



NEWS CLIPS

SEPTEMBER 1-30, 2020

Dr. Harsh Vardhan launches CSIR Technologies for rural development under the joint initiative of IIT Delhi, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Vijnana Bharti and CSIR

September 30, 2020 <https://indiaeducationdiary.in/dr-harsh-varadhan-launches-csir-technologies-for-rural-development-under-the-joint-initiative-of-iit-delhi-unnat-bharat-abhiyanvijnana-bharti-and-csir/>



New Delhi: The Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Harsh Vardhan today launched CSIR Technologies for rural development under a joint initiative of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) and Vijnana Bharti (VIBHA). The event was organized through online platform on the occasion of CSIR-NISTADS 40th Foundation Day, here. The technologies released included:

Improved bee hive for quality and hygienic extraction of honey, CSIR-IHBT, Palampur

Technology for manufacturing of Ginger paste, CSIR-CFTRI, Mysore

Dehumidified drier for food and agri products, CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram; and

Technology for agricultural waste (wheat bran, sugarcane bagasse and fruit peels) based biodegradable plates, cups and cutlery, CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram

The Minister also released CSIR-NISTADS e-Compendium and e-Coffee Table Book, on the occasion.

Dr. Shekhar C Mande (DG-CSIR, Secretary, DSIR, GOI), Padma Bhushan Shri Vijay P. Bhatkar (Chairman-National Steering Committee, UBA), Prof Ram Gopal Rao (Director, IIT Delhi), Prof. Virendra K. Vijay (National Coordinator, UBA), Dr. Ranjana Aggarwal (Director, CSIR-NISTADS) were among the speakers throwing light on the synergy among science and technology interventions and rural upliftment. Various stakeholders including famous dignitaries, science experts, field experts, all Regional Coordinating Institutes and Participating Institutes of UBA, non-profit organisations, UBA volunteers, villagers and farmers of the adopted villages also participated in this programme organized with a purpose to enable the outreach of CSIR rural technologies to society.

A tripartite MoU to this effect was signed by the three parties on 28th July 2020 at CSIR to work jointly for post-COVID fast track action plan to create livelihood opportunities in rural areas, particularly for the people who have returned to their native villages in the lockdown period.

Over the years CSIR has developed several appropriate technologies which could be deployed in rural areas for development and livelihood generation and achieving sustainable development goals. These technologies will now be disseminated to society through the Higher Education Institutional network of UBA and local chapters of VIBHA. CSIR- National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (CSIR-NISTADS) is acting as a nodal CSIR Lab to establish linkages between CSIR laboratories, UBA, VIBHA, and stakeholders.

In his keynote address, Dr Harsh Vardhan congratulated CSIR-NISTADS on their 40th Foundation Day, and said, “they have been involved in exploring continuously the interface between Science, Technology and Society and have played an important role in science policy research in CSIR and at National Level also”. Stating that “appropriate intervention of Science & Technology can play a crucial catalytic role in bringing equity and equality in the process of development”, Dr Harsh Vardhan said that “Corporates, Research agencies, Organizations working with medium, small, and cottage level entrepreneurs, voluntary social organizations, NGOs, and socially cognizant citizens need to partner on a common platform to address various problems affecting the lives of millions”. He said, “the challenges that we would be facing need actions at several levels, and we need to explore and reinvent innovative approaches for actions from different stakeholders that include not just Government agencies but also voluntary social organizations, NGOs, Corporates, Entrepreneurs, academicians & Scientists and constructively supplement these efforts”.

