Newspaper Clips
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Deccan Herald, ND 17/09/2014 P-7

IITs ease admission norms; lower cut off

Prakash Kumar

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Students securing 75 per cent marks in Class XII board examinations can now hope to find admission in any of the premier Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) from academic year 2015, provided the Central government accepts recommendations of an expert panel.

The proposal put forth by the Joint Admission Board (JAB) of the technical institutes, if implemented, will open the doors of the 16 hallowed institutions to many more students. Currently, entry into IITs is limited due to complicated eligibility criteria. The new method is aimed at relaxing the admission norms.

The proposal, however, is subject to approval by the IIT Council, headed by Human Resource Development minister Smriti Irani. The JAB recommendation will be placed before the IIT Council – the highest decision making body of IITs – during its meeting sometime next week.

Until now, admission was restricted to students cracking the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Advance of IITs and also scoring high marks in the 12th board examination, to figure among the top 20 percentile scorers.

The IIT Council had tweaked the eligibility criterion in 2013 and insisted on students performing well in the JEE and board examination as it was found that the boards were neglected and focus was only on scoring well in the IIT screening test. The percentile system was introduced to identify top scorers in both the tests.

The percentile rule, however, evoked widespread criticism as many students, who had scored 90 per cent marks in Class XII boards and cleared the JEE advance, could not get admission in IITs as they did not make it to the top 20 percentile club.

IITs denied admissions to more than 100 students in 2014, even after they cleared the JEE-Advance, because they fell short of the top 20 percentile cut off.

"Keeping such instances in mind, the JAB recommended that students with 75 per cent marks (in boards) may also be considered for admissions provided they clear the entrance test," sources told *Deccan Herald*.

The top 20 percentile criteria, however, has not been scrapped. It will continue as one of the admission criteria.

Accordingly, the IITs will first check if a student is in the top 20 percentile group. If not, the institutes will examine whether the student has at least 75 per cent marks in the board examination to determine eligibility.

IITs admit around 10,000 students from across India on the basis of their all-India ranking and percentile.

75% IN BOARDS FOR ADMISSION TO IITs SOON?

Brajesh Kumar

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NEW DELHI: The IITs may soon change their admission rules to make candidates in the "top 20 percentile or with 75% marks in state board exams, whichever is lower," eligible.

This recommendation of the IITs' Joint Admission Board aims to tweak the 'top 20 percentile system' introduced in 2013 under former HRD minister Kapil Sibal.

The controversial rule had led to a huge variation in cut-off marks of different boards and resulted in 80 students, mostly from Andhra Pradesh, missing out on the IITs despite qualifying for the entrance exam, as they failed to figure in the top 20 percentile.

Cut-offs (to figure in the top 20 percentile) for Andhra students had shot up to 91.8% — the highest in the country — and to 90.9% in Tamil Nadu while it was 85.2% in Kerala.

The standing committee of the IIT Council met Saturday to discuss the change, government sources said. The final decision will be taken at a meeting of the council later this month.

Before the UPA regime introduced the percentile system — reportedly to make students focus more on their Class 12 boards — IIT aspirants just had to score 60% to qualify for admission.

IIT council likely to tweak 20 percentile rule

Chennai: IIT-JEE aspirants have news to cheer about. A student had thus far to crack JEE (advanced) and should be in the top 20 percentile of his school board to be selected for IIT counselling. Now the IIT council, which meets on September 22, is likely to change the eligibility criteria from the existing top 20 percentile to top 20 percentile or 75 per cent marks in the Class XII board exam, whichever is lower.

Former deputy director and professor emeritus at IIT-M's ocean engineering department Prof V.G. Idichandy says that absolute marks vary from board to board and hence it could be argued that the students of a particular board might be at an advantage. The change is, perhaps, also introduced to avoid the confusion arising out of the procedure for calculating the percentile marks, he said.

Prof Idichandy hopes that the Joint Admission Board of the IITs in its collective wisdom had decided to recommend the change taking into account all possible scenarios that might obstruct natural justice to hardworking students of different boards, who take school education with all the seriousness it deserves.

