

Newspaper Clips Oct. 30, 2015

Times Of India ND 30/10/2015 P-17

Clarification by HRD ministry

With regard to the news report "3 IIT Deans threaten to quit over HRD interference", the HRD ministry has said that forwarding a grievance petition for consideration at the level of the board of governors is normal action as in all grievance petitions and standard operating procedure.

"It is up to the BOG to accept it or reject the petition," the ministry has said. The ministry has said that it had acted as per the Act and statutes and principles and practice of good governance. The ministry has regretted that its action has been termed as interference and said it was working with IITs for building them into robust institutions with adequate financial and administrative autonomy.

Akshaya Mukul responds:

The HRD has not explained that if forwarding grievances is "standard operating procedure" how not a single grievance related to a purely aca-

3 IIT-D deans threaten to quit over HRD interference

Senate Rebuffs Nudge To Review Girl's Admission

Akshaya Mukul
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New Delhi: The IIT Delhi senate has rebuffed the HRD ministry's intervention in the matter asking it to reconsider its decision to accept the admission of a part-time PhD student in bio-science who was found to have concealed facts regarding her work experience. Three of the six deans of the IIT threatened to resign.

PHD STUDENT AT CENTRE OF ROW

• IIT Delhi cancels admission of Akshaya Tangri, a part-time PhD student, saying she had concealed facts about her work experience.

• Akshaya claimed she had worked with a consultancy firm from June 2009 although she was studying at IIT.

• HRD admission requires full-time work experience. Akshaya said she worked in her dad's firm after classes.

• Akshaya's father Nitin Tangri petitioned HRD which sends it to HRD ministry.

• Ministry asks IIT to put the petition up for "suitable verification/redressal" by board of governors.

• The HRD ministry's Office transferred a petition filed by Nitin Tangri, father of PhD applicant Akshaya Tangri, to the IIT ministry for suitable action. The secretary in the letter dated 28/10/15 said that the petition should have been referred by the secretary higher education, to the IIT director instead of the senate which is responsible for main-

demical matter like the case mentioned in the report has been referred directly to the BOG, IIT Delhi, by the ministry for verification/redressal. The case under discussion was referred by HRD despite IIT clearly stating that "act and behaviour of Ms Tangri not only made her ineligible to the course/programme but also renders her liable to disciplinary action for her academic misconduct."

The HRD referral came after due process had been followed by the institute. IIT Senate sources maintain that all such matters are settled through proper institutional mechanism which has sufficient checks and balances.

HRD Ministry blasts Media for IIT Delhi mischievous report

<http://www.niticentral.com/2015/10/29/hrd-ministry-blasts-media-for-iit-delhi-mischievous-report-336074.html>



R. Subrahmanyam
Additional Secretary (TE)



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To
The Editor
Times of India.

28th Oct 2015

Sir,

The Ministry of HRD has noted with regret a report '3 IIT-D Deans threaten to quit over HRD interference' published front page in your Newspaper today.

To keep the record straight, it is clarified that as per the provisions of the Act and the Statutes, and the principles and practice of good governance, the Ministry has forwarded a grievance petition for consideration, verification/redressal at the level of the Board of Governors, which is the Body to exercise the general superintendence of the Institute as per the Section 13 of the Institute of Technology Act 1961. It is up to the BoG to accept it or reject the petition. This is a normal action as in all grievance petitions and standard operating procedure. To term it as 'interference' is not only distorting facts, but is possibly, irresponsible as well.

The Ministry is working with the IITs for building them into robust institutions with adequate financial and administrative autonomy. Several measures are on the anvil for promoting crucial and socially relevant research in these Institutions. While we take measures for promoting these Institutions at the global level, reports like this, which are intended just to create a controversy where there is none, distort perceptions and dilute constructive efforts.

Before filing the report, the reporter has not checked with the Minister, or any other officer in the Ministry or even in the IIT Delhi, although all of them are available on phone or in person. You would agree that such reporting would not uphold values of professional journalism.

