

IIT-GN and CIT to develop early earthquake warning system

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AHMEDABAD: Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IIT-GN) have undertaken a project to develop a 'slight early' earthquake warning system.

The institute has teamed up with California Institute of Technology (CIT), Pasadena, USA, to develop a system having dense network of low-cost motion sensors capable of sensing earthquake's early seismic activity.

"The goal of our project is to put in place a network of small devices called accelerometers near an active fault line which can pick up earth vibrations. They can be standalone devices transmitting data to a central server," Prof Girish Singhal, project incharge at IIT-GN said.

"A mesh of very low-cost sensors in that area shall be able to pick up velocity of shock waves, issuing slight early alerts of an earthquake," Singhal claimed.

The project is expected to be of immense help to first responders during a calamity.

According to estimate of experts, an earthquake in Bhuj will take few minutes to reach Ahmedabad and an early warning system in place could help in issuing alerts to shut down big machines here, which are potential major source of secondary losses in the event of any seismic activity.

Singhal, along with two final year B.Tech students, is working on this project at IIT-GN.

"One of the students, Prathmesh Juvatkar, visited CIT as part of this project on building a community seismic network. He has brought four sensors along with him for this pilot project," Singhal said.