

Ramanujan Grant to 3 city profs for their pioneering research

Each professor will receive a fellowship of Rs85,000 per month

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Three professors from the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IIT-G) have been awarded with the prestigious Ramanujan Fellowship by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.

Professor Saumyakanti Khatua and professor Arnab Dutta from the Department of Chemistry along with professor Virupakshi Soppina of Biological Engineering have been selected for the award.

Each of these professors would receive a research grant worth Rs7 lakh per annum, in addition to a monthly fellowship of Rs85,000, for the five-year fellowship.

According to information provided by IIT-Gn officials, professor Soppina is pursuing his research in molecular motors, would form a basis for coming up with cures of neuro-degenerative diseases. Molecular motors essentially help in the movement of living organisms.

On the other hand, the study pursued by professor Dutta will help in devising mechanisms for optimal utilisation of environment-friendly renewable energy resources in near future. Professor Dutta said, "For proper utilisation of the renewable energy resources, we need to efficiently store these intermittent energy resources and properly extract that stored energy for future usage."

"Activation of Hydrogen and Oxygen can be employed for this energy transformation process but this requires an electro catalyst to facilitate their transformations. We are developing these necessary enzyme-inspired artificial electro catalysts in our lab," he added. The third faculty, professor Khatua, who received the exalted fellowship, is in the process of synthesis and applications of gold nanoparticles and their assemblies. Gold nanoparticles, when exposed to visible light in a confined environment would help create an electric field.