Not engineered for jobs

A serious situation has arisen because of the mushrooming of private technical institutions. Barred from exemptions, there is scant regard for maintenance of standards in these places," Rao said. "The notion that the upgrading of teaching standards continues to fail across levels, resulting in a poor pool of engineering talent to fit most industry requirements. In 2003, a report submitted by former ISRO chairman U.R. Rao had questioned the need for new technical institutions, urging the AICTE to step back in this regard. The report had warned that the rate of increase of engineering graduates was around 55 percent as against only a 4.5 percent growth rate of the economy. Naturally, they would not be absorbed into jobs.

"But the industry is not convinced. The software firms based out of Gurugram are struggling to hire the right candidates with most managing to hire an average of 10 to 12 percent of every 100 applicants. President of the Apex Stya Group, Bishnu Beria, explicates, "Apart from domain knowledge, we are also looking for soft skills. An engineer today has to communicate with the client, engage with the organisation and its goals, work in a team and understand the dynamics of workplace better. Finding the right candidates is a challenge. Also, there is shortage of technical and domain engineers even though there is huge requirement of civil engineers."

A research by the group shows civil engineering programmes had the capacity to train 13,000 students in 1809 while computer science and IT departments could accept 12,100. By 2008, the IT and computer science programmers ballooned to 1,800 while civil engineering programmes climbed to only 2,300. Another problem is lack of core skills in emerging sectors such as Big Data business. Beria adds, "NASSCOM has pointed out how software firms are facing shortage of skilled engineers. India's biggest software firms are looking for more business in areas such as Big Data but there is shortage of engineers to analyse data. We have only 300 engineers to undertake such projects whereas the requirement is five times more."

"The market for Big Data (describing huge chunks of information) in India will grow at about 50 percent a year from 2013, $2 billion in 2013 to $6 billion in 2014, according to a study by technology research firm International Data Corp, which estimated that the world generates 1 petabyte of data every 11 seconds."

Further speaking, he noted that the industry is facing a major challenge in the area of employability. He said that the AICTE had produced several high-level committees and task force to review the curriculum and enhance employability. The AICTE also conducts the NSITC (Nagpur Students' Technical Council) which has been actively working in this area. However, in the face of such challenges, there is a need for industry to step up and ensure that the students are trained to meet the demands of the industry.

"Tribune 2508/2013 P-14"
In losses, colleges scrap BTech courses

BY SANDEY SINGH BARIANA

RECENTLY, the trend of diminishing enrolment in engineering colleges affiliated to Punjab Technical University (PTU), has led to a significant reduction in admissions from the current academic session onwards. Many colleges have reported a drop in the number of students enrolling for BTech courses, leading to a decrease in revenue. As a result, several colleges have decided to scrap BTech courses altogether.

MBA and MCA courses, particularly in the fields of management and computer science, remain popular among students. However, the demand for these courses is not as high as that for BTech courses. The decline in BTech enrolment has led to a surplus of seats in these courses, which has further contributed to the decision to scrap BTech courses.

The situation is particularly acute in urban areas, where the demand for engineering courses is high. In rural areas, the demand for engineering courses is lower, and colleges are facing difficulties in attracting students.

The decision to scrap BTech courses has been welcomed by many students, who believe that it will lead to a better allocation of resources and a shift towards more popular courses.

Placement prospects for engineering graduates are considered to be better than those for MBA and MCA graduates. However, the decision to scrap BTech courses has been met with mixed reactions from students and parents.

Placements: The lack of demand for BTech courses has led to a decline in placements for engineering graduates. Many students have been forced to pursue MBA or MCA courses, which have higher placement prospects.

Fees: The decision to scrap BTech courses has also had an impact on fees. Many colleges have been forced to lower their fees to attract students.

The decision to scrap BTech courses has been welcomed by many students, who believe that it will lead to a better allocation of resources and a shift towards more popular courses.

At the moment, mechanical and civil engineering courses are slightly better placed.

Fake scholarships: Many students have opted for engineering courses due to the availability of scholarships. However, the decision to scrap BTech courses has led to a decline in the number of scholarships available for these courses.

The director of an institute, requesting anonymity, says: "What do you expect us to do in the wake of the falling strength of students? Instead of a seat going unused, which is what happens in engineering, now the seats are filled by students."
SC directs AIIMS not to reserve general seats for OBC students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has directed AIIMS not to reserve general category medical seats for reserved category students. An order from the court became essential as the premier medical institution had issued a notice during the ongoing counselling inviting reserved OBC candidates to apply against the unreserved seats.

