This year, IITs will admit students with even 6% in entrance exam

Qualifying Marks For STs Slashed To 31 Out of 504
Yogita Ran, Hemali Chhajed-Shah & Swati Shinde Cole | Times

Mumbai/Pune: The challenge of maintaining standards at the IITs seems to be growing. While IIT-Roorkee last week expelled 73 students for underperformance (first reported by TOI), it now appeals this elite group of institutions will have to lower the bar to admit students from the weaker sections.

In a comment on the lack of success in raising school education standards, especially for the disadvantaged, the IITs will be admitting students with scores as low as 31 out of 504, or 6.1%, this year to fill vacant seats (compared to 8.8% in 2014). Subjective components in the JEE (Advanced) 2015 question paper and use of higher negative marking made it tougher this year. IITs had to therefore lower the bar for qualifying in the general category from 35% to 24.5%.

For reserved categories, cut-offs came down to 12.25. Since IITs do not manage to fill all seats in these categories even after lowering cut-offs, qualifying marks will be further reduced to create a third category for students who will be sent for a preparatory course provided they've got at least 6.1%.

As reported by TOI on Monday, after the first round of seat allocations, 301 seats were vacant, and the majority of them, say officials, are reserved for students in ST (scheduled tribes) and PwD (people with disabilities) categories.

An IIT director said that the final position on seat vacancies would be known only after the third round, but indicated that the IITs have to follow constitutional reservation. Seats cannot be kept vacant due to the sheer demand for admissions in our institutes. What the government can instead do is improve the secondary education at school level — An IIT director.

IITs have to follow the constitutional reservation. Also, seats cannot be kept vacant due to the high demand for admissions in our institutes. What the government can instead do is improve the secondary education at school level — An IIT director.

Urban-rural divide to blame for drop in cut-offs at IITs?

Under the new formula for admissions this year, the IITs have already admitted over 100 students (who scored above 31 and less than 62 marks) in the preparatory programmes across all institutes. The numbers may go up after the third rounds.

More students with marks in this range may be added over the next two rounds. These students will then have to go through a one-year-long preparatory course before they are absorbed in the B Tech programmes.

The preparatory course is a year-long special coaching programme in physics, mathematics and chemistry for reserved category candidates who fail to make the cut in the entrance. Numbers of students admitted to preparatory courses are not more than 10 in most institutes, in the older the numbers may go up to 20 sometimes.

Another professor said part of the reason for the drop in cut-offs was the mismatch in quality of students coming from urban and rural areas. While urban students can make up for gaps in school education by enrolling in coaching institutes, others who cannot afford to do so, said another professor. He added quotas needed to be supplemented with stronger schooling, especially for the weaker sections of society.

At a time when qualifying marks are being reduced, 31 students who qualified in JEE (Advanced) and were eligible for seats in the IITs have been rejected after they failed to meet class XII eligibility criteria of being in the top 75 percentile of their respective boards or even scoring 75% and above.

At a time when qualifying marks are being reduced, 31 students who qualified in JEE (Advanced) and were eligible for seats in the IITs have been rejected after they failed to meet class XII eligibility criteria of being in the top 75 percentile of their respective boards or even scoring 75% and above.

Till last year, a student had to be in the top 10 percentile of their respective boards to be eligible for an IIT seat. Around 240 students were denied seats last year despite qualifying in JEE (Advanced), this year the IITs relaxed the criteria by allowing students who had scored at least 75% in class XII or were in the top 20 percentile of the board. As a result, only 31 students failed to meet the cut.
‘If not car, what’s the polluter?’

NGT Asks Govt To Explain On Tuesday Main Reason For Air Pollution In City

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Monday directed the Union transport ministry to submit its views on what is contributing to air pollution in Delhi. Reacting to the Centre’s previous affidavits which stated that transport isn’t the major contributor to poor air quality, the NGT bench headed by chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar asked the ministry to come back on Tuesday with substantive arguments on what could be causing such severe air pollution.

