Why are there so many suicides in IITs? We talk to students and professors to find out the reasons — and the way out

By Sangeeth Sebastian

For a successful AIEEE, students who crack the entrance exam don’t just lick their lips in joy. They also heave a sigh of relief, especially if they are admitted to an IIT. The sting of failure is far more. We all know how much students have to go through to score an IIT seat, with much depended on the hard work done in 12th standard. Thus, the news of suicides has come as a shock. The exact impact of the IITs on mental health is hard to determine, but students who get admitted feel that the stress of having to study for the entrance exam is compounded with the stress of dealing with stress. Suicide has been a growing problem in the IITs, with most cases occurring during exams. The stress of having to perform well at a time when it is hard to keep up with the pace of the curriculum can be too much for some students. In the past few years, there have been reports of suicides in the IITs. The IIT-Kanpur has been one of the worst affected. In the past two years, there have been four suicides at the IIT, which is alarming. The institute has taken steps to prevent suicides, such as providing counseling and mental health services. But the problem is bigger than that. The institution is not without its faults, especially when it comes to handling student complaints. The students feel that the institute is only interested in maintaining its reputation rather than addressing student concerns. The IITs are known for their rigorous academic programs, but the stress they put students under is not justified. The IITs must take responsibility for the mental health of their students and provide them with the necessary support to handle the stress of their studies.
Swamy well past age limit to be JNU V-C: Irani

HT Correspondent
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LUCKNOW: Union HRD minister Smriti Irani said on Saturday that BJP leader Subramanian Swamy was past the age limit required for the post of JNU vice-chancellor, putting to rest a raging debate over the issue.

“I also wish to make it clear that my ministry doesn’t recommend name for the post of V-C, he is recommended by the search and select committee. In any case I think there is an age bar for the post and Swamyji has crossed the age bar,” Irani said at the Hindustan Shikhar Samagam here on Saturday.

Swamy had tweeted recently that the “media is on fire that I have been offered the JNU VC post. No formal offer nor will there be if the Govt can’t meet my pre-conditions.” He, however, did not clear what the preconditions were.

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students’ Union (JNUSU) had threatened to “resist any attempts with all its mights” to saffronise the campus and termed the BJP leader as a “regressive figure”.

Irani also spoke about the Congress allegations about saffronisation of education and that she had visited the RSS headquarters to give a presentation on her ministry to the Sangh top brass. “I don’t think the news about my presentation to RSS is correct. And as far as the allegation on saffronisation goes, I think such allegations would keep on coming whenever a BJP government is there,” she said.
After 5 years, CAT registrations see a rise

BS REPORTER
Ahmedabad/Mumbai, 26 September

After a gap of five years, demand for management education is seeing a revival, with registrations for the Common Admission Test (CAT) 2015 rising 15.6 per cent to 218,664 candidates from 189,000 last year.

After touching a high of 242,000 in 2009, CAT registrations had been declining. In 2010 and 2011, these stood at around 205,000 each, followed by 214,000 in 2012, and 195,000 in 2013.

CAT scores are used by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), along with 103 other business schools, to admit students to management courses. For this year, the IIMs extended the registration deadline for CAT from September 20 to September 25.

According to data available, in the last five days of the registration process, IIM-Ahmedabad recorded the sale of 35,632 registration forms, against 183,032 till September 20.

While CAT registration centres did not comment on the reasons for the rise in registrations, sources attributed this to greater efforts by IIMs to reach out to more candidates. The increase in the number of cities where the examination will be held this year comes amid efforts to have registration centres in remote places.

This year, CAT will be conducted at 650 examination centres across 136 cities. A new section, reading comprehension, has been added and the exam duration has increased by 10 minutes. Also, students will now be allowed to use an on-screen calculator.

The exam is scheduled to be held on November 29 and the results will be declared in the second week of January.

