

**Newspaper Clips**  
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# IIT council meet to increase quota of students for JEE Advance

**MPOST BUREAU**

NEW DELHI: A crucial meeting of the IIT council – the apex government-nominated body of the 16 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) – on October 6 could discuss a proposal to increase the quota of students appearing for JEE Advance from 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh and recovering of running expenses of institute through student fee.

Currently, after the first stage, JEE (Main), 1.5 lakh students are selected for the second stage of the selection process, that is JEE Advance.

The meeting in Mumbai would be held within a week of the NIT council meeting on October 1, where the government decided to constitute a core committee to evaluate a proposal to hold a single entrance test for both IITs as well as NITs.

The IIT council at Mumbai

**The crucial meeting of IIT council will be held on October 6, wherein a proposal to increase the quota of students appearing for JEE Advance from 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh will be discussed**

could deliberate on adopting a funding mechanism, where the government will appreciably enhance investments in capital assets, labs, etc, but the bulk of the running expenses would be met by the students.

According to sources, this could potentially raise the tuition fee, though the increase would be met by 100 per cent interest free student loan. IITs charge Rs 90,000 from the students annually. The model has already been accepted by the NITs. On the agenda would be increasing the number of students appearing for JEE Advance from 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh from 2016 onwards.

“The number of seats available at the IITs has increased considerably as new IITs have also come into existence. But, over the past three years, only 1.5 lakh students could make it to the IIT-JEE (advanced) examination. We wanted to ensure that more students could take the competitive examination as seats have remained vacant even this year,” said an IIT director.

IITs, on the other hand, are mulling holding a single entrance test by reverting back to the old format as the existing format is proving to be “cumbersome” and “time consuming”.

Deccan Herald ND 03/10/2015 P-01

# IIT fees likely to shoot up

**Prakash Kumar**

**NEW DELHI, DHNS: The tuition fee of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) is likely to shoot up, with the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry urging the premier technical institutes to recover their operating costs from students.**

The ministry has proposed a new financial model of funding under which the Centre will provide funds to IITs to meet expenditure on re-

search, capital assets like laboratory and equipment as well as infrastructure development, while the premier institutes will have to manage their "running expenditure" on their own, collecting the cost from students.

Though a final decision in this regard will be taken at the IIT Council's upcoming meeting at IIT-Bombay on Tuesday, official sources told *Deccan Herald* the proposed funding mechanism would get the council's approval as most of

the premier technical institutes do not have any objection to it.

The National Institutes of Technology (NITs) adopted a similar funding model proposed by the HRD Ministry at its meeting in Warrangal on Thursday.

Thereby, they became the first among centrally-funded technical institutes to have accepted to meet their non-plan expenditures from their own resources.

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## IIT fees likely to shoot up

**Fees, from Page 1**

To help students cope with the burden of increased education costs, however, the ministry said at the NIT council's meeting that a new scheme for providing 100 per cent loan at 0 per cent interest would be rolled out.

"This scheme will be available to IIT students, too," said sources.

Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students will remain unaffected by the increase in tuition fees as they will continue to avail waiver of fees with the government's support, added the sources.

NITs and IITs are heading to embrace this new mechanism almost four years after a committee headed by nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar recommended it, stressing that the objective of realising autonomy would be facilitated by de-linking IIT finances from the government's non-plan support.

As of now, it is not clear how much the fee will be hiked from the current Rs 90,000 per annum for the IITs' undergraduate programmes.

The Kakodkar committee had in 2011 suggested hiking the annual fees to between Rs 2-2.5 lakh per student.

## NIT to increase its course fee by 300 per cent

<http://www.abplive.in/india/2015/10/02/article729673.ece/NIT-to-increase-its-course-fee-by-300-per-cent>

**New Delhi:** Tuition fees at the National Institutes of Technology are set to jump threefold, bringing them on a par with those at the best private engineering colleges.

Under a decision taken today, the NITs and the Indian Institutes for Science Education and Research will join the Indian Institutes of Management as publicly funded education institutions that recover their entire running costs from the students.

This could raise the tuition fees at the 31 NITs above Rs 2 lakh a year from the current Rs 70,000, two NIT directors told The Telegraph.