In the name of reservation, the AIIMS even declared that if the reserved candidate vacated the general category seat to opt for a reserved seat, the benefit of that vacancy would go to the next OBC candidate in line and not to any of the general category students. This meant that several general category seats in MBBS and MD courses would covertly be added in the reserved quota.

The matter was reported to the apex court by a NGO Samta Andolan Samiti and also a student who found the notice put up by AIIMS in the first week of July as affecting his right to admission. Initially the apex court directed the Convener of AIIMS Counseling Committee to allow the student to take part in counseling as it set out to examine the decision of AIIMS to revert general category seats to reserved candidates.

Advocate for the petitioners ML Lahoty and Gopal Shankaranarayanan pointed out to the Court that the matter required to be urgently dealt with since the third round of counseling would commence next week. The Court was informed that already OBC candidates had appeared in counseling and it was likely that with the counseling notice in place, they may claim a right for admission against general seats.

Lahoty cited early decisions of the Supreme Court which held that reservation in admissions and jobs cannot exceed 50 per cent of the total seats. Later, in Ashoka Kumar Thakur which dealt with 27 per cent OBC quota in IITs, IIMs and central educational institutions, the majority verdict held that vacancies generated in general category cannot be passed to reserved category students. This was done to balance the 50 per cent quota benchmark set by the apex court.

In view of the submissions, the Bench of Justices KS Radhakrishnan and AK Sikri held,

“Vacancies which are available in the General category shall not be filled up from other categories for a period of two weeks.” The order came as a blow to AIIMS as it was prevented from admitting SC/ST/OBC candidates against the General pool.
Sibal stresses on higher education through fibre-optics

statesman new service

NEW DELHI, 24 AUG: Union Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Mr Kapil Sibal, today said that the government is in the process of laying down fibre-optics to connect 2.5 lakh gram panchayats and facilitate the flow of information which will ultimately contribute in providing quality education to students across the country.

Mr Sibal, while addressing the annual cultural function and exhibition organised by Apeejay School, Pitampura, said that the use of optical fiber will help students get quality education. The students need not to be physically present in the classroom under the scheme, he said.

"Using information technology a student based in North-east can have a lecture from a Delhi University professor without physically being present in the classroom and vice versa."

He said that around 400 universities of the country have already been connected through National Knowledge Network (NNK) and more universities will be connected soon. The minister said that there is a sea change in the field of higher education in the country.

Without naming any university, he supported the change taking place in the Delhi University. "We are now a global competitor in the field of education and we have to adopt global standards and for this we need to bring some change in our education system", he said. He further said that the growth of the nation does not depend on the GDP but on the gross enrolment ratio of the students in colleges. "GDP of the nation gives you trillions of dollars but the GDP is created in the university and in higher education system and so much depends on the gross enrolment ratio of students," he said adding that in developed country around 40 students out of 100 reach colleges while in India only 12 students as per the 2009 data reach college.

He said that the government is committed to increase this gross enrolment ratio to 30% by 2020. He also suggested the parents to allow their children discover their own genius and do not impose their dreams on them.

"Remember their DNA is different, their dreams are different. Don’t discover life for them let them discover it themselves," he advised.
No change in JEE 2014 format, says IIT board

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NEW DELHI: The Joint Admission Board (JAB) for IITs which met on Sunday in Delhi to review the IIT entrance test format has decided that there should not be any change in the exam next year. While the JEE (mains) is likely to be held on April 6, JEE (advanced) exam is likely to be conducted on May 25. It has been decided that JEE 2014 will be conducted by IIT Kharagpur. The next JAB meet will be held in Kharagpur on September 15, which if necessary, will once again revisit the decisions taken on Sunday.

The IIT Council is slated to meet on September 3. The board meeting, attended by 10 IIT directors, JEE (advanced) chairmen and vice chairmen has decided that next year the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) for admission to different IITs should follow the same format as this year.

There were suggestions to relax the percentile criteria for some school boards which had high 20 percentile cuts offs. There was also a suggestion that the number of students filtered from JEE (mains) to JEE (advanced) be increased from 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh. These were not approved by JAB. The board approved some changes for next year like counselling and registration services.