I would be grateful if these are clarified through your newspaper.

Yours sincerely


(R. Subrahmanyam)



IIT-Delhi deans threaten to quit due to Smriti Irani's interference in academic matters

<http://www.prepsure.com/news/iit-delhi-deans-threaten-to-quit-due-to-smriti-iranis-interference-in-academic-matters/>

The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi senate has threatened to quit in the protest against Human Resource Development minister Smirit Irani. Three out of six deans have retaliated at the HRD minister's interference in the academic matters. The senate is asking HRD minister to re-consider the decision of cancelling the admission of a part-time Ph d student under humanities domain who was found guilty to have concealed facts related to her work experience.

The deans alleged that the petition filed by Rajeev Tangri, father of applicant; Aleesha Tangri should have been referred to IIT Director and not the senate responsible for maintaining academic standards. Earlier in December 2014, the IIT Delhi faculty forum requested Director R Shevgaonkar to withdraw his resignation over which a controversy had erupted, describing him as a man of "dignity and integrity". The request came even as Chairman of the IIT-D's Board of Governors Vijay Bhatkar met HRD Minister Smriti Irani.

"The faculty of IIT Delhi stands by the decisions that its administration has taken to uphold the autonomy of the Institute. We request the Director, IIT Delhi to withdraw his resignation," the faculty forum said in a statement. The resignation has not yet been accepted.

Shevgaonkar had last Friday forwarded his resignation to Bhatkar citing "personal reasons" even as a media report suggested that he was under pressure from the HRD Ministry. The Ministry denied that any pressure was put on Shevgaonkar that may have made him quit.

Sources in the HRD Ministry indicated that faulting the Director on the issue of the setting up of an extension research campus in Mauritius would prove counter productive as it had approval of the Ministry itself and an MoU in this regard was signed in Mauritius last year in the presence of the then HRD Minister M M Pallam Raju. An enquiry is already underway about the MoU which has been at the centre of the controversy ever since Shevgaonkar quit.

An IIT statement issued by the acting registrar yesterday had, however, said the campus in Mauritius is not an "extension campus of IIT-D" but an independent research academy named 'International Institute of Technology Research Academy' (IITRA). "IIT-D's role is only advisory in nature," it said.

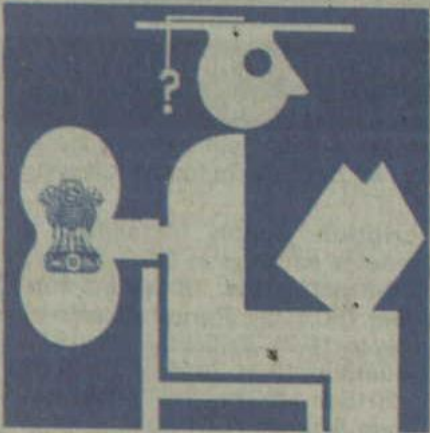
Sources said that HRD Minister Smriti Irani met President Pranab Mukherjee, who is the visitor of the IITs. While it remained unclear what transpired at the meeting, HRD Ministry sources maintained that Irani went to Rashtrapati Bhavan to enquire about the President's health.

Let IITs Breathe

Government must not undermine the autonomy of higher educational institutes

When the autonomy of India's finest institutes of higher education seems to be under threat, it's time to be afraid for the future of education in the country. This week the human resource development (HRD) ministry once again meddled in the affairs of IIT Delhi by asking it to review its decision to cancel the admission of a PhD student, who had submitted incorrect information regarding her work experience. Though the institute's senate rejected the directive, the incident has brought the issue of the ministry's repeated attempts to undermine the autonomy of IITs – the lynchpin on which their excellence rests – back into focus.

In December last year IIT Delhi director R K Shevgaonkar resigned his post following differences with the HRD ministry. Earlier this year nuclear scientist Anil Kakodkar too resigned as the chair-



man of the board of governors of IIT Bombay, citing interference from the HRD ministry. The latter has not stopped short of intervening even in petty matters. For instance, HRD minister Smriti Irani issued a directive to IITs and IIMs last year, asking them to segregate vegetarian and non-vegetarian students in their dining halls.

