Newspaper Clips
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Rajasthan Patrika ND 19.08.2016 P-02

Hindustan Times ND 19.08.2016 P-01

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

At 15:1, IITs not quite the beacons of ideal student-teacher ratio

Nishad Pandey

The Indian Institutes of Technology have come out with the latest edition of its annual report, which lists the performance of the institutes across various parameters, including student-teacher ratio. According to the report, the average student-teacher ratio across the IITs is 15:1. However, this ratio is not quite the ideal one, as the reports have been highlighting the need for a lower ratio to ensure better quality of education.

IITs not quite the beacons of ideal student-teacher ratio

IIT-Delhi has a student-teacher ratio of 1:1, while IIT-Bombay has a ratio of 1:2. Even among the IITs, the student-teacher ratio varies significantly.

Ministry sources said the ratio, if not corrected, will get still worse with more students and less faculty. There is a need to have at least 1:1 ratio, or else the quality of education will suffer.

IITs by 2030

The ministry is also looking at relaxing norms for teaching positions specifically at IITs with a poor ratio, an official said.

There is fierce competition to get into the IITs which have 25,000 students at present. More than a million aspirants appeared for the JEE main exam this year.

Defending the schools, IIT Bombay director Pradeep Banerjee said, "All IITs have to maintain a very high bar for permanent faculty. Rather than taking in poor-quality permanent faculty, we do have high-quality IITIPE fellows, and our own institute-funded post-doctoral fellows who perform full-time academic duties but are not counted as faculty."

Admitting the poor student-faculty ratio was a challenge, a former IIT director who wishes to be identified said, "This is affecting global ranking and no quality as such. It is easy to increase the number of students but not to get quality faculty. And the IITs are hiring."
Economic Times ND 19.08.2016 P-08

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New Delhi: Pressured by what has now become an annual affair of terminations of low performers and then revoking the terminations, Indian Institute of Technology-Roorkee, has decided to lower the bar for passing the B-Tech (mechanical) examination.

Giving a buffer to those students who are not able to face the academic pressure, the institution has lowered the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) required to pass the course from 5.0 to 4.0. ‘A rationalisation of CGPA was much needed. As every year, we find it is difficult for at least 1 to 2 per cent of the first year batch (1000 students) to score a 5.0 CGPA,’ IIT-Roorkee director Pradip Banerjee told The Economic Times over phone.

This year, IIT-Roorkee, has struck it lucky in picking students that make it to the top of the list. The number of students this year is comparatively higher than last year. Speaking in favour of lowering the CGPA, IIT-Roorkee dean of Academic Affairs Neeraj Misra, said: “IITs should not instil the fear of failure in the young minds. Reducing CGPA is a good idea.”

According to the institute, it has lowered the CGPA required to pass the course from 5.0 to 4.0. “We have lowered it to give a buffer to those students who are not able to face the academic pressure,” said Neeraj Misra, dean of Academic Affairs.

IIT members and students have not and are not able to cope with the pressure at the IITs. “There are a few institutions that are not able to cope with the pressure at the IITs,” confirmed a faculty member at IIT Delhi. IIT Delhi gives six years to B.Tech students to complete a degree, which should ideally be completed in four years.

Many IIT faculty members blame the poor-quality of students to the cramming up taught at the coaching centres, inability to comprehend English language and the objective type of question papers for the IIT entrance examination that is not an actual test for conceptual comprehension.

“The current assessment for the IITs does not help in a complete assessment of students getting through the IITs. It is little misleading,” said Misra.

IIT-Gandhinagar director Gaurav Bhatia says the problem of a few students not able to cope with the pressure at the IITs is nothing new. “This has been there for several years,” he said.

IIT-Vanijyam (IIT-Roorkee-Hindu University) director Rajeev Sengupta quotes the inability to comprehend lectures in English and high competition among peer groups as main factors for students not being able to cope at the IITs. He says, “Lowering CGPA is just not the answer to this problem.”