With the existing system, students from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala were the worst hit as the 20 percentile cut-off remained at 90 per cent or above in the board exam marks.

It may be recalled that an Andhra Pradesh student who cracked the JEE (advanced) was refused admission to IIT Bombay as he could not get into the top 20 percentile category. Similarly about 240 IIT aspirants had to go empty handed without an IIT admission despite clearing JEE (advanced).

IIT aspirants have welcomed the proposal stating that a student who scores 75 per cent and above marks in the board exam could get through the admission process.

"This has come as shot in the arm for students from Tamil Nadu. In the past even though we cleared JEE (advanced) we were not able to get into IITs as Tamil Nadu board had been generous in awarding centums to students, even in languages and we were not able to get into the top 20 percentile. This hampered our prospects to get a seat in IITs," K. Sriram, an IIT aspirant said.

STUDENTS AND EXPERTS DIVIDED ON RELAXING IIT ELIGIBILITY NORMS

Hindustan Times (Mumbai)

MUMBAI: Even as the Joint Admission Board is contemplating relaxing the eligibility criteria for admission to Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), students and academicians are divided on the proposal.

Sources in the IITs said the admission board may change the eligibility criteria to 20 percentile, or a score of 75% and more in the Class 12 board exam, whichever is lower. At present, only those in the top 20 percentile [of board exam scores] are eligible.

The change was recommended after it was found that the percentile system was uneven as many boards were more scoring than others. The recommendations will be considered at the IIT Council meeting on September 22.

The proposal, however, has invited a mixed response "The IITs are premier institutions and the percentile formula was brought to ensure equal attention to Class 12 exams and entrance tests. Reducing the weightage to 75% will serve no purpose," a source from the HRD ministry said.

Students are unsure if the recommendations will benefit them. "We tend to concentrate more on preparing for the IIT-JEE and sail through with board marks. This [plan] will mean tougher competition from other boards," Sachit Mehrotra, a Class 12 student said.

Praveen Tyagi, managing director, IIT-ians Pace, said, "The new eligibility criteria will benefit CBSE board students and other state boards where higher number of students will score more than 75%"

IITs recommend change in UGC degree notification and relaxation in JEE Advanced exam criteria

http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/iits-recommend-change-ugc-degree-notification-jee-advanced/1/383052.html

Sticking to their guns on the IIT-UGC row over four-year undergraduate courses, the IITs decided at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the IIT Council (SCIC) on September 12 that the UGC's July notification on recognised degrees should not come in the way of IIT degrees and it should instead be expanded to include IIT degrees. The SCIC recommendation will be taken up by the IIT Council that is scheduled to meet on September 22 under the chairmanship of the HRD Minister Smriti Irani.

That apart, a recommendation made by the IITs Joint Admission Board (JAB) to relax the eligibility criteria for JEE Advanced- the exam that determines admissions to all 16 IITs will also be taken up at the IIT Council meeting. JAB has recommended an alternative to the percentile based IIT admission formula in view of legal wrangles and to ensure a level playing field for students from across states.

As of now only students who are among the top 20 percentile in their board examinations and have cleared the JEE Main examination are eligible to appear for JEE Advanced. However, the JAB has now recommended that alternatively students who may have scored 75 per cent marks in their Class XII exams should also be seen as eligible for JEE Advanced. This will apply where the last cut off for top 20 percentile is more than 75 per cent marks.

Several students from Andhra Pradesh could not make it to IITs last year as while some had scored over 90 per cent they still could not be among the top 20 percentile- the issue even went to court. Reason being that some school boards are more generous in their marking system than others inadvertently putting their students at a disadvantage when it came to JEE Advanced that has started relying on percentile based screening mechanisms. CBSE also faced similar problems. The JAB is of the view that a relaxation is necessary to ensure that all candidates are at equal advantage when appearing for JEE Advanced.

On the UGC-IIT row, the Standing Committee said in its meeting last weekend that the controversy can and should be resolved at the level of the union Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) itself. While among ways to sort out the standoff were suggestions that the IIT Act, 1961 be amended to expressly mention that its provisions will override those of any other Act or law that may come in conflict-moving an amendment, however, can be rather lengthy process. Sources told India Today that the IITs are of the view that the issue can

be sorted out by requesting UGC to expand its list of recognised degrees as put out in its July 5 notification, so that the IIT degrees are also included in it.