He highlighted that “Unnat Bharat Abhiyan” is a flagship programme of Ministry of Education conceptualised and launched in IIT Delhi, with a vision of transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help build the architecture of an Inclusive India. “Unnat Bharat Abhiyan now constitutes 45 Regional Coordinating Institutions (RCIs) and 2,614 Participating Institutions (PIs). Till date, a total of 13,760 villages have been adopted under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan”, he added.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan expressed his confidence that “the agencies known for its knowledge, grassroot presence and technical competency, like IIT Delhi, VIBHA and their joining hands with CSIR can prove to be very useful for deployment of indigenously developed technologies by CSIR in rural areas”. He called for “greater synergy among innovative scientific solutions and tradition knowledge systems so that the fruits of this combination reaches to the every person, every village to for betterment of their lives and development of the country.”

CSIR, UBA, Vijnana Bharti have planned to work jointly on a framework for scientific intervention to create sustainable livelihood opportunities in the rural clusters under synergy of S&T Organizations (CSIR/DST/DBT/DRDO etc), VIBHA and UBA. It began with strengthening the network, where R&D organizations and institutions to take the role of nodal agencies who provide solutions to the felt need of the communities in the country. UBA nodal centers- RCIs are the solution facilitators and are the link that build capacities and connect to the solution seekers (community, farmer etc.) and solution disseminators such as Development agencies, Institutes, NGOs, and Panchayati Raj Institutions etc.

CSIR-National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies(NISTADS), New Delhi is one of the constituent laboratory of CSIR. It is devoted to a study of various aspects of interaction among science, society and state and exploring continuously the interface between Science, Technology and Society. Currently, the faculty comprises of highly qualified faculty members drawn from a variety of academic disciplines. This intellectual diversity is the mainstay of the institute. The Institute has core competence in Science and Technology policy Research mainly addressing the concerns and problems of developing countries. The institute's strength mainly lies in Interdisciplinary research teams, multi-discipline in faculty, long experience of field research.

Vijnana Bharti(Vibha): VIBHA, a science movement with swadeshi spirit, has a greater role to play. Swadeshi Science Movement was started in Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru by some eminent scientists under the guidance of Prof. K. I. Vasu. One of the founding principles of VIBHA is – Swadeshi Movement with modern sciences adapted to national needs.

IIT Delhi Undergraduate Students Receive Over 300 Internship Offers from International and National Companies

September 30, 2020 <https://www.dqindia.com/iit-delhi-undergraduate-students-receive-300-internship-offers-international-national-companies/>

IIT Delhi says that its undergraduate students have received over 300 internship offers from international and national companies

IIT Delhi has concluded its first phase of internship hiring, and undergraduates students from the institute have received over 300 offers says IIT Delhi. The internship hiring drive, which began on 6 September 2020 was conducted in the virtual mode. The Indian Institute of Technology Delhi says that its students received over 300 internship offers with over 230 unique selections including international training offers from Hong Kong, South Korea and the US.

The internship hiring season was held for undergraduate students from the second and third year of the 4-year BTech programs and fourth year of the 5-year dual degree program. Several students, IIT Delhi says, managed to bag multiple internship offers from national and international companies.

The entire process was conducted virtually through the online mode with the aid of multiple e-resources from registrations, students' orientations and trainings, company presentations, company pre-processes like tests, group discussions to selection interviews. The institute also states that over

150 organizations have already registered for the current internship hiring season, the final phase of which will begin in January 2021.

Anishya O Madan, ILO and Head, Office of Career Services (OCS), IIT Delhi said: “The number of selections has been quite impressive for the undergraduate students of the institute who have opted for summer internship for Summer 2021. We hope that the robust intern hiring numbers at the start of the season are an indication of hiring numbers in final placement as well.”

Teicoplanin, an antibiotic, could be potential medicine for Covid-19: IIT Delhi research

September 30, 2020 <https://www.hindustantimes.com/delhi-news/teicoplanin-an-antibiotic-could-be-potential-medicine-for-covid-19-iit-delhi-research/story-N6RFIN2h8lxQ2GC5sP1JSP.html>

In laboratory experiments, the medicine effectively inhibited the activity of the 3CLpro enzyme that is needed for replication of the Sars-CoV-2 virus, which causes Covid-19



The researchers decided to make the 3CLpro enzyme that they knew was the key for viral replication because a biosafety level (BSL)-3 laboratory—a requirement for any institute wanting to work on the Sars-CoV-2 virus—was not available.

