CBS initiative to give its students edge at BARC

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THE first batch of students passing out from the Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences (CBS) will have an edge over others if they want to join the training schools of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). This, thanks to a new scheme of CBS according to which graduates who secure a cumulative grade performance average (CGPA) of 7.5 or above will be entitled to appear directly before the final selection committee for admission to the BARC Training School.

The BARC Training School prepares students for various scientific and engineering positions in various units of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). To get admission into the training schools, candidates have to crack a tough written test, which is followed by an interview.

Started in 2007, the CBS is a joint initiative of the DAE and Mumbai University. It offers a five-year integrated MSc programme. "To get into the CBS, students have to take the All-India National Entrance Screening Test (NEST). This year, we had around 15,000 applicants and the CBS will take around 30 students. It's a tough exam and students who study at the CBS undergo a rigorous training process. I am confident that students who graduate from the CBS and are able to take advantage of this initiative, will be picked by the selection committee of BARC's Training School," said S M Chitre, chairman of the academic board, CBS.

NEST is the entry-level screening exam for the CBS and the National Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhubaneswar.

The one-year orientation course for engineering graduates and science post-graduates is conducted at the five training schools of BARC. After passing out, students can join as scientific officers in one of the units of the DAE. There were around 88,000 applicants for the course last year of which over 400 were selected from across India.

"This is a good opportunity for students," said Rashi Verma, a CBS student. "Working in DAE and its various units enables you to do a lot of research and developmental work. One gets to work on practical applications for society. I have been working hard and I may opt for it," said Kedar Kolekar, another student.