

## Stay away from IITs, alumni tells govt

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The government should stop interfering with the administration of IITs. That is the only way to enhance the quality of IIT-like institutions. Thus feel ex-IIT students who flocked at the PAN-IIT-2006 Global Conference at the Bandra-Kurla Complex on Sunday.

They said the government should instead concentrate only on funding and scholarship aspects. At the same time, they also felt that it was the brand name and the hefty salary packages that had been attracting students to IIT. Many also felt that thus they failed to contribute to the country's development.

Many expressed their discontent over the depleting standard of education in renowned institutes like IITs. Professor M Balakrishnan, IIT-Delhi, said: "In comparison to global educational scenario, IITs have failed to produce sufficient number of research scholars. Every year IIT-Bombay produces just 60 Phds. This is due to the paucity of technical expertise required to maintain the infrastructure installed in IITs."

Mphasis CEO Jaithirth Rao said: "No government interference will pave the way for more innovation in premium institutes in the country. It will lead to the creation of a competitive environment. The Government of India has passed several laws that have caused a decline in the standard of education offered at the IITs. It is the role models that will help the country to produce world-class IITians and not the laws."

The IIT alumni held the government responsible for the failure to upgrade technical institutes and making them appear as though they belong to the 1950s.

To improve the quality of education available to the poor, the alumni suggested the introduction of a system that allows choice.

***Infosys CEO Nandan Nilekani said, "There is an urgent need for the government provide vouchers to parents from the economically backward section. That way they can choose to enrol their children in private schools instead of the government-run schools, which are in a pathetic state."***

Elaborating on various measures to be introduced in IITs to bring it on a par with foreign universities, Nilekani said all IITs need to be equipped with the "incubation centres" to enhance entrepreneurship among the IITians.

He also expressed the need to involve curriculum based on finance, accounts and market in IITs instead of providing conventional technical education through subjects like chemistry and physics.

Addressing the convention on Sunday, Nandan Nilekani, also raised concern over the country's education sector.

He said: "Nearly 1,40,000 students of Indian origin have been pursuing higher education abroad by spending nearly three to four million dollars. To reduce the figure of Indian students graduating from foreign universities, public and private investments in the education sector should be encouraged."

Others wanted the government to set up a rating agency for the technical institutes. However, it was not just the IIT alumni, but the Global Convention also observed suggestions from the IIT students to increase the standard of education in IITs.