

## Newspaper Clips Oct. 7, 2015

Pioneer ND 07/10/2015

P-05

# Move to hike IIT fees put on hold

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The decision to increase tuition fees for students of IITs were put on hold at the crucial Council of IITs meeting chaired by HRD Minister Smriti Irani in Mumbai on Tuesday. The meeting agenda had proposed a funding mechanism for IITs to support the running costs by incurring lump sum costs on students but sources said that the HRD Minister asked to put the item on hold.

On the other hand, the Council decided to enhance Government investments for building world class infrastructure. A committee of directors would examine ways to enhance loans to students, and maintain and enhance scholarships to needy students, especially those from the SC/ST/economically

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The current system of admission through a two-stage entrance was also reviewed by the council. It was decided that the system would be examined in depth by a group of eminent persons to determine whether it needed modification. Their recommendations would be provided by the first week of November 2015.

Chairing the meeting, Irani emphasised that IITs carry a major responsibility of facilitating the Make in India cam-

paign by participating in research and innovating processes to improve the competitive edge of Indian manufacturing on the global stage.

“Already many IITs are engaged in research, but they need to reach the frontiers of knowledge. It is also essential that socially relevant themes are given focus in research,” Irani said expressing the need to build IITs into robust and autonomous institutions, and become global centres of knowledge.

Higher Education Secretary

Vinay Sheel Oberoi, along with senior officers participated in the meeting along with Chairmen and Directors of all IITs. The Council of IIT is the apex policy making body for the all the IITs.

It was also decided that a system for admitting foreign students would be put in place, with preference being given to students from SAARC and African countries. All IITs would participate in the National Ranking Framework and the Rashtriya Avishkaar Abhiyaan by adopting the schools in their vicinity.

Prior to the Council meeting, the Minister inaugurated a new 1,000-seater hostel for girl students and visited the National Centre for Aerospace innovation and research (NCAIR) in IIT Bombay.

Deccan Herald ND 07/10/2015 P-07

# IITs to study plan to collect operational cost from students

**Prakash Kumar**

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will examine how the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry's proposal to collect operational cost from students through tuition fee could be implemented with introduction of an easy loan for "needy students".

For this, a committee of IIT directors was set up at a meeting of the council of the premier technical institutes held at IIT-Bombay on Tuesday. HRD Minister Smriti Irani presided the meeting.

"The committee of (IIT) directors would examine ways to enhance loans to students, and maintain and enhance scholarships to needy students, especially those from the SC/ST/economically weaker sections," a Ministry official

said. The Council also proposed providing "freeships" to differently-abled students on implementation HRD Ministry's proposal.

The Council of the National Institutes of Technology (NITs) at its meeting recently decided to recover operational cost of education from the students through the tuition fee, accepting a new mechanism for central funding proposed by the HRD Ministry.

As the implementation of the Ministry's proposal will result in hike of the tuition fee of the NITs from the current Rs 90,000, the Ministry assured that a scheme for providing 100 per cent loan with zero percent rate of interest would be introduced for the students to help them meet the increased cost of education.

Under the new funding

mechanism adopted by the NIT council, the Centre will provide funds for expenditure on research, capital assets like laboratory and equipments as well as infrastructure development while the NITs will have to manage their "running expenditure" on their own collecting the cost from students.

The IIT council also discussed the demands of some of the 15 premier technical institutes to review the format of the entrance examination conducted in two parts-JEE-Main and JEE-Advance.

"It was decided that the system would be examined in depth by a group of eminent persons to determine whether it needed modification. Their recommendations would be provided by the first week of November 2015," a Ministry official said.

**DH News Service**

# Raising fees is not an option for IITs

## Committee of three directors to be set up for recommendation on restructuring govt funding

AMITA SHARMA

New Delhi

THE IIT Council that met on Tuesday was expected to discuss fee hike so that the strain on the government in mobilising financial resources needed to run the IITs — now increasing in numbers and burgeoning in size and scope of activities, is somewhat eased. This was, however, left undecided. Instead, it was decided to set up a committee of three directors to recommend restructuring government funding of IITs.

Restructuring funding was part of the recommendations of the Kakodkar Committee made in April 2011. The committee was set up by the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) to suggest reforms for making the IITs world class. The Kakodkar committee recommended that the entire capital expenses and expansion budget come from MHRD. This included providing each IIT Rs 15 lakh per additional student as one-time capital expense and Rs 1.5 lakh per student as capital grant every year. Since the older IITs have worn out infrastructure, it also suggested a one-time regeneration capital grant of Rs 5 lakh per existing student.

