



‘Research by IIT-Gandhinagar faculty to be under focus’

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Ahmedabad : * **As the chairman of IIT-Gandhinagar, what are the things on your priority list?**

The fundamental issue we are focusing on is research. The entire emphasis is on the quality of research by the faculty. We are hiring faculty who have done their PhDs in information and communication technology (ICT) research and more specifically, engineering research. Going further, we may tie up with foreign universities.

* **You have been on several central committees on higher education. Now that the Higher Education Bill — which allows the entry of foreign universities in India — has been passed, how do you think it will help the education system?**

I am a firm believer in providing a competitive environment. The Foreign Universities Bill will do to the country what liberalisation efforts did to trade and economy in 1991. It will create competition among the education providers, which will help improve the quality of higher education.

* **On the recommendations by your committee on pollution control in India, the government has decided to have Bharat Stage III emission norms for two-wheelers from April 2010. How do you look at this development?**

It's a good development. It will help the environment as well as energy conservation in India.

* **How are the corporate groups looking at energy conservation and environment? Are they uniform in their policies or doing things in bits and pieces?**

I am on the board of various companies like Reliance Industries, Thermax and Tata Motors. It seems they are taking energy and environment issues seriously and it has become an integral part of their policy. Reliance is working on bio-fuels, Thermax on solar and renewable energy, and Tata Motors on energy efficient vehicles. The awareness among the corporate groups is high and their policies are also directed towards energy conservation and environment.

* **What are the steps being taken by NIF as far as the marketing and licensing of technological innovation developed by the common people? They are finding it difficult to sell them?**

It's true. Marketing and selling of the innovations, which come to NIF, is difficult. But that is on the top of our agenda. In fact, we discussed about it in our NIF governing council body meeting yesterday. We are trying to have a fund of our own through which we can finance those innovations or technologies. We also need some more micro-venture funds to be a part of this. Talks with SIDBI are on for the same.

* **You are also heading the global research alliance, which includes combined knowledge and expertise from nine countries. What are the things that you are presently working on?**

At GRA, we are working on several issues and grand challenges the world is facing. This includes health, education and technology. We are working on a system, which can help the poor in different countries. We are coming up with technological innovations for the masses which are inclusive in nature.