



## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **Shri Bhagya Chander, President, Himachal Pravasi Global Association Canada, visits IIT Mandi**

## **IIT Mandi and Himachal Pravasi Global Association to explore collaborations on programs for socio economic development of Himachal region**

**Mandi, 5th May 2022:** Shri Bhagya Chander, President of the Himachali Pravasi Global Association (HPGA), visited [the Indian Institute of Technology Mandi](#) on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The Institute discussed ways in which Himachali NRIs based abroad could contribute in different ways to the Institute's vision of serving the local and global Himachali society via technological interventions and research.

The [Himachali Pravasi Global Association](#), the largest network of Himachalis settled abroad, is working to serve and keep the Himachali NRI diaspora across the globe connected. During the meeting at the Institute, there was also a discussion about creating a retreat centre dedicated to the Indian knowledge system and mental wellbeing on campus.

**Speaking about the visit to the Institute, Prof. Laxmidhar Bahera, Director, IIT Mandi, said,** "It is a pleasure to connect with the Himachali Pravasi Global Association through this visit of Mr. Bhagya Chander. IIT Mandi shares a common vision with the Himachali Pravasi Global Association to contribute to the socio-economic development of the Himachal region. Such collaborations with global Indians from Himachal would enable meaningful discussions and programmes to fulfil this vision."

During his visit, Shri Chander met with Prof. Laxmidhar Behera, Director, IIT Mandi, Prof. Chayan K. Nandi, Dean, Resource Generation and Alumni Relations, Prof. Varun Dutt, Associate Dean, Resource Generation and Alumni Relations, Prof. Shyam K. Masakapalli, Associate Professor; Prof. Arnav Bhavsar, Associate Professor; and Prof. Satinder K. Sharma, Dean, Faculty from IIT Mandi.

**Mr Bhagya Chander, President, Himachali Pravasi Global Association, a Himachali living in Canada, said,** "It was a great pleasure to meet the Director Dr. Laxmidhar Behera, Prof. Varun Dutt, Prof. Chayan Nandi, and other faculty members during IIT Mandi campus visit. We are overjoyed to see the research work for upcoming inventions duly carried by the IIT Mandi in field of IT, Biotech, and much more. It was really a great to having the experience and observe the research projects such as in landslide alarm system, Botanical Garden, cognitive recognition in artificial intelligence, VR methodology to promote the Himachal Tourism, cyber security threat, microbiology etc. One of the main focus of HPGA's mission is to contribute to the Himachal Pradesh for the well-being of state in respect of socio-economic development. After visiting the IIT Mandi campus it seems that together we can do much more to achieve our common goal with high level of efficacy."



Earlier on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022, a meeting was held between HPGA, IIT Mandi, and the Government of Himachal Pradesh, to discuss ways in which HPGA could contribute to the vision of IIT Mandi and the local people. Apart from Shri Bhagya Chander, fellow HPGA members Shri Arun Chauhan and Dr. Sushil Sharma were at the present (HPGA), along with Shri R. N. Batta (Advisor to the Chief Minister, HP), Director, IIT Mandi, and Institute faculty. Shri Bhagya Chander's visit to the Institute on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022 was a fall-out of this meeting.

During his visit, Shri Chander also visited several research facilities on campus and interacted with students and researchers. These included the MANAS Lab, Applied Cognitive Science Lab, Advanced Research Materials Centre, C4DFED, and the BioX Centre.

The visit has been a tremendous opportunity for IIT Mandi to establish a connection with HPGA for the first time; both institutions are striving hard for a collective aim of making a positive impact on the socio-economic development of Himachal Pradesh.

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## About [IIT Mandi](#)

IIT Mandi has four Academic Schools and three major Research Centers. The Schools are: School of Computing and Electrical Engineering, School of Basic Sciences, School of Engineering, and School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Centers are: Advanced Materials Research Centre (AMRC; set up with an investment of Rs. 60 crores), Centre for Design and Fabrication of Electrical Devices (C4DFED; has Rs. 50 crores worth of fabrication tools), and BioX Centre (has acquired research equipment worth Rs. 15 crores).

The unique, project-oriented B.Tech. curriculum is centred around its 4-year long Design and Innovation stream. From August 2019, IIT Mandi started 3 new and unique B. Tech. programmes in Data Science and Engineering, Engineering Physics, and Dual Degree in Bioengineering. Since the inception of the Institute, IIT Mandi faculty have been involved in over 275 Research and Development (R&D) projects worth more than Rs. 120 crore.

IIT Mandi set up the IIT Mandi iHub and HCI Foundation (iHub; a section-8 company) on its campus at Kamand with significant funding of INR 110 crores from the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India. The iHub is planned to fuel research and technology development, skill development, startup and innovation, and collaborations in the HCI and allied AI/ML areas in India. IIT Mandi is the only second-generation IIT to be featured at rank no. 7 in the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements of the Innovation Cell, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.

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