

Record of Discussion of Online Session of Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing, held on 30.09.2025 at 10:00 AM

1. The 32nd online session under the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was conducted on 30th September 2025 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The session was organised under the guidance of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education for nominated faculty from centrally funded HEIs.

2. A total of 80 participants attended the session, including 73 nominated faculty members from centrally funded institutions across the country. The session was opened by Mr. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director, DoHE, who extended a warm welcome to all participants and resource persons. He reiterated the Ministry's continued commitment to strengthening institutional ecosystems for mental health, resilience, and wellbeing. He stressed that the programme is not only a response to urgent challenges but also a proactive effort to transform higher education into a space that nurtures both intellectual and psychosocial growth.

3. Mr. Sharma noted that collaboration across institutions and sharing of innovative practices are critical for addressing the scale and diversity of challenges faced by students in India's higher education landscape. Mr. Sharma then introduced the speakers for the session:

- ❖ Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
- ❖ Ms. Geeta Mehrotra, Expressions India
- ❖ Prof. Namita Ranganathan, University of Delhi
- ❖ Prof. Naved Iqbal, Jamia Milia Islamia

4. Prof. Namita Ranganathan reflected on the cultural psychosocial context of student life in HEIs. She observed that India's collectivist culture shapes how students view themselves and their roles within the family and society. Many students undergo an intense "grind" to secure admission into prestigious HEIs, but entry itself does not end their struggle. Students continue to face pressure, dissonance between expectations and reality, and challenges in adjusting to institutional life.

5. Prof. Ranganathan emphasised the critical role of faculty in shaping a sense of belongingness within institutions. Teachers who take a proactive role in building supportive campus cultures can help students navigate their new environment with greater confidence. She suggested that orientation programmes should be designed more holistically wherein around 60% of the programme may focus on professional and academic aspects, and the remaining 40% should introduce students to life at the HEI, life in the city, and non-academic support systems. Group activities during orientation, she noted, can provide opportunities for students to forge friendships and create informal peer networks that ease transition.

6. She also proposed that interested parents could be invited to orientation programmes, strengthening the institution's community ties and enhancing parental trust. Importantly, Prof. Ranganathan highlighted the need to actively take feedback from students on their first impressions of institutional life, including what they find lacking, to ensure that orientation and support structures remain responsive. She concluded by underlining the vulnerability of students at the transition stage,

observing that at 18 years of age many are “still children” who require a nurturing and empathetic environment to thrive.

7. The session was then handed over to Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, who broadened the discussion by reframing mental health as more than the absence of illness, defining it as the ability of individuals to contribute positively to themselves and to society. He said that faculty and institutions must intentionally foster environments that are enjoyable, engaging, and mentally nourishing for students.

8. Dr. Nagpal spoke about the importance of counselling services, year-long activity calendars, and peer-led initiatives as central pillars of comprehensive wellbeing ecosystem. He underscored that faculty members are not only academic mentors but also gatekeepers and change agents for mental health, capable of shaping student resilience through everyday interactions. He also noted the evolving psychosocial pressures on students, such as recent changes in visa policies affecting aspirations to work abroad, disparities in placement opportunities based on institutional reputation, and the pervasive influence of corporate culture. These factors, he said, create disillusionment and stress among students.

9. In this context, Dr. Nagpal strongly advocated for embedding life skills education within higher education. Skill such as resilience, empathy, adaptability, and emotional regulation are essential for building confidence, supporting academic achievement, and preparing students to navigate uncertainty. He urged faculty to view life skills as integral to the curriculum rather than as optional add-ons.

10. The session was then handed over to Ms. Geeta Mehrotra. Ms. Mehrotra focused on practical strategies for embedding wellbeing within classroom practices. She encouraged faculty to integrate creative and engaging methods of teaching, including mindfulness-based activities that help students manage stress and enhance focus. She highlighted that open minded questioning not only promotes critical thinking but also fosters communication and trust between students and teachers. Faculty, she emphasised, must model life skills, such as active listening, empathy, and adaptability, in their interactions with students, since students often learn more from observed behaviour than formal instruction.

11. Ms. Mehrotra also underlined the role of peer-support initiatives and student-led wellbeing clubs. These can complement formal counselling by creating informal networks of care and reducing stigma around mental health discussions. She encouraged institutions to empower students to lead initiatives, thereby making wellbeing a shared responsibility.

