

900% hike in M Tech fees riles students

Updated: [September 29th, 2019, 22:30 IST](#)

Bhubaneswar: Students and academicians in the Capital city have vehemently opposed the Centre's decision to hike M Tech fees by 900 per cent and demanded revision of the fee structure. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Friday, decided to increase the fee for M Tech courses by almost 10 times to Rs 2 lakh per year. The hike will be introduced in a staggered manner over a three-year period, starting from 2020 academic session.

Presently, an M Tech Student at IIT-Bhubaneswar has to pay between Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 per semester depending on the field of study in a span of four semesters over two years. If the new fee structure comes into effect, the cost could rise to anything between Rs 45,000 to Rs 90,000 and the total cost could be anything between Rs 2 lakh to Rs 4 lakh.

“This is preposterous,” complained Surya Narayan Mohanty of All Odisha BPUT Students Association (AOBSA). “If public institutes start increasing fees like private ones then there will hardly be any difference between the two. Where will the poor students go?” he added.

Furthermore, the IIT Council, the apex body that met Friday, also decided to introduce an evaluation system for faculty members to weed out non-performers. Besides, decision making body of the 23 IITs has also proposed to stop the monthly stipend of Rs12,400 paid to all M Tech students who secured admission through the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) exam.

“The council approved, in principle, the recommendations of the three-member committee constituted for suggesting reforms in the M Tech system. The committee has recommended uniform fee structure for the M Tech programme in all IITs, and for charging the same fee for M Tech, as in B Tech.” the HRD Ministry said.

The committee made five key recommendations. One, to increase the M Tech fees to Rs 2,00,000 per year and give relief to needy students; two, scrapping of the monthly stipend of Rs 12,400; three, 50 per cent of the fee hike could be disbursed among competent M Tech students who would want to take up the role of teaching assistants; four, the top one percentile students could be offered a five-year fellowship if they pursue PhD from a top Indian institution; and five, a mechanism to encourage IITs to go for sponsored students from the industry to pursue M Tech courses.

Responding to this, Biswajit Mohanty, a student at IIT-Bhubaneswar said that there had been an increase in the B Tech fees only a few years back. “This hike will be a death knell for students who look up to public institutes for completing their studies,” he added.

However, IIT-Bhub Director, R V Rajakumar said, “The fee has been increased but it will not be a significant rise. The fee waiver will still be in place, however, those who do not fall under the exemption category will have to pay the increased amount.