Hari Bhoomi ND 19.08.2016 P-06

आईआईटी ने गोद लिए पांच गांव
गांव का निम्न स्तर बनाने के लिए लोगों की जागरूकता करने का आईआईटी

नममो के निम्नांगल के तत्त्व गांव को स्वच्छ और निम्न स्तर बनाने के लिए आईआईटी कन्नूर ने गांव ने किये किसान पदक पाए गए गांव को गोद लिया है।

आईआईटी केन्द्रित गांव को स्वच्छ बनाने और लोगों की स्वास्थ्य के लिए स्थाई निम्नांगल का समाधान तलाशने के लिए गांव को निम्न स्तर बनाने के लिए आईआईटी ने गांव को गोद लिया है। यहां गांव ने किसान पदक पाए गए गांव को गोद लिया है। इसे गांव के निम्न स्तर बनाने के लिए आईआईटी केन्द्र का समर्पण है।

आईआईटी केन्द्र के सीलिस इंजीनियरिंग विभाग के उद्धव तमीरामण ने आईआईटी केन्द्र के संयोजन में निम्नांगल का निम्न स्तर बनाने के लिए गांव को गोद लिया है। इसे गांव के निम्न स्तर बनाने के लिए आईआईटी केन्द्र का समर्पण है।

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- स्वच्छ नगर, खेजरू, कटोरी, प्रतापाबुद्ध, हरि हिंदुस्थन और कटोरी लोगो खेजरू गांव के सवारी भविष्य
IIT-G to get fastest supercomputer in NE


Guwahati: The Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, (IIT-G), has acquired one of the most powerful supercomputers in the country.

According to Gautam Biswas, director of IIT-G, the supercomputer will have the topmost specifications among supercomputers in the entire northeastern, eastern and southern regions, outside Bangalore.

Speaking to TOI he said, "We received the supercomputer about a month ago and installation is in the final phase. It will be opened for use once the human resource development minister inaugurates it."

Reportedly, a date hasn't been decided yet for the formal launch, but the supercomputer is expected to be inaugurated within this year.

The device has been developed as a joint venture between the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune, and IIT-G. A part of the Param series of supercomputers by C-DAC, it has been named jointly by the two organizations as Param Ishaan. Biswas said around Rs 10 crore was spent to build the supercomputer.

Param Ishaan will have a speed of around 250 trillion floating point operations per second (tflops) and 300 TB storage.

Rajat Moona, director general of C-DAC told TOI, "Supercomputers are present in different educational institutions of the NE states, like Tezpur University, Assam Engineering College, various National Institutes of Technology (NITs). However, this will be first time that a supercomputer of such huge specifications will be deployed in the region."

The first supercomputer installation in the state, the C-DAC and AEC PARAM Supercomputing Facility, was at the Assam Engineering College at its Jalukbari campus. It became operational earlier this year.
Currently, Indian Institute of Science has the most powerful supercomputer in the country, SahasraT, with a computing speed of 901.5 teraflops.

**IBM sets up high-power computing facility at IIT Bombay**


MUMBAI: Tech major IBM and IIT Bombay has announced the opening of the first OpenPOWER Research Facility (OPRF) at the institute to help drive further education, innovation and research with the country's National Knowledge Network.

The network aims to interconnect all institutions of higher learning and research with a high-speed data communication network, facilitating knowledge sharing and collaborative research and innovation.

Open POWER Foundation was born out of a collaboration by IBM, Nvidia and Mellanox, and supports open development on the POWER architecture.

OPRF has been established to provide the country's large research and development community with technical assistance and infrastructure to further indigenous research.

"Open collaboration is driving the next wave of innovation across the entire system stack, allowing clients and organizations to develop customized solutions to capitalize on today’s emerging workloads," Monica Aggarwal, vice president, India Systems Development Lab (ISDL), IBM Systems told.

"The OPRF will enable Indian companies, universities and government organizations to build technologies indigenously using the high-performance POWER processor, helping to drive the national IT agenda of India," she added.

The OpenPOWER Foundation is a global, open development membership organization formed to facilitate and inspire collaborative innovation on the POWER architecture.

So far, it has 230 members across 24 countries, and is looking at aggressively expanding its network in top tier institutions in the country, Aggarwal said.

OpenPOWER members share expertise, investment and server-class intellectual property to develop solutions that serve the evolving needs of technology customers.