Most members also felt that one year is a small time to bring about any change.
The IIT Joint Admission Board (JAB) on Sunday agreed to carry on with the existing two-tier engineering entrance test for another academic year. The final decision will, however, be taken by IIT-Kharagpur, which has been tasked with conducting the JEE Mains in April 2014 and JEE Advanced in May-June 2014.

In the two-tier system, which was followed in JEE 2013, a candidate has to be in the top 20 per cent in their secondary examination to get into an IIT.

The first part, JEE Mains, will select students for all Centrally-funded technical institutes (CFTIs), except the IITs. JEE Main has adopted ranking with 40 per cent weightage to secondary examination results and 60 per cent to the entrance examination. The top 1.5 lakh rankers will have to take the second part — Advanced — for admission to IITs.

The HRD Ministry has been drawing flak for the controversial IIT eligibility criteria. In a review meeting on August 14, chaired by HRD Minister MM Pallam Raju, it indicated complexities in the format.

The Ministry had asked the JAB to decide on selection norms to clear the confusion before the next batch of engineering aspirants get ready for the 2014 entrance test. A possible change in eligibility criteria, with a higher cut-off slab concerning secondary school results, was thus on the anvil.

Meanwhile, the Council of IITs is expected to amend fee payment policy of IITs to augment fiscal resources, in a meeting early next month. With the Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme on its way, those exempt from paying fees under Government policy will get the amount through DBT and have to pay it.

Fee revenue constitutes just 7-10 per cent of total non-plan expenditure of an IIT and they are paid only by 50 per cent students. Under the existing system, fees for about 22 per cent of SC/ST students are fully waived. Besides, up to 25 per cent of students whose parental annual income is less than Rs 4.5 lakh, are entitled to a fee waiver. The remaining students pay the full fee.

IITs meet most of their expenses, such as salaries and staff costs, through financial grants from the HRD Ministry. The Planning Commission as well as the Department of Expenditure in the Ministry of Finance, have highlighted the need to increase fee revenue, according to official sources.

The council could also consider a dedicated technical cadre to free faculty members of extra administrative load and help them devote more time to teaching and research.
No change in IIT-JEE entrance exam pattern

The IIT Joint Admission Board (JAB) agreed to continue with the same pattern for the IIT-JEE examination for one more year at a crucial meeting in New Delhi on Sunday, PTI reports.

The board made a detailed review of the new pattern of the two-tier Joint Entrance Examination, which was implemented this year, and was of the view that the pattern should be continued next year as well for a closer assessment of the system, sources said. JAB comprises heads of the various campuses of the premier technological institute. The meeting was held in the wake of reports that there could be some changes in eligibility criteria for admission to IITs.

Some of the IIT directors had met HRD Minister M Pallam Raju in Delhi last week to discuss a proposal to ease percentile cut-offs for entry into IITs.
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According to sources, some of the IIT directors had met HRD minister M Pallam Raju here last week to discuss a proposal to ease percentile cut-offs for entry into an IIT. IIT aspirants in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and those belonging to national boards like CBSE, had to contend with high cut-offs this year under the new format for admissions. The cut-offs for AP and TN were above 90 per cent this year.

Sources said that since the issue was being legally challenged, JAB on Sunday decided to maintain the status quo.

JAB is expected to meet again on 15 September at the Kharagpur IIT where the matter would be discussed once again. Meanwhile, the IIT council is slated to meet on 3 September.

The meeting is also understood to have decided on next year’s examinations. The IIT-JEE (Mains) could be held on 6 April and IIT-JEE (Advanced) on 25 May, sources said.
आईआईटी-जेईई प्रवेश परीक्षा पैटर्न में नहीं होगा बदलाव

अभिमुख भुगतान नीति में बदलाव कर सकता है आईआईटी

नई दिल्ली। आईआईटी-जेईई प्रवेश परीक्षा के पैटर्न में एक और साल तक कोई बदलाव नहीं किया जाएगा। आईआईटी संयुक्त प्रवेश बोर्ड (जेब) की रजिस्ट्रेशन को हुई अहम बैठक में बर्तमान पैटर्न को ही बनाए रखने पर सहमति बनी।

सूत्रों का कहना है कि बोर्ड ने दो लेखन वाले संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा के नए पैटर्न की विस्तृत समीक्षा की और इसे अगले साल भी जारी रखने की राय बनी ताकि इस प्रणाली का बारीकी से आकलन किया जा सके। नए पैटर्न को इसी साल लागू किया गया था।

