Newspaper Clips
September 20, 2013

Deccan Herald ND 20-Sep-13 P-8

CBSE may conduct JEE-main twice

NEW DELHI: Engineering aspirants may have a chance to improve their scores in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Main from next year as the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is contemplating on conducting the exam twice before the JEE-Advance.

The JEE-Main is conducted for selection of candidates for admissions to centrally-funded technical institutions, including the National Institutes of Technology (NITs).

A good score in the JEE-Main also gives students a chance to appear in JEE-Advance, subsequently conducted to select candidates for admissions to 15 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad.

There have also been demands to bring changes in the eligibility criteria for students to appear in JEE-Advance.

The IITs finalise the successful candidates' list on the basis of their performance in JEE-Main and percentile in the Class XII Board.

"Keeping the significance of JEE-Main, the board is contemplating holding the test twice. It will not only help candidates improve their scores and get enrolled in streams of their choice in the centrally funded technical institutions but also brighten their chances of getting into IITs, if they fared well in their class XII board," sources in the CBSE said.

The board, which conducts JEE-Main, is holding consultations on the issue of conducting the test twice. "A final decision is yet to be taken." sources added.

There had been demands to bring changes in the eligibility criteria for students to appear in JEE-Advance, too. Only the top 20 percentile in their respective boards are considered for admission to IITs on the basis of their performance in JEE-Main and JEE-Advance.

At a recent meeting of the IIT council here, IIT-Delhi suggested that students with 80 per cent marks in class XII Board examination should also be considered for their admission to the premier technical institutes on the basiss of their performance in JEE.

This, however, was rejected by the council which decided to bring no changes in its admission policy. The meeting was presided over by Human Resource Development Minister M M Pallam Raju.

DH News Service

IT body turns down CBSE proposal to have two main JEE examinations

Mumbai Mirror | Sep 20, 2013

Arita Sarkar

The IIT apex body on Tuesday turned down the CBSE's proposal of conducting two mains for the upcoming IIT Joint Entrance Examination (JEE).

The CBSE board, which conducts the JEE-Mains, had prepared a proposal for two main tests to be held in 2014, one in February and one in April.

The members of the apex body agreed that two exams would increase the amount of stress on the students who will also be taking their board exams in February.

"The exams have to be student-friendly. If the students are given a choice of two exams, then all of them will obviously take both of them" said one of the senior IIT officials.

While this decision will be welcomed by IIT aspirants, it will disappoint those who were hoping to get two attempts to get into engineering institutes such as National Institute of Technologies NITs and International Institute of Information Technology (IIITs).

"There is so much pressure to do well in just one paper. I think two exams would be better," said Nishad Bapat-Dhar from KC College, while speaking to Mirror.

Although the official announcement is yet to be made, the tentative date for the written exam in 2014 has been set for April 6. Maintaining the mixed format, the first of the two-tier format introduced this year, the JEE Mains will be conducted online on dates between April 8 and April 28.

IITs will take nearly 10 years to get to ideal teacher-student ratio

Hemali Chhapia, TNN Sep 18, 2013, 12.59AM IST

MUMBAI: Facing a faculty crunch, the Indian Institutes of Technology have projected that it will take the elite institutes close to a decade to get to the ideal teacher-student ratio. The government stipulates IITs must have a teacher-student ratio of 1:10, but at present, the ratio is an area of concern.