With the opening of OPRF, scientists, students, developers and enterprises who are a part of the National Knowledge Network initiative can tap into the latest and best available OpenPOWER-based infrastructure, IBM said here.

To begin with, PhD scholars, MTech and engineering students will tap into OPRF to develop new age applications and solutions around eGovernance, healthcare, education, agriculture and high-performance computing.

"OPRF at IIT Bombay supports an open technology ecosystem for high-performance computing and its applications.

OPRF gives opportunities to students, faculty, and researchers to gain familiarity with OpenPOWER system features, and make contributions to the OpenPOWER foundation in terms of power processor, GPU acceleration, network
In terms of its objectives and activities, OPRF aligns well with the recently-launched National Supercomputing Mission of Government of India, he added.

**IIT Hyderabad bags Rs 30 cr Japanese multi-mode transportation project**
http://indianexpress.com/article/education/iithyderabad-bags-rs-30-cr-japanese-multi-mode-transportation-project2984766/

The five-year project is aimed at reducing carbon footprint.

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad has bagged a Rs 30 crore project from Japan in the area of multi-mode transportation as the institute pursues to further nurture its special relationship with that country. “It is a five-year project aimed at reducing carbon footprint. We have a unique relationship with Japan,” IIT-H Director Prof U B Desai said. Officials of the institute said it is a second SATREPS (Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development) project on ‘Smart Cities for Emerging Countries based on Sensing, Network, and Big Data Analysis of Multimodal Regional Transportation System’.

“Perhaps the other one which comes closer is the relationship that IIT-Kanpur had with the United States.”

“IITH, which started functioning in August, 2008, has various programmes with Japan like research and development collaborations and friendship programmes, as well as on the infrastructure front,” he said.

“About 25 to 30 faculty members from Japan come to IITH every year, and an equal number of IITH faculty go to that country annually. Practically, we have one Japanese visitor to IITH every week,” Prof Desai said.

The R&D collaboration between IITH and Japan are in areas of sustainable development, smart cities, digital fabrication, energy and environment, nanotechnologies, design and manufacturing, among others. The institute has MoUs with more than a dozen Japanese universities, and about 40 IITH graduates are pursuing higher education in Japan, funded by means of scholarship and fellowship by universities there.

On August 30, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is organising a conference, CONNECT-IITH in Tokyo, exclusively for IITH to interact with Japanese industries. As a cultural collaboration, a coffee shop named ‘Shiru Cafe’ has been established by Japan at IITH. Run by Japanese students, faculty and students of IITH get free coffee here every day.

**UGC to set up national digital library**

Kolhapur: The University Grants Commission (UGC) will set up a National Digital Library (NDL) in an attempt to provide single window access to e-learning facility to post-graduate courses.

In a letter issued on August 16, UGC secretary Jaspal Sandhu has asked the students of the universities and colleges to register themselves on the NDL portal (https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in).

"The ministry of human resources development under its National Mission on Education has entrusted IIT Kharagpur to host, coordinate and set-up National Digital Library towards building a national asset," the letter states.
It further states, "The objective of project is to integrate all the existing digitized and digital contents available with different institutions. More specifically, it is to provide a single-window access with e-learning facility to different groups of users ranging from primary to higher education."

The letter said that from single window of NDL, educational material, more than 40 types of learning resources, and 13 lakh items in more than 70 languages can be accessed. In order to making the most out of these resources, the UGC has asked the officials to advise students to register themselves on the NDL portal at https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/.

The Shivaji University, Kolhapur (SUK) officials the UGC move was a unique and fine approach to provide vast and varied content to the students. University officials already have access to various journals for higher education, but the digital library is altogether a different scenario, said the official.

**Reduction in forest area has led to deficit rainfall, says IISc study**
http://www.deccanherald.com/content/565499/reduction-forest-area-has-led.html

*The state has received deficit rainfall this season. This is not just because of global warming and el Nino effect, but also because of change in land use, especially reduction of forest cover.*

A recent study by researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) titled “Time-Series Modis Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) based vegetation change analysis with land surface temperature and rainfall in Western Ghats, India” shows that because of change in landscape of north, central and southern Western Ghats, there is a decline in rainfall trend, which is also having an adverse impact on the food and water security.