In contrast, the premier Indian Institutes of Technology charge about Rs 90,000 from their undergraduate students annually.

An NIT director said the increased fees might drive some good students away to private engineering institutions.

It wasn't clear how much the fees at the five IISERs, which now charge about Rs 10,000 a year, would rise.

Under a formula adopted by the NIT Council, headed by Union human resource development minister Smriti Irani, the operating costs would be collected from the students while the government would spend on capital assets such as labs and equipment and on research.

The government will set up a panel to work out the modalities. The operating cost includes the salaries of teachers and other staff as well as the expenditures on maintenance.

However, the students will receive education loans with zero interest, to be repaid after the course is over, today's meeting decided.

Education is now heavily subsidised at publicly funded institutions in India, with the government bearing a major slice of the running expenses. The few exceptions include the IIMs, where the tuition fees run into several lakh.

A panel headed by scientist Anil Kakodkar had in 2011 worked out the operating expenditure of the IITs at between Rs 2.25 lakh and Rs 2.5 lakh per student.

Today's meeting did not take any decision on proposals to change the admission norms.

The NIT selection process now gives 40 per cent weightage to candidates' Class XII board marks and 60 per cent to their JEE Main score.

A panel headed by IIT Bombay director Devang Khakhar had recommended that the board weightage be scrapped and the NITs admit students solely on the basis of their JEE Main scores.

A standing committee of the NIT Council accepted the suggestion to scrap the board weightage but recommended that the institutes admit their students on the basis of their JEE Advanced scores, like the IITs.

However, at today's meeting, some members argued that the weightage to board marks had helped more girls and rural students secure admission. It was decided to set up a committee to study the impact of the board weightage on admissions.

## Business Line ND 03/10/2015 P-11

# Have student-centric approach, Irani tells national institutes

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

Warangal, October 2

Expressing concern over growing depression among students due to non-performance in studies, Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani on Thursday announced a scheme for some national-level institutes in which weak students would be assisted by a mentor student.

### 'Hand holding' scheme

Irani chaired a meeting of the Council of National Institute of Technology, Science Education and Research held at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) here.

The Minister unveiled a slew of measures to support students.

The scheme of 'hand hold-

ing' of students who are weak in studies will be implemented in institutions, under which a mentor student will be designated to take care of such students.

The mentor students will be provided financial incentives which will be supported by the HRD Ministry to the concerned NITs.

### Policy making body

The Council is the apex policy making body for 31 NITs, five Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) and Indian Institute of Engineering, Science and Technology (IIEST), Shibpur, according to the press release issued by the NIT, Warangal.

Asking NITs, IISERs and IIEST to adopt "student-centric ap-



Smriti Irani, HRD Minister

proach", Irani emphasised that students' grievances should be addressed effectively and in a time-bound manner.

She constituted a student grievance redressal cell at the Council level. This cell will monitor the redressal of

grievances and coordinate with directors of institutions to address them effectively.

"Common counselling not only reduced stress on students and parents, but also minimised the vacant seats. Less than 2 per cent seats remained vacant after five rounds of counselling leading to all-time high numbers of admission in these institutions," she said.

Irani also took stock of the progress made by NITs under flagship programme of GIAN, Unnat Bharat, MOOCs, and Digital Library. She stressed that these institutions should take strong initiatives to gain full benefits of these schemes.

She said that performance of directors should be monitored critically.

## Norms to set up new tech institutes to get tough: AICTE

### In a bid to stem proliferation of technical institutions, AICTE is planning to revise norms for setting up of such institutions

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/management/norms-to-set-up-new-tech-institutes-to-get-tough-aicte-115100200221\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/management/norms-to-set-up-new-tech-institutes-to-get-tough-aicte-115100200221_1.html)

Setting up of new technical education institutions is soon going to get tough.

In a bid to stem the proliferation of technical institutions, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) is planning to revise norms for setting up of such institutions in the country. [AICTE](#) is the technical education regulator of the country.

Anil Sahasrabudhe, chairman, AICTE said, “We want to be more strict with setting up of new institutions. With a large number of seats going vacant in technical education institutions, the norms of setting up of new ones need a review.”