Navbharat Times ND
27/09/2015 P-19

11 वैज्ञानिकों को भटनागर अवार्ड

■ प्रसीदंश नई दिल्ली: 2015 के लिए 11 वैज्ञानिकों को शांतिस्वरूप भटनागर अवार्ड के लिए चुना गया है। कानपुर आईआईटी के योगेश्वर मोरेश्वर जोशी के अलावा मुंबई के तीन वैज्ञानिकों का नाम भी लिस्ट में शामिल है। इस अवार्ड को भारत का नोबेल पुरस्कार भी कहा जाता है। शानिवार को सीएसआईआर के स्थापना दिवस पर इन पुरस्कारों का ऐलान किया गया। इस मौके पर छह वैज्ञानिकों को यंग साइंटिस्ट्स अवार्ड से सम्मानित किया गया।
NIT-R in crisis as chairperson-director row worsens


BHUBANESWAR: An on-going tussle between chairperson of the Board of Governors (BOG) of National Institute of Technology, Rourkela (NITR) and its director worsened on Friday deepening the administrative crisis in the premier engineering institution.

NIT director Sunil Sarangi rejected a direction of BOG chairperson Vasantha Ramaswamy to reinstate suspended registrar S K Upadhyay. Sarangi had suspended Upadhyay on September 20 for alleged insubordination and given the charge to a deputy registrar while he was on tour. He took the additional charge himself from Thursday. "The BOG's direction can't be executed because the order is not based on reasoning. Being the principal executive officer of the institute, I can't violate the law," Sarangi told TOI.

Sarangi said the revocation of suspension can be done only by the BOG when it meets. "Though the chairperson can take power of the board in an emergency situation, revocation of suspension is not an emergency," he said.

Pune-based Ramaswamy, when contacted over phone, said her letter is self-explanatory and she had quoted the relevant sections of the NIT Act why the registrar should be reinstated forthwith. "Now it is up to him (the director). I don't want to explain it further," she said.

"I hold the suspension order passed by the director prima facie not warranted and I hereby revoke the suspension order issued by the director with immediate effect. The BOG will be informed of the action taken by me for confirmation and ratification. I direct that the registrar shall resume his office as such," Ramaswamy wrote in a letter dated September 24 to Sarangi (Copy available with TOI). She highlighted that the suspension decision was taken in haste without prior approval from either the BOG or the chairperson.

After his suspension, Upadhyay has given a representation to the Ramaswamy the same day stating that he was suspended because he declined to obey the director's order to send a letter to the BOG chairperson that all the BOG orders after the 44th BOG meeting were withdrawn, which was not possible.

NIT insiders are in a fix on whether the BOG chairperson's order or the director's would be valid in such a scenario.

The tug of war between Sarangi and Ramaswamy started in January after dismissal of a probationary employee by the institute (director). At Ramaswamy's behest, the BOG passed a resolution restoring him. However, the Union ministry of human resources development set aside the restoration. Ever since, the BOG boss and the director are opposed to each other's decisions.
More students to take IIT-JEE exam?


KOLKATA: The JEE Apex Board (JAB) has proposed to increase the number of candidates appearing in the IIT-JEE (advanced) examination from 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh from 2016. They have also asked the IIT Council, where all the directors of IITs are members and which is chaired by HRD minister Smriti Irani, to take a call on merging the existing two-tier admission system into one, exclusively for the IIT aspirants.

In a meeting at IIT-Guwahati on Sunday, it was decided to propose a change in the number of candidates appearing in IIT-JEE (advanced). "Till this year, the top 1.5 lakh students from JEE (main) could sit for IIT-JEE (advanced) and around 10,000 ranks were awarded to fill up seats in the IITs across the country," said a member of JAB.

He added, "The number of seats available at the IITs has increased considerably as new IITs have also come into existence. But, over the past three years, only 1.5 lakh students could make it to the IIT-JEE (advanced) examination which is conducted by the IITs. We wanted to ensure that more students could take the competitive examination as seats have remained vacant even this year." JAB also felt that more counselling rounds could be held if additional ranks are offered.

In 2016, eighteen IITs will take students from IIT-JEE (advanced) examination. Till 2015, three rounds of counselling were done by the IITs. This year, at IIT-Kharagpur, around 30 seats remained empty across all the faculties. Taking into account all the IITs, the number is around 200. "The vacant seats include even those where students had paid the fees and taken admission but did not turn up," a senior IIT official said.

The proposal to scrap the two-phase IIT entrance examination, comprising JEE (main) and IIT-JEE (advanced), and hold only one entrance test for all the IITs has been referred to the IIT Council. The meeting of the council is slated to be held in October following the JAB meeting where both the proposals will be considered and debated.

"The HRD ministry is keen to hold a single entry admission test for all the engineering colleges. The IITs want their own entrance examination which will be conducted by each IIT in rotation from each of the seven zones. The two-tier admission system may remain in place till 2016. From 2017 onwards a change is likely in the admission process to the country's premier institution. The final call will be taken by the IIT Council subsequently," said the JAB member.

