Indian Institute of Technology Mandi

Shri Rajendra V. Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Himachal Pradesh visit to IIT Mandi

December 30, 2021

The Hon'ble Governor appreciated innovation initiatives of IIT Mandi that are creating social impact in the state of Himachal Pradesh

Shri. Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Himachal Pradesh visited Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi, on Tuesday, 28th December 2021. This was the first visit of the Governor to the IIT Mandi campus. During the visit, he interacted with a group of faculty and staff members of the institute.

Professor Bharat Singh Rajpurohit, Dean-I&S, IIT Mandi briefed the Hon'ble Governor on the growth of IIT Mandi in recent years, and several academic and research activities of IIT Mandi. The Governor appreciated the outstanding development of IIT Mandi campus in a relatively short period of time and lauded IIT Mandi's focus on the social impact that was reflected through its innovative curriculum design, student programs, research initiatives, industry collaboration, and partnership with the government.

Hon'ble Governor took note of some key social impact initiatives of IIT Mandi including IIT Mandi Catalyst – the first technology business incubator, the establishment of Technology Innovation Hub in the area of Human-Computer Interaction and the development of Tinkering lab facility for young students.

The Governor particularly sought interventions from the institute on ways to prevent and mitigate the impact of landslides in the state. **Speaking about the landslides in the state, Shri. Rajendra Arlekar, Governor of Himachal Pradesh, said,** *"It is disturbing for me to witness the loss of life of even one person. Let's join hands to provide practical solutions for landslide problems in this 50th year of the State of Himachal Pradesh and the 75th year of Independent India. In addition to our focus on 'what industry needs' we need to start thinking about 'what society needs. This is the need of the hour."*

During the session, Dr. K. V. Uday, Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Geohazard Group, School of Engineering, made a presentation on IIT Mandi's expertise and research capabilities for performing the investigations, studies and analysis related to Landslide risk management. After the presentation, structural and non-structural mitigation options for reducing the risk of landslides were debated. Discussion was also held on various aspects of the site and hazard-based mitigation scheme selection and the need for landslide monitoring and early warning systems. The Hon'ble Governor was given a demonstration of an innovative low-cost landslide warning system developed by Dr. K. V. Uday and Dr. Varun Dutt in the last three-four years. The Hon'ble Governor noted that this innovative product was installed by Mandi district administration at several locations in the districts to avoid loss of life at sites prone to landslides, and has been successful in averting disasters on several occasions. The Governor

appreciated the Landslide risk research group at IIT Mandi and assured all possible support from his office.
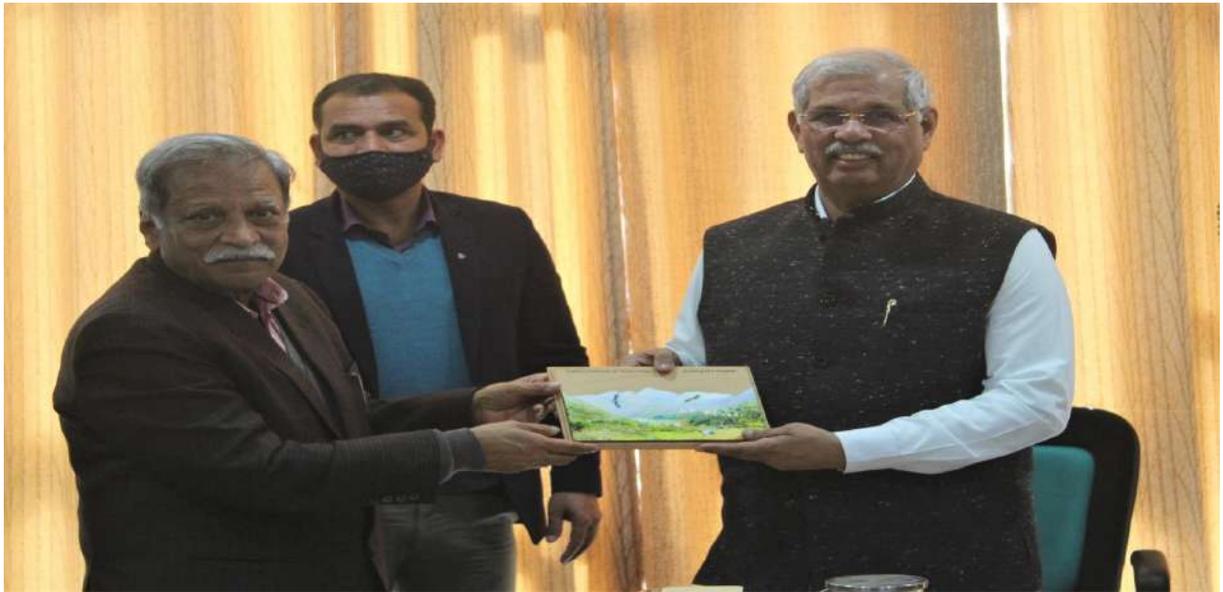
Prof. Ajit K. Chaturvedi, Director, IIT Mandi, conveyed the following message,"IIT Mandi is committed to come up with technology-based solutions that can make citizens' lives safer. I am glad that in the last four years our faculty's research and development on landslide monitoring has been implemented on the ground with good results. This has been possible because of the support extended by the state and local administration. We will continue to work for the prevention of loss from landslides in the future."

After the event, IIT Mandi hosted a sapling plantation by the Honorable Governor. The Honorable Governor expressed his appreciation for the work done by faculty at IIT Mandi to benefit society in different ways and expressed confidence that the association of IIT Mandi and the Himachal Pradesh Government will be pivotal in overcoming several societal problems.