

N Indian program a possibility York to get Space Centre

By JAMES FLAGAL

An upcoming festival commemorating India's 40th anniversary may result in the establishment of an Indian Studies program at York, if enough interest is generated on campus and in the surrounding community.

The festival, entitled "India Since Independence," will run from September 17-23 and feature a variety of prominent Indian figures speaking on topics ranging from politics to poetry. The festival's purpose, however, is not solely to celebrate India's 40th anniversary of independence.

According to Professor Rajesh Thakar, Director of the York-India project, the festival should be seen as a "starting point (for further) development of Indian Studies at York." Thakar explained that through the festival, York will be going out to the community and the students to see if it's in their interest for the university to launch such a program.

The idea of establishing an Indian Studies program at York is not new. According to Thakar, the proposal came out of a meeting held by the "so-called Indianists" faculty on campus which included those professors who had either taught courses on India, or studied India on their own.

"Isolated scholars worked on their own areas," Thakar said, "without ever really coming together until that date (winter of 1985). Thakar gave a number of examples from John Higgins, a fine arts professor who studied South Indian vocals, to Douglas Verney, who currently teaches a course on Indian politics. "We decided to coordinate our efforts," Thakar said, "and attempted to bring all our interests under one roof."

According to Thakar, York's Indian program would have its strengths in performing arts and modern Indian history, unlike Uni-

NEW OFFICE BUILDING AT YORK? The proposed Indian Studies programme would emphasize modern Indian history and Indian culture and art.



versity of Toronto's past program. Thakar explained that U of T had a Sanskrit and Indian Studies program until 1980-81 when it was dismantled and finally replaced by the South East Asian Studies Program. This development, Thakar said, has created a vacuum. The demand for an Indian Studies Program is especially strong in Toronto. Of the 300,000 Canadian Indians, 200,000 reside in Toronto, and many are recent immigrants. According to Thakar, York is in the right place at the right time to go into this area of study."

York has already begun to expand its Indian course curriculum by offering 11 courses in various departments this year. According to Thakar, such courses as Hindu-Anglo Literature in the English department and New Cinema of India in fine arts will be experiments in order to gauge student interest in Indian Studies.

The ultimate aim is to establish a chair for Indian Studies at York.

Thakar explained that a chair, like the one which exists for Italian Studies, allows the administrators in the program a chance to invite distinguished scholars to come and teach at York for a year. Thakar also said that the establishment of a program will help York to round out its course offerings so that the curriculum includes selections in departments such as philosophy and social science.

Thakar noted that the festival's emphasis on modern India and Indian culture and art is no mistake. "There's a relationship," Thakar said, "between the Indian courses being offered this year and the types of seminars being offered at the festival."

There will be a special admission rate for students attending the festival. Instead of the regular \$25 registration fee for the Conference and the Inaugural Dinner, students can buy tickets for \$18. Day passes for students are \$7.

York to get Space Centre

By DEBORAH DUNDAS

Thanks to the efforts of a team of York scientists an important new space research centre will be established on campus sometime in mid-October.

Labelled the Institute for Space and Terrestrial science (ISTS), the centre is the result of a successful proposal in the provincial government's Centres of Excellence competition. The competition was set up to help make Canada less dependent on foreign technology, by encouraging collaboration between universities and industry.

When the competition was announced at the beginning of the year, Dr. Kim Innanen, Dean of the Faculty of Science, quickly organized a planning group to get the detailed proposal together.

York's Faculty of Science had been interested in developing a close relationship with industry for some time before the competition was announced. Dr. Larry Morley, now Interim Executive Director of the Institute, was hired as a consultant to help develop the relationship. Funds to put their ideas into operation, however, were scarce.

On July 19, the directors learned that their proposal was one of among 28 submitted to be chosen to receive funding from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology under the provisions of the competition.

Funding will amount to \$39.3 million over five years, with an evaluation of its success after two and a half years. Success will be measured on how well industry makes use of the research undertaken. After five years, the ISTS must be self-sufficient.

York will collaborate with the University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Waterloo, Humber College, and 16 space technology industries, including Spar Aerospace in running ISTS. The Centre won't run under the auspices of York, but will be more of a consortium sharing resources, ideas, equipment, and research.