The study, conducted by Prof T V Ramachandra, Centre for Ecological Sciences, IISc along with Utta Kumamar and Anandita Dasgupta, showed that the dense forest areas in the northern, central and southern Western Ghats have decreased by 2.84%, 4.38% and 5.77% respectively and agricultural or grasslands have increased by 2.23%, 4.32% and 5.85%.

The rainfall time-series data also showed a decreasing trend in the rainfall pattern from 2013 towards 2020 in the northern, central and southern Western Ghats, revealing a grave situation threatening water and food security in peninsular India with an increasing trend of deforestation. Also, the number of rainy days had decreased in the southern Western Ghats region.

The trends in rainfall time-series data were analysed using statistical methods and modelled using auto-regressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) which indicated a decreasing trend in the rainfall pattern, Ramachandra said.

There is also a marginal increase in human settlement or soil area and small decrease in the spatial extent of water bodies in all the three regions. The study also revealed that the temperature in dense forests has always been less than in agricultural or grassland areas in all the three seasons.

“We focused on vegetation data to investigate the distribution of land surface temperature and rainfall because the existing vegetation distribution is largely controlled by temperature and precipitation pattern. Monthly climatic changes and trends of the last 10 years provided a clear illustration of the NDVI trends,” he said.
Differences in NDVI–temperature and NDVI–precipitation correlations relative to vegetation types such as forest and agriculture or grassland were also investigated. This result supports and is of similar magnitude as temporal studies showing increase of NDVI corresponding to increase in growing season temperature over the length of the satellite record, Ramachandra added.

**August 18**

Navodaya Times ND 18.08.2016 P-04  

Hindustan Times ND 18.08.2016 P-13

**Education channels to help IIT aspirants**

NEW DELHI: DTH service providers and cable operators have agreed to carry the feed of 32 education channels called ‘Swayam Prabha’ to be launched soon by the HRD ministry. The channels will telecast programmes for IIT entrance, engineering courses and will help students prepare better for competitive examinations.

The decision, according to sources, was taken after a meeting held by HRD minister Prakash Javadekar on Wednesday with all cable and Direct to Home (DTH) operators.

The content of these channels has been finalised and the ministry is now working on ensuring that they reach every household. “The minister asked them (operators) to be a part of this educational revolution and assured support in technical matters,” a senior official said.
IIT-BBS inks pact with BHEL for energy research

BHUBANESWAR: The Indian Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar (IIT-BBS) is stitching up a spate of collaborations for research and development (R&D) in emerging sectors of science.

On Wednesday, it signed an MoU with BHEL for R&D collaboration in energy sector. The MoU for long term R&D was signed by IIT-BBS Director Prof RV Raja Kumar and Dr Executive Director of BHEL Umakant Choudhury.

A dozen areas where IIT can collaborate with BHEL has been identified which includes carbon nanotubes to system-level study on grid interaction of multiple hybrid PV System.

Raja Kumar said the collaboration would enable IIT’s faculty members to contribute for technology development in the areas of energy and power systems including renewable energy sources in which both the agencies have a lot of common interest and huge potential.

Earlier, the institute had collaborated with Integrated Test Range (ITR), DRDO, Chandipur by signing agreements for three sponsored research projects. The projects include ‘Utilisation of ITR Doppler Weather Radar Products in High Resolution Mesoscale Model for Prediction of Severe Weather Over Chandipur’ by Prof UC Mohanty, ‘Real time Implementation of Image Fusion Algorithms for IR and CCD Video’ by Dr NB Puhan and Prof G Panda of SES and ‘Aeronautic Telemetry Channel Estimation and Equalisation’ by Dr PR Sahu and Prof G Panda.

The research partnerships apart, the institute has sought to rope in visiting faculties and researchers from international institutions to create an academic atmosphere of cosmopolitan character and global flavour.

The visiting faculties can be hired for a semester which can be extended up to one more year. They can also participate in teaching as well as research programmes in its constituent schools.

The IIT-BBS is offering an honorarium of `1.5 lakh per month and other amenities to the international faculty members. They would also be eligible for an allowance up to `50,000.