

11K-cr GIFT-wrapped for fin-tech city

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Gandhinagar: Investors queued up to be a part of chief minister Narendra Modi's dream project, Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) as memorandums of understanding worth Rs 11,724 crore were signed on the final day of the two-day Vibrant Gujarat summit held here.

Signed in front of Modi, the biggest MoU is by Newgen Technologies for setting up information and communication technology (ICT) network worth Rs 7,000 crore. The next important MoU is by Infrastructure Lease & Financial Services (IL&FS), for Rs 3,000 crore, to kick-start the GIFT project on ground near Gandhinagar by creating an office space of five million square feet with at least three 35-storey towers.

IL&FS hopes to sell the space it creates to finance and ICT service providers, officials said. In all, 32,500 jobs are proposed to be created by implementing six MoUs that were signed at the Vibrant Gujarat business meet.

Others who signed MoUs were Financial Technology India for Rs 400 crore for setting up a multi-SEZ in GIFT city; Rs 1000 crore MoU to set up a world class hotel by Gandhinagar Hotels Ltd, owners of Haveli in the state capital; Rs 300 crore MoU by India ITME Society to setting up a convention centre in GIFT complex; and an education and research institute by Caralox Education and Research Institute.

Going both by the number of MoUs and the amount, it is much smaller than what was proposed in 2008, when 25 MoUs for selling out 80 million square feet in GIFT city had already been signed up.

Planned to come up as an alternative financial hub to Mumbai, at that time, officials said, it GIFT was already "over-booked", and it would attract an investment worth \$ 16.33 billion. All MoUs, without exception, collapsed because of the slowdown that followed later.

Among important players that had come forward in 2008 to buy up space included Kotak Mahindra Bank, Hong Kong Bao and Tang Medical Group, Hond Kong Progress Architectural Design, DLF Commercial Developers, Vanguard Realty, Pacifica Infrastructure, K Raheja Universal Private Ltd, Essar Properties, others. Significantly, none of these proposed turned up to sign MoU with the state government for the GIFT project.

WHO INVESTS HOW MUCH	
Newgen Technologies	7,000
Gandhinagar Hotels	1,000
Financial Technology	400
ITME	300

(Figures in Rs cr)

