

# UGC must treat BITS at par with IITs: Parrikar

## BITS' student intake to double by '19

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Rakesh Mundy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK



Union defence minister Manohar Parrikar with one of the medalists. Also present were the institute's chancellor Kumar Mangalam Birla (left) and vice-chancellor Souvik Bhattacharyya (right)

campus received their degrees at the ceremony. Of these, 405 students received bachelors' degrees, 169 were awarded dual degrees, 30 earned postgraduate degrees and 12 were awarded doctorate degrees.

Addressing the students, Birla said, "You are privileged because the education you have received is among the best our country offers... No more than 10% of those who complete high school have access to university or college educa-

tion in India... This privilege places an obligation on you to be aware of the responsibility you have to better the world around you and reach out to those who are not as fortunate as you have been. So think beyond yourself."

The institutes' vice-chancellor Souvik Bhattacharyya said the Goa campus has begun admitting international students and has taken in 18 students from other nations this year.

**Panaji:** BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus will double its student as well as faculty numbers in the next three to four years, under its expansion plans. There will be added focus on postgraduate and research programmes, BITS Goa campus director Sasikumar Punnekkat said on Sunday at the annual convocation.

The expansion is estimated to take place at a cost of ₹425 crore.

Vice-chancellor Souvik Bhattacharyya said, "Expansion of the Hyderabad and Goa campuses will happen in three phases from this year till 2019. A further 8.5 lakh sq ft of new construction will be added to the Goa campus taking the total built up area to 21.5 lakh sq ft. The student strength of Goa campus will be increased by 2,500 taking the total campus strength to 5,000 students by 2019."

The expansion plans include an academic area of 2 lakh sq ft, additional 3 lakh sq ft of student accommodation, and another 3.5 lakh sq ft of faculty housing.

**Panaji:** University Grants Commission (UGC) needs to treat BITS Pilani institutes differently from other technical colleges as they are institutes that have achieved excellence on par with Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), Union defence minister Manohar Parrikar said on Sunday at the annual convocation ceremony of the BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus.

"UGC lists BITS Pilani institutes along with other little-known technical colleges in the country. This needs to change and I will speak to the authorities to bring this change in the status accorded to BITS Pilani institutes. They are as good as the IITs. Maybe a person who has attended a technical institute can bring about this change," Parrikar said, delivering his address as the keynote speaker at the ceremony.

Chairman of Aditya Birla Group and chancellor of the institute, Kumar Mangalam Birla, was also present at the event.

This year, 785 students from BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa