

## Haryana to provide 100,000 technical education seats

Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda Friday announced to double the technical education seats in the state and open an education city 'modelled on Oxford'.

'From 33,000 seats in technical institutes three years ago, Haryana today boasts of 52,000 seats. Our aim is to take this number to 100,000 by 2010. I am determined to establish the state as India's show-window for technical education,' Hooda told reporters.

He said an additional 50 private engineering colleges will be added this year to the current 62 engineering colleges in the state.

With the largest of these additions likely to take place in districts like Faridabad, Sonapat, Panipat and Gurgaon, the state government's expansion of technical education infrastructure is expected to have a significant bearing on students in the national capital region, he said.

'The Haryana government has increased budgetary allocation to the education department from Rs.16 billion in 2004-05 to Rs.32 billion this year,' he added.

He said the state would open an education city named Rajiv Gandhi Education City in September this year at Kundli, around 25 km from Delhi.

'The education city is a big project and will be modelled on Oxford University. We have already earmarked 2,000 acres of land and will facilitate several branches of modern education in it,' Shiv Bhatia, media advisor to Hooda, told IANS.

Haryana government officials present at the press conference said that with every 10th soldier of the Indian Army from Haryana, the state was also a natural choice for setting up world-class educational facilities tailored for the armed forces.

The state government is planning to set up India's first Defence University in the state.

Authorities said Haryana would introduce a new initiative called State Teachers Eligibility Test (STET), a screening examination to select teachers, principals and headmasters for its schools.

All B.Ed graduates from Haryana and neighbouring states applying in state-run schools will now need to undergo the STET test. Over 100,000 people have applied for the test scheduled between July 20 and Aug 18.

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