



Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Mohali भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान मोहाली

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Press Note

The Institute is delighted to communicate that the winners of the inaugural **Tata Transformation Prize** have been announced today by Tata Sons and The New York Academy of Sciences. **Professor Purnananda Guptasarma**, Department of Biological Sciences, IISER Mohali is the recipient of the prize in *sustainability* category.

Professor Guptasarma's work is mainly in areas of protein science and engineering; a sub-discipline of biochemistry, biophysics and molecular biology. The Tata Transformation Prize has been awarded to him in recognition of research on the enzymatic degradation of the plastic, polyethylene terephthalate (PET), conducted with his erstwhile doctoral student, Dr. Arpita Mrigwani. Together, Professor Guptasarma and Dr. Mrigwani developed a novel approach as well as improved enzymatic reagents for the degradation of PET chains into pure, recyclable terephthalic acid (TPA), beginning with solid PET plastic. Their research was recently published in a series of landmark papers, including one in the journal, Green Chemistry, reporting some of the best yet purity and yields of TPA achieved through enzymatic degradation of PET. The prize has been awarded to support efforts in the Guptasarma laboratory to further improve enzymatic reagents and scale experiments up to pilot-scale. The prize consists of INR 2 crores, a medal, and a lifetime membership of The New York Academy of Sciences.

Professor Guptasarma is out of station today and he will be available soon to interact with the media.

The press release from Tata Sons and The New York Academy of Sciences is being shared for further details.