‘IIT Delhi best engg college’
Kolkata, June 9
IIT Delhi has been ranked as the best engineering college in India while Kolkata’s Jadavpur University is leading the pack among government colleges, according to a report. In the recently released EDU-RAND 2015 rankings, IIT Delhi is at the top of the list, followed by other IITs in Kharagpur, Mumbai, Chennai, Guwahati and Kanpur. Kolkata’s Jadavpur University is ranked as the best government engineering college while BITS Pilani occupies the first place amongst private colleges. PTI

आईआइटी दिल्ली सर्वश्रेष्ठ इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज : सर्वश्रेष्ठ
कोलकाता, 9 जून (भाषा)। आईआइटी दिल्ली को एक सर्वश्रेष्ठ में भारत का सर्वश्रेष्ठ इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज बताया गया है, जबकि कोलकाता का यादवपुर विश्वविद्यालय सरकारी कॉलेजों में अग्रणी है। हाल में जारी एजु-रैंक 2015 रैंकिंग के मुताबिक सूची में सबसे ऊपर आईआइटी-दिल्ली का नाम है। इसके बाद आईआइटी खड़गपुर, मुंबई, चेन्नई, गुवाहाटी और आईआइटी कानपुर का नाम है। कोलकाता का यादवपुर विश्वविद्यालय देश में सरकारी इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेजों में सबसे आगे है। निजी कॉलेजों में बिट्स पिलानी को अवृत्त बताया गया है। पूरी सूची में यादवपुर विश्वविद्यालय को 11वां स्थान मिला है, जबकि बिट्स इससे थोड़ा आगे दसवें नंबर पर है।
आईआईटी दिल्ली सर्वश्रेष्ठ इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज

कोलकाता, 9 जून (भाषा): आईआईटी दिल्ली को एक सर्वेक्षण में भारत का सर्वश्रेष्ठ इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज बताया गया है, जबकि कोलकाता का यादवपुर विश्वविद्यालय सरकारी कॉलेजों में अग्रणी है।

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IISc debuts in QS Asia University Rankings 2015

BS REPORTER
Mumbai, 9 June

Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, has debuted in the QS University Rankings: Asia 2015 by bagging the 34th spot, which is also the top slot for India. Last year, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, was at the top from India at the 38th spot.

The top institution from Asia is National University of Singapore. Hong Kong University took the second spot, while Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology took the third position. Further, three of the top 20 and 25 of the top 100 are mainland Chinese universities, with about 70 getting featured in the ranking.

In India, by contrast, only 17 universities reached the top 300 and only three among them occupy higher positions than in 2014. There is no Indian institution in the top 30, although three appear in the top 50 and nine in the top 100. Panjab University, which was in the 171-180 position in 2014, has now dropped to 201-250 position.

“The main bright spot for India in the new publication is the performance of the Indian Institute of Science, which can be judged on a full set of data for the first time. It emerges as the country’s leading representative, at 34th, and is fourth in Asia for the number of papers produced by each faculty member,” said the QS rankings.

Established in 1909, the IISc has 3,300 students, most of them postgraduates. Its researchers were 11th in world rankings for the number of citations per paper in 2014, building on a stellar reputation in advanced computing, space science and nuclear technologies.

According to the rankings, Delhi remains the highest-placed Indian university in the QS University Rankings: Asia, at 91st. The University of Mumbai is closing the gap, having risen six places to 125th in the latest ranking. John O’Leary, member of the QS Advisory Board, said the drive for world-class institutions in India is a recent phenomenon, despite a distinguished record of research in a number of areas.

“The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have led the way — they account for seven of the country’s top 10 institutions in the latest ranking — but neither they nor the leading universities have received funding on the scale enjoyed by their counterparts in China.”

He added the first priority of successive governments, including the current one, has been to cater to the explosion in demand for higher education in India as the numbers of educated young people have risen.

He added that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Pranab Mukerjee have met QS delegations in the past year to discuss the performance of Indian institutions in international rankings.
Going abroad, in India

Encourage foreign universities, free local ones

Given that over 2 lakh Indians go overseas to study each year, spending around $10 billion in doing so, prime minister Narendra Modi has done well to call for a high-level meeting on allowing foreign universities to set up campuses in India—the move is significant since, when the UPA wanted to bring in foreign universities, the BJP was among the parties opposing the Foreign Universities Bill. This is also what the prime minister did in the case of Aadhaar-based cash transfers once he came to power—not being hostage to the BJP’s old positions, and preferring to look at each idea on its merit is a good thing and augurs well for the future.