Teicoplanin, an antibiotic medicine, may be a potential option for treating coronavirus disease (Covid-19) patients, according to a research conducted by scientists at Kusuma School of Biological Sciences (KSBS) in Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Delhi.

In laboratory experiments, the medicine effectively inhibited the activity of the 3CLpro enzyme that is needed for replication of the Sars-CoV-2 virus, which causes Covid-19.

The medicine was found to be up to 20 times more effective in inhibiting the activity of 3CLpro than some of the medicines that have been used in Covid-19 patients such as anti-malarial drug

Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) and Chloroquine, antibiotic Azithromycin, and anti-Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) medicine Lopinavir.

“Covid-19 has affected millions of people across the world and there is no specific treatment for the viral infection. We have been working for the last seven to eight months to find possible treatment for the infection. We started looking at drugs that are already approved and are in the market. If found effective, these drugs will be available for the treatment of Covid-19 patients,” said Dr Ashok Patel, assistant professor at KSBS, IIT-Delhi.

Earlier, KSBS was the first academic institute to develop a novel and cheaper reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) kit to conduct a Covid-19 test.

The researchers decided to make the 3CLpro enzyme that they knew was the key for viral replication because a biosafety level (BSL)-3 laboratory—a requirement for any institute wanting to work on the Sars-CoV-2 virus—was not available.

They found a way around to conduct the research about the virus that enters a human body and replicates within cells to cause Covid-19.

“We created a list of about 100 existing medicines that we thought could attack the captain of the cricket team, the 3CLpro protease (enzyme) that is crucial for viral replication. After testing, we found 11 molecules that were responding to this viral protein, which included the medicines already in use such as Azithromycin, Chloroquine, Lopinavir and even Oseltamivir that are used to treat H1N1, or swine flu. But, Teicoplanin turned out to be upto 20 times more effective than the other medicines,” said Dr Patel.

The researchers collaborated with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, for some advanced testing.

“Unlike HCQ, which is harmful for the heart, there aren’t any major side-effects of Teicoplanin,” he said. The institute did not have ethical clearance for human trials. However, these trials would be needed to prove that the medicine is, indeed, effective in treating the viral infection, he added.

“Teicoplanin is an approved broad spectrum antibiotic that is given to patients, especially in critical care, for various reasons. It is an interesting finding. However, viral culture studies and small human trials have to be conducted before it can be approved for an off-label use, which refers to a use of a medicine for a condition for which it was not approved. Many antibiotics such as Azithromycin and Doxycycline are being prescribed to Covid-19 patients across the country, and at times, indiscriminately. It might lead to large scale antimicrobial resistance in the future,” warned Dr Neeraj Gupta, a professor at the department of pulmonology in Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi.

IIT Delhi Releases the JEE Advanced Answer Key 2020 at <http://jeeadv.ac.in/>, Check Details Here

September 30, 2020 <https://www.news18.com/news/india/iit-delhi-releases-the-jee-advanced-answer-key-2020-at-httpjeeadv-ac-in-check-details-here-2921129.html>

The candidates who are not satisfied with any of the answer or found any discrepancy in the JEE advanced provisional answer key 2020 can submit their objections till October 1.

Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) advanced 2020 provisional answer key has been released by The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi on September 29. The candidates who have appeared for JEE advanced 2020 can check the answer key and calculate their possible scores at <http://jeeadv.ac.in/>.

The candidates who are not satisfied with any of the answer or found any discrepancy in the JEE advanced provisional answer key 2020 can submit their objections till October 1. JEE officials will release the final answer key 2020 after considering all the objections. The JEE advanced 2020 result will be declared on the basis of the final answer key.

