

Second Industry-Academia Interaction Conclave Indian Institute of Technology Mandi, Kamand, H.P., India May 23rd, 2014

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organized the second Industry - Academia Interaction Conclave on Friday, 23rd May 2014 at its permanent campus in Kamand. The objective of the current conclave was to showcase the strengths of IIT Mandi to partner with the industry, to understand the problems being faced by industry and society at large, and to explore possible solutions to such problems. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Er. Kartar Singh, Founder and CEO, Amber Group of Industries.

Prof. T. A. Gonsalves, Director, IIT Mandi, kicked-off the event with a welcome address to the academia and industry attendees. Prof. Gonsalves' address was reciprocated by a welcome address by Mr. Arun Rawat, Chairman, CII (HP State Council). Mr. Rawat, in his address, mentioned that the industry - academia gap needed to be bridged. He suggested that setting-up of a research park at IIT Mandi was the need of the hour.

Mr. Rawat's talk was followed-up a keynote address by Mr Satish Kaura, Chief Managing Director, Samtel and a 2004 Padma Shri awardee. Mr. Kaura mentioned a real transformation in the industry, where there has been a shift in focus from quality some decades back to cost reduction, innovation, and severe competition now. In another keynote address Prof. R. Sharan, IIT Gandhinagar, and formerly a professor at IIT Kanpur, stressed on how IITs grew out of an independent India with a focus to meet the social minimum.



Faculty and Industry Participants at the 2nd Industry-Academia Interaction Conclave at IIT Mandi (Kamand Campus)

The Chief Guest, Er. Kartar Singh, delivered an interactive talk on "Human Science". In his talk, Er. Singh highlighted the need to increase concentration level and to inculcate true human qualities like trust, peace, innocence, and compassion.

The post-lunch activities involved three interactive panel discussions.

The first panel discussion was on the practical steps in strengthening partnership between academia and industry, and it was chaired by Mr Satish, Microsoft Research. As part of this session, the panel highlighted the constraints to having a healthy industry-academia interaction, and how to overcome them. The panel emphasized the role of students in the collaboration, via internships and summer schools.

The second panel discussion was on the essence, relevance, challenges, and effectiveness of interdisciplinary courses and it was chaired by Prof. Sharan. This discussion highlighted the essence of multidisciplinary courses in an engineering curriculum and its need.



A Panel Discussion on Energy

The third panel discussion was on energy with a focus on new technologies and their emergence in the Indian power sector. This session was chaired by Prof. Subrata Ray, Distinguished Visiting Professor, IIT Mandi. The discussion presented the business and technology sides for power generation sector in India, both of which face numerous challenges currently.

The conclave was organized by Dr. Arti Kashyap and Dr. Samar Agnihotri, IIT Mandi, along with a number of other faculty members from the Institute. The companies attending the conclave included Microsoft Research, Tejas Networks, NTPC Energy Technology Research Alliance (NETRA), Indian Oil Corporation, PayPal India, DesignTech Systems Ltd. (Altair), Amber Group, Toduphodu, CEWiT, ABB, Lucidus, HAL, Himalayan Vegefruit Ltd., Baddi Foils Pvt. Ltd., Indorama Industries Ltd., TVS Motors Co. Ltd., ACC Ltd., Shoolini University, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd., JB Conductors & Cables, Art N Glass Inc., and Highway Retreaders Pvt. Ltd.

The event drew to a close with an informal discussion between the faculty and industry participants followed by a dinner for all.

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