

## IIT Inks Pact to Set up Ocean Observatory

Express News Service

**Bhubaneswar:** The Indian Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar (IITBBS) has signed an MoU with the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) for establishing the Bay of Bengal Coastal Ocean Observatory in Puri as a national facility.

The MoU was signed by Director of IITBBS Prof RV Raja Kumar and Secretary, MoES Dr Shailesh Naik.

The Ministry has approved a grant of ₹9.23 crore for starting development of the observatory while the Odisha Government had earlier agreed to provide land for the project.

The agreement is a significant step towards building an important research facility for understanding air-sea-land interactions, prediction of extreme events, marine seismology and sea-level rise due to climate change and ocean acidification.

The observatory - first of its kind in the country - can also be used to monitor ocean, earth and climatic parameters and systems.

International organisations such as Woodshole Oceanographic Institute,

USA, National Oceanographic Centre of University of Southampton are going to partner in this venture.

The data collected by the observatory will be useful in understanding the ocean, earth and climatic interactions which will further help

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in climatic predictions. Other MoES institutions such as Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad and National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai are involved in the project.

Raja Kumar said the IIT will work with the State Government in expediting land acquisition, procurement of equipment for the observatory and its early establishment.