



विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



AWaDH
IIT Ropar - TIF

IIT Ropar – Technology & Innovation Foundation Agriculture & Water Technology Development Hub (AWaDH)

Supported By

DST NM - ICPS

VI E34

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2026



Technology and Innovation Foundation (TIF-AWaDH), an initiative of IIT Ropar supported by the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS), drives innovation, deep-tech startups, and human resource development in Agri, Water, IoT, ICPS, and Sustainability.



विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



AWaDH
IIT Ropar - TIF

Table of Contents

Message from Director, IIT Ropar	3
Message from Project Director, iHub-AWaDH and ANNAM.AI	4
Startup Punjab(GoP) Conclave 2026	5
MoU with Veer Madho Singh Bhandari Uttarakhand Technical University (UTU), Dehradun.	6
Inauguration of 19 th CPS LAB at EPIC , Ambala College of Engineering & Applied Research, Ambala	7
Discussions with Shri Pradip Mazumdar	8
Meeting with Kamal Bawa	9
National Youth Day 2026	10
Meeting with Shri Tejveer Singh, IAS	11
District-Level Farmer Fest & Agriculture Exhibition	12
Advancing Technology-Led Urban Transformation in Varanasi	13
Visit IDAPT Hub Foundation IIT-BHU	14
Gallery	15

Theme of the Month: "Nation-Building Through Innovation & Inclusion"

CONTACT:

W: ihub-awadh.in
E: people@ihub-awadh.in
E: contact.awadh@iitrpr.ac.in
M: 01881 - 232601
A: 316/317, Third Floor, M.Visvesvaraya
Block, Indian Institute of Technology
Ropar, Rupnagar, Punjab,
India, 140001

EDITORIAL

Patron :
Prof. Rajeev Ahuja
Director, IIT Ropar
Editor-In-Chief
Dr. Pushpendra Singh
Project Director, IIT Ropar TIF
Editor(s)
Dr. Radhika Trikha (CEO)
Dr. Mukesh Kestwal (CIO)
Aditya Madan (CLO)

EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE

Saurabh Arora, Head, IP & TT
Purna Arora, Senior Social
Media Executive
Manvi Bhopali, HR Executive



Prof Rajeev Ahuja
Director, IIT Ropar

The recent period has been exceptionally enriching, reflecting the expanding footprint and impact of IIT Ropar's innovation, skilling, and outreach initiatives across the country.

The **Startup Punjab (GoP) Conclave 2026** at Lovely Professional University, Kapurthala, marked a significant milestone for Punjab's startup ecosystem, bringing together key stakeholders and reaffirming the Government of Punjab's strong commitment to innovation-led economic growth, as emphasized **by the Hon'ble Chief Minister**.

Constructive engagements with **Smart City Varanasi Limited and the Varanasi Municipal Corporation** explored technology deployment for IoT-enabled urban monitoring, data-driven governance, and citizen-centric services, aligning with the national vision of Viksit Bharat. **Inter-iHub discussions with IDAPT Hub Foundation, IIT-BHU**, focused on joint pilots, co-incubation, and capacity building in CPS, AgriTech, and water innovation.

The inauguration of the **19th CPS Lab of IIT Ropar, first in Haryana at Ambala College of Engineering & Applied Research, Ambala** marks another significant step in strengthening India's Cyber-Physical Systems ecosystem under the NM-ICPS mission. Such laboratories are critical enablers of hands-on learning, innovation, and industry-aligned skilling.

A significant academic milestone was achieved with the visit of a distinguished delegation from the Higher & Technical Education Department, Government of Uttarakhand, culminating in the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding between IIT Ropar and Veer Madho Singh Bhandari Uttarakhand Technical University (UTU), Dehradun**.

Our commitment to inclusive growth was also reflected through initiatives focused on youth empowerment, financial literacy, and skill development, as well as through direct engagement with farmers during the **District-Level Kisan Mela in Ropar**.

On the occasion of **National Youth Day 2026**, commemorating Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary, a Financial Literacy Awareness Session was organized under the PM VIKAS Project of the Ministry of Minority Affairs. The session, led by expert trainers from the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM), focused on financial literacy, digital awareness, and entrepreneurship, with valuable support from the ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth.

