

ICWIP 2023: Scientists call for more participation of women in physics

Flexible work policies for middle-age groups, mentorship programs for young women, leadership roles and research grants for seniors would bring more women into science research

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The 8th IUPAP International Conference on Women in Physics is being held virtually from July 10-14 with India as the host nation. (Image: @KAHallberg / Twitter)

As the International Conference on Women in Physics (ICWIP 2023) gets underway in India, scientists and young researchers underline the particular need to foster greater participation of women in physics and other STEM disciplines.

The 8th conference in this series is being held virtually. It is jointly organised by the Gender in Physics Working Group (GIPWG) of Indian Physics Association (IPA) and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR). The inaugural session was attended by more than 150 individuals from over 70 countries.

India as host nation

Distinguished particle physicist Professor Rohini Godbole expressed how, as the host nation, India has a unique opportunity to further its commitment to the cause of promoting women in physics. Ensuring gender equity in scientific research is not only important for women but also for the field of scientific research. It adds diversity and enriches the overall research.

physics, many initiatives in the country to support gender equity in science will serve as illustrative examples for developing countries, dealing with the women's under-representation in physics and other STEM disciplines," said the renowned particle physicist.

Presenting a clear timeline, Professor Godbole mentioned that the organisation of the first Gender in Physics Conference in India (Pressing for Progress) in 2019 and eventually the hosting of the 8th ICWIP in 2023 demonstrates the progress that has been achieved through the sustained efforts of several physicists in attaining gender equality in India.

Govt promoting inclusivity

Talking about the Centre's role in encouraging women participation in science, Professor Vandana Nanal of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research said that the Centre has been strongly supportive of efforts to increase the participation of women in science. This commitment has been further strengthened by setting up a Task Force on Women in Science and a Standing Committee on Women in Science. Most recently, it has launched GATI, an accreditation program to promote gender equity, observed Nanal.

The challenges and opportunities

Talking about the new challenges faced by young researchers, Arnab Bhattacharya, Centre Director, Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, said online bullying and trolling have emerged as the new challenges that young researchers encounter regularly.

Also read: [Make this the century of women's equality: UN chief Antonio Guterres](#)

Speaking on creating enabling conditions that can facilitate more women's participation in scientific research, he said flexible work policies for middle-age groups, mentorship programs for young women, and leadership roles as well as significant research grants for seniors would be the way forward in bringing more women into science research.



V Muraleedharan. File photo

Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan will be on a two-day official visit to Syria, the first ministerial level visit to the country in seven years.

During his maiden visit to Syria beginning Wednesday, Muraleedharan is likely to meet the country's leadership in Damascus for wide-ranging discussions. He will also interact with a group of Syrian students who have studied or are proceeding to study in India under a scholarship scheme. Muraleedharan is also expected to meet functionaries of the Syrian Orthodox Church.

India and Syria have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations based on deep-rooted people-to-people ties, the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement here.

It said India has maintained its Embassy in Syria all along the course of conflict in the region.

A large number of students, businessmen and patients travel to India. India has contributed immensely to the capacity-building of the Syrian youth over the years through scholarship schemes and training courses under the flagship ITEC programme, it said.

Muraleedharan's visit is expected to lend further momentum to the strong relationship between the two countries.

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