According to some IIT faculty members, the higher-education institutes find the two-step entrance examination cumbersome. "The nature of examination where 10,000 students are selected and the nature of examination from which few lakh students are selected can't be the same. There has to be a difference between the admission test conducted for the IITs and other engineering colleges. All IIT aspirants have to mandatorily appear in JEE (main) examination from where the shortlisting is done for IIT-JEE (advanced). We want an examination exclusively for the IITs," said a senior IIT faculty member.

"At the moment, cumbersome process leads to a waste of time that could be a reason why some IIT seats remain vacant. It also puts a lot of stress on candidates who have to hold their concentration for over a month from appearing in JEE Main to holding the IIT-JEE Advanced", he added.
IIT admission became a two-phase affair in 2013 at the prodding of the HRD ministry. The ministry wanted to bring admissions to all engineering colleges under one roof and decided to hold a common entrance test for NITs and IITs. But when IIT-Kanpur threatened to quit the common entrance system and hold its own admission test on its own, MHRD allowed the IITs to hold a second test (IIT-advanced).

Hindustan Times ND 28/09/2015

Govt forms panel for revamp of civil services examination

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NEW DELHI: The format of the civil services examination could be up for a change, again.

A year after it started rolling back changes made to the civil service examination reforms, the NDA government on Sunday announced a committee had been set up to take a fresh look at the examination conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

The panel, headed by former education secretary BS Baswan, will revisit the entire gamut of issues relating to the examination, right from its pattern and syllabus to the eligibility criteria of aspirants, minister of state Jitendra Singh announced on Sunday.

Sources told HT that the seven-member panel had been tasked to submit its report by early next year.

The panel also includes former water resources secretary BN Navalawala, former UGC chairman Hari Pratap Gautam, AICTE chairman Anil Sahasrabudhe, former director of Shimla-based Indian Institute of Advanced Study Prof Peter Ronald DeSouza and IIM Bangalore’s Prof. B Mahadevan.

The exam is conducted annually in three stages — preliminary, main and interview — to select candidates for the prestigious Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

The existing exam pattern is largely based on the format approved by the government in 1979.

Former PM Manmohan Singh had tried to introduce some changes, including lowering the maximum age of candidates, but could not see it through. Later, his government introduced the civil services aptitude test recommended by Prof YK Alagh in 2001 but the changes were practically reversed by the NDA government.
INVESTMENT TECH-NIQUE Some of the largest global technology cos, including the likes of Google and Microsoft, have promised to put their backing behind the Digital India initiative. They have announced plans to improve internet penetration, entrepreneurship

Silicon Valley Presses the ‘Enter’ Key on India

San Jose: Search giant Google and software maker Microsoft were among some of the largest technology giants that pledged their support to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Digital India initiative on Sunday, announcing plans to improve internet penetration and entrepreneurship in the country.

“We are working on many connectivity projects, including bringing connectivity to railway stations in India,” said Google CEO Sundar Pichai. The company plans to launch Wi-Fi hotspots at 500 Indian railway stations.

Google will also make it possible for people to type in more than 10 Indian languages on the Android operating system, including the Prime Minister’s mother tongue Gujarati,” Pichai said at the event attended by tech industry rallies. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella announced that the company plans to join others to enable broadband internet using television white-space technology.

“We have plans to partner with the government of India, state governments, telecommunications companies and local ISPs (internet service providers) to take this technology to 600,000 villages in India,” said Nadella.

Networking major Cisco’s executive chairman John Chambers pledged support on behalf of the industry. “The US-India Business Council and Silicon Valley will be there for you,” he said. “I think the US and India will be very strong together.” Chambers has just been elected USIBC chairman.

Chip maker Qualcomm announced a $56 million fund to invest in Indian startups. The company, which has been funding startups in the country since 2007, will encourage product design from India, said executive chairman Paul E. Jacobs. “We really want to see a local ecosystem for product design,” he said.

Modi also met Apple chief executive Tim Cook to discuss the Make in India initiative, apart from Tesla’s Elon Musk.

