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QS World University Rankings 2021

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Why in News

Recently, **QS World University Rankings 2021** shows a decline in the rankings of the **Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)** and the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**.

Only the newer **IITs in Guwahati and Hyderabad** have shown some **improvement**.

QS World University Rankings

- **Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)** is a leading **global career and education network** for ambitious professionals looking to further their personal and professional development.
- QS develops and successfully **implements methods of comparative data collection and analysis** used to highlight institutions' strengths.
- The '**QS World University Rankings**' is an **annual publication of university rankings** which comprises the global overall and subject rankings.
- **Six parameters and their weightage for the evaluation:**
 - Academic Reputation (40%)
 - Employer Reputation (10%)
 - Faculty/Student Ratio (20%)
 - Citations per faculty (20%)
 - International Faculty Ratio (5%)
 - International Student Ratio (5%)

Key Points

- Only three educational institutes from India, the **IIT Bombay (172)**, **IISc Bengaluru (185)** and **IIT Delhi (193)** feature in the **top 200 list**.

- Despite the Centre's flagship **Institutes of Eminence (IoE) scheme** to boost the Indian presence in these global rankings, the **total number of Indian institutions** in the top 1,000 global list has **fallen from 24 to 21**.
- In **private universities, BITS Pilani and the Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) have dropped** out of the top 1,000 list, but **OP Jindal Global University has climbed** to the 650-700 band in the rankings.
- Out of the six parameters, Indian institutions get **zero scores on the ratio of international faculty and students** while **scoring well on research impact**, measured through citations per faculty.
- India also **scores poorly on faculty-student ratio** because of counting only full-time faculty whereas American universities include PhD students who are teaching or are research assistants.
- Indian academics have focused on that **if a parameter comparing the cost of education to students is introduced**, Indian institutions would be among the world's top 50.
- Earlier in 2020, IITs **jointly decided to boycott the World University Rankings** released by the **Times Higher Education (THE)** questioning its methodology and transparency.
- One of the reasons for a drop in Indian universities' rank is **lack of sufficient efforts**.

Other universities across the world are making **increasingly-intense efforts to enhance their educational offerings**.

- A **committee** of IIT directors has been formed to see **how Indian institutes can improve the perception about them abroad** and also make efforts to enhance the quality of standards within the country.
- **Suggestions:**
 - The government should launch a campaign for improving educational institutes, similar to **Incredible India** which promotes **tourism in India** and engages with the travellers.
 - **Success should be based on five pillars:**
 - Not-for-profit status.
 - Strong commitment to faculty hiring and research.
 - Focus on internationalisation.
 - Devotion to humanities and social sciences.
 - Drive to build a reputation through students and employers.

Institutions of Eminence Scheme

- It is a government's scheme to provide the **regulatory architecture for setting up or upgrading** of 20 Institutions (10 from public sector and 10 from the private sector) as world-class teaching and research institutions called 'Institutions of Eminence'.

- **Objectives:**
 - **Excellence and Innovation:** To provide for higher education leading to excellence and innovations in such branches of knowledge as may be deemed fit at post-graduate, graduate and research degree levels.
 - **Specialization:** To engage in areas of specialization to make distinctive contributions to the objectives of the university education system.
 - **Global Rating:** To aim to be rated internationally for its teaching and research as a top hundred Institution in the world over time.
 - **Quality teaching and Research:** To provide for high quality teaching and research and for the advancement of knowledge and its dissemination.
- **Benefits:**
 - **Autonomy:** Institutes with IoE tag will be given **greater autonomy and freedom** to decide fees, course durations and governance structures.
 - **Grant:** The **public institutions** under IoE tag will receive a **government grant of Rs 1,000 crore**, while the **private institutions will not get any funding** under the scheme.

Way Forward

- The perception about India and its education standards play a major role which cannot be changed by an individual institution so all of the universities and institutes have to come together to tackle the issue.
- To regain lost ground, Indian higher education must find ways of increasing teaching capacity and of attracting more talented students and faculty across the world to study and work in India.

Source: TH