The UGC had sparked a furore when it suddenly shot off a communication to the country's 16 IITs last month asking them to ensure that the degrees they are offering are aligned to those recognised by them. Taking strong exception to the higher education regulator dictating degree specifics to them, the IITs had written to the Smriti Irani led HRD ministry complaining about what they viewed as interference in the IIT system.

The IITs are autonomous engineering institutes of national importance governed by The Institutes of Technology Act, 1961 that lays down their powers, duties, framework for governance etc. They have argued that the UGC Act does not apply to them at all - with some IITs even refusing to take cognizance of the IIT communication. Several IITs may have to restructure or rename their four year Bachelors of Science (BS) programmes or dual degree programmes if the UGC directive is imposed on them.

THE HINDU, ND 17/09/2014   p-15

Ranking rankles educationalists

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: All the top 10 positions in the QS World University Rankings list released on Tuesday are taken by the U.S. and U.K.-based universities with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology retaining the first position for the second year running.

The National University of Singapore leads the pack as far as the Asian continent is concerned and is ranked 22nd.

The poor showing of Indian institutions in world university rankings has become a cause of concern among educationists in the country and efforts have been under way for a couple of years now to evolve an India-generated ranking system. Premier institutes like IIT Kanpur, Madras and Kharagpur are in the 300 range.

A ranking committee – set up by the United Progressive Alliance government – has already submitted its report.

As per the proposal, an India-generated ranking system would ensure that the large set of institutions across the country are properly ranked and placed in proper perspective, factoring in aspects that are peculiar to India like the quota system.

One model being considered is that of China's, which for the past decade has been coming out with the Academic Ranking of World Universities. This is conducted by the Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, an independent organisation on higher education information which is not legally subordinated to any university or government agency.

Besides providing an Indian benchmark that can be used by world ranking lists as an indicator, a domestic ranking list would also help students and parents make a more informed choice instead of just going by lists brought out by media houses.

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IIT-B is highest-ranked Indian varsity globally

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NEW DELHI: No Indian university features among the top 200 institutions across the world, according to the latest world rankings released on Tuesday.

The QS World University Ranking 2014, for the third consecutive year, is led by MIT. At number two is the University of Cambridge, followed by Imperial College, London, Harvard University and University of Oxford.

The Bombay and Delhi IITs have virtually swapped places in the ranking, but are still well ahead of the rest. The number of Indian institutions in the ranking has grown from 11 to 12, with Banaras Hindu University joining the group below 700th place.

None of the Indian institutions are in the top 300, in terms of citations — a measure to check the quality of research papers published. Five of the top six institutions from India have a lower score than last year.

The weakest elements for India are the proportion of international staff and students. Universities in the top 200 in the world attract large numbers of international students, who normally pay higher fees than domestic students,

VARSITIES & STANDINGS

Top 5 Indian Universities in QS World University Rankings

Institution		Rank 2014	Rank 2013
IIT Bombay	▲	222	233
IIT Delhi	▼	235	222
IIT Kanpur	▼	300	295
IIT Madras	▼	321	313
IIT Kharagpur	▲	324	346

while their international staff boost their citations and raise their profile overseas.

Karthick Sridhar, vice-chairman, Indian Centre for Assessment and Accreditation said, "With increasing globalisation of higher education, Indian universities need to compete to attract the best students, as well as best qualified faculty from across the world."

Ben Sowter, who is responsible for the rankings as the head of the QS Intelligence Unit, said, "Indian universities are engaging with the rankings more than ever before and this should bear fruit in the medium term."

Not one Indian univ in world's top 200

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London: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay has for the first time emerged as India's leading university in the world university rankings.

IIT-B has overtaken its counterpart in Delhi for the first time.
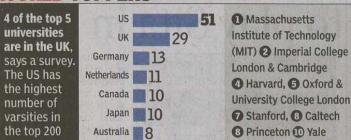
IIT-Delhi has been the leader in India throughout the first 10 editions of the QS rankings.

