

Newspaper Clips

November 8, 2013

The Telegraph

IIT research moan at top

BASANT KUMAR MOHANTY



New Delhi, Nov. 7: The President and the Prime Minister today rued the poor research output at the IITs and the National Institutes of Technology, both echoing what academics have long described as a historical neglect.

At a conference of NIT directors, Pranab Mukherjee and Manmohan Singh also voiced dissatisfaction over the global rankings of Indian institutions.

Figures show the number of researchers for every million people in the country is just 119, way behind countries like China and the US.

"There is need to emphasise research and innovation in NITs. Out of the total student strength of 71,000 in NITs, there are only 4,000 PhD students. In IITs, there are only around 3,000 PhD students in the total student strength of 60,000.... NITs must evolve clear strategies to encourage research and development, which then leads on to innovation and patents," Mukherjee said.

Singh voiced the same concern, saying India's research output in science and technology accounted for a mere 3.5 per cent of scientific publications in the world in 2010, three years after China's contribution to the global pool was an impressive 21 per cent.

In patent applications, too, Indians trailed in 2010. Singh said the number of applications by Indians was 0.3 per cent of those filed globally, while the country's share of R&D investment was 2.2 per cent, lower than China's 9.2 per cent and America's 32.4 per cent.

The poor research output at Indian institutions appears to have contributed to their world university rankings by international agencies like Times Higher Education and Quacquarelli Symonds.

This year, IIT Delhi ranked 222 in the QS ranking, the highest for any Indian institution, while Panjab University ranked between 226 and 250, the highest for an Indian institute, in the Times Higher Education ranking. The NITs did not figure at all. "It is not difficult to see where our institutions stand today vis-à-vis the best in the world," the President said.

Former NIT Delhi director Sandeep Sancheti said the NITs, earlier known as Regional Engineering Colleges, focused on teaching for over four decades. "The IITs shifted focus to research earlier. The NITs gave importance to research in the last five to 10 years."

President for revision, upgradation of curricula in universities

Staff Reporter

Not a single Indian university or institution finds a place in the top 200, pointed out President Pranab Mukherjee on Thursday as he called for a revision and upgradation of curricula, introduction of choice-based credit system, examination reforms and promotion of a culture of excellence.

Addressing the first-ever conference of Directors of National Institutes of Technology (NIT) at Rashtrapati Bhavan here, Mr. Mukherjee said at least one or two departments in every NIT must be turned into centres of excellence.

“It is not difficult to see where our institutions stand today vis-à-vis the best in the world. In two reputed international rankings of universities – the QS ranking and Times Higher Education ranking – not a single Indian university or institution finds place in the top 200,” he said.

“Apart from leading universities of the West, the universities in countries like China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Malaysia are ranked higher than Indian institutions. The highest ranked Indian institution in the QS Ranking is IIT-Delhi at 222nd position. Not a single NIT is amongst these institutions,” Mr. Mukherjee said.

Calling for wide-spread changes and improvements in the education system, the President said the ranking process needs to be taken seriously not just for the ranks *per se* but for the fact that high ranking helps attract the best faculty from across the world.

This, in turn, improves the prospects of good placement for graduating students and provides a benchmark for continuous quality enhancement.

“During my recent visit to Belgium and Turkey, I had the privilege of being accompanied by a delegation of Vice-Chancellors of Central Universities as well as the UGC Chairman. I used the visit to provide impetus to the international collaboration efforts of these Universities,” he said, encouraging NITs to look for similar collaboration.

He said engineering programmes must be also periodically evaluated based on industry trends and emphasis should be on research and innovation in NITs.

“India ranks 12th among top 20 countries in terms of publication on science and technology. We have 119 researchers in research and development per million people, as compared to 715 in China and 468 in United States. NITs must evolve clear strategies to encourage research and development, which then leads on to innovation and patents,” the President said.

