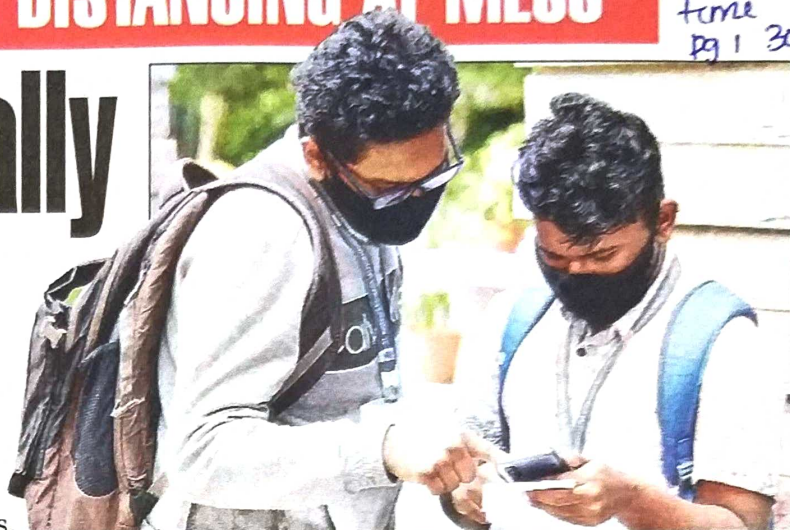


LAB IN BATCHES, DISTANCING AT MESS

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Colleges to finally reopen in Jan



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News of Manipal Institute reporting 69 COVID-19 cases a few days ago, has caused quite a flutter among several educational institutions and students alike. With colleges in Bengaluru gearing up to reopen in the coming days, we take a look at whether enough precautions are being taken by students and colleges to avoid a similar situation.

PRACTICAL EXAMS TO BE CONDUCTED IN BATCHES

While theory classes have gone online, offline practical exams and laboratory ses-

sions are being held with precautions. "We are following a similar model in the hostel as well. Though the hostel capacity is 175, we are calling only 35 students per batch. That way, we ensure that there is only one student per room," says Rev Dr Augustine, professor and board member of the St Joseph's College Gents hostel.

A similar model is being followed at RV College of Engineering, where lab sessions are being held in batches. "For practicals, we are calling students according to their

While colleges have no other choice but to conduct practicals on campus, theory classes may remain online for a while

semesters. Students from each semester are on campus for 15 days, following which they leave and the next batch comes in. We make sure that there are only 10 students in each class. In fact, students are not required to be present for all 15 days. Those who are from outside Karnataka, have been provided facilities in the hostel. In case paying guest accommodations are shut, students can book a hostel room for three days and pay accordingly," says Dr KN Subramanya, principal.

CANTEENS SHUT, MESSSES OPERATE WITH PRECAUTION

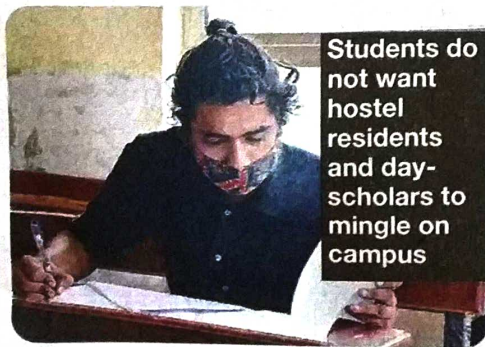
Dr Subramanya says that though students are on campus, they are not allowed to crowd. "Canteens are shut because students crowd in such places. For hostellers, meals are provided in the mess. Students are not allowed to sit close to each other and day scholars are encouraged to bring food from home. Those who cannot, can eat at the hostel mess, provided they inform in advance," he says.

SOME COLLEGES STILL UNSURE ABOUT OFFLINE CLASSES

"The online model has worked well for us. Depending on the situation, the college administration will take a call on whether classes will continue online or can be conducted offline as well," Fr Augustine sums up.

STUDENTS WORRY FOR THEIR SAFETY

A student of NITTE Meenakshi Institute of Technology says that he prefers to stay at a private accommodation facility over the college hostel. "When classes begin, I'd prefer to stay at a PG. It makes me feel safer. Now there aren't many students on campus, but I don't know how it will be once classes begin," he says. Another student asks, "If we have students from all over the country travelling to the city in the coming days, who is to ensure our safety?"



Students do not want hostel residents and day-scholars to mingle on campus

Students suggest regular testing and bubble concepts be introduced on campus. "Lab sessions for day scholars and hostlers can be held separately, thereby minimising contact with others and avoiding cluster situations. Special arrangements have to be made for hostel staff, including regular COVID tests to be conducted," says a student of Sir M Visvesvaraya Institute of Technology.