The bad news however is that not a single Indian university features in the top 200 rankings.

Just like last year's rankings, the top-placed Indian institution is 222nd in the world — IIT-B.

IIT-Delhi has slipped one rank to 235th this year. IIT-B's success is down to improvements in its reputation among both academics and employers. It is now in the top 60 in the world in the QS international survey of employers and its position of 160th in the academic survey represents a rise of 23 places. But it has work to do on research citations and the proportions of international students and faculty, which are all outside the top 300, if it is to break

WORLD TOPPERS

4 of the top 5 universities are in the UK, says a survey. The US has the highest number of varsities in the top 200

Country	Count
US	51
UK	29
Germany	13
Netherlands	11
Canada	10
Japan	10
Australia	8

❶ Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) ❷ Imperial College London & Cambridge ❹ Harvard, ❺ Oxford & University College London ❼ Stanford, ❽ Caltech ❽ Princeton ❿ Yale

into the leading positions in the ranking.

University of Calcutta has jumped 50 ranks since last year's ranking and is placed 650th in the world while the University of Delhi has jumped 20 ranks to 430th.

IIT-Kanpur is ranked 300th globally followed by IIT-Madras (321), IIT-Kharagpur (324), IIT-Roorkie (461) and IIT-Guwahati (551).

The number of Indian institutions in the ranking has grown from 11 to 12, with Banaras Hindu University joining the group below 700th place. But the overall standing of the

remaining institutions is similar to last year: six have gone up and five have gone down, with the two leading IITs well ahead of the rest.

India's strength is in the QS survey of academics, where the two leading IITs, the University of Delhi and the Indian Institute of Science all feature in the top 200.

All but one of the Indian institutions in the ranking has improved on this measure — a good foundation for the future since it is accounts for 40% of each university's score. They are much less competitive, however, in terms of the num-

ber of times their academics' research is cited.

The weakest elements for India are the proportions of international staff and students.

Dr Karthick Sridhar, vice chairman, Indian Centre for Assessment and Accreditation says "With the increasing globalization of higher education, Indian universities need to compete to attract the best students, as well as best qualified faculty from across the world. Students continue to use rankings as one of their decision making tools to choose their destinations. The prestige associated with higher ranks also drives universities to benchmark themselves globally".

Ben Sowter, who is responsible for the rankings as head of the QS Intelligence Unit, said "India may not have made as much progress as it would have liked in the new rankings, but new measures always take time to be reflected in higher positions. Indian universities are engaging with the rankings more than ever before and this should bear fruit in the medium term".

IIT, IIM से ऑनलाइन कोर्स इसी साल से

■ पूनम पाण्डे, नई दिल्ली

आईआईटी, आईआईएम जैसे देश के टॉप मोस्ट इंस्टिट्यूट से पढ़ने का सपना अब पूरा हो सकता है, वह भी घर बैठे। ह्यूमन रिसोर्स डिवेलपमेंट मिनिस्ट्री ने 'स्टडी वेब्स ऑफ एक्टिव- लर्निंग फॉर यंग एसपायरिंग माइंड (स्वंय)' नाम से प्रोजेक्ट शुरू किया है। इसके तहत आईआईटी,

आईआईएम और सेंट्रल यूनिवर्सिटी ऑन लाइन कोर्स ऑफर करेंगी। इसके पहले फेज में चार आईआईटी, दो आईआईएम और तीन सेंट्रल यूनिवर्सिटी शामिल हैं। जो इसी साल से ऑन लाइन कोर्स शुरू कर देंगी। अभी 5 सब्जेक्ट पर ऑनलाइन कोर्स ऑफर होंगे। इन विषयों को बाद में बढ़ाया जाएगा।

एचआरडी मिनिस्ट्री के एक अधिकारी ने कहा कि आईआईटी, आईआईएम जैसे इंस्टिट्यूट्स में लिमिटेड सीट हैं। हर साल हजारों-लाखों स्टूडेंट्स यहां एडमिशन के लिए अप्लाई करते हैं। लेकिन एडमिशन कुछ को ही मिल पाता है। ऐसे में हमने 'स्वंय' नाम से प्रोग्राम शुरू किया है, जिससे हर स्टूडेंट्स को

