



CRISIS: National Institute of Technology Surathkal campus

Water woes prompt NITK to modify its academic calendar

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Mangaluru: The National Institute of Technology Surathkal, which was grappling with water scarcity every summer, has made changes to its annual calendar of events, to ensure that nearly 80% of the students on its campus are sent home on vacation, by the first week of April.

The premier technical institute houses a total population of 8,000, including 6,000 students from BTech and postgraduate courses, as well as PhD scholars. It requires 12 lakh litres of water every day. According to officials, post-Covid, they have ensured that exams for BTech students are completed before April, and students are sent home on vacation. Only a few postgraduate students and PhD scholars remain on campus.

Basavaraju Manu, professor, department of civil engineering at NITK, and in charge of water supply, said that as per the earlier academic calendar, the BTech examination was held during the months of May and June.

"That resulted in students suffering due to acute water scarcity. To avoid inconvenience due to water

woes, the institution has modified the calendar in such a way that students are home by the first week of April. The ongoing semester exams will end this week, and students will return home for nearly two-months vacation," explained Manu, adding that water consumption has increased over the years, since admissions have increased, and new hostels have come up.

"A lot of water is required to run the laboratories on the campus," he said.

To address the water scarcity issue, the campus has installed a rainwater harvesting system across the institution. Manu said that the major water supply comes from the Mangaluru City Corporation; the campus also has two big wells, and four borewells to meet the requirement.

"Once 80% of the students leave the campus, the per-day water requirement drops to less than three lakh litres a day. Whenever there was scarcity, water tankers came to our rescue," he said.

A senior faculty member from the institution shared that in order to wind up the academic year at the earliest, classes were conducted on Saturday as well, which is otherwise a non-working day at the institution.