Sanjay Upadhya, petitioner Vardhaman Kaushik’s lawyer, highlighted how the ministry and other agencies have been dodging action to control sources of air pollution. “Nothing has happened since last October. There are no substantial submissions and everybody, especially the transport ministry, is in a mode of denial. We have to accept that norms for polluting old vehicles are very lax. We have made our submissions to NGT on this.”

The Union transport ministry had filed an application in NGT on April 27 against a ban on old diesel vehicles claiming that any “stringent measure of ad hoc nature to ban vehicles on the basis of age will not provide any holistic solution to the pollution problem.” The ministry had argued that “in-depth academic analysis and observations clearly enumerate that the age of a vehicle cannot be considered as a salient factor for contributing to pollution in the NCR as there are other significant factors.”

Quoting a letter from Dinesh Mohan, a Volvo Chair professor emeritus at IIT Delhi, the ministry had cited a research paper—benchmarking vehicle and passenger travel characteristics in Delhi for on-road emission analysis—to establish its point that only 7% of the vehicles are over 10 years old. The paper was published in the international Journal Risoeiver.

In subsequent affidavits, the ministry had claimed that more than 10 year old diesel vehicles contribute to less than 1% of PM2.5 (fine, respirable pollution particles) emissions in the city. Their argument was based on a study by professor Mohan and other IIT scientists.

The ministry had also submitted data taken at RK Puram which cited that on Sundays or holidays, despite traffic being low, the PM 2.5 levels remained high. NGT had slammed the study as it failed to explain what was causing high air pollution levels on holidays.

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) has also criticized the ministry for using studies by IIT Delhi to “selectively play down the problem of vehicular pollution and block the ban on old diesel vehicles.”

“There are no current source apportionment studies to tell us what is contributing to how much air pollution. Delhi government has commissioned one to IIT Kanpur, but that is yet to publish. The IIT Delhi studies should be taken seriously in the absence of any other report,” said Banti Shekhar, who is representing transport ministry. Chisky Anand, additional solicitor general who is arguing for the Centre didn’t appear on Monday.
Start-ups want Day-Zero slots; IITs say no
Placement panel informally decides to not invite some start-ups this year

VINAY UMAMI & KALPANA PRADHAN
Ahmedabad/Mumbai, 3 July

At the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) placements this year, start-ups want Day-Zero slots, something blue-chip companies such as Google, Microsoft, Facebook and Oracle have been getting so far. The IITs, however, are in no mood to relent.

While the premier institutes say Day-Zero slots are based on annual pay packages, start-ups argue the employee stock ownership plans (Esops) offered by them as part of the packages are good enough for them to seek the coveted placement slots.

The IITs at Roorkee, Delhi, Kanpur, Kharagpur and Guwahati confirmed start-ups were increasingly aggressive about Day-Zero slots. At IIT Roorkee, Zomato, Housing.com and CouponDunia have sought these slots for placements this year.

Deepu Philip, chairman, Students’ Placement Office, IIT Kanpur, said, "Start-ups are trying to be more aggressive in their recruitment tactics and one of the ways is by demanding Day-Zero slots. But we want to make sure these companies are worth the slot and that it is not only a marketing stunt. Also, we don’t want our students to be put through too many companies on a given day.”

Every year, IITs start placements on December 1, known as Day-Zero or Day-One slots. On Day Zero, 30-40 companies can participate and the slot is usually reserved for core companies and consulting giants. In the earlier placement season, start-ups, including Housing.com, Flipkart, Ola, Commonfloor, Meru Cabs, Snapdeal and Stayzilla, had hired aggressively from IITs. They had participated in the first phase of placements, in December.

This time, start-ups say they are paying good annual packages of `16-20 lakh, including stock options. But IITs say companies are given slots based on higher cash-in-hand salaries, usually given by bigger companies.

During the last placement season, US-based computer technology firm Oracle had made one of the top offers at `1.83 crore a year (base salary of 80 lakh and 4,000 shares in stock options).