इन टॉप इंस्टीट्यूट्स से सीखने का मौका मिलेगा, चाहे वह देश के किसी भी कोने में हो। उन्होंने कहा कि हमने यह ऑनलाइन कोर्स फ्री रखे हैं। यह भारत के सिटीजन के लिए ही होगी और ऑन लाइन कोर्स किसी विदेशी नागरिक को ऑफर नहीं किया जाएगा। अगर सीखने वाले को इन कोर्स का वेरिफाइड सर्टिफिकेट चाहिए होगा तो उसके लिए कुछ फीस ली जाएगी।

Student engineers to also help Modi build smart cities

KALPANA PATHAK

Mumbai, 16 September

Engineers from various institutes, including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), could help Prime Minister Narendra Modi with ideas to build smart cities across the country. Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, as part of its annu-

al technology event Techfest, has invited applications from engineers across the country — even professionals — to suggest ideas to make their city a smart city.

IIT-Bombay has decided that the ideas presented by the participants shall be considered for implementation in the development of new smart cities along the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor

(DMICDC). Techfest has also associated with government organisations like Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority, City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra and DMICDC to make this plan a success. Ideas presented would be considered for implementation in the development of DMICDC.

IIT-KHARAGPUR OPENS DOORS TO NEW SCIENCE GALLERIES

HT Kolkata

KHARAGPUR: IIT-Kharagpur opened new galleries on its campus on Tuesday.

The galleries have been themed on basic laws of science, evolution of the country's transport and road network down the ages and the advent of computer among others.

PP Chakraborty, director of IIT-Kharagpur, inaugurated the four new galleries on Tuesday. They would be housed inside the Nehru Museum of Science and Technology.

"These galleries would be open to all. The items displayed here would both be attractive and informative, especially for schoolchildren. The visitors at these galleries wouldn't be charged any entry fee. They would be at liberty to look around for as long as they want on days the galleries stay open," Chakraborty said.

Arnab Hazra, technical director of the museum that is housed in the old building on IIT-Kharagpur campus, said the galleries have been named Indian Railways, Waterways, Air Express and Computers. All items showcased at these galleries would have audiovisual effects.

"Our's is the first such museum in south Bengal. We hope to draw students from local schools. We hope our exhibits would give them an idea of evolution in the field of science over the years. Our items on Railways, computers, waterways and aircraft will help them take away some lessons on the evolution of science," Hazra said.

Several other galleries are also in the pipeline and these would house items showcasing Newton's law of motion, principles of light and sound and other fundamental laws of science.

According to authorities of the elite institute, the galleries have been set up with help from Birla Industrial & Technological Museum, better known as BITM.

The Union ministry of culture allotted ` 87 lakh to fund the project. The galleries, measuring 15 ft x 12 ft, would house items spread across eight rooms.

"Work on the galleries was taken up under the first phase of the project. Our models would give visitors an idea on the advent and evolution of computer technology, railways and the coming of new-age ships and boats that ply on our waters," Dhrubajyoti Sen, chairman of the museum and a professor at IIT-Kharagpur, said.

IIT-K BOY DEVELOPS LIFE-SAVER MOBILE APPLICATION

Hindustan Times (Lucknow)

A student of IITKanpur has developed a unique mobile application, which would enable road accident victims get easy and immediate access to medical care through mobile internet.

Designed by Vinay Kumar, the application will not only come to the rescue of mishap victims, but also be used for many other purposes. Kumar designed this app while participating in 'The Internet for All Challenge 2014', a competition organised by Uninor. Uninor had announced the winner of the circle finale of UP East who will go to the final round in Delhi in mid-October. The eminent jury chose the life-saver mobile application designed by Kumar.

Vinay Kumar said, "I am excited to win this contest and geared up for the next round in Delhi." The winner will now represent the circle at the national finals and may go on to win one of the two seats to the Telenor Youth Summit 2014.

The 'Internet for All Challenge 2014' provides two young Internet enthusiasts a chance to represent India at the Telenor Youth Summit 2014, Oslo, Norway.