It is not likely that, were foreign universities to be allowed, Indian students will stop wanting to go overseas to study. For one, it will take foreign universities a long time to set up so many campuses in India. Two, it is not certain a Princeton or a Harvard would even want to set up a full-fledged campus here to begin with—creating a parallel Princeton, should the varsities want to do it, is something that will take decades. What is important, however, is that India needs to dramatically improve the quality of higher education. India has just one university in the top 500 Academic Ranking of World Universities—the US has 146 and China has 44; in 2010, the US had 154, China 34 and India 2. Also, given the way in which demand for education is rising, India also needs to dramatically increase the number of positions available in universities—the rush for the Delhi University seats exemplifies just how starved India is for good universities.

Allowing foreign universities to set up campuses here—possibly in collaboration with Indian ones—is not going to solve the problem immediately, though it does open up the possibility of India maturing into some kind of regional education hub over the years, in much the same way that a Singapore has developed as an education centre. More important, and this is also related to foreign varsities, is what India does with its existing universities as well as the ones that want to come up. The fact that an Indian School of Business chose not to become a university and offered a diploma instead tells its own story of how cumbersome the education bureaucracy in India is. If top US and UK universities are to set up campuses here, surely public universities need to be freed up too? This applies to their funding as well as to various restrictions put on them by the government, from reservations for students and teachers to HRD ministers trying to impose their decisions on them. At some point, sooner rather than later, the prime minister will have to spell out his vision for universities in the country as well.
LIMITED POWER

IIM bill proposes coordination forum, not IIT Council-type body

BY PRASHANT K. NANDA
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NEW DELHI

Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), the country’s premier business schools, may be guided by a coordination forum led by the Union human resource development (HRD) minister if legislation proposed by the Union government takes effect.

The forum is aimed at helping IIMs leverage each other’s resources and give policy direction to these institutes without creating a body like the IIT Council.

The HRD ministry on Tuesday put up the draft of the proposed law on IIMs for comments and public opinion, taking forward a proposal initiated by the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government.

Four ministers in charge of technical education from governments in states where the institutes are located will be members of the forum by rotation each year.

The draft bill proposes to cover all aspects of the functioning of IIMs.

“This Act may be called the Indian Institutes of Management Act, 2015,” the draft bill said. It also permits IIMs to award degrees instead of diplomas as is the current practice.

On the coordination forum, the draft bill said it shall consist of the minister in charge of the ministry or department of the central government having administrative control of the technical education and shall function as ex-officio chairperson.

The technical education secretary of the government of India, the chairperson of the board of each IIM and director of each IIM shall complete the forum. But other than policy direction, it shall not have the power to fix fee, a demand made by IIMs during discussion rounds.

The IIT Council, also headed by the HRD minister, is the final authority on all matters—from fee determination to key administrative matters at IITs.

The draft bill, however, has empowered the board of governors of each IIM to review the performance of the directors of the institute at regular intervals.

“The board shall conduct an annual review of the performance of the director, in the context of the achievements of objects of the institute,” the draft bill said.

“The board shall, within seven years from the incorporation of the institute, and thereafter at the end of every fifth year, evaluate and review the performance of the institutes on the parameters such as long-term strategy and five-year rolling plan of the institutes,” the draft bill said.

A professor at an IIM said that the bill is fine in intention, but the forum should not flex its muscles and start interfering in the matters of the IIMs as the autonomy of these institutions are key to its quality so far.

“There are too many government officials in the forum and hope they stick to just advisory role,” the professor added, asking not to be named.

India has 13 IIMs and six more are in the pipeline. Each IIM is structured as a society and governed by its own board of directors. Once the law is drafted and passed, IIMs will cease to be societies and become institutions created by statute.
Modi likely to inaugurate IIT-Patna campus on June 30

RUHITEWARI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

WITH BIHAR assembly elections around the corner, the BJP is leaving no stone unturned to make a mark in the state. In tune with this strategy, PM Narendra Modi is likely to inaugurate the permanent campus of the Indian Institute of Technology-Patna at the end of this month.

According to sources in the Human Resource Development Ministry, IIT-Patna has been informed that Modi is expected to inaugurate its permanent campus on June 30. In case that does not work out due to logistical issues, HRD Minister Smriti Irani will do the needful in the first week of July. Sources say that either way it is going to be a high profile inauguration with the elections due later this year.

IIT-Patna, one of the six new IITs established by an Act in 2008 by the UPA government, has been operating out of a transit campus in Patliputra since.
Netherlands on the lookout for researchers

HT Education Correspondent
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The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) will open admissions for the fourth batch of their PhD scholarship programme in July 2015. The five-year Computational Sciences for Energy Research (CSER) initiative, started in 2012, is supported with a commitment of about 45 million euros from Shell and the NWO. Fifty-five students have joined the PhD programme, part of the CSER Initiative, to date and there are 20 more places to fill in 2015-2016. The ongoing partnership with NWO, the National Research Council, will provide postgraduate doctorate scholarships for a total of 75 Indian students at leading institutes in The Netherlands.