जेब में देशभर के विभिन्न प्रमुख तकनीकी संस्थाओं के प्रमुख शामिल हैं। जेब की बैठक उन रिपोर्टों के लिए हुई, जिसका कहना था कि आईआईटी संस्थाओं में उपलब्ध की योग्यता संबंधी नियमों में कुछ बदलाव किए जा सकते हैं। कुछ आईआईटी के निदेशकों ने पिछले हफ्ते मानव संसाधन विकास मंडल स्पेशल राज्य से मुलाकात की थी।

और उनके साथ आईआईटी में प्रवेश के परिस्थिति कर और मामले पर चर्चा की थी। आईआईटी, केल और तमिलनाडु के साथ ही राष्ट्रीय शैक्षणिक बोर्ड यूजीसीएसई से निकले छात्रों ने नए फार्मेट के तहत इस साल बहुत ऊंची कट ऑफ हासिल की।

इस साल आईआईटी और तमिलनाडू के छात्रों का कट ऑफ 90 प्रतिशत से अधिक रहा। सूत्रों ने कहा कि इस मसले को कोटों में चुनौती देने के बाद भी जेब में मौजूदा पैटर्न को एक और साल बरकरार रखने पर सहमति बनी। जेब की आली बैठक 15 सितंबर को खड़गपुर आईआईटी में होने की उम्मीद है जहां एक बार फिर इस मामले पर चर्चा होगी। हालांकि आईआईटी काउंसिल की बैठक 3 सितंबर को होनी है। रजिस्ट्रेशन की बैठक में आगे साल ने होने वाली परीक्षा की तिथियों पर भी चर्चा हुई।

अगले साल 6 अप्रैल को आईआईटी-जेईई (मैन्स) और 25 मई को आईआईटी-जेईई (एडवर्स) की परीक्षा हो सकती है। जेबी
आईआईटी एंट्रेंस में नहीं होगा बदलाव

नई दिल्ली | वनीता श्रीवास्तव

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी) की प्रवेश परीक्षा में फिलहाल कोई बदलाव नहीं होगा। राजधानी में रविवार को आईआईटी प्रवेश परीक्षा प्रक्रिया की समीक्षा करने के लिए ज्वाइंट एडमिशन बोर्ड (जेएबी) की बैठक हुई। इसमें फैसला किया गया कि अगले साल के लिए प्रवेश परीक्षा की प्रक्रिया में कोई बदलाव नहीं होगा।

बैठक में यह भी फैसला किया गया कि संयुक्त इंजीनियरिंग प्रवेश परीक्षा - 2014 (जेईई) कराने की निःशुल्क आईआईटी खड़गपुर की होगी। संभवतः जेईई (मेन) परीक्षा अगले साल 6 अप्रैल को आयोजित की जाएगी। जबकि जेईई (एडवांस) की परीक्षा 25 मई को कराए जाएंगे।

जेएबी की बैठक में यह निर्णय लिया गया कि अगर जरूरी हुआ तो अगले वर्ष में की 15 तारीख की बैठक में बुलाया जाएगी। जहाँ पर इस फैसले की समीक्षा की जाएगी। वहाँ, आईआईटी रिपोर्ट की बैठक 3 सितंबर को होगी। जेएबी की बैठक में 10 आईआईटी निदेशकों ने हिस्सा लिया।

जेईई (एडवांस) के अध्यक्ष और उपाध्यक्ष ने फैसला किया कि अगले साल भी प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान में प्रवेश के लिए मौजूदा प्रवेश प्रणाली को ही अपनाया जाएगा।
आईआईटी की फीस पॉलिसी में हो सकता है बदलाव

नई दिल्ली (एप्सनबी)। भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थानों (आईआईटी) की मौजूदा फीस भुगतान नीति की बदलाव जा सकता है। अभी इन संस्थानों में 50 फीसद विद्यार्थी ही फीस का भुगतान करते हैं। आरक्षित श्रेणी के विद्यार्थियों को फीस से छूट मिली हुई है। ऐसे में आईआईटी के कुल गैर-योजना व्यय में फीस से प्रायः राजस्व का हिस्सा महज 7 से 10 प्रतिशत रहता है। नीतिज्ञता, संस्थानों में वित्तीय स्थिति बेहद नहीं रहती है। आईआईटी काउंसिल की तीन सितंबर को होने वाली बैठक में इस बात का फैसला लिया जाएगा।

