

eNewspaper Clippings

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Just 14 & homeschooled, he's Delhi IIT-JEE topper

Neha Pushkarna / TNN

New Delhi: The boy sat hunched, his eyes on the floor and his hands held in a twisted clasp below his knees, clearly uncomfortable with all the attention. On Wednesday, 14-year-old Sahal Kaushik left everyone gasping in disbelief by not only becoming the youngest ever to crack the tough IIT-JEE test but also topping it in Delhi and notching an all-India rank of 33.

Sahal, schooled at home by his mother, Ruchi Kaushik, a doctor-turned-homemaker, replied after what seemed an eternity to the barrage of questions — which IIT would he join? Would he study electronics engineering? He looked up: "I want to study pure science, physics or maths, not engineering." He looked down again. "I took the JEE because I could also get science courses through it."

He looks like any other 14-year-old, but Sahal could spell out long words when he was just two, he recited tables till 100 at the age of four, and by the time he was six, he had finished reading H G Well's 'Time Machine'. He muttered something to the effect that topping JEE in Delhi wasn't a "big deal". Then a long pause. Was he doing some complex mental maths, someone asked. "No," he smiled, "not today." A little later, he attributed his success to his mother and his "physics sir" but his all-time idol is Albert Einstein.

Andhra bags seven of top 10 ranks

Andhra Pradesh hit a jackpot with its students bagging seven of the top 10 ranks in IIT-Joint Entrance Examination, the results of which were declared on Wednesday. The state claimed the coveted top two ranks, with A Jitendar Reddy from Warangal emerging as the national topper followed by Uday K Shah from Hyderabad. P 14

This year, more SC students than seats

This year, probably for the first time, IITs have declared there will be no preparatory course for SC candidates, as more students have qualified than there are seats. "Over the years, enough SC students have done well and qualified for IITs. It is probably the first time that we don't need to conduct a preparatory course," said IIT-Madras director M S Ananth. P 14

Andhra bags 7 of top 10 IIT ranks

Over 25% Successful Students From State

Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh hit a jackpot with its students bagging seven of the top 10 ranks in IIT-Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), the results of which were declared on Wednesday. In fact, the state claimed the coveted top two ranks of IIT-JEE, with A Jitendar Reddy from Warangal emerging as the national topper followed by Uday K Shah from Hyderabad.

Others from the state who bagged top ranks include Madhu Kiran (fourth), K Satwik (sixth), Janardhan Reddy (seventh) Sabarish Nikhil (eighth) and Neeraj Gopal (ninth). An estimated 30% of the 50,000 students who wrote the examination from the state cleared the test this year, with over 500 of them making it to the top 2,000 in the open category. A total of 65,000 students had written the examination from the southern region.

Andhra students also scored well in the reserved category with OBC students from the state bagging seven out

of the top 15 ranks in this section. Among reserved categories including SC, ST, OBC and physically handicapped (PH) the state secured over 50 ranks in the top 200 slab.

Officials from IIT-Madras, who were in charge of the results, said Andhra students already account for 21% of the total student strength in IITs. "One should not be surprised by the performance of these students as they have traditionally done well. This year, the percentage of students from the state in the IITs might be higher than 25%," said T S Natarajan, director, IIT-JEE.

While IIT-Madras, which conducted the examination, was criticized for the errors in mathematics and physics question papers, IIT experts said such errors could have actually worked in favour of the students from Andhra as not many would have been able to crack some of ambiguous questions. "Most front-rankers from the state cracked these ambiguous questions, which might have given them an edge over others," said K V Raghunath, vice-chairman, Narayana Group of Colleges whose students bagged five of the top seven ranks. Some other experts noted that a tough maths paper helped garner top ranks as students from the state have traditionally done well in the subject.



'NOT A BIG DEAL': Sahal wants to study pure science, not engineering



TOP OF THE HEAP: Jitendar Reddy (right), who topped the IIT-JEE 2010, with second-ranker Uday K Shah, in Hyderabad

Sahal may opt for physics at Kanpur

Neha Pushkarna / TNN

New Delhi: Sahal Kaushik (14), who became the youngest ever to crack the tough IIT-JEE test, wanted to do research in astrophysics. His mother, Ruchi Kaushik, added Sahal may go for a five-year integrated MSc in physics at IIT-Kanpur.

