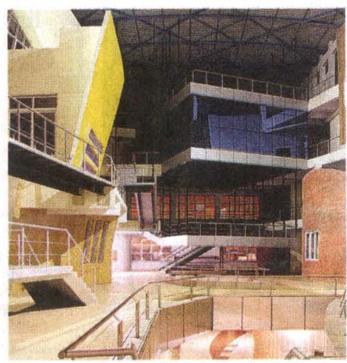## VIT wanted a structure that would create a vibrant and lively atmosphere for the students

College shines with campus design

■ The award-winning Vidyalankar Institute of Technology building at Wadala

Priya Ramakrishnan

At first glance, this glassy structure nestled amidst the highrises at Dosti Acres in Wadala looks like a posh mall. However, a bold sign proclaims the structure to be none other than Vidyalankar Institute of Technology (VIT), an engineering and management college which recently won the Honor Award from Designshare, New York, USA for its innovative design.

Started in 1999, the institute wanted a structure that would create a vibrant and lively atmosphere for the students. The structure boasts of a gateless campus, man-size chess board, an amphitheatre, and multi purpose zone for students to chill.

Elated with the prestigious award, Vishwas Deshpande, managing trustee, VIT, said, "The structure is made up of glass as we wanted to reflect the college's transparency. We wanted a design which could challenge the traditional campus architecture and at the same time would fulfil the requirements of our students and the faculty members."

Taking this into consideration, the structure is divided into small blocks for different departments such as electronics, and computer science, which are connected by a 2 lakh sq ft long indoor campus.

"The campus makes it easy for students from all branches and faculty to intermingle. They also have a separate section for basketball and table tennis. We have constructed nooks and corners for students to read. An open air café inside the campus is also a meeting place for students and teachers," said Santha Mattoo, director of Planet3Studios, the architecture firm which won the award.

"Before we designed the structure, we spoke to students and faculty to know what their expectations were. Since the students have different departments, they wanted a common hangout area where they can chill out or read," said Mattoo.

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