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G20 seminar focuses on access to science

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Pune: Many low and middle income countries have challenges accessing scientific resources and establishing robust academic and research infrastructure, Union minister of state for education Subhas Sarkar said on Friday. Fostering accessibility and collaborations can bridge the global knowledge gap, he added.

Sarkar was speaking at the inauguration of a seminar on accessible science at Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune on Friday. It is a precursor to the fourth G20 Education Working Group meetings which will be held in Pune from Monday to Thursday.

The department of higher education, ministry of education, the central government, IISER Pune in partnership with Elsevier hosted the seminar. The G20 Education Working Group is one of 13 under India's G20 presidency.

Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz, senior vice president of Research Networks at Elsevier, presenting data from SCOPUS database, said that in 2021, researchers in G20 countries co-authored 75% of the total scientific publications in the world.

"Some G20 countries saw enormous growth in scientific capacity, especially those from Global South. Between 1999 and 2022, some CAGRs were India growing at 11.2% per year, China at 14.7%, Saudi Arabia at 16% and Indonesia at 20.1%," Carlos said.

He added for countries in the Global South, a key challenge is to create conditions for the business sector to increase their in-house R & D. "India has challenges in developing research collaborations that you might want to pay attention to because there is an opportunity to gain more contributions to the creation of science," he said.

By promoting accessible science, knowledge and expertise are shared equitably, empowering researchers worldwide to contribute to scientific advancements, Sarkar said. "G20 can work towards creating an enabling

policy environment and strengthening inter-sectoral collaborations for reducing the inequalities and accelerating progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond,” he added.