

IISER | Institute to operate from NCL's Innovation Park, permanent campus in 15 months

From August 16, IIT of science to begin classes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

JULY 21

A DAY after the Independence Day, when nearly 70 students walk into the national Chemical Laboratory campus on August 16, it will be a new dawn for science education in the country. For, the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) — touted as the IIT of science education — will start its academic session.

To begin with, it will be based at the NCL's Innovation Park and classes and labs will be held here till the institute shifts to a permanent campus. IISER in Pune and Kolkata was formed on the recommendations of the CNR Rao-led Scientific Advisory Committee to the Prime Minister. On October 4, 2005, *Pune Newslines* had reported

THE IISERs

IISERs are a new experiment in the science education field as they will have an inter-disciplinary approach. The institute will offer an integrated five-year Master of Science degree as well as PhD programmes. The financial outlay for each of the IISERs is Rs 500 crore for a period of five years. For the first two-and-a-half years, the students will be taught various topics related to mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology. Stress will be on research and hands-on experience in various areas of science. Student to faculty ratio will be 10:1. After building a firm base in the subjects, the students (with counselling) will be able to choose from a wide array of subjects for specialisation. More information is available on www.iiserpune.ac.in



The Innovation Park will house IISER. (Inset) IISER director K N Ganesh. Pavan Khengre

about the scope and functioning of the institute.

"The institute is at an embryonic stage and NCL will provide support in the form of administration, finance, engineering services as well as infrastructure," IISER project director and NCL chief S Sivaram said.

The 100-acre permanent campus that will come up in the NCL premises itself, will be ready in 15 months. "The academic building of IISER, with more than 30,000 sq ft of built-up area will be ready in the next 15 months. A 100-room hostel, with twin accommodation will also be built on the campus," eminent scientist and the first director of IISER, Pune, K N Ganesh said.

The first batch of students is being drawn from the extended IIT-Joint Entrance Examination list. "There was a counselling session at the IIT-Kharagpur extension centre in Kolkata, which was attended by 180 students," Ganesh said.

Call letters have been sent out to 83 students, while 10

seats (five each) have been reserved for Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojna scholarship holders and winners of Olympiads in mathematics, physics, biology and chemistry. The IISER students will receive Rs 3,000 as fellowship per month.

"We have sent out more call letters than our capacity because many selected students might not turn up as they have taken admission in other institutes," Ganesh explained. IISER, Kolkata has sent out call letters to 79 students.

In the first year of its existence, a team of seven in-house faculty members, who have a background in research and teaching will guide the students at IISER. Besides, a list of eight adjunct faculty members, comprising prominent scientists, have also been finalised.

At full capacity, IISER, Pune will have close to 3,000 students, who will be guided by 200 faculty members.