Sahasrabudhe took over as the AICTE chairman this July.

Many institutes, Sahasrabudhe said, have come forward and expressed their desire to shut down. “This has resulted in [engineering](#) seats coming down by 600,000, almost a 40 per cent decline,” he said.

Currently India has over 1.67 million engineering seats.

AICTE says it has allowed discontinuation of 757 technical and professional courses at educational institutions this year. Of the 757 courses that have been shut, 556 were engineering courses, followed by pharmacy (89), computer application (57) and [management](#) (54). Also, 83 colleges — 46 management and 31 engineering colleges — have shut.

Majority of these institutions, 345 or 45 per cent, are situated in Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

Between 2006 and 2013, engineering institutions saw a growth of 131.5 per cent, rising from 1,511 to 3,498. During the same period, the number of management institutes went up from 1,132 to 2,467, up 118 per cent.

Shankar S Mantha, ex-chairman, AICTE says the proliferation has happened due to lack of a perspective plan from the state governments.

“Till states come up with a perspective plan on their educational needs, it will not be possible to stem random proliferation. One needs to know how many students pass out of class X and XII every year. How many of them opt for science, arts or commerce streams? States have to make an estimate of such data and then decide on the seats required for higher studies. These plans can then be discussed in the Cabinet and facilitate decisions,” said Mantha.

Mantha said, in the past, when AICTE had denied permission to individuals or institutions from setting up new institutes, it was taken to court.

“If states have a perspective plan, AICTE can assess which areas require technical institutions to be set up. In the absence of a plan, it becomes difficult to argue in the court why AICTE denied permission to an institution,” added Mantha.

B-school directors say the norms to set up new institutions are not in sync with changing times. For instance, a management institute does not need acres of land to set up a campus.

“AICTE should ask for built up area and not land. In addition to this, AICTE emphasises on keeping physical copies of books and journals. In this digital age, neither students nor the faculty uses hard copies. E-books should be emphasised upon,” said the director of a B-school from Noida.

AICTE, said professors, should encourage good institutions and not leave it all for the market forces to decide.

“Non-serious institutions are indulging in “hire and fire” policy. This demotivates academicians. AICTE has to address all these issues,” the director added.

## **PU slips in global varsity ranking**

### **Sources attribute the slip to the new criteria to rate research and ongoing issues in the university**

<http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/pu-slips-in-global-varsity-ranking/>

Slipping by 275 points, the Panjab University (PU) has appeared in the 501-600 slab of the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for 2015-16.

In 2014, the university was ranked in the 276-300 group and in 2013, in the 226-250 category.

Commenting on the slip in the university’s ranking, PU vice-chancellor Arun Kumar Grover said, “The competition is high among the leading universities and other institutions of the country. All the universities, IITs and IISc have their unique strengths and get different scores according to different criteria and parameters. But, it is a matter of satisfaction that PU is consistently being ranked among the top universities of the country by different rankings.”

Grover added that, “With the support of students, research scholars and teachers, the university is striving hard to further excel in the field of education and research.”

The Panjab University has appeared in the 501-600 slab of world rankings along with Jadavpur University, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Amrita University, Andhra University, University of Calcutta, University of Delhi (DU) and Savitribai Phule Pune University have been ranked in the group of 601-800.

Indian Institute of Science has been ranked in the 251-300 category and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay in the 351-400. IIT Delhi, IIT Kharagpur and IIT Madras are placed in the 401-500 category. IIT Guwahati, IIT Kanpur, IIT Roorkee, Jadavpur University and Panjab University are in the 501-600 category.

Grover attributed the slip in the global rankings to the new criteria for rating research and citations used by Times Higher Education.

“Earlier, the Times Higher Education survey was calculating score of citations on the basis of the data drawn from the academic journals indexed by Thomson Reuters Web of Science database. However, this year they have changed to Elsevier’s Scopus database. The Thomson Reuters and Elsevier’s Scopus have different

database. Therefore, there has been a change in the citations score of the university, which resulted in the change in ranking,” a PU spokesperson said.