“The Government is investing huge amount of resources in higher education. The effort to increase ‘quantity’ exponentially must be matched with commensurate efforts to improve ‘quality’. We must lead our institutions into the ranks of the best such institutions in the world,” he said.

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IIT-IIM parting hope to Andhra

BASANT MOHANTY



Pallam Raju

New Delhi, Nov. 7: Human resource development minister M.M. Pallam Raju, who is not attending office since last month in protest against the decision to divide Andhra Pradesh, has recommended a plethora of educational institutions in the coastal region if a Telangana state is eventually sliced out.

The HRD ministry on Tuesday sent an elaborate wish list, including three central varsities, an IIT and an IIM, to the group of ministers (GoM) dealing with the planned bifurcation.

Sources in the GoM and the HRD ministry said the list, which also includes a National Institute of Technology (NIT) and an Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in the Seemandhra region, would be examined in consultation with political parties.

The sources said Raju, who is from coastal Andhra, had been consulted before the recommendations were sent to the GoM, headed by Union home minister Sushil Kumar Shinde.

The demand for new institutions has arisen as most of the top ones in Andhra are located in and around Hyderabad, one of the 10 Telangana districts.

Hyderabad has three central universities, an IIT, an Indian Institute of Information Technology, the National Institute of Rural Development and the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology. Twenty-seven reputable educational and research institutions are located in Hyderabad and Warangal, another district that falls in the Telangana region.

In contrast, coastal Andhra does not have many centrally funded educational and research institutions. Vijayawada city has just one School for Planning and Architecture, a central government institution. The UGC University Grants Commission recently approved an Inter-University Centre in Kakinada.

Raju, who represents Kakinada in Parliament, had submitted his resignation to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh after the Union cabinet last month approved the proposal to create a Telangana state. The resignation has not been accepted yet but Raju has stopped coming to the ministry for the past month and been skipping official events, sources said. All important files are taken to his residence for clearance.

Raju, however, attended a conference of NIT directors with President Pranab Mukherjee today.

Last week, home secretary Anil Goswami had written to higher education secretary Ashok Thakur asking for comments on the education needs of coastal Andhra.

Super 30 protests against higher fee for offline applications

Super 30, well-known for helping economically backward students crack the IIT entrance exam, y petitioned Union HRD ministry today against JEE (joint entrance examination) going online from 2014 for the main exam and charging Rs 1000 more from those applying offline.

"This (going online) is heavily loaded in favour of the rich and the elite students and will affect the talented students from poor families as access to computers for them is still a luxury," Super 30 founder Anand Kumar said in a letter send to Union HRD minister Pallam Raju.

A copy of the letter has been marked for CBSE chairman.

For 2014 admissions, the online application will commence from November 15. JEE (Main) online application submission will start from November 15, 2013 and will end on December 16, 2013.

Kumar said the number of schools having computer access is very low and schools where students actually get to use computers are even lower.

He demanded that the charge for offline applications should be decreased to Rs 600 and instead the online applicants' charges could be raised to Rs 1000 from Rs 600. "These (online applicant) well off children can easily pay them by cutting expense on ice-creams."

Anand Kumar has been providing free lodging, boarding and education to 30 students from poor economic background. His institution has won accolades in the country and outside for its results in the IIT entrance examinations since its inception in 2002. This year 28 out of 30 students from Super 30 qualified for the IITs.

IIT-BHU to introduce project-oriented syllabus for undergraduate courses

TNN | Nov 8, 2013, 05:11 AM IST

VARANASI: [Indian Institute of Technology \(IIT\)](#), [Banaras Hindu University \(BHU\)](#) is going to restructure the academic curriculum for its undergraduate students. The new curriculum will be more project-oriented.

According to director of the institute, [Rajeev Sangal](#), a committee was formed to discuss the syllabus for different disciplines of engineering. Approach paper for the restructuring of the syllabus has already been prepared and all the heads of the departments have received a copy of it. The final decision of the entire study plan will be passed by the IIT-Senate members followed by further detailing of the syllabus.

