



THE KGP CHRONICLE

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Community

Combating COVID

📅 March 20, 2020 👤 Shreyoshi Ghosh

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IIT Kharagpur's Combat against COVID19

[India Today](#)[Indian Express](#)[Yahoo News](#)[Amar Ujala](#)

As the world is battling CoronaVirus, universities suspending their academic and select other activities, in one corner of Eastern India, the world renowned institute is giving fillip to the combat against COVID-19. The oldest and largest IIT and its stakeholders on the campus are contributing through a wide range of initiatives to continue helping students with their course work, increase public awareness about CoronaVirus pandemic and create resources to boost health and hygiene. Whether they be at the laboratories creating much needed solutions or socially distanced students seeking meaningful engagement or faculty and staff exploring alternate mode of teaching and learning, IIT Kharagpur is exhibiting its unique creative energy and cautious optimism at this crucial time demanding our endurance and responsible behaviour.

Health Outreach Projects

Recently Vision Prabaho, a twenty-member student group from IIT Kharagpur, found special mention in the social media post by Shri Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Communications and Electronics and Information Technology. The group had translated the precautionary advisory issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) in eleven Indian languages.

Biswaroop Mondal, one of the students from the group said, “An astounding billion plus people are conversing in regional languages. We thought it would be imperative to help increase the reach

through messages in vernacular languages. We have translated the advisory issued by WHO in Assamese, Bengali, Odiya, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Kashmiri and Hindi. We are trying to incorporate more editions of the video in other regional languages.”

In another initiative, four researchers are carrying out a study titled ‘Travel During COVID-19 Outbreak: Behaviour, Impact, and Interventions’ to increase public awareness and perceptions about travel and social distancing. They are collecting public inputs to understand diverse insights and create a sense of preparedness. The researchers include Dr. Saurabh Dandapat, Dr. Kinjal Bhattacharyya, Annam Sai Kiran and Kaustubh Saysardar.

Hygiene Facilitation

Further to this, a research group is also working towards developing a hand sanitizing solution independently following WHO guidelines. The Transport section of the Institute has also prepared a hand sanitizer for internal use and hygiene. [Read More](#)

“The campus hospital is also exploring the procurement of washable masks designed and manufactured locally to ensure safety during unavoidable social and limited professional interactions. The administrators have been practicing social distancing themselves and encouraging the practice among the staff and students,” said Director Prof. Virendra Kumar Tewari.

Alternative Academics

It may be mentioned in this regard that restricted travel and social distancing have been repeatedly advised by healthcare practitioners and has been a key component in the address by the Prime Minister on March 19. But the social distancing goes beyond health and hygiene.

“While academic activities remain suspended until March 31, students are being facilitated through existing and newly acquired e-

learning platforms,” added Prof. Tewari.

The Institute already offers a wide range of course lectures on digital platforms such as MOOCs, Swayam, and DTH platform Swayam Prabha. Students can access these with a high-speed internet connection from anywhere in the world.

“Since the pronouncement of the suspension of classes, the Center for Education Technology has acquired a large number of WebEx licenses from CISCO for conducting classes from 2nd-year undergraduate courses upto postgraduate level. First-year classes are being conducted through YouTube Live. More than 40 faculty members are already taking classes using these e-learning facilities. We are further discussing with Zoom to facilitate interactive online teaching,” said Shib Sankar Das from the Centre.

Prof. Jeevanjyoti Chakraborty who recently conducted a lecture on Mechanics reported more than 1500 viewers for his lecture on YouTube of which 450 were live viewers.

Talking about his experience Prof. Chakraborty said, “the teaching community is new to managing technicalities while recording lectures. The e-learning which we have been using until now was done at studios and there is technical staff to work through the logistics. The Institute’s stepping up the YouTube Live facility has enabled the faculty to concentrate on the teaching part instead of being concerned with the technical aspects of recording and streaming.”

He also mulled over the flipped classroom and active learning strategies wherein students can listen to recording course lectures prior to the scheduled online class and interact more regarding their queries on the topic.

Virtual Campus Outreach

In a novel initiative to give the mind rest from the flow of news and discussions regarding COVID19, the students of IIT Kharagpur and those studying in schools on the campus are being encouraged to engage creatively especially the occasion of [Earth Day](#) which is scheduled on April 22. The Govt. of India has been actively promoting it for the past few years. The Branding and Communications Cell under the aegis of the Dean International Relations, IIT Kharagpur has launched an [online competition and exhibition](#) (Drawing/Painting, Poster, Photo Story and Video) in electronic mode, extensively using social media platforms to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Earth Day. While the themes would primarily include Climate Change, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources, Pollution, Biodiversity, it would also include themes such as Disaster Management, Hygiene & Cleanliness. ([Click Here to Know More](#))

“The Institute is gearing up for a digitized celebration of Earth Day which is scheduled on April 22 with the optimism of a better tomorrow,” remarked Director Tewari.

“We are among the first in India to strategize an [online celebration of Earth Day](#) which is otherwise marked with large public gatherings, environmental events and activism,” stated a staff member.

Gearing Up for March 22

The Institute is also gearing up for the moment of gratitude and solidarity with those sections of the community who have been serving the campus diligently during the COVID pandemic.

Following the message of PM Narendra Modi, Director Tewari confirmed that the community will take part in the solidarity clap with the staff engaged in essential services such as healthcare, security, hostel mess, sanitation, electricity etc. along with the defenders of the nation on these fronts.

◆ academics, corona virus, covid, Covid-19, Director, Director IIT Kharagpur, e-learning, Earth Day, hand sanitizer, health, health outreach, Healthcare, Modi, Narendra Modi, PM Modi, Prime Minister, V K Tewari, Virendra Kumar Tewari, Vision Prabaho, WHO, World Health Organization, YouTube Live

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4 thoughts on “Combating COVID”



Varadarajan Seshamani

📅 March 20, 2020 at 10:45 pms 💬 Reply

I am glad to see that such initiatives have been taken up at IIT Kgp that keep work going and translate to an active learning powerhouse team.

The staff, faculty and students are all to be congratulated and emulated for this effort to continue as much as possible with their work of teaching and learning – plus do as much as possible to look for ways to help the people at large.



Arin Bhakat

📅 March 21, 2020 at 4:49 pms 💬 Reply

India's number 2 higher education institute making sanitizers! Bravo.



Shreyoshi Ghosh

📅 March 22, 2020 at 2:16 pms 💬 Reply

In times of need we will do every bit in service of the nation.

**Salina Marak**

March 21, 2020 at 5:48 pms Reply

This is really a great initiative taken during such situation. It is not only a positivity booster for the students, but also for the rural areas near the campus, as well the nation i whole wide range. Being from the same city, its really a great news for me to feel proud and be encouraged by the whole IITians.

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