



# Newsletter

*Office of International Relations, IIT Bombay*  
*January, 2021 – June, 2021*

## *Word from Dean International Relations*



**Prof. Amit Agrawal,**  
**Dean International Relations**

In the past several months, the rapidly evolving situation of the pandemic has brought about multi-faceted challenges to people globally and across the higher education community. In response to this global public health crisis, we have been working diligently to handle various emerging issues, ensure the wellbeing and health of our students, faculty and staff, and align efforts to continue teaching and research. We at the Office of International Relations have been working virtually, yet closely with our international partner universities to further strengthen our cooperation and partnership at all levels. Through this newsletter, we are sharing the activities that have taken place in the last six months. Hope you enjoy reading!

## *Virtual Meetings*

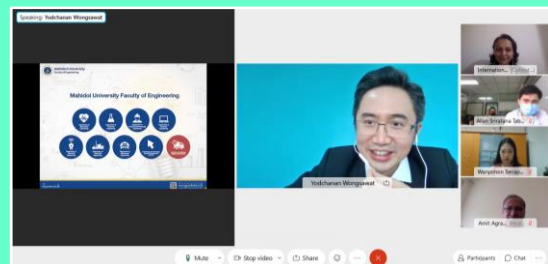
The virtual meetings look set to remain in the post-pandemic workplace. It comes as no surprise that business travel has dwindled in the past year. But what might come as a surprise is that this dip is suggested to last even after travel restrictions are eased. While virtual meetings might miss out on the intimacy and productivity of smaller, in-person meetings they enable the sharing of ideas among wider audiences, increasing participation and contribution. The virtual meetings also support our rapidly evolving world of global operations, instant access and connectivity. These meetings led to building new partnerships as well as continuing the activities with our existing partners.

- Imperial College of London, UK – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 - Mr. Alex Page, Senior International Relations Officer for Asia and Ms. Rosanna Gillespie, International Relations Officer, South Asia.
- Newcastle University, UK - Prof. Richard Davies, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Engagement and Internationalisation & Ms. Lesley Jackson, International Relations and Partnerships Manager.
- Adama Science and Technology University, Ethiopia – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 - Dr. Perumalla Janaki Ramulu, Director, Center of Excellence for Advanced Manufacturing Engineering.
- Inonu University, Turkey – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 - Prof. Ekrem Atalan, International Office Coordinator; Mr. Hasan Toman, Erasmus Institutional Coordinator; Mrs. Samira Zafer, International Office Staff.

- Consulate General of France in Mumbai – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021 - Dr. Olivier Fudym, Attache for Scientific and Academic Cooperation and Ms. Amruta Datar, Deputy to Attache of Academic and Scientific Cooperation – West India.
- University of Colombo, Sri Lanka – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 - Prof. Chandrika Wijeyaratne, Vice Chancellor; Prof. Upul Sonnadara, Dean, Faculty of Science; Dr. Darshana Perera, Faculty of Technology; Dr. Sashika Manoratne, Director of International Office; Mr. Mohamed Shifar, Assistant Registrar and Ms. Kalhari, Coordinator International Office.
- Simon Fraser University, Canada - 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 - Dr. Gretchen Ferguson, Director Global Engagement; Dr. Kero Lau, Dept. of Physics and Ms. Sarah Ngo, Manager Global Engagement.
- University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 - Prof. G.B. Herath, Dean, Faculty of Engineering; Prof. S. R Kodithuwakku, Dean, Faculty of Science; Prof. Shameen Jinadasa, Director International Relations Office; Dr. U. I. Dissanayake, Head - Dept. of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering; Dr. Kamalanath Samarakoon, Dept. of Computer Engineering, Faculty of Engineering; Dr. Amalka Pinidiyaarchchi, Dept. of Computer Science, Faculty of Science; Mr. Roshan Pradeep, Project Manager, International Relations Office.
- National Taiwan University – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 – Prof. Chang-Ping Yu, Project Leader; Prof. Hsiao-Wei Yuan, Vice President for International Affairs and Ms. Amber Chen, Manager, Global Partnerships.
- Iraqi Cultural Office in New Delhi – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 – Dr. Ammar Abdulhamed Khader, Associate Cultural Attache, Embassy of the Republic of Iraq.



