



Kyunki... she's a newsmaker

EVERYONE knows that Minister of Human Resource Development, Smriti Irani, was here on Monday to attend an event at the Indian Institute of Technology in Gandhinagar. But only your diarist can tell you that she left the faculty and students were wowed by her lack of airs.

Clad in a maroon sari with a green and gold border, the 39-year-old has constantly been in the head-

lines, most of them controversial. The first big row arose when she provided conflicting affidavits of her educational qualifications. Her decisions to celebrate Teacher's Day as 'Guru Utsav' and Vajpayee's birthday as 'Good Governance Day' raised eyebrows. The minister, who became the youngest face in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet at the age of 38, has been at loggerheads with the chairman of the board of governors of IIT-Bombay over

differences regarding the selection of IIT directors. However, none of this was evident when she met the staff and students of the institute for a private chat. The authorities had set up chairs and mike on the dais. But your diarist spotted Irani, who is also an MP from Gujarat, perch herself at the edge of the raised platform to address the audience. Seeing her "come down to their level" left the institute members impressed.