

Getting rural students industry-ready

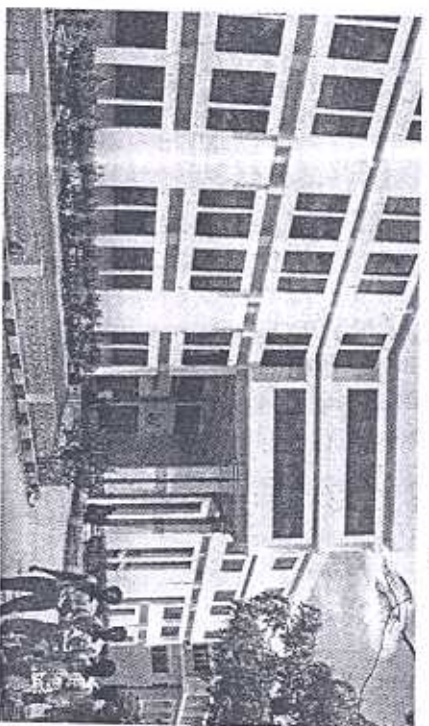
The Technology, Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC)-Centre of Relevance and Excellence (CORE) at the Shanmuga Arts Science Technology and Research Academy (SASTRA) University, Thanjavur, is meeting with success in transforming rural students into trained manpower suiting industry requirements.

The Rs. 20-crore facility, a brain-child of President Abdul Kalam, was established in 2000 by the Department of Science and Technology as a Centre for Excellence in a specific area of technology relevant to Indian industry. The contributions made by the Government and industries was Rs. 4 crore and 3 crore respectively. The institution bore the rest of the expenditure.

The idea of such creating world-class facilities in select institutions other than IITs was in keeping with the President Kalam's vision to make India an economic super-power by 2020.

Industries could benefit a lot from the TIFAC-CORE that specialises in Advanced Computing and Information Processing, according to K.S. Chandrasekar, chairman of the New Delhi-based Reach Monitoring Committee (RMC) that reviewed the performance of the facility recently. Acknowledging the efforts taken by the vice-chancellor R. Sethuraman for creating the facility into a platform for an interface amongst industry, institute and Government over the past seven years, Mr. Chandrasekar said that apart from ensuring academic excellence, the facility utilises Information Technology to undertake socially relevant work and improve the quality of life of rural public.

The Centre conducted the very first International Conference in Nanocomputing in 2001. It is now working with various industry partners such as ECIL, Nanyang Technological University, INTEL, TCS and Sun Microsystems.



STATE-OF-THE-ART: A view of TIFAC-CORE building on SASTRA University campus at Vallam in Thanjavur district. PHOTO: M. SRINATH

The RMC team that reviewed the performance of the facility at the institution comprised Neeraj Saxena, coordinator, Mission Reach, TIFAC, Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi, Deepak

Bhatnagar, senior adviser and scientist G, TIFAC, and Munde Agarwal from IIT, said Ushadevi, coordinator, TIFAC-CORE, SASTRA.

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