In short, the government has been making regular stabs at thrusting its own agenda – and people – on these in-

stitutes. In the same vein, it foisted B-grade actor Gajendra Chauhan as director of Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, triggering student unrest that went on for months. The point is that the excellence of these institutes, which makes them a bulwark against the largely shoddy quality of the Indian education system, has been built on their autonomy. The government runs the risk of destroying them and stifling scientific thought and research – and much else besides – if it persists in interfering with them. Along with writers and artistes, the mood of India's scientific community is sullen today. Scientist P M Bhargava plans to return his Padma Bhushan in protest against the "government's attack on rationalism, reason, and science".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke eloquently at the Africa Summit yesterday about the need to develop scientific capabilities and human capital. Perhaps a start can be made towards tackling pervasive mediocrity in Indian higher education by inducting talent at the head of the human resources ministry itself. Smriti Irani has strong political instincts; she can be moved to a political role.



■ Facebook chairman and CEO Mark Zuckerberg (C) at IIT Delhi. HT FILE

‘Committed to keep Internet.org open’

Saubhadra Chatterji

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NEW DELHI: Amid intense debate over net neutrality, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg on Thursday said he is committed to keep the Internet.org open with no restrictions on user’s choices. In a candid admission, he said that his initial plan of Internet.org is changed after the debate over free internet in the US and India.

US ambassador Richard Verma, three MPs from Parliament’s information technology committee, Amitabh Kant from department of industrial policy and promotion secretary, were among the 12 people present in the closed-door meeting with the Facebook CEO where the issue of net neutrality and digital media giant’s controversial Internet.org or Free Basics programme were discussed at length.

“We were really pleased to see that Zuckerberg committed

to the basic principles of net neutrality. He assured us that Free Basics will not do any gate-keeping,” said independent Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrashekhar.

The standing committee is preparing a report on net neutrality in India. Many members of the panel have so far strongly opposed any attempts by cellular service providers to give preferential treatment to online content for commercial gains.

Anurag Thakur, chairman of the panel, reportedly told Zuckerberg the panel will talk to all sides – consumer forums, government representatives as well as telecom operators – before preparing their report on net neutrality.

Sources added that Zuckerberg told the audience Facebook expects to invest the lion’s share of its \$3 billion fund to improve digital reach in India following what he saw as clearer policies of the government.

Amar Ujala ND 30/10/2015 P-16

सरस्ते मकान बनाने में मदद करेगा आईआईटी कानपुर

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। आईआईटी कानपुर सभी के लिए आवास योजना के अंतर्गत शहरों में दो करोड़ सस्ते मकान बनाने में केंद्र की मदद करेगा। सरकार ने आईआईटी कानपुर के साथ मिलकर नए घरों की मजबूती और बेहतर डिजाइन के लिए अध्ययन करने का फैसला लिया है। आवास और शहरी गरीबी उन्मूलन मंत्रालय ने नई आवास प्रौद्योगिकी को बढ़ावा देने और उन्हें लोकप्रिय बनाने के उद्देश्य से यह फैसला लिया है।

मंत्रालय ने इस संबंध में आईआईटी कानपुर के जरिये तैयार किये गये प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दे दी है। इस अध्ययन के लिए 31.34 लाख रुपये की आर्थिक सहायता की भी सहमति दी गई है। इस परीक्षण अध्ययन से देश में कम कीमत में मजबूत मकान बनाने की उम्मीद की जा रही है। इसका लाभ

मकानों की मजबूती और बेहतर डिजाइन के लिए होगा नई तकनीकों का परीक्षण

केंद्र ने दी आईआईटी के प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी

मुख्य रूप से आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर तबके और निम्न आय वर्ग को मिलेगा।

