Union Minister Smriti Irani inaugurates IIM Udaipur


UDAIPUR: Union Minister Smriti Irani today said a special 'centre for tourism hospitality' will be constructed in the IIM campus here, in which students from across the country, interested in learning hospitality management can enroll themselves.

Keeping in view the hospitable nature of Rajasthan, this centre will be brought up in the Indian Institute of Management campus here, the Union HRD Minister said.

She was speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the first IIM campus, situated in Balicha in the city.

Through IIM, Rajasthan can become one of the leading states in education, she said.

Mentioning the 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan' -- an initiative of the HRD Ministry involving engagement of institutions such as IITs and IIMs with communities around them -- Irani said, IIM Udaipur has also been directed to adopt villages near it for their upliftment.

The 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan' involves engaging with communities around each institute and for their upliftment. Under the programme, each IIT will identify 10 villages in its neighbourhood and work out technologies to solve the most pressing issues of the region.

"A country's soul lies in its villages. We are thinking upon including issues related to agro based industries in the syllabus," she said.
Speaking on the occasion, Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhra Raje said, "Centres like IIM should be set-up in different corners of Rajasthan for a bright future of the state's youth".

The chief minister said due to coming up of an IIM here, Rajasthan will now be included in the list of developed states.

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**UGC, HRD min roll out choice-based credit system**

**Vikas Pathak**

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**NEW DELHI:** With all central universities agreeing to move towards a choice-based credit system (CBCS) in the coming academic year, the university Grants Commission (UGC) and the human development (HRD) ministry have set the ball rolling to help institutions make the transition.

Eight workshops have been scheduled in central universities between March and April to explain the transition. One representative from the ministry will also accompany the UGC staff in these workshops.

A credit is a unit by which the course work is measured, and a student must complete a given number of credits to get the degree. One credit is equivalent to one hour of teaching or two hours of practical work. The CBCS allows students to select from the prescribed courses — core, elective or minor or soft skills.

“There are three things required for the shift. Each university will have to shift to semester system, restructure its curriculum to suit this and standardise exams to have a grading system in place,” said an official familiar with the developments. Grades denoted by O, A+, A, B+, B, C, P and F will be awarded.

At present, all 39 central universities have semester system in PG courses, 33 out of 39 have grading system in PG courses, 21 have grading system in UG courses and 30 have semester system in UG courses.

The workshops will be held North Eastern Hill University Shillong, Central University of Rajasthan, Banaras Hindu University, Pondicherry University, University of Hyderabad, Dr HS Gaur University, JNU in Delhi and Central University of Gujarat between March 9 and April 3.
DU councils ask VC to get BTech courses approved

NEW DELHI, PTI: Delhi University's statutory bodies – academic and executive councils – on Friday approached the Vice Chancellor seeking his intervention into the issue of 24 colleges not having AICTE approval for running the BTech courses.

The four-year BTech programmes were launched as part of the controversial four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP), which was scrapped last year after the intervention of UGC.

UGC had directed DU to continue with the five BTech programmes, but only for the students admitted in the academic year 2013-2014.

The colleges were also asked to seek AICTE approval.

“We urge you to personally ensure that the process for seeking prerequisite AICTE and UGC approvals for the five BTech courses currently running in the university's colleges, is completed at earliest and positive intervention is made in the interest of students enrolled in these courses,” the letter sent to the VC by the council members said.

“The careers of approximately 6000 students are at stake,” it said.

‘Extremely concerned’

“Therefore, the teaching community is extremely concerned about the approaching last date of approvals and wishes that the varsity should take proactive and timely steps to ensure that their degree prospects are not endangered,” it added.

The five BTech programme in question are Computer Science, Electronics, Food Technology, Instrumentation Electronics and Polymer Science.

The last date for applying for the AICTE approval is February 20.
Orissa varsities flouting UGC norms: CAG

DEBABRATA MOHANTY
BHUDBANESWAR, FEB 13

The CAG in its latest report has derided Orissa’s higher education system, saying universities in the state have been flouting UGC guidelines, and granting affiliations to colleges and institutes without proper check.

It has also pointed at a large number of vacancies for teaching staff at various universities and colleges, and irrational recruitments.

The CAG report on the state of higher education in Orissa, tabled before the Assembly on Thursday evening, said that 42.58 per cent of teaching posts in government educational institutions, 35.41 per cent in universities and 15.10 per cent in aided educational institutions remained vacant as of March 2014.

It said the vacancies were not rationalised - on one hand no teacher was available in 17 subjects in 13 government educational institutions, while on the other 12 surplus teachers for the subjects were at five other educational institutions.

As per the UGC guidelines, the student-teacher ratio in PG departments should be 10:1 in Science and 15:1 in Commerce department. However, it was 34:1 at Bhubaneswar’s Utkal University, 52:1 at Cuttack’s Ravenshaw University and 20:1 at Balasore’s Fakir Mohan university. Posts for 11 professors and five lecturers in PG departments of these universities have been lying vacant.

The state government opened many courses at the PG-level in various universities, but did not make enough provisions to recruit teaching staff, the CAG said in its report. In three colleges (Ekamra College, Panchayat Samiti College, Belpada and Deogarh College) ladies/ST/SC hostel were used as office, teacher’s common room, classroom, and Principal’s room. In one college (Kankadahad Junior College), ST/SC hostel has been rented out to an NGO since 2008-09.
After IITs, Central Universities may have Pension Portability too


In October 2014, the Central government had allowed pension portability for IIT and IIM faculty and senior non-teaching staff making it easier for them to switch jobs without having to go through the hassle of New Pension Scheme (NPS). Now the government is mulling over implementing a similar system for Central Universities too.

With pension portability facility, teaching jobs in Central Universities will become transferable. However, it will be the choice of the state government to allow it or not in their state – depending on teacher availability in their areas.

Recently, IIT Kanpur had run a project called ‘New Faculty, New Hope’ to retain bright young faculty members who might migrate abroad to look for research funds to get on with their projects. HRD Ministry has instructed the institutions to forward it a list of bright candidates that need to be trained and retained and has promised them adequate support and funds for the purpose.

HRD Minister Smriti Irani also told the media that six of the new IIMs are shifting to their permanent campuses. She also said that while she has ensured that they have committed adjunct faculty, she has a limited role in how IITs, IIMs, NITs and Central Universities choose their faculty. She said that she is committed to provide all the administrative help that these institutions might need to attract best faculty.

Regarding the HRD Ministry plan to find best teachers and principals for government schools and colleges, Irani said that she has made training mandatory for new Principals and Vice-Chancellors. Irani also the MP government experiment to get the wardens and cooks at Navodaya Vidyalayas trained by the hospitality sector, and said that it will be implemented for all NVs across India.