Preparing for IIT-JEE Entrance Exam by Sarfraj Ahmed

Article published on January 6th 2012 | Education

Cracking the IIT-JEE Entrance Exam is just the first big milestone on your way to a rewarding career. The bigger challenge is to choose the right specialization that puts you on track to a career that is both rewarding and soul- satisfying. But how do you gain an insiderâ€™s perspective when all your energy and efforts are focused on getting past the Rubicon of the countryâ€™s toughest entrance exam? Lots of IIT Students confronted this challenge when they were preparing for the IIT-JEE. The moment you clear the exams, youâ€™ll be flooded with free advice from friends, relatives and well-wishers on what to opt for and what not to.

Most of the students will get to know about specializations and how they differ from each other only after joining the IITs. Only those who are already in IITs will be able to guide you better. Even the teaching methods of IIT professors are different.

The professors will give you the summary of a topic and it is then up to students to master it. This can lead to poor performance in semester exams if you donâ€™t prepare well for it. It was the dismal performance of their juniors that motivated the two to start IITians for Youth; a 40- member counseling group-comprising students from IIT Kharagpur aimed at clearing the doubts and apprehensions of IITJEE aspirants. Since its launch in 2009, the group has organised workshops in cities across the country, most recently at Sharda University in Greater Noida last week.

Students are not aware that some of the programmes that are growing in popularity in the IITs today are Economics and Pure Sciences. Unlike the regular programmes in universities and colleges, the Economics course at the IITs draws a lot from Mathematics and Applied Physics. Even thermodynamics, a topic in Physics that deals with the transfer of heat to material bodies, is applied to the subject.

Students make working models and are taught how to apply the theory of random motion of particles to that of fluctuating stocks. Economics graduates from the IITs, incidentally, have been hired as strategists and business analysts by leading multinational companies such as Barclays, Deutsche Bank and Citibank.

The prospect of research in foreign universities has made Pure Sciences popular among students in the last couple of years. The rising popularity of Pure Sciences can be gauged from the merit rankings of the students who have enrolled for these subjects. The minimum rank for pure sciences at Kharagpur this year was 700; it was 33 in Kanpur last year.

The Union government is encouraging Pure Sciences by giving scholarship to students who opt for the subjects. Under the â€˜ Inspire Scholarshipâ€™ offered by the ministry of science and technology, students who pursue bachelorâ€™s and masterâ€™s degree courses in natural and basic sciences are entitled to an annual endowment of ` 80,000 each. The parting advice of the IITians for Youth is worth repeating. Students must listen to their heart when they have to take a career decision.

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Article Keywords:
IIT-JEE Entrance Exam, IITJEE aspirants, Preparing for the IIT-JEE, IIT Kharagpur

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