“The Silicon Valley visit comes at a time when Modi’s advent as prime minister has served to boost investor confidence,” the correspondent in The US at the invitation of Facebook. The correspondent is in the US at the invitation of Facebook.
India to Launch Its First Astronomical Mission

On Monday morning, India will launch a satellite called the Astrosat, a multipurpose space telescope. The country’s astronomical community is excited about the launch, as it gives them a new tool to probe some of the mysteries of the universe. Here is a brief introduction to the satellite and what to expect.

WHAT IS THE ASTROSAT?
The Astrosat is a satellite costing ₹78 crore and been in the making for about 15 years. It will be launched at 10 am on board a Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), the workhorse of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The satellite is a space astronomical observatory weighing 1.3 tonne and orbiting close to the equator at an altitude of about 650 km.

WHAT CAN THE ASTROSAT DO?
Astronomers around the world will always welcome new telescopes. One in space is even more welcome as it can work without interference from the earth's atmosphere. The Astrosat’s excellent x-ray detection capabilities are especially welcome, as there are some gaps in the capabilities of other x-ray telescopes. The Astrosat’s ability to look at objects in different wavelengths at the same time is an invaluable addition to astronomer’s capabilities to observe space. Specifically, it can spot variations in the intensity of x-ray sources, always an indication of change. It can spot transients, short intense bursts of radiation that can hint at new phenomenon. It can also look at galaxies, oscillations of black holes.

WHY IS ITS LAUNCH SO IMPORTANT?
The Astrosat is India’s first astronomical space mission, and puts India in a small club of nations with observatories in space. The Astrosat, however, is different in scope from any other orbiting telescope. It can look at faraway objects using a variety of media-visible light, ultraviolet and x-ray – at the same time, as ISRO combined several different kinds of payloads into one satellite. While it opens up new windows for all astronomers, it is especially important for Indian astronomers. Since they have been part of Astrosat design, they know its capabilities well and can perform experiments accordingly. They have special privileges too. The satellite is also a marvel of engineering. The instruments have been built in India by small teams from scratch, and with no prior experience.

WHAT CAN HAPPEN ON MONDAY AND BEYOND?
The satellite will be launched at 10 am, barring bad weather high in the atmosphere or other unforeseen events. The Astrosat will be in a transfer orbit soon, and will be brought to its parking place near the equator within a week. It will take a few more weeks before all the instruments are switched on. After that astronomers will be free to use its instruments. Chances are that astronomers will discover something not long after that. The satellite is built to perform for five years, but its engineers expect a longer life.

TEXT: HARI PULAKKAT
India set to enter elite club with space observatory launch today

Chennai: The countdown for the launch of Indian rocket carrying ASTROSAT, India's first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory that will help in understanding the universe, and six other foreign satellites was progressing smoothly on Sunday, a senior official of the Indian space agency ISRO said.

"The countdown is progressing without any hitch. The fuelling of the rocket's second stage (engine) has started and would be completed late on Sunday. The rocket is set to blast off at 10 am," a senior official at Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) not wanting to be quoted said over the phone from Sriharikota.

The successful launch of the around Rs 180-crore and 1,513-kg ASTROSAT and placing it in orbit at an altitude of 650 km above the earth on Monday morning would make India a member of the select group of nations having its own space observatory after the US, Japan, Russia and Europe.

However, it will not be right to call ASTROSAT as India's 'Hubble'. The Hubble owned and launched by the US in 1990 is 10 times heavier than the ASTROSAT and is said to cost $2.5 billion.

The PSLV will carry ASTROSAT and six foreign satellites to space telescope is still working, India’s ASTROSAT’s life span is five years.

The 44.4 metre-tall 320-tonne polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV-XL) version is a four-stage rocket with six strap-on motors for additional thrust during the initial phase of the flight.

The first and third stages are powered by solid fuel while the second and fourth stages are powered by liquid fuel which will be filled during the countdown.

Apart from fuelling up the engines, all the systems would be checked and re-checked during the countdown.

The 50-hour countdown for the rocket launch began at 8 am on Saturday at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh, around 70 km from here.

The rocket with seven satellites cumulatively weighing 1,631 kg will blast off on Monday at 10 am from the first launch pad of the rocket port.

For the third time an Indian rocket will be launching seven satellites in a single mission. In 2008, ISRO had launched 10 satellites in one go, including India's Cartosat-2A satellite.

Just over 22 minutes into the flight, the rocket will eject ASTROSAT.

Soon after, six other satellites will be put into orbit and the whole mission will come to an end in just over 25 minutes.