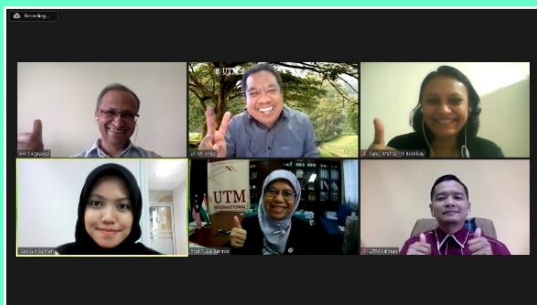
**Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Indonesia**



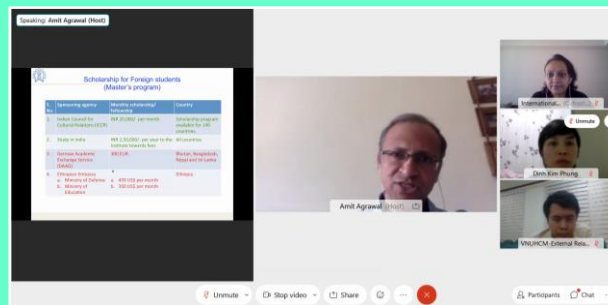
**Mahidol University, Thailand**

- Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Mumbai – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Mr. Agus P. Saptono, Consul General and Mrs. Tennike Erman, Consul Socio-cultural.
- King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - Prof. Khaled N. Salama, Head of International Activities.
- King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 - Prof. Abdulrahman Al-Wahhabi, International Relations Head and Prof. Hisham Mortada, Advisor to International Relations.
- Vyatka State University, Russia – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 - Prof. Sergey Fomin, Vice-Rector for International Affairs & Ms. Jeanette Merkulova - Deputy Head of the International Department.
- Coventry University, UK – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – Prof. John Latham, Vice-Chancellor; Prof. Richard Dashwood, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research & Development and Mr. Alan Gemmell, Trade Commissioner to South Asia and British Deputy High Commissioner for Western India.
- Kazakh-British Technical University, Kazakhstan – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Prof. Rassim Suliyeu, Dean of Faculty of Information Technologies; Prof. Alibek Bissembayev, Deputy Dean at Faculty of Information Technology and Ms. Aiza Shinbayeva, Manager, Department of Internationalization and Strategic development.

- University of Gadjah Mada, Indonesia – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – Dr. I Made Andi Arsana, Head of Office of International Affairs; Ms. Adhe Nurcahyarini, Office of International Affairs and Ms. Sepitri Indrayanti, Office of International Affairs.
- Persian Gulf University, Iran – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Prof. Arash Khosravi, Director of International Affairs and Overseas Students.
- Sabanci University, Turkey – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Prof. Abdullah Dasci, Director, International Relations Office & Professor of Operations Management and Ms. Evrim Gungor, International Relations Office.
- Chulalongkorn University, Thailand – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Asst. Prof. Natt Leelawat, Assistant Dean for Communications and International Affairs, Faculty of Engineering; Ms. Sukalin Wanakasemsan, Director of the Division of Global Academic Affairs, Office of International Affairs and Global Network; Ms. Chanita Somsuwan, International Affairs Officer, Faculty of Engineering; Mr. Phuwarech Duangmanee, International Affairs Officer, Faculty of Engineering; Mr. Nattapong Preesit, International Coordinator, Office of International Affairs and Global Network.



**Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia**



**Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City**

- Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismid Md Said, Pro-Vice Chancellor International, UTM International; Prof. Dr. Nor Haniza Sarmin, Assoc. Director Global Strategy & Engagement, UTM International and Mr. Ahmad Hilman Borhan, Manager International Relations.
- Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021 - Prof. Andika Putra Pratama (Professor School of Management), Head of Division of International Partnerships, Bureau of Partnerships; Prof. Tatacipta Dirgantara, Faculty of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Prof. Ivonne Milichristi Radjawane, Faculty of Earth Science and Technology; Prof. Febri Zukhruf, Faculty of Civil and Environmental Engineering; Prof. Yuki Agriardi Koswara, Faculty of Art and Design; Prof. Mohammad Rachmat Sule, Faculty of Mining and Petroleum Engineering.
- King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Assoc. Prof. Anak Khantachawana, Assistant to the President for Internationalization; Ms. Sasima Juwasophi, Director, International Affairs Office and Ms. Waralee Poolket, International Affairs Office.
- Mahidol University, Thailand – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 - Ms. Wanpimon Senapadpakorn, Director, International Relations Division; Ms. Tassanaporn Hongyon, International Relations Officer; Asst. Prof. Dr. Patreeya Kitcharoen, Assistant Dean for International Relations and Corporate Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities; Mrs. Naphanat Kongkarat, Head of International Relations Section, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yodchanan Wongsawat, Vice Dean for Research and International Relations, Faculty of Engineering; Dr. Allan Sriratana Tabucanon, Assistant to the Dean for Corporate Communication and International Relations, Faculty of Environment and Resource Studies; Professor Dr. Peter Haddawy, Deputy Dean for Research Development, Faculty of Information and Communication

Technology; Dr. Withoon Chunwachirasiri, Head of Department of Physics; Asst. Prof. Dr. Chanun Lewchalermvong, Deputy Head of Department of Mathematics; Ms. Nongnuch Prasomkhum, Head of International Cooperation Office, Faculty of Science; Mr. Sethavudh Kaewviset, International Relations Officer, Faculty of Science.

- Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Indonesia – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - Assoc. Prof. Maria Anityasari, Ph.D, Director Global Engagement; Dr. Astria Nur Irfansyah, Senior Manager International Partnership; Ms. Nastiti Prima, Staff for International Partnership.
- Aalto University, Finland – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – Ms. Kirsi Kettula, Head of Global Engagement and Ms. Kiruthika Srinivasan, Senior Manager, Global Engagement, Aalto University
- Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - Prof. Chu Duc Trinh, Vice-Rector of International Cooperation and Research & Development, University of Engineering & Technology; Assoc. Prof. Bui Thanh Tung, University of Engineering & Technology and Dr. Pham Ngoc Thao, University of Engineering & Technology.
- University of Gadjah Mada, Indonesia – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - Dr. Danang Sri Hadmoko, Director of Cooperation, Alumni and Global Initiatives; Dr. I Made Andi Arsana, Head of Office of International Affairs; Dr. Bambang Hudayana, Head of Center for Rural and Regional Development Studies; Dr. Sudarmaji, Head of Geophysics Study Program, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences; Dr. Hendy Setiawan, Secretary of Magister Program Study of Geological Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Dr. Herlan Darmawan, Secretary of Geophysics Study Program, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.
- Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021 - Mr. Bui Le Vu, Deputy Director, Department of External Relations and Project Development; Dr. Nguyen Le Dung, Deputy Head of External Relations Office, University of Technology; Dr. Vo Hong Hai, Deputy Head of External Relations Office, University of Sciences; Mrs. Dinh Kim Phung, Deputy Head of External Relations Office, International University; Ms. Ho Thi Minh Phuong, Deputy Head of External Relations Office, University of Information Technology; Mr. Nguyen Huu Quy, Department of External Relations and Project Development and Ms. Nguyen Tran Nguyet Thu, External Relations Office, University of Technology.
- Delft University of Technology, Netherlands - Prof. Herman Russchenberg, Director Climate Institute and Head of the Department of Geoscience and Remote Sensing and Dr. Marie Kummerlowe, Policy Advisor Global Engagement.

## *Partnerships*

New agreements open doors for collaboration and global partnership contributes immensely to academic and scientific progress. Besides mutual sharing of best practices and expertise, the agreements facilitate the academic and student exchange whereby the participating students and faculty from both institutions come together for joint studies, research and training activities, and other educational programs of mutual interest.