वर्तमान में नई प्रौद्योगिकी के लिए कोई भारतीय मानक या आचार संहिता नहीं है। इस परीक्षण में सफल होने वाली तकनीक को देश में बढ़ावा दिया जाएगा। उल्लेखनीय है कि यह अध्ययन प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना के प्रौद्योगिकी सह-मिशन के तहत होगा। जिसमें उत्तम गुणवत्ता वाले घरों के तेजी से निर्माण के लिए आधुनिक और हरित प्रौद्योगिकी (ग्रीन टेक्नोलॉजी) को अपनाया जाएगा।

Economic Times ND 30/10/2015 P-03

FINANCIAL PUSH Institutes will be granted funds ranging from ₹100 to 500 cr for next 3-4 years to improve their performance and find a place among the top 100 on global academic rankings

Centre to Fund Top 10 Institutes, Help them Break into Big League

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New Delhi: The Centre will soon pick 10 higher education institutes with potential and provide them with substantial funding over the next four years so that Indian institutes can finally storm into the top 100 on global academic rankings like QS and Times like neighbours China and South Korea.

The human resource development (HRD) ministry has drawn up a list of 8-10 institutes of high academic standing that are currently among the top 500 institutes in global academic rankings and have the potential to perform much better. These 10 institutes, it is proposed, will be granted funds — ranging from ₹100-500 crore for the next 3-4 years so that they can create world class research infrastructure and laboratories. The end target is getting Indian institutes among global top 100.

Some of the top ranking IITs besides the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore are among the institutes identified so far for the fund boost.

“Based on the rankings and performance of Indian institutes from 2013, 2014 and 2015, we have identified 8-10 institutes that are among the top 500 in the rankings and are consistently improv-



FILE PHOTO

Based on performance and rankings, the HRD ministry has identified IITs which will receive government funding

ing their performance over the years. These are likely to include IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, IIT Kanpur, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Madras, IIT Roorkee, IIT Guwahati and Indian Institute of Science and Bangalore. The idea is to incentivise institutes that perform well enough to compete at the global level. Institutes have sought funds around ₹300-500 crore, the proposal is being examined to assess how much money can be granted,” a senior official from the HRD ministry told ET on condition of anonymity.

While there is not a single Indian institute among the top 100 or top 200 on inter-

national rankings but this year when IIT Delhi and IISc Bangalore finally registered their presence among top 200 on the QS rankings, neighbours China and South Korea have quite a few institutes among the top 50. Both countries apart from Singapore have invested considerably with funding and policy support to ensure a major quality upgrade in its higher education sector.

The Modi government has taken the cue and the Centre is preparing to pump in substantial funds in 10 top Indian institutes so that they can climb up the tally. The Smriti Irani-led ministry is mov-

ing the plan as a key part of its budget proposal. It is learnt that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also quite keen that a concerted effort be made to ensure the same. President Pranab Mukherjee has often lamented the dismal performance of our institutes in rankings year after year. This issue in fact is also set to come up for discussion at the visitor's conference to be held next week at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Indian institutes, incidentally do not score well on the parameters where academic reputation of the institutes is measured through a global survey.

Hindustan Times ND 30/10/2015 P-15

Centre wants top institutes to research on social topics



IIT Delhi.

Neelam Pandey

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NEW DELHI: The NDA regime wants researchers at IITs, NITs and other universities across the country to take up more socially relevant subjects including climate change, providing sustainable habitat and clean energy.

To encourage students to take up such subjects, the human

resource development (HRD) ministry is looking at funding such research areas including defence and security, information and communication technology, better consumer goods, water resources, healthcare and sanitation.

The ambitious project named Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT) is likely to be launched by the President and Prime Minister on November

4-5 during the conference of vice-chancellors and directors of IITs.

IIT Kanpur is the national IMPRINT coordinator and the 10 key areas have different coordinators to focus on each area. Under this project, a new engineering education policy will also be formed. The government is of the view that the 10 themes finalised by it should spread across the country. “This will not only cover the

MPhil and PhD students but even faculty members who want to take up advanced level of research,” said a senior HRD official.