12. Finally, Prof. Naved Iqbal shared insights on Jamia Milia Islamia’s University Counselling and Guidance Center (UCGC) as an exemplar of developing centres of excellence – a scalable practice of wellbeing at HEIs. During his presentation, Prof. Iqbal shared that this academic year JMI has started work on 2 units – Mental Health Promotion Unit, and Counselling activities in collaboration with METOPOLIS a joint effort funded by various institutions. Prof. Iqbal showcased a comprehensive presentation that detailed the history, services and mission of the UCGC, established in 2005 to foster the holistic development of students, enabling them to realise their full potential in both academic and professional spheres, excel in life, and prepare for future challenges. He outlined how since 2007, the UCGC has expanded its scope to include activities such as remediation, rehabilitation, prevention, and management of psychological issues, alongside personal and career counselling. He explained the

centre's structure and activities, emphasising its core objectives of helping students address personal issues, navigate career decision, develop crucial life skills, and maintain their mental health and wellbeing. Additionally, Prof. Iqbal highlighted the tele-counselling services offered by JMI, which provide accessible mental health support to students remotely. Overall, Prof. Iqbal's presentation offered a thorough overview of the UCGC's multifaceted approach to student support, underscoring its commitment to psychological and professional development of the students.

13. Prof. Iqbal also acknowledged that resource constraints within universities limit the expansion of counselling services and research initiatives. He encouraged institutions to innovate within existing capacities, for instance by leveraging peer networks, faculty sensitisation, and low-cost wellness activities.

14. The session concluded with a vote of thanks.

List of Attendees
Faculty Members

S. No.	Name of Institution	Faculty Nominated	Attendees	Absentees
1	Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya	No faculty nominated		
2	Mizoram University	1. Abhijyoti Ghosh 2. Baby Zaithanpuii Hmar 3. C. Lalengzama 4. C. Lalfamkima Varte 5. C. Zothanmawia 6. Grace Lalhlupuii Sailo 7. HT Lalmuankima 8. John Lama 9. Lalremsangi 10. Lalthlanchhuaha 11. Vanlalmuansangi Khenglawt	1. Abhijyoti Ghosh 2. Baby Zaithanpuii Hmar 3. C. Lalengzama 4. C. Lalfamkima Varte 5. C. Zothanmawia 6. Grace Lalhlupuii Sailo 7. HT Lalmuankima 8. John Lama 9. Lalremsangi 10. Lalthlanchhuaha 11. Vanlalmuansangi Khenglawt	None
3	Nagaland University	No faculty nominated	1. Lovika P Shikhu 2. Toshimenla Jamir	
4	IIIT Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	1. Aashish Parihar 2. Abhinav Singh Parihar 3. Geo Jose 4. Kamlesh Kumar Chauhan 5. Neha Singh 6. Paridhi Athe 7. Priyanka Kamboj 8. Shikha Patel 9. Sourabh Jain 10. Sunil Kumar 11. Supriyo Mandal	1. Aashish Parihar 2. Neha Singh 3. Paridhi Athe 4. Priyanka Kamboj 5. Shikha Patel 6. Sourabh Jain	1. Abhinav Singh Parihar 2. Geo Jose 3. Kamlesh Kumar Chauhan 4. Sunil Kumar 5. Supriyo Mandal
5	IIIT Surat, Gujarat	No faculty nominated		
6	National Institute of Technology, Warangal	1. A. V. Giridhar 2. B. Srinivas 3. Bhargavi 4. C. Sumanth	1. Raja Viswanathan	1. A. V. Giridhar 2. B. Srinivas 3. Bhargavi 4. C. Sumanth

