



National Institute of Technology Karnataka, Surathkal

Reflections of the Reality - 5th December, 2021

The word COVID has been buzzing in our ears for over 20 months and today it is a synonym to a viral fever. We have been experiencing the consequences of its spread since the onset. Relentless efforts are on by the government to bring life back to its normalcy, where we move all around the places with head held high and in fearlessness.

It is being noticed that there are two perpendicular ways in which most of us are reacting to Covid-Created-Crisis. One group of people means without saying “who cares, let my freedom not be forced to remain behind a single or double mask”. But the fact of the matter is WHO cares and it cares a lot firstly, because SARS-CoV-2 virus recurred with a new name tag- ‘Omicron’, and secondly, because there are enough evidences that it is more transmissible and therefore, it has the potential to overtake Delta as the predominant variant. The other group of people is those who fear its recurrence, fear of contagion. It is said through many multi-media sources that Omicron is a cause of concern, and never a cause of panic.

It will be like living in a fool’s paradise making the government solely responsible for the safety of the community. The things that the government needs to do to prevent the spread of the virus and its potential impact, are already in place and all that we need to do is to cooperate with the system and get vaccinated if not got yet and report if we are sick with all the symptoms of Covid virus.

I appeal to one all that it is time for us to feel responsible in following Covid-appropriate behaviour, like wearing a well-fitting mask and maintaining social distance. The arguments like, Indians have attained the herd immunity and avoid taking vaccines are not going to take us anywhere other than to hospitals. Further it is not a worthy argument under these uncertain conditions, that too when we know least about the virus yet. On the contrary it may undermine our growing confidence in vaccines. Scientific communities across the globe, working on vaccines, have made a univocal statement

that vaccination can reasonably reduce the transmission of all forms of Covid-19 virus, which in fact is of greatest value. They have reiterated that, looking at the order of mutations, it is most unlikely that we would ever attain a “herd-immunity” in our lifetime. It is therefore wiser to adapt and learn to live with the virus, than antagonise those who are asking us to follow SOPs to its last word.

Today I took a trip around the campus in the morning hours. I did notice that most of the students are mask-less and moving as before, ignoring all their promises and commitments of strictly following Covid-appropriate behaviour. Please remember that your carelessness should not put someone else’s life in jeopardy. “Your freedom ends where someone else’s nose begins”. Our fears are justified and history never lies. Covid did not spare any single family from its effects in one way or the other and there are cases of its devastating consequences. However, we are not letting the fears override our logic and disturb all the academic and administrative activities. The entire faculty and administrative staff have been working together to uphold the importance of the academic calendar. We have always been following, with belief, the opinions of the scientific community rather than being driven by fear. NITK did open the campus for the students to return to their hostels in a phased manner.

Therefore, it is time that we come together with a **collective determination and responsibility** to a **single thought** that we make the campus life safe for all and happy forever.

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5th December 2021