**MOU e-signing ceremony  
IIT Bombay & Coventry University, UK**



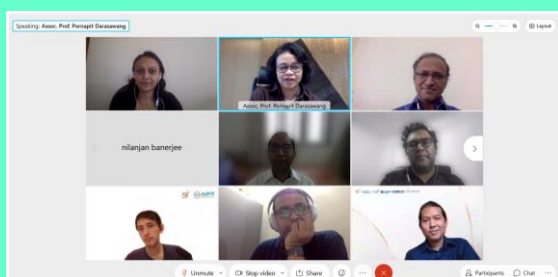
We have signed agreements with the following universities in the past six months:

- Adama Science and Technology, Ethiopia
- Sunway International Business School, Nepal
- Inonu University, Turkey
- Coventry University, UK
- Temple University, USA

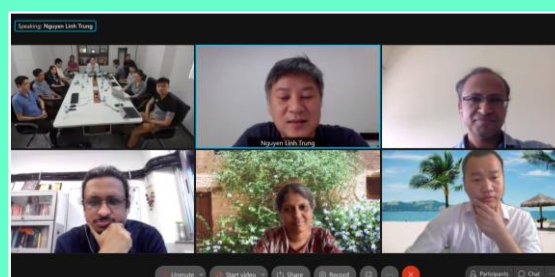
## ***Workshops***

The faculty research workshops are important for portraying the ongoing research and other activities in IIT Bombay, which helps improve the impression of the institute outside our country. The virtual workshops bring together faculty members from different institutes who share a common interest or problem. The workshop aims to be a platform for faculty members to introduce their research, build connections, and find synergies for potential collaborations. This is also an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to exchange research experiences, and explore studying, exchange, and research opportunities abroad through the international partnerships. We had six research workshops with our international partner universities in last six months and the details are as follows:

- BRICS Network Universities International Thematic Group Meeting (Energy) Workshop on Generation and Storage of Renewable Energy - 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021
- University of Sydney, Australia on Advanced Materials for Batteries - 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021
- Simon Fraser University, Canada on Quantum Science and Technologies - 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- Mahidol University, Thailand on Climate Modeling for Designing Adaptation - 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand on Composites - 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021
- Vietnam National University, Hanoi Vietnam on Healthcare Engineering – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021



**Workshop - IIT Bombay & King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand**



**Workshop - IIT Bombay & Vietnam National University, Hanoi**

## ***BRICS Network University***

The Chairmanship of BRICS NU (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa – Network University) is with India for the year 2021 and IIT Bombay is the lead institution of India for BRICS NU. BRICS NU is a union of higher education institutions of the five BRICS member countries, formed with the objective of enhancing educational cooperation in general and especially in the realm of research and innovation. The six priority fields of study at the BRICS NU are Energy, Computer Science and Information Security, BRICS Studies, Ecology and Climate Change, Water Resources and Pollution Treatment, and Economics.

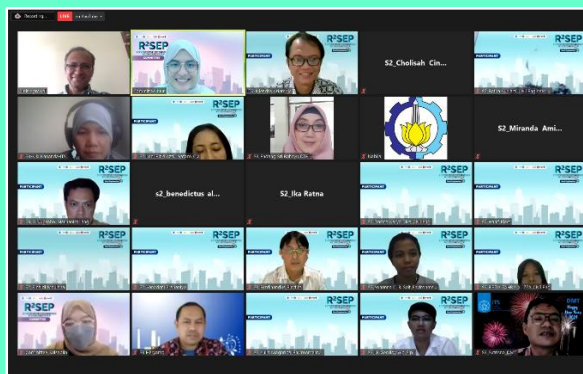
A screenshot of a Zoom meeting interface. The top bar shows the meeting title "Zoom Konfigurasikan" and the time "12:00". The main area displays a grid of 14 video feeds. The participants are: Rajni Deyaneri, Dr. Shamsul Hameed, Raji Prabhakar, Yang Li Qian, Yang Li Qian, Rajni Deyaneri, Dr. Shamsul Hameed, Human University Zhong, Prof. Cesar Tovar, Samir Chakrabarti, Rajni Deyaneri, Rajni Deyaneri, DEAN'S OFFICE, Dr. Shamsul Hameed, and NCWU Ma.Q. The bottom bar shows the Zoom logo and a "Join" button.

