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TOI

70% weight to Class 12 marks in IIT cutoff?

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In what may mark a major shift from the current scheme of admission to the country's bluechip engineering institutions, an HRD ministry panel has recommended 70% weightage to class XII marks and 30% for performance in an aptitude test to be conducted more than once a year, for the IIT-Joint Entrance Examination.

A cutoff list on the basis of the class XII result and the aptitude test will be prepared in the month of June every year and the top 40,000 will have to take an additional test for IITs. Over four lakh students now appear for IITJEE in a single test.

The panel headed by Damodar Acharya, director of IIT Kharagpur, that gave its report to HRD minister Kapil Sibal on Wednesday, has also suggested that the aptitude test be an ongoing affair which students can take more than once. However, the best score in the aptitude test —which will have questions on reasoning, numerical ability and communication skills — should be taken into account.

It is only the add-on test for the top students that will have questions on physics, mathematics and chemistry. However, the panel has put a restriction on the number of times the add-on test can be taken.

Also, unlike the present system, students will have to indicate right at the beginning whether they are applying for the IITs or other institutes — like Indian Institute of Science Education & Research — whose admission test is also conducted through JEE. Students will also have to spell out their choice of branch of engineering or stream of pure science.

Engineering A New Path

Panel set up by HRD ministry suggests 70% weightage for Class 12 marks, 30% for aptitude test
After cutoff list prepared, top 40,000 students to take additional test for IITs
Aptitude test may be taken more than once. Candidate's best score to be taken into account

'Address concerns of Indian students in Oz'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India on Wednesday said it would consider taking up concerns raised by Indian students in Australia regarding the new immigration laws. Requesting Australia to protect the interests of the Indian students, overseas Indian affairs minister Vayalar Ravi said the new laws should be implemented ''prospectively'' and not with retrospective effect.

''We request Australia to address genuine concerns of our students studying there. The students should at least be allowed to complete their courses,'' Ravi said. The minister had recently returned from Australia.

Under the new migration rules, the Australian government has trimmed the skilled occupation list (SOL) for getting permanent resident status in Australia from the earlier 450 to 150. The SOL now does not comprise most sought-after courses among Indian students like hair dressing and cookery.

''I told the Australian ministers to implement the provisions of the new law prospectively and not retrospectively,'' he said. The minister held talks with Australian foreign minister Stephen Smith, trade minister Simon Crean and minister for immigration and citizenship Chris Evans and discussed various bilateral issues, including welfare of the Indian diaspora.

College with 450 Indians on rolls shut

Careers of over 450 Indian students in Australia has been jeopardized following closure of an Adelaide-based college after it failed audits of the government on standards of education it was offering. The south Australian government cancelled the registration of the Adelaide Pacific International College which failed audits this year. Adelaide education minister Jack Snelling told parliament that the APIC in Currie Street is no longer registered to operate. The college has as many as 450 students who had come to Adelaide from India. It's registration will be cancelled from June 28 when it will be removed from the National Training Information Service. The college has 28 days to appeal against the decision. PTI

SIMPLY GENIUS!

A tutor, a mathematician, a social reformer...try to place Anand Kumar of Bihar in any one of these categories, and he would fit in perfectly. His Super 30 Ramanujam School of Mathematics, is a towering example of how an idea can change lives! Here's a sneak peek into the mind of this math wizard

Anu Bhambhani

Volunteering has really caught on with the young generation these days. The intent to do something good for the society, for those who aren't so fortunate is so great that you'd find several young men and women from colleges and big corporates taking out a few hours from their hectic schedules on a weekend to teach little kids from the slums or spend time with the elderly in some old age home, and several such activities. A noble thought indeed, but not as noble as the thought of Anand Kumar from Bihar.

The founder of Super 30, a free coaching institute for admission to country's most prestigious engineering school, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), is one of the very few people who has actually made a difference to many, many lives by just a thought and a lot of hard work. What makes the institute extraordinary is the fact that since past three years, all 30 students of the institute have cleared IIT-JEE.

A brilliant mathematician himself, Anand formed a Mathematics Club while he was pursuing his graduation called Ramanujam School of Mathematics in 1992. In the year 1994, Anand got admission in the world renowned Cambridge University, but the poor financial situation of his family, he couldn't find the funds to go abroad and pursue a degree.