Similarly, it suggested that the new IITs be given Rs 10 crore per year for five years to build an endowment. However, operational expenses were to be met by the IITs from their own resources, principally by increasing tuition fees. To be able to pay



### Final result

- Restructuring funding was part of the recommendations of the Kakodkar Committee made in April 2011 by MHRD
- To be able to pay higher fees, a student-loan scheme by the government was also recommended by the Kakodkar Committee
- Already, many students find the expenses at IITs high. Fee hike may deny good, but poor students the opportunity of studying in the IITs

higher fees, a student-loan scheme by the government was also recommended.

Before taking a view on fee hike, the government must consider the possible debilitating consequences of student loans. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York's Quarterly Report on Household Debt and Credit, total student loan debt, across all age groups, stood at nearly \$1 trillion (\$956 billion) in the fall of 2012, having more than tripled in the last 9 years. Student loan debt is the largest form of consumer debt outside of mortgages. Career choices should not be compelled by debt burdens. IIT tuition fees were last hiked from Rs 50,000 a year to Rs 90,000 a year in 2013. Al-

ready, many students find the expenses at IITs high. Fee hike may deny good, but poor students the opportunity of studying in the IITs.

No major research university in the world has risen based on student fees. At MIT, a private university, the total income (2013) was \$3.2 billion, of which, government funds amounted to 49 per cent, industry funds were only 3 per cent and tuition fees accounted for 10 per cent (\$41,000). At the University of California, Berkeley, which is a public university, of the total income of \$2.3 billion (2012), government funds amounted to 41 per cent, industry funds 7 per cent and tuition fees 22 per cent (\$13,000). At the National

University of Singapore, which is also a public institute, the total income (2013) was \$2.2 billion, of which government funds were 64 per cent, industry funds 3 per cent and tuition fees 15 per cent (\$7,500). At all these top universities, only 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the revenue comes from fees.

Tuition fees alone cannot fund all operational costs. Fee exemptions to 45 per cent IIT students halve the collection per student. This waived amount is not reimbursed. A lump sum non-plan grant takes care of salaries and maintenance. Expecting a public institute to fund its operational costs from fees will make salaries for the faculty uncertain and quite akin to some state government colleges.

At least 64,000 students are pursuing education at the IITs, which together admit some 8,500 undergraduates every year. Even now, the IITs are struggling with problems of infrastructure deficiencies like buildings and classroom and faculty shortage. A parliamentary panel on human resource development recently underlined the persistent faculty shortage across the IITs.

The new committee set up to examine fund restructuring for the IITs needs to carefully consider that it is not wedged into restructuring funds in a way that divests the government's financial responsibility toward the IITs and transfers it to the students, as private institutes do, thereby hiving off the

IITs into a niche economic class. Since the government has drastically cut plan funds to the IITs and even the non-plan funds that cater to essentials like salaries and operational bills have been squeezed since the last financial year almost by nearly Rs 80-90 crore for some of the older IITs, will the government find cash to run a loan fund corpus or reimburse operational deficits or augment capital and expansion commitments?

The committee should take note that more than a year ago, the previous government had approved the block grant scheme recommended by the Kakodkar committee. This was intended to convert non-plan budget into a block grant to ring fence the IITs expenses on salaries and maintenance on the basis of a per capita per student operational cost indexed to inflation.

Despite the cabinet approval under the previous regime, the finance ministry did not rustle up the funds and the block grant meant to liberate the IITs from budget eccentricities was 'blocked'. By this precedence, restructuring may be a euphemism for cutting funds. The IITs may end up losing bare bones money for salaries, scholarships, and operations as well as not enter the promised land of plenty, with buildings, equipment and growth. More government support to IITs, not less is the need of the hour.

amitasharma  
@mydigitalfc.com

# IIT Council defers decision on fee hike, financial autonomy

## One exam for IIT, NIT & all engineering colleges

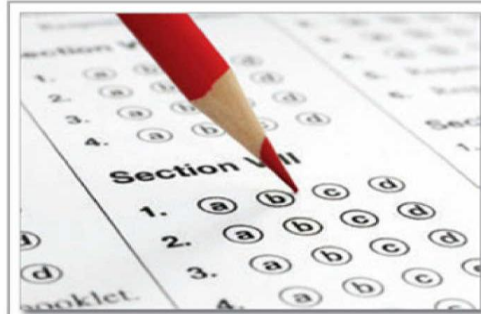
AMITA SHARMA  
New Delhi

THE IIT Council in its meeting on Tuesday held in IIT Bombay decided to introduce a national test for admission into engineering institutes. Union minister for human resource development and chairperson IIT Council Smriti Zubin Irani expressed concern over extensive coaching classes that prepare students to compete in entrance exams for premium engineering institutes like IITs and NITs.

