



RADHAKRISHNAN PANEL: GOVERNANCE

NEWS: Radhakrishnan panel recommends restructuring of NTA, asks for better coordination with States

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

The Radhakrishnan panel, formed after a NEET-UG exam paper leak, proposed reforms to enhance transparency, security, and efficiency in national entrance exams. Key recommendations include restructuring the NTA, adopting computer-adaptive testing, and strengthening digital infrastructure.

Radhakrishnan Panel Recommendations

1. Formation and Mandate of the Dr. K Radhakrishnan Committee

- **Context:** The committee was constituted in June 2024 following a NEET-UG paper leak, exposing serious flaws in exam security.
- **Objective:** Tasked by the Ministry of Education to:
 - Recommend reforms in examination processes.
 - Strengthen data security protocols.
 - Improve the structure and functioning of the National Testing Agency (NTA).

2. Key Recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Panel

A. Restructuring the National Testing Agency (NTA)

- **Focus Areas:** The NTA should prioritize conducting entrance exams and reduce dependence on outsourced agencies.
- **Capacity Enhancement:** Strengthen the NTA with domain-specific resources and leadership led by additional director generals.
- **Streamlining Roles:** Defer recruitment exams until NTA develops adequate infrastructure and capacity.

B. Enhanced Role of State and District Authorities

- **Coordination Committees:** Form committees with NTA, NIC, police, and intelligence agencies for smooth exam management.
- **Secure Exam Centres:** Implement strict measures such as:
 - Sealing centres under supervision.
 - Continuous CCTV monitoring.



- Appointment of a presiding officer at each centre.

C. Improved Testing Processes and Security Measures

- **Multi-Stage Testing:** Introduce multi-session exams for fairness (especially for NEET-UG).
- **Local Testing Centres:** Allocate centres in candidates' districts to avoid logistical issues.
- **Enhanced Security:** Include measures like:
 - Encrypted question papers printed on-site.
 - Digital question paper delivery systems.
 - Biometric verification tools like Digi-Exam to prevent impersonation.

D. District-Level Testing Infrastructure

- **Standardized Testing Centres:** Establish at least one testing centre per district, supplemented by mobile centres for remote areas.
- **CBT Network:** Leverage Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas for creating standardized computer-based testing centres.
- **Capacity Expansion:** Aim for a capacity of 2-2.5 lakh test-takers per session, reducing reliance on private providers.

E. Adoption of Computer-Adaptive Testing

- **Personalized Testing:** Tailor questions in real-time to candidates' abilities, ensuring accurate and secure assessment.
- **Harmonization:** Standardize undergraduate admissions through this advanced testing mode.

F. Unified Testing Criteria


- **Consistency:** Introduce uniform eligibility and admission criteria across undergraduate programs.



- **Standardized Framework:** Ensure tests follow consistent modes, sessions, and frequencies.

Committee's Recommendation


NTA OVERHAUL

 **NTA should focus on entrance exams and take up other exams only after capacity augmentation**

NTA should have a stronger governing body, with three sub-committees:


- Test audit, ethics and transparency
- Nomination and staff conditions
- Stakeholder relationships

Additional secy-level director general should be assisted by 10 verticals, including on technology, products, operations, test security and surveillance




OTHER ISSUES


Creation of a Grievance Reporting and Redressal Cell backed with AI/ML mooted




Need to strengthen school education system



THE TEST

 **For exams involving over 2 lakh participants, multi-session testing format spread over days suggested**

Multi-stage testing for NEET-UG a 'viable possibility'	Panel calls for rationalisation of multiple subject streams in CUET
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 **Testing-centre allocation policy recommended**

'Strange' patterns of choice should be detected through data analytics	Panel moots setting up standardised testing centres
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Mobile testing centers – possibly in a bus with seating capacity for 40-50 – mooted for remote, rural areas

Hybrid computerised, pen-paper tests proposed:

- Encrypted question papers to be delivered to confidential servers at testing centres
- High-speed printers at testing centres
- Question papers distributed in PPT format

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G. Development of Digital Infrastructure

- **Collaboration:** Work with educational institutions to build a nationwide network of CBT centres.
- **Infrastructure Expansion:** Enhance capacity and minimize operational risks for conducting large-scale digital exams.

3. Broader Implications

- The recommendations aim to modernize and secure national-level entrance exams, ensuring greater **transparency, efficiency, and fairness**.
- Enhanced collaboration with state authorities and standardized digital infrastructure would create a robust, secure, and accessible examination ecosystem.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/education/radhakrishnan-panel-recommends-restructuring-of-nta-asks-for-better-coordination-with-states/article68997163.ece>