		5. G. Amba Prasad Rao 6. Gaurav Kumar Sharma 7. R. Arockia Kumar 8. Raj Mohan S 9. Raja Viswanathan 10. Sorabh Roy 11. Surajbhan Sevda		5. G. Amba Prasad Rao 6. Gaurav Kumar Sharma 7. R. Arockia Kumar 8. Raj Mohan S 9. Sorabh Roy 10. Surajbhan Sevda
7	National Institute of Technology, Arunachal Pradesh	1. Brajagopal 2. Dipak Sen 3. Jayakesh 4. Koj Sambyo 5. M. M.Singh 6. Nabam Rich 7. R S Goswami 8. Rajen Pudur 9. Ralli Sangno 10. Ravi Ranjan Kumar 11. S K Chakraborty	1. Dipak Sen 2. M. M.Singh 3. R S Goswami 4. Rajen Pudur 5. Ralli Sangno 6. Ravi Ranjan Kumar 7. Sahaved Roy 8. Sanjeev Kumar Metya 9. Mainak Mallik	1. Brajagopal 2. Jayakesh 3. Koj Sambyo 4. Nabam Rich 5. S K Chakraborty
8	IIT Bhilai	1. Balakrishna Mehta 2. Eslavath Rajkumar 3. Praveen Kumar 4. Raghavender Medishetty 5. Rekha R 6. Sreelakshmi R 7. Swati Yadav 8. Udayraj 9. Vinod Reddy 10. Vivek Raghuwanshi 11. Yagnesh Shadangi	1. Eslavath Rajkumar 2. Praveen Kumar 3. Rekha R 4. Sreelakshmi R 5. Swati Yadav 6. Udayraj 7. Vinod Reddy 8. Vivek Raghuwanshi 9. Yagnesh Shadangi 10. Rajkumar	1. Balakrishna Mehta 2. Raghavender Medishetty
9	IIT Goa	1. Abhitosh Upadhyay 2. Keval Shrihari Ramani 3. Niraj Kumar 4. Priyabrata Sahoo	1. Abhitosh Upadhyay 2. Keval Shrihari Ramani 3. Niraj Kumar 4. Satyabrata Mahapatra 5. Satyanath Bhat	1. Priyabrata Sahoo

		5. Satyabrata Mahapatra 6. Satyanath Bhat 7. Satyaprakash Ahirwar 8. Saumya Bajpai 9. Saurabh Trivedi 10. Selvaraj Seenivasan 11. Tapaswini Baral	6. Satyaprakash Ahirwar 7. Saumya Bajpai 8. Saurabh Trivedi 9. Selvaraj Seenivasan 10. Tapaswini Baral	
10	IIT Dharwad	1. Achyut Mani Tripathi 2. Amarkumar Kushwaha 3. Dhriti S Ghosh 4. Naveen Kadayinti 5. Omkar Bembalge 6. Rajshekar K 7. Rajshekhar V Bhat 8. Ramesh Nayaka 9. Saroj Mondal 10. Satyapriya Gupta 11. Tamal Das	1. Achyut Mani Tripathi 2. Amarkumar Kushwaha 3. Dhriti S Ghosh 4. Naveen Kadayinti 5. Omkar Bembalge 6. Rajshekhar V Bhat 7. Ramesh Nayaka 8. Saroj Mondal 9. Satyapriya Gupta 10. Tamal Das	1. Rajshekar K
11	IIM Bodh Gaya	1. Abhyudaya Anand Mishra 2. Akriti Bhatt 3. Anamita Guha 4. Loitongbam Athouba Meetei 5. Manali Chatterjee 6. Namita Ruparel 7. Remya Lathabhavan 8. Somya Gupta 9. Sujit Sekhar Moharana 10. Tamal Samanta 11. Vishal Ashok Wankhede	1. Abhyudaya Anand Mishra 2. Akriti Bhatt 3. Namita Ruparel 4. Somya Gupta 5. Tamal Samanta	1. Anamita Guha 2. Loitongbam Athouba Meetei 3. Manali Chatterjee 4. Remya Lathabhavan 5. Sujit Sekhar Moharana 6. Vishal Ashok Wankhede
12	IIM Sirmaur	1. Ajay Kumar Singal 2. Ashish Goel	1. Ajay Kumar Singal 2. Ashish Goel	1. Sanjay Pareek

		3. Devika Vashisht 4. Karthikeyan Balakumar 5. Mohd. Hussain Kunroo 6. Mohita G Sharma 7. Sanja Samirana Pattnayak 8. Sanjay Pareek 9. Shah Bhavikumar Indravadan 10. Urvashi Rathod	3. Devika Vashisht 4. Karthikeyan Balakumar 5. Mohd. Hussain Kunroo 6. Mohita G Sharma 7. Sanja Samirana Pattnayak 8. Urvashi Rathod	2. Shah Bhavikumar Indravadan
13	Unidentigied		1. Swarnendu	

Additional Attendees

Affiliation Details	Name of the Attendees
Ministry Officials, Resource Persons, Officials from NIEPA	1. Mr. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director, DoHE, Ministry of Education 2. Prof. Kumar Suresh, NIEPA 3. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India 4. Ms Geeta Mehrotra, Faculty, University and School Life Skills, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Expressions India 5. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi 6. Prof. Naved Iqbal, Jamia Milia Islamia 7. Dr. Suman Negi, NIEPA 8. Ms. Richa Shrivastava, Consultant, MMTTP, Ministry of Education