

100 profs line up for IIT-H director's post

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Hyderabad: Nearly 100 senior professors and ex-directors of IITs from across the country are said to have applied for the director's post at IIT, Hyderabad. At least 60% of the applicants have roots in either Telangana or Andhra Pradesh and are teaching in other IITs, sources tracking the development told TOI. They added that the number of applicants is exceptionally high. Generally, 20 to 25 of the best professors apply for such posts. IIT-H was established in 2009 with U B Desai as director. His tenure ended in June. "One of the reasons for applying for the job is because I want to do something for the state I was born in," said one of the professors, who has applied for the top post. "Unlike the well-established IITs, at IIT-H, there is a scope to bring in changes, grow exponentially and bring it on a par with the older IITs," he said adding that at least three professors working at IIT, Madras, have applied for the post. Sources added that getting shortlisted by the search-cum-selection committee is a herculean task as they need three nominations from eminent people—academicians, industrialist, scientists among others, to be considered for the interview. However, a retired IIT professor, several of whose students have applied for the director's post, said that nominations play a crucial role. "I feel if a candidate thinks he can be a director of an institute of this stature, he should not have a problem in getting nominations," said the professor, who retired in 1996. "Not just the ones who have connection with Telugu states, many others have applied for the post," he added. Explaining possible reasons for the high number of applications, he said: "This IIT is not very as established as Madras, Bombay and Kharagpur, but it is top among the newly established IITs." A former director of IIT Kanpur, said: "I would be really surprised if the number of applicants are more than 25 to 30," he said adding that hardly 10-12 will be short-listed at the end of the day and will be called in for interviews. He further added that the government should had ideally completed appointment of both Hyderabad and Gandhinagar director by February or extended the current director's tenure by six months. Incidentally, none of the professors from IIT-H have applied for the post. "There are not many senior professors here. So, hardly anyone applied for the post," said a professor. According to the sources from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the search-cum-selection committee is yet to send interview letters to short-listed candidates. The director is appointed by the IIT Council (headed by the HRD minister), with prior approval of the President.