

Institutes' Participation in Govt-backed Social Missions to Decide Score, Ranking

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New Delhi: A higher education institute's contribution and participation in government backed social missions will now count towards its overall score and ranking on the 'India Rankings' that are published every year by the Human Resource Development ministry.

The ranking parameters for 'India Rankings 2020' under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) have been revised by the Centre to include metrics for participation in government projects- Unnat Bharat Abhiyan and SWAYAM (the Indian MOOCs platform), ET has learnt.

Officials in the HRD ministry told ET that the revision of parameters was being done to ensure that 'institutes focus on important social initiatives'. Accreditation of the

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)/ National Board of Accreditation (NBA) has also been added as a high weightage parameter for determining an institute's ranking.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan is a flagship project of the union Human Resource Development ministry under which a higher education institute adopts at least five villages and finds technological and logistical solutions to their specific problems/concerns.

SWAYAM is the national digital repository of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)- an open source platform that hosts course material and video conference linked tutorials by faculty from across institutes.

The HRD ministry had, incidentally, also asked all Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) to mandatorily participate in the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan as part of its 100 day pro-

gramme earlier this year. When IIMs expressed reservations around the participation being made mandatory, the ministry 'advised' them instead to participate in it.

The rankings score public and private higher education institutes on a number of parameters and are increasingly being relied on for accord- ing greater grants, improved status and more autonomy to institutes.

A clutch of institutes including Ashoka University, KREA University, Azim Premji University, Indian Institute of Human Settlements and Indian Institute of Public Health were 'not considered' for the Institute of Eminence status by the government this year on this count, despite an expert panel recommending for the same.

The government had said that they were not being accorded the status as they do not figure in latest QS rank-

ings or the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) or India rankings.

There are five parameters on which every higher education is assessed for the India rankings- each carrying 100 marks. These are Teaching, Learning & Resources; Research and Professional Practice, Graduation Outcomes, Outreach and Inclusivity and Perception. Each parameter has 4-5 metrics for scoring an institute.

The four metrics under the parameter 'Teaching, Learning & Resources' now stand revised to six to include 'participation in SWAYAM (MOOCs)' and metric for awards and recognition- both will carry five marks each. Similarly, the ranking parameter 'Outreach and Inclusivity' has been revised to include five instead of four metrics. The new addition is 'participation in Unnat Bharat Abhiyan' which will carry 20 marks.