The Telenor Youth Summit is held in collaboration with the Nobel Peace Centre. "This was a tough call as all the ideas presented were very innovative. We selected the idea with the eminent jury members," said Vivek Anand, chief finance officer, Uninor.

IIM-C ranked among best in Asia

Hindustan Times (Jaipur)

IIM Calcutta has been ranked among the best from across all non-European B-schools. It has been ranked 13 in the 2014 Financial Times Master in Management ranking, post an impressive debut at rank 19 in the list of 70 B-schools in 2013. IIM-C is the highest ranked nonEuropean B-school.

IIM-Calcutta has been ranked number 1 and adjudged the best management institute globally for study in economics.

With only six non-European schools in the list of top 70, the other Indian school in the ranking is IIM Ahmedabad at rank 16. IIM-C has been ranked number 1 and adjudged the best management institute globally for study in economics.

A valuable factor in the ranking methodology is the careers rank under the the alumni career progress section of parameters for which the batch of 2011 had been considered.

IIM Calcutta ranks number one in the careers rank signifying that the alumni have registered the best career growth (calculated in terms of seniority and company size and employee strength) over the last three years in comparison to all other participating B-Schools.

Professor Ashok Banerjee, dean, new initiatives and external relations (NIER) says, "FT rankings is considered the gold standard in B-School ranking and we are indeed happy and proud to make such progress in a single year. This is a significant milestone in our globalisation journey along with our recent achievements including the AMBA (association of MBAs), AACSB (advance collegiate schools of business) accreditations and the CEMS membership. The rankings will help us network more closely with the top European B-schools."

It is also interesting to note that the FT has devised a concept of clustering. The top 14 schools form the top cluster, with IIM Calcutta being ranked 13. While 195 points separate the top ranked school from rank number 70, the differences are small within the group. The second cluster includes schools from rank 15 to 33; IIM Ahmedabad belongs to this cluster.

Role of university is to equip students with curiosity: Rajan

Hindustan Times (Mumbai)

MUMBAI: The role of the university is not only to teach students what to think but to also equip them with the quality of curiosity, said Raghuram Rajan, governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday.

KUNAL PATIL/HT PHOTO RBI governor Raghuram Rajan at the KJ Somaiya College, Vidyavihar.

Rajan was addressing a gathering as the chief guest at the 55th foundation day of Somaiya Vidyavihar at KJ Somaiya College of Engineering, Vidyavihar.

Talking about the importance of asking the right questions, Rajan said, "If you leave the university with curiosity, it just changes you for life and this is what keeps you continuously learning and making a contribution to the society."

He gave away the Chairman's Academic Excellence awards to students in the field of engineering, management, humanities, medical, paramedical courses and schools. "I am delighted to see students excelling," he said.

'The innovation expo', an e xhibition of t e chnolo g y projects by Somaiya- Vidyavihar students, was also held at the venue. The projects featured in the exhibition included a chess board for visually impaired, pollution mapping kits and an AC-DC portable motor tester. Rajan said, "It's great to be back at the university and see the wonderful innovations being done in this institute."

Speaking on the economy, Rajan cautioned about excessive dependence on foreign financial flows.

He advocated the continuation of the limit on overseas investments in debt. "We are limiting our reliance on foreign debt. It is important we keep it this way and manage the economy in way that is careful and is circumspect," he said.

Rajan, however, said the country has succeeded in substantially containing the current account deficit, which narrowed to 1.7 % in fiscal year 2014 from an all-time high of 4.8 % in the previous fiscal.

Cusat Can't be Upgraded to IIT: Chandy

http://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/Cusat-Cant-be-Upgraded-to-IIT-Chandy/2014/09/17/article2435295.ece

KOCHI: The Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat) cannot be upgraded to the status of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)as the Central Government's policy stipulates that the proposed IIT must be a new institution, said chief minister Oommen Chandy here on Tuesday.

"The proposed new Indian Institute of Technology will come up in Palakkad, for which the land has already been identified," the Chief Minister said.

The chief minister was speaking after inaugurating the new seminar complex at Cusat.