There is no age bar for entering IIT , but a candidate is required to clear class XII. So, Sahal enrolled with

Vandana International School, Dwarka, for two years. He scored 78% in PCM — marks that might not be enough to get him into a half-decent Delhi University college. Asked about his lacklustre class XII results, Sahal said, "That's because I studied for only four days for each paper."

"This boy doesn't need a pen and paper. He solved JEE orally before selecting the answers. He speaks less, thinks more," said U P Singh, Sahal's mentor at Narayan IIT Academy. In the last two years, Sahal was given a separate group of teachers who taught him exclusively for six hours, six days a week.

"When he came to us at the age of 12 or 13, he said he was interested in electrostatics and also answered complex mathematical problems by just calculating them in the mind. I had never seen anyone like him before," Singh said. "But he is what he is thanks to his mother who sacrificed her career to mentor him so well," he added.

Sahal joined school only in 2006 and cleared class X in 2008. Before he was introduced to classroom teaching, his mother taught him "like it should be". He never took any exam, even through NIOS. "I realised very early that my child was different. I didn't send him to a school as I thought it would make him dull. I faced a lot of social pressure when I quit my practice and started teaching him at home 12 years ago. But it has paid off," said Ruchi Kaushik.

She remembered that she never taught Sahal according to any set pattern. "Sometimes, we would study geography for days together. On some days, he only read novels. When he read Charles Dickens, I told him about society in London back then, and its history too. That's how he learnt," she explained.

Sahal's father, who is in the Army, is posted in Assam. His sister, who is two years younger to him, also studies at home. "My daughter was initially slightly dyslexic but she has overcome it now. She is more into arts and more outgoing than Sahal," Ruchi said.

Sahal has many "older" friends from the coaching centre. His mother has invested Rs 15 lakh to put together a library at home. "All our salary goes into this. We now have more than 2,000 books and Sahal has already read them all," Ruchi said.

Does Sahal have any hobbies? Any special interests? "He knows all about Indian mythology," said Ruchi. "He loves reading about Egyptian history and anthropology." Her daughter, Saras, reminds her, "He also knows horse-riding and swimming."

Little Saras said her brother has won the Olympiads in maths, physics, chemistry, biology and has also worked with Dr Ratnashree, head of Nehru Planetarium, on calibrations in Jantar Mantar. So did Ruchi ever try finding the reason for her son's gifts? "Not really. That's the way he is."

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ON FAST TRACK: Sahal (middle) with his mother (right) and sister

Sahal didn't impress in XII

Neha Pushkarna / TNN

New Delhi: Home-taught prodigy Sahal Kaushik has topped the IIT-JEE results in Delhi. The 14-year-old wants to do research in astrophysics. His doctor-mom Ruchi Kaushik said Sahal may go for a five-year integrated MSc in

physics at IIT-Kanpur. There is no age bar for entering IIT , but a candidate is required to clear class XII.

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His first train ride was to take exam

Rajiv Kumar / TNN

Begusarai: Cracking the IITJEE is an achievement even for those who get the best of coaching. But, for someone like Pran Kumar, a native of Khamhar village who passed his 10th board from a village school and completed his intermediate from a non-aided college, clearing IIT was nothing short of triumph of will against adversity.

Pran (17) has an all-India rank of 2,494 but the feeling of successfully cracking one of the toughest entrance exams in the country is still to sink in. His father, Valmiki Prasad Singh, teaches in a non-aided college in Khamhar. With small family income, Pran's academic career would have all but ended had his physics teacher, Rajendra Singh, not come to his rescue. Singh, who runs a coaching institute in Begusarai, ensured that financial constraints did not hamper Pran's studies.

"I saw in him the spark to succeed in IIT-JEE. I kept him under my guidance. As Pran had no means to prepare for the examination, I ensured he got the requisite reading materials. I also gave him free coaching," he said. The first time Pran took IIT-JEE test was in 2009, for which he went to Bhagalpur, boarding a train for the first time.