That got him thinking about scores of bright students like him, who because of poverty, couldn't get ahead in life. That's when he shaped his Ramanujam School of Mathematics and in due time it was developed as a Super 30 coaching institute wherein he trains students for IITJEE.

"A total of 30 talented students from not so well off backgrounds are selected and trained for the exam for a very nominal fee and those who can't pay any fee at all are not charged," explains Anand and adds, "We are a team of six people. Along with me, there is Pravin Kumar, Amit kumar, Neeraj Pratap Singh. While my mother takes care of the food for the students, Pranav Kumar looks after the management."

This hatrick of the institute has assured a bright future for all those who've cleared the exam. But what's the magic mantra that works in the case of Super 30? "We follow a different methodology of teaching. We show the students a multi media presentation in which two characters are shown-Ricky who comes from a well-to-do urban family and Bholu who belongs to a not so affluent family. While Ricky is shown as a bike riding, English speaking fellow, a yuppie who enjoys a good life, Bholu is shown as a kurta clad regular kind of a young boy who addresses people with 'namaste'. But when Ricky is given a problem to solve, he gives a very general solution to it. On the other hand, Bholu gives multiple solutions to the same problem bringing out new dimensions. Through this presentation, we explain to the students that no matter what background you come from, ultimately it is your talent that will take you places," explains Kumar.

While that's quite a visual explanation, one wonders if this impregnates the divide between haves and have-nots in the minds of the students even more. Disagrees Kumar, "Students who come from the underprivileged and not so well off sections of the society have as much and even more talent as their well off counterparts from big cities. But apart from their poor financial status, what makes them take a back seat is their low self esteem. They can identify with the character of Bholu and when they see Bholu giving a multidimensional answer to a problem unlike Ricky, they feel more confident of themselves. Their strength is their talent and they need to capitalise on that by enhancing their selfesteem. We also show them the movies of Amitabh Bachchan wherein the protagonist comes from a poor background and yet moves up in life. These are confidence building measures."

The students at Super 30 study for almost 14-16 hours a day. A rigorous routine it is but don't the students of other such coaching institutes study the same hours and get taught by the best of teachers? Then why is the success rate of Super 30 100% for the last three years?

"A lot depends on the interest of the students. It depends on how badly does he want to get into the IIT," explains Kumar, "And then, we also give the students two tests a week where the paper is formulated on the same lines as IIT-JEE. So after solving several such papers for over a year, finally when the real exam comes, the students treat it like any other test paper they cleared at the institute. We encourage our students to think out of the box to come out with a solution."

That's quite innovative. The success rate of Super 30 has made sure the institute is flooded with applications to study there. While the institute is considering increasing the number of students from 30 to 60 a year from this year onwards, the man behind the institute can easily make millions out of the success. But, he isn't dreaming of that.

"I know that today if I want, I can make a lot of money, but I don't want to. That's not what I want in life, I never did. I always read biographies of mathematicians and wanted to become like them. Unfortunately I couldn't, but if I can guide those who want to, that's enough for me. My dream now is to open a big school that's big enough to let the students run and play to their heart's content and explore their potential to the fullest," shares Kumar.