“This will increase research activities in these areas as there is more focus due to extra funding. But it won't have any direct impact on research in other areas because funding for every kind of research is available,” said a senior faculty member from IIT-Delhi.

Mint ND 30/10/2015 P-08

7TH PAY COMMISSION

IAS officers against any move to restore parity with other services

More than 100 letters to the govt demand to maintain the edge that IAS officers get over services such as IRS, IPS

BY REMYA NAIR,
MAYANK AGGARWAL &
YOGENDRA KALAVAPALLI

NEW DELHI/HYDERABAD

Apprehending that the seventh central pay commission may restore parity between different government services in terms of compensation and career progression, Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers have shot off many letters to the department of personnel and training opposing any such move.

More than 100 letters from IAS officers of different cadres and batches have been sent to the secretary of department of personnel and training in the last few days, just a few weeks before the seventh pay commission submits its report to the government, according to two people familiar with the development.

Mint has seen a few of these letters, which highlight the deep rivalries between the cadre of various All India services.

The seventh pay commission, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ashok Kumar Mathur, is expected to submit its report in the third week of November.

The common thread across these letters is a demand to maintain the edge that IAS officers get when it comes to pay and empanelment compared with other services such as the Indian Revenue Service and Indian Police Service.

Dismissing the argument by the other services that they too qualify for recruitment after tak-



PRIYANKA PARASHAR/MINT

Case against parity: Officers say they were empanelled in IAS as they performed better in the Civil Service Exams than their counterparts in the other services.

ing the same exam, IAS officers point out that they were empanelled in IAS as they performed better in the Civil Service Exams than their counterparts in the other services.

"Equality of opportunity to perform is the backbone of healthy competition but equality of rewards irrespective of one's performance is an antithesis to the whole idea of competition," said one of the letters.

Another letter drew parallel to the recent world championships where Jamaican Usain Bolt won the 100 metres race by 0.01 second. "Can the silver medallist now claim that he should also be given a gold medal because he lost out so narrowly?" the letter questioned.

There are around 4,500 IAS officers and a majority of the country's top policymaking positions currently are held by officers of this cadre. Most of the posts of joint secretary and above are dominated by IAS

officers.

IAS officers also pointed out that they did not bargain for pay and rank parity when they chose the service that requires them to work long hours, and often in remote locations. They added that it will be unfair if the latest pay commission and the Union government decide to apply parity among different services "retrospectively" because they did not bargain for it when they opted for IAS.

One of the two persons cited in the first instance pointed out that 99% of civil services aspirants target the prestigious IAS cadre. "But if the seventh pay commission recommends bringing all central services on par with IAS, its charm would be lost and administrative service will no longer attract the brightest talent," he said.

To be sure, officers who belong to other services such as Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Forest Service (IFoS),

Indian Revenue Service (IRS), Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS) and others do not agree with this claim of their IAS counterparts having an "edge". The officers from these services have been actively demanding pay parity with IAS and Indian Foreign Service Officers and have made representations to the seventh pay commission.

As per their arguments, an IAS or an IFS officer gets ₹4,000-5,000 a month more than officers belonging to other services after four years of service, which goes up to ₹15,000-16,000 per month by the 14th year and ₹18,000-20,000 per month by the 17th year of service.

That's because IAS and IFS officers are accorded additional increments at 3% each over their basic pay.

In its representation to the seventh pay commission, the Indian Civil & Administrative Service (Central) Association, the representative body of IAS officers, demanded that the salary structure of the officers should be comparable to private sector packages. The letter proposed benchmarking the salaries of the officers with the private sector's salaries but with a discount to factor in the "public service" component.

"It is a matter of opinion as different services will have different opinions (about pay parity and opportunities for higher posts). But there is a sound case for reforming the colonial system (of services), which we continued with after independence. Even today, some people who are eligible for IAS in civil services examinations prefer customs and revenue for more money," said constitutional expert Subhash Kashyap, referring to the corruption that's associated with those services.

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