Warm regards,
Dr. Rajeev Ahuja
Director, Indian Institute of Technology Ropar



Dr. Pushendra P. Singh

Dean CAPS, IIT Ropar &

Project Director, iHub AWaDH and Annam.ai

I am delighted to share the remarkable growth story of IIT Ropar (iHub - AWaDH) over the past year. As a hub of innovation and technological advancement, iHub AWaDH has made significant strides in fostering a vibrant startup ecosystem, advancing research and development, and enhancing human skills across the country.

Our focus on nurturing startups has led to the incubation & acceleration of 150+ deep-tech innovative ventures, providing them with the necessary resources, mentorship, and market access to thrive. Through 220+ strategic partnerships and targeted support, we have created a robust ecosystem that empowers entrepreneurs to transform their visionary ideas into impactful solutions.

In the realm of research and development, iHub AWaDH has spearheaded cutting-edge 60+ projects that address critical challenges in agriculture, water, and health. Our collaborative efforts with academic institutions, industry leaders, and government agencies have yielded pioneering breakthroughs, driving progress and enhancing societal well-being.

Human skilling remains a cornerstone of our mission. We have implemented comprehensive training programs to equip 5000+ individuals with the latest technological skills, ensuring they are well-prepared for the evolving job market. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation, we are shaping the next generation of skilled professionals and leaders.

As we look to the future, iHub AWaDH remains committed to propelling India towards a more innovative, technologically advanced, and inclusive future. Together, we will continue to make strides in transforming challenges into opportunities and dreams into reality.

Dr. Pushendra P. Singh
Dean CAPS, IIT Ropar &
Project Director, iHub-AWaDH and ANNAM.AI



STARTUP PUNJAB(GOP) CONCLAVE 2026

The **Startup Punjab(GoP) Conclave 2026** at **Lovely Professional University, Kapurthala**, marked a defining milestone in advancing Punjab's innovation-driven future.

We were honored to be part of this landmark convergence of founders, investors, policy makers, incubators, and ecosystem enablers, united by a shared belief: entrepreneurship is the engine of inclusive and sustainable growth. Organised under the visionary leadership of Startup Punjab (GoP) in collaboration with the District Administration Kapurthala, the conclave created a fertile ground where ideas met opportunity and ambition met action.

From dynamic startup exhibitions to deeply engaging panel discussions on scaling ventures, the role of incubators, and the promise of emerging technologies, every conversation reflected momentum and maturity within Punjab's startup ecosystem. The presence and inspiring keynote by **Sh. Bhagwant Mann, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab**, reaffirmed the Government's strong commitment to innovation-led economic transformation.

Representing IIT Ropar were **Prof. Rajeev Ahuja (Director, IIT Ropar)**, **Dr. Radhika Trikha (CEO, iHub-AWaDH)**, **Dr Mukesh Kestwal (CIO, iHub-AWaDH)**, and **Ms. Ritika Mahajan (Manager, TBIF)** - contributing insights rooted in research, incubation, and real-world impact.



MOU WITH VEER MADHO SINGH BHANDARI UTTARAKHAND TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY (UTU), DEHRADUN.

We were delighted to engage with a **distinguished delegation from the Higher & Technical Education Department, Government of Uttarakhand**, during their visit to Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar, marking the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar and Veer Madho Singh Bhandari Uttarakhand Technical University (UTU), Dehradun**. This landmark collaboration sets the stage for long-term partnerships in higher education, innovation, entrepreneurship, and ecosystem development.

