

SATELLITE CAMPUS ON HOLD; IIT INDORE SET TO START PRELUDE CENTRE

ATUL GAUTAM
city.indore@fpj.co.in

Technical and fund related issues are resolved but now land has become a major hurdle before the much-talked IIT Indore's Satellite campus in Ujjain.

Putting the plan to start the satellite campus from session 2023-24 on hold till its gets 100 acres of land, IIT Indore has decided to open a prelude centre, as of now, in the ancient town from this week.

Union minister of education Dharmendra Pradhan is likely to visit Ujjain soon for inaugurating the prelude centre christened 'Centre for Experiential Learning in Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship (C-ELITE)'.

The C-ELITE will operate from a portion in Government Engineering College campus in Ujjain.

The institute has set up three laboratories for Astronomical Heritage, Tinkering and Laser Technology in the college.

While the state government officials say that the launch of C-ELITE will mark the commencement of the satellite campus in Ujjain, the institute authori-

The state government calls launch of the centre as commencement of satellite campus, the institute terms it 'independent entity'. Read full story for the catch



ties disagree.

'This is an independent centre which will be started by IIT Indore. It is not a part of IIT Indore's satellite campus project. The satellite campus will be made operational when we get land for opening the same. However, the C-ELITE will be merged with the satellite campus when it will open,' IIT Indore PRO Dr Sunil Kumar said. While the claims are not in the same line, there is a catch.

Though the IIT Indore is dubbing C-ELITE as 'an independent centre', it is being set up with 50 per cent fund sharing scheme between the state government and the institute.

While 50 per cent grant

will be given by the state government, the remaining share will be part of Central grant under 'Support to IITs' scheme.

'The Ministry of Education has approved satellite campus named as Deep-Tech Research and Discovery Campus (DRDC) of IIT Indore at Ujjain on the basis 50 per cent funding scheme. If C-ELITE is being set up under 50 per cent funding scheme, how can it be a separate centre,' a senior state government officer who is associated with the project on condition of anonymity said.

IIT Indore wants land in one piece!

IIT Indore requires 100 acres of land for setting up

BLOW BY BLOW ACCOUNT OF SATELLITE CAMPUS PROJECT

- The then higher education minister Mohan Yadav, currently the Chief Minister, in 2021 had announced that IIT Indore is going to open its satellite campus in Ujjain from session 2022-23.
- The institute was debt-ridden so it informed the state government that it has huge loans to repay. The institute told that to the state government and it could not take further loans to start a huge project like satellite campus in 2022.
- The state government then had offered to give 50 per cent of project cost if it also offers courses which can benefit the youth of the state. IIT Indore had accepted the offer and a proposal was sent to the Union Ministry of Education for IIT Indore's satellite campus in Ujjain in 2023.
- The Union Ministry gave approval to the project about a month ago.
- However, the land issue has cropped up now

satellite campus in Ujjain. IIT Indore officials, including director Prof Suhas Joshi, inspected the land, the state government has offered to the institute, for the satellite campus but it is not in one piece. One private engineering college and some private plots divide the land. In addition, the land consists of several thousands of trees which can't be chopped off without taking permission from the forest department. So, the institute authorities are seeking some other land which is in one piece with lesser number of trees.

The wait is over

Finally, IIT Indore is starting its operations from Ujjain. Call it start of satellite campus or prelude centre but the elite institute is finally starting its facility in the ancient town. The centre will do cutting edge research and do innovations and discoveries which will lead to the growth of not only the city, the state but also the country.

— **DR RAJIV DEOT,**
Nodal officer (state govt), IIT
Indore satellite campus