How to check JEE advanced 2020 answer key:

Step 1. Visit the official website jeeadv.ac.in

Step 2. Click on the JEE advanced answer key link

Step 3. Enter your JEE advanced registration number and date of birth

Step 4. The JEE advanced 2020 answer key will be displayed on the screen

Step 5. Download the answer key and match your answers

Candidates can also check the JEE advanced 2020 provisional answer key directly by clicking on the link <http://cportal.jeeadv.ac.in/>

IIT Delhi will release the JEE result 2020 on October 5 on the official website. Once the JEE advanced result will be released, exam officials will start the seat allotment process from October 8. The students will be called for further counselling process on the basis of the JEE advanced seat allotment 2020.

Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSAA) will conduct the counselling. Eligible candidates who have successfully qualified the JEE Main or JEE advanced exams 2020 can do the registration at josaa.nic.in. There will be six counselling rounds instead of seven this year.

The JEE advanced 2020 was conducted by IIT Delhi on September 27. This year only 1.60 lakh students out of top 2.5 lakh eligible students have completed the registration process for JEE advanced 2020. A total of 1,51,311 candidates have appeared in Paper 1 of the exam, conducted in the morning while 1,50,900 candidates have appeared in paper 2, conducted in the afternoon. IIT Delhi has conducted the JEE advanced 2020 at 1,001 centres in 222 cities across the country.

IIT Delhi, ILBS sign MoU to solve unmet challenges in medical practice and health services

September 26, 2020 <https://indiaeducationdiary.in/iit-delhi-ilbs-sign-mou-to-solve-unmet-challenges-in-medical-practice-and-health-services/>

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), Delhi have signed an MoU to establish 'ILBS-IITD Collaborative Platform' initiating wide-ranging collaborations involving academic, research, product, process and human resource development. The MoU was signed by Prof V. Ramgopal Rao, Director, IIT Delhi and Dr. SK Sarin, Director, ILBS, Delhi.

The mission of the ILBS-IITD Collaborative Platform is to help in critical identification of the problems faced by the practicing doctors in metabolic and liver diseases, ranging from the primary health center to tertiary care super-specialty hospitals and to initiate the work jointly by the engineering and medical teams for sustainable solutions.

The scope of collaboration focusses on liver diseases and encompasses (i) to make intramural funding for the projects in both IIT Delhi and ILBS, to initiate the collaborative research among different medical and engineering disciplines of these two institutions (ii) To allow registered Ph.D students of both institutions to attend lectures and courses relevant to their area of research in each other's institutions and (iii) imitating joint Ph.D supervision and developing Technology Business Incubator (TBI).

The thrust areas of collaboration include (i) Use of Artificial Intelligence in Liver & Biliary diseases(ii) Bio-sensor development (iii) Computational biology and Big Data (iv) Material Sciences, Liver Dialysis Membranes and Machines (iv) 3D Bio-printing, Bio-artificial Liver (v) Process such as regenerative tissue growth (vi) Use of nano-science in diagnosis and effective drug delivery (vii) Applied principles and design concepts of engineering to healthcare and (viii) Establishment of an Incubation Center at ILBS, with the help of FITT (IIT Delhi) Speaking of the MoU with IIT Delhi, Dr. SK Sarin, Director, ILBS, Delhi, said, "Use of computational tools, AI and biosensors are of paramount importance in real-time inference and non-invasively from a large amount of diagnostic data. 'Team ILBS' with data of more than 200,000 liver patients is most suited and eager for rapid strides and joint ventures with IIT Delhi." Welcoming the MoU with ILBS, Prof V. Ramgopal Rao, Director, IIT Delhi, termed it as mutually beneficial partnership between the two eminent institutions having complementary expertise. He added, "Developing specialized human resources in interdisciplinary domains bridging engineering and medicine faculty to solve some of the challenges faced by the health sector in the country will be an important goal of this Collaborative Platform. IIT Delhi researchers will bring their expertise on machine learning and AI technologies to solve some of the outstanding problems in the area of liver and biliary medicine."

