



The 14<sup>th</sup> convocation of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Mohali was held on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025. A total of 222 students received their BS, MS or Integrated BS-MS degrees, whereas 84 students received their doctoral degrees, including 54 from IISER Mohali, 29 from INST, and 1 from CIAB. In addition, 10 students received their degrees under the Integrated MS-PhD program. This convocation was different from the previous convocations as from this year we have adopted traditional Indian attire.

The Chief Guest on this occasion was Professor Umesh Waghmare, a renowned physicist and academic administrator from the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru. Also, he was the President of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Bengaluru till last year. Professor Waghmare is currently the President of JNCASR and also a professor in the Theoretical Sciences Unit of the same institute.

The convocation function was presided over by Dr. J. S. Yadav, Chairperson, Board of Governors of the Institute, who was also the former Director of the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, Hyderabad.

Mr. Rabsan Galib Ahmed, a Physics-major student, received the President's Gold Medal for the best academic performance among the graduating BS-MS students. Mr. Aprameyan Desikan, also a Physics-major student, received the Institute's Silver Medal for standing second, and Mr. Joshua J Abraham, a Mathematics-major student, received the Institute's Bronze Medal for standing third in Academic Merit. Ms. Sapna Krishnakumar, a Biology-major student with a minor in Data Science, was awarded the Professor SN Kaul Medal for best overall performance. Minor degree is an innovative concept of the course curriculum of IISER Mohali, where students taking elective courses from carefully crafted baskets of courses are allowed to claim a minor in domains such as Data Science, Science Education, Science and Society Studies, Development and Public Policy Studies, Astronomy, Earth Sciences, Atmospheric Sciences, Indian History, and various branches of Science and Mathematics.

Ms. Prateek Mayur Vaniawala in Biology, Mr. Anubhav Rajyan in Chemistry, Mr. Joshua J Abraham in Mathematics, and Mr. Rabsan Galib Ahmed in Physics received Academic Excellence Prizes for best performance in the respective disciplines.

Thanks to the diverse academic training of IISER Mohali, apart from core Science subjects, the students do courses in domains as diverse as Humanities, Visual Arts, Science Education and Data Sciences. The interdisciplinary research lies in the genesis of IISERs, which were established during 2006-2016, across seven locations in the country. The IISER Mohali started functioning from Sector-26, Chandigarh in 2007 and is now located in Sector-81 on the airport road. It was the first institute that came up in the Knowledge City of Mohali.

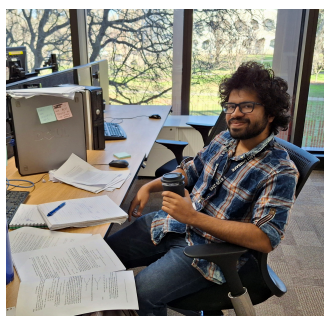
In the Director's report, Professor Anil K. Tripathi, the Director of the Institute first welcomed all the Institute guests, graduating students along with their parents and highlighted the achievements of the Institute in the last one year. Addressing the students, he said, "It is a great pleasure for us to congratulate all the students who will receive their degrees today and wish them success and glory in their academic and professional goals they will choose to pursue in the days to come".

Professor Umesh V Waghmare, the Chief Guest, in his address to the students said "We live in a world that is quite imperfect. You will encounter lots of gaps and problems but remember that your education here has enabled you to do well wherever you go and whatever you choose to do. Some of you have received medals and awards for the excellence in your performance at IISER; please remember that these are important accomplishments, but they constitute small steps towards achieving many more things. Even otherwise, each of you is unique in your abilities and have a different timeline for growth and achieving excellence". He emphasized the role of emerging scientific streams, along with the responsibility of being a great citizen to compassionately give back to society. He said "Through a strong foundation in basic sciences and research, our students are thus enabled to shape our nation by inventing and implementing sustainable solutions for societal problems through scientific methods and research".