According to Sangal, under the new curriculum students will be given an environment similar to that of their future workplace. The projects and practical works will have an edge. Courses of humanities will also be inculcated under this curriculum. Students will be able to opt for compulsory and elective courses in Humanities while studying engineering, he informed. Sangal also informed that the

supplementary system of examination has been terminated as per the new regulations which were formed after the conversion of Institute of Technology (IIT-BHU) into IIT-BHU.

According to him, to keep in pace with the restructured courses, institute is also developing modern laboratories. A fund of Rs 25 crore is being spent on the laboratories of the institute. The departments of the institute have listed the necessities and machinery and equipments that need to be replaced. Apart from that a Centralised Instrumentation Facility of worth Rs 30 crore is also in pipeline. The instrumentation facility will be available for carrying out research works and projects. The facility will be open for BHU researchers as well. The institute is also developing the high performance computing system to provide better facilities for the students and faculty members.

Read a comment

Magsaysay awardee to be chief guest at IIT-BHU convocation

TNN | Nov 8, 2013, 05:11 AM IST

VARANASI: [Indian Institute of Technology \(IIT\)](#), [Banaras Hindu University \(BHU\)](#) is going to hold its second convocation at Swatantrata Bhawan, BHU on November 9. Magsaysay awardee, [Rajendra Singh](#) will be the chief guest on the occasion and will deliver the convocation address.

Director, IIT-BHU, Dr Rajeev Sangal gave the information while talking to reporters here on Thursday. He said, [Human Resource Development Minister](#) of India, MM Pallam Raju will not be able to attend the event as the chief guest, as declared earlier, due to some official engagement.

During the convocation ceremony, a total of 1003 students will receive the degrees of BTech, MTech, BPharm, MPharm, PhD and integrated dual degree (IDD) programme. This year, 21 PhDs are being awarded in different disciplines of engineering and pharmaceuticals. As many as 284 students will be awarded MTech and MPharm degrees whereas 121 students will receive IDD and Integrated MTech degrees (IMD) degrees. A total of 577 students will be awarded BTech and BPharm degrees on the

occasion.

Maintaining the tradition set in the first convocation, the institute has decided to opt for the Indian attire for all the participants this time as well. The convocation robe for the males will be 'kurta payjama' or 'dhoti-kurta', while the female graduates will wear salwar-kameez or saree.

As many as 38 students will be felicitated with the institute's medal, whereas 22 students will be awarded with gold medals. Hemant, a BTech graduate from department of electronic engineering will receive the highest number of medals for his outstanding performance under various categories. Two silver medals will also be awarded to students.

The function will be followed by the distribution of medals. The degrees will be distributed to students at the respective departments.

HT Chandigarh

'Indians are silent victims of plagiarism in academics'

HT Correspondent

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CHANDIGARH: Prof Praveen Chaddah, a noted scientist and director, UGC-DAE consortium for scientific research, on Thursday, said that Indian science was being portrayed in a bad light for plagiarism but on the contrary Indians continued to be silent victims of plagiarism.

Prof Chaddah was addressing the eighth colloquium lecture of the Panjab University Colloquium Lecture Series, on the topic 'plagiarism and its control in academic domain,' at the auditorium of Dr SS Bhatnagar University Institute of Chemical Engineering and Technology, PU, on Thursday.

Prof Chaddah highlighted that there were cases where ideas of Indian scientists were plagiarised by foreign bylines but they do not show up in plagiarism-check software because of clever word changes.

He mentioned two such cases,

PROF PRAVEEN CHADDAH, A NOTED SCIENTIST, WAS THE KEY SPEAKER AT PU'S COLLOQUIUM LECTURE SERIES

where ideas of Indian scientists were plagiarised by foreign bylines and text was also copied.

Prof Chaddah said, "Plagiarism is currently a much-discussed issue in academic circles and it occurs at various levels. But we also need to worry about our ideas being plagiarised by others, and presented with clever word changes to avoid detection by current software."