The math wizard believes that there is no dearth of good schools in our country, but there is an acute shortage of good teachers. All the guardians want their kids to study under good teachers, but Kumar laments the fact that "no parents want their children to become teachers themselves. You can build a state-of-the-art school building and can change the syllabus to modify it, but all is in vain if you don't have good teachers. Why are the other countries excelling? That's because they pay a lot of attention on education of their citizens. The only innovation in education we need today is having good, well-qualified, talented and sincere teachers to teach the future of the country," sums up Kumar.
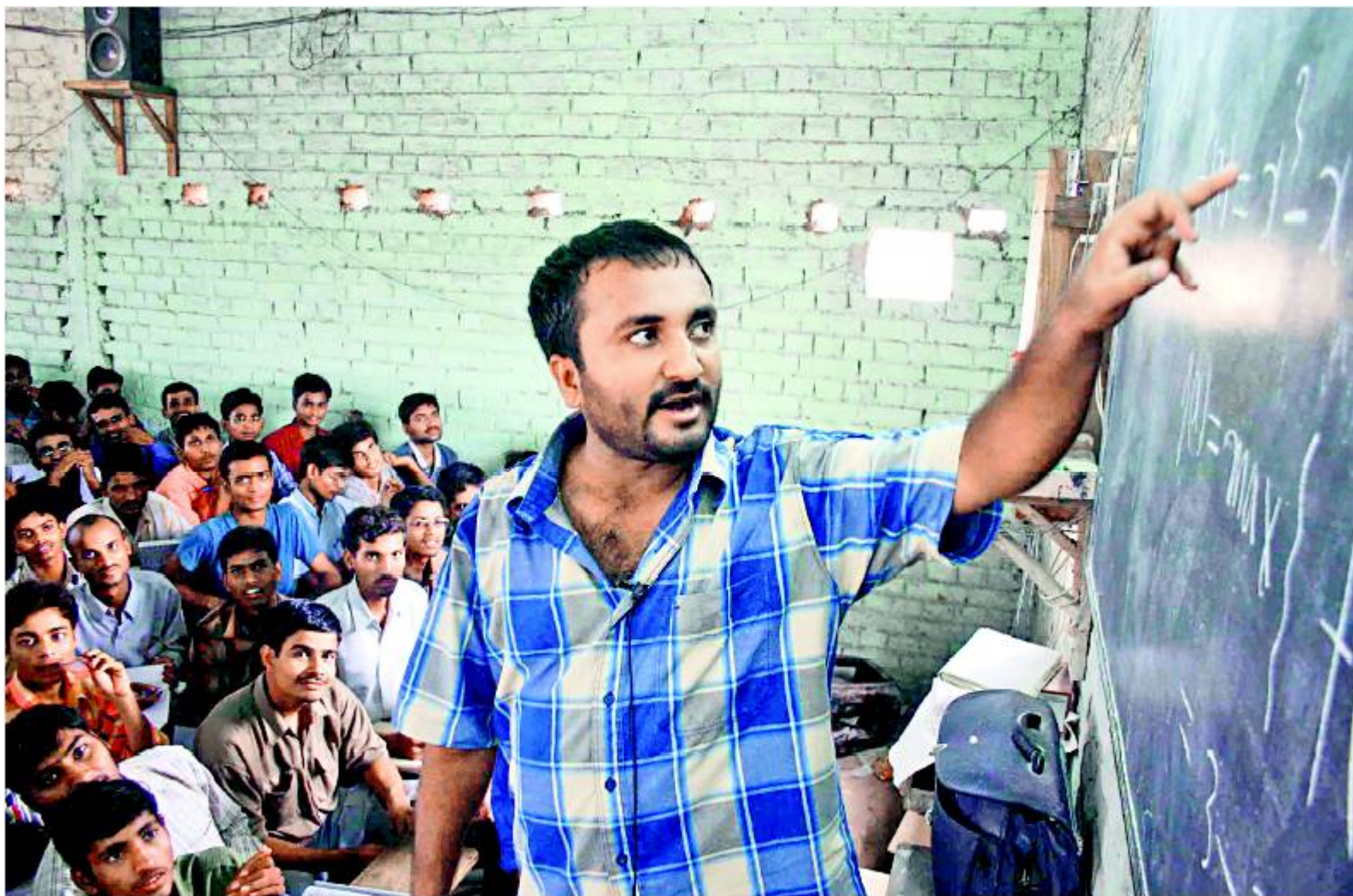
The wizard and his magic wand...

Special features of Anand Kumar and his super successful venture

His name has got into Limca Book of Records 2009 for his contribution in helping the poor students crack IIT-JEE by providing them free coaching
The institute generates money by running evening classes for intermediate level students who are interested in various engineering tests
Super 30's mission is to help more and more students from economically poor sections reach the IITs

The genius and his prodigies: Anand Kumar has proved that it doesn't need money to bring about a change in the lives of so many people. An simple idea can make all the difference

VICE CHANCELLOR REACTS TO THE HC ORDER

"If the court has given some order then it's legal, and the teachers are being paid to follow the legal guidelines, and if they are not doing that, then of course, they are not acting in the best interest of the institution and the constitution. The teachers should understand that it's a court order and they should not act against it."

Deepak Pental, VC, DU

ET

Prometric cuts ties with NIIT for CAT this year

Our Bureau MUMBAI

PROMETRIC, the US-based testing company, which conducted the computer-based CAT (common admission test) last year in association with NIIT, has decided to sever ties with its Indian partner this year, said a senior Prometric official. "We have decided not to involve NIIT for CAT 2010," said Soumitra Roy, managing director, Prometric India.