A placement cell official at IIT Roorkee said though start-ups were demanding Day-Zero slots, the institute hadn’t committed to these companies yet. "Students take a call on which companies should be given Day-Zero slots. Though start-ups are welcome, we do not want to mislead them on the big daddies," the official said.

IITs also cite the limited availability of students during Day-Zero and Day-One slots. "Almost all start-ups are pushing for Day-Zero slots but we cannot entertain them. Much of the choice of companies on Day-Zero or Day-One slots is decided by students. Also, at Guwahati, it is not a problem of infrastructure; there are only a limited number of students who can be accommodated on Day Zero," said sources in IIT Guwahati’s placement cell.

What’s more, with candidates at some IITs facing inconvenience during the placement process, their complaints have resulted in these institutes initiating due diligence measures.

Turn to Page 18
Zomato Founder Deepinder Goyal Lashes Out At His Alma Mater, IIT Delhi; Claims Campus Placement is Broken In India

In a series of Tweets, Zomato founder Deepinder Goyal has expressed his severe displeasure over the treatment melted out to him by his alma mater: IIT Delhi. Without naming anyone, he criticized the campus placement procedure, and accused IIT Delhi of partiality (to some extent).

However, on closure scrutiny of the incident, we may discover that IIT Delhi was not 100% inaccurate in their assessment, as ESOPs can be a risky decision sometimes.

**How It Started?**

On Friday, Deepinder Goyal, a passout of IIT Delhi, went to the campus and asked the placement cell to provide him with Day 1 slot for placements. Normally, the biggest and most preferred MNCs such as Google and Microsoft are provided day 1 slot during the placement session; considering that the cream of talent gets selected during that day.

Deepinder’s request was not only rejected, but he was also informed that the package offered by Zomato is too less to even consider them providing day 1 slot.

Zomato had offered Rs 16 lakh annual take home (excluding tax dedications) and Rs 10 lakh as ESOPs or Employee Stock Option Plans.

**Deepinder Lashes Out**

Soon after, Deepinder tweeted, accusing the whole structure of campus placement in India, and especially IIT: “Campus placements in India are broken. Placement cells optimise only for money. Growth, esops, quality of work is secondary.”
आईआईटी रुड्की मामले में मौन रहेंगी स्मृति ईरानी!

हरिभूमि ब्यूरो. नई दिल्ली

बीटेक प्रथम वर्ष की परीक्षा में खराब प्रदर्शन करने वाले आईआईटी रुड्की के 73 छात्रों को संस्थान से निष्कासित किया जाने के मामले में केंद्रीय मानव संशोधन विकास मंत्री स्मृति ईरानी यानि एचआरडी मंत्रालय कोई हस्तक्षेप नहीं करेगा। आईआईटी संस्थान इस तरह के किसी भी मामले में निर्णय लेने के लिए स्वतंत्र और स्वायत्त है।

हरिभूमि की पद्धति में मिली जानकारी के मुताबिक आईआईटी रुड्की द्वारा के इस निर्णय से प्रभावित हुए कुछ बच्चों के माता-पिता ने सोमवार को यहां एचआरडी मंत्रालय आकर सर्वेक्षित विभाग के अधिकारियों से मदद की गुहार लगाई। अभिभावकों का मंजूरालय से कहना है कि आईआईटी के इस कठोर निर्णय से उनके बच्चों को भविष्य दाव पर लग गया है। इसे ध्यान में रखकर मंजूरालय इस मामले में हस्तक्षेप करे। लेकिन मंजूरालय की ओर से अभिभावकों से स्पष्ट कह दिया गया है कि वो इस मामले में कोई हस्तक्षेप नहीं करेगा।