Recently IIT Bombay had organised a three day, BRICS NU World Conference 2021 on “Electric Mobility” from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021. This conference brought together 20 distinguished speakers and several researchers from leading universities of BRICS countries, who shared and exchange their experiences on all aspects of Electric Vehicle Technologies over the period of three days. The Inaugural event of the conference had a brief talk by Shri. Amit Khare, Hon’ble Secretary, Higher Education Department who guided on the ways to enhance and foster international collaborations under BRICS NU. The highlight of conference was the plenary talk by the Chief Guest Shri. Nitin Gadkari, Hon’ble Minister for Road Transport & Highways and the Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Government of India who shared his valuable insights on the theme of the conference. The International Governing Board (IGB) meeting of the BRICS NU was held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021, to take a look at the progress made by member states under this initiative so far, and discuss ways to take it further. Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri, along with Shri. Amit Khare, Hon’ble Secretary, Higher Education Department, Shri. D P Singh, Chairman UGC attended as members from India in the BRICS NU IGB. The IGB stressed upon the need to promote development of mechanisms to enhance academic and research collaborations among BRICS members. All these activities were held in virtual mode and more activities are planned in the near future under BRICS NU.

As one of the international relations activities, we conducted information sessions for the students of the international universities. The primary purpose of an information session is to put a spotlight on IIT Bombay and it is a great way of connecting with the students. These sessions provided information on the life and opportunities at IIT Bombay thereby enhancing the visibility of IIT Bombay and encouraging more students to consider IIT Bombay as next career option. Also the students were made aware of the various scholarships available to them for studying in India like ICCR, SII, ASEAN and the institute teaching assistantships. We conducted the information sessions with the following international universities:

- University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
- Adama Science and Technology Universities, Ethiopia
- Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Indonesia

Besides the students of international universities, we also conducted two information sessions for the students who had applied this year for admissions to IIT Bombay. These interactive sessions helped clarify the student queries and guided them on the smooth application procedure at IIT Bombay. Professor S Sudarshan, Deputy Director Academic and Infrastructural Affairs and Professor Prita Pant, Associate Dean Academic Programmes, joined us to answer student queries during these sessions.



**Information Session  
Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Indonesia**

### ***Activities under Consortia / Networks***

IIT Bombay is part of many consortia and is associated with many networks as well. These consortia / networks provide a venue for universities to share their valuable experiences to improve higher education and international cooperation by fostering academic and cultural exchanges. There were some activities that were carried out under these consortia / networks, all in virtual mode in past six months:

#### ***Asian Universities Alliance***

Asian Universities Alliance (AUA) is a very active alliance and IIT Bombay students, faculty and staff have been actively participating in its activities which are hosted by the AUA Secretariat and member universities of this alliance. AUA aims to enhance the existing ties and facilitate new links among member institutions and foster a multicultural learning environment, specifically through increased educational and research exchanges. It works towards increasing the accessibility of educational resources among member institutions in an effort to cultivate future leading talents.

**AUA Board Meeting:** The AUA Board Meeting was held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021 for making major decisions related to next AUA Executive Presidency, Financial Statements and Budget, AUA Program Proposals and Framework. Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri, Director; Prof. Prasanna Mujumdar, Deputy Director Finance and External Affairs and Prof. Amit Agrawal, Dean International Relations participated in this meeting.



**AUA Board Meeting 2021**

**AUA Program Proposals:** The AUA Secretariat received a total of 19 program proposals for the year 2021- 2022, which were submitted by 9 member universities. All of the 19 proposals were sent to member universities for voting and Overseas Study Programme on Sustainable Energy Systems proposed by the Department of Energy Sciences and Engineering, IIT Bombay received the highest number of votes. This program will have students participating from AUA member universities and will be conducted from 5<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021 in online mode.

