

IIT-Gn fully engineered to exercise franchise

Bharat Yagnik | TNN

Ahmedabad: In a first, IIT, Gandhinagar (IIT-Gn) has set the ball rolling to ensure that each of its students, staff, and faculty participates in one of the biggest democratic events — the forthcoming state assembly elections.

Led by a group of faculties including Prof Shivakumar Jolad, Prof Mona Mehta, and Prof Sudhanshu Sharma, IIT-Gn has started a voters' registration drive on the campus. The faculties are guiding people on the campus on how to register with the collector's office so that their names are entered on the voters' list and they are able to exercise their franchise. The institute has a strength of 700-odd students and employees.

To facilitate the process registering their names in the electoral rolls, IIT-Gn has placed several copies of Forms 6, 7 and 8 in the institute's library. Anyone from the campus can procure these forms and return the completed forms to the library. The faculties will submit all the forms to electoral officers in October. The institute will also host talk sessions by electoral officers.



“I was an NRI for several years and despite being an Indian citizen I could neither vote in India nor in the country where I resided,” said Prof Jolad, who has also been actively involved in petitioning the government for granting absentee voting rights for migrants. “I strongly believe that every citizen of India who is eligible to vote has the right to participate in the democratic process through voting, irrespective of where he or she physically lives or works.”

Jolad said that a large chunk of the population in the country consisted of migrants who have shifted base for employment or education. “Even though voting is the crux of a democratic form of government, most of these migrants are missing out on voting,” he said. “While none of them would take the trouble of going all the way back to their states to just cast their votes, most of them are unaware that they can register for voting in the states where they live and cast their votes there.”

A staff member at IIT-Gn Gaurav Shukla said, “It is a great opportunity to exercise my right to vote and I am looking forward to registering myself and taking part in voting.”