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PRESS RELEASE

IIT (ISM) Dhanbad team brings international laurels with Asia Pacific runner-up finish

Team IIT (ISM) Dhanbad has secured second place in the prestigious AAPG Imperial Barrel Award (IBA) 2026 Asia Pacific Regional Competition, bringing international recognition to the institute for excellence in geoscience and petroleum studies.

The competition, organised by the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), is regarded as one of the most respected global contests for geoscience students. The IIT (ISM) team competed against leading institutions from across the Asia Pacific region, with Institut Teknologi Bandung securing first place and IIT Bombay finishing third.

The IIT (ISM) Dhanbad team presented a deepwater hydrocarbon systems study based in the Gulf of America. The project involved interpretation of real 3D seismic data, identification of potential hydrocarbon leads, prospect generation, analog benchmarking, and volumetric risking.

The team was guided by Prof. Saurabh Datta Gupta of the Department of Applied Geophysics as Internal Mentor. Team members included Pareekshit Hegde, Padmini Pujapanda, Karthik H S, Gokul K, and Sachin Dhakad, representing the Departments of Applied Geophysics and Petroleum Engineering.

Prof. Saurabh Datta Gupta said, “This achievement reflects the hard work, technical depth, and teamwork of our students. Competing at such a high international level and securing second place is a proud moment for IIT (ISM) Dhanbad. Their ability to analyse complex geological data and present a strong technical case was truly commendable.”

Team captain Pareekshit Hegde said, “We are incredibly proud and humbled to secure second place in the AAPG Imperial Barrel Award 2026 Asia Pacific Regional Competition. Every interpretation and analysis in our project was built from scratch, and this recognition makes the effort truly rewarding.”

He added that the guidance of faculty mentors and industry experts played a major role in the team’s success.

The achievement highlights IIT (ISM) Dhanbad’s growing strength in geoscience education, applied research, and industry-oriented technical training at the international level.

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