

# Smriti sets stone rolling to boost education level

GIAN, launched by Union HRD minister Smriti Irani at IIT Gandhinagar, to help students and experts share knowledge on a single platform

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**A**iming to boost the quality of India's higher education institutes, Union Minister of Human Resource Development Smriti Irani launched an MHRD scheme titled Global Initiative of Academic Network (GIAN) at Indian Institute of Technology in Gandhinagar on Monday. This initiative will provide students a single platform to share and explore knowledge with internationally renowned experts. State education minister Bhupendrasinh Chudasma informed, Irani had also approved a new Indian Institute of Information Technology at Surat.

Elaborating about the scheme, Irani said, "GIAN is not limited to IITs and national institutes only. It will cater to students in many of the government institutes who hardly get any opportunity to meet, interact and learn from international faculty."

GIAN was conceived at a 'retreat' of IITs, also attended by Irani, in 2014. It was decided that institutes of higher education will host guest lectures by



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internationally and nationally renowned experts and even evolve them into the comprehensive Faculty Development Programme.

MHRD has allocated Rs 35 crore for GIAN for the current financial year. Under the scheme, 500 international faculty will be engaged this year and 1,000 in subsequent years to offer short courses and programmes throughout India. Nearly 200 Indian institutes will host GIAN courses this year. The number will grow to 500 institutes in the following years.

The long term goals of GIAN include sharing of academic credits, development of a repos-

itory of learning materials, availability of content through a National Digital Library, catalysing interaction between faculty and students from across the country and abroad, and forging academic and research collaborations across the world.

"Smriti is trying her best to realise Narendra Modi's dreams of making Gujarat a leading education hub. Now, after becoming Prime Minister, Modi is trying to bring India's education level at par with international ones. He has proved that the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (meaning 'the world is one family') can be realised," Chudasma added.