

# T.N. has most engg. colleges with less than 30% intake

Lack of employment demand, deemed varsities increasing seats cited as reasons

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Tamil Nadu has the most number of engineering colleges with less than 30% intake of students this year. The State has 526 colleges of which 177 have enrolled only 12,399 students this year, according to Satya Pal Singh, Minister of State for Human Resources.

The Minister provided the information in the Lok Sabha in response to questions from eight members, who sought details of the number of colleges that had enrolled less than 30% of its total intake in the last three years and what steps the government had taken to remedy the situation.

The Minister said the All India Council for Technical Education did not offer the option of converting engineering colleges into arts and science colleges. Closure itself depended on voluntary application furnished to the Council.

In Tamil Nadu, while 140 engineering colleges had less than 30% of its sanctioned intake in 2014-15, the number rose to 142 colleges in the following academic year. In 2016-17, in 177 engineering colleges only 12,399 were enrolled against a sanctioned intake of 77,509 students.

Though the government has tried to absolve the Council of blame, engineering college principals do not agree. The Council had, in the past decade, eased the

## Falling numbers

MHRD Ministry has provided data on engineering colleges with less than 30% intake to the Lok Sabha



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Year	Institute Count	Intake	Enrolment
2014-2015	1,178	5,12,936	70,866
2015-2016	1,171	4,80,385	64,249
2016-2017	1,267	5,07,129	68,158
<b>TAMIL NADU</b>			
2014-2015	140	61,994	10,152
2015-2016	142	59,493	9,050
2016-2017	177	77,509	12,399

requirements for setting up an engineering college, spawning more institutions to circumvent the restriction on intake.

## Skill deficiency

This led to more students enrolling in colleges, but many were not skilled enough to be employable, says V. Venkatachalam, principal of Sengunthar Engineering College. "The AICTE opened the market and colleges increased intake without con-

sidering the demand-supply ration. Job opportunities have reduced gradually and poor skilling have led to students joining the college as faculty in some cases," he says.

While the Minister has said that the AICTE has introduced skill development centres or vocational education institute, engineering educators say it will take a long time before there can be a turnaround.

Several factors contribut-

ed to fall in admissions, says M.S. Mathivanan, vice-chairman of the consortium of self-financed engineering colleges of Tamil Nadu. "Some colleges are closing as there is no employment demand. Another reason is deemed universities have increased the number of seats and students prefer them or even autonomous colleges where results are liberal."

The AICTE recently reduced the teacher to student ratio to 1:25 from 1:20, but it may take a long time for the effect to percolate as colleges are struggling to pay the salaries to the existing staff. He faults the State government for delay in reimbursement of fee of Scheduled Caste students.

"Classes started in July but we have not yet received the money. We are not able to pay the salary to teachers because of this. Since it is free education more students join but we have a problem in paying salary to the staff," Mr. Mathivanan says.

Fingers are pointed at AICTE for permitting colleges to increase the number of courses. "Whoever had accreditation could increase intake. As a result colleges have gone for increase in intake. New colleges have also been allowed to commence. We find that at nearly 20% of enrolled students are not interested in engineering in a given institution," says S. Kuppuswami, principal of Kongu Engineering College.