

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION 2026

The Women Welfare Committee of Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar organized the International Women's Day Celebration, marking the culmination of the weeklong events dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the achievements of women across different fields. The programme held on 15 March 2026, brought together faculty members, staff, students, and their families to celebrate the spirit of women's empowerment and leadership. The Chairperson of the Women Welfare Committee (WWC), Dr. Anasuya Roychowdhury delivered the welcome address and shared the key activities and initiatives undertaken by the Women Welfare Committee over the past year, emphasizing WWC's continued efforts toward fostering inclusivity and empowerment.



In his address, Prof. Shreepad Karmalkar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar, underscored the importance of women's health and well-being, emphasizing that proper nutrition and maintaining adequate haemoglobin levels are essential for women to lead healthy lives. He noted that the Institute has introduced supportive measures such as allowing women students engaged in projects or research to take two days of work-from-home during their menstrual cycles, reflecting its commitment to a supportive and inclusive academic environment. Encouraging women students to improve their haemoglobin levels through an appropriate diet so they can actively participate in activities such as blood donation, he stressed that everyone owes their existence to their mothers, and caring for women's basic health needs is crucial for building a healthy and responsible society.



Prof. Madhavi Latha Gali, Fellow of the Indian National Academy of Engineering, Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering and Chair of the Centre for Sustainable Technologies at Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Delivering the keynote address entitled **"From a Remote Village to Himalayan Peaks: My Incredible Engineering Journey"**, Prof. Madhavi Latha Gali shared her remarkable journey from a small village of Andhra Pradesh to becoming a leading

geotechnical engineer associated with the construction of the Chenab Railway Bridge, the world’s highest railway bridge. Reflecting on the challenges of building the bridge 359 metres above the river in a highly seismic Himalayan region, she described how the project required extensive geotechnical investigations, slope stabilization, rock anchoring, and continuous redesign through a “design-as-you-go” approach to address complex geological conditions. Sharing insights from her personal journey, she emphasized that success does not follow a predetermined path and encouraged students, especially young women, to pursue their aspirations with resilience and determination. “There is no template or blueprint for life—you evolve as a person as you go along,” she said, highlighting the importance of courage, perseverance, and supportive ecosystems in achieving one’s goals.



Her story served as a powerful source of motivation for students, faculty, and staff alike. The talk was followed by an engaging Question and Answer session, during which the audience actively interacted with the Chief Guest. She thoughtfully responded to several questions, sharing insights from her experiences in engineering, research, and leadership.

Women Welfare Committee, in collaboration with Souls for Solace, began the International Women’s Week Celebration, with Self-Defence workshop on 8 March 2026. Winners of various competitions held during the International Women’s Week—including painting, photography, creative writing, and quote writing—were felicitated during the final event on March 15<sup>th</sup>. These competitions encouraged participation from across the institute and celebrated the spirit of creativity, awareness, and appreciation of women’s contributions to society. The celebration also featured vibrant and enthusiastic cultural program. Overall, the event witnessed passionate participation and concluded on a highly positive note, making the International Women’s Day celebration a memorable and successful event for the entire IIT Bhubaneswar community. Finally, Dr. Prama Bhattacharya, Member Secretary, WWC, proposed a vote of thanks. The event also highlighted IIT Bhubaneswar’s commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive ecosystem for women—where well-being, safety, and leadership go hand in hand.