Indian Institute of Technology

IIT Mandi organized workshop on Indian Knowledge System and Mental Health on 25th-27th March, 2022

March 28, 2022

The Indian Institute of Technology Mandi aims to provide students, academia, and practitioners with insights on empirical research pertaining to the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and mental health. Towards this goal, the Institute organized a three-day workshop on 'Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and Mental Health' between 25th and 27th March 2022 in partnership with IIT Mandi iHub and HCI Foundation. The workshop was sponsored by the State Bank of India, Netweb Technologies, and Hospimedical.

With the advent of leading artificial intelligence and human-computer interaction, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) education highlights the importance and benefits of this system for the

body, the mind, and the consciousness. The workshop covered talks and brainstorming on graduate curricula based on IKS, as well as different research topics related to it.

Addressing the inaugural event, Chief Guest Shri. K Sanjay Murthy, Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of India, said, "The transformation of traditional knowledge forms into science is the need of the hour. It is essential that these knowledge systems be standardized in terms of their utility and consumption by the general population without creating any hype or unverified claims. I am glad that IIT Mandi has taken this step to formalize Indian Knowledge Systems as a scientific discipline. Mental health is also subjected to a great deal of social stigma in India, with youth and seniors alike suffering from various mental disorders. It is important that this subject be dealt with within the Indian Knowledge Systems within a holistic framework for its acceptance among Indians."

Using bio-signals such as electroencephalograms (EEGs), brain imaging, as well as virtual reality-based immersive neuron-feedback, the programme envisioned at IIT Mandi seeks scientific innovations aimed at addressing mental health with the Indian Knowledge System. This will allow both IKS and mental health challenges to benefit from a scientific approach.

Highlighting the importance of the workshop, Professor Laxmidhar Behera, Director, IIT Mandi, emphasized that the very foundation of the Indian Knowledge System was built on the hypothesis that matter in its elementary (subtle) form is cognitive and thus cognitive emotion and behavior are not emergent properties of any complex molecular combinations**.**

Underlining the importance of this approach, Prof. Laxmidhar Behera, **said,** "Mental health is becoming an issue for everyone like a pandemic due to a lack of proper scientific understanding of the holistic nature of body, brain, and mind. This workshop is a platform where experts will deliberate on all issues related to IKS and its relevance to mental health. IIT Mandi has taken the initiative to start an academic program on IKS and Mental Health. A proper deliberation will help this program to get the right direction. There will be a brainstorming panel discussion on course curriculum as well as a similar discussion on enumerating relevant research agendas useful for society at large. I welcome everyone for joining in these very important deliberations that may set new standards for an inclusive paradigm for science and technology."

Speaking about the objectives of the workshop, the Guest of Honor, Padma Shri Acharya Nagendra, said, "Firstly, I would like to congratulate IIT Mandi for organizing such an event which has brought together experts from all around the world to share their knowledge about the Indian Knowledge System. With mental health becoming a major concern globally, it is imperative we go back to our Indian Knowledge System and find solutions that can help us lead better lives."