वर्तमान में आईआईटी की फीस संस्थानों में अनुसूचित जाति और अनुसूचित जनजाति के करीब 22 प्रतिशत विद्यार्थियों की फीस माफ की गई है। इसके अलावा इनमें ऐसे 25 प्रतिशत विद्यार्थी हैं, जिनके अभिभावकों की सालाना आय 4.5 लाख रुपए से कम है। इनकी भी फीस माफ की गई है।

बाकी बचे करीब 50-52 परसेंट विद्यार्थी को फीस का भुगतान करते हैं। आईआईटी मुम्बई के एक अध्यापक ने कहा गया है कि सभी छात्रों को फीस का भुगतान करना चाहिए और जिन्हें फीस से छूट दी गई है, उन्हें छात्रवृति के रूप में प्रयक्त नकद हस्तांतरण योजना के तहत पैसा दिया जाना चाहिए।

आईआईटी प्रशासन अपने कर्मचारियों के बीच और अन्य तरह के खर्च मानव संस्कार विकास मंत्रालय से फिर से अनुदान के जरिए पूरा करता है। सूचना के अनुसार योजना आयोग के साथी ही व्यय विभाग, वित्त मंत्रालय ने भी फीस राजस्व को बढ़ाए जाने की जरूरत को रखकर किया है।

बैठक में परिषद शिक्षक वर्ग पर अतिरिक्त बजट को देखते हुए समाप्त तकनीकी बैठक गठित किये जाने पर भी विचार कर सकती है ताकि शिक्षक पढाने और शोध कार्यों में अधिक समय दे सकें।

अगले वर्ष आईआईटी जेईई प्रवेश परीक्षा में कोई बदलाव नहीं: बॉर्ड

नई दिल्ली (एप्सनबी)। आईआईटी संयुक्त प्रवेश बॉर्ड (जेएबी) ने रविवार को यह एक महत्वपूर्ण बैठक में आईआईटी जेईई परीक्षा का पैटर्न एक और वर्ष समान बनाए रखने पर सहमति जताई।

सूचना के अनुसार बॉर्ड ने फिल्टर समान लागू हुए दो चरण वाली संयुक्त प्रवेश परीक्षा के नये पैटर्न की विस्तृत समीक्षा की और यह पाया कि इस प्रणाली के करीब आकलन के लिए इस पैटर्न को एक और वर्ष बनाने रखना चाहिए। जेएबी में इस प्रमुख संस्थान के विभिन्न परिसरों के प्रमुख शामिल हैं। यह बैठक ऐसे समय लगे हैं जब यह चरण हैं कि आईआईटी में प्रवेश के लिए योजना में कुछ बदलाव किया जा सकता है। जेएबी को आईआईटी खड़गपुर में 15 सितंबर को फिर से बैठक होने की संभावना है जहां इस मुद्दे पर एक बार फिर चर्चा होगी।

इस बीच, आईआईटी परिषद की बैठक तीन सितंबर को होनी है। माना जा रहा है कि आई की बैठक में अगले साल की परीक्षा की तिथियों पर भी फैसला किया गया। आईआईटी मुख्य परीक्षा छह अप्रैल तक आईआईटी जेईई एडवांस परीक्षा 25 मई को होने की संभावना है।
IIT robots to score a goal in Malaysia

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NEW DELHI: Robots made by students of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur are all set to play soccer in Malaysia at an event from Monday.

Robots built by Kharagpur RoboSoccer Students’ Group will represent India and 13 students from IIT-Kharagpur would be in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the world cup. The event has been organised by the Federation of International Robosoccer Association (FIRA). FIRA organises the world cup soccer for robots every year at different locations across the world.

The world cup has several leagues and is host to a hundred teams from different countries.

The team would participate in two leagues — MiroSot and SimuroSot.

MiroSot is a 5 v 5 match of autonomous robot teams that are smaller than a cube of 7.5cm x 7.5cm x 7.5cm. It is one of the most fast paced leagues in the tournament, where robots are restricted to a field of play 2.2m x 1.8m.

SimuroSot is a 5 v 5 match played on a simulator. This platform pits the best strategies of the teams against the other in an idealised environment. The one with the best strategy module shall be declared the winner.

