

First Salters' Chemistry Camp in Himachal Pradesh held in IIT Mandi.

We woke up to a drizzly morning. Apart from the beautiful weather the other excitement was of the 62 students coming to IIT Mandi for a three day residential camp conducted by The Royal Society of Chemistry, India and the Salters Institute, UK. The camp was for Class IX students at IIT Mandi, Kamand from July 3 – 6, 2017. This was for the first time Salters' Chemistry Camp was conducted in Himachal Pradesh. IIT Mandi had this opportunity to host around 62 school students from various parts of Mandi district. One of the very significant feature of the camp was that the gender ratio was almost balanced.

The Camp was inaugurated with welcome lectures by Dr.. Prem Felix Siril, Dean (SRIC) Dr. C. S. Yadav, faculty member in Physics of IIT Mandi and Dr. Aniruddha Chakraborty, faculty and Coordinator of this camp. They welcomed them with an inspirational speech of how to correlate chemistry with the day to day life and how to learn from nature.

A break from regular chore of just getting into curriculum, this camp was aimed at fostering chemistry amongst school students in a very provocative way. It involved convivial approach of tutoring chemistry to the kids and was a very enthusiastic attempt to develop a long lasting interest through hands on practical activities. Dr. Ajay Soni, a faculty member in physics gave a thought provoking lecture on "Why science". Apart from the coordinators and faculties inspiring them, there were six different teachers and ten different demonstrators and research scholars to stimulate them to handle these chemistry practicals. Alongwith the offbeat way of teaching they also got a taste of vibrant life in the residential campus of IIT Mandi. The camp ended with closing lectures by Prof. Timothy A. Gonsalves, Director, Dr. Subrata Ghosh, Dean (Infra) and Dr. Pradeep C. Parameswaran, Asso. Dean (courses) of IIT Mandi. Director, Prof. Gonsalves, despite his very different background of computer engineering, gave a very interesting speech with extremely rigorous and captivating examples from chemistry. The entire three days residential camp was coordinated by Dr. A. Chakraborty & Ms. Moumita Ganguly. Ms. Moumita was most likely the youngest coordinator in the history of RSC-Salters' Chemistry Camp





