THE BEACON RAY



Prof. Bidyadhar Subudhi
Director, NIT Warangal

It is a privilege for me to have assumed the position of Director of NIT Warangal and I am fully dedicated to contributing to the institution's growth, success, and development.

"MY VISION IS TO BUILD NIT WARANGAL WITH EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND HIGH-QUALITY RESEARCH"









BR: Could you share your thoughts on your experience at NIT Warangal, sir?

Dir: I am truly honoured to have been entrusted with the responsibility of leading NIT Warangal by the Government of India. I am extremely delighted by the warm reception and enthusiastic nature of the students, as evident through this Newsletter. The city of Warangal, with its rich heritage and historical significance, has left a profound impression on me. The magnificent Ramappa temple, the Thousand Pillars temple, and other architectural wonders are a testament to the engineering prowess and cultural legacy of this region. I feel privileged and humbled to be a part of this vibrant community. I am fully dedicated to contributing to the institution's growth, success, and development, and I am confident that, with the support of the talented faculty, dedicated students, and hardworking staff, we will achieve remarkable milestones together.

BR: What is your vision for the institution in the context of the changing landscape of education, and how do you plan to align it with emerging trends and technologies?

Dir: In the context of the evolving education landscape, our institution is committed to enhancing the quality of education. The government has emphasized the need for a student-centric approach, empowering students to shape their educational experiences. The National Education Policy and the National Credit Framework are two significant initiatives introduced by the government to guide academic institutions, including the NIT system.

The National Education Policy, formulated by a group of visionaries, holds great promise for the nation across various fields. One key aspect highlighted in the policy is the promotion of multidisciplinarity in education. NIT Warangal is actively pursuing the development of new programs and courses that embrace this multidisciplinary approach. For example, our senate recently approved the introduction of the BTech

Mathematics and Computing program, which exemplifies this ethos. Going forward, we aim to foster interdisciplinary collaboration in BTech projects and PhD courses, where professors from different specializations work together to solve complex problems. By incorporating a multidisciplinary approach throughout our curriculum, we can leverage the expertise of diverse disciplines to address real-world challenges effectively.

Another aspect of our vision is to provide students with a broad range of options and electives, enabling them to align their education with their career aspirations. We are also exploring opportunities to integrate engineering with management by collaborating with other institutions. Through such partnerships, our students will have the chance to complement their engineering degree with a management degree. By the end of their four years of study, they will possess valuable skills that open up diverse career opportunities in management.

To align with emerging trends and technologies, NIT Warangal is planning to invite industries to establish innovation, incubation, and start-up ecosystems as part of our curriculum. This initiative will expose our students to research and development opportunities where they can contribute to addressing social problems, local and global challenges, and sustainable goals related to the economy, energy, and the environment. We envision our students actively working on research projects that yield practical products and software solutions. By linking student activities with industry-level engagement, we aim to strengthen our nation's overall development.

In addition, we are in the process of formalizing internships, with a growing interest from students in other institutions to join us. We will establish a policy to facilitate students from different institutes across the country to undergo a two-month training program at NIT Warangal. This exchange of knowledge and experience will further contribute to the advancement of education. Furthermore, we are actively involved in skill development training for local engineering colleges, leveraging our automation activities at the SIEMENS Centre. By producing high-quality human resources proficient in areas such as 3D printing and additive manufacturing, we aim to meet the manpower needs of industries and contribute to their growth.

These are some of the strategic directions NIT Warangal is taking to align our curriculum with the changing landscape of education and ensure that our students are well-prepared to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.









BR: **Building upon the previous point, you highlighted the significance of prioritizing student-centric approaches. However, within our institution, we not only cater to students seeking education but also harbour faculty members who are pursuing their professional aspirations. Could you elaborate on the strategies you intend to employ to ensure the recruitment and retention of exceptionally skilled faculty members within their respective domains?**

Dir: Undoubtedly, it poses a formidable challenge for our institute to both attract and retain highly talented faculty members in their specialized fields. Given the dynamic nature of the academic landscape, faculty members often encounter enticing prospects that beckon them elsewhere as they progress in their careers. Nonetheless, we are committed to implementing meticulous strategies aimed at fostering an environment that not only encourages but also facilitates our esteemed faculty colleagues to embark on a fulfilling academic journey here at NIT Warangal.

