



PRESS RELEASE

ALL INDIA COUNCIL OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CONTINUATION OF ACADEMIC PURSUIT UNDER PREVAILING LOCKDOWN AND VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION BY AICTE

The outbreak of COVID pandemic in India has caused extreme distress to the students and is a setback to academic activity. In this moment of crisis, AICTE has endeavoured to leverage digital access for continuation of the academic activities by online mechanisms. Various activities such as webinars, Faculty Development programmes, leadership talks etc have been progressively taken up by AICTE. These activities have seen active participation from all stake holders with positive outcomes.

A course on Universal Human Values was introduced by AICTE as a part of engineering curriculum. An online webinar for 5 days was conducted from 02 April 2020 to 06 Apr 2020. This was attended by more than 50 participants who were mentored by 12 senior faculty members. The Workshop was aimed on 'Vision for Education and Role of Universal Human Values' for decision makers in institutes. A similar 5-days online workshop has now been scheduled between 10 to 15 April 2020 on 'Incorporating Universal Human Values in Technical Education' for Vice Chancellors and University coordinators. More such online courses on Universal Human values and Student Induction Programme will be organised for training faculty after taking the Vice Chancellors of Universities on board.

In order to foster an ecosystem where institutional support is made available/ rendered on voluntary basis to the society, leading to measureable outcome, AICTE has recently launched the Utkrisht Sansthan Vishwakarma Awads (USVA) 2020 under the theme "INDIA FIGHTS CORONA". The detailed guidelines have already been released on 07 April 2020. Institute can submit their respective nomination by cut-off date (i.e 30 Apr 2020).

AICTE Training And Learning (ATAL) Academy has been implementing the Faculty Development Programme (FDP) in the key emerging areas. Under the present circumstances, a 5 days Online Faculty Development Programme through live sessions was conducted on 'Internet of Things' from 06 April 2020 to 10 April 2020. The FDP was well received with more than 100 participants joining the online workshop from across India. Various sessions during the workshop were also mentored by 10 senior academicians and experts who had joined the sessions remotely. A similar FDP of 5 days has now been scheduled from 13 Apr to 17 Apr 2020 on Artificial Intelligence. Based on the feedback of the participants, 15 more courses are planned to be added under ATAL. These programmes shall be delivered online for which expansion in digital platform is underway. The expanded capacity shall allow 1000 faculty

members to attend the online sessions simultaneously. In addition to the above, AICTE shall also be organising workshop on Exam Reforms for updating faculty members.

MHRD has announced a National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) as a Public-Private partnership model in Jan 2020. The aim of NEAT is to bring the best technological Products in education technology on a single platform for the convenience of learners. The portal is now fully functional and has 13 companies with 45 different products available online for learners. The NEAT envisages to offer free seats to 25 % students from weaker sections of society. Under the prevailing lockdown, the number of registration has now increased from 22000 to nearly 68000 students. Given the present circumstances, fruitful discussions have thus been held to allow free usage of contents for benefit of all students & faculty members. In order to spread awareness, video sessions on NEAT regarding benefits for students were recorded on 02 & 06 Apr 2020 and online discussions were also held with Google team in India & Singapore for expansion of the portal. Two more sessions have now been planned to be broadcasted on social media on 10 & 14 Apr 2020. The talk on this subject shall be delivered by Dr M P Poonia, Vice Chairman, AICTE.

To help the students under duress amidst the lockdown, AICTE had also created a web portal (<https://helpline.aicte-india.org>) which was launched by the Honorable Minister for Human Resource development Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" on 03 Apr 2020. The portal aims to support stranded students and re-connect them to their family, schools, colleges and meet their urgent personal needs including psychological support. More than 16700 institutes/ NGOs and other organisations have voluntarily come forward to provide assistance at such a crucial juncture. Till date 2815 students had submitted their issues and necessary help is being extended to them. Other organisation in the Country may also join the effort to provide help & relief to such students affected due to lock down/ COVID-19.

To scout for technological solutions that can help in effectively handling the crisis arising in light of the pandemic, Fight Corona IDEathon was organised. It was a 2-day online ideathon held from 27 March to 29 March 2020, that was jointly organised by AICTE, MHRD Innovation Cell with InnovatioCuris and Forge as organising partners. Other agencies such as MEITY Startup Hub, DST and organisations of global and national prominence offered support in terms of technology, knowledge, outreach, etc. With 21 partners, the IDEathon witnessed a total of 5350 participants including student innovators, researchers, and startup founders. The event also involved active participation of more than 150 mentors and jury members. Online webinars, masterclasses and live one-one mentoring sessions were also organized to support innovators and guide them in technical design, innovation acceleration and rapid development of their prototypes. Another mega online challenge "SAMADHAN" (www.mic.gov.in/samadhan) has been launched by MIC and AICTE in collaboration with Forge and InnovatioCuris to test the ability of students and Educators to innovate. The entries on the portal shall be accepted from 14 Apr 2020 till 30 Apr 2020 with an aim to invite solutions involving design, simulation, proof of concept and is primarily focused on handling the pandemic efficiently.

To motivate the young India, MIC has also been organising the 'India First Leadership Talk Series (IFLTS)'. Considering the ongoing situation, the IFLTS sessions has been shifted entirely online. Under the current lock down, the talk on "Innovation for Resurgent India" with Mr.

Abhishek Suryawanshi, Director, Project SWASTHA, Wikipedia with Dr Abhay Jere, CIO, MIC was organised on 07 Apr 2020. The next talk was held on 08 April 2020 with Prof Vijayraghavan, Principal Scientific Advisor, Govt of India. The guest for future talks would be featuring Prof Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, AICTE (09 Apr 2020) and Prof Partha Chakraborty, Ex-Director, IIT Kharagpur (10 Apr 2020).

AICTE has also been actively pursuing National Initiative for Technical Teachers Training. It aims to enable teachers in imparting teaching in a manner which highlights character building, important facets of new teaching methodology and innovative means of transferring knowledge by means of 08 online pedagogy oriented modules. A six-days online workshop was organised between 24 March to 29 March 2020 that saw participation of 90 faculty members. The members were connected online with 4 mentors remotely who were delivering their respective sessions. A separate session was also organised on 29 March with more than 100 participants where the overview of the online modules was disseminated. Similar insights on NITTT were shared in subsequent online sessions held on 02, 03 & 06 Apr 2020. The participation from faculty members have been overwhelming necessitating more such session to be delivered between 10-13 Apr 2020.

AICTE Quality Improvement Schemes (AQIS) as a part of its functions provides financial assistance to various Institutions for improvement in quality of education. AQIS related issues such as evaluation of the proposals, briefing of institutions on schemes etc was organised via online session held on 26, 28 & 31 March 2020. More than 75 participants attended the sessions each day. As a follow on, a small video conferencing session was also organised on 01 Apr where the quality initiatives of AICTE were shared with the participants. Further discussions in online mode regarding AQIS has now been planned for 14 Apr 2020.

Apart from such direct intervention, the regular staff members from AICTE have also contributed their three days' salary to PM CARES fund. An amount of **Rs 11.2 Lakhs** has already been deposited. Other non-regular staff and other contractual employees have also expressed their willingness for voluntary contribution which shall also be remitted to PM CARES fund shortly.