PRESS RELEASE

IIT Mandi Launches 'Science on Wheels' to Bring Hands-on Science Education to Schools Across Himachal Pradesh

DST-supported initiative aims to reach 50 schools across Himachal Pradesh, introducing students to space technology, robotics, sustainability, and water filtration

Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, 26th October 2026: The Indian Institute of Technology Mandi (IIT Mandi) along with **Plaksha University** and **Igniting Dreams of Young Minds (IDYM) Foundation** has initiated **'Science on Wheels'** program in **Himachal Pradesh**, aimed at promoting practical education in science amongst school students especially those living in rural areas.

The programme's Himachal Pradesh segment was launched on **17th October 2026** at **IIT Mandi Campus School** in the presence of **Prof. Laxmidhar Behera, Director, IIT Mandi**, who graced the occasion as the **Chief Guest**. The programme is backed by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, **Government of India, through NCSTC**, with an objective of making students aware of the difference between theoretical studies and scientific experiments.

After having covered more than **7,500 student**s through **70 schools** of **Chhattisgarh** and **Punjab**, the **Science on Wheels** initiative is now looking forward to covering **50 schools** in **Himachal Pradesh, including Mandi, Kullu, Bilaspur, Hamirpur,** and **Kangra**.

After the inauguration of this initiative, the team began its efforts in **Mandi district** by covering **Government Senior Secondary Schools in Badog, Baggi (K), Bari Gumanu, Batheri,** and **Deori.**

The program caters to students in **classes 6th to 12th**, providing them about **six hours** of learning experiences at each school under **four** different themes, viz., S**pace Technology, Robotics, Sustainability,** and **Water Filtration.**

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, **Prof. Laxmidhar Behera, Director, IIT Mandi**, remarked, *"Science on Wheels is a great initiative. We need to develop an interest in science amongst our children as they are the future of an Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India). With the help of Science on Wheels, not only will we be able to instill interest in learning science within them, but these children could be the people who will come up with futuristic technology such as the fMRI machine and the Atomic Force Microscope in India, provided we do something more than just demonstrating science to them."*

In appreciation of the project, **Deshraj Sharma, Principal, IIT Mandi Campus School** stated, *"You are educating children about science in areas where even the sight of such scientific equipment and using it is an unusual opportunity for them. Thus, by doing so you are widening their horizons of thoughts and giving new opportunities to them for the future. It is indeed a noble project."*

This ceremony was also graced by the presence of **Prof. Surya Prakash Upadhyay, Chairperson, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, and President, IIT Mandi Campus School Society; Prof. Rahul Vaish, Dean Faculty, IIT Mandi, and Member, IIT Mandi Campus School Society; and Prof. Shaily Mahendra, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA,** who is currently working as an **International Environmental Expert at IIT Mandi. Prof. Mahendra** felicitated the members of the Science on Wheels team.

One of the main attractions of the event was a live **hydro rocket** launch that demonstrated various scientific aspects of force, pressure, and motion. The students were excited about the activity and found it very engaging as they were able to relate classroom lessons to practical application.

One of the students at IIT Mandi Campus School stated, "*We have learned a lot about science, but Science on Wheels made us see it differently. It was amazing seeing the rocket launch live!*"

The project is headed by **Dr. Rucha Joshi, Principal Investigator, Plaksha University, with Dr. Harshad Kulkarni, IIT Mandi; Dr. Shashank Tamaskar, Plaksha University; Mr. Ratnesh Mishra, President, IDYM Foundation, and Dr. Srijita Chkraburty, Visiting Assistant Professor, Plaksha University, Mohali. The IDYM Foundation is an official Space Tutor of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).**

The program has begun with the visits to schools in **Mandi district** and would be extended to other districts of **Himachal Pradesh** in the coming weeks, fostering scientific inquisitiveness, rational thinking, creativity, and innovation in students, along with practical science education in distant areas.

About IIT Mandi:

Indian Institutes of Technology Mandi is one of the top second-generation IITs located in Kamand Valley, Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh, India. It is one of eight new Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, and recognized as one of Institutes of National Importance. IIT Mandi's permanent campus about 14 km (8.7 mi) from Mandi consists of the South and North campuses connected by a narrow neck. The South campus is on the left bank of the Uhl River below Kamand village. The North campus is along the Kataula Khad opposite Salgi village. A transit campus at Government Post graduate College, Mandi was handed over by the Himachal Pradesh Government on 16 November 2009. The Kamand campus ground-breaking ceremony, to mark the start of construction, was held on 13 April 2012. On 25 April 2015, IIT Mandi became the first of all the new IITs to completely shift B. Tech students to its permanent campus in Kamand. Since its inception the institute has been involved with more than 275 Research and Development (R&D) projects worth more than ₹120 crore. In the past 10 years, the institute has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with as many as 11 international and 12 national universities.

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Media Contacts: Adfactors PR

Taran Singh
Shalika Thakur

Sr. Manager	Account Executive
9887999284	7807490819