IISER Mohali is an Institute of National Importance established through an act of parliament, in order to impart quality science education and inculcate the spirit of research through innovative teaching and research methodologies. Over the last 18 years it has emerged as a preferred destination for academically gifted students from across the country. It admits students for Integrated BS-MS, Integrated MS-PhD, and PhD programs. IISER Mohali graduates are placed in some of the top research institutions around the world such as Oxford, MIT, Cornell, Stanford, Caltech, TIFR, NCBS, JNCASR and IISc. Students have received highly prestigious fellowships and grants such as Fulbright-Nehru fellowships, Leaky foundation grants, Max-Planck fellowships and Alexander von Humboldt fellowship to name a few.

### About the academic excellence prize / medal winners

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**Joshua J Abraham (Mathematics):** Growing up in a small town in Kerala, he did not know what mathematics was before he came to IISER Mohali. He came in thinking he would do physics, but after taking the coursework here and talking to many professors, he realised that mathematics was a much better fit for him. At IISER, he was provided with many opportunities to grow as a mathematician, for instance he was the co-convener of “Infinity”, the mathematics club at IISER Mohali. He participated in the “Future Research Talent” program at the Australian National University, this opportunity, along with his thesis year at IISER Mohali gave him a solid perspective on what research in mathematics entails. He will start a PhD in Mathematics this August at the University of Illinois, Chicago. In the coming years, He hope to become a mathematician and help advance our understanding of the world.



**Prateek Mayur Vaniawala (Biology):** During school days, he always pursued both studies and sports with high passion. While Physics intrigued him with formulas and mathematics, he drove my competitive spirit from basketball at the state level. He was awarded the INSPIRE scholarship based on his board results, and he entered IISER Mohali with a background in physics, chemistry, and mathematics, having never studied biology in school. However, a course in developmental biology during his second year shifted his interests, leading him to pursue a major in biology. He received international internships in France and Germany, where he experienced both cutting-edge research environments and cultures that value scientific curiosity, working discipline and work-life balance. He completed his MS thesis at the Max Planck Institute for Heart and Lung Research in Germany and this experience helped him grow beyond the lab. He took up Data Science as a minor subject to broaden his skill set, particularly with the growing relevance of AI in life

sciences. He is planning to pursue a PhD in developmental genetics, with the long-term goal of transitioning to industry, where he will contribute to the development of practical medical solutions based on fundamental science.

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**Sapna Krishnakumar (Biology):** She hails from Chennai and she is a professionally trained Bharathanatyam dancer and Carnatic musician. Additionally, she is an excellent tennis player. After completing her MS from IISER Mohali, she is going to pursue her PhD in Molecular Biology at Princeton University, USA. She aspires to be a scientist in academia/industry.

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**Aprameyan Desikan (Institute's Silver Medal):** He is passionate about quantum information technologies specifically in bridging quantum systems that include superconducting circuits. He did his MS thesis research at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Lausanne, Switzerland, where he worked on hybrid quantum systems with superconducting qubits and bulk acoustic oscillators. He will further be pursuing his PhD at Yale University in Connecticut, USA, to further his research goals in the field of superconducting circuits for quantum information processing.

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**Rabsan Galib Ahmed (Physics)** Since his school days in West Bengal, he was passionate about theoretical physics and mathematics. As a recipient of the Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana (KVPY), he joined IISER Mohali. Over the years, quantum information processing has piqued his interest, eventually leading him to conceive of a new class of quantum error-correcting codes in his Master's thesis, partly

carried out at the Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden. During the summer of his thesis year, he participated in the 73rd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting in Physics. He will be pursuing a PhD in Quantum Information at the Institute for Quantum Computing (IQC), jointly at the Department of Applied Mathematics, University of Waterloo.

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**Anubhav Rajyan (Chemistry).** He is keen to study the chemistry of solid complex clusters-especially those relevant to materials science-using computational chemistry techniques and advanced electronic structure methods, supported by programming skills in Python. Post-PhD, he aims to continue in this field through postdoctoral research, with the long-term goal of becoming an independent researcher or academic.