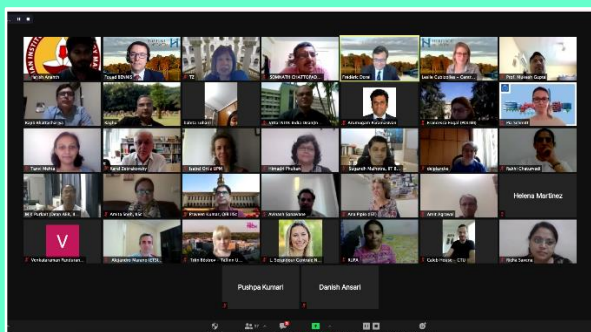
**AUA Program:** The AUA Overseas Study Program 2021 - Key Concepts of Data Science Artificial Intelligence was hosted by Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan from 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021 in online mode. From IIT Bombay 4 students participated in this program.



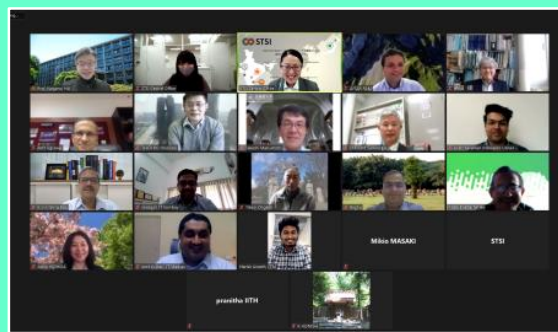
Students were presented with core concepts and state-of-the-art applications of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, and through a combination of topical lectures and hands-on exercises became familiar with sources, methods, challenges, and current work in the field. The topics were presented by domain experts, using practical examples, with the expectation that students are seriously considering future employment or graduate study in the field.

### ***Heritage Network***

The Heritage Network aims to strengthen Higher Education Cooperation (research and training) between Europe and India in the field of Engineering Sciences. The General Assembly is the supreme body of Heritage Network and meets once a year and votes for the strategies, actions and representatives (Steering and Executive Committee members) of the Heritage Network. This year the General Assembly was held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 in virtual mode and Prof. Amit Agrawal, Dean International Relations, Prof. Sugandh Malhotra, IDC School of Design and Ms. Tanvi Mehta, Executive Officer, Office of International Relations participated from IIT Bombay. About 40 representatives from the 15 Indian and 13 European Heritage Network member institutions participated in General Assembly this year.



**Heritage Network – General Assembly Meeting**



**STSI Steering Committee Meeting**

### ***Sustainable Transportation System and Infrastructure (STSI)***

The STSI Program is the co-educational program by Hokkaido University and three IITs (Bombay, Hyderabad, and Madras). IIT participants take STSI Basic Courses (STSI Fundamentals, STSI Basic Course on Language and Culture), and learn teamwork research ability through internship at Hokkaido University. After completing the course with the approval from both Japan and India, students receive “Certificate of Completion of STSI Program”. The 4<sup>th</sup> STSI Steering Committee Meeting was held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 in virtual mode and decisions on program challenges, achievements and future improvements were made during this meeting. Prof. KVK Rao and Prof. P Vedagiri from the Department of Civil Engineering participated in this meeting along with Prof. Amit Agrawal, Dean International Relations.

### ***U7***

The U7 Alliance is a unique forum for discussion between university presidents in the fields of higher education and research. It commits leading universities worldwide to demonstrating the defining role they play, and the responsibility they carry, in the multilateral framework. The workshop on "Action for the Climate: Working together to address our Greenhouse Gas emissions" was held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 and the workshop on "Promoting Student Access to courses relating to Climate, Biodiversity and Sustainability" was held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Prof. Trupti Mishra, Prof. Arpita Mondal and Prof. Sridhar Balasubramanian from IDP Climate Studies and Prof. Anil Dikshit, Prof. Munish Chandel, Prof. Swatantra Pratap Singh from the Department of Environmental Science and



Engineering participated in the workshops. These workshops on sustainability were co-hosted by the University of Edinburgh, Université PSL and University of Toronto under this alliance.

### ***Outbound Students***

We are now living in a globalised environment. At IIT Bombay, we embrace this concept and are dedicated to giving our students a high quality international educational experience so that our graduates are prepared for the global workplace. Our studying abroad program of semester exchange enables the students to spend part of their degree studying at a prestigious international university. Students who study abroad as part of their studies find that it is a deeply enriching experience, offering so much more than merely giving their CV a boost. It also enhances future employability and academic success, allowing them to build up a network of valuable contacts, broaden their horizons, and develop an entire range of new soft skills.