He discussed many possible steps to protect the students from being targeted as helpless victims whose ideas can be plagiarised.

Prof Chaddah said, "The appropriation of another per-

son's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit is considered as plagiarism."

He referred to various cases of plagiarism by well-known persons in their research work, as highlighted repeatedly even in a journals like Nature during the last two years.

Prof Chaddah said that UGC had proposed stringent regulations to check plagiarism in PhD thesis, hoping to curb mediocrity in research. He discussed the implications of these regulations in the context of the global norms of research journals and the need for controlling plagiarism.

Prof Arun Kumar Grover, vice-chancellor, PU; Prof Madhu Raka, dean, university instructions; Prof Lalit Bansal, dean research, and colloquium co-ordinator, associate professor Dr Archana R Singh and a large number of faculty members, research scholars and students were also present on the occasion.

HT Lucknow

Scientists unlock the mystery of Earth's formation

Press Trust of India

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LONDON: New insights gleaned from volcanic rock have helped scientists unlock the mystery of how our planet evolved 4.5 billion years ago.

Studies of basalt, the material that forms from cooling lava, are being used to develop a time-line of how the planet and its atmosphere were formed. Scientists examined liquid basalt - or magma - at record high pressures and temperatures. Their findings suggest molten magma once formed an ocean within the Earth's mantle, comprising two layers of fluid separated by a crystalline layer.

Scientists agree that Earth formed around 4.5 billion years ago, at which time much of the planet was molten. As it cooled, Earth's crust was formed. Researchers are keen to pin down how the planet's core and crust took shape and how its volcanic activity developed. The discovery by a European team of scientists involving the University of Edinburgh, using hi-tech laboratories, supports current theories of how and when our planet evolved.

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Is CSIR chief orchestrating lobbying for his extension?

Aide Eggs Lab Heads To Write To PM Backing Incumbent

Mahendra Singh | TNN

New Delhi: The jostling to head the prestigious Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is turning murky amid allegations of behind the scenes lobbying to ensure an extension to the scientific body's current head Samir Brahmachari.

A clandestine effort to root for Brahmachari has come to light with the head of a science laboratory urging other science lab directors to write to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stating how the CSIR chief's continuance is essential for the organization's growth. There are around 38 science labs headed by a director working under direct supervision of CSIR.

Though Brahmachari de-

Though Brahmachari denies the charge, a trail of emails shows that a director understood to be close to him has been pushing other directors to dash off letters to the PM

nie the charge, the trail of emails in possession of TOI shows that a director, understood to be close to the CSIR director general, has been egging other directors to dash off letters to the PM.

"I have not asked any director in the CSIR system to write any such letter/email to anyone. On the contrary, I have already forwarded a list of senior scientists and direc-

tors to the government to select my successor," Brahmachari told TOI. But the "draft letter" circulated by a director of a CSIR lab with email ID nageshiyer@gmail.com to others is quite forthright, even asking recipients to modify contents appropriately before sending the missives to the PM on individual letterheads.

The draft says, "Sir, we are writing this letter with a specific request to continue Prof Brahmachari's tenure as DG, CSIR... Prof Brahmachari's tenure ends this December and we all request you to continue his term for another few years to chaperon this heterogeneous yet extraordinary enterprise in the difficult hours of haziness."

The proposed letter to the PM goes on to say, "As you

know, Prof Brahmachari, a full-bred (thoroughbred?) researcher and scientist to the core, also showed how excellent and creative administrator he is... it is therefore essential that Prof Brahmachari continues for at least a couple of years and hands over the baton to the next successor for a well-planned and smoother transition." Brahmachari's tenure ends in December.

Many in CSIR are quite taken aback by the brazenness of subordinates in recommending the case of a superior directly to the PM. But Brahmachari said, "For your information, I am eagerly looking forward to engage myself in full-time research as a JC Bose National Fellow after my retirement and to mentor young researchers."