Amar Ujala ND 20-Sep-13 P-13

आईआईटी में शोध छात्रों की संख्या बढ़ाने को नियमों में बदलाव, चौथे साल में पीएचडी के लिए कर सकेंगे आवेदन

बीटेक की डिग्री से पहले पीएचडी में दाखिला

बृजेश सिंह

नई दिल्ली। आईआईटी संस्थानों में बीटेक के छात्र तीन साल की पढ़ाई के बाद चौथे साल में ही पीएचडी के लिए आवेदन कर सकेंगे। इस योजना के तहत केवल उन्हीं छात्रों को आवेदन का अवसर मिलेगा जो पिछले सेमेस्टरों में बहुत अच्छे अंक लाते रहे हैं। ऐसे छात्रों को बीटेक कोर्स पूरा करने से पहले ही गेट परीक्षा देने की भी छूट प्रदान करने की अनुमति एनसीबी से मांगी गई है।

आईआईटी काउंसिल ने काकोदकर समिति की सिफारिशों को ध्यान में रखते हुए आईआईटी जैसे संस्थानों में शोध छात्रों की संख्या बढ़ाने के लिए कई कदम उठाने का फैसला किया है। आईआईटी काउंसिल ने सेंट्रल फंडेड टेक्निकल संस्थानों (एनआईटी, आईआईआईटी आदि) के छात्रों को सीधे बीटेक की डिग्री के बाद भी रिसर्च के लिए दाखिले की योजना शुरू करने को स्वीकृति प्रदान की है।

बीटेक के छह सेमेस्टर में 7 सीपीआई लाने वाले छात्र चौथे साल में आईआईटी में पीएचडी के लिए आवेदन कर सकेंगे। पीएचडी में प्रवेश मिल जाने के बाद छात्रों को संबंधित आईआईटी में ही बीटेक की चौथे साल की पढ़ाई की सुविधा होगी। यद्यपि बीटेक की डिग्री उन्हें अपने मूल संस्थान से ही मिलेगी।

इसके अलावा जो छात्र बीटेक के बाद एमटेक में प्रवेश ले चुके हैं वे एक वर्ष की पढ़ाई पूरी करने के साथ ही रिसर्च के लिए पीएचडी में दाखिला ले सकेंगे। ऐसे छात्रों को एमटेक व पीएचडी दोनों की डिग्री एक साथ अवार्ड की जाएगी। एमटेक के लिए ऐसे छात्रों को अलग से शोधपत्र भी नहीं देना होगा। पीएचडी के शोधपत्र को ही उनके मामलों में एमटेक की डिग्री के लिए भी मान्य किया गया है।

ये उपाय भी होंगे

शोध में छात्रों की संख्या बढ़ाने के लिए अभी सिर्फ केंद्रीय वित्त पोषित संस्थानों के दूसरे तकनीकी संस्थाओं के छात्रों अनुसंधान के लिए योजनाएं चलाई जा रही हैं किंतु निकट भविष्य में निजी इंजीनियरिंग कालेजों के छात्रों को भी इस योजना में शामिल किया जाएगा। आईआईटी से पीएचडी करने वाले छात्रों के लिए मंत्रालय की ओर से विशेष छात्रवृत्ति योजना शुरू करने की भी काउंसिल ने मांग की है।

10 हजार हों शोध छात्र

वर्तमान में देश के सभी आईआईटी संस्थानों में कुल चार हजार से भी कम रिसर्च स्कालर हैं। आईआईटी काउंसिल का लक्ष्य है कि पीएचडी के कम से कम 10 हजार छात्र होने चाहिए। फिलहाल स्थिति यह है कि आईआईटी से ज्यादातर छात्र बीटेक करते ही जॉब अथवा अपना उद्यम करने के लिए संस्थान छोड़ देते हैं।

Economic Times ND 20-Sep-13 P-6

IIT-B, Aussie Varsity Bridge the Great Divide

Students of IITB-Monash Research Academy working on cutting-edge projects relevant to Indian companies

HARI PULAKKAT
BANGALORE

Late last year, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced a major doctoral fellowship scheme – which pays students as much as ₹45,000 a month – aimed at fostering relationships between universities and private industry. The first set was awarded last month to 23 PhD students around the country. Six of these students were from a fledgling institution in Mumbai, a Section 25 company called IITB-Monash Research Academy. They are working on cutting-edge projects of interest to companies like Thermax, Piramal Life Sciences, Proctor and Gamble and Intel.