सीनेट ने लिया था फैसला

मामले में आईआईटी रुड्की के निदेशक का कहना है कि इन छात्रों ने दूसरे सेमिस्टर की परीक्षा में पच्च सीजीए एसे से भी कम अंक हासिल किए हैं। इसके चलते इन्हें संस्थान से निष्कासित किया गया है। यह फैसला 100 से भी ज्यादा रोकथामों की सीनेट ने लिया है। सभी पहलूओं पर विचार-विमर्श करने के बाद ही सीनेट ने यह फैसला लिया है।

-प्रांवी बनर्जी
निदेशक आईआईटी रुड्की
IIM-A’s incubator to launch water accelerator programme

VIRENDRA PANDIT
Ahmedabad, July 13

With a view to kick-starting the ecosystem for water innovation and technology in India, IIM-Ahmedabad’s technology business incubator—Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIIE)—will launch the country’s first water accelerator in partnership with global organisations.

Partners in the initiative include Asian Development Bank, Rohini Nilekani’s Arghyam Foundation, Luminous Water Technologies’ Livpure, the World Bank’s Water and Sanitation Program, and other purification solution providers.

Nishesh Mehta and Mudit Narain from CIIE will lead the programme that aims to accelerate, nurture, and invest in early stage start-ups that have the potential to become scalable and competitive enterprises. Selected start-ups will be provided intensive capacity building, mentoring and advisory support by leaders in industry, government, academia and practitioners.

Rajasthan offer
The Rajasthan government is expected to review and award pilots to the top start-ups to field-test their solutions. The programme will run a separate track to support non-profit organisations looking to become financially independent or scale-up rapidly, and help passionate individuals looking to venture in to the water and sanitation sector.

Applications for this accelerator will be received by July 26 from early-stage start-ups working on breakthrough technologies and business models in various areas such as water supply, sanitation, treatment and purification, water management and mobile technology, irrigation and Internet of Things. The programme expects to select about 10 to 12 teams.

Kunal Upadhyay, CEO of CIIE, said the incubator will also assemble leading water-focused funds and companies such as Livpure to consider potential investment in the shortlisted ventures.

“More than 100 million people in India live in places where water is severely polluted. It is critical to find and support promising entrepreneurs to develop and scale breakthrough solutions to help address this issue,” said Xuedu Lu, Advisor from ADB’s Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department.
Computer Science at IIT-Bombay lures most JEE Top Rankers

http://www.pagalguy.com/articles/computer-science-at-iit-bombay-lures-most-jee-top-rankers-34838032

Once again Computer Science at the IIT-Bombay proved to be the most sought after choice of the JEE toppers. Apart from the first ranker Satvat Jagwani, a lot of other top rankers too have secured a seat for computer science at IIT-Bombay (IIT-B) in the joint seat allocation.

The dream of Satvat Jagwani to secure a computer science seat at the prestigious IIT-B turned into reality. "Computers always interested me and I wanted a seat for Computer Science (CS) at IIT-B, which is the most coveted stream. This was finally fulfilled in the first round of seat allocation," he said.

Computer science at the IIT-B is the most sought after seat for most JEE toppers. Amit Ahuja, Counsellor at Allen Career Institute, Kota, informed that 10 top rankers of JEE Advanced, 2015 within the merit list of Top 100 from their institute have secured a seat for computer science at IIT-B through the seat allocation. "The closing Rank of Computer Science at IIT-B is 59 in the General category which is why most of the Top Rankers have secured admission at IIT-B for Computer Science," he said. He also added that, Chitrang Murdia the JEE Advanced topper 2014 from Allen too had taken admission in computer science stream at IIT-Bombay. The excellent placement records of IIT-Bombay's Computer Science course lure toppers towards to prefer it.

"The exposure and overall development of the student is at IIT-B is remarkable. The prospects in the computer stream in the recent times is also very good. That is the reason why most of the toppers choose this stream and that too at IIT-Bombay." said Brajesh Maheshwari, Director of Allen Career Institute, Kota.

