

Seven-member Panel to work out common entrance test for varsities

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In news

Recently, UGC has set up a seven member committee to consider the issue (of) holding common entrance test at undergraduate level

Key highlights

- The government is exploring the feasibility of holding a common entrance test for undergraduate admissions across all central universities from the next academic year.
- University Grants Commission(UGC) has set up a seven-member committee on December 23, **headed by Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Punjab R P Tiwari, to consider the issue of holding common entrance test at undergraduate level only from the next academic year in central universities to provide a single platform for admission**

Why the common entrance test?

- The new NEP, released in July this year, advocates reducing the number of entrance tests to “eliminate the need for taking coaching for these exams”

Who will conduct it?

- If the NEP suggestion is implemented, the National Testing Agency will be tasked to conduct a common aptitude test as well as specialised common exams for different disciplines at least twice a year, for admission to bachelor’s in central universities.

National Testing Agency (NTA)

NTA has been established as a premier, specialist, autonomous and self-sustained testing organization to conduct entrance examinations for admission/ fellowship in higher educational institutions.

Functions of National Testing Agency

- To identify partner institutions with adequate infrastructure from the existing schools and higher education institutions which would facilitate conduct of online examinations without adversely impacting their academic routine
- To create a question bank for all subjects using the modern techniques
 - To establish a strong R&D culture as well as a pool of experts in different aspects of testing
 - To help individual colleges and universities in the field of testing and to provide training and advisory services to the institutions in India.
 - To provide quality testing services to the academic institutions in India.
 - To develop a state of the art culture of testing in India by using domestic and international expertise. To collaborate with international organizations like ETS to achieve the same.
- To undertake any other examination that is entrusted to it by the Ministries.
- To undertake the reforms and training of school boards as well as other bodies where the testing standards should be comparable with the entrance examinations.

What is the role of the committee?

- Conducting a common entrance test seems simple but there are several intricacies. For instance, given the range of subjects offered across central universities, **this committee will have to identify the disciplines for which separate tests will be needed.**
- The government expects a report by January and hopes to

make a decision by March 2021.