

Government targets 50,000 acres of land for industries by March 2010

KIADB has already acquired 25,000 acres of land

Special Correspondent

BANGALORE: The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) is to acquire 50,000 acres of land for industrial use by March 2010. M.R. Sreenivasa Murthy, Additional Chief Secretary to the Government, Finance Department, said the Government had already acquired 25,000 acres of land across the State.

Participating in a panel discussion organised by the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, Mr. Sreenivasa Murthy said the remaining land would be acquired "before the Global Investors Meet which begins in June 2010".

Admitting that the state of infrastructure and the persistent power shortage "were major concerns," Mr. Murthy said additional power capacity of about 7,000 MW would be available in four years.

He said the State's prudent management of its finances had resulted in Karnataka having the highest tax to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) ratios among all States. He pointed out that this was despite the State having among the lowest stamp duty rates. "It is evident that the compliance rates are among the best in Karnataka," he said.

Referring to the Goods and



TALKING COMMERCE: (From left) Syed Baderuddin, President of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce; M.R. Sreenivasa Murthy, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Finance; Anil Menon, President of Globalisation and Smart Connected Communities, Cisco Systems; Raj Rajkumar, Chairman of IACC; and M.V. Rajeev Gowda, Professor at IIMB, greeting each other at a discussion in Bangalore on Wednesday. — PHOTO: V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

Service Tax (GST), Mr. Murthy said the new tax is likely to be implemented in 2010-11. "Most States are in general agreement with the proposed GST," he said. He added that the GST would result in a better business environment.

Anchoring the discussion,

M.V. Rajeev Gowda, professor of Economics and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore, said, "The networks of international production are ignoring barriers erected by national governments." Referring to the recent agree-

ments on trade and investment signed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the U.S., he asked: "Do we need these agreements when the geography of global production is becoming increasingly multinational?"

It is the same old story on Day Five also

CAT glitches continue but two centres report plain sailing



WHEN WILL IT BEGIN?: Candidates appearing for the Common Admission Test wait outside the Vivekananda College in Bangalore on Wednesday.

— PHOTO: SAMPATH KUMAR G.P.

Deepa Kurup

BANGALORE: Amidst rumours of the computer-based Common Admission Test being cancelled to revert to the pencil-and-paper format, candidates turned up to write this entrance examination at eight test centres in the city for admission to the prestigious Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs).

Even on the fifth day of this 10-day process, the examination continued to be ridden with issues at the Garden City College Centre in Bangalore. While there were no formal cancellations on Thursday, students slated to appear for the examination in two of the 11 labs were unable to log in for more than two hours.

Exasperated, several left the hall with nothing to show for the fact that they had attended the session or any written assurance of a second chance. Many were students who had other college examinations.

Furious with authorities, Rakesh, a candidate, said while students in other labs in the city were logging out after completing their examination, the proctors were

still trying to "fix the problem". "It is completely ridiculous. People who had come to attend CAT had classes scheduled, examinations to write and office appointments to keep," he said. Moreover, the centre is on the city's outskirts, making it even more inconvenient.

The Garden City College centre has been facing such technical snags for five consecutive days. While the IIMs and Prometric have blamed it on a "virus", students and even coaching centre chains claim that a "virus issue" cannot last this long. "What is the big deal? Reformat the computer, disconnect it from the internet and retain only the operating system and the test package — that should be a simple deal!" snapped Ajay Arora of TIME, a coaching centre. TIME has also written to the IIMs seeking cancellation of CAT 2009.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, IIM-Ahmedabad Director Satish Deodhar said scrapping the CAT or reverting to non-digital format had not been considered as an option till date, as reported by a section of the media. "We are awaiting Prometric's feed-

back on today's performance, and will reschedule examinations of all the students who have been denied their chance so far," he added.

Exceptions

Though technical glitches and cancellations have marred this CAT season, it has been smooth sailing for a few colleges such as Sir M. Visvesvaraya Institute of Technology and R.V. College of Engineering. These centres have not seen a single cancellation and delays too have been kept to the minimum.

While the MVIT has fewer students opting for this far-flung centre, R.V.C.E has a sizeable number of students.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, MVIT Principal Indira said none of the 200 students appearing each day have encountered any technical issues. "This can be attributed to the fact that we tested the robustness of the system a week in advance and even used a strong anti-virus package," she said. Further, though the test organisers had sought to accommodate 300 to 400 candidates, the college had restricted it to 200, she added.