A committee has been set up comprising IIT Roorkee chairperson Ashok Misra, IIT Kharagpur chairperson Pawan Goenka and IIT Gandhinagar chairperson Baldev Raj to come up with a working proposal by October-end to institute one national entrance exam for engineering institutes pan-India.

The meeting also decided against effecting a much-anticipated hike in tuition fees for IIT students as it was felt that such a move would impose a burden on meritorious but financially stressed students. Instead the Council decided to set up a second committee to suggest restructuring of funds flow to the IITs and give them autonomy to raise their own resources.

At present, there is a two-step joint entrance exam (JEE) for IITs and NITs. The qualifying list of NIT is derived from the



### Testing times

■ Council comprises IIT Roorkee chairperson Ashok Misra, IIT Kharagpur chairperson Pawan Goenka and IIT Gandhinagar chairperson Baldev Raj

■ They have been given time till October-end to come up with a working proposal to institute one national entrance exam for engineering institutes pan-India

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■ While those selected for the IITs have to clear JEE (advanced). Only students qualifying in the JEE (main) can take the JEE advanced

JEE (main), while those selected for the IITs have to clear JEE (advanced). Only students qualifying in the JEE (main) can take the JEE advanced.

Over 1.3 million students took the JEE (main) exam in 2015, of whom the top 150,000 went on to take the JEE (advanced) exam for admission into IITs and the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad (ISM Dhanbad). The NITs absorb about 30,000 students and IITs about 9,000.

The JEE scores are also

a gateway for admissions into 350 state engineering colleges, Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology and 40 other engineering colleges across the country. Highly competitive, as the JEE is, the aspiration to qualify in it has led students to coaching classes and to compel students to pay more attention to their school studies, the JEE

policy in 2012 gave weightage to the twelfth board exam scores. This, however, had no impact on the scale of coaching.

While a well-designed national test may save students money and trouble, it is not clear how this would stop coaching classes. It is also not very clear whether the national test is for the centrally funded institutes or for all engineering colleges across the country, as the states have the freedom to design their own entrance policies. Although not part of the IIT Council agenda, there is clearly an urgency to introduce it. Under the IIT Act, 1961, the IITs enjoy academic autonomy and have the right to decide their examination system. The senates in the IITs are vested legally with the powers to discuss academic issues and matters of common interest like entrance exams are decided through joint committees that the IITs set up among themselves.

Since 2012, the entrance exam issue has been discussed in the IIT council. Several IIT senates had resisted the proposal of a single exam and the IIT council had to modify its original proposal of a 'one-nation one-test' for joint exam for IITs and NITs. It is to be seen how the statutorily established decentralised academic autonomy of the IITs will respond to this decision.

Turn to P10

Raising fees is not an option: MySpace: P10

## Funds for IITs dry up as govt focuses on new institutes

From P1

Another crucial concern discussed in the IIT council meeting was fund constraints. Even while the government has increased the number of its and has committed itself to an IIT in each state, plan funds for the old and existing new IITs, this fiscal, have declined from Rs 2,500 crore to Rs 1,835 crore.

Tuesday's meeting decided to set up a committee comprising director IIT Bombay Devang Khakhar, director IIT Madras Bhaskar Ramamurthy, and director IIT

Kharagpur Partha Chakravarty to suggest a restructuring of funds released to the IITs.

The recommendations of the Kakodkar committee set up by the ministry of human resource development in its report in 2011, had made several suggestions on restructuring financial support that the IITs receive from the ministry.

This included doing away with the plan/non-plan difference, increase budget support for capital and expansion expenses and let the IITs meet their operation expenses from their own resources,

mainly by raising the fees. Although the fee hike issue was discussed it was felt that this might impose a burden on the not so well off students.

Director IIT Kharagpur Partha Pratim Chakravarty told Financial Chronicle, "Fee increase without due consideration and deep thought would adversely impact the socially, academically and economically weak students and would devastate the hard work that these students put in to get into IITs.

Once these students qualify in the IITs on merit, the present finan-

cial model of IITs is such that it takes care of their needs and ensures them the best quality education in the country. This model should not be distorted by a fee hike."

