



Stage set for IIT-Gandhinagar's first academic year to begin today

BASHIR PATHAN Posted: Aug 02, 2008 at 0056 hrs

Gandhinagar, August 1 The first academic year at the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IIT-G) will be formally launched on Saturday when Professor Ashok Misra, the Director of IIT-Bombay, will deliver a welcome address to the first batch of engineering students.

He will be accompanied by senior faculty of IIT-Bombay, which includes Professors A K Singh and S Biswas, who will also address the students.

The launch function will be held at the Government Engineering College in Chandkheda, where a temporary campus has been set up. Representatives of some of the leading industrial houses and senior government officials, including state Education Secretary Anita Karwal, Revenue Secretary P Panneervel and Director (Technical Education) Manish Bhardwaj, will be present on the occasion.

The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has already sanctioned the setting up of IIT-Gandhinagar and accorded it the status of a "Mentoring Institution". The government has already earmarked 450 acres of land near Palaj village in Gandhinagar district for establishing a full-fledged permanent campus.

Prof U A Yagnik, who teaches physics at IIT-Bombay, has been brought to IIT-G on deputation and has been appointed the Dean of Student Affairs and Academic Programme.

He said as many as 103 students from different parts of the country were admitted in the first batch at IIT-Gandhinagar for the mechanical, electrical and chemical engineering courses. "In the next academic year, we propose to introduce B. Tech courses in civil and computer sciences too," he said.

He added: "We are in the process of recruiting faculty for IIT-G. Till this process is over, the IIT-Bombay faculty, which includes seven professors and five research assistants will be requisitioned for IIT-G. The Government Engineering College in Chandkheda will provide the facility of engineering drawing laboratory."

The Gujarat Government has also spent Rs 70 lakh for upgrading the infrastructure of the college to make it conducive to the IIT benchmark.

"We have also recruited two lab assistants for as many other labs set up for IIT-G students," said Prof. Yagnik.

He said several corporate houses in Gujarat were keen to set up their chairs for each of the faculty at the institute. The state Government has already requested the leading industrial houses like Adanis, Reliance and Suzlon to set up their chairs at IIT-G.

Prof. Yagnik added that till the institute gets its own hostel and mess facilities, a residential building owned by the Adani Group and located across the road in Chandkheda has been handed over to the institute, free of charge. It has 29 flats, each accommodating four students.

He further said that work on the proposed permanent IIT-G campus at the new site will begin as soon as the government hands over the possession of the plot to the institute. IIT-G will then get the land registered as an educational society under the Societies Registration Act. Once it is done, the land will be handed over to IIT-Gandhinagar, he said.

The Central Government's "site selection committee" headed by Union Human Resource Development Ministry's Additional Secretary Ashok Thakur is scheduled to inspect the new site for the proposed IIT's permanent campus on August 7, a senior government official said. He said after the committee gives its nod, the issue will go to the state Cabinet for final approval of the site.