However, his name figured only in the extended merit list. "However, I had full confidence in him and insisted that he should take the test for a second time," Rajendra said. Pran, a shy and taciturn young man, told TOI that he relished watching Akshay Kumar films for his comic virtuosity. However, he also likes watching Prakash Jha's films.

Advertisement


NO STUDENT IN TOP-15

Kota magic missing this year

Rao Jaswant Singh / TNN

Kota: The famous coaching hub in the country for IITJEE — Kota — lost its sheen on Wednesday. As the entrance results were out during the day, not a single student from the city's premier coaching institutes managed to secure a position in the top 15 of the All India Rankers (AIR). The institutes, which are now a brand name and attract thousands of students across the country, have missed the bus for the first time in the last 14 years.

The top rank from Kota went to Sanchar Sharma (AIR 16) of Jodhpur, who attended coaching classes at the newly launched Vibrant Academy. The next topper from the coaching hub, Mehul Kumar (AIR 19) of Jaipur, studied at Resonance Classes. Sanket Satish Totala of Aurangabad, who bagged AIR 20, also took coaching at Vibrant Academy. The silver lining though is that over 4,000 students from Kota have cleared the exams.

The biggest setback was for Bansal Classes, which has been the pioneer in the IIT  coaching industry and has been producing maximum number of toppers every year since 1997. It failed to make a mark in the top 20 with its topper Sameer Kumar Agarwal securing AIR 23.

Commenting on the performance, P K Bansal of Bansal Classes said it is shocking that not only Kota but the whole northern region has no top ranker. "We are unable to understand why none of their candidates got place in top 10," he said. In 2007, three students (first, third and seventh rank) were in the top 10 list. In 2008, it was six students (first, second, fifth, sixth, ninth and 10th rank). In 2009, it was three students (second, seventh and 10th rank). Sources said error in question paper instructions and deleting Kota from the list of examination centres could be reasons behind Kota's "unexpected" performance.

Advertisement

Tune in to univ radio for guidance

Rachit Anand & Shaily Bhusri / TNN

New Delhi: Admissions can be a very confusing time. So to help, Delhi University's very own community radio — 90.4 Mhz — doles out all the information you need about the admissions process. You have principals of various colleges, the dean of students' welfare, counsellors, and management experts coming on air and taking calls from aspirants, helping clear their doubts.

Surendra Kumar, a student RJ, says: "We were briefed by the dean of students' welfare, S K Vij, about details of the admissions process, such as the centres where admission forms will be sold, the cost of the forms, and the composition of different courses."

DU's community radio has also launched interactive programmes aimed at solving student queries. Programme Manager, Vijay Lakshmi Sinha, says: "We answer questions from students and their parents by bringing in professional experts on special shows like Success Mantra and SOL Calling."

"Every day we get at least 35 calls from students as well as parents. We also do special programmes for which we go to various colleges to cover important events, such as the first day of sale of forms," adds Surendra Kumar, who has been working with 90.4 for the past two years. DU's community radio was launched in 2007, its target audience obviously being students. It covers a radius of 10km and is funded by Delhi University. "90.4 is not complete without the active participation of the student community, and hence students are encouraged to participate in the programmes," says Sinha.

Mallika Jain, a student RJ, who collects tid-bits from all over campus and makes announcements in between programmes, says: "I have been working here for more than a year. This is the busiest time of the year as we air specific programmes and announcements to guide freshers through the admissions process. We set up help desks, prepare relevant discussion points and then debate them on air. The scorching Delhi heat is one of the hottest topic these days."

DU's community radio is very popular among students living on campus. Amita Viridi, an ex-DU student, says: "90.4 has become an integral part of campus life. Programmes by budding musicians and singers from several colleges are aired on it. That encourages students. This is the only radio channel that gives useful information minus annoying commercials."

