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IITs play a vital role in India's development: IITGN director in New York

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AHMEDABAD: Sudhir Jain, director of [Indian Institute of Technology](#), Gandhinagar (IITGN), highlighted the social contribution of IITs in a speech in New York.

"The IITs play a vital role in India's social and economic development," Jain said in a speech titled 'Top to Bottom: The Role of IITs in Meeting India's Societal Needs,' at the Indian Consulate General in New York on May 15.

Jain outlined the many contributions of the IITs, including social activism and the philanthropic contributions of its successful alumni, as well as research projects implemented by rural development centers at IIT Kanpur, Delhi and Kharagpur that serve the economically underprivileged.

Jain said, "IITs are among India's most elite institutions. Every year, nearly a half million of the country's best and brightest students vie for their 10,000 undergraduate seats. Thousands of IIT alums now occupy the highest rungs of the corporate ladders in India and abroad. But the IITs also play a critical role in India's social and economic development."

He pointed to several projects developed by IIT Gandhinagar students, such as an electronic cane and mobile apps for the blind, and an agarbatti machine to reduce workload and improve productivity of slum women.

An internationally renowned expert on earthquake engineering and president elect of the International Association for Earthquake Engineering, Jain also discussed his role in the development of the National Information Centre of Earthquake Engineering at IIT Kanpur and the publication of 'Indian Seismic Codes and Commentaries,' which are now widely adopted by practicing engineers throughout India, which, he estimated, will save thousands of lives during earthquakes.