

IISER sans hostel for three years

But Plans Afoot To Build A Full-Fledged Campus

Swati Shinde | TNN

Pune: The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune — one of the premiere science research institutes in the country — badly needs a hostel for its pupils. Nearly 100 students from across the country will descend on the city by the end of the month to pursue an integrated masters programme (MS) from the science institute, but they don't have a place to stay.

The institute was set up after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh okayed the C.N. Rao-headed committee's charter, (Scientific Advisory Committee to the Prime Minister) to put them in place by August 2006. Even as IISER enters the third year, it is increasingly finding it difficult to provide hostel accommodation because nobody is willing to build one.

"Despite approaching several builders and issuing tenders we got a cold response," said Basavaraj Swamy, registrar of IISER, Pune. They just received one or two responses, nevertheless even they failed to work out.

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Apparently, the first batch of students has been accommodated in a building provided by the National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), adjacent to the NCL guest house. The second batch was accommodated in the nearby area in Someshwar building in service apartments. Having experienced accommodation issues in the first two years, the IISER authorities started making prior arrangements for the third batch a year ago. However, they haven't quite succeeded.

"About 110 students have been offered admission this year by the Joint Admission Committee of IISERs, of which 62 have joined so far. We are presently negotiating with a few builders in the surrounding so that we can accommodate the new batch," Swamy informed.

Owing to these teething troubles which lasted for over three years though, IISER, Pune, has plans to construct a full-fledged campus soon, which will include a hostel. "A new campus is being constructed on 98 acres of land between Pashan and Baner and the work shall start next month. The land has been given to us by NCL as per the MOU signed between Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), NCL and IISER. There is no purchase involved. We are in the process of finalisation of architect for building," Swamy informed.

IISER, Pune plans to accommodate 240 students in the new hostel, which will have all facilities. While the masters programme is a five-year course, the IISER also offers courses in doctorate of philosophy programmes, research studies and various fellowships.

The Government of India established two IISERs in 2006, the other one functioning in Kolkata while the third IISER was established last year in Mohali. Two more IISERs have started functioning from this year at Bhopal and Thiruvananthapuram.