Urvashi, a professional RJ with All India Radio, says: "We play all sorts of songs, from classical to Hindi film music. The response from students has been overwhelming. Our phones keep ringing throughout the day." toireporter@timesgroup.com



LISTEN AND LEARN: DU's community radio has principals, the dean of student welfare and counsellors answering questions

It's a hat-trick for Bihar's Super-30

Pranava K Chaudhary / TNN

Patna: Bihar's famous Super-30 achieved a hat-trick with all its 30 students making it to IITs for the third consecutive year in 2010. It was in 2002 that maths wizard Anand Kumar, who could not pursue higher studies in Cambridge University due to poverty, made the Super-30 initiative under which 30 poor students are coached free of cost every year to crack IIT-JEE. Altogether 212 of the 240 Super-30 students have cleared one of India's toughest exams during the last eight years.

Like those it groomed earlier, the Super-30 stars this year too are wards of landless farmers, typists, a domestic help and a grade IV government employee. Of them, 20 are OBCs, one is SC and nine are general.

Komal Agrawal, Saurabh Agrawal and Atul Kumar Sinha, the Super-30 toppers, are all OBCs.

"Though I have cleared JEE in my second attempt, my ambition is to eventually join Union civil services," lone SC candidate Anand Kishore said.

A jubilant 'Anand sir', as the Super-30 founder is called by his students and their guardians, was an epitome of modesty. "More than to me, the credit goes to the students who slogged for 16 hours daily for months in the run-up to the all-India exam," he said and reiterated he would increase the intake to 60 for the Super-30 centre from this year onwards.

Amit Kumar and Pravin Kumar, who teach physics and chemistry respectively at the Super-30 centre, were also all praise for the students. "These students come from humble families, but they are sharp and intelligent," Amit said. Pravin added, "I enjoy taking classes for these children for they are very receptive."



THE ACHIEVERS' CLUB: Students celebrate with their teacher Anand Kumar in Patna on Wednesday

This year, more SC students qualify than available quota

Hemali Chhopia / TNN

Mumbai: In 1993-94, the IITs wrote to the government for permission to run a year-long preparatory course, a feeder class to train quota students for a year to equip them to clear the JEE. That was when quota seats went abegging. Now, things have come full circle and probably for the first time this year, the tech schools have declared there would be no preparatory course for Scheduled Caste candidates, as more students have qualified than seats available.

Popularly termed "prepies" on campus, the students did not make the mark forcing the IITs to generously reduce cut-offs and put them through special coaching. "But over the years, enough SC students have done well and qualified for the IITs. It is probably the first time that we don't need to conduct a preparatory course for them," said IIT-Madras director M S Ananth.

According to information provided by IIT-Madras, which organised the JEE-2010, 1,773 SC candidates qualified across the country, against the 1,426 seats reserved for them across the 15 IITs. In 2009, merely 967 SC students qualified, compelling the IITs to put 473 candidates through the preparatory programme to fill the remaining seats (see box). "All those who qualify from the 2009 batch will also be admitted. The class size in most IITs may go up, but that is the way the preparatory system scheme works," explained T S Natarajan, JEE 2010 chairman. Stating that parents were getting more conscious of "social factors like education", Natarajan observed that the number of quota students requiring a relaxation in scores too was falling. This year, of the SC

students who qualified, 120 did not even require a handicap.

This is how the IITs select a quota student: Let's assume the last general category student is admitted with an overall score of 100 (out of 480), and the aggregate cut-off for an SC/ST student would be 50 (after a 50% relaxation). To select students for the preparatory course, the IITs will further lower the qualifying score by another 50% (25 marks).



People check the results of IIT-JEE at IIT-Madras

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Page Number 3

HRD & health ministries stick to claims over medical study

Urmi A Goswami NEW DELHI

OFFICIALS from the HRD and health ministries have begun deliberations on which ministry should have charge of medical education.

The question is whether medical education should be transferred to HRD ministry's National Commission on Higher Education and Research or retained by the health ministry under the proposed National Council for Human Resource in Health.

The HRD ministry argued that the health ministry should get out of the business of licensing colleges and allow the responsibility to be vested with universities. "Let NCHER enforce higher education standards through universities," was the argument put forth. In its presentation on the proposed NCHER, the HRD ministry clarified that its aim was to restore powers to universities.