"We will have multiple partners this time." When contacted, NIIT CEO Vijay Kumar Thadani said: "Due to conflicting business priorities NIIT has chosen not to participate in CAT 2010. However, we will continue to partner with Prometric in other computer-based examinations."

To ensure that the CAT goes error-free this year, the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and its partner Prometric have come up with a slew of other measures such as test site preparation, registration of candidates and the final delivery of the test. Also, IIMaspirants this year can expect a longer duration of testing period than last year's 10 days. Last year, students faced several technical glitches in the first phase of CAT in December, forcing Prometric to conduct the test in the second phase next month for the affected candidates. This year IIM-Lucknow and IIMCalcutta will jointly handle CAT. The institutes have come up with their recommendations. "We are going through every process of the test," said Devi Singh, director, IIM-Lucknow. "Registration for CAT, the test delivery and scoring are being looked at separately."

An audit team comprising officials from IIMs and Prometric have come out with reasons that affected CAT 2009. "We found that testing centre computers did not have updated virus protection software," said Mr Roy of Prometric India. Prometric is planning to take over the test centres at least a month before the CAT begins to rule out chances of a similar virus attack.

Hindustan Times
epaper

Published on June 24 2010 , Page 17

IIM-A to be mentor to Udaipur

HT Correspondent
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AHMEDABAD: The Union ministry of human resources development (HRD) has entrusted the task of mentoring the new Indian Institute of Management (IIM) to be set up at Udaipur, Rajasthan, to IIM Ahmedabad.

"The government has appointed noted industrialist C.K. Birla as chairman of the board of the new institute," IIM-A Director Samir Barua told a press conference in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. "A director will be selected shortly (for IIM-U),"

THE NEW INSTITUTE WILL COMMENCE ITS ACADEMIC SESSION FROM 2011; LAND FOR IT HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED

he added.

Land for the new institute, which will commence its first academic session from 2011, has already been identified.

"The ministry has also given IIM-A the green signal to set up a campus abroad, but we will focus on the new IIM for now,"

said Barua.

Turning to the faculty crunch at the premier management institute, he said IIM-A has currently 94 faculty members against the required number of 110.

"We have recruited 28 faculty members over the last 2-3 years but there is still a 15 per cent shortage," he added.

Meanwhile, the institute has admitted 380 students in its postgraduate management programme for 2010-12 and 40 students in its post-graduate agri-business management (ABM) programme.

Hindustan Times
epaper
Published on June 24

Oz closes college with 450 Indian students

MELBOURNE: An Adelaide-based., South Australian. Government, college with over 450 Indian students has been finally shut down after it failed audits of the government on standards of education it was offering.

Hindustan Times
epaper
Published on June 25

IIMs to overhaul online CAT

Mou Chakraborty

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KOLKATA: Following the embarrassing glitches of last year when the Common Admission Test (CAT) to the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and other prestigious management institutes was conducted online for the first time, key changes have been made for this year's test.

For one, Prometric, the US-based testing company conducting CAT, has dropped the National Institute for Information Technology as its technical support partner for the test, Soumitra Roy, managing director, Prometric, India, said.

"We are looking for a new technical partner," Roy told *HT* on Thursday.

Last year's technical glitches had forced the authorities to re-schedule exams and delay the results. Prometric hopes to make this year very different.

"Improvements are being made in preparation, registration, delivery areas," said Roy. "We will reduce the number of testing centres to ensure higher quality of test experience."

IE

Leadership lessons for principals at IIMs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 24

TO "empower" principals, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is conducting a training programme on strategic management and leadership at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

"CBSE has been conducting training programmes for principals in collaboration with the IIMs and National University of Educational Planning and Administration. But the overwhelming response by principals of affiliated schools has made the Board explore other avenues since the intake for these courses is hugely oversubscribed," a CBSE official said.

The Board has hence approached all the IIMs for strategic collaboration to provide "empowerment to principals of senior secondary schools affiliated to CBSE". The IIM-A has confirmed a six-day programme on its campus.

The objectives of the programme are "contextualising the initiatives and flagship programmes of CBSE such as comprehensive schools health programmes, life skills programmes, adolescent education programmes and introduction of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) as well as other alternative modes of assessment".

