

'State engg. colleges have best industry ties'

AICTE-CII survey says Tamil Nadu has maximum number in high-performing category

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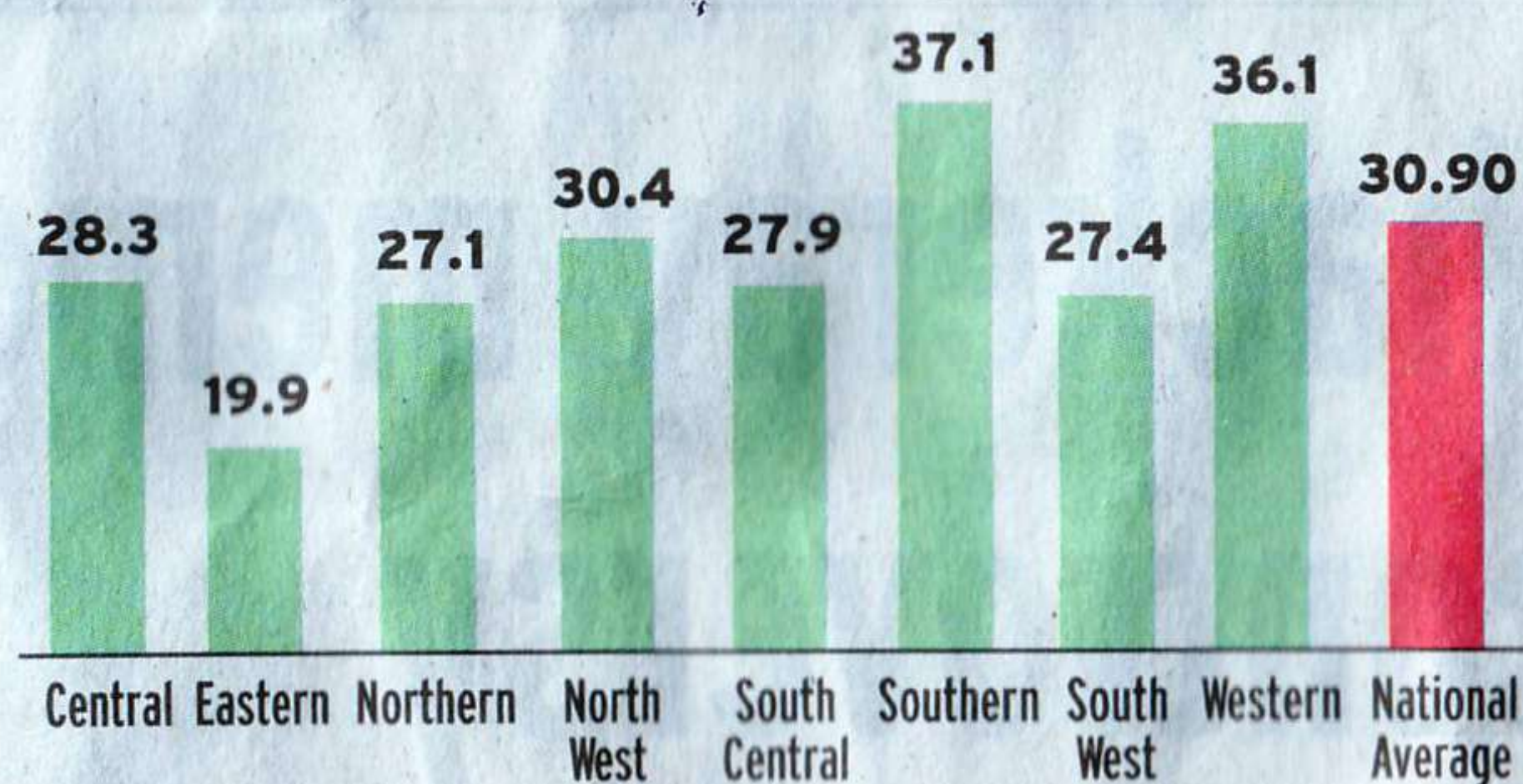
CHENNAI: A recent study has shown that engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu are the best performers when it comes to collaborating with companies. Eight of the top twenty colleges in the country are in the State, says the study conducted by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The survey was covered 156 AICTE-approved engineering institutes across eight zones.

The Southern zone, comprising Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, topped the list as far as placements, faculty and entrepreneurship, is concerned and came second in the areas of infrastructure, curriculum and services, next to Maharashtra.

The study was initiated a few months ago to evaluate how far the engineering institutes have been successful in providing demand-based, industry-responsive education. Based on the results,

AVERAGE SCORES ACROSS AICTE REGIONS

The 156 colleges were evaluated on criteria such as governance, curriculum, infrastructure, faculty and placements



Central: Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh | **Eastern:** West Bengal, Orissa, Jharkhand | **Northern:** Uttar Pradesh | **North-West:** Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi | **South Central:** Andhra Pradesh | **Southern:** Tamil Nadu, Puducherry | **South-West:** Karnataka, Kerala | **Western:** Maharashtra

the colleges were classified into three categories (high, medium, low). According to the study, Tamil Nadu has the highest percentage of institutes in the high-performing category (29%), followed by the Karnataka and Kerala (24%). Nearly 61 per cent of the institutions from Tamil Nadu are in the medium category and 10 per cent in the low category.

Computer and IT engineering emerged as a good performers across all parameters indicating strong industry linkage while civil engineering had low scores, indicating a need for realignment with industry requirements, the survey said.

'Not encouraging'

However, AICTE officials termed the results of the sur-

vey 'not encouraging'. Only 17 institutes out of the 156 had a composite score above 50 per cent when it comes to industry-institute interaction. A majority of them lagged behind in industry-academia collaboration.

"In some colleges, there are industry members on the board of committees but there is no active participation. There are no workshops conducted by industry and sharing of facilities and infrastructure is yet to start," said an AICTE official.

The survey was open for those institutes which offer at least three out of the six streams and had completed 10 years as of August 2012. The questionnaire was on the AICTE website and filled by the eligible institutes after which a jury visited the colleges, and evaluated them on governance, curriculum, faculty, infrastructure, services, entrepreneurship and placements.

The colleges from the State that figured in the top 20 are PSG College of Tech-

nology, Rajalakshmi Engineering College (engineering and technology); Bannari Amman Institute of Technology; PSNA College of Engineering and Technology, Dindigul, Thiagarajar College of Engineering, Panimalar Engineering College and R.M.K. Engineering College.

The high-ranked institutes were found to have three or more industry members on their board of governors and most of them were found to have conducted more than 10 industry guest lectures or seminars since 2007. Most of them had cells financially supported by the industry, and excellent campus placement offers, with over half of the students being recruited by companies directly aligning to the core streams they studied.

On the other hand, the colleges that performed poorly, had almost negligible resource sharing or involvement with the industry and none of the institutes, except one, has faculty members who have presented papers

to the industry.

Only 41 participants

However, a senior professor at Anna University pointed out that only 41 of the 223 eligible colleges in the State participated in study. "While it is good that most of the institutions are aligning themselves to suit industry demands, they should not lose track of engineering curriculum," he added.

S.Vaidhyasubramaniam, Dean - Planning & Development, SASTRA University, which did not participate in the survey, expressed dissatisfaction with the parameters "Glaringly missing is a measure of consistency in core relevant industry-institute parameters like long-term collaborative research projects, joint publications in journals, industry-sponsored labs in emerging areas, industry-endowed chair professorships, FDPs, etc. This ranking is more suited for teaching institutions rather than research institutions," he said.