“The World Cup offers students an opportunity to showcase their talent at an international stage. The achievements of the team will definitely bring IIT Kharagpur at par with the best universities in the world that offer a platform to work in the field of robotics,” Disha Sarawgi, a member of the team told HT. She said the team had made their robots smaller and metal-based.

आईआईटी खड़गपुर के रोबोट मलेशिया में खेलेंगे फुटबॉल

उत्तराखण्ड में अंतरराष्ट्रीय टूर्नामेंट आज से, एफआईआरए इस साल आयोजित करता है रोबोट का वर्ल्ड कप स्कॉरर

हरै दिल्ली | हिंदी

आईआईटी खड़गपुर के इंजीनियरिंग छात्रों द्वारा बनाए गए रोबोट दो सीमाएं से मलेशिया में शुरू हो रहे अंतरराष्ट्रीय फुटबॉल टूर्नामेंट में अपना जलवा बिखर रहे।

एफआईआरए प्रतियोगिता के लिए पल्ले का सरकार का आयोजन करता है। हरै भारत की ओर से खड़गपुर रोबोटरसिस्टम का भाग लेने वाले दो रोबोट हैं।

इसमें से पहला रोबोट, सॉफ्टवेयर द्वारा बनाया गया एक रोबोट उत्तराखण्ड में खड़गपुर के इंजीनियरिंग छात्रों द्वारा बनाया गया।

इसे हवा में उड़ाने के लिए अंडर 18 मॉडल के रहस्यमय विस्तार के साथ प्रदर्शित किया जा रहा है।

इसका उपयोग अंतरराष्ट्रीय फुटबॉल टूर्नामेंट में करने हेतु किया जा रहा है।

दूसरा रोबोट, एक स्मार्टफोन का फुटबॉल खेलने के लिए बनाया गया है।

इसमें हवा में उड़ाने के लिए दो रोबोट हैं, जिन्हें एक स्मार्टफोन के साथ जोड़ा जा सकता है।
By Neha Pushkarna
in New Delhi

STUDENTS opting for private universities will now know which one is better.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has decided to allow private universities in all states to seek a tag of "University with Potential for Excellence" (UPE) under the 12th Plan.

Even private colleges can now get recognition from the UGC for doing good work.

Though the tag will not attract any special funding from the government, the title "University with Potential for Excellence" will be a boost to a private university's image and its popularity among admission-seekers.

The Commission also decided that state's private universities and other universities covered under section 12B of the UGC Act may also be considered for grants of status of UPE provided they fulfill the various conditions under the scheme, mentioned in the minutes of the meeting held earlier this year.

However, the private universities will not be able to seek the special grant under this scheme as provided to government universities. There are 165 private universities in the country which have been approved by UGC. However, the competition for these universities is going to be fierce as the UGC targets to give the tag to only five universities during every Plan period.

The Commission also decided in its last meeting that any university which already has a UPE tag for five years will be graduate to the next level where it would be called a University of Excellence. UGC will grant up to Rs 20 crore over three phases to universities that have been labeled as UPE and eventually as "University of Excellence".

"For private universities, however, the tag will only mean that their good performance in academics and research is being acknowledged," said an official.

The scheme was introduced during the Plan. Since then, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jadavpur University, Pune University and Madras University have received the coveted tag. Similarly, individual colleges which were selected as "College with Potential for Excellence" (CPE) will be modified as College of Excellence after the same period of time.

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School students from Delhi, Gurgaon discover two asteroids

NEW DELHI: Fear school students of Delhi and Gurgaon have discovered two asteroids which will soon be listed in world’s official minor body catalogue maintained by International Astronomical Union (Paris).

Shourya Chambial and Gaurav Path of Amity International School, New Delhi, and Balachandra Routh and Ayush Gupta of Gurgaon’s Ryan International School, part of two separate teams, have made two provisional discoveries of asteroids doing the country proud, said Sachin Bahmba, chairman and managing director, SPACE.

The discovery has been confirmed by the International Scientific Community and the asteroids have provisionally been named as 2013 LS28 and 2013 PR, he said.

SPACE director CB Devgun said they are now waiting for them to be placed in the world’s official minor body catalogue maintained by International Astronomical Union (Paris).

IAU is the body officially recognised by astronomers and other scientists worldwide as the de facto naming authority for astronomical bodies, he said.

