week Indian Society for Technical Education workshops during summer and winter vacations, will attend a remote centre tutorial and lab sessions in a centre close to their own college.

Lecture transmission and live interaction will take place through distance mode using the 'A View Technology' and Internet, at the selected remote centres across the country.

Faculty coordinators will be appointed at each centre, to handle the technology infrastructure and other operational logistics in the workshops.

Santosh Panda new NCTE chairman

NEW DELHI: Santosh Panda, a faculty in [IGNOU](#), has been appointed as the new chairman of National Council for Teacher Education ([NCTE](#)), the regulator for setting quality standards and running of teacher education institutions in the country.

Panda's name was approved by HRD Minister M M Pallam Raju and cleared by the Appointment Committee of Cabinet, sources in the Ministry said.

In all, 11 candidates were shortlisted for the post, of whom three made it to the final list. Panda was the front runner, they said.

Focus on research, students told

Special Correspondent

Union Minister of State Shashi Tharoor on Thursday exhorted students to concentrate on research for cutting-edge technology as that holds the key to world ranking. "Apart from the government, corporate groups also have a duty to extend support to universities in conducting top-end research in deserving areas. Cusat deserves to be known on a national level and the HRD Ministry is doing all in its power to upgrade the university to an Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IEST)," he said.

— Special Correspondent

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SCIENTISTS FOR MORE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

HT Correspondent

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JAIPUR: Two days after Bharat Ratna awardee Dr CNR Rao expressed anguish over the lack of funds for science, an online petition addressed to the Prime Minister requesting for an increase in the research scholarship has gone viral on the social media

Dr Sreevalsa Kolathayar, assistant professor, Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, has created an online petition addressed to the Prime Minister saying, “Research students need your care, Increase the scholarship amount of research scholars”. The petition has been signed by more than 4,500 research scholars and scientists across the world.

To support the cause, Kolathayar has attached an open letter to the Prime Minister based on his personal experience, which he says is the experience of many researchers in the country.

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Scientists write to PM against open field trials of GM crops

Jayashree Nandi | TNN

New Delhi: Hundreds of scientists have raised serious concerns about “open air field trials (outside glasshouse)” of genetically modified (GM) crops in India by writing a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday.

Incidentally Bangladesh officially gave a conditional approval for planting of certain varieties of genetically modified Bt Brinjal recently. Indian scientists said that open cultivation of GM Brinjal in Bangladesh could be risky for India as it can contaminate Indian varieties too. The five scientists who have drafted the letter are prominent molecular biologist and founder director of Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, PM Bhargava; former VC of Calcutta University, R N Basu; Dinesh Abrol of Institute of Studies in Industrial Development and JNU in Delhi; V S Vijayan, former chairman, Kerala State Biodiversity Board. It has been endorsed by hundreds of other scientists.

They demanded that the recommendations of the Technical Expert Committee (TEC) appointed by the Supreme Court be accepted. The final report of the TEC has recommended against the deployment of Bt food crops in India until their safety is established. The report also recommends a ban on genetic modification of crops for which India is the “centre of origin”. “We are not saying that trials have to be stopped. We are suggesting that open field trials be stopped,” said Dinesh Abrol.

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

Pleasant surprise for IITs ahead of placement season

Business Standard, Nov. 22

Placement cells have recorded an increase of 10-20% in average salary levels

For the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), this [placement](#) season may be much beyond their expectations. IITs say, given the economic scenario, they expected placements to be a muted affair, but the response from companies has been quite good.

There is more. Placement cells have recorded an increase of 10-20% in average [salary](#) levels. The highest salary offered has seen an increase of around 20-90 per cent as compared to last year. Final placements on IIT campuses begin on December 1.

"Given the slowdown, we wondered if the placements would be as decent as last year but a good number of companies have confirmed participation allaying our fears," said a placement official from [IIT Bombay](#).

A US-based software major has offered the highest salary (so far) of Rs 1.30 crore per annum, to an IIT Bombay student. However, an institute official said this cannot be confirmed till placements begin as the final offer has not been made yet. Last year [Samsung](#) (Korea) offered the highest salary at Rs 80 lakh per annum.

IIT Bombay will see 1,600 students sitting for placements this year and expects around 250-270 companies to participate. "Some US companies have doubled the salaries this year against what was offered last year," the placement official added.

IIT Bombay said this year there is a lot of interest from software companies. [Microsoft](#), [Oracle](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), Goldman Sachs, [Shell](#) and Samsung are a few companies which have confirmed participation so far.

Even IIT Kanpur and Kharagpur (IIT-KGP) are expecting salaries to be better than last year. The institutes said IT giants like Google, Microsoft and Yahoo will be visiting the campus during placements next month.

"There is misleading speculation that none of the US companies are coming to IITs for placements. This is not true. Some of these giants have taken care of their requirements through pre-placement offers (PPOs) which is why they are not coming. However, major IT, consulting, finance and core engineering companies like ITC, Microsoft, Google and Yahoo have confirmed their participation in the placements at IIT-KGP this year," said Sudhir Barai, head - training and placement at IIT-KGP.

For IIT KGP, feedback from recruiters has been "very good". "The number of companies participating at KGP has increased from 180 last year to 220 this year. The feedback from recruiters have been very good and salaries will be higher than last year," said Barai. The batch size at IIT KGP this year is over 2000 students.

Seconding Barai is Vimal Kumar, chairman - training and placement at IIT Kanpur who said that global firms like Google, Microsoft and Amazon will be visiting its campus.

"Some companies have dropped out after confirming but it is not alarming. This happens every year. However, salaries will be higher or at least like last year," said Kumar. IIT Kanpur will roughly see 200 firms participating in the placements process for a batch size of over 1000 students. Other firms likely to participate at IIT Kanpur placements include Oracle, Mitsubishi, Diamond Consulting, Crédit Suisse, Deutsche Bank and Goldman Sachs, among others.

IIT Madras could not be reached for comments.