The esteemed **delegation included Dr. Ranjit Kumar Sinha, IAS, Secretary, Higher & Technical Education, Government of Uttarakhand; Prof. Tripta Thakur, Vice Chancellor, VMSB UTU; Shri Byomkesh Dubey, Deputy Secretary, Technical Education; Dr Rajesh Upadhyay, VMSB UTU; Prof. Manoj Panda, Director, Women Institute of Technology, Dehradun; Santosh Kumar Hampannavar PhD(NITK), SMIEEE, FIE, CEng(India), Director, BTKIT Dwarahat; Prof. (Dr.) Deepak Pandey and Dr Govind Pathak Assistant Director, HE Uttarakhand; and Prof. (Dr.) Kuldeep Singh, Higher Education.**



As part of the visit, the delegation interacted with us supported startups, explored cutting-edge technologies developed at the Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar CPS Lab, and engaged in enriching discussions around academic-startup collaboration, incubation support, knowledge exchange, and joint innovation initiatives. The interactions offered deep insights into AWaDH's vibrant innovation ecosystem and its role in translating research into scalable, real-world impact.



INAUGURATION OF 19TH CPS LAB AT EPIC, AMBALA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & APPLIED RESEARCH, AMBALA

We are pleased to announce the inauguration of the **Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar 19th CPS Lab** and the first such lab in the state of Haryana, powered by the **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)** at **EPIC (Entrepreneurship Promotion and Incubation Council), Ambala College of Engineering & Applied Research, Ambala**.

The CPS Lab was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, **Shri Sanjeev Chawla**, Additional Development Commissioner, MSME (DFO Karnal), in the presence of distinguished dignitaries:

- Dr. Ashawant Gupta, Director, Ambala College of Engineering & Applied Research
- Shri Rama Kant, Director, Entrepreneurship Promotion and Incubation Council (EPIC), Ambala College of Engineering & Applied Research, Ambala
- Dr. Meenu Saini, Head of Department (ECE), Ambala College of Engineering & Applied Research, Ambala
- Shri Nalini Kant, Chairman, MDI and Ambala College of Engineering and Applied Research, Ambala



- Gp Capt Chander Shekhar Sharma (Retd.), Registrar, Ambala College of Engineering and Applied Research, Ambala
- Dr. Radhika Trikha, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Mukesh Kestwal, Chief Innovation Officer



DISCUSSIONS WITH SHRI PRADIP MAZUMDAR

From the Bay of Bengal to the Himalayas, West Bengal brings together a rich cultural legacy, strong intellectual capital, and progressive governance - positioning the state as a natural leader in inclusive, innovation-led development.

Our **Chief Liaison Officer (CLO)**, **Mr. Aditya Madan**, held **discussions with Shri Pradip Mazumdar, Hon'ble Minister for Panchayats & Rural Development Department, Government of West Bengal**, to explore structured and long-term collaboration aligned with the state's evolving development priorities.

Key discussion areas included:

- Technology deployment and adoption
- Skilling and workforce capacity building
- Innovation-enabled governance
- Scalable and sustainable development models

The engagement reaffirmed a shared commitment to translating policy vision into measurable on-ground outcomes through effective public-institutional partnerships, supporting inclusive growth and building future-ready systems across West Bengal.



विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



AWaDH
IIT Ropar - TIF



MEETING WITH KAMAL BAWA

A deeply engaging and forward-looking discussion **centered on envisioning a transformative agri-innovation hub for North-Western India, with Punjab as its focal point. The conversation moved beyond the idea of a physical hub**, focusing instead on building a living, evolving ecosystem that integrates sustainability, technology, research, and community impact.

The meeting was led by **Kamal Bawa, Founder of Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment**, whose visionary leadership and global experience in ecology and conservation brought invaluable depth to the dialogue. Participants explored the possibility of establishing a regional hub inspired by ATREE's model, gaining insights into how such hubs function, collaborate, and drive long-term, place-based impact.



NATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2026

On the occasion of **National Youth Day 2026**, commemorating the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, organized a Financial Literacy Awareness Session **under the aegis of the PM VIKAS Project of the Ministry Of Minority Affairs**.

The session featured expert trainers from **National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM)**, who delivered an intensive program on Financial Literacy and Digital Awareness, followed by an engaging session on Entrepreneurship and Startups, aimed at equipping beneficiaries with essential life and livelihood skills.

Key Focus Areas:

- Financial Literacy & Digital Awareness
- Entrepreneurship & Startup Ecosystem
- Skill Development & Livelihood Enablement

We sincerely acknowledge the support of ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth and the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM) trainers in making this initiative impactful for beneficiaries.



