

## **IITs climb, others slip in Asian varsity rankings**

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Despite the language barrier, China is taking over from India, in terms of their ranking among top Asian Universities. According to the latest QS Asian University Rankings 2011, six Chinese universities have made it to the top 30. India's pole position starts from 36 with IIT Kanpur.

"The Chinese dominance is despite India's comfortable use of English, something China is only now starting to work on," said Martin Ince, Editor and Chairman Advisory Board, QS World University Rankings.

According to Ince, Indian universities have far too few staff to teach their students by world standards, with no-so-good faculty/student ratios. "Although of high quality, the number of research paper is too few. Consequently, international staff and students do not want to be there.

So plenty of scope for improvement and investment in India," adds Ince.

This may not be different from what Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh recently pointed out, "The IITs and IIMs are good because of world class students, not because of the world class faculty."

In the present QS Asian University rankings, five out of seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have improved on their previous performance. "We are well aware that our research ecosystem needs a big revamp with more investment to compete internationally. A research council is also required at the apex level which we are discussing with the Ministry of Human Resource and Development. But we also know that inspite of many handicaps, we are on the growth path," said S G Dhande, Director, IIT Kanpur.

IIT Bombay lost its top place among Indian universities falling two places to 38, while IIT Delhi improved its 39th place in 2010 to 37th place in 2011.

IIT Madras and IIT Kharagpur are the new entrants in the top 50 list.

"Our position will get better by the year as we are investing a lot in improving our faculty and research infrastructure. The only thing pulling us down could be our composition of international students and faculty. We are however, constantly working on policies to bring in desirable changes here," said Surendra Prasad, Director, IIT Delhi.

IIT Guwahati which has dropped 16 places to settle at 82, said it is looking at increasing the number of PhD students from the current 60 to 140 every year.

However, other Indian universities including University of Calcutta, University of Delhi, University of Mumbai and University of Pune, have all slipped in their rankings of the top 200 universities list.

Among Asian countries, Japan was the best-represented nation, with five of the top 10 and 57 of the top 200 universities, ahead of China (40) and South Korea (35), Taiwan (16), India (11), Thailand (9), Indonesia (8), Malaysia (7) and Hong Kong (7).

The Hong Kong University of Science & Technology (HKUST) climbed up from second place last year to top the rankings in 2011.

“Both HKUST and Hong Kong University are strong across most of the indicators, with their truly international character setting them apart. HKUST has the edge in research productivity, where the gap has widened in 2011,” said Ben Sowter, head of QS Intelligence Unit.

Despite the troubled Japanese economy, its universities continued to perform strongly with Tokyo and Kyoto each moving up one place to 4th and 7th, respectively. In Singapore, National University of Singapore (NUS) retained its place in the top three.

Moreover, mainland China's universities perform strongly in the reputation indicators, with Peking and Tsinghua both rated in the top seven by academics, and third and fourth by employers.

The rankings have been prepared by QS, a leading global information specialist in the higher education sector.