

Latest fellowship sends IITGn students on A 6-STATE TRIP

The Explorers Fellowship is the first of its kind offered by any IIT in country

25 students to explore 6 Indian states in 6 weeks, by travelling in govt buses & sleeper class trains

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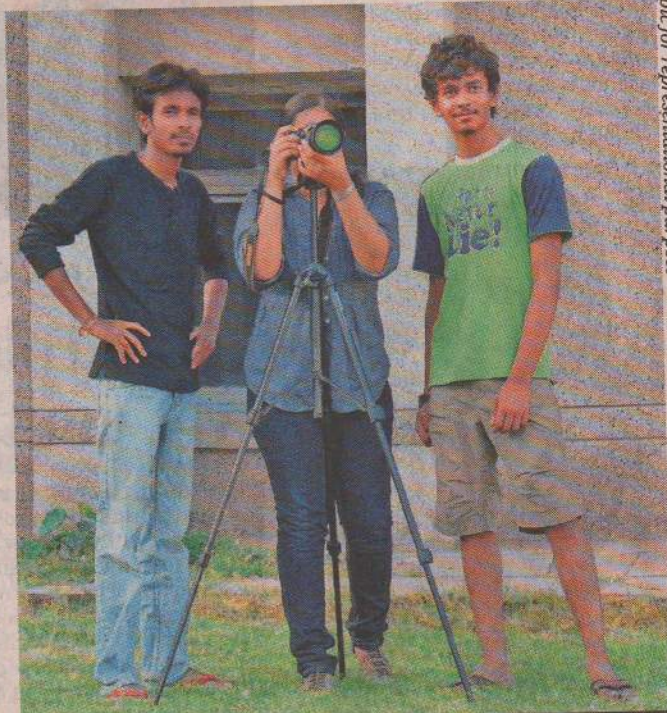
As many as 25 students of the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, are ready with their backpacks to set off on a journey to explore six Indian states in six weeks. Thanks to IITGN, which has introduced an 'Explorers Fellowship', first of its kind by any IIT in the country. Interestingly, the fellowship is not just about exploring India and having a tourist experience. The fellows will roam and get lost, walk off the worn path, only to find themselves in unexpected adventures. They will have to travel by sleeper class trains, government buses and stay in dharamsalas or youth hostels.

"India is a vast country with diverse cultures and practices. The Explorers Fellowship aims to expose our students to India's diversity so that they can understand the country's many traditions and ground realities, learn from them and become better decision makers," said Professor Sudhir K Jain, Director, IITGn.

He further added, "The intention behind introducing the fellowship was to introduce students to cultures, people and areas of India, with which they are not familiar. Fellows will make powerful connections and find opportunities to foster dialogue with people from different walks of life, who will share who they are, what they do and what matters to them."

The students will have to travel in a team of two or three and each student will be given Rs45,000 for their journey. The journey will spark insight, curiosity, reflection, compassion and commitment. "At times, they will realise their great strengths, while at other time they will be confronted with sheer humility. In six weeks, the fellows will explore a small chunk of the world and a large chunk of themselves, said Jain.

Lavdeep Kaur (19), who hails from Rajasthan, is one of the stu-



pic for representational purpose

GUIDELINES GIVEN TO STUDENTS

- Fellows must travel in a team of two or three
- Explore six or more states during May-July (summer break)
- Must travel for at least six weeks
- Fellows must travel via sleeper class trains and state government buses
- Must stay in homestays, dharamsalas, youth hostels
- Travel around a theme - Cuisines, folklore, oral history, indigenous technology

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dents who has been selected for the fellowship. She says, "I know this fellowship will be very challenging, keeping in mind the summer heat. But since I want to start an NGO in the near future, this is the kind of an opportunity where I will get to meet people at the grassroots and understand their problems."

Another third year student of

electrical engineering, Prashant Kumar, who hails from Bihar, said, "The main aim of this fellowship is to increase the connect of students with society. While exploring India, students will come to know about different aspects of societies and issues that can later be addressed with available resources and technology."

The theme of Prashant's team is 'festivals and local rituals'. He says, "We will try to understand local beliefs, major festivals, how they arrived in a specific society, change happening down the years, etc." His team will consist of two other students.



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PRASHANT KUMAR, III yr student, IITGn

Talking about the selection process, officials said, "The students were asked to submit a write-up on their travel plans, including goals, objectives, timeline, budget and action plan for activities. Post the travel, the student will report on his or her experiences and make a presentation to the IITGn community."