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## **IIT-Gn students bitten by language bug**

### **linguist's deal ? 60 under-graduate students have enrolled for the Chinese language course**

Course was started on Sept 10, and will be conducted for one semester

IIT Gandhinagar talk focuses on LGBT

Gandhinagar: Lack of communication and social acceptance acts as a major hindrance in spreading awareness about HIV and other sexually-transmitted diseases (STD) among LGBTs. This issue was discussed during a talk by Pallav Patankar, director, HIV programmes for the Humsafar Trust at IIT Gandhinagar on Thursday. Patankar was addressing the students and faculty of the institute about the LGBT community and the issues related to STD. Patankar said, "There are a lot of men who are sexually engaged with other men but do not identify themselves as gay. Due to lack of awareness, these men do not use protection and get exposed to HIV and other STDs. However, it is a big challenge to identify them and make them aware of STD prevention and safe sex."

Gandhinagar: Keeping in view China's fast growth as a major economy in the world, as well as its students' zeal to learn the Chinese language, IIT-Gandhinagar has for the first time introduced Chinese as an elective course. About 60 undergraduate students have enrolled for course wherein they will learn the basics of writing and speaking in Chinese language. During the course, they will also get to know a lot about the Chinese culture.

Although the institute has courses in foreign languages like French, Spanish, German and Urdu, Chinese is the latest addition to the list. "It is part of the wider efforts here at IIT to internationalise the institute. We are continuously engaging with various schools and scholars from around the world to expose our students and professors to larger communities and cultures," said professor Bhaskar Datta, associate dean, academic affairs, IIT-Gandhinagar.

With per capita income of both the countries improving significantly, and also the fact that Chinese and Indians together form a large part of the world population, crossing the language hurdle will provide this students with enormous opportunities. Many IIT-Gandhinagar students have worked along with their Chinese counterparts and feel that learning the language will help them work better together.

Lavdeep Kaur, 19, third-year student, who enrolled for Chinese course, said, "I recently worked with MIT students on a project and most of them were Chinese. We also have to work constantly and compete, so it's better to learn the language."

While many students are opting to learn Chinese keeping in mind a better career and prospect, many others are taking the language out of fascination towards different scripts. "I previously took up French and learnt the basic. It helped me converse with many French and know them better. Chinese will help me do the same," said 21-year-old Joy Narang, fourth-year student.