Asteroids have provisionally been named 2013 LS28 and 2013 PR

The two teams used exclusive data to look at specific parts of the sky and with the help of complex procedure called 'Astrometrically tracked objects' by looking at the images of the sky as provided by telescopes based in the US to see which of the objects moving over time could be a possible asteroid.

The discoveries were made as part of the program All Indian Asteroid Search Campaign (AASC) conducted jointly between April and August this year by Science Popularisation Association of Communicators (SPACE) and International Astronomical Search Collaboration (IASC).

AASC was started by SPACE in 2010 in India with an endeavour to increase love for science, astronomy and research especially among school students, Bahmba said.

The campaign has been very successful in showing that with proper opportunities and guidance, Indian students can achieve scientific heights and distinctly contribute in scientific discoveries at a very early age, he added.

Besides the two asteroids, 12 preliminary discoveries, 2 Near-Earth Objects (NEO) confirmation and 262 NEO Observations were also done during AASC phase III.
While India boasts of the best engineering colleges, a large number of aspiring engineers are eager to pursue their higher education abroad. While some attribute it to global exposure, others consider it necessary to gain an edge in the job market. Classroom diversity, placement prospects and research opportunities are equally important for students who are looking at 21st-century learning as more than a classroom experience.

In fact, Nihal Shah, who is pursuing BS in computer science at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, points out that unlike in India, where entrance exams determine the course that one would pursue, in the US one’s interest is the primary determinant.

Additionally, he says, the liberal nature of the education system ensures that apart from gaining a thorough knowledge of his/her subject, students also get an opportunity to explore other avenues. Also, Nihal adds that the facilities in terms of equipment, methods of learning, exposure and opportunities are significantly better and varied when compared to India.

**APPENDIX**

**APPLICATIONS**

Says Viral Dodhi, career counselor, “For undergraduate applications, a strong academic record from scores, graduate schools in the US require GRE scores. 

Advises Yash Mishra, an MEng biochemical engineering student at University College London, “UK universities use a common universities and colleges admissions service.”

“Depending on finances, strike off institutes that are expensive right at the beginning. Also, be honest and present your true self in the essay. If any university has an early application deadline, apply before time as it can be beneficial.”

The most important thing to do while applying to institutes abroad is to budget and plan the finances for the total cost of education, including tuition and living expenses for the entire duration of the programme.

Says Pratibha Jain, overseas counselor, “Through scholarships and awards, do not assume that you will get the funding even if you are a bright student. While most countries allow only 20 hours per week while on a student visa, the money earned is too little to cover any major expense.”

**CHOICES**

Popular fields such as IT and computer engineering, electronic, electrical, mechanical and telecommunications continue to attract Indian students. However, with the infrastructural boom in urban and rural areas of India, civil engineering is gaining prominence. Says Harshil Khandelwal, international officer, South Asia, University of Nottingham, UK, “While mechanical engineering is the most popular degree among Indian students at our university at the undergraduate level, at the postgraduate level, students tend to opt for MArch programmes, particularly Master’s urban design and Master’s sustainable tall buildings.”

Other lesser known yet promising fields that students consider include petroleum, environment, geology, operations research, financial, nano-science and engineering and mechatronics engineering.

**FOREIGN EDGE**

A research-driven curriculum, international exposure and a multi-disciplinary approach seem to attract aspiring Indian engineers to Institutes abroad, finds out Ruchi Chopda

**PROSPECTS**

While students look at the return on investment prospect amidst a difficult financial situation, experts insist that good engineers will be in demand.

Says Sanyal, country head and director, Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), “Engineering is a relevant field in the 21st century and that there are no jobs for engineers is a myth. There is, in reality, a dearth of good engineers. Unfortunately, most engineers who graduate from institutes in India have only bookish knowledge. However, the education system abroad focuses on applications. The ‘applications’ knowledge of these students is inherently higher and so is their potential of coming back to India and getting better jobs.”

**NEXT MONTH**

Study Abroad: Country-wise information, student views, course trends, test tips, scholarships, and more.
However academically gifted an engineer you are, a degree from a good University is no longer enough to land the engineering job you want — that’s the consistent message from companies as far afield as London, Delhi and Beijing. There are so many excellent graduates now — and companies are working under ever-increasing competition from around the world — they need employees with more than just the kind of knowledge learned in the classroom.

Nishan Canagarajah, dean of engineering at the University of Bristol, comments, “I tell all our students that companies want to employ people with a real breadth of attributes, and so I work hard with my colleagues to give our students opportunities to develop different skills.”

