

Dear IIT Gandhinagar Friends, Alumni, Parents, and Well-Wishers,

Welcome to the second edition of our annual update letter where we reflect on the year that has gone by. The year of 2017 has been among our most eventful. We started with the visits of **Nobel Laureates Professor Randy W. Schekman and Professor Harold E. Varmus** in the month of January. Professor Varmus is a Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine, while Professor Schekman is at the University of California in Berkeley. They delivered inspiring lectures and interacted with our faculty and students.



► Ceremonial naming of the Jasubhai Memorial Auditorium

We organized a **seminar on Campus Development** in February, which showcased the hard work and dedication of the entire team engaged in campus development with awards, discussions and presentations on the development of IIT Gandhinagar Palaj Campus. In the same month, we had the **ceremonial naming of the Jasubhai Memorial Auditorium**, in the memory of Late Shri Jasubhai Shah.

The **Japanese State Minister of Finance Mr Taku Otsuka** and 17 other Japanese officials visited IIT Gandhinagar in May. The Japanese delegation met students and faculty members at the campus and visited our laboratories.



► Mr. Taku Otsuka with Prof. Sudhir K. Jain



In the month of October, **our campus was dedicated to the service of the nation by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi**. The dedication ceremony took place in the presence of several dignitaries including the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Vijaybhai Rupani and Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Prakash Javadekar.



► Dedication of the IIT Gandhinagar Campus to the nation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi

We are also proud to share that **Prof. Michel Danino, Guest Professor, was conferred on Padma Shri** for his contributions towards Literature and Education.

### *National and International Partnerships*

Prof. Manuel V Heitor, Portuguese Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education visited us in January. As a follow up of his visit, **we signed an MOU with the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology** and the MOUs were exchanged in presence of the two Prime Ministers. We already have a vibrant relationship with ISCTE-IUL Lisbon, and look forward to building more partnerships in Portugal. President Asano of **Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (JAIST)** visited us in August and **signed an agreement for a double degree Masters program**. We also **signed an MOU with the University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka**, in September. The MoU intends to promote research and academic exchanges between the two institutions.

We became the first IIT where **Indian Army has created a Research Cell** by deputing an officer full-time. The Research Cell is meant to engage our faculty and students to identify relevant problems, and to initiate focused research. With support from the **Underwriters Laboratories**, we inaugurated the **William Henry Merrill Fire Engineering Lab**. Our Research Park took off during the year. **Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd. (GUVNL) has established its R&D Unit** in the park with 13 researchers. **Final Mile** and **BBC** are the other two companies to join our Research Park.

We have had a special year in terms of collaborative events in the nature of workshops, conferences and schools. Together with [ten faculty members of University of Saskatchewan in Canada](#), Dr. Ambika Aiyadurai organized a Summer Institute on [Social Justice: Practice and Research](#) for participants from across the country.

In 2013, the National Geographic Society initiated a five-year annual conference called [Dialogue of Civilizations](#) to encourage scholarly and public discourse about five ancient, literate civilizations of the world. IIT Gandhinagar hosted academic sessions this year as a part of the fourth conference in this series which witnessed participation from a wide range of archaeologists.



- ▶ Exchange of MOUs with the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology in the presence of the Prime Ministers of India and Portugal

We also hosted an [International Seminar on Enigma of Nature](#) in collaboration with Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, an [International Conference on Changing Landscape of Science & Technology Libraries](#), two GIAN courses on topics in [Pattern Matching](#) and [Computational Social Choice](#), and an [International Conference on Exploring the History of Mathematics](#). Apart from these we hosted over ten national-level workshops and schools. These contribute not only to collaborations, training and research output, but also to the vibrant academic atmosphere on campus.

This summer also witnessed our traditional programs going from strength to strength: our flagship [Explorer's Fellowship program](#), where students travel across the length and breadth of the country on a frugal budget, was availed by as many as 98 students, doubling the strength from the previous edition. We started the [Gram Fellowship](#) this year, wherein a student experiences a rural lifestyle in an immersive fashion. Our [Summer Internship program](#) had another successful run as well.

## Community Outreach

It is important for us to make a difference to our immediate neighborhood. **Nurture & Empower Entrepreneurial Ventures (NEEV)**, our community outreach program, continues to be deeply engaged with the needs of communities in our immediate neighborhood, and they organized a Vocational Skills Training Course during summer and several Entrepreneurship Development Workshops and Business Skill Competitions as well. **Three consultants from SAP Global spent their 'social sabbatical' at IIT Gandhinagar** to assist the NEEV program.



► Snapshot from a workshop organized by the Creative Learning Initiative

Our new venture into reforming school education saw massive growth this year. Helping school teachers and students with hands-on, experiential education, the **Creative Learning Initiative (CLI)** at IIT Gandhinagar aims to provide a space and environment where learning can be joyous and lead to conceptual understanding. Apart from the school community, the initiative engages with students of IIT Gandhinagar as well, and also collaborates with faculty to help with improving the classroom experience by devising appropriate demonstrations and projects.

IIT Gandhinagar remains one of India's fastest growing institutes of higher education. **Started less than a decade ago, it has started to build a reputation for innovation in research, teaching, and community engagement.** We hope you enjoyed the glimpses of the novel initiatives that we have taken in our attempt to revitalize and reimagine the scope and context of a modern engineering education. We plan to not only continue but amplify our now-established traditions of innovation — and we look forward to your being a part of our bold narrative.

Best wishes,  
Sudhir K. Jain