

AT FIRST IIT-GN WINTER CARNIVAL...

## PROFS, STUDENTS TO DISH UP FRIENDSHIP

The food fair is a platform for teachers and pupils to interact freely and pep the spirit of those who have been unable to go home for Diwali

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When people share food, their spirits connect. Banking on food to encourage a healthy relationship between professors and students, IIT Gandhinagar is organising its first-ever Winter Carnival. Students and professors will get together, cook and set up stalls where their creations will be dished out.

The carnival will be held on campus on Sunday evening. It is the brainchild of Jaison Manjaly, assistant professor and dean of student affairs. "We wanted a platform where students would get to interact with professors informally. The Winter Carnival is a oneday event for now. We want to make it a weekly affair where students and professors can bond over food," he says.

Manjaly adds, "Our campus is far from the main city. We miss the street food concept and ambiance. So students and professors form small groups and venture out. By hosting the food festival on weekends, we will give people an opportunity to relax on campus and get to know each other better." Several faculty members will put up their stalls. Prof Sivapriya Kirubakaran will sell dosas and idlis at her stall. She confesses, "I was not sure about my participation till Friday evening." Realising

the idea's potential, she decided to put up a stall.

“Not all students interact freely with professors. The fair is a good way of opening communication channels. Also, a lot of students did not go home for Diwali. This will pep up their spirits and make them feel comfortable here.” She adds, “A majority of faculty members at IIT-Gn are young. This makes it easy for them to accept such concepts. My husband, who is also a faculty member here, will help me man my stall.”

Dayanand Meitei, who is the communication and media relationship officer at IIT-Gn, will also set up a stall with students from the North-East. “We plan to set up a stall offering authentic North-East cuisine. We will serve three items initially. We are offering black tea, vegetable/chicken momos and cooked pineapple as dessert,” he says.

Cultural secretary (students' council) Eepsit Tiwari says, “We had a meeting with professors and they decided that they will play an active role in the carnival. We will charge a nominal cost for the dishes. Profits will be donated to needy organisations.” The carnival is inspired by melas held in rural areas. “We will follow the village theme We will have stalls offering puppet and magic shows. There will be face painting and rangoli- making competitions, too,” he adds.

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