The HRD ministry is understood to have stated that all medical institutions are affiliated to universities, including those affiliated to health universities. Universities are regulated by the University Grants Commission. Therefore, bringing medical education within the ambit of NCHER would only make maintaining standards simpler.

The fact that National Accreditation Regulatory Authority Bill already has medical education within its ambit does make matters slightly difficult for the health ministry. The Accreditation Authority Bill defines "higher educational institution" to mean an institution of learning including a university, an institution deemed to be university, a college, an institute, an institution of national importance declared as such by an Act of Parliament, or a constituent unit of such institution, which is imparting (whether through conduct of regular classes or distance education system) higher education beyond 12 years of schooling leading to the award of a degree or diploma. While the Prevention of Malpractice Bill, clearly makes reference to medical institutions.

The argument was that both bodies could co-exist without stepping on to each other's turf. NCHER would have control over matters of medical education while NCHRH would have purview over medical students entering into the practice of medicine.

For its part, the health ministry has argued that medical education encompasses large spectrum. More importantly it is difficult to separate the practice of medicine from education. Even if medical education were to be brought under NCHER, it would then have to be limited to undergraduate level.

Since medical students at the post graduate level are already practicing doctors, this would create an untenable situation as far as regulatory oversight is concerned.

HYDERABAD IIT-JEE TOPPER PREFERS ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

Ashok Das

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HYDERABAD You would expect a student of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), the country's top engineering school, to be sketching out plans of a high-flying engineering career with blue-chip companies and placing zero after zero to their salaries.

But leave Anumula Jithender Reddy, this year's topper at the joint entrance examination for the IITs nationwide, out of the list.

Jithender doesn't want to be a millionaire. Instead, he wants to spend his life researching arcane problems of physics inside labs and explaining them to university students. But mind you — they have to be the world's best labs, and the world's best universities.



Keep your calm. Follow the subjects, the rest will follow.

A. JITHENDER REDDY,
IIT-JEE topper

"After graduation, I would like to go to Stanford (University) and take up research in physics and may be get into academics," he said.

For now, he is opting to study electronics and communication engineering (ECE) at IIT-Bombay. "I have chosen Mumbai because the faculty there is very good. And ECE has more to do with physics," he said.

Jithender is the youngest of three children of a teacher couple from Warangal town in Andhra Pradesh's Khammam and

Medical education to stay with Health

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 25

THE Union Health Ministry on Tuesday ruled out shifting medical education from its purview to that of the HRD Ministry.

In a meeting between Union Health Secretary K Sujatha Rao and HRD Secretary Vibha Puri, the latter declared that there was no question of such a transfer. "Medical Science cannot be divorced from

actual health policy," Rao said after the meeting on Tuesday.

The HRD Ministry has been pushing for including medical education under the purview of its proposed National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER). The Health Ministry, on the other hand, has been raising objections to the proposed Foreign Universities Bill that recommends an overarching commission as the final authority to approve, regulate and monitor universities of

all disciplines, including health and allied sciences, wanting to make their entry in India.

Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said that it was not possible to bring all aspects of higher education under one overarching body. "It will only create chaos," Azad said. Medical education being a "peculiar subject" should be handled by it alone, the Health Ministry has argued in a communication to the Human Resource Development Ministry.

SC refuses to stay IIT-JEE results

NEW DELHI: Calling it a stunt and publicity venture, the Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected a petition seeking to restrain the government from declaring the result of the IIT Joint Entrance Examination 2010 on Wednesday (May 26).

The vacation bench of the Supreme Court comprising Justices G S Singhvi and C K Prasad said petitioner Chetan Upadhyaya, who claims to be a journalist and also secretary of Satya Foundation, has no locus standi to "meddle" in the

declaration of the results by the Human Resources Development Ministry.

"No court can play with the career of young students who are aspiring to join engineering and other courses in IITs," the bench said.