"It has become a trend these days for the toppers to choose computer science at IIT-B. The reason that most of the toppers hail from Western Zone in IIT-JEE is also a factor why toppers choose the stream. There is a lot of activity at IIT-B as well which is why it is the most sought after seat," said Shailendra Maheshwari, Director, Career Point Institute, Kota. He also added that the topper from Career Point Abhinav Goyal, AIR 32 also secured a seat at IIT-B for computer science.

IIT Kanpur launches a special course on Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV)

IIT Kanpur has launched a special course on Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV), also popularly/colloquially referred to as Drone Technology for students and professionals. The course is being conducted by the team that developed the first indigenous Low Altitude Long Endurance UAV. The classes for the course will be under the guidance of the team that developed the first indigenous Long Endurance UAV.
Running its course over a period of 4 days, it will be conducted in the premises of IIT Kanpur itself. The interested students will be required to pay Rs 20,000 while fees for the professionals of higher order is Rs 40,000. The accommodation will be taken care of by the campus authorities.

The new course aims at providing hands-on training to participants for understanding and designing a UAV. There will also be flight trials and testing at Flight Lab of IIT Kanpur.

IIT Kanpur also launched a portable unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) in August 2014 to help the police, army and other security agencies for patrolling in the border areas, which received significant buzz for its technological innovation.

Meanwhile, a proposal has been put forward to keep 15 seats in the Post-Graduate courses and 10 in the Phd programme for the Cognitive Science course. The percentage of seats is likely to increase depending on the turnout received from the students.
HRD ministry won’t ink MoU with Germany

Akshaya Mukul
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The HRD ministry has distanced itself from the Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (CASHSS) to be set up in collaboration between Max Weber Foundation and Institute of Economic Growth, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and Centre for the Studies of Social Sciences, Kolkata.

It has been decided that the HRD ministry will not be signing the MoU with German government as it was not involved in the process of setting up of CASHSS in India. Last year, when a ministry official attended the meeting in Bonn, sources said, it was more as an observer. Now the MoU will be signed by the institutes collaborating with the German government. The HRD ministry also realized that three Indian institutes that are part of CASHSS are autonomous and receive small grant from the government. “The HRD ministry has no idea about the negotiation for setting up of CASHSS. We were never consulted and now are being asked to sign the MoU. It can be done by the institutes. We are not against CASHSS,” one source said.

In November, the German government had approved the setting up of the CASHSS in India. Though many Indian institutions were competing, Germany approved the proposal made by Max Weber Foundation in collaboration with the Institute of Economic Growth, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and Centre for the Studies of Social Sciences, Kolkata. Another proposal was from Jawaharlal Nehru University in partnership with Heidelberg University.

CASHSS is a German government initiative that plans to set up one centre each in South and South-East Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle-East.

The ministry has distanced itself from CASHSS, a German initiative that plans to set up one centre each in South and South-East Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle-East. CASHSS will be funded in three phases and up to 12 years. In the first phase Germany and partner country will plan and prepare the establishment of CASHSS, and the German side will meet the entire cost of one million euros. In the second phase, German and Indian partners will develop a research plan for the school under a joint funding programme. In the final phase, exhaustive research in individual fields will be taken up.
Harvard Reaches Deeper, Draws Lessons from India

Harvard School of Public Health to open Mumbai office, among other initiatives

Rica.Bhattacharyya @timesgroup.com

MUMBAI: The world’s leading university Harvard is increasing its engagement with India as it attempts to draw lessons from and reach out to a crucial and complex market.

For the first time in seven years, Harvard Business School recently brought its Advanced Leadership Initiative for Harvard fellows to India where global fellows got to interact with industry leaders such as D Shivakumar of Pepsico and Swati Piramal of Piramal Enterprises.

In a few months, The Harvard School of Public Health under Harvard University will have an office in Mumbai. Also, HBS recently launched its version of online teaching called HBX, for which India is a major market. Apart from these, an increasing number of Indian cases being taught at the school, greater faculty interest for research in India, coupled with the school’s Indian origin dean Nitin Nohria’s proactive role to engage with Indian business leaders are all signs of the increasing engagement.

