

NCERT gets deemed university status

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CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi: Apex textbook and academic body NCERT has been granted the status of a deemed-to-be university, but the conditions mandate that the six-decade-old institution seek approval from other regulatory bodies for its operations.

Retired faculty members and officials of the National Council of Educational Research and Training said the NCERT deserves Institutions of National Importance status like the IITs, IIMs, NITs, AIIMS and IISERs, and not a deemed tag.

At present, the NCERT's executive council, the key decision-making body, is headed by incumbent education minister Dharmendra Pradhan. The government exercises its control over the NCERT's decision-making process.

NCERT's Regional Institutes of Education (RIEs) in Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysore and Shillong offer BA-BEd, BSc-BEd and research programmes like PhD.

Each RIE is affiliated to a local university in the state to award degrees to students graduating in these courses. According to the law, only a university or the Institutions of National Importance set up by Parliament or Assembly or a deemed university can award degrees.

Though the deemed university tag will enable the NCERT to grant degrees, it has to follow the norms of regulators such as the University Grants Commission and the National Council of Teacher Education. It has to seek accreditation and take part in the rankings conducted by the education ministry.

"The NCERT is well known in India and abroad for its expertise in the domain of curriculum and textbook preparation. Its teacher training courses are considered model programmes. If the government had granted INI status by passing a bill in Parliament, the NCERT would have got greater academic freedom like IITs to excel in academic and research," said a retired NCERT professor.