IIT-Delhi issues guidelines for JEE (Advanced) 2020

September 25, 2020 <https://telanganatoday.com/iit-delhi-issues-guidelines-for-jee-advanced-2020>

In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the IIT-D has discontinued the practice of displaying lab/hall/room number outside the test centres to avoid crowding at one place

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Delhi which is organising the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Advanced 2020 has issued guidelines for the conduct of exam on September 27.

In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the IIT-D has discontinued the practice of displaying lab/hall/room number outside the test centres to avoid crowding at one place. Instead, the staff at the centres will guide candidates to the respective labs after scanning the bar code on the admit card.

“No candidate will be denied permission to appear for the examination unless she/he violates the Covid-19 directives/advisories of Government (Central/State) applicable on the day of exam and instructions mentioned in the admit card,” the IIT-D said.

In Telangana, the JEE Advanced will be held in 15 test cities/towns including Adilabad, Hyderabad, Jangaon, Karimnagar, Khammam, Kodad, Mahabubnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Palvoncha, Sathupally, Siddipet, Suryapet and Warangal.

The paper-I is scheduled from 9 am to 12 noon, and paper-II from 2.30 pm to 5.30 pm. Before entering the exam venue, all candidates are required to sanitize their hands by washing with soap or sanitizer available at the centre. The filled-in Covid-19 self-declaration on the admit card and the body temperature, using thermo guns, will be checked at the entry into the exam venue.

After the commencement of paper-II, all candidates must hand-over their admit card (duly filled and signed Covid-19 self-declaration) to the invigilator. If any candidate misses to hand-over the admit card to the invigilator, action which also includes disqualification from the exam can be taken against the candidate, the IIT-D said.

Before the commencement of each paper, the seating area including monitor, keyboard, mouse, webcam, desk, and chair will be thoroughly sanitized. Candidates can further sanitize the same with sanitizers available in the exam hall/room.

To ensure physical distancing in the exam hall/room, the IIT-D said alternate seats will be kept vacant and at centres where there is sufficient space between seats, six feet distance will be maintained between the seats.

According to reports, 1.60 lakh students from across the country have registered for the exam which is held for admissions into IITs.

IIT Delhi launches new UG course: B.Tech in Engineering and Computational Mechanics

September 24, 2020 <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/delhi/2020/sep/24/iit-delhi-launches-new-ug-coursebtechin-engineering-and-computational-mechanics-2201212.html>

The new programme will be run by the Department of Applied. Students will be given extra choice to choose this programme after qualifying via JEE

The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT-D) has launched a new undergraduate programme— Bachelors of Technology (B.Tech) in Engineering and Computational Mechanics-- for the fresh batch of 2020-21. The new programme will be run by the Department of Applied. Students will be given extra choice to choose this programme after qualifying via JEE Advanced.

“The graduates of this programme are likely to find the best technical jobs in core engineering and will also be very apt candidates for higher studies like Master’s and PhD in IIT Delhi as well as other leading national and international educational institutions,” said Professor Sanjeev Sanghi, Head of Department (HoD), Applied Mechanics.

“Design, analysis and research jobs in sectors such as defence, aerospace, automotive, shipping, bio-mechanics and bio-medical devices, off-shore structures, etc will be open to students in this programme, which has been designed based on consultation with industry,” Sanghi added. The students taking this course will be able to analyse complex interdisciplinary phenomena relevant to problems in industry and cutting edge research through experimentation, analysis and computation, said the officials.

COVID-19: IIT Delhi-Developed Facial Protection Equipment Receives Financial Support

September 17, 2020 <https://www.ndtv.com/education/covid-19-iit-delhi-developed-facial-protection-equipment-receives-financial-support>

Rapid prototyping will be employed to mass produce COVLOCK at IIT Delhi for frontline workers and organisations battling COVID-19 at a low-cost.

