

IIT-GN to help foreign students understand country's identity

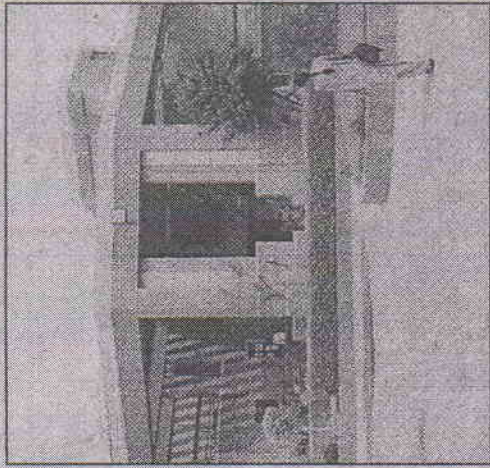
Dayananda Yumlembam | TNN

Ahmedabad: Thousands of foreign tourists visiting India every year experience the country in their own style. Many could have possibly gone through bad experiences and returned with wrong impressions of the country's diverse cultures and traditions.

Taking a step away from such a tourist cliché, Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IIT-GN) will now host a programme to immerse visiting foreign students into the culture and traditions of the country, coordinated by faculties of IIT-GN Rita Kothari and Jaison Manjaly, the ten day programme has been designed to help overseas students relate to the many layers of the country's identity.

The first batch of the programme that will take off on December 21 will have 11 students of California Institute of Technology (Caltech) par-

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ticipating. The module will include discussion on the country's economic trends, culture and history, poetry, films, structures of caste and community and enable the participants to appreciate the country's multifaceted identities.

"Through a combination of academic lectures and field visits, the module will take the students through India of the past, present and the future. By helping the students relate to the country's traditions of philosophy, science and tech-

nology to a present-day India, the programme will help them identify continuities as well as shifts that the country has made through the centuries," said Kothari.

The institute perceives its location near Ahmedabad as an added advantage for hosting such a programme. Ahmedabad's 600-year-old history which is responding rapidly to modernity and globalization, that the city was chosen by Mahatma Gandhi as the centre of his political campaigns and social experiments, its long-standing tradition of business and entrepreneurship and rich architecture will all become points to ponder on for participants. "Ahmedabad city will provide to the participants an unhurried view of a city that has something of the old as it embraces the new, a simultaneous view of the regional and the national," said Kothari.