"While the Central Government proposes a new IIT for the State, it also makes it clear that the IIT should be a new one. For that reason, Cusat cannot be upgraded to the status of IIT. However, it can be upgraded to the level of Indian Institute of Science and Technology (IIST)," he said.

"The Central Government has agreed in principle to upgrade Cusat to IIST, and the Planning Commission has approved the same. The process is currently under the scrutiny of the Finance Commission. The government will make sure that Cusat gets IIST status in the current financial year itself," he added.

The Chief Minister was responding to minister V K Ebrahim Kunju's request to upgrade Cusat to the level of IIT, in his presidential address.

Speaking on the occasion, Cusat vice-chancellor-in-charge Paulose Jacob said that the seminar complex project was initiated 20 years ago, but hit a roadblock due to many reasons. The complex is fully air-conditioned, and has a seating capacity of 750.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated the golden jubilee celebrations of the School of Management Studies (SMS) at Cusat. The SMS is one of the earliest departments in Cusat, which presently has 180 full-time and 30 part-time seats.

Cusat former Vice-chancellors M V Pylee and Babu Joseph were also present at the event.

Cusat registrar S David Peter; Benny Behnan MLA; Kalamassery municipality chairman Jamal Manakkadan; SMS director M Bhasi; Kerala Management Association former president Deepak Aswani; and Syndicate members Hibi Eden, Sunny P Jose, Nedumudy Harikumar, K A Zakkariya, A Mujeeb and K Sajan were also present.

Asian Age ND 17/09/2014 p-4

Scientists at Isro groom GenNext

B.R. SRIKANTH
BENGALURU, SEPT. 16

Top Indian space scientists are grooming GenNext engineers in a clear indication that scientific exploration of other planets are on the cards even as some of their colleagues intently monitor the probe to Mars before steering it into an orbit around the Red Planet on September 24.

On Wednesday, about 500 young engineers will get a glimpse of opportunities and challenges in future during an interactive session with senior scientists involved in the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) — Mr S.K. Shivakumar, director at Isro's Satellite Centre (ISAC), Bengaluru, Dr Mylswamy Annadurai, programme director, MOM, Dr Subbaiah Arunan, project director, MOM, Dr V. Keshavraju, mission director of post-launch operations, and others. The venue: ISAC, where the orbiter was assembled ahead of its launch on November 5, 2013. Besides a detailed presentation on MOM by their seniors, these engineers will also get to know about complex technologies involved in manufacture of satellites and launch vehicles. "It is our chairman (Dr K. Radhakrishnan)'s idea that we groom young engineers on how to take the space programme forward," Dr Annadurai told this newspaper.

He said similar technical sessions would follow in other centres of Isro across the country as each of these facilities focus on specific elements of the space programme.

IIM-B's realty portal aims to promote transparency

Laiqh A. Khan

MYSORE: In an effort to usher in transparency in the real estate market, the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, will launch a crowdsourcing portal, www.iboughtproperty.com, on Wednesday to create benchmarks for property values by collecting data directly from buyers and validating the information using standard scientific practices.

"We have created a website where people who have bought or sold properties [land, apartments, villas and so on] in recent years can enter what they paid or received after providing some basic details about the property. No personal information will be collected and the users will remain totally anonymous. The whole process should take not more than two minutes," Venkatesh Panchapagesan, Associate Professor, Finance and Control Area, IIM-B, said.

A market value report summarising information across all respondents that will be shared with the public seeks to alleviate a key source of consumer anxiety. Though the portal seeks to cover the entire country in due course, the pilot will focus on improving property price transparency in Bangalore.

As much of the information made available to buyers comes from either builders or middlemen with vested interests, the IIM-B initiative will help make an objective assessment of property values.

The institute expects several uses for this data in the public policy domain. "Several governmental and private entities like property valuation cells and bank loan processing departments require market value information. Policymakers can utilise this data to study the effects of registration charges and stamp duty rates on disclosed property prices and the impact of the parallel economy in this sector.

The IIM-B has tied up with Century Real Estate Research Initiative to develop scientific research and data on the Indian real estate sector. Dr. Panchapagesan said the recent global financial crisis, which had its origins in subprime mortgages in the U.S. housing sector, underscores the critical need for good timely research to identify potential fault lines and evaluate possible solutions to ensure that similar events do not recur.

