



Current Affairs of the Day

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- Older IIMs lag behind newer ones in enforcing quota rule
- 'Census interim data by 2024'
- Rajya Sabha passes MTP Bill

GS Paper - III

- Delhi remains the most polluted capital: report

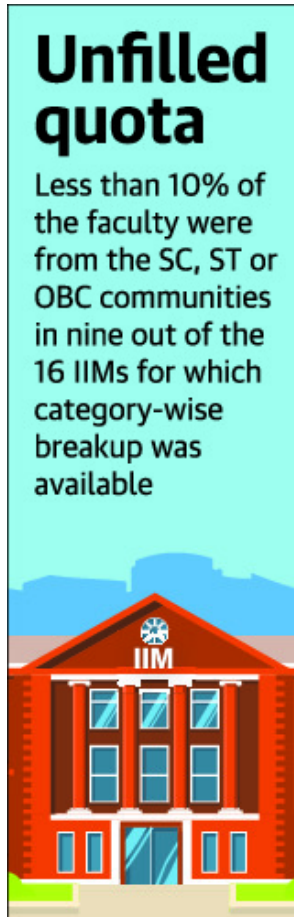


Older IIMs lag behind newer ones in enforcing quota rule

Less than 10% of faculty from reserved groups, reveal RTI data

Highlights:

1. At the very top of the prestige list, IIM-Kolkata has no SC or ST faculty member, but it does have two OBC faculty members, who make up less than 3% of its total strength of 77.
2. IIM-Ahmedabad said it “does not maintain category wise information for faculty” and failed to provide any information to the RTI plea.
3. The key is to implement



IIM	SC	ST	OBC	GEN
Nagpur	0%	0%	0%	100%
Kolkata	0%	0%	3%	97%
Lucknow	1%	0%	2%	95%
Amritsar	0%	0%	5%	95%
Udaipur	0%	3%	3%	95%
Bengaluru	3%	1%	2%	94%
Sambalpur	0%	0%	7%	93%
Vizag	0%	0%	9%	91%
Kozhikode	4%	0%	6%	90%
Kashipur	10%	0%	3%	88%
Ranchi	0%	0%	13%	87%
Tiruchi	0%	0%	16%	84%
Sirmaur	10%	0%	10%	80%
Raipur	0%	0%	21%	75%
Jammu	9%	0%	14%	77%
Shillong	15%	4%	12%	69%

reservation in the doctoral programmes so that the pool of diverse candidates available for faculty hires increases. But most of these PhD graduates [from the reserved categories] are now filling up positions at the newer IIMs as the older IIMs are still resistant.

Not inclined to implement Affirmative action

1. To understand the faculty recruitment process, RTI queries also asked for a breakdown of the number of candidates who applied from each category, were interviewed, offered jobs, and accepted employment at each IIM between January 2019 and December 2020.



2. The response showed that in some cases, hundreds of applicants were listed but none made it through the hiring process.
3. At IIM-Lucknow, for example, there were 888 applicants for faculty positions over the two year period, including 197 from reserved categories. Only seven were shortlisted for interviews, and none were offered jobs. Of the 691 applicants from the general category, 59 were shortlisted and 12 were offered jobs.
4. The IIMs cannot continue to use the excuse of the unavailability of qualified candidates. They need to be intentional, and scout for applicants, as done in affirmative action programmes by the world's top universities. They also need to ensure that biases are not allowed to play out through the shortlisting and interview process.

Seeking Exemption:

Since 2019, when Parliament passed the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, the IIMs have been actively lobbying the Education Ministry to exempt them from the law's requirements to reserve faculty positions for SCs, STs, OBCs and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). They had earlier cited a 50-year old Central government memo that exempted scientific and technical posts from reservations.

'Census interim data by 2024'

The provisional data for the latest Census and National Population Register (NPR) will be available before the Lok Sabha election in 2024, according to the Union Home Ministry.

Highlights:

1. The Ministry informed that the Census and update of the NPR would be among the major thrust areas for the financial year 2021-22. The previous Census was conducted in 2011 and the NPR, which has a database of 119 crore residents, was last updated in 2015.
2. As reported by The Hindu, a mobile application has been developed for collecting the Census details and NPR and residents can also self-enumerate.



The mobile app through which Census will be conducted will be available in 16 languages.

3. The fieldwork for the first phase of Census 2021 that will provide data on housing conditions, household amenities and assets possessed by the households is expected in 2021-22.
4. The fieldwork for the population enumeration phase to provide data on demography, religion, SC/ST, language, literacy and education, economic activity, migration and fertility will be done in 2023-24.
5. During the next update of NPR, the Aadhaar number is being collected voluntarily. The presence of the Aadhaar number in the NPR database will facilitate its integration with other databases.

Rajya Sabha passes MTP Bill

The Rajya Sabha passed the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 that increases the time period within which an abortion may be carried out.

Highlights:

1. Opposition MPs said the Bill still did not give women the freedom to decide since they would need a nod from a medical board in the case of pregnancies beyond 24 weeks.
2. Currently, abortion requires the opinion of one doctor if it is done within 12 weeks of conception, and two doctors if it is done between 12 and 20 weeks.
3. The Bill allows abortion to be done on the advice of one doctor up to 20 weeks, and two doctors in the case of certain categories of women, between 20 and 24 weeks.
4. For a pregnancy to be terminated after 24 weeks in case of substantial foetal abnormalities, the opinion of the State-level medical board is essential.
5. The amendments, he said, had been made pursuant to the rising number of pleas in the court. There are 23 petitions in front of the Supreme Court and many hundreds in the High Courts.



Delhi remains the most polluted capital: report

Delhi remained the most polluted capital city in the world but India, on the whole, had improved its average annual PM2.5 (particulate matter) levels in 2020 than in 2019, according to a report from IQ Air, a Swiss air quality technology company.

Highlights:

1. Delhi's PM2.5 concentration level, based primarily on data from the Central Pollution Control Board, was 84.1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2020, a 15% improvement from the 98.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ recorded in 2019 when the city was ranked the world's most polluted capital for the second straight year.
2. Bangladesh and Pakistan were the countries in 2020 with worse average PM2.5 levels than India, said the report. China ranked 11th in the latest report, a deterioration from the 14th in the previous edition of the report.
3. In 2020, 84% of all monitored countries observed air quality improvements. However, of the 106 monitored countries, only 24 met the World Health Organization annual guidelines for PM 2.5, the report underlined.
4. When ranked by cities, Hotan in China was the most polluted, with an average concentration of 110.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, followed by Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh at 106. Of the 15 most polluted cities, 13 were in India.
5. In spite of being a pandemic year, 2020 was particularly severe for agricultural burning. Farm fires in Punjab increased by 46.5% over 2019.