

## Alma FIESTA'21-The Social Cultural Fest starts off in virtual mode on a grand note

By Campus Varta - April 16, 2021 24 0

The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of Alma Fiesta, the annual socio-cultural fest of IIT Bhubaneswar which will be conducted on virtual platform for four days (15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021) was inaugurated on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The event was inaugurated by **Chief Guest** of the event **Smt. Anuradha Acharya**, founder and CEO of Ocimum Bio Solutions and Mapmygenome in virtual mode and was presided over by **Prof. R.V. Raja Kumar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar**.

This year's the social theme of Alma Fiesta is chosen as "सशक्त नारी से बनता है सशक्त समाज" considering the multi-faceted impact of the pandemic on women lives and livelihoods and cultural theme is "**Bollywood Boulevard**" which serves as symbolic of Bollywood's role in being the mirror of the culture prevailing in the society. The event commenced with saraswati vandana honouring the great tradition of India with an aim to spread harmony among souls.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. R.V. Raja Kumar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar said that the outbreak of the pandemic posed several challenges on all fronts across the globe. IIT Bhubaneswar has been successful in making several innovations, come up with a unique mechanism for conducting conventional pen and paper exams online etc., and applied the same very successfully carrying the performance evaluation of students. This apart this Institute could switch to online education with zero gaps, offered laboratory practice in a mixture of online and with physical presence of students and could run timely academics at uncompromising standards during the pandemic. Following the same spirits the students too could come up with organizing the pre-events of E-Summit, Wisseinaire and Alma Fiesta in hybrid mode in high standards. He reiterated that fests in IITs is a platform for the students to showcase their talent and in the process gaining experience and satisfaction. Alma Fiesta being the annual Socio-Cultural fest has grown to become a

beacon of culture and social change. He complimented the students for conducting the Alma fiesta with gaiety and wished them success.

Smt. Anuradha Acharya, Founder and CEO of Ocimum Bio Solutions and Mapmygenome, Chief Guest of the evening spoke about the several complex aspects of her professional journey, about the difficulties faced by women at their respective work places, existing pay-gaps, entrepreneurship, lucidly in an easy to understand manner by giving day to day examples from her daily life. She inspired the audience with the glorified message of empowering the women in all streams of life. She also spoke about the various technological innovations undertaken by her organization during recent times. She gave an inspiring message to all the students to be courageous and move forward to the path of progress.

The inaugural session also involved announcement of winners of children's fest "*Bachpan Ka Rangmanch*" conducted in association with souls for solace. Events ranging from music and dance competition, musical chairs, poster making, dumb charades, book balancing, essay recitals, and many more fun activities were organised online specially for orphanage children with a motto to give them a day of profound happiness.

Alma Fiesta, the four day fest in virtual mode includes events comprising of dance, music, dramatics and fine arts, literary, technical workshops, women oriented panel discussions on the social theme (STEM from women-The way forward; Women in army – From tokenism to centrality; Missing women from workforce – How to make the workplaces women friendly; Women in sports) under "Break the stereotypes" initiative with the help of institute women welfare committee, Star nights (Lamhe, Head bang) and many more.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Rajesh Roshan Dash, Chairperson, Alma Fiesta'21, Dr. Manaswini Behera, Vice-Chairperson, Almafesta'21 and Mr. Anmol Surana, Chief Coordinator, Almafesta'21. Also, present in the event were Shri. Debaraj Rath, Registrar I/c and Dr. Sankarsan Mahapatro, President Student Gymkhana. The event ended with vote of thanks.

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