The Pioneer ND 17/09/2014   p-12

'Boeing may win NASA space taxi contract'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

American aerospace giant Boeing seems set to win a multibillion-dollar contract to build space taxis for NASA that will ferry astronauts to and from orbit.

The Wall Street Journal quoted US Government and aerospace-industry officials as saying that Boeing may well be the winner of the competition to build the spacecraft, potentially beating its two rivals, including SpaceX.

SpaceX had been considered a favourite because of its lower costs and nimbler approach, the report said.

According to the officials, recent signals from the Obama administration indicate that NASA's leadership has concluded on a preliminary basis that Boeing's proposed capsule offers the least risky option, as well as the one most likely to be ready to transport crews to the International Space Station (ISS) within three years.

The officials cautioned that a last-minute shift by NASA chief Charles Bolden, who must vet the decision, could change the result of the closely watched competition.

However, interviews with numerous space experts from industry, Government and elsewhere reveal a growing consensus that Boeing is likely to emerge as the big winner to develop and operate the replacement for the space-shuttle fleet, which was retired in 2011.

One of the two other bidders — SpaceX or Sierra Nevada Corp — is expected to obtain a smaller contract as a second source, experts said.

Times of India, ND 17/09/2014   p-19

Long work hours may raise risk of heart disease

Seoul: Are you a workaholic? Your habits may raise your risk of heart disease, a new study has warned.

Working for more than 40 hours a week may increase one's risk of developing coronary heart disease, or narrowing of the blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the heart, it says.

"The longer hours employees worked, the higher their chances of developing coronary heart disease within 10 years, with those working 61 to 70 hours having a 42% increased likelihood of developing the disease, those working 71 to 80 hours having a 63% increased likelihood, and those working more than 80 hours having a 94% increased likelihood," said Dr Yun-Chul Hong, senior author of the study, from the Department of Preventive Medicine, College of Medicine, Seoul National University.

Researchers evaluated the association between long working hours and risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) estimated by Framingham risk score (FRS) on 8,350 Korean adults.

The subjects were asked about working hours and health status. Participants al-

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SWITCH OFF

so completed physical examinations and biochemical measurements necessary for estimation of FRS.

Multiple logistic regression was conducted to investigate the association between working hours and the 10-year risk for CHD estimated by FRS.

Compared to those who work 31-40 hours, significantly higher 10-year risk was estimated among subjects working longer hours.

As working hours increased, the odds ratio (OR) for the upper 10% of estimated 10-year risk for CHD increased up to 1.94.

The study was published in the American Journal of Industrial Medicine. PTI

Times of India, ND 17/09/2014   p-19

Water purifier made of foil chip packets

Melbourne: Australian researchers have designed a low-cost drinking water treatment system using foil chip packets and some glass tubing.

The system, developed by University of Adelaide mechanical engineering students, makes use of UVA radiation directly from the sun to kill pathogens in the water in a continuous feed facility that can be made from improvised materials.

"Worldwide, 780 million people still don't have access to safe and clean water for drinking, cooking or washing," said Dr Cristian Bir-

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LIFE ON THE LINE

zer, lecturer in the School of Mechanical Engineering, who supervised the students with Dr Peter Kalt.

"It's estimated that 1.5 million people — 90% of them children — die every year from consuming un-

treated or contaminated water," Birzer said.

The team worked with ChildFund Australia to learn about local conditions in the Papua New Guinea highlands.

"We wanted something where we could provide design guidelines and let the local communities build and install their own systems using readily available materials," said Birzer.

The students — Michael Watchman, Harrison Evans, Mark Padovan and Anthony Liew — first designed and tested a workshop-quality manufac-

tured system using high-quality materials.

They then designed, built and tested a handmade rudimentary system using some plywood, glass tube and high-density polyethylene plastic sheeting coated with metalized plastic (chip packet wrappers).

The UVA from the sun produces "reactive oxygen species" in water which damages the DNA of pathogens and deactivates them.

"The system can treat close to 40 litres in four hours and the beauty is that it's designed to be modular," said Birzer. PTI