The aim of this programme is to develop new talent in the computational sciences who can help to deliver innovative technology solutions for the world’s largest oil companies. All applicants will have a chance to work with Shell after finishing their programme. They will be offered jobs at Shell’s Technology Centre in Bengaluru—one of Shell’s three global hubs for technology in addition to Houston and Amsterdam. The students will also have the opportunity to pursue an internship at Shell R&D labs in The Netherlands during the course of their PhD studies.

Commenting on the programme, Harry Brekelmans, executive committee member and projects and technology director, Royal Dutch Shell, said: “Technical and competitive IT is a core part of our technology capability. It enables us to make better decisions and more efficiently manage our assets. Only the brightest and best minds, along with cutting edge hardware, will allow us to handle the large volumes of data to deliver the energy that society relies on.”

Yasmine Hilton, chairman, Shell Companies in India, said they were taping into India’s talent pool to identify “brightest candidates who could partner with Shell in this journey.”
Glass found on Mars hints at signs of past life

Srinivas Laxman

Mumbai: In a significant discovery, glass has been found on Mars, throwing up the possibility of past life on the Red Planet, Nasa announced on Tuesday. The breakthrough was attained by Nasa’s Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter which detected deposits of glass within impact craters on Mars. “Though formed in the searing heat of a violent impact, such deposits might provide a delicate window into the possibility of past life on the Red Planet,” Nasa said.

According to Nasa, knowing that impact glass can preserve ancient signs of life — and now knowing that such deposits exist on the Martian surface today — opens up a potential new strategy in the search for ancient Martian life.

One of the craters containing glass, called Hargraves, is near the Nili Fossae trough, a 650-km-long depression that stretches across the Martian surface. The region is one of the landing site contenders for Nasa’s Mars 2020 rover, a mission to cache soil and rock samples for possible return to Earth. Nasa states that Nili Fossae trough is already of scientific interest because the crust in the region is thought to date back to when Mars was a much wetter planet. The region also is rife with what appear to be ancient hydrothermal fractures, warm vents that could have provided energy for life to thrive just beneath the surface.

During the past few years, research has shown evidence about past life has been preserved in impact glass on Earth. A 2014 study led by scientist Peter Schultz of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, found organic molecules and plant matter entombed in glass formed by an impact that occurred millions of years ago in Argentina. He suggested that similar processes might preserve signs of life on Mars, if they were present at the time of an impact.
Engineering vs Medical

Engineering and medical have been the conventional choices of students, thanks to the many opportunities and immense job prospects that these streams hold. Aakash Chaudhry says it is vital that aspirants introspect, listen to their inner voice and analyse both the streams carefully in order to take the right decision.

A trial quantum leap for a student in his career, it is after cracking the exam that the real predicament begins. With a variety of subjects available, it becomes extremely difficult to zero in on a particular discipline. Engineering and medical being the most popular streams, aspirants usually face the dilemma of which of these realms to go into. This is a crucial decision that can make or break a student’s professional course.

Clearing the Class X exam brings students at a crossroads where they have to weigh the pros and cons of both the streams and finally take the right decision about which road to choose. For the crème de la crème of the toppers, it is not such a strenuous task as they are already clear in their minds regarding the field they wish to go for. The real dilemma lies for the average students who are unsure as to which stream they can shine in.

Engineering and medical have been the conventional choices of students for a long time, thanks to the scores of opportunities that they offer aspirants. Also, the immense job prospects that these streams hold make them the most lucrative career options. Usually students and their parents have their own pre-defined mind sets regarding the two streams. This is why some are biased towards engineering and others towards medicine.

A quick glance at the numbers will reveal that the percentage of students opting for engineering is higher as compared to those choosing the medical stream. This is evident from the fact that there are more engineering colleges in the country and abroad than medical colleges.

THE DILEMMA

If we compare the two professions, a four-year B Tech course can help students in grabbing a decent-paying job after they graduate. In case of medicine, students have to toil for eight to nine years that include 4.5 years of MBBS, one year of internship and three years of specialization in any specific field. It is only after this entire process that medical students start earning well.

However, it is the aspect of ‘noble ness’ that makes the medical profession a continued favourite. The high of curing patients and saving their lives tempts students to build a prosperous career in this field. The inner satisfaction that one gets from being the saviour of people’s lives is something that money can never give.