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has developed a type of protective gear -- COVLOCK -- for use by frontline workers combatting COVID-19. The low-cost COVLOCK has received financial support from Clifford Chance Business Services. The protective gear, as per an IIT Delhi statement, restricts person-to-person transmission of coronavirus when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It is an “innovative ergonomic” face mask, which can comfortably be worn for long durations just like a pair of glasses.

“Rapid prototyping will be employed to mass produce COVLOCK at IIT Delhi for frontline workers and organisations at an ultra-low cost,” said the IIT Delhi statement

Thanking the Clifford Chance Business Services for the financial support, the principal investigator of the project, Professor Arnab Chanda, Centre for Biomedical Engineering, IIT Delhi said: “COVLOCK is the first ergonomic 3D-Printed face shield for prolonged wear and comfort. This project is a collaboration between IIT Delhi and Clifford Chance Business Services and offers the potential of making a meaningful difference in this situation by equipping the front runners in the healthcare industry with the appropriate protection gear.”

Professor V Ramgopal Rao, Director, IIT Delhi in the statement said: “In an effort to contain the raging pandemic, personal protective equipment is a highly valuable aid. These shields are sure to be

utilised by COVID-19 frontline workers. IIT Delhi has been at the forefront of innovation, and we are glad to have corporate support in our endeavours.”

“We are hopeful that more companies will follow suit,” added the IIT Delhi Director.

Professor Anurag S Rathore, Dean, Corporate Relations, IIT Delhi added: “These tough times call for industry and academia to work together for the betterment of the prevalent conditions, and this association will prove to be a successful step in that direction. As IIT Delhi continues to devise methods to battle the pandemic, we urge more companies to come forward and join us in our endeavours.”

IIT Delhi faculties elected as Fellows of INAE 2020 for contributions in engineering & technology

September 13, 2020 <https://www.timesnownews.com/education/article/iit-delhi-faculties-elected-as-fellows-of-inae-2020-for-contributions-in-engineering-technology/651813>

Indian Institute of Technology, IIT Delhi faculties have been elected as Fellows of the Indian National Academy of Engineering, INAE 2020. Five faculty members have been selected as a fellow for INAE 2020.

Indian Institute of Technology, IIT Delhi faculty members have been elected as Fellows of the Indian National Academy of Engineering, INAE 2020 for their contributions to engineering and technology. Five faculty members of the Institute have been selected as a fellow for INAE 2020.

IIT Delhi Director, V. Ramgopal Rao has congratulated these five faculty members of the institute. He wrote, “Five #IITDelhi faculty members have been elected as Fellows of the Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE) in the year 2020 in recognition of their contributions to engineering and technology. Hearty congratulations to them.”

Prof. Naveen Garg of Computer Science and Engineering, Kamal Kishore Pant of Chemical Engineering, Indra Narayan Kar of Electrical Engineering, Jayadeva of Electrical Engineering, and Suddhasatwa Basu of Chemical Engineering are selected for the fellowship.

As a Fellow of INAE, the person should be Indian nationals who have worked and/or maintained a regular position in India for the last five or more years and have significantly contributed to the engineering and technological field in India. The Academy has several criteria for election to the fellowship that needs to be followed by professors who are applying for it, as per the official site.

Meanwhile, IIT Delhi has set up the ‘School of Artificial Intelligence’. The school will offer a Ph.D. program to students and the admission cycle would begin from January 2021. The Institute is also planning to offer PG level degree courses in this school soon.

About INAE

The Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE), founded in 1987 comprises India’s most distinguished engineers, engineer-scientists, and technologists covering the entire spectrum of engineering disciplines. INAE’s activities include programmes on issues of technology policy and

overall development for the benefit of society, and the Academy promotes research projects, pilot studies, engineering education, fellowships, scholarships, awards and other benefactions. Seminars/Workshops/ Round Tables are conducted on topics of current national importance.