As **Swami Vivekananda** reminded us, "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached." Together, we are strengthening India's Youth with Knowledge, confidence, and opportunity.



MEETING WITH SHRI TEJVEER SINGH, IAS

We hosted a meeting with **Shri Tejveer Singh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Technical Education & Industrial Training, Government Of Punjab**, and **Shri Moneesh Kumar, IAS, Director, Technical Education & Industrial Training, Government Of Punjab**.

The meeting saw active participation from Polytechnic Colleges and ITI institutions, with focused discussions on establishing advanced skilling laboratories and skill hubs across the state.

The discussions highlighted the skilling ecosystem being developed at Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar, where skill hubs in the form of specialized laboratories are deployed to build capacity in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS), Industrial Automation, and IoT. These initiatives aim to provide hands-on, industry-aligned training and enable multi-level skill development, ultimately uplifting youth and improving employability.

The interaction was highly fruitful and marked an important step toward kickstarting the development of future-ready skill centres, strengthening collaboration between government, academia, and technical education institutions.



DISTRICT-LEVEL FARMER FEST & AGRICULTURE EXHIBITION

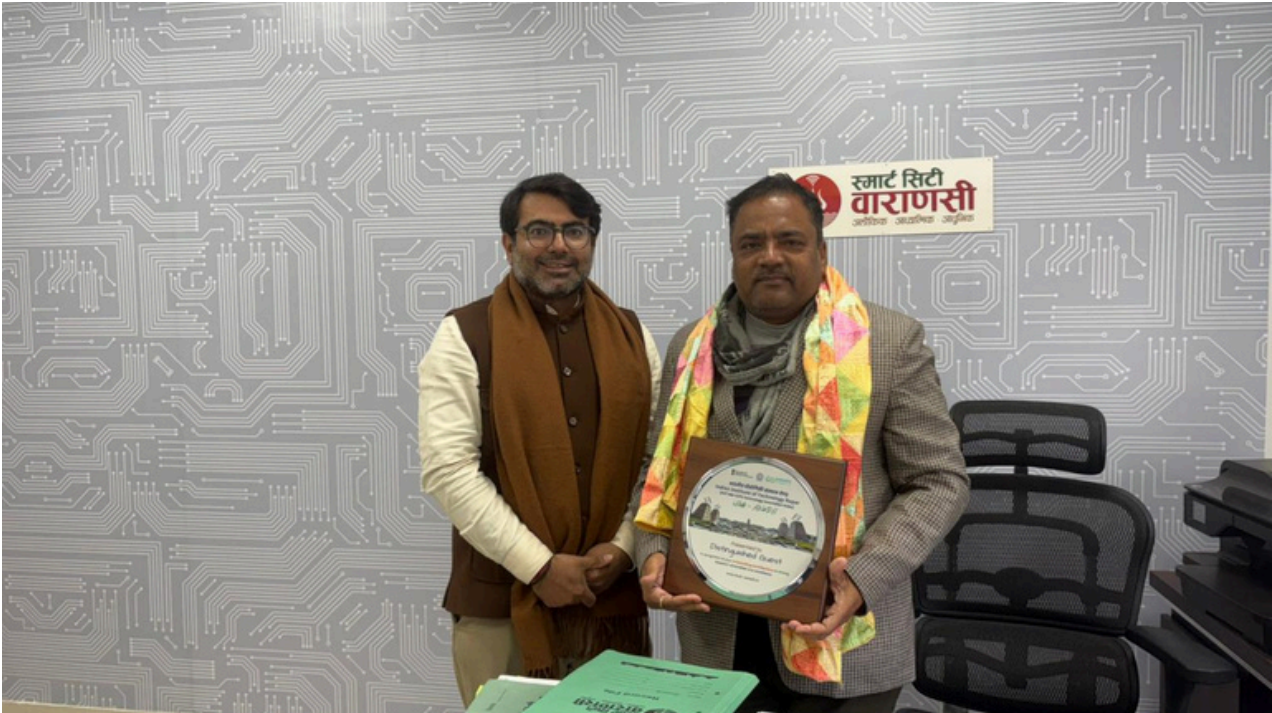
We had the privilege of participating in the **District-Level Farmer Fest (Kisan Mela)** and Agriculture Exhibition, Ropar 2026, jointly organized by the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and ATMA (Agriculture Technology Management Agency) engaging directly with farmers and key stakeholders from the agricultural ecosystem.