Also, the chances of creating a far more illustrious career is easier in the medical profession. Firstly, this is true because of the nature of the job and the larger good one does as a medical practitioner. Secondly, the number of engineering pass-outs every year is higher than the number of jobs being generated. Doctors, on the other hand, can get jobs easily as pass-outs of good colleges are limited in number.

DECESSION-MAKING

Students should gauge their skills judiciously and then take the final call. For instance, engineering demands thorough understanding of the fundamentals, observation and reasoning skills and a high intelligence quotient. For Engineering, students need to be meticulous in using the art of Science in a practical and effective manner and produce something worthwhile and innovative out of it. For being an engineer, candidates should choose Physics, Chemistry and Maths after Class X and appear for state or national level entrance exams which might get them an entry into the top engineering colleges of the country.

On the contrary, for entering the stream of medicine, it’s of prime importance that students have an in-depth knowledge of all subjects related to medicine and are competent enough in this craft as far as the practical aspect is concerned. Physics, Chemistry and Biology should be chosen after Class X. Post Class XII, they should appear for entrance exams that act as a gateway into prestigious medical colleges.

STUDENTS WHO LOVE THEIR SOCIAL LIFE AND CAN’T COMPROMISE ON IT CAN OPT FOR ENGINEERING. AN ENGINEER’S WORK IS USUALLY LIMITED ONLY TO OFFICE HOURS. ON THE CONTRARY, DOCTORS HAVE TO SACRIFICE THEIR SOCIAL LIFE SOMETIMES WHEN THERE ARE SERIOUS CASES THEY HAVE TO ATTEND TO.

INFLUENCING FACTORS

It’s no unknown fact that the number of seats in the medical stream is very limited. There is a major supply and demand imbalance and this is also why many students take the engineering route. Also, parental and peer pressure are other reasons that influence the decision of students. This is, however, not very wise. A judicious comparison of both the disciplines by taking into account certain parameters is the right way for students to choose the path that is best for them. They mustn’t succumb to pressure and should try to identify their strengths and interests. Aspirants need to compare the two streams on the basis of their individual financial expectations, social challenges and ease of establishment.

Apart from these, students who love their social life and can’t compromise on it can opt for engineering. An engineer’s work is usually limited only to office hours. On the contrary, doctors have to sacrifice their social life sometimes when there are serious cases that they have to attend to.

Students should think on all these parameters before calling the shots. Making up one’s mind on the basis of public opinion and what others have to say will do no good. At such a crucial stage, it’s vital that aspirants introspect, listen to what their inner voice has to say and analyse both the streams carefully in order to take the right decision. It’s just one thought, one decision and one step that can change the entire professional course of a student’s life. That’s why it is advised that aspirants use their own intellect while taking this life-changing and transformative decision.

(The writer is director of Aakash Educational Services Pvt. Ltd)
Spotlight back on Smriti issue

Anita Joshua

NEW DELHI: The arrest of Delhi Law Minister Jitender Singh Tomar on Tuesday for allegedly forging his academic degrees has brought the spotlight back on Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani who has been found making contradictory statements under oath about her education in affidavits filed along with nomination papers for the Lok Sabha polls in 2004 and 2014.

“If Tomar can be arrested for a fake degree, why not Smriti Irani,” became the subject of a heated discussion across media platforms with some politicians also weighing in. Reacting to the arrest, Communist Party of India (Marxist) Polit Bureau member Brinda Karat said: “Tomar arrest apart from rights and wrongs, how come same standard does not apply to Smriti Irani?” National Students’ Union of India president Roji M John tweeted: “Hope the Delhi police will also arrest BJP ministers who filed false affidavit” and tagged Ms. Irani. Given her high profile, it was Ms. Irani who attracted the biggest amount of caustic remarks. Minister of State in the Modi government Nihal Chand — against whom there is a rape charge — came a distant second.

In 2004 — when she contested from the Chandni Chowk constituency in Delhi — Ms. Irani declared her educational qualification as “B.A. 1996 Delhi University (School of Correspondence).” But in the affidavit filed by her for the 2014 Lok Sabha election from Amethi in Uttar Pradesh, she deposed that she had done “Bachelor of Commerce Part-1, School of Open Learning (Correspondence), University of Delhi-1994.”

As per the School of Open Learning, Part-1 is the first year of the three-year programme. Her affidavit while filing the nomination for the Rajya Sabha election in 2011 also cites B.Com Part-I, School of Correspondence, University of Delhi, 1994.

Mr. Tomar has been accused of not only lying under oath about his educational qualifications in the affidavit filed for elections for the Tri Nagar Assembly segment in this year’s Delhi polls, but also forging the documents.

A Delhi court is hearing a case under The Representation of the People Act, 1951, against Ms. Irani and an order on taking cognisance of the complaint is expected on June 24.