IIT Delhi campus likely in Saudi Arabia: Indian Envoy

September 12, 2020 <https://ummid.com/news/2020/september/12.09.2020/iit-delhi-likely-to-have-campus-in-saudi-arabia-indian-envoy.html>

Indian Institutes of Technology are premier autonomous public technical and research universities located across India

The Indian Ambassador in Saudi Arabia, Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Friday said talks are on with concerned authorities to establish Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus, most probably that of IIT Delhi, in the Kingdom.

"With the education sector witnessing changes, the Kingdom has expressed interest in setting up an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus in Saudi Arabia", Dr Sayeed said during a webinar to discuss the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Indo-Saudi bilateral economic relations.

"We are in talks with the pertinent authorities to allow an IIT campus which could be a win-win situation for both countries, and the likelihood is that IIT Delhi could set up its campus in Saudi Arabia", he added.

The Indian Institutes of Technology are premier autonomous public technical and research universities located across India. Brainchild of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister, the first IIT was established in August 1951 at Kharagpur. As of today there are 23 IITs in India, including the one in New Delhi.

Dr. Sayeed said that Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trading partner and 39th largest investor with FDI close to \$318m in past two decades.

"During 2019, \$100 billion MoUs were signed, and recently the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) invested \$1.5 in telecom company in India with additional investment interests in multiple startups showcasing importance of the upcoming innovative solutions from India", he said, according to Saudi Gazette.

"India enjoys edge in technology and better economics in the domain of pharmaceutical, information technology, tourism, education and chemical industries where lot of business interest are seen. India continues to remain third largest importer during last quarter despite global slowdown", he said.

"Similarly, Saudi Arabia has shown increasing imports from India in certain sectors viz cereals, organic chemicals, automobile accessories, mineral fuels. The creation of Strategic Partnership Council (SPC) and joint working groups beneath in IT, energy, industrial infrastructure, agriculture and food security is expected to reveal growing relationship with India," Dr. Sayeed said highlighting the bilateral relations between the two countries.

IIT-Delhi to establish School of Artificial Intelligence; PhD admissions to begin from January 2021

September 12, 2020 <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/india/iit-delhi-to-establish-school-of-artificial-intelligence-phd-admissions-from-january-2021-5830271.html>

Admission process for the PhD programme will begin from January 2021, while post graduate (PG) level degree courses “are being planned”

The Indian Institute of Technology – Delhi (IIT-Delhi) will establish an independent ‘School of Artificial Intelligence’ (ScAI) on campus.

Admission process for the PhD programme will begin from January 2021, while post graduate (PG) level degree courses “are being planned,” the institute added.

Prof V Ramgopal Rao, Director, IIT Delhi said, “Future progress of a nation will depend on its AI capability.” He further noted that while India is ranked 5th in the world in terms of number of AI companies and jobs, it lags in “some very important aspects,” such as number of AI researchers and overall quality and quantity of AI research.

“To fill this gap, IIT-Delhi has decided to establish the ScAI. One of the goals is also to strengthen IIT Delhi’s place on the global map of AI”, Rao added.

Among other objectives listed include:

- Bring together faculty and individuals invested in various aspects of the field, thus acting as a force multiplier for overall research productivity.
- Provide branding to IIT-Delhi in the important field, allowing global visibility and becoming a one-stop centre for industry or government collaborations or funding AI innovations.
- Provide a platform for industry, government and civil society entities to share domain problems, which can be matched with relevant faculty analytical and technical expertise.
- Initiate AI focused educational programs at the PG level, followed by professional level educational programs once critical mass of core AI researchers is achieved

Speaking on the need for a specific program, Rao said current degrees are “broad-based” and do not allow students to learn the depth and subfields within AI. “There is strong demand globally for skilled AI practitioners, which these programs can cater to,” he noted.

For faculty, ScAI will have a flexible model including core, joint and adjunct faculty members, not excluding industry insiders.