The council felt that before considering the need for a fee hike, an exercise would be taken for restructuring the way funds are released to the IITs.

The last fee hike was in 2013 by 80 per cent, raising the tuition fee for undergraduate course to Rs 90,000 per annum.

amitasharma  
@mydigitalfc.com

# IITs waive fee for physically challenged

Akshaya Mukul &  
Vinamrata Borwankar | TNN

**Mumbai/New Delhi:** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) council has decided to waive fees for physically challenged students. The council, headed by HRD minister Smriti Irani, also decided not to take any "knee-jerk" decision on a fee hike.

The council, the highest government-nominated body of the 16 IITs, met on Tuesday. A committee has been set up to suggest a solution for the proposal to hike the IIT fees of Rs 90,000 per year to Rs 2.5 lakh. A source said, "The minister insisted that the interests of socially and eco-



**The IIT council, headed by HRD minister Smriti Irani, also decided not to take any 'knee-jerk' decision on a fee hike. A source said she insisted that the interests of socially and economically weaker sections should be protected at all costs**

nically weaker sections should be protected at all costs. She said a fee hike is a sensitive issue and cannot be rushed into. IITs will look into the fee hike issue again."

The IIT joint admission board's (JAB) proposal to increase the quota of students appearing for JEE (Advanced) from 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh

too has received the council's consent.

The JAB had proposed to increase the seats at a meeting at IIT-Guwahati in the last week of September. The change was proposed as there were almost 200 vacant seats at the IITs this year and more IITs will be taking students from the IIT-JEE (A)

exam from 2016.

The council has also approved a new plan, PAL, under which weaker students will be mentored so that they can adjust into the IIT system easily.

"We do not want a repetition of what happened at IIT-Roorkee," said the source. A student from the institute had fled from the hostel leaving behind a 'suicide' note on September 6. The student had returned to his Delhi residence a few days later.

It has also decided to set up a committee to look into admissions for foreign students in IITs. "It has been left to the IITs to formulate the strategy," the source said.

Amar Ujala ND 07/10/2015

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## भूकंप के 30 सेकेंड पहले अलर्ट जारी करेगा आईआईटी रुड़की

रुड़की (ब्यूरो)। आईआईटी रुड़की देश का ऐसा पहला संस्थान बनने जा रहा है जहां भूकंप से 30 सेकेंड पहले ही चेतावनी जारी हो सकेगी। यह सब आईआईटी रुड़की में चल रहे अर्ली वार्निंग प्रोजेक्ट से संभव होने जा रहा है। प्रोजेक्ट हेड और वरिष्ठ वैज्ञानिक प्रो. अशोक कुमार की मानें तो जनवरी से भूकंप अलर्ट के लिए परिसर में पूरी व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित कर दी जाएगी।

## Indian Scientists Developing Sanitary Napkins From Jute

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indian-scientists-developing-sanitary-napkins-from-jute-1228255>

**Kolkata:** The National Jute Board (NJB) in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology - Kharagpur is developing jute-based sanitary pads which could help prevent cervical cancer.

"We are carrying out trials and now we are trying to scale up production after initial production and encouraging feedback," NJB secretary Arvind Kumar M told IANS today.

IIT - Kharagpur scientist B Adhikary is leading the technological innovation in the project funded by the NJB.

Since menstrual hygiene plays a role in development of cervical cancer, researchers believe it will be beneficial to women's personal hygiene. Also, the new line of products could revive the dying jute industry.

The product is fabricated from cellulose extracted from jute and its qualities are enhanced with addition of a super-absorbent polymer.

Normally, the sanitary napkins are made of imported cotton or wood cellulose.

# Health ministry rankings help you choose a medical school abroad

**RIGHT CHOICE** Search for institutes will now be easy for those aspiring to study abroad without being duped by fly-by-night agents



Gauri Kohli

gauri.kohli@hindustantimes.com

Those looking to study medicine abroad have their priorities cut out — apart from choosing a reputed institute, they have to factor in tuition fees, cost of living and the city or country they want to go to. To make their search easy, the ministry of health and family welfare has come up with a list of medical institutes they can apply to as degrees from these universities will hold value in India too. The institutes have been ranked on the basis of how students have performed in a screening test, the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination (FMGE) conducted by the National Board of Examinations (NBE). The FMGE is a licensure exam which screens out test-takers who do not have the aptitude for medicine and select those who are capable of boosting the country's physician workforce with their knowledge and skills.

