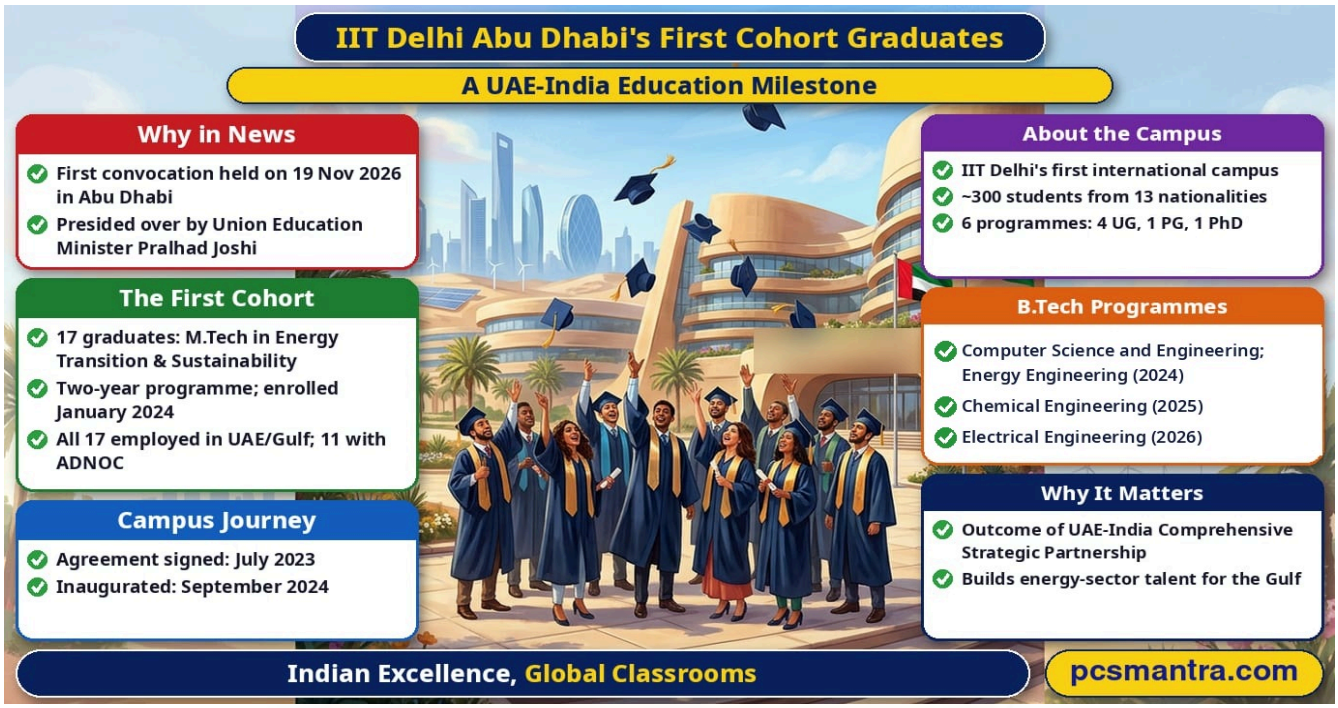
IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi's First Cohort Graduates: A UAE-India Education Milestone

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Original symbolic illustration: pcsmantra.com

News Reference: First graduation ceremony of IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, 20 November 2026

Why in the News

IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi held its inaugural ceremony for the first cohort of its M.Tech programme in Energy Transition and Sustainability. According to the Abu Dhabi Media Office the cohort has 17 graduates, including 11 ADNOC employees, all working across the UAE and wider Gulf in energy, sustainability and engineering.[1]

India's Union Education Minister Pralhad Joshi and India's Ambassador to the UAE, Dr Deepak Mittal, attended the ceremony.[1]

Institution background

Agreement: Established under an agreement signed in July 2023 in the presence of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.[1]

Inauguration: The Abu Dhabi campus was inaugurated in September 2024 by Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council.[1]

First international campus: The release describes it as IIT Delhi's first international campus. Minister Pralhad Joshi called it the first international campus of India's highest-ranked university. The ranking remark is the minister's statement.[1]

Key facts

First cohort: 17 graduates, M.Tech (Energy Transition and Sustainability), all employed; 11 are ADNOC employees. The release headline cites 100 per cent graduate employment.[1]

Fields: Energy and sustainability, computer science, artificial intelligence, chemical engineering and electrical engineering.[1]

Growth: Almost 300 students from 13 nationalities across six programmes (four undergraduate, one postgraduate, one doctoral).[1]

Alumni network: Graduates join IIT Delhi's global alumni network of more than 65,000.[1]

Industry link: The programme was co-designed with national industry champions, and collaboration with partners such as ADNOC is cited.[1]

Exam analysis

Education diplomacy: A campus of an Indian institution abroad builds India's academic standing and knowledge exchange between the two countries. This is analysis based on the facts in the source.

- **Opportunity:** An industry-linked programme and jobs in a sector such as energy transition.
- **Open question:** This is only the first cohort; long-term quality, research output and expansion are yet to be seen.
- **Caution:** "First international campus" is said for IIT Delhi, not for all IITs. Do not mix it up with other IITs' overseas campuses.

For Mains

Question: "Campuses of Indian higher education institutions abroad are an emerging tool of education diplomacy." Analyse with reference to IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi. (Answer in 150 words) | 10 marks

Answer Outline

Introduction: IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi produced its first cohort after the July 2023 agreement and September 2024 inauguration. Of 17 graduates, 11 are ADNOC employees.

Main body:

- **Partnership:** India-UAE academic cooperation; an energy transition programme co-designed with industry.
- **Gains:** Wider Indian academic reach; job-oriented training; research and industry cooperation; alumni network.

- **Limits:** Only the first cohort, so long-term quality and expansion are yet to be judged; small student numbers.

Conclusion: The first cohort is a promising start, but the success of education diplomacy will rest on quality, research and durable industry partnerships.

Prelims Practice Questions

Question 1: With reference to IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi, consider the following statements:

1. It is IIT Delhi's first international campus.

2. Its first cohort has 17 graduates, including 11 ADNOC employees.

3. The first graduating cohort belonged to a B.Tech programme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 3 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 1, 2 and 3

(d) 1 and 2 only

▼ **Answer and explanation**

Answer: (d)

- Statement 1 is correct: the release describes it as IIT Delhi's first international campus.
- Statement 2 is correct: the cohort has 17 graduates, 11 of them ADNOC employees.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: the first cohort graduated from the M.Tech programme in Energy Transition and Sustainability.

Syllabus Mapping:
Mains: GS-2 (India and Gulf relations; education); GS-3 (energy transition)
Prelims: Current events; international relations; education

Sources

1. Abu Dhabi Media Office: IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi celebrates inaugural graduating cohort (20 November 2026)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Summary answer: IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi's first cohort has 17 graduates, 11 of them ADNOC employees, from the M.Tech in Energy Transition and Sustainability.

Question: When was IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi set up?

Under an agreement of July 2023; the campus was inaugurated in September 2024.

Question: How many graduates are in the first cohort?

17, of whom 11 are ADNOC employees. All work in the Gulf region.

Question: How many students and programmes does it have?

Almost 300 students from 13 nationalities and six programmes (four undergraduate, one postgraduate, one doctoral).