

Engg colleges turning into schools, ITI centres in Raj

Over 60 Institutes Shut Owing To Poor Admission Since 2011

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur: The closed engineering colleges are fast turning into schools, ITI centres, degree colleges and other institutes in Rajasthan.

A grim reality, exposing the tall claims repeated several times by chief minister Vasundhara Raje, of state turning into a hub of technical education. Two colleges, marred by low students' turnout, closed for years before they converted into schools. The smart classes, state of the art labs meant for engineering students are being used by school students. Over a dozen colleges have started offering BA, MA or commerce courses.

As per the state government data, over 60 engineering and 80 MBA colleges have closed down owing to poor admissions since recession (2011).

Jyotika Sachdeva, public relations officer of the IIS School in Sanganer, which was IIT Engineering College, says that the college was converted into a school two years ago. "It is running well. The administration has no major changes for converting into a school," said Sachdeva.

Schools being the safest and the most legal option to switch is a reason that in the next two years over a dozen engineering colleges will convert into schools from three at the moment.

Another trend coming up here is that management of colleges are injecting humanities or commerce or other professional courses to counter the disinterest in engineering. An engineering college in Jodhpur is awaiting permission to open state-of-art school of hospitality in its engineering campus. "I have invested 2.5 crore in developing lab or kitchens in my engineering college and made all possible modifications. I am hoping that the new course will recover the losses. If the response is good I am planning to open specialised courses to give stu-



Pic for representational purpose

Out of 42,000 seats in 94 institutes, 14,000 filled

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Jaipur: An eerie of silence often breaks by buzzing bees around the honeybee hives visible at several places on the structure spread in five acres of land with fading paint is not the description of any abandon industry but an locked engineering college in the outskirts of Chittorgarh.

The disinterest in engineering owing to multiple factors have taken away the charm of such structures—students and teachers and off course rendered thousands jobless. Similar is the fate of over 30 colleges locked from a period of one to four years. While some dozen fully constructed buildings across the state are awaiting 'acche din' to start academic operations.

Many more colleges to meet the same fate is obvious from a fact that in 2017-18, aga-

dents diversity," said a director requesting anonymity.

State has present 94 engineering colleges reduced from the highest number of 164, including 21 evening col-

inst 42,000 seats in 94 colleges, barely 14,000 engineering seats were filled by the students. The grim situation has left several edupreneurs under the debt which they seemed not in a position to repay, unless the academic season runs smooth.

"I am running the institute in losses for the past five years hoping every year that things will improve. Debt is soaring and barely able to pay the interest. It seems that 'giving up' is certain," said a director, of an engineering college in Kukas.

The situation of institutes in urban centres like Jaipur is far better as they have options to convert into schools but those in the interiors opening a school is also not viable. "The damage is beyond repairable. The closed or about to closed institutes outside the urban reach has very minimal chances to recover," sa-

leges. The rush was so high in 2008-09 that several evening colleges were given the permission. Some of them have given land for rent to run coaching institutes in

id RP Yadav, former vice chancellor of RTU.

An edupreneur, Shashikant Singhi, fears to not see any improvement in the near future. He blamed the fast changing employability dynamics in several traditional sectors for engineers due to technological advancement making the task originally engineers replaced by non-technical employees.

"The citadel of engineering is crumbling is directly related to skewed job opportunities is the simplest explaining. If, however, you have to understand the problem, then the rise of universities where you'll have several courses and thousands of students explains that preference of students has become cosmopolitan. They want to experience other than academics which the single stream institutes have failed to deliver," said Singhi.

the garb of running courses.

As per the rule, education institute can be through a society and not run any activity which is deemed commercial.