So what skills are these companies looking for, exactly? Firstly, they’re looking for people who know how to transfer their academic knowledge into an industrial setting — and the best way to demonstrate that is through a successful internship. Subhovan Roychowdhury, engineering method specialist at GKN Aerospace Bangalore says, “Applicants who have done some kind of internship really stand out — they are clearly the ones who are already thinking about how to apply their theoretical knowledge in the real world.

Secondly, they’re looking for evidence of an enterprising spirit — this could be a student who has set up their own small company whilst studying, but might equally be someone who has achieved something else beyond the confines of the curriculum in a sporting or artistic field.

Companies always tell me that they’re looking for evidence of achievement entirely outside a graduate’s field of study.

Thirdly, employers want engineers who are also great communicators. Sophie Yang, HR officer for Arup (Beijing) says, “Having strong relevant technical knowledge is essential. However, equally important is communication and team-working skills, because you will often be required to work in a team to solve problems.”

Professor Canagarajah sums it up, “Students who want to work for the best companies when they graduate need to be getting out there whilst they’re still students, or even before, showing that they are able to work with people and have the drive to achieve things under their own steam.”

So academic study and achievement is still crucial to getting a great job after you graduate, but now you need to do a lot more.
According to a TimesJobs.com survey, Middle East and North Africa figure as the top international locations for engineers seeking a foreign posting.

According to TimesJobs.com data, 87% of all international job opportunities for Indian engineers are available in Middle East and North Africa. The other top locations are US, Singapore, Germany, and Australia.

According to Rajeesh Biswas, director, HR and Administration, Q3 Technologies, Middle East and North Africa are regions with fairly robust economies and significant employment potential, as these regions lack the education infrastructure needed to produce large volumes of skilled workers. These regions, therefore, provide excellent career opportunities to engineering graduates from India.

"Countries like the US, Singapore, Germany and Australia are also witnessing economic growth and are continuing to create a demand for skilled engineering graduates. While the education infrastructure of these countries is excellent and produces a large number of skilled resources locally, the demand outweighs the supply and engineering graduates from India continue to find good career opportunities there," stated Biswas.

Chris Trayanor, career adviser, Newcastle University, UK, is of the opinion that engineers are in demand wherever anything is being manufactured, built, developed, improved, repaired, designed, decommissioned, and transported. As a result, engineers are in demand globally and particularly in all of the major industrial economies.

He states that in the UK, engineers are among the most sought-after graduates and indeed, demand of good quality engineering graduates, with strong employability skills, outstrips supply, according to a recent report by the Royal Academy of Engineers. "Mechanical, electrical, electronic, civil and chemical engineers are in demand by employers," Trayanor adds.

"In addition to requirements within the engineering profession, many graduate recruiters from other sectors such as finance, IT, logistics, and business also regularly look for engineering graduates, for their strong problem-solving, numerical and logical reasoning skills." Trayanor adds.

"While the Middle East and North Africa attract a large number of chemical, mechanical and computer engineers, US, Europe and Australia attract computer, software and biotech engineers," states Biswas.

According to Muralidharan, a large number of mechanical and automobile engineers opt for Germany because the country is known for excellence in automotive engineering. Singapore offers immense opportunities to candidates with a financial engineering degree.

Talking about career opportunities abroad after a BTech in biotechnology, Ashish S Verma, professor of biotechnology, Amity University, adds, "The most common areas in demand are sales and marketing and support staff to any private company involved in biotechnology products. He believes that a higher degree like M Tech would open up avenues in the areas of production and quality control. A biotech engineer, with expertise in IPR, can pursue legal practices for IPR and patent services abroad, which will be in demand in the future."

"We, being an IT company, look for technically strong candidates in areas such as software development using Net, Java and PHP. We also look for skills in areas such as SharePoint development, Microsoft Dynamics, CRM and Ecommerce platforms like Hybris. Another area where we see significant international demand is cross platform mobile development and Big Data Analytics," states Biswas.

According to him, the compensation varies from one geographical area to another. However, they see a range anywhere between Rs 50 Lakh to upwards of Rs 1 crore per annum, for international positions.

Highlighting their soft skills requirements, Biswas explains that for international positions, candidates must have good communication skills, presentation skills and general cultural awareness.

Source: TimesJobs.com