**Outbound Student - Naman Narang,  
Dual Degree, Electrical Engineering, IIT Bombay at  
EPFL, Switzerland during semester exchange**



**Outbound Student - Anubhav Goel, Dual Degree, Electrical Engineering, IIT Bombay at DTU Denmark during semester exchange**  
Despite of COVID-19 challenges, we had sixteen students from IIT Bombay going for a semester exchange to our international partner universities - Aalto University, Finland; Technical University of Denmark; INSA Lyon, France; Politecnico Di Milano, Italy; University of Mons, Belgium; EPFL, Switzerland and University of Geneva, Switzerland.

Also, one student enrolled in the virtual semester exchange program at Malardalen University, Sweden.

### ***Inbound Students***

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, none of the students registered for the exchange program nor the Ph.D. program during the spring semester 2020-21. One student from Hokkaido University, Japan, did virtual project work from Feb to March 2021. Currently, there are 76 international students registered for the full-time Master's/Ph.D degree programs at IIT Bombay.

## ***Student Experiences***

### ***Anant Kasodekar, Dual Degree, Department of Energy Science & Engineering:***

Doing an exchange semester in a foreign university is something I had always craved for since the very first year of my undergraduate studies. Back in 2020, I was selected for an exchange semester at ETH Zurich, a university known for its vibrant student culture and a prudent academic atmosphere. However, thanks to the pandemic, the planned exchange was cancelled by ETH, not once but twice. However, thanks to the efforts of Ms. Chandrika Naik from the IR office, I was able to secure a nomination for a semester exchange at the University of Mons in Belgium. Little did I know that my time in Belgium would turn out to be a life changing chapter of my life. It was an exchange full of vivid and unique experiences.

Academically, it was a completely new canvas for me to experiment upon. I therefore took a mix of courses from Business, Engineering and Humanities fields. I enjoyed the continuous and friendly learning methodology which UMONS followed. None of my courses had more than ten students in it. Student-Faculty interactions were therefore quite frequent and lively. The courses I took in the fields of humanities helped me understand the complex world of international relations and intercultural communications. Unlike the Indian universities, where exams are largely in

written mode, UMONS follows a blend of oral and written examination patterns. Along with the course commitments, I also took a research project with one of my professors which helped me in honing my skills for my master's thesis. Due to the blended mode of courses at UMONS, I was also able to explore and travel in 11 European countries with quite an ease. Infact, as I write this article, I am on my way to the beautiful city of Lisbon in Portugal. The most important benefit of living in Belgium for me was that travel turned out to be significantly less expensive as compared to other european countries. Scaling Europe's highest peak, couchsurfing with strangers, speaking in the European Union's Parliament and maybe recovering from the coronavirus were some of the amazing things that I experienced during this exchange. I will forever cherish the amazing friends I made during my travel throughout Europe. Special thanks to the IR offices of IIT Bombay and UMONS for having such an amazing bilateral partnership even during the pandemic.



### ***Khemraj Gautam Kshetri, MTech, Department of Aerospace Engineering:***

It has been my privilege to complete my Master's from IIT Bombay. The list of people goes very long that I am grateful to for their companionship, help, encouragement, and motivation. Recalling the initial days of campus, I remember that rush we had to attend class early morning. For me, the monsoon like we have here was the first experience, and it was simply fantastic. Almost everyone here comes from a different place, and diversity is something to appreciate here. With time, I made many friends.



Their friendship is overwhelming, so is the support from seniors. Talking about the academic experience I remember the first class I attended on Aerodynamics. From the first day itself, I realized that this is the place I am supposed to be, and here I am. I can't thank enough to my professors, and I am grateful for their clarification of the concept, their insight, support, and enthusiastic teaching. To summarize, I had the best personal, social and academic experience one can ever have, and this is what I will never forget. I am taking a huge bag of memories and lessons back to my country, Nepal.

