

Boy from rural Gujarat wins gold at IIT Gn

23-year-old Vivek Popat is the first person from his village Kuvadwa near Rajkot to study at an IIT; will soon join a public sector unit in Maharashtra

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IIT Gandhinagar student Vivek Popat, who is a native of Saurashtra, did his parents and his entire village proud when he won a gold medal at the institute's second convocation. Hailing from a small village of Kuvadwa near Rajkot, Vivek is the first person from his village to have studied in IIT Gandhinagar.

As Vivek walked up the aisle to collect his medal, his parents Rasikhbhai and Manjulaben couldn't hide their pride in their son's accomplishments. A beaming Rasikhbhai said, "He is the first boy from our village to become an engineer."

Vivek said, "I come from a very middle-class family. My father is a small-time cloth merchant while my mother is a school teacher. They always taught me that the only way to achieve success



PHOTO: SHARAD KUMAR

Vivek Popat hopes his success will ensure a better life for his family

is through hard work." Vivek's journey from Kuvadwa began after he passed out of Class 10 and went on to pursue diploma engineering from Rajkot's poly-

technic college. After completing the diploma course, Vivek shifted to Ahmedabad and went to Vishwakarma Government Engineering College to pur-

IIT GN HOLDS 2ND CONVOCATION

The second convocation of IIT Gandhinagar was held on Sunday at the institute's temporary campus at Vishwakarma Government Engineering College. A total of 104 students were awarded with B.Tech degree. This year, the M.Tech programme's first batch, consisting of 10 students also graduated.

President's gold medal in B.Tech went to Shruti Jain. She also won Institute's gold medal in chemical engineering and another award for the best performance in core courses in Humanities and Social Sciences. While, the President's gold medal in M.Tech went to Shivani Rani.

sue Chemical Engineering. As fate would have it, the newly formed IIT Gandhinagar opened up on the same campus. "As an engineering student, I

have heard of the IITs and everyone knows that only the best get admission there. But I didn't have enough confidence to apply." But his sisters Jigna and Rina motivated him. Jigna said, "Nobody had ever heard of IIT in our family. From what Vivek told us, we realised that it was a prestigious institution. So we encouraged him to give it a try. I still remember the admission form to IIT Gandhinagar cost Rs 100, a sum which at the time we could hardly afford."

Once Vivek secured admission to IIT Gandhinagar, he focused on excelling in studies. Vivek said, "Today, I have three job offers lined up. One is with a PSU, another with an MNC and the third one is with the central government. I am taking up the job with Rashtriya Chemical and Fertilizers Ltd in Maharashtra, a PSU. I will be away from home for some time but this is a sacrifice that I will make in order to gift my family a better life."