ASTROSAT, with a life span of five years, will observe the universe through optical, ultraviolet, low and high energy X-ray components of the electromagnetic spectrum, whereas most other scientific satellites are capable of observing through a narrow wavelength band, the agency said. IANS
अब इग्नू में ऑनलाइन परीक्षा दे सकेगे छात्र

नई दिल्ली, 27 सितंबर (हरूपुरो): इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय मुक्त विश्वविद्यालय (इग्नू) में छात्र घर बैठे परीक्षा दे सकते हैं। इसके लिए इग्नू ऑनलाइन परीक्षा करवाने के विकल्प पर काम कर रहा है। इसके लिए इग्नू ने एक प्रस्ताव एचआईडी व यूजीसी को सौंपा है। मालूम हो तो इग्नू ने इसी वर्ष से दोबारा ऑनलाइन आवेदन प्रक्रिया भी शुरू की है।

इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय मुक्त विश्वविद्यालय (इग्नू) 28 लाख छात्रों को सौंपा देने के लिए ऑनलाइन परीक्षा के विकल्प पर विचार कर रहा है। इसके लिए इग्नू ने एचआईडी एवं यूजीसी को एक प्रस्ताव सौंपा है।

ऑनलाइन परीक्षा के विवरण पर इग्नू के कुलपति नागेश्वर राव ने बताया कि इग्नू ने इस संबंध में मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय और यूजीसी को प्रस्ताव सौंपा है।

संसाधन प्रस्ताव का अध्ययन कर रही है और तीर्थस्थानें पर काम किया जा रहा है। राय ने बताया कि इस साल से दोबारा शुरू हुई ऑनलाइन आवेदन प्रक्रिया में इग्नू को जबरदस्त प्रतिक्रिया मिली है।

उन्होंने बताया कि वर्तमान में इग्नू
Seeking the best for the next generation

Going abroad for higher studies has always been popular among UHNIs, but the trend has accelerated in the past few decades

By Neelam Sureka

A

uruda Nair, joint managing
director and chief executive
officer of the hotel chain
Alila Hotels and Resorts,
was around 21 years old
when she flew from India to study
at ChE University, now known as Stenden University, in the Netherlands.

For the granddaughter of C.P. Krishnan Nair, founder of the Leela Group, the
experience was new but much-awaited.

“It was a huge step, but it was also a
new beginning,” she said.

Two years later, in 1998, when she
moved to Cornell School of Hotel Ad-
ministration in New York for her
master’s degree, it was “like coming
circles for my family,” as both her parents had
studied there and she had grown up hearing
stories about it.

Going abroad for higher studies has
been popular among ultra-high-net-
worth individuals (UHNIs) since colo-
nel times. But the trend has caught on at
a much faster pace in the past few decades
even to globalisation and the resulting
increase in the number of UHNIs, which
includes not just individual families,
but entrepreneurs and professionals as well.

Bigger pool

According to the Kotak Wealth
Management’s report, Top of the Pyramid, the
number of high net worth households
(HHNIs) grew from 337,100 in FY15 to
around 377,000 last year, a growth of 12% over
three years and a 27% increase over five years.
The emergence of a larger pool of HHNIs has
increased the number of educational opportunities.

“We expect the number of Indian
HHNIs to increase by 389,000 by FY25, driven
by new entrants from emerging sectors such
as e-commerce and new avenues for high-
end investments,” the report stated.

For established families, it is,
of course, a natural progression, like
Nair’s case. “Globalisation has created opportunities for Indians to do business
outside India which requires promoter
families to be more adept at
managing partnerships and
understanding the challenges abroad,”
said Kavita Ramachandran,
exective director, Thomas Schmitthey Centre for
Family Business at the Indian School of
Business (ISB).

An increasing number of first-generation
entrepreneurs are seeing this as
an opport

The world is their oyster

The benefits are quite apparent.

There are several challenges in
making the transition from
entrepreneurship to
higher education, but the end
goal is clear:

“I have recently set up a joint ven-
ture to start a global hotel management
company in Qatar and I am certain that the
early exposure I had while being
abroad and working with multi-cultural
groups gave me the adaptability I need to
function efficiently,” she said.

Harbhajan’s eldest daughter,
Sneha, completed her law degree from
Pune’s Law College in Pune to join her
father’s Masters from the National University of
Singapore. She now works for a law firm in
India.