BR: How do you intend to leverage your extensive research background to cultivate a culture of innovation and research among the faculty and students within the institution?

Dir: At NIT Warangal, we will initiate a research development conclave that will involve the participation of our sister institutes, the other thirty NITs, alongside esteemed directors, deans, and leading experts from diverse sectors. This collaborative platform will enable us to align our research endeavours with the latest trends and directions, leveraging the valuable insights and expertise of renowned individuals associated with ranking bodies and other relevant domains. To further augment this process, I will emphasize the establishment of a research advisory committee comprising distinguished individuals who have made significant contributions in their respective areas of research.

Furthermore, we plan to establish a unified research and development portal, accessible to all 31 NITs, where the outcomes of our research efforts will be published. This platform will serve as a valuable resource for various industries, facilitating knowledge dissemination and fostering collaborations. Additionally, we will actively engage in collaborations with other NITs, sharing research facilities, attracting funding, and establishing connections with industries. Through these concerted efforts, we aim to inspire our students to actively participate in research, particularly at the industry level, while also encouraging the industry community to support and invest in our research initiatives.

To summarize, we will motivate our faculty members to pursue collaborative research by facilitating visits to other institutes of their choice, fostering the utilization of shared facilities, and encouraging the submission of research proposals in thematic areas. By establishing strong linkages with research and development agencies, funding bodies, and industries, we anticipate securing valuable partnerships that will enable us to pursue impactful research endeavours.





BR: Based on your previous response, as a final year student required to undertake a research project, I often face the challenge of finding suitable platforms to publish my research findings. Therefore, I would like to inquire if centralizing the publication process for all the NITs is a feasible option, and whether it would bring potential benefits.

Dir: Research outcomes can be disseminated through various means such as research publications, patents, or books. When it comes to BTech projects, which serve as initial steps in students' research careers, it would be beneficial to direct their project outcomes towards relevant journals. This would benefit future students by showcasing how topics for research are approached. For instance, I can cite an example of a student group I supervised who developed a cost-effective weather monitoring system based on IoT. Their work was recently published in IEEE Consumer Electronics Magazine, demonstrating that even small-scale projects can be published in reputable journals.

Additionally, it's worth noting that many people overlook the fact that BTech students can make significant contributions by securing patents throughout their degree. I encourage BTech students to channel their intellectual capabilities towards creating tangible products and generating novel ideas. Rather than focusing solely on publishing in journals, pursuing patents can be even more valuable as they attract a wider audience, in particular, the industries.

BR: Sir, I would like to bring to your attention the need for enhancing the institution's infrastructure and facilities in order to create a modern and conducive learning environment for both students and faculty. Could you please share your plans in this regard?

Dir: Enhancing the infrastructure and facilities of NIT Warangal requires significant effort. Prior to joining this institution, I studied at NIT Rourkela, which boasts a sprawling campus of 640 acres, making it the largest campus outside the state capital of Bhubaneswar. NIT Rourkela and NIT Warangal share a similar background, with NIT Warangal being my senior institution by only two years. However, I have observed that the campus here in Warangal spans a mere 260 acres, with a road dividing it into two sections. Individually, the campus appears quite small. When comparing the facilities to those of NIT Rourkela, I have noticed that Rourkela has undergone renovation, retaining its existing buildings while utilizing them effectively. In contrast, many of the buildings in NIT Warangal are in a deteriorated state. Therefore, we face several tasks: demolishing old buildings, renovating existing structures, and creating new infrastructures. Currently, my foremost task is to take forward these priorities.

Furthermore, I have realized that in an institution of this stature, faculty members should be available on campus 24/7. However, it is common for faculty to reside outside the campus, resulting in minimal investment of their evening hours in research activities. I intend to address this by encouraging faculty members to reside on campus. However, this cannot be implemented immediately due to accommodation shortages. Hence, my first priority is to propose to the Board of Governance the construction of two new apartment buildings with 100 flats for teaching and non-teaching staff. Additionally, departments such as civil, electrical, and mechanical require separate, updated buildings. This necessitates another set of proposals. We also need to expand our ladies' hostel as per the board's plans. Once we receive the necessary approval, we will proceed with these prioritized tasks.