“The slip in the ranking is probably because of the fact that owing to several ongoing issues, the university has failed to deliver on key areas like research and global participation. More focus needs to be given to improvement in quality of education at the university,” a university professor said.

According to key statistics declared on the THE website, the Panjab University has 16,691 students with a student to staff ratio of 23:9. The university has 1 per cent international students with a female to male ratio of 46:54.

## **FYUP-backer UGC chief to head panel to select DU VC**

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/FYUP-backer-UGC-chief-to-head-panel-to-select-DU-VC/articleshow/49188949.cms>

NEW DELHI: University Grants Commission chairman Ved Prakash will chair the search team for the new vice-chancellor of Delhi University. The three-member committee also comprise former CAG Vinod Rai and former ISRO chairman K Kasturirangan who was nominated by the university's executive council. The eventful term of current VC Dinesh Singh will end on October 29.

The appointment of the new VC will be closely watched by the academic circle, given the controversies in DU regarding the now defunct Four-Year-Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) and other issues. In fact, Singh was issued a show-cause notice by the HRD ministry earlier this year over FYUP.

Prakash's appointment as the team's chairperson came as a surprise for the university. Apart from the fact that his appointment as the VC of National University of Educational Planning and Administration, before he became the UGC chairman, is sub-judice and is up for hearing on November 19, it is also a well-known fact that FYUP was introduced with his knowledge and Prakash had even publically praised Dinesh Singh for the programme. However, after the NDA government took over, the UGC did a u-turn and asked DU to roll back FYUP in 2014.

"The news that Ved Praksh is the chairman of the search committee has brought some discomfort. The UGC chairman had supported professor Dinesh Singh and his team during the implementation of FYUP. He also turned a deaf ear to representations on other important issues, including violation of the reservation policy. He openly expressed his admiration for Dinesh Singh on platforms including the university's cultural fest, Antardhwani. We fear a conflict of interest since DU needs to be freed from all those responsible for the mess created under Dinesh Singh's administration," said Abha D Habib, DUTA member.

## SPACE

# NASA captures Pluto's moon Charon in stunning detail

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, October 2

NASA's New Horizons spacecraft has returned the best colour and the highest resolution images yet of Pluto's largest moon, Charon, which show a surprisingly complex and violent history.

The image combines blue, red and infrared images taken by the spacecraft's Ralph/Multispectral Visual Imaging Camera (MVIC); the colours are processed to best highlight the variation of surface properties across Charon.

Charon's colour palette is not as diverse as Pluto's; most striking is the reddish north polar region, informally named Mordor Macu-



An image of Charon AP

la, NASA said. Charon is 1,214 kilometres across. The image resolves details as small as 2.9 kilometres.

At half the diameter of Pluto, Charon is the largest satellite relative to its planet in the solar system. Charon's cratered uplands at the top are broken by series of

canyons, and replaced on the bottom by the rolling plains of the informally named Vulcan Planum. The scene covers Charon's width of 1,214 kilometres and resolves details as small as 0.8 kilometres. Another image shows the details of a belt of fractures and canyons just north of the moon's equator.

This great canyon system stretches more than 1,600 kilometres across the entire face of Charon and likely around onto Charon's far side. Four times as long as the Grand Canyon, and twice as deep in places, these faults and canyons indicate a titanic geological upheaval in Charon's past.



# Higher learning and the community

*In the process of engaging the academic community in outreach activities, students will be sensitised to social issues that concern the nation, writes G. Palanithurai*

**Governance at grass root level is not always based on the rule of law and provisions of the Constitution, but on practices of the community. On many occasions, we see a clash between community practices and Constitutional provisions. Given this, governance has to operate in the new paradigm**

The present government has unequivocally demonstrated that it will follow a different paradigm of governance in which cooperative federalism will be the guiding principle. In the process, much responsibility and autonomy will be given to the state governments for achieving development through effective planning and decision making. All development-related activities will be done through a synergetic action between state and local governments, and for which adequate resources will be provided. This message has been sent out through two major decisions, namely, abolition of the Central Planning Commission, and approval of the Fourteenth Finance Commission's report on resource sharing; all within the neo-liberal framework of development. There is no ambiguity or vacillation in taking this stand on governance and development. The above paradigm is visible through the Central government's decision to create NITI Aayog, proclaiming that the Centre will be involved in policy-making and not in preparing schemes and programmes for the states and local bodies. The federal government unambiguously stated that it will follow neo-liberal policies, but all safety nets have to be created for the poor only by the state governments and local bodies as they are closer to people at operational point.

