

NIFT comes to Kannur

The National Institute of Fashion Technology has come to Kannur, the land of Looms and Lores. The Union Minister for Textiles, Shri Shankar Sinh Vaghela inaugurated the ninth NIFT centre and also laid the foundation stone for the proposed campus at Kannur on April 19, 2008. The opening of a NIFT Centre in Kannur district will help in the development of competencies and the skills of the weavers in critical areas essential for the traditional industry to compete with the modern, high class design centres and business entrepreneurs.

NIFT was started in 1986 under the Ministry of Textiles as a premier institute of design that moulds professionals for the Fashion industry. The Institute is a pioneer in envisioning and evolving fashion business education in the country through network of eight professionally managed Centres in New Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Gandhinagar, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai and Raebareli.

The Union Textiles Ministry has funded the total cost of Rs.58.64 crores for this project. NIFT would start two four-year B. Tech Degree courses in Textile Designing and Apparel Production from the academic year starting June 2008. The NIFT centre will temporarily function from the Institute of Handloom and Textile Technology campus at Thottada, near Kannur and the full fledged operations of the new centre would begin later at NIFT campus coming up on over 12 acres of land adjacent to the Kannur Engineering College in Mangattuparambu. KINFRA, the nodal agency for the NIFT, Kannur has promised the construction of the campus in two years during the inaugural function, which was also attended by Industries Minister Shri Elamaram Kareem.

According to NIFT Director-General Rajiv Takru, the new campus to be developed at Mangattuparamba would have all facilities available in other NIFT centres, such as fully equipped lecture rooms, design studios, laboratories, resource centres, activity centres and hostels. Like other centres, the Kannur centre will be a campus with creative architecture and spaciousness. In three years, the centre would be a full-fledged campus equipped to provide a common platform for fashion education, research and training.

The courses at NIFT are designed to equip and prepare students with best practices in apparel designing and manufacturing. The programmes emphasises practical and hands-on experience through state-of-the-art technology and focuses on development of creativity, originality and design application in apparel and home fashion industries. The multidisciplinary curriculum is equipped to deliver skill-oriented education. 30 students would be admitted to each course and candidates will be selected from a list of students who have already cleared the 2008 NIFT Entrance Test.

Initially the Centre was willing to establish only a satellite centre of NIFT in Kannur but later conceded to the demand of the State Government to have a full-fledged centre. With the opening up of this centre, Kerala is poised to capture a share in the globally growing fashion business as it will offer immense opportunities to acquire high-end jobs in the fashion industry.