

500 candidates for IISER admissions

Maiden batch may consist of creme de la creme

By Siddhartha D. Kashyap/TNN

Pune: Five hundred youngsters who scored good marks at the IIT-JEE 2006 exams have been short-listed for pre-admission procedures at the newly-created Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), in Pune and Kolkata.

These students have been invited for interviews and counselling on July 16 by the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, for admission to IISER.

S. Sivaram, director of National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), who is also director of the Pune-based IISER, told TOI that for the first batch 120 students will be selected for both the institutes for courses commencing on August 1.

While the curriculum for the integrated five-year M.Sc. programme has been designed by a team of eminent scientists headed by C.N.R. Rao, the institute will offer a unique inter-disciplinary approach to basic science at the under-graduate level.

"We have set up all the required infrastructure and facilities," Sivaram said, adding that the institute would gradually shift to its own campus on a 25-hectare plot given by the NCL.

Due to shortage of time, admissions for the first batch will be done on the basis of the qualifying marks for the joint entrance exams of the IITs; but from next year, IISER will have its own evaluation system, including entrance and aptitude tests, Sivaram said.

Teachers drawn from the IITs, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and other universities of excellence will be hired as full-time core faculty. "The selected experts will stay on the campus for a full semester," Sivaram said. IISER will also have about 15 adjunct teachers.

"These people — somebody like astro-physicist Jayant Narlikar — will come and deliver lectures in their areas of interest, but will not stay on the campus," Sivaram said. Apart from the core disciplines of biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and earth sciences, the adjunct faculty will try to generate interest in areas like astronomy, nano science, evolution, genetics and population.

The IISERs, being set up with an investment of Rs 500 crore each, is aimed at promoting higher studies and research in basic science. The institutes will also contribute to the creation of a highly competent manpower that would be a major catalyst for technological human resource revolution.

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