UH eyes stronger links with India

Joint MS-BS program, recruitment center, India chair in the offing

By Haider Kazim

Houston: Renu Khator, President of the University of Houston and Chancellor of UH System, has taken or is considering several major initiatives to strengthen the university’s links with India. These include a MS-BS joint program with several Indian universities, a recruitment office in India, establishment of an India Chair at UH, a scholarship fund to offset the cost of higher education, and possibly a UH campus in India if everything goes well.

The initiatives will help UH forge stronger links with India than any other university in the United States.

“We are looking at issues that have not allowed stronger relationship between Indian universities and American universities,” Khator told Voice of Asia in an exclusive interview on Friday.

There are two major barriers in the way, she said. First, the credit system in both countries is different – semester in the US and annualized system in India. Secondly, BS is three years in India and four years in the US, creating problems for Indian students seeking admission into the US universities. “As President, I set the direction and articulate the vision, and after this the deans will take the ownership.”

The MS-BS joint program will also have a reverse flow in which students doing BS here can go to India for one year to do their master’s there. Several UH students have shown interest in this program, she said.

Khator said that she had received a letter from Minister of Overseas India Affairs Vayalar Ravi suggesting establishment of a chair of study “in the fields of Indian languages and culture.” Once the proposals are made and accepted, the chair will be the first of its kind sponsored by the Indian government in a US university.

She said that the donor’s name.

Another area in which she envisaged partnership with India is energy. India’s growing economy has created a huge demand for energy and UH with its pool of award-winning researchers can help in new projects for renewable energy or more efficient use of energy.