Furthermore, I am well aware that the 260-acre campus will be insufficient for our future growth and expansion plans. Therefore, I am actively working towards acquiring additional land either from the Telangana state government or the central government. This will provide us with the opportunity to plan for academic and future expansion. I see two potential avenues for this: first, requesting additional land from the state of Telangana to establish our second campus, which would include academic buildings and a research park; second, seeking support from our esteemed alumni who hold influential positions to provide us with space in Hyderabad for a possible alternative second campus. While these plans are not finalized, I am actively working in these directions and will proceed accordingly if feasible.

Apart from campus infrastructure development, there is a need to establish a faculty club, technology club, recreation facilities for non-faculty members, and a faculty gym. However, due to space constraints, we have been unable to take action in these areas. Once we receive the necessary approvals, we will proceed with our plans for these facilities.

BR: Drawing upon your experience as a Dean in alumni relations and resource generation, how do you envision fostering strong connections with alumni and effectively harnessing their support and resources for the benefit of the institution and its students?

Dir: For an institution of national importance and higher learning, alumni hold a significant position as stakeholders. The development and progress of our esteemed institution require the support and contributions of our alumni community. Based on my experience as a dean in alumni relations at NIT Rourkela and now as the director here at NIT Warangal, I have great confidence in the potential of our alumni to provide substantial support and active participation in the development plans for the institute.

Having interacted with the NIT Warangal Alumni community during the two-day meetings held in Hyderabad and the Senate, I have witnessed their immense generosity and dedication towards our college. Our alumni are an invaluable resource and stakeholders, and I firmly believe that they will extend their support not only in terms of financial contributions but also in terms of mentoring our students, engaging with faculty, and enhancing the teaching-learning process. They can play a crucial role in various aspects of institutional development, including our efforts to improve our NIRF ranking.

I have utmost confidence in our alumni community, and I am positive that their involvement and support will significantly benefit NIT Warangal in its pursuit of excellence and growth.

BR: Could you please elaborate on NIT Warangal's current position in the NIRF ranking and share your perspective on the institution's efforts to further enhance its ranking?

Dir: Rather than settling for a "good" position, I believe in striving for excellence. When we consider institutes of a similar age, such as NIT Surathkal, NIT Rourkela, NIT Trichy, and NIT Warangal, I firmly believe that NIT Warangal, being the oldest among them, should hold the top position in terms of ranking. However, we currently stand at fourth place. This can be attributed to factors such as public perception and visibility, which require time and concerted efforts to improve.

To enhance our ranking and reputation, it is crucial to focus on certain areas. Firstly, I urge our students to take responsibility for their surroundings. It is disheartening to witness littering and improper parking in the campus. I believe our students are capable of becoming responsible agents of change who lead by example. Through voluntary initiatives, such as keeping the surroundings clean, engaging in discussions with hostel staff and student representatives, and proposing ideas for a comfortable and hygienic environment, our students can make a positive impact on society. I emphasize the importance of cleanliness, as it resonates with the inspiring words of Mahatma Gandhi.

Secondly, discipline plays a vital role in shaping our institution's legacy. We have recently approved an Institute Student Discipline Committee document, which outlines the consequences for various infractions. I hope this document remains unused, as it signifies students' adherence to the rules and regulations. Attendance in classes should be prioritized, and exceptions should be made only in genuine cases. I encourage faculty members to invest more time in research, as this contributes to the overall perception of the college. Additionally, students should actively engage in research projects, addressing real-world issues such as mosquito control.

Thirdly, we must focus on increasing our research and development efforts. Apart from NIRF ranking, my aspirations extend to achieving recognition in the QS ranking, which is an international benchmark. Faculty members are encouraged to increase their publications to improve our position in the QS ranking. We should also consider inviting foreign faculty members on a contract basis, fostering a global perspective

and visibility. Moreover, we will work on attracting more international students through the DASA system, which not only enhances our global reputation but also generates revenue. Increasing the number of Ph.D. scholars and ensuring smooth transportation from Hyderabad airport will further contribute to our research endeavours.

In summary, my vision is to establish NIT Warangal as a highly regarded institution, becoming the preferred choice for students, faculty, and staff.

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