



## **IIT Kharagpur**

Office of Dean, International Relations

Contact: [deanir@adm.iitkgp.ac.in](mailto:deanir@adm.iitkgp.ac.in)

### **PAN IIT Dean International Relations Conclave Highlight on Joint Initiatives to improve IITs' International Outreach**

The PAN IIT Dean International Relations (IR) Conclave was held at IIT Kharagpur on June 28-29, 2019. Nine IITs, represented by Deans and Executives of IR Offices, participated in the Conclave viz. Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Guwahati, Kanpur, Tirupathi, Mandi, Indore, Dhanbad, Roorkee, Palakkad and Kharagpur. Over two days the IITs deliberated on common challenges and processes towards attracting and admitting more international students, funding mechanisms, degree provisions, international collaborations and several more.

“The IITs and their alumni are probably the finest products coming out of India since independence. While each IIT pursues and attains excellence in its own way, we must remember that individually we are too small to make any sizeable impact globally. Together however, with about 1 lakh students and about 5000 faculty members, the 23 IITs are a sizeable bloc and can compete favourably with the largest university systems around the world. We therefore need to join forces and pursue internationalization in a synergistic manner,” said Prof. Baidurya Bhattacharya, Dean IR, IIT Kharagpur.

While JEE remains the only gateway available to anyone seeking admission into the IIT system's flagship undergraduate programs, most IITs have created the mechanism for graduate admission for international students. There was a consensus on enhancing the outreach and information dissemination globally about Masters and Doctoral programs at IITs and promoting foreign admission opportunities. “This will require tapping into the already existing network of academicians and alumni in select countries,” opined Prof. Rakhi Chaturvedi, Associate Dean, Alumni and External Relations, IIT Guwahati.

IIT (ISM) Dhanbad has also created an avenue for foreign undergraduate admission. “We have run a separate 5-year undergraduate programme exclusively for students in Afghanistan and African countries focused on Mining and Petroleum Engineering,” said Prof. Somnath Chattopadhyay, Associate Dean, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad.

The IITs further explored ways to make the selection process through ICCR scholarship schemes more streamlined and in alignment with the IIT admission criteria and timelines. These collective recommendations have been planned to be presented to ICCR for further discussion and consideration.

To ease out information availability and admission, Prof. Swati Patankar, Dean IR of IIT Bombay informed the gathering that a common application portal for joint admission of international students is underway.

The challenge of increasing diversity through international student admission was also discussed from the aspect global ranking of the IITs. In this regard, deliberations were made on the importance of an India-relevant definition of diversity. “We need diversity but we will have to evolve a definition consistent with our country’s ethos of language, culture and food. Our definition of diversity should look to bring diverse thinking to our student populace, including through the presence of international faculty and students,” said Prof. Mahesh Panchagnula, Dean International & Alumni Relations.

The conclave also focused on global regions which could be potential academic partners of the IITs for international students. Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, several countries in the ASEAN and Middle Eastern region, the African continent and Taiwan could be some of these regions. To take benefit of the competitive edge of academic disciplines in which the IITs excel, specific discipline oriented MoUs and agreements were also encouraged.

Prof. Anandaroop Bhattacharya, Associate Dean, International Relations at IIT Kharagpur proposed setting up a PAN IIT consortia with similar consortia in countries like France, Germany, Japan etc.

A key aspect of internationalization is increasing the presence of international faculty. IIT Madras highlighted their approach of hiring fresh doctorate holding researchers on a 3-year contract as visiting international faculty staff to work at IIT Madras. This gives the Institute as well as the faculty the opportunity to mutually experience different lines of thinking and could lead to long-term engagement.

Sharing of best practices and networking between International Relations offices for coordination and outreach activities was also proposed. “Such initiatives would help third generation IITs and standardize some of the key operation procedures,” concluded Prof. K. N. Satyanarayana, Director, IIT Tirupati