IITB-Monash Research Academy was set up three-and-a-half years ago as a 50:50 partnership between IIT Bombay and Monash University in Australia. Monash University was the prime mover, led by its dean of engineering Tan Sridhar, one of the most influential academicians in Australia. IITB-Monash Research Academy is expected to work on areas of interest to Indian and Australian companies, bringing a developed country work culture to industry-academia relationships in India. "In the West, universities have a more holistic relationship with industry," says Sridhar. "We want to bring this know-how into the academy."

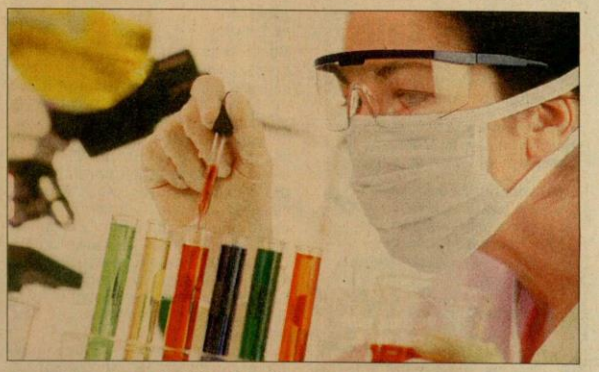
The academy has 130 students working towards a PhD, to be increased to 300 students by 2015. About 30% of them are supported by private companies, a figure that is set to touch 70% in the future. According to its officials, the academy students have already published 72 papers in top journals, of which 82% are in the highest-rated ones. Private companies and industrial organisations in India and Australia have together committed to sponsoring well over 100 PhD students over the next four to five years. "Industry-academia partnerships do not work if you leave it to individuals," says Sridhar. "You need an engine room for partnerships."

The academy aims to bring a developed country work culture to relationships between industry, academia

Right from inception, IITB-Monash had tried unusual methods for an institution based in India. It tried to get the best people at the top. For its research council, it roped in Infosys co-founder NR Narayana Murthy as the chairman and former director general of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, RA Mashelkar, as vice-chairman. Murthy took a serious interest in the working of the research council, and has attended 13 meetings out of a total of 16. The academy signed up several industrial partners, including Infosys, Reliance, TCS and JSW Steel in India. It gave high stipends and considerable freedom to students, with an eye on attracting the best.

It got a well-known academician as CEO: Mohan Krishnamoorthy, who was associate dean of engineering at Monash University. Krishnamoorthy encouraged students to take up challenging problems. "We focus on problems that need to be solved and not on those that can be solved," says Krishnamoorthy. Monash University was used to working regularly across intellectual disciplines and geographical borders, and had a sophisticated way of looking at industrial problems. "The Western research ecosystem is a lot more evolved when compared to India," says Subu Goparaju, head of Infosys Labs and product R&D.

Infosys had been attracted to the concept of a three-way partnership, between a private company, Indian academic institution and an Australian university. "It will help to merge the quality of an international ecosystem with Indian costs," says Goparaju. For the students, the availability of facilities in Monash University is a big attraction, as they spend approximately nine months in the Australian campus near Melbourne, which is equipped with advanced equipment not easily available in India. For example, Indian students almost never get to use the synchrotron, invaluable for studying biological structures, as the country has only one machine in a defence lab. Monash students can use the synchrotron next to its campus.



Private companies normally do not support PhD work in India. In IITB-Monash, Piramal Life Sciences is supporting a student to study biological protein structures, Thermax supports a project to study energy transport in fluids, and Reliance Life Sciences is supporting students to study algae. All of them have important commercial applications.

