

Amit Prashant appointed as IITGn interim Director

PICS: ANCELA JAMINDAR

Director Sudhir Jain completed his 10-year stint on Sunday; interim Director to take charge on July 4 as he is travelling abroad

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Amit Prashant, Dean, Research and Development, at the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGn) has been finalised as the interim Director of the premier institute, though a formal announcement is yet to be made. He will replace Sudhir Jain, who

finished his 10-year term as Director on Sunday.

As per official sources at the institute, the search committee to appoint a new Director has not yet zeroed in on Sudhir Jain's successor and so Amit Prashant has been appointed as interim director.



Updates

'IN 2008, I HAD IDEAS. IN 2019, MOST HAVE TURNED INTO REALITY'

Q What is it that you are happy achieving as Director?

Everything's unfinished. There is no upper limit to quality. The faculty has definitely been much better than how it was five years ago and before that, but we still need better faculty and staff. It is a continuous process. In the family of IITs, IITGn is known for its innovations, curriculum and governance. IITGn has done exceptionally well in staff management, campus construction and so on.

Q. What is your vision for next 10 years, for IITGn?

IITGn has taken a position that we are here for long term and not here for short term. We did not have Computer Science for eight years because it was difficult finding quality faculty for the course. Several students would not come due to this reason and our opening and closing rank suffered due to that. The focus should remain on maintaining the values we have created: transparency, merit-based selection and interdisciplinary approach. We have tried to build values and those are becoming assets.

Q. What has been your contribution in bringing IITGn to where it is today?

My main contribution has been to collect good people and encourage them. We built the most beautiful campus in a short time. Anybody who walks in the campus is amazed by the building, horticulture.

Q. What change do you see

in yourself after 10-year stint?

When I was interviewed in 2008, I had taken the print out of my slides which had everything I had thought of for the institute. I still have those slides in my drawer. I had wanted to do everything as per my slides and people at IITGn as a team have helped me achieve that. In 2008, those were ideas and in 2019 many of the ideas have become a reality. In these 10 years I have gained the experience on what works and what does not work. I had dreams in my eyes in 2008 and in 2019 I am going out with wisdom on what it takes to get those

ideas turn into reality.

Q. Your plans for future?

In building up the institute, I could not dedicate enough time to my family. So, I will be taking some time off to give to my family and relatives.

Q. What do you have to say about the new interim Director whom you know since your IIT Kanpur days?

He is the senior most dean in IITGn and he has the longest administrative experience. He is the right candidate.

INTERVIEW
SUDHIR JAIN
OUTGOING DIRECTOR



INTERVIEW
AMIT PRASHANT
INTERIM DIRECTOR



Q. How are you planning to use your administrative and educational experience?

IITGn's newly-appointed interim Director and Dean of Research and Development Amit Prashant has been associated with IITGn since 2010. He was an Associate Professor at the institute from 2010 to 2015 and then a Professor since November 2015 till present. From 2005 to 2010, he was an Assistant Professor at IIT Kanpur. He is an alumnus of IIT Roorkee and did his PhD from University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA.

Mirror talks to him about his vision for the institute. Excerpts from the interview:

Q. Your first reaction to your appointment.

It came as a little surprise. It is good to know that the ministry and the institute have confidence in me. The team that I worked with is wonderful. I have been associated with IITGn from its infancy. When we started out, it was a small institute and now things are already in place.

Q. Now that you are at the helm, what is your vision for IITGn?

We all have a shared vision for the institute since past seven-eight years. We as a team would march ahead in the same direction. It is not something I would be doing individually but as a team and in an excellent way. I believe that whatever you do, do it perfectly and in a consistent manner which will lead to fruitful results.

Q. What will be your focus areas?

Faculty and students both will remain the focus. Faculty has been our focus since the beginning and it will continue. About the curriculum, it is an ever-evolving process. We have improved with time in terms of curriculum with a lot of innovation

and we will continue with experimentation to bring the best for the students. People make the institute. It is very important to have right kind of people and to help them grow which will lead to the growth of the institute as well.

I will be officially taking charge tomorrow morning but since I am not in India, for four days someone will handle the charge. I will be back on July 4.

Since last eight years I have been working with my colleagues and whenever I needed help they have always come forward. Colleagues have turned good friends and we work like family.

Q. What legacy of the outgoing director would you take forward?

All of it. All those things that have taken the institute higher and all those things that I was part of have already been embedded in me. What I have learnt is to be ready to change any time. Be ready to take up new opportunities, keep updating and accept the opportunities with open arms.

