

IIT Bhubaneswar final year exams conducted online amidst COVID-19

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The screenshot shows the IIT Bhubaneswar website. The header includes the IIT logo and the text "भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान भुवनेश्वर" and "Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar". A search bar and "Site Map" link are visible. The navigation menu includes: Home, The Institute, People, Schools, Academics, Students, Quick Links, Media, Admissions, R&D, Placements, Alumni Affairs, Jobs, Outreach, Programs. The main content area features a news article titled "IIT Bhubaneswar Celebrates National Science Day with Zeal" and a photo of Prof. R.V. Raja Kumar presenting a memento to Dr. Bijayantimala Mishra. A "News & Updates" sidebar on the right lists several items related to COVID-19, including "INFORMATION RELATED TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS" and "Do's and Don'ts - Preventive measures to be taken to contain the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)".

Indian Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar has completed the end-semester examinations for the final year students. The examinations were conducted in the online mode due to the COVID-19 lockdown in the country. The examinations were conducted from June 24 to 30, 2020, where the students were given the option to attempt the exams in the pen and paper mode and upload the answer sheets to the university.

The institute has stated that 526 final year students which also includes those who registered for the final year courses appeared for the examinations. Close to 167 M.Tech students, 206 B.Tech students, 75 M.Sc students, 42 Ph.D. students, and 36 dual degree students appeared for the final semester examinations.

IIT Bhubaneswar in a statement mentioned that the exams were conducted successfully as it reduced the dependence on the internet connectivity by only requiring it during the 'question

paper access, answer paper uploading, and invigilation'. The institute further added that it provided multiple options to facilitate the students to take the tests with all fairness even though access to technology was different for each student.

Director Professor Raja Kumar said that one of the main challenges faced in the system design is to provide fairness of access to the students who have a lot of variation in the availability of gadgets and internet connectivity. He further stated that since answering the questions can also be done with pen and paper, the requirement of the internet is reduced to download the question paper, upload the answer paper, and invigilation.

The institute also stated that the exams were conducted as usual even though it was held online since they only had to improve the duration and weightage of the exams.

Dean of Academics, Professor PR Sahu said that the exams could have been conducted without any compromise on the regulations despite the pandemic as the only change made is that the duration of the online exams was reduced to 2 hours from the usual 3-hour examination and a weightage of 40 percent was in place instead of the 50 percent as recommended by the senate.

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