“There are many things India has to teach,” said Rosabeth Moss Kanter, chair and director at Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative, which is aimed at preparing leaders to take on challenges in the social sector.

Having an Indian at the helm has accentuated their presence in India. “With the dean being Indian there has been a massive movement towards India,” said Vibha Kagzi, an HBS alumni and co-president of the Harvard Club of Mumbai, which represents all the university’s colleges.

Most large corporate families including the Tatas, Piramal, Godrej, Bajaj and Mahindra have some affiliation with Harvard with either their promoters or children having studied there. “It is up to someone to tap into those affiliations... the dean is a catalyst in this,” she said.

Also, the Harvard School of Public Health will in a few months have an office in Mumbai and has filed for registration for the new hub in the city, K Vish Vishwanath, professor of health communication at Harvard School of Public Health, who will also head the Indian unit told ET in his first and exclusive media interaction. “The India hub will be called Harvard Glob-

LOOKING EAST
India is a major market for HBS’ online teaching platform HBX. An increasing number of Indian cases being taught and there is greater faculty interest for research in India. We have received a generous donation of space from Swati Piramal,” he told ET. The institute will also work closely with partners in India to invest in healthcare capacity-building and manpower.

A lot of the faculty members at HBS and other colleges in Harvard are Indians and having this sort of engagement with India gives them an opportunity to reconnect with their roots.

India is also a crucial market for HBX, launched globally two months ago. Harvard professor of Indian origin Bharat Anand, who is spearheading the project, was recently in India to showcase the platform.
Satellite-based navigation system Gagan launched

NIRBHAY KUMAR
New Delhi

CIVIL aviation minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju on Monday launched the GPS-aided geo augmented navigation (Gagan) system which would enhance the ground-based air-navigation system and help airlines cut cost on routing of their flights.

Jointly developed by Indian space research organisation (ISRO) and Airports Authority of India (AAI), Gagan is a satellite-based navigation system that would provide high-precision geo-spatial location information.

It will provide augmentation service for GPS over the country, Bay of Bengal, South East Asia and West Asia expanding up to Africa.

"In the aviation field, Gagan will support more direct air routes, reduce fuel consumption and improve safety," an official statement said.

A senior AAI official said that the new system would straighten several routes and cut aerial distance in the range of 5 to 20 nautical miles.

"This would help airlines save on fuel cost and reduce emission in the skies. Some of the routes that would see reduction in distance are Delhi-Banglore, Mumbai-Chennai, Kolkata-Mumbai and Trivendrum-Mumbai," the official added.

Apart from aviation, the Rs 774 crore Gagan would provide benefits to agriculture, transportation, defence services, security agencies and disaster recovery management by aiding in search and rescue to locate the disaster zone accurately.

The satellite-based system will also provide increased accuracy in position reporting thereby enhancing air traffic management (ATM) in the country.

Gagan is the first satellite based augmentation system (SBAS) in the world certified for approach with vertical guidance operating in the Equatorial Ionospheric region and the third SBAS after WAAS of the USA and EGNOS of Europe.

@mydigitalfc.com
‘Students Must Combine Other Skills with Big Data’

Big data scientists are in great demand. To get business value from big data, companies are looking for multi-skilled experts who understand programming, large-scale mathematics, statistics and business, and universities are introducing specialised programmes to meet this demand.

Dean Ramayya Krishnan of Carnegie Mellon University is the professor of Management Science and Information System. He spoke to Varuni Khosla on the new role of data scientists in both public and private sectors to understand policy, information sciences, and how the two intersect in order to create forward thinking organisations.

Edited excerpts:

What is the volume of big data being produced?
It’s not just the volume of data that has gone up but also the variety, like video, sounds and so on. Something as simple as using maps on phones generates a stream of data.

What kind of Industries need to study big data?
Consulting companies like the Big Four and the poster children for big data – companies like Google, Amazon etc. But you don’t have to be a Google or an Amazon to find value in big data. Sectors like finance and governance require evidence-based decision making.