When the Central Planning Commission was abolished, the Central government indicated that the local bodies and state governments have to initiate the planning process from the lower levels. Massive amounts of resources are given to state governments and local governments to carry out activities as they plan, with the active participation of all sections of society and particularly the poor, marginalised, and vulnerable groups. Till date, serious intellectual activities have been conducted at the level of the erstwhile Central Planning Commission, Central Finance Commissions, and the various ministries of Government of India. However, at the state and local levels, all governance and development-related activities had been carried out only by the bureaucrats of respective levels. The state governments considered themselves as only implementing agencies of schemes of the Central Government.



Representational Image

Barring a few state governments, many do not have adequate resources to evolve schemes and programmes for development. The efficiency of lower level bureaucracy is always questioned as they lack professionalism. There is always a gap between the Central government's decision making process and implementation by the state and local governments. People who are involved in implementation of schemes are poor in professional competence as there are no adequate professional training institutions offering training and capacity building. Further, the institutional structure, design, and manpower at the grass root levels are always inadequate. There are fewer facilities and fewer professionals here compared to the Central government functionaries. In the above given context, people's expectation from the government is increasing as political parties practice competitive populism for electoral politics.

Apart from the above, the life led by people is not based on science and

technology but on cultural practices. Governance at grass root level is not based on rule of law and provisions of the Constitution, but on practices of the community. On many occasions we see a clash between community practices and Constitutional provisions. Given this, governance has to operate in the new paradigm. It has been noticed that while evaluating the effective resource utilisation, both the local bodies and state governments are criticised by the Central government. The Centre often cites evaluation reports and audit reports to push its claims. Why do the state and local governments deviate from the well-established financial framework of norms? The reasons are many. Some of them prefer closeness of the government to people, proliferation of rules and regulations by the Central government schemes and programmes by the state and local bodies without giving them flexibility to accommodate regional variations, poor professionalism of personnel, and competitive populism

practiced by the political parties for electoral prospects.

But the present context is complex. The state governments must reorient themselves fast to cope with the expectation of the Centre in reshaping the process of governance to take advantage of the new paradigm. The new context, envisages the state governments and local governments to act in a transparent and professional man. They have to work with some active participation of people, and on the demand of people to achieve a better outcome from economic growth. For transforming the process of governance and development, institutions have to be strengthened and professionally equipped, for which the state and local governments can involve institutions of higher learning. As they have grown phenomenally, they can be involved in a systematic way in the process of social transformation. 722 universities, 39000 colleges, 11000 research institutions, 80,00,000 students are the real source of strength,

and they can be involved in preparing a data base, micro level planning, and implementation. Even if all institutions of higher learning fully funded by the Government can be involved in this process as they have 500 social science departments with 250000 teachers. The 200 social science research institutes funded by the Central and state governments should be involved in micro level research and planning.

From creating awareness to skill development and knowledge sharing, institutions of higher learning have to reach out to communities. In the process, the state and local bodies can act more professionally. For an effective governance process, people will be mobilised for achieving development and strengthening democracy. By doing so, the linkage between these institutions and the communities becomes a movement. The interface between society and institutions of higher learning will be meaningful and mutually beneficial if

they work sustainably. Apart from the above, the quality of education will be enhanced. As the linkage between industry and technical education, the linkage between higher learning in social science and society will enhance the quality of higher education which will be both productive and creative. Both community and the educational institutions will find ways for engagement. Their engagement will make every university a worthwhile space. In the process of engaging the academic community in outreach activities, students will be sensitised to social issues. They will develop concern for the community. Academics and students will realise their social responsibility. It will serve not only the students but also the entire society directly or indirectly. Academic programmes and research programmes will be socially more relevant. It needs only a framework and the University Grants Commission can evolve that framework.

*(The views expressed are strictly personal)*