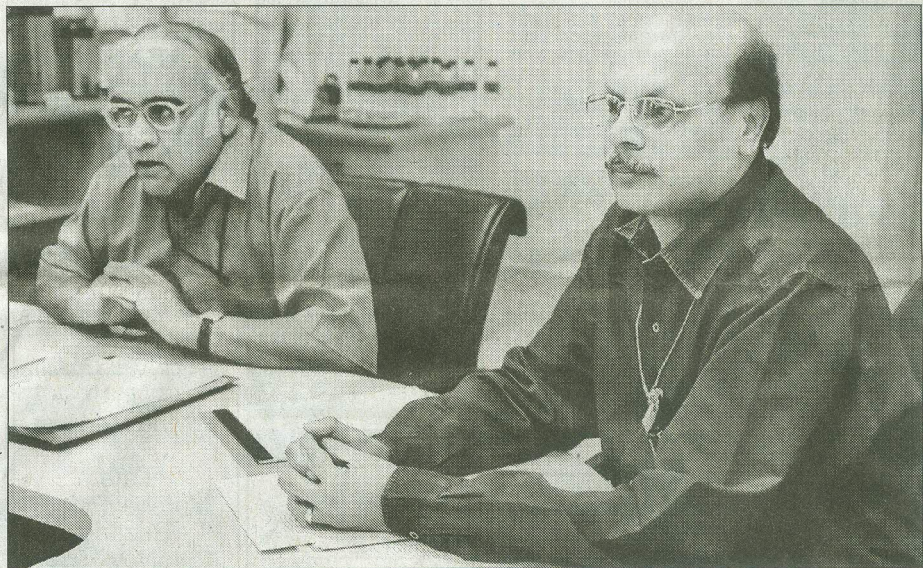


IISERs to begin academic sessions on August 16

Chandigarh being considered for 3rd institute



S. Shivram (left), director, National Chemical Laboratory, with Dr Krishna N. Ganesh, who was appointed director of the newly-established Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, at a press conference in Pune on Friday

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pune: The much-anticipated Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) in Pune and Kolkata are all set to simultaneously commence their academic sessions from August 16.

The autonomous degree-granting and fully residential institutes, created by the Ministry of Human Resource Development for studies in natural sciences, are on a par with the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Managements (IIMs). The ministry has set aside Rs 500 crore for the IISERs.

In Pune, the IISER will start operating from a 10,000 sq-ft. makeshift campus made available by the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) at its Innovation Park. In 2007, it will shift to a campus of its own, which will be constructed on 40.5 hectares near NCL.

K.N. Ganesh, the newly-appointed director of IISER, Pune, told reporters that the institute would primarily offer a five-year integrated masters programme in science (MS) and Ph.D. studies. This would provide the much-needed research component found lacking in most under-graduate colleges across the country.

With science increasingly becoming futuristic and interdisciplinary, the focus will be on integrating different concepts and experiments through a borderless, seamless curriculum. "IISERs will be for sciences, what

the IITs are for engineering," said Ganesh. The institute will also be networking for teaching and research with existing academic and research labs in Pune like the University of Pune, NCL, IUCAA, NCRA etc.

While admissions this year are being effected on the basis of the IIT-Joint Entrance Exam (IIT-JEE), Ganesh said that the IISERs would eventually come up with an entrance exam of their own.

Following a counselling session held in Kolkata on July 16, Ganesh said that 83 students have been offered seats at IISER, Pune, and another 79 at IISER, Kolkata. Not all, however, are expected to take up the offer. The makeshift campus was geared for 70 students.

Besides, 20 seats from Pune and Kolkata would go to brilliant science students selected through various national and international science Olympiad meets under the Kishore Vaidnyanik Yojana. In fact, 19 such students have been called for a counselling round on July 23, Ganesh said.

The government will also be funding stipends at Rs 3,000 per student per month to enable them pay back the fees at Rs 1,000 per month and boarding charges, Ganesh said.

Meanwhile, ex-officio director of IISER, Pune and NCL chief S. Sivaram told reporters that Chandigarh may get the third IISER of the country. "The ministry is currently engaged in examining the feasibility for Chandigarh and details are likely to be worked out subsequently," he said.

Sachin and Gade