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Even space scientists are superstitious

Chennai: Space scientists the world over may be working on advanced scientific fields. But they are not free of superstitions and beliefs, said an Indian space scientist.

While Indian space scientists pray to Lord Balaji at Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh prior to every space mission for its success, their American counterparts eat peanuts.

“More interesting is the tradition of Russian cosmonauts who urinate on the right

Orbit-raising op done

The first orbit-raising manoeuvre of India's Mars Orbiter Spacecraft was performed in the wee hours of on Thursday, two days after its successful launch by PSLV C-25 into orbit around the earth. At 1.17 am the 440 Newton Liquid Engine of the spacecraft was fired for 416 seconds by commanding it from Spacecraft Control Centre at Isro Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network. ¶¶

back wheel of their transfer bus on their way to the launch centre,” a space scientist at the Indian Space Research Organization (Isro) said.

“It is all individual beliefs. One cannot take chance with God and poison,” a former Isro chief said. According to a retired Isro rocket scientist, a project director used to wear a new shirt on the day a rocket was launched.

In line with the Indian tradition, pujas will be conducted before Isro begins to integrate the various rocket stages, he added. While Indian space scientists said that the agency as a whole does not follow any superstitious acts. IANS

Publication: The Times Of India Mumbai, Date: Nov 8, 2013; Section: Times City; Page: 5;

A SLICE OF HISTORY

Anil Shinde



RECREATING DANDI MARCH: A workshop to create sculptures of all 80 people who participated in the Dandi March along with Mahatma Gandhi was inaugurated at the IIT-B on Thursday. The sculptures will be created within IIT Bombay campus by sculptors and students from different parts of the globe. The workshop is being conducted as a part of the prestigious 'National Dandi Salt Satyagraha Memorial'

Diwali at IIT-B

A time to set aside all the misery of the past weeks and all the poor tests and exams and enjoy. A time to empty your pockets (and your parents') and splurge on those crackers and fancy lanterns. A time to finally get to that clothes pile and give them for laundry. *OK, that last one doesn't apply for everyone at home.*

But it does apply right here at IITB! Time for a well-deserved break! So yes, a majority of the students did rush home for this break courtesy Tatkal and the efforts of the Class Representatives. And the campus did wear a deserted look but that didn't stop the celebrations at this beloved (second?) home of ours.

And for those who stayed up at campus, a Diwali treat was on the cards! From washing clothes to bursting crackers to lighting up rooms to lighting up ENTIRE hostels, everyone had a whale of a time. If you were one of those freshmen in H15, there's one more reason I envy you.

If ever that quote "Simple is beautiful" rang true, it was then. What a delightful setup.

And talking of beautiful, the rangolis that the resident [Picassos](#) (at IIT we call them Rangeelas and Pixelites) made simply stood out! And not to mention the video they made to make us feel jealous. Check it out here:

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href=&amp;amp;quot;http://youtu.be/bkbdJXaTGMk&amp;amp;quot;&amp;gt;Click here to watch the video.&amp;lt;/a&amp;gt;

Courtesy: Rahul Jain

And then the crackers. It's said that the air and the view of the sky from [IIT-B](#) rooftops is so clean it's probably the only place in Mumbai you can see stars without using a telescope. But if you were one of those who stayed back, you'd definitely wonder at the number of stars you could see! Don't believe me? See this video by Jaseem Umar, a Sophomore who stayed back and made another video for all of us to get jealous:

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href=&amp;amp;quot;http://youtu.be/H7mifzHKPKY&amp;amp;quot;&amp;gt;Click here to watch the video.&amp;lt;/a&amp;gt;

And well as you might have guessed, this is your Campus Reporter writing from home (*yes, that's the reason for the relaxed style*) getting truly jealous and curious of what else happened at the institute in these four days - the four days in which we all like to stuff our mouths with sweets, wear new clothes, get pampered like 5 year old's and greet each other with "Happy Diwali." At home or at.. well, home.

(<http://www.coolage.in/2013/11/07/diwali-at-iit-b/>)