The list has around 286 institutions from 42 countries, including Russia, Ukraine, China, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines, United

Arab Emirates and Romania. NBE has ranked institutes on the basis of results of around 35,000 students who cleared their MBBS exams between 2012 and 2014. About 9,690 Indian students passed the screening test during this period with an overall pass percentage of about 27%. The maximum number of graduates, according to the ranking, were from China (11,825) with a pass percentage of 18.9%, followed by Russia (5,950) with a pass percentage of 18.4%, Ukraine (3,520) with a pass percentage of 19.1% and Nepal (3,163) with a pass percentage of 21.2%.

There are 16 colleges and universities from where Indian students have graduated in the NBE screening test with a pass percentage of 100%. Two colleges in China — Chenyang Medical College and College of the Left Side of China have a pass percentage of 100% Indians in the test. Russia's Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University also has a pass percentage of 100% as has Ukraine's VN Karazin Kharkiv National Medical University. Nepal's Nobel Medical College has been ranked number one on the NBE list with a pass percentage of 32%. BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences is a close second with a pass percentage of 31%.

With increasing competition and fewer MBBS seats in India for lakhs of students who apply, many medical aspirants

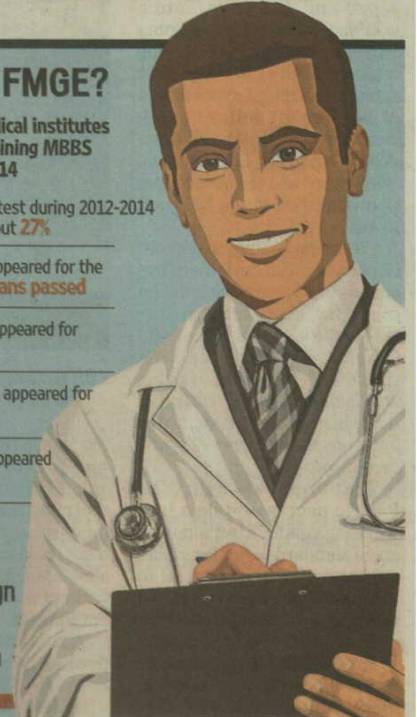
## HOW DID INDIANS FARE IN FMGE?

The National Board of Examinations has ranked medical institutes based on the results of around 35,000 students obtaining MBBS degrees from select institutes between 2012 and 2014

<b>9,690</b>	Indian students passed the screening test during 2012-2014 with an overall pass percentage of about <b>27%</b>
<b>11,825</b>	Students from <b>87 colleges</b> in China appeared for the FMGE from 2012-2014 and <b>2,239 Indians passed</b>
<b>5,950</b>	Students from <b>34 colleges</b> in Russia appeared for the FMGE and <b>1,094 Indians passed</b>
<b>3,520</b>	Students from <b>18 colleges</b> in Ukraine appeared for the FMGE and <b>671 Indians passed</b>
<b>3,163</b>	Students from <b>14 colleges</b> in Nepal appeared for the FMGE between 2012 and 2014

This information will help aspirants make an informed choice. We are working to compile basic data on the foreign medical institutions for the candidates

PROFESSOR DR BIPIN BATRA, executive director, national board of examinations



ISTOCK

contemplate pursuing education abroad in countries such as China, Ukraine, Russia and the Philippines. Another reason for choosing these countries over others is the cheaper educational cost when compared to the more expensive countries like the US or UK.

Experts say the health ministry move will help students as well as the Indian medical fraternity. "Generally speaking, a ranking based on objectively structured criteria and defined weightage accruable thereto is definitely useful for a student to make an appropriate choice for seeking admission to a con-

cerned college. An objectively-based categorisation is of definite use to the stakeholders," says Dr Jayshree Mehta, president, Medical Council of India.

Dr Mehta says that the present scenario would be affected to the extent that the Indian students opting for foreign medical qualifications could make an 'informed choice' while selecting an institute. "This would be on the basis of specific quality information handily available to him so that the choice is not blind in nature but is based on subtle relevant information. However, the ranking would turn out to be of consequence

and relevance provided it is made in an objective and definitive manner," she adds.

Dr KK Aggarwal, honorary secretary general, Indian Medical Association, agrees. "We must remember that students make institutions and institutions do not make students. An institution like AIIMS has the best results because the best students go there. Through such a ranking, students can know the pass percentage of these institutions. China and Russia have the cheapest medical fee and that is why most students go there. This kind of ranking helps."