



MR. SUBODH BHARGAVA
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&
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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Let me first extend my hearty congratulations to the young men and women who will be receiving their degree today. You are starting on a new journey in your life to surely an exciting career ahead. I do hope that the learning and the skills you acquired here, you also had the opportunity to learn the values how to be a good human being and remain a student and learn all through from life. I expect that the contribution from each one of you to the development of our country and a better sustainable future would not be wanting. My compliment and congratulations also to your parents for their care, guidance and support to you through the years past.

I am delighted that Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala, Padma Shri, Institute Chair Professor, IIT Madras and a true and successful technocrat will be the Chief guest and Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, award winning engineer from Ladakh will be the Guest of Honour at the 6th Convocation of IIT Mandi. It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome to them.

IIT Mandi began its journey in 2009 and has since progressed rapidly with many firsts and pioneering initiatives. On behalf of the Board of Governors of IIT Mandi compliments to the Director Prof. Gonsalves, Members of the Faculty and the Staff for their commitment and the achievements.

The board of Governors of IIT Mandi continues to encourage the growth and development in both teaching and research by formulating and approving policies empowering the faculty and staff to give their best. No doubt, we are helped in this regard by the Director and his Leadership team.

I may add that there is a long way to go for us to compete with the very best at the global level. The challenges include expeditious completion of creating the requisite infrastructure keeping in pace with the increasing number of students, faculty and staff in the coming years.

Recruitment and retention of bright young faculty will continue to be an important factor in Institute's development. With coming up of many new technical educational institutions besides expansion of existing IITs, NITs etc. there already is and is bound to be shortage of good faculty. We have to make special efforts to attract talent. Let the location and the related difficulty to get to Mandi not be a handicap – let us turn it on its head and leverage our beautiful landscape situated in the Himalayas and the excellent sprawling campus for attracting the best.

I would like to focus on two crucial aspects of this Institute's engagement with the wider world today: Industry Connect, and International Collaborations.

Industry Connect first. Many of you will be aware of Catalyst, IIT Mandi's Technology-Business incubator. Only two years old, Catalyst is already supporting 15 teams and start-ups in domains such as Health Tech, Edu Tech, Fin Tech, Agro Tech, Bio Tech, Renewable and Clean Energy. One such AI based start-up, Solar Labs, has just won the 3rd place in Schneider Electric's Asia-Pacific level startup pitch contest held in Singapore. It is commendable that this company was founded by IIT Mandi students who opted to reject high-paying jobs in order to follow their dream. I wish the Catalyst team and incubate every success in future.

I would also like to mention two other projects at this point. One is the Farmer Zone project, a Department of Biotechnology Initiative with IIT Mandi as the lead institution. This project will deliver the benefits of Machine Learning algorithms to farmers by giving them access to up-to-date weather, soil and crop disease information.

The second project which immense scope for collaboration with Industry is the E-auto project: IIT Mandi is evaluating the business model for popularizing the same, and also testing prototypes. This is a unique initiative since it focuses on hilly regions. I look forward to the implementation of these projects. IIT Mandi hosted over 20 senior technical personnel from Industry since January this year, and I hope these numbers will rise. The Industry panel of the recently concluded 3rd HP Science Congress held at IIT Mandi is an excellent initiative in this regard.

Coming to International linkages: this year faculty members visited SAARC countries to recruit students. We welcome students from Nepal and Bangladesh. IIT Mandi has also been appointed the nodal Institute for collaboration with German universities in the recently launched 'Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration' (SPARC) by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. I am sure IIT Mandi will capitalize on its already strong linkages with the German TU9 Universities to make this international partnership a success. I hope that eventually IIT Mandi's international collaborations will translate to the

award of joint degrees as well as the faculty exchange, recruitment and mobility from and to all parts of the world.

I am glad to note that this campus will conduct an International Workshop in Nano/Micro 2D-3D fabrication and manufacturing of electronic-biomedical devices and applications at the end of this month. Scientists and policymakers from the US, Germany, Taiwan and Singapore are scheduled to attend this event. I hope this will be the first of many events with International participants to be hosted in this well-developed and attractive campus.

Those graduating today will join the alumni who will remember their days here, sometimes fondly when you think of friends of friends and favorite teachers; sometimes with a touch of relief when you recall courses, tests, exams which appeared a formidable hurdles. My best wishes to each of you for a bright and successful future.

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