Do students need to specialise in this field?
Students studying big data can choose whether they want to be in technology creation or technology implementation. The global demand for these students is quite high and going forward it will be a horizontal skill.

Students who are just data scientists won’t be the only requirement; they will need to combine it with marketing, human resources or operations skills.

At our college for instance, we offer courses in technology innovations. So you could do a masters in data science or data research – and we include both decision as well as data analytics. Decision analytics is equally important.

This area has a lot of global interest and the supply of scientists is less than demand. Masters’ students can earn a median salary of $1,10,000 per annum.

What is the background requirement to study big data?
A majority of students getting into this field hold a masters degree in some field with a background in quantitative engineering because it needs strength in math, problem solving and information technology to be able to do these jobs.
Big data, big opportunities

CRACK THE DATA While the digital era has led to the generation of voluminous data, companies with innovative data analytics will have an edge over others

Rozelle Laha

Big data is watching you! Every minute you spend on the Internet, you are being monitored. Big data is a buzz word used to describe a massive volume of data that cannot be processed using traditional database techniques.

According to a joint report by Nasscom and CRISIL Global Research and Analytics, “The Indian Big Data industry is expected to grow from $200 million in 2012 to $1 billion in 2015 at a CAGR of 83%. In India, Big Data analytics and related IT services will create an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 specialist jobs by 2015.”

As more companies start relying on consumer activities to generate tailored advertisements for them, the market is all set to grow.

“There will be huge demand for qualified data scientists in the coming two to three years. Healthcare, manufacturing, insurance and banking sectors will be among the top recruiters,” says Prof Sobhan Babu, computer science department, IIT Hyderabad. The upcoming digital era will be largely driven by insights from your activities in the social media platforms, mobile devices and internet of things.

“A data analyst’s role can span the entire life cycle of data. If every bite of data had a life, then principally a data analyst could be involved at every touch point within this life. This means looking at work right from a computer engineer’s perspective of data management (structured and unstructured data), to data quality, governance, data warehousing and finally reporting and visualisation solutions, to a statistician’s perspective of data models and predictive methodologies and tools, to finally a business owner’s perspective of making sense of the various data points and drawing relationships between them to arrive at inferences and actions,” says Shahvir Irani, analytics advisor associate manager, operations at Accenture in India.

“Data equity is becoming even more important than brand equity. Companies can use data analysts to leverage this data equity and help impact revenue, cost and customer experience,” says Ajay Kelkar, co-promoter and chief operating officer, Hansa CEQuity.

So, what are the skills that employers are looking for? This career is a good fit for technically-savvy people with good analytical skills. They should have strong observational skills. Graduates should ideally have a background in either engineering or a computer science.

“Most importantly, we seek graduates with an aptitude for analytical problem solving, to be able to look at the big picture, think out-of-the-box and arrive at logical solutions,” says Parag Pande, managing director for human resources, Accenture, India.

To add to the shortage of trained professionals is the “shortage of tailored courses in the field of data analytics. Most undergraduate and post graduate programmes are too generic in their structure to train students for the big data industry,” says Prof (Dr) Bheemarajuna Reddy Tamma, HOD, department of computer science and engineering, IIT Hyderabad.

Several institutes have come up with aligned programmes for training manpower in the field. The postgraduate diploma in business analytics jointly offered by IIM Calcutta, IIT Kharagpur and ISI Kolkata is a step in this direction.

Similarly, IISc Bangalore is also conducting public lectures for educating people on big data.

The department of computer science and engineering at IIT Hyderabad is launching M Tech in data science for industry professionals from August 2015. Among private players, Great Lakes Institute of Management has been offering a post graduate programme in business analytics since 2013, an executive programme for working professionals.

“Candidates with less than five years of experience typically begin at a business analyst or senior analyst level and the salaries offered would be in the range of 5-8 lakh to 10-12 lakh per year,” says Dr PK Vishwanathan, professor, director, PGPBA, Great Lakes Institute of Management.