Access to – or lack of – research equipment is a common problem across all institutions in India. In IIT Bombay, where the academy students work, students have to give an application and wait for weeks. When the permission comes, many facilities are open only from 9 am to 5 pm. Things are much simpler in Australia, where the labs are available 18 hours a day and procedures very streamlined. There are few distractions to work as well. It is no wonder that students and professors accomplish more in overseas campuses.

hari.pulakkat@timesgroup.com

HT Mumbai

Cambridge univ-IITB to start second phase of partnership

Bhavya Dore
bhavya.dore@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: New ways of tackling infectious diseases and nano-science to help deal with neurological conditions and dementia – these are just some of the potential areas that the University of Cambridge and the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) are looking at working on as part of 'phase two' in their institutional partnership.

The two institutions signed an agreement in 2008, and are keen to further build on that, said Cambridge University vice-chancellor Leszek Borysiewicz, during a visit to the city on Thursday.

"We have a very successful programme. We are now thinking of developing the second phase of that programme – to be able to continue with exchanges but also to develop it around specific programmes of work, particularly how nanotechnology might interface with the health sector," said Borysiewicz.

"[Earlier,] a lot of it was looking at partnerships to start off with. Now we are looking at the details."

Preempting questions on a potential India campus, given the developments in the bill for foreign universities, he reemphasised this was not the agenda.

"A question I am always asked is with the relaxation of rules, would we be opening a campus, and the answer is no," he said.

"But it's not just India, we're not opening overseas undergraduate campuses anywhere. That's the direction that we've taken... We want to build our relationships around research and postgraduate agendas rather than compete with our partners for undergraduate students."

Times of India ND 20-Sep-13 P-21

Earth can sustain life for 1.8bn years

Planet Will Later Become Too Hot As Seas Will Evaporate, Say Experts

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

London: Scientists have concluded that Armageddon will arrive, but not for another 1.75 billion years.

Habitable conditions on earth will be possible at least till then, after which it will become impossible for life to exist on the blue planet. Earth will then become the 'hot zone' of the sun, with temperatures so high that the seas would evaporate causing "catastrophic and terminal extinction event for all life."

© Eric Audras/Onoky/Corbis

CLOCK IS TICKING: Scientists say humans' best bet will be to move to Mars, which will remain habitable till the end of Sun's lifetime (6bn years)

Astrobiologists from the University of East Anglia in the UK have worked out the habitable lifetime of earth — based on our distance from the sun and temperatures at which it is possible for the planet to have liquid water.

Scientists also concluded if humans would have to move to another planet, Mars would be the best bet. "It's very close and will remain in the habitable zone until end of the sun's lifetime — six billion years from now," the team said.

The study, published on Thursday, examined seven planets, including earth, to determine how their "habitable zones" will change as their stars get hotter and brighter over time. The key factors in determining a planet's habitability are whether it is the correct distance from its star to have liquid surface water and a temperature less than 50°C.

Using recently discovered planets outside our solar system (exoplanets) as examples, they investigated the potential for these planets to host life. "We used the 'habitable zone' concept to make these estimates — this is the distance from a planet's star at which temperatures are conducive to having liquid water on the surface," said Andrew Rushby, from University of East Anglia's school of environmental sciences.

"We used stellar evolution models to estimate the end of a planet's habitable lifetime by determining when it will no longer be in the habitable zone. We estimate that earth will cease to be habitable somewhere between 1.75 and 3.25 billion years from now. Of course conditions for humans will become impossible much sooner — and this is being accelerated by anthropogenic climate change. Humans would be in trouble with even a small increase in temperature, and near the end only microbes would be able to endure the heat."

For the full report log on to www.timesofindia.com

Hindu ND 20-Sep-13 P-9

Supreme Court upholds changed NET criteria

Says UGC has not acted in 'arbitrary and illegal' manner

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court, on Thursday, upheld the policy of the University Grants Commission (UGC) for fixing eligibility criteria for candidates to qualify in the National Eligibility Test (NET), saying it is not "arbitrary and illegal."

The Bench was hearing a petition of the UGC, challenging a Bombay High Court order setting aside the eligibility criteria fixed by the UGC after holding NET in June 2012. A single-judge Bench of the Kerala High Court and a Division Bench of the Bombay High Court set aside the criteria.

