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New BESU V-C to pitch for Central status

Shiv Sahay Singh Posted: Feb 26, 2009 at 0308 hrs

Kolkata Ajoy Kumar Ray, who was appointed the new Vice-Chancellor of the Bengal Engineering and Science University (BESU) on Wednesday, said his first priority would be to pitch for Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IEST) status for the institute and expressed hope he would be able to do so soon.

Ray, who takes over in the wake of unrest on the campus, said any difference of opinion within students and the teaching and administrative staff has to be taken care of. "There should be no negative feelings among the students and the faculty and if they can remain united, the university has the potential to be developed like an IIT," said Ray.

The 55-year-old vice-chancellor who has about 29 years of experience in teaching and research in electronics and applied area intended to boost research activities on the campus. "There are some departments like electrical engineering and metallurgy & material science that are doing good work, but the research atmosphere on the campus has to be revived," he said.

Ray, who at present is heading the School of Medical Science and Technology, a school for interdisciplinary research at IIT Kharagpur, aims to establish two hubs in medical science and technology research in the city with the BESU being its nodal centre. "The next era will be of medical science and its amalgamation with technology. If as a country we have to progress beyond information technology, it is going to be the technology," said Ray.

Ray is looking forward to start dual-degree B Tech programmes at the university, which has got considerable success at the IITs. "In case we require any help, we can always bank on IIT Kharagpur, the institution I have been associated with," he said.

On the insistence by the faculty members that he reside on the campus, Ray said, "Staying on the campus at night is very important. I might have some health problems but since I have been given the responsibility, I will try to do as much as possible."

The teaching community at the university welcomed the change of guard.

Buddha writes to Centre for BESU status

Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee has asked the Human Resource and Development Minister Arjun Singh to reconsider the upgradation of Bengal Engineering and Science University (BESU) as a Central university. In a letter sent on Wednesday, Bhattacharjee said the ministry, taking note of media reports about the disturbance on the BESU campus, has denied the status of Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IEST) to the university. But upgradation of an institute with a long tradition and history should not have been delayed because of some reports in a section of the press, the letter pointed out. Last week the HRD ministry had sent a letter to the BESU Chancellor, Governor Gopalkrishan Gandhi, saying that the institute couldn't be accorded the IEST status due to the frequent incidents of violence on the campus. In the letter, the chief minister has urged the ministry to review its decision. — ENS