The court stopped short of imposing heavy costs on Upadhyaya and said he obviously did not fathom the extent of harm he would cause students if their results were stayed. Justice Singhvi asked: "What will happen if (as a consequence) some students commit suicide?" **ENS**

With frequent alerts, IIT-K steps up security set-up

KAUTILYA SINGH
KANPUR, MAY 25

TAKING note of the frequent security alerts issued by the district police and local intelligence unit (LIU), Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur (IIT-K) has decided to upgrade the security setup of the campus.

While eight CCTV cameras have already been installed at separate locations of the institute earlier this month, the IIT-K authorities are contemplating on introducing a smart chip card for identification of vehicles. Other than this, 15 private security guards, dressed in casuals, will be posted at different locations of the institute.

Principal Research Engineer and Security In-charge Rajeev Gupta said: "LIU and senior police officers of Kanpur, including Inspector General (Kanpur Range) and DIG Kanpur, keep updating us about the security threats and alerts. Following their advice, we chalked out our strategy to further enhance our security system."

According to him, the lone CCTV camera at the entrance gate was not enough. Hence, CCTV cameras had to be installed at seven different locations.

Gupta and his team have been working on the project to develop the smart cards for the vehicles. The cards are likely to be introduced within a few weeks, said Gupta.

A microchip embedded smart card will be placed in the vehicle and the identification will be done with the help of sensors installed at the entry point of the institute.

Registrar of IIT-K Sanjeev S Kashalkar said: "We do get security alerts from the district police and LIU. But this is a move on our behalf to ensure that no unwarranted or suspicious people enter the campus premises."

A faculty member, meanwhile, said the construction of the boundary wall of the institute is in the final phase. "Barring a small section in the southern part of the institute, the construction of the wall has been completed to a large extent," said the faculty member.

21 from Jalandhar crack IIT entrance

JALANDHAR: Twenty one students of Jalandhar cracked the IIT entrance exam. Ramandeep Singh of Guru Amardas Public School secured the 170th rank (reserve category), while Maninder Singh and Navdeep Singh of Sant Swami Das and Dayanand School got 379 and 396 ranks, respectively. Jaspreet and Bharat Monga secured 715 and 1,251 ranks, respectively, while Sarvesh Sahota secured 22nd rank in reserve category. "I want to either pursue aeronautical engineering or go for basic science like Physics," said a delighted Maninder who used to study for 10-12 hours a day. My elder sister, who is doing also studying to be an engineer inspired me a lot, he said. His friend Navdeep, who secured the 396 rank wants to become a civil servant after completing his engineering in computer science.

Delhi's top IIT coaching centres have one address: Kalu Sarai

DEEPU SEBASTIAN EDMOND
NEW DELHI, MAY 26

ONE could be forgiven for thinking that Rahul Deshwal, awaiting his Class X results, would have tried out a lot of permutations and combinations before choosing the institute to which he would travel thrice a week for two years from his Badarpur residence for his IIT-JEE coaching.

But, Nitin Jain shrunk Rahul's calculations to just one name. "Nitin Jain, who topped the Joint Entrance Examination for the Indian Institutes of Technology in 2009, studied in the FIITJEE's Kalu Sarai centre. Hence, I chose the same," says Rahul.

FIITJEE has not repeated its success this year, but IIT aspirants will still flock to Kalu Sarai, which houses at least 17 coaching centres with nearly 7,000 youngsters. As if to inspire the students, it is situated

close to IIT-Delhi.

Narayana — which has cornered the first four ranks — seems to be the most sought after institute this year. "Yes, it seems so. However, it all depends on the student," says Rahul, adding that he does not regret his choice. "They still have the best faculty in this particular centre."

"Securing the first rank matters. We have seen a dip in the number of admission enquiries compared to last year, but since Bansal's Classes in Kota has not performed well, we expect students to flock to us eventually," admitted an employee of the FIITJEE group.

For Madhur Tulsiani it the proximity of the coaching centres that presents more opportunities. "I joined Narayana as they had the best teachers. However, after Piclured them all, I too shifted there," he smiles.

"At the end of the day, this is a



Advertisements of IIT-JEE coaching centres greet students in Kalu Sarai.

