

11:06:50 PM IST.

Construction Of 30-meter Optical Telescope To Begin Next Year



New Delhi: A five-nation consortium including India is expected to start the construction of the world's largest telescope next year with Indian scientists making significant contribution in developing its key components.

The Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT), dubbed as the world's most advanced ground-based observatory, will be built at the summit of Mauna Kea volcano in Hawaii at a cost of 1.2 billion dollars.

The TMT Governing Board concluded its two-day meeting here this evening where it reviewed the status of the project and the contributions to be made by partner nations India, China, Japan, Canada and the US.

"The TMT will be 81 times more sensitive than the current telescopes of its kind," Edward Stone, Vice Chairman of the TMT Governing Board, told reporters here.

"Providing primary mirror segments to the TMT is one of the major goals of India-TMT," B Eswar Reddy, Programme Director, India TMT Coordination Center, said after the meeting of the TMT Governing Board.

Reddy said 12 Indian companies have been identified for supply of various components India has to contribute towards the project.

Besides mirror segments, India has agreed to contribute the complete segment support system comprising 1,500 actuators and 3,000 edge sensors required for the project.

With a 30-meter mirror giving astronomers nine times the light collecting area than the largest telescope of today, the TMT will be used to study the farthest galaxies.