“International exposure with top legal
firms and business houses helped me
derstand business culture in
South-East Asia. The cultural
context of dealing with different
groups helped build values of working
with a multi-cultural workforce,” said Harbhajan.

A majority of UHNIs’ children return
to join their family businesses. For
instance, Kumar Mangalam Birla, who
pursued his MBA from London Business
School, took over as chairman of the
Aditya Birla Group in 1995 at the age of
23 after the sudden death of his father,
Aditya Birla.

According to the Kotak Wealth report,
catering to specific needs of children
global entrepreneurs and inheritors,
many global business schools have
started tailor-made programmes for
running family-managed businesses.

“It primarily depends on their
background. Those from business
families normally return to join the
family. Children of UHNIs professionals tend to
be entrepreneurs or professionals,” said
IBS Ramachandran.

But there is no set rule. While
many still join the family business,
another prefers to start their own
venture. The varied exposure gives them
the opportunity to pursue careers of their
choice.

Ruchsand, who went to Harvard
Business School, chose to set up his
start-up loseitch.com after working
for six years in his family business,
Wanchoo Chemical Pvt Ltd.

Ritiksh Samantha, son of Marico Ltd
founder Hariot Samantha, started his
independent soap-making venture,
Soap Opera N More, five years ago.
He graduated from Frank G. Zarb School of
Business, Hofstra University, New York.

Nair and her siblings choose their
educational institutes in keeping with their
academic interests. Her brother,
Aashish, chose to go to Les Roches
International School of Hotel Manage-
ment in Switzerland, while her sister,
Shubhada, completed a four-year
degree at The Culinary Institute of
America. She is now a food and bev-
ager consultant. Nair worked as a hotel
consultant in Singapore and then joined
the family business, before she set up
Anna Hotels.

Vithal Viswanathan contributed to this story.
PEC pushes for IIT upgrade


CHANDIGARH: The call to upgrade PEC University of Technology as an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) is once again gaining momentum, with an increased push from the UT administration. A number of meetings are being held between PEC and UT officials to nudge the ministry of human resource and development (MHRD) into upgrading PEC as a centrally-funded institute - either an IIT or a National Institute of Technology (NIT).

Interestingly, the 12th five-year plan also makes a mention of upgrading several institutions into central institutions. PEC and Chandigarh College of Architecture (CCA) are amongst the higher education Institutes (HIEs) from UTs that have been named as those with potential for an upgrade.

Confirming that a meeting was recently held with UT adviser Vijay Kumar Dev to pursue the matter with the MHRD, which has received the proposal through UT, PEC director Manoj K Arora said PEC had all the ingredients to be converted to a central-level institute. "PEC is one of the oldest institutes in the region. Had it become an IIT, it would have been amongst the earliest IITs in the country," he told TOI.

"While Chandigarh is geographically well-placed and would cater to students of the region and neighbouring states, it is a fact that students prefer PEC to lower-ranked IITs. In a way, we are already working like an IIT," Arora added.

The PEC director and senior officials from the institute met the adviser on September 24 to discuss the matter and redraft a proposal. Arora said if PEC is upgraded to an IIT, grants and infrastructure will improve and PEC can be made a 'smart campus' in the real sense. "This was also discussed with the adviser and we are working toward making this happen," he said.

PEC deputy director Sanjeev Sofat said that the upgrading PEC would give it financial and administrative autonomy. "It will be good for the institute as well as its students. Just like the Bengal Engineering College was converted into an IIT, we would gain national importance against the current status of a deemed university," he added.

>>PROS and CONS

What works in favour of PEC

Already listed to be upgraded in the 12th five-year plan

Geographic location: Caters to students from Himachal, J&K, Haryana and Punjab - many of whom prefer PEC over lower-ranked IITs

Working on IITs' academic model

What works against?

Other IITs in the region: If PEC gets upgraded to an IIT, it would be third one in the region after IIT Ropar and IIT Mandi, making it one of the highest concentrations of these nationally-governed institutes.

'Deemed-to-be-university' tag, which places institutions under private varsities

>>12th five-year plan

12th five-year plan mentions developing central Institutions as quality-leading Institutions and upgrading of several institutions into central institutions. Higher education institutes that have been listed in the plan as exhibiting potential in the UTs that come under the central government (through the ministry of home affairs) include the PEC University of Technology and Chandigarh College of Architecture.