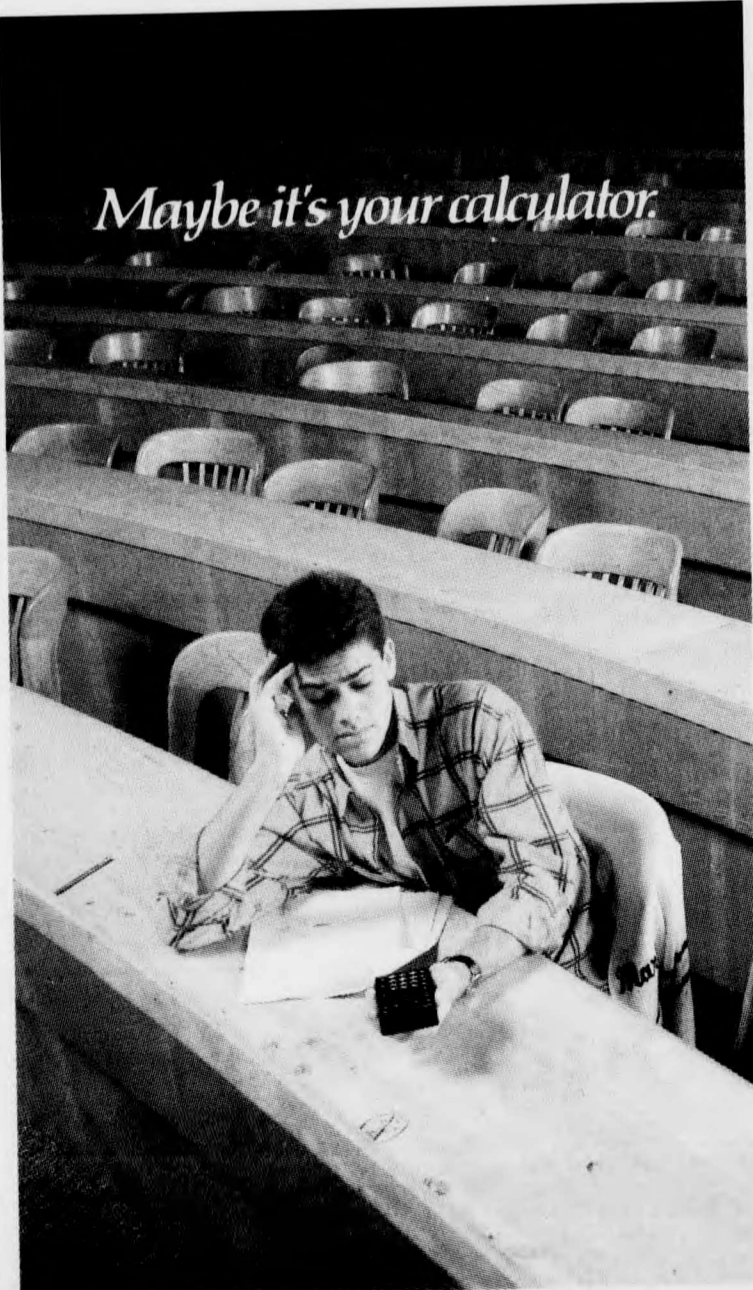
According to Morley, ISTS should be a great help in the advancement of the space science industry in Canada. Usually scientific research takes several years before it is actually applied in industry. But with the ISTS, information will be shared between labs, making the transfer of information much faster.

Not only is the centre a boost to the advancement of scientific research, but "it will give York an enormous boost in prestige," Morley notes. "Some graduate students are already applying (to York) because of the ISTS," he added.

The ISTS will operate seven research labs: Human Performance in Space; Space Geodynamics; Space Astrophysics; Solar Terrestrial Physics; Atmospheric Physics; Earth Observations; and Space Technology. Five of the labs will be located on the York campus.

For the moment, the labs will be housed in existing space on campus, largely in the Petrie Science Building. A new building will be constructed with private capital by the York University Development Corporation who will then rent it to the Institute. Location has not yet been established, but it is expected that the building will be completed in about three years.

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