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Sardar Patel University recommends US-based alumnus' name for Padma Shri

Prashant Rupera | Times of India | Jan 24, 2018, 08:50 IST



VADODARA/ANAND: Vallabh Vidyanagar-based Sardar Patel University (SPU) has recommended the name of its illustrious US-based alumnus Gordhan Patel for the next Padma Shri award.

Born in Manund, a non-discreet village which is now in Patan district, Patel is best known for developing the self indicating instant radiation alert dosimeter (SIRAD) technology to ascertain the amount of radiation in surroundings using the colour-changing strip that is being supplied world-wide to developed countries United States, Japan, Europe among others.

"We have recommended his name to GOI for Padma Shri award as he is a globally-renowned scientist who has not only received more than 125 patents in a variety of disciplines but through his cutting-edge research developed the technology through which ordinary people can measure the amount of radiation in their surroundings which has won several awards," said SPU vice-chancellor professor Shirish Kulkarni.

After 9/11, the US Department of Defense had approached Patel, the 75-year-old founder of J P Laboratories which he had established in Middlesex, New Jersey in 1983, to develop the devices for use by the military and police.

"The dosimeter which is size of a credit card and 20 times cheaper than earlier ones, was developed specifically as terror-fighting device amidst fear of terrorists using 'dirty bomb' emanating radioactivity," said Patel, who is in Vidyanagar to felicitate gold medalists on the eve of 60th annual convocation of SPU told TOI.

The technology developed with US $ 3 million funding from US government and another US $ 1 million of Patel's own money was widely used by Japanese authorities post the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011.

"In fact, during the Fukushima disaster, nearly half a million devices got sold while within a week of the North Korea-US conflict its sales had surged to nearly quarter of a million," said Patel, who suggested that he was bit reluctant when he was told that SPU would suggest his name for Padma Shri award.

"But I have succeeded in his my journey as a researcher because of my studies at SPU and my teachers who mentored me during his bachelors, masters and PhD studies," said Patel, who had shifted to US after completing his post-doctoral research at the UK.