***Tariku Asfaw, PhD Scholar, Department of Civil Engineering:***

From Ethiopia, currently, I am regular international Doctoral student at the Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Bombay since, 2017. I completed my M.Tech at IIT Bombay, in 2014. I have gained a lot of experience, skills, training and knowledge from this institute because they have very advanced laboratories; departments and institution always have training; professors are also highly qualified and experienced; people are happy to help both in campus and outside campus, especially when they see a foreigner. The students here are excellent academically as well as they are well-disciplined, and I have learnt a lot from these students. The campus is beautiful, clean air and green cover. In the past few years, I learned how to interact with diverse people and how to communicate easily, because India is known for its quote "unity in diversity"; across the world. That means India is a diverse nation, many religions, cultures, food and languages etc. people live together peacefully and value different cultures.



***Parth Laturia, Under Graduate, Department of Computer Science and Engineering:***

The "Key concepts of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence" short term program conducted by Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan as a part of Asian University Alliance was certainly one of the most engaging and fruitful programs that I ever participated in. This program offered a fundamental understanding of the different domains of Artificial Intelligence and Data Science through well organised sessions, interesting problems to ponder on, hands-on exercises, etc. I got the valuable opportunity to interact with some of the world's best intellectuals in these domains. The systematic planning and execution of the program added further to its credibility and effectiveness. The student group that I was a part of was also captivating since I got to know about different culture, different education patterns and a multitude of ideas and thoughts that each one of the group brought with him/her. Overall, it was certainly a never to forget experience.





***Shaymaa Mohamed Abdelrahim Sherif Omran, PhD Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences***

I am Shaymaa Omran, PhD Scholar at Humanities and Social Sciences Department, IIT Bombay. I am an international student from Egypt. I spent five years in Mumbai, and I must say it was a beautiful journey with all its ups and downs. I could make lots of good friends, and I felt how friendly Mumbai city is. When I reached campus, it took me some time to adjust to a new lifestyle, culture, food, weather, hostel life, etc. It was challenging, but I must say it was really meaningful. Many people and events helped me adjust and live an enjoyable life on campus and in Mumbai city. IIT Bombay campus is really great; it has lots of facilities and a decent Gym which is well maintained. It has a huge ground for running and walking and other sports like badminton, football, etc. I really enjoyed playing badminton in its huge badminton courts. It was a blessing and helped me stay healthy and fit during my stay in IIT. Mumbai city is really a safe city, I could roam around any time of the day and always felt safe, and people are very friendly and helpful. On top of all, people are what make the journey beautiful. I was blessed with great friends and colleagues in my department who always stood by my side during all times. I don't think my ties to great India will ever end, it was not just a PhD program, but it was a life journey that I will cherish all the way.



***Daniel Alemu Abbanura, MTech, Department of Environmental Science and Engineering***

The Ministry of Science and higher education of Ethiopia helped me to find a program that was right for me. During my first year at IIT Bombay, I had many new experiences such as making new friends, adjusting to the new living situations, new activities, learning different subjects from the knowledgeable faculties, etc. The professors at IIT Bombay compelled me to spend my time consistently and rigorously within the course that was very helpful in boosting my self-confidence and proceeding forward. I had more classes, quiz's tests, assignments, projects, vivas, and presentations than I ever had before. Since everyone experiences a lot of ups and downs in their respective journey, IITB is so good place to gain the practical knowledge to tackle the same. If we had any problem regarding food or academic issues, we conveyed our feelings and emotions to ISCP or Department Coordinator, Student Companion, IR office who responded and sorted the issue as soon as possible. IIT Bombay provides an excellent opportunity to participate in sports. It has excellent sports facilities for cricket, football, athletics, hockey, squash, table tennis, lawn tennis, basketball, swimming etc. The campus has one of the best food facilities. I made so many memories during the week of Mood Indigo. With incredible Indian dance and funk music, crazy outfits, and nonstop celebrating, it was definitely a special experience and also helping me to know beautiful Indian culture. These experiences have added a lot of new perspectives and values to my personal growth. My experience with a different culture allows me to expand my worldview. Mumbai is my second home; I'll forever be grateful to IITB and my friends here at IITB.



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