A Bench, headed by Justice K.S. Radhakrishnan, said courts shall not interfere in matters of education unless there was a violation of statutory provisions, and the UGC could lay down any qualifying criteria.

In March 2012, the UGC had called for applications for NET and, in its notification, prescribed the minimum marks for the general category as 40 per cent, 40 per cent and 50 per cent in papers 1, 2 and 3, respectively. Candidates belonging to the Other Backward Classes and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were given a relaxation of five per cent and 10 per cent, respectively.

Clause added

After the test, the UGC had added a clause prescribing 65 per cent aggregate marks in all three subjects for general candidates, 60 per cent for those belonging to Other Backward Classes and 55 per cent for candidates from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as the final qualifying criteria.

Candidates challenged the clause before the Kerala High Court and the Bombay High Court.

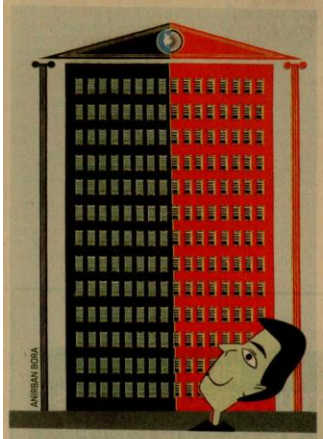
"We are of the view that in academic matters, unless there is a clear violation of statutory provisions, regulations or the notification issued, the courts shall keep their hands off since those issues fall within the domain of experts. The UGC, as an expert body, has been entrusted with the duty to take steps as it may think fit for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in the university. For attaining the said standards, it is open to the UGC to lay down any qualifying criteria which has a rational nexus to the object to be achieved...," the Supreme Court Bench said.

"The UGC has only implemented the opinion of experts by laying down the qualifying criteria which cannot be considered as arbitrary, illegal or discriminatory or violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India." The Supreme Court, while upholding the UGC's decision, said: "Prescribing the (final) qualifying criteria, in our view, does not amount to a change in the rule of the game as it was already premeditated in the notification. We are not inclined to say that the UGC has acted arbitrarily or whimsically against the candidates." — PTI

Economic Times ND 20-Sep-13 P-6

LEADING EDGE With the government opening up opportunities for foreign universities to establish campuses in India, academicians are looking forward to enhanced collaborations, sharper research projects and exposure to the best of global faculty, curriculum and educational systems

East, West Walk Together on Campus



VARSITY TIE-UPS: THE BENEFITS

What Indian Institutes Stand To Gain

Long-term tie-ups in areas of mutual interest

Modern pedagogic styles of global institutions

High-quality collaborative research

Exposure to global faculty and educational experts

An opportunity for top institutes to showcase their research

Collaborations In The Offing

IIT Delhi in talks with Toyo University of Japan to offer a joint degree programme. It is also exploring tie-ups with other institutions

IIT Madras is in the process of forming associations with University of Passau, Germany, Michigan State University and NTHU Taiwan to offer joint doctoral degrees. The tie-ups will include faculty collaboration, coaching and serving on each others' doctoral committees

"Existing relationships rely on institutional initiative and faculty-to-faculty collaboration. Having world-class institutions in India will give a boost to high-quality research in the country"

AJIT RANGNEKAR, *Dean, ISB*

RICA BHATTACHARYYA
MUMBAI

The government's recent move to allow foreign universities to establish campuses in India is seen facilitating collaborative research and opening up the domestic academic environment to the latest pedagogies and curriculum of the West even as global varsities learn more about a major emerging market economy.

The move could benefit millions of meritorious students who are rejected from the system due to the lack of seats in colleges. Ivy league institutes, which have ruled out any immediate intention of opening campus here, will continue to enhance their research tie-ups with local institutes and forge new forms of collaborations. Some tier-2 institutes could also make an entry.

"Existing relationships rely mostly on institutional initiative and faculty-to-faculty collaboration. Having these world-class institutions in India will give a boost to high-quality research being done in the country," says Ajit Rangnekar, dean, Indian School of Business.