The training programme is scheduled from October 4 to October 9. The CBSE says it will give preference to those principals who have not attended any previous programme at IIM and are active partners of various initiatives of the Board.

MP, ministers refuse to wear gown in convocation

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL JUNE 23

THE convocation gown famously described by Union Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh as a barbaric colonial relic continues to get a dressing down in BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh.

More and more ruling party leaders are discarding the gown in public and ensuring that the annual convocations of universities are remembered for reasons that are not exactly academic.

Indore MP Sumitra Mahajan, Minister of State for Medical Education Mahendra Hardia and Indore mayor Krishnamorari Moghe joined the growing list of anti-gown brigade when they refused to wear it during the convocation of Indore's Devi Ahilya University on Wednesday.

The tempo was built by ABVP members who were protesting on the same issue. The police arrested 28 ABVP activists who insisted that the colonial gown was a sign of slavery.

While Governor and Chancellor Rameshwar Thakur wore the gown on Wednesday, BJP leaders said they would like the coordination committee of universities to take a call on an Indian replacement.

I²IT-IGNOU start MTech, MS & MBA programmes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

JUNE 24

THE International Institute of Information Technology (I²IT) and the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) have launched a Centre of Excellence for Advanced Education and Research to offer regular MTech, MS and MBA degree programmes.

The academic programme covers 21 Masters level programmes in advanced information technology, management, automotive engineering, robotics, biotechnology, intelligent systems and nanotechnology. Many of the MS & MTech academic programmes like stem cell biology, molecular medicine, nanoelectronics, nanobiotechnology, intelligent systems and robotics and satellite communication and space systems are being introduced for the first time in India. The I²IT-IGNOU Centre of Excellence will also provide a platform for pursuing PhD research in cutting edge areas of IT, BT & NT and technology management.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by VN Rajasekharan Pillai, Vice Chancellor of IGNOU and Aruna Katara, president of I²IT in the presence of Vijay Bhatkar, chief mentor I²IT, KR Srivatsan, pro- vice chancellor of IGNOU and K Subramanian, director of IGNOU's Advance Centre of Information and Innovative.

The new I²IT-IGNOU Centre of Excellence is designed to create close to 1,000 MTech, MS, MBA postgraduates and several PhD every year to cater to Indian and global requirements in advanced information technology, biotechnology, nanotechnology and management.

Tribune, ND 25-Jun-10 p-2

IITs favour old test pattern

ADITI TANDON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 24

After experimenting with the single, multiple choice questions (MCQ)-based JEE test format for years, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) propose to return to the old system of screening aspirants at two levels to weed out "unmanageable" candidates taking the exam every year. This year, 4.5 lakh candidates took JEE for 10,000 seats.

For the final entry to the technical institutes, aspirants who clear the first level of screening- comprising Class XII board exams and national aptitude test - would have to write an exam featuring long questions that demand reasoning ability from the students. This format would potentially prohibit the coaching industry, believes the IIT-JEE reform panel set up this February, to draft reforms for the entry to IITs and other technical institutes in India.

In the draft report (not final till vet-

JEE Reforms

■ IITs want two-tier screening system back; in the final test, long questions to replace MCQs

■ Subject to concurrence of state boards, IIT reform panel for 70 per cent weightage to Class XII exams; 30 per cent to the national aptitude test for shortlisting candidates at first level of screening for entry to technical institutes

ted by IIT directors, IIT Council and the National Institute of Technology Council) submitted to the HRD ministry, the committee has proposed that the final exam for the entry to IITs should be in paper-pencil format instead of the optical response sheet pattern and questions should be such as demand long, reasoned answers. IITs, which shifted to fully objective type question banks in 2006, are finding it hard to cope with the results that fetch them coached students with

meager intellect.

For short-listing students in initial screening, the panel backs 70 per cent weightage to Class XII boards and 30 per cent to the national aptitude test which will assess the student's general knowledge, logic and communication skills. This on-line test would be allowed three times in a year. The candidate's best score would be final.

Speaking to The Tribune, Prof MS Ananth, Director, IIT Madras, and member, IIT-JEE reform panel, said today that the report submitted to the ministry was only a draft and would be presented before the IIT directors in July before it goes to IIT and NIT councils.

Meanwhile, Kapil Sibal told The Tribune that the draft report recommendations were only indicative in nature and were not final. "We will have to take this to state education ministers. Also, wider debate is required on whether we need add-on exams."