The event provided a valuable platform for on-ground interactions with farmers, enabling our team to understand the real challenges faced in the field, the need for practical automation, and the kinds of technological solutions that can deliver meaningful impact at the grassroots level. These insights continue to guide AWaDH's approach toward developing farmer-centric, deployable, and scalable innovations.

We were also honored to interact with **IAS Shri Varjeet Walia, District Commissioner Rupnagar** whose vision and insights into agriculture were both inspiring and thought provoking. His keen interest in and appreciation for the ongoing developments at AWaDH reinforced our commitment to strengthening the bridge between research, technology, and real-world agricultural adoption.



Engagements like these play a vital role in bridging the gap between research, technology development, and on-ground adoption, ensuring that innovation translates into measurable value for the farming community



ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY-LED URBAN TRANSFORMATION IN VARANASI

Constructive meetings were held with Smart City Varanasi Limited and the Varanasi Municipal Corporation to explore opportunities for deploying technology and driving urban transformation in the city. The **delegation was led by Mr. Aditya Madan, Chief Liaison Officer (CLO), who engaged with senior officials** to identify collaborative pathways for implementation.

The discussions focused on:

- ◆ IoT-enabled urban monitoring
- ◆ data-driven governance
- ◆ digital infrastructure strengthening
- ◆ citizen-centric public services
- ◆ pilot-led smart city implementations

As the Lok Sabha, Parliament of India constituency of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Varanasi holds unique national significance. Advancing technology-led innovation here aligns with the broader vision of Viksit Bharat, enabling inclusive, resilient, and future-ready urban governance.



विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



AWaDH
IIT Ropar - TIF



VISIT IDAPT HUB FOUNDATION IIT-BHU

Strengthening Inter-iHub Collaboration for Scalable, Field-Ready Innovation

Engaged in a productive discussion with the **IDAPT Hub Foundation IIT-BHU**, to explore **structured collaboration opportunities across Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS)**, AgriTech, and Water Innovation. The deliberations focused on aligning complementary strengths to enable joint research pilots, technology translation and validation, startup co-incubation, and capacity-building programs.

We strongly believe that inter-hub and cross-institutional partnerships are critical to accelerating the journey of innovations from labs to farms and real-world deployments. Such collaborations are essential for addressing national priorities related to sustainable agriculture, water security, and climate resilience, while ensuring scalability and adoption.



विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



AWaDH
IIT Ropar - TIF



Gallery

Shaping the future ...





विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग
DEPARTMENT OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



AWaDH
IIT Ropar - TIF

EDITORIAL TEAM

CHIEF EDITORS

Dr Rajeev Ahuja, Director, IIT Ropar

Dr Pushendra P. Singh, Project Director, iHub - AWaDH

Dr Radhika Trikha, Chief Operating Officer, iHub - AWaDH

Mukesh Chandra Kestwal, Chief Innovation Officer, iHub - AWaDH

Aditya Madan, Chief Liasion Officer, iHub - AWaDH

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Saurabh Arora, Head, IP & TT, iHub - AWaDH

Prerna Arora, Senior Social Media Executive, iHub-AWadh

Manvi Bhopali, HR Executive, iHub - AWaDH

CONTRIBUTOR

IIT Ropar Technology and Innovation Foundation

iHub - AWaDH Team



Download the News Letters and Report

bit.ly/AWadh_Brochure

☎ 01881 - 232601

🌐 www.iHub-awadh.in

📍 IIT Ropar Technology & Innovation Foundation

(iHub - AWaDH)

316/317, Third Floor, M.Visvesvaraya Block,

Indian Institute of Technology Ropar,

Rupnagar, Rupnagar, Punjab, India, 140001