Once the foreign universities are here, more collaboration will take place on varied fronts and Indian institutions will benefit from some of the modern pedagogic styles of these institutions, he says. Moreover, there will be better opportunities for the Indian talent pool in terms of faculty and educational experts.

Several of India's top management and engineering institutes, including the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) and Indian School of Business, already have various tie-ups with global varsities through faculty, student exchange and research. The government's move will further strengthen those associations and lead to exploring new tie-ups.

IIT Delhi, for the first time ever, is likely to offer a joint degree programme with Toyo University of Japan. The institute currently has research partnerships with Toyo University in bio nano. "Some other universities have also expressed interest and we are trying to look at various ways to collaborate," says Anurag Sharma, dean-academics at IIT Delhi. Research collaboration would be a key area once some of the global institutes register their physical presence here, says Suneet Tuli, dean-research and development.

IIT Madras, which already has a joint doctoral programme with the National University of Singapore (NUS), is in the process of forming similar associations with University of Passau, Germany, Michigan State University, and NTHU Taiwan. These tie-ups to offer joint doctoral degrees include faculty collaboration, coaching, serving on each others' doctoral committee, etc. The value of co-existence lies more in research and other forms of collaboration, says R Nagarajan, dean – international and alumni relations at IIT Madras.

Last week, the government opened the doors for top foreign universities to set up campuses in India and award degrees, giving Indian students the opportunity to study in global institutions without leaving home or spending a fortune. The move has been welcomed by Indian institutes, academicians, and industry leaders.

The coming of tier-2 institutes could benefit millions of meritorious students who are rejected from the system

Among several associations with global institutes, IITB and Monash University in Australia have a tie-up in the form of the IITB-Monash Research Academy, where students are doing doctoral research.

"IIT Bombay's associations with international universities are primarily focused on postgraduate education and research. There may not be immediate opportunities for such interactions while these universities are starting up here. However, in the longer term, we may seek collaborations in areas of mutual interest," says Prof Devang Khakhar, director, IIT Bombay.

The vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge is in India to explore research partnerships with Indian institutes, academia and industry. The university is working with IIT-Bombay, among others in India, in the field of nanoscience and nano-technology. "We are looking for serious partnerships with Indian institutions based on excellence. Our focus will be on research and deep collaboration to jointly tackle some of the world's recent problems," says Prof Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, vice-chancellor, University of Cambridge.

This is also an opportunity for top institutes to showcase their research. "IIMs will get the opportunity to showcase their academic professionalism and research," says Prof S Raghunath, dean administration, IIM-B.

However, the institutes that are likely to benefit most from global varsities opening campuses in India would be those that do not yet have access to global universities, says IIT-M's Nagarajan.

Under the proposed rules of the human resource development ministry, foreign educational institutions – before setting up campus in India and being notified as a Foreign Education Provider (FEP) under the University Grants Commission – would be required to maintain a corpus of a minimum of Rs 25 crore. The rules also provide for penalties ranging from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore for FEPs that contravene any provision of these rules or UGC Act, and the forfeiting of the corpus fund.

But these rules are a cause for some concern. The government must come up with a differentiated policy for top schools in order to attract them here in the interest of long-term collaborative relationships and establishing a technologically-savvy infrastructure, says IIM-B's Raghunath. "Of particular concern is the requirement that all the new institutions must conform to UGC standards. Unless UGC recognises merit and accordingly adjusts its compliance requirements, India runs the risk of alienating high-quality foreign players," says SP Kothari, deputy dean, MIT Sloan School of Management.

MIT Sloan School of Management, like other top institutes including Harvard Business School, Stanford Graduate School of Business, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Cambridge University have ruled out the possibility of opening campuses here. They are, however, keen to continue engaging with students, academia and industry here through research, faculty exchange, and executive education programmes.

rica.bhattacharyya@timesgroup.com