OINAM ANAN

market. You want to be where the competition is, and hence the cluster. The students also find it easy to find institutes; it also helps competitiveness as they are always comparing their performance with their friends in other institutes," says Shivraj Singh of Resonance Coaching Centre.

"We get students from states like Bihar, MP, UP, J&K apart from the NCR. However, since Kota came up as a JEE destination, the number of students from other states has come down," says Singh. Many of the centres even

provide hostel facilities.

The coaching centres have also spawned a community catering to their needs. "I have been here for 14 years and now, we are also supplying books and other study material to the coaching centres," says G S Mishra of Mishra Book Depot, busy servicing new students.

Kalu Sarai's tryst with the JEE started in 1992, with the start of the first-ever FIITJEE centre here. "We introduced the concept of classroom teaching. Till then, Brilliant Tutorials and the now defunct Aggarwal's Classes were the

market leaders, but they had only correspondence material," said a FIITJEE employee. "This will be our 18th batch. With around 3,000 students, we are still the biggest centre," he says. "The best too," he adds as an afterthought.

On Wednesday, it was time for the change of guard. Waiting anxiously in the lobby of a coaching centre was Anurag Verma, whose son had topped the centre. "His rank is 728 and may not get his preferred Computer Science," says Verma, as his son was being counselled inside on his options.

Former IIT staffer held for thefts on campus

NEW DELHI: The South District police has arrested a thief, Mukesh Kumar (30) and recovered three laptops. On interrogation, it was revealed that Mukesh had been working as a Class IV employee on a temporary basis at the IIT campus. Later, he quit his job and started stealing valuables from the hostels. As the students were familiar with him, nobody could doubt or check his activities.

Haemophilia patient from Kanpur ranks 72 in IIT-JEE

KANPUR: Kanpur resident Himanshu Saxena, a haemophilia patient, has secured an All India Rank of 72 in the physically-challenged category of the IIT-JEE 2010, the results of which were declared on Wednesday.

Terming it the "biggest achievement" of his life, Saxena said: "I have been a Haemophilla patient since birth, but I did not let the disease become a hurdle in my efforts. I want to pursue BTech in Mechanical Engineering from IIT-K. Later, I intend to become an IAS officer." Two other students from Lucknow, Mayank Srivastava and Rajiv Krishna Omar, who appeared for the JEE from Lucknow secured 78 and 87 ranks respectively. **ENS**

More Bengal students to join IIT this year

KOLKATA: The number of students from West Bengal qualifying the IIT-JEE has increased this year with 571 candidates from the state making it to the premier institutes, compared to the 541 last year.

"As many as 1,481 candidates qualified the JEE from the IIT Kharagpur zone. These include 571 students from West Bengal," said Amar Nath Samanta, chairperson, IIT-JEE (Kharagpur zone).

On the All India Rank (AIR) scale, the state high scorers include Siddhartha Sarkar (AIR 159), Sushnato Mondal (AIR 237), Sounak Dhar (AIR 253) and Debyayan Das (AIR 308).

The IIT-Kharagpur zone comprises West Bengal, Jharkhand, Orissa, Andamans and Sikkim. **ENS**

IIT entrance exam: Girls improve their ranks as compared to previous years

CHANDIGARH: In a shift from the usual trend, there is a marked improvement in the ranks of girls in the region. As against the previous year where the top all-India rank among the girls in the tricity was 815, this year it has improved to 493. Also, another girl making it to the IITs is Shiny Singh who has secured AIR 84 (in reserved category). Triya Bhattacharya has secured 493 AIR and considered to be the topper among the girls from the region. In 2009, the highest AIR from the region was secured by Aastha Dua (815) while in 2008 it was secured by Ankita Mittal (1225). Going by this record, it manifests that the girls are certainly emerging as tough competitors for their male counterparts. "IIT-JEE has been dominated by boys as more and more of them secure better rankings. Girls lack behind in physics and maths which are not popular among them, this is the reason most of them prefer medical than non-medical," said Triya. Following Triya is Ashima Singla with 3314 rank and Prakriti with 3317th position.

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