

23rd March, 2020

IIT BHUBANESWAR – Riding on Technology Edge in COVID-19 Crisis

Bhubaneswar: The ongoing outbreak of Novel Corona Virus (COVID-19) globally is a matter of high concern. In India too, the concern is raised with the identification of a number of positive cases and also three causalities have been identified across the country. Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar is committed to the health and welfare of its students and campsites and has taken up a number of proactive measures during the epidemic outbreak. However as the situation is not alarming in the state of Odisha, the Institute has maintained a collective stand to take all possible steps to counter the spread of the pandemic outbreak and to continue the academics through normal as well as live online streaming of the theory classes for its students in an innovative way.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. R.V. Raja Kumar says, “We took proactive measures to prevent contact and spread of COVID-19. We gave options to the students to stay in the campus or go to their respective homes, respecting their wish made as per their safety and risk assessment in this crisis time. In the campus, all actions have been taken for safety and isolation and classes are continuing. The classes are video streamed live to the students including all those who have gone to their respective homes and staying in our hostels. In view of the announcement by MHRD to facilitate the faculty to work from home and lockdown by the State Govt. Of Odisha, the faculty members are made to work from home and stream their video lectures to students wherever they are. The students can put their questions live through chat and same can be immediately answered by a teacher. This is done to ensure that the semester of the students is saved, in the unlikely case of a prolonged crisis. The live video lectures can be taken by a student on a desktop or laptop or even on a mobile phone. The Institute is making use of Microsoft Teams software through which online lectures are being facilitated for students. Attendance is also being taken on-line through the system. Our students staying anywhere in the world can access the lectures. This will also help the students to save them from sickness due to isolation and subsequent suffering to to academic pressure. The live classes are going on flawlessly with only some occasional minor issues. The institute requested the faculty to save the videos for further references by students. If any student faces any problem to access the live streaming, he/she can get the saved video link to watch the session at his convenience.

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Safety against the Coronavirus is of utmost importance, the Institute is taking all adequate precautionary steps to prevent exposure at its campus. The institute has put itself on high alert, took all the actions related to cancelling of all foreign travel, took steps like putting biometric attendance in abeyance, the hostel workers were asked to stay inside the campus, restricting movement to outside, maintaining sanitation of high standards and hygiene, thermal screening particularly of those coming into the campus, preparedness for right medical care and transitory isolation if any, procurement of related equipment’s such as Thermal screening scanners, fumigation apparatus etc. Proper Sanitation of classrooms, tables, door handles, railings, dustbins is being strictly carried out and spraying of disinfectant is effectively been practised. In addition, the Institute had already organized awareness talks and circulated relevant information to all in the campus.

The Institute has observed the “Janata Curfew” to 100% in a spirited manner on 22nd March, 2020 inside its campus as lead and advocated by Shri. Narendra Modi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India through his address to the nation. The campsites confined themselves to respective homes/hostels, nobody moved out except for only three construction technicians going out due to medical urgency. A 5 min clapping and bell sound making etc., at 5 pm was made by the institute including the participation by the Director as called upon by the hon’ble Prime Minister. The institute has been also following all the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (DoPT) through MHRD and the guidelines provided by the State Government are being strictly followed by the Institute.