Indian Institute of Technology

IIT Mandi celebrates 13th Foundation Day on 6th March 2022

March 7, 2022

The Indian Institute of Technology Mandi celebrated its 13th Foundation Day on 6th March 2022. Dr Vijay Kumar Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog, and Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

Addressing the Institute on this grand occasion, Dr. Vijay Kumar Saraswat, Chief Guest of IIT Mandi's 13th Foundation Day, said, "An interdisciplinary approach to learning is

essential to scale new frontiers of technology and interdisciplinary science and social engineering can solve the world's complex problems. The world needs highly creative engineering graduates, and they are in this hall today. You can solve the world's problems with ethical and sustainable solutions using interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary engineering."

The event was attended by faculty, staff, students, and distinguished guests.

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Laxmidhar Behera, Director, IIT Mandi, said, "Over the last decade, IIT Mandi has built many world class facilities like the Advanced Material Research Centre (AMRC), Bio-X, and the C4DFED facility for the fabrication of semiconductor chips. We aim to make IIT Mandi primarily a research Institute. All these centers can contribute to the growth of the institute and the nation. Given my background in robotics and artificial intelligence (AI), I plan to develop a world-class, state-of-the-art laboratory on Cognitive Robotics and HCI (Human-Computer Interaction) to find smart solutions in healthcare, education, agriculture, and defence."

Prof. Behera credited the centers at IIT Mandi with putting the Institute on the map for innovation in India and mentioned, "The entrepreneurship and incubation activities of Catalyst have helped reach IIT Mandi on the national innovation map. In the recent Atal Rankings of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA) for 2021, IIT Mandi was ranked among the top 20 institutions in the country. In the rankings, the Institute has ranked excellent in the category of Institute of National Importance & Central Universities/CFTIs (Technical)."

Prof. Laxmidhar Behera further said, "As Director, my role will be to focus on the key areas that can enable India to achieve self-sufficiency (Atmanirbharta) and build a sustainable future. I assure you that the Institute will actively contribute to the societal development and progress of the nation with dedicated faculty and student engagements from time to time. I also acknowledge the District Administration of Mandi for its contribution to IIT Mandi's growth in the past 13 years."

To date, IIT Mandi's Career and Placement Cell has received 224 job offers during this pandemic from a variety of companies for the 2021-22 academic session. 175 companies have registered for placements at the Cell, which has hosted 120 companies until now for full time equivalent (FTE) hiring, including top corporates like Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Adobe, Flipkart, Oracle, Paytm, Qualcomm, Synopsys, Texas Instruments, BPCL, BEL, L&T, and Deloitte. Additionally, 191 students have received internships. There have been 86 internship registrations by companies, and the Cell hosted 65 companies for the internship drive, including top recruiters like Walmart, Uber, Sprinklr, Arista networks, Zomato, Intel, Nvidia, and Siemens.

During the pandemic year, IIT Mandi also made rapid strides in science, technology, innovation, academics, entrepreneurship, research & development, and international linkages. **In the past one year, the Institute's faculty are involved in 38 new sponsored research projects worth over Rs. 16 crores and 15 consultancy projects,** amounting to over 88 lakhs from different funding agencies.

Boosting Entrepreneurial Ecosystem:

In an effort to advance the entrepreneurial culture in the Himalayan region, IIT Mandi's Technology Business Incubator, Catalyst, organized the HST Start-up Grand Challenge. The winning start-ups were awarded Rs. 5 lakhs in cash and up to Rs. 50 lakhs in funding.

IIT Mandi Catalyst, the on-campus technology business incubator, has supported about 220 start-ups in a range of fields, including agriculture, clean energy, healthcare, waste management, enterprise management, disaster management, and consumer internet. It has created a pool of 80 business mentors and 50 technical mentors, with over 50 faculty members providing technical support to start-ups in Catalyst. Over 600 full-time and part-time jobs have been created by these start-ups, which have won over 80 awards and recognitions on a national and international level. 'Human-Computer Interaction', 'Himalayan Solutions', and 'Sustainability' are emerging as the three key themes for Catalyst.

Catalyst added 83 new start-ups and 5 new funding schemes to its portfolio in the last year. The new schemes include the iHub & HCI Foundation fund, Start-up India Seed

fund, and DST's NIDHI-EIR fund. By 2022, Catalyst will host 10 funding schemes with a total sanctioned funding of Rs. 68 crores.

The Technology Innovation Hub in the Human Computer Interaction area was set up at IIT Mandi with funding of Rs. 110 crores by the Department of Science and Technology under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems. This is the largest project in the history of IIT Mandi and will work in thematic areas like Cognitive Sciences, Brain Computer Interface, to name a few.

The basic mission of the Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) is to help provide impetus to translational research which can lead to new technologies, IP, products, and start-ups. iHub will help identify and fund research projects with translational deliverables through focused project funding or by encouraging innovators to become entrepreneurs.

During a visit to the IIT Mandi campus on 22nd February 2022, General Dalbir Singh Suhag, High Commissioner of the Republic of Seychelles to India, interacted with the faculty and had a close look at the innovations being developed on campus. General Suhag complimented the Institute and said, "I commend IIT Mandi for the remarkable progress and achievements made in such a short time span which is due to their dedicated staff and formidable teamwork."

Video Link: https://youtu.be/hMSSIcNFL3Q

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