

Record of Discussion of Online Session of Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing, held on 29.05.2025 at 10:00 AM

1. An online session under the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was held on 29th May 2025 at 10:00 AM.

2. This session marked the 24th in the series of such fortnightly engagements conducted since the launch of the programme by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, in May 2024. A total of 100 participants attended the session, including 92 nominated faculty. This initiative continues to draw participation from faculty members across centrally funded institutions, and as of this session, more than 1717 faculty members from over 160 HEIs have benefitted from the programme.

3. This session commenced with a welcome address by Professor Kumar Suresh, Professor and Director (Planning and Development) at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA). Professor Suresh reiterated NEIPA's role as the coordinating institution for this and other faculty development initiatives under the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme (MMTTP), including programmes on Special Learning Disabilities and Nurturing Future Leadership. He extended a warm welcome to all participants and thanked the Ministry of Education for its leadership in placing emphasis on mental wellbeing in HEIs through faculty development.

4. Reflecting on the programme's progress, Professor Suresh described its current phase, which involves engaging a second set of faculty members from participating institutions in order to deepen institutional capacity and broaden the base of trained faculty sensitised to issues of student mental health. He emphasised that the programme is designed to create a more empathetic, responsive, and nurturing environment in higher education settings, where mental health is regarded as an essential dimension of the learning experience.

5. The following resource persons were introduced and the session was handed over to them:

- ❖ Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
- ❖ Ms. Geeta Mehrotra, Expressions India
- ❖ Prof. Shantanu Misra, IIT Kanpur

6. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal commenced the technical session by outlining the changing ethos of higher education, shifting from a focus on literacy to a more holistic vision of human development. He underscored the vital role of faculty in shaping compassionate academic environments and called for a collaborative national response to the mental health crisis in higher education, particularly in light of data indicating rising levels of student stress, anxiety, and suicide. Citing national statistics and campus-level research, Dr. Nagpal highlighted that a significant proportion of mental health issues emerge between the ages of 14 and 18, and often worsen as students progress through university. He argued that transitions – such as

the move from school to university and from undergraduate to postgraduate study – require particular attention and structured psychosocial support.

7. Throughout his presentation, Dr. Nagpal advocated for a systemic and multi-tiered approach to promoting student wellbeing. He proposed a four-level framework encompassing the creation of a campus-wide wellbeing culture, knowledge building on mental health, early identification of risk signs by faculty, and provision of timely counselling or therapeutic support where necessary. He also warned of the compounding effects of unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, and substance use on students' mental health, describing these as part of a nexus of challenges faced by young adults in the current academic ecosystem.

8. The session proceeded with an open dialogue featuring faculty members from various institutions. Dr. Anita Singh from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) pointed out that students often suffer silently due to lack of communication with peers, teachers, and family members. Dr. Prashant Singh from BHU expanded on this by observing that many students lose confidence during the early years of university, partly due to the formal and hierarchical nature of faculty-student relationships and the isolating impact of excessive social media use. He noted that despite institutional efforts to build mentorship structures, a gap remains in reaching students on a deeply personal level.

9. Dr. A. K. Deshmukh, BHU, spoke about BHU's ongoing initiatives under the Student Wellbeing and Student Leadership programmes. He noted encouraging participation and the development of a sense of belonging among students through structured interventions. Prof. Manisha Mehrotra from BHU elaborated on her experience leading the life skills programme in the Faculty of Social Sciences at BHU. She described how students from rural or underserved backgrounds often struggle with low self-esteem and social confidence, despite having high academic potential. Her efforts included not only conducting life skills sessions but also introducing mindfulness and alternative healing modalities such as Reiki and energy-based practices to support students' emotional and psychological resilience.

10. Further reflections were shared by Prof. Sharad Dhar Sharma, BHU, who highlighted the crucial influence of parenting and early socialisation on students' ability to engage meaningfully with the university environment. He stressed that family dynamics, societal expectations, and lack of preparedness to navigate adult academic life often contribute to emotional distress and behavioural withdrawal.

11. Dr. Bhaskar Bakthavachalu from IIT Mandi highlighted the importance of faculty-student engagement and noted the critical role of early mentorship in preventing student withdrawal and psychological disconnection. He acknowledged that while digital tools have enabled access, they have also contributed to a sense of detachment and overreliance on virtual communication, reducing face-to-face interactions that are essential for trust and emotional connection.

12. The session was then led by Ms. Geeta Mehrotra who engaged with the participants through a series of interactive activities designed to highlight the importance of creativity and self-expression in promoting mental health. One of the activities, “Puns upon a Time” involved creating humorous captions for meme templates. Faculty participants shared how such activities could help students relax, get to know each other, and foster a light-hearted atmosphere.

13. Ms. Mehrotra discussed the concept of adaptive life skills, which may be lacking in young people, and explained how these skills could be cultivated. She identified key life skills such as emotional regulation, self-awareness, empathy, communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking as essential tools for promoting psychosocial competence.

14. Prof. Santanu Misra, IIT Kanpur, was invited as a resource person to share his insights on IIT Kanpur’s Wellness and Counselling Centre as an exemplar. As the Head of the Institute Counselling Service for the past three years, he outlined both long-standing and recently introduced practices aimed at fostering a supportive environment for students.

15. Prof. Misra began by noting that IIT Kanpur has one of the oldest and most established counselling services among Indian HEIs. He described this as a dynamic, evolving system that has continuously adapted to the changing needs of students. He elaborated on the framework they use at IIT Kanpur, which begins each semester with him sending an email to all faculty outlining indicators of student distress and expected support responses. The institute operates a robust multi-layered support system that includes three full-time psychiatrists and nine clinical counsellors, all appointed as permanent officers. The counselling team works closely with faculty, who are trained to be the first line of observation and referral.

16. Prof. Misra stressed the importance of confidentiality, non-judgemental engagement, and cultural sensitivity in dealing with student concerns. He pointed out that faculty members are trained not to make inquiries into students’ backgrounds – such as caste, religion, or financial status – when offering support. Instead, they are encouraged to focus on building trust and ensuring that students feel heard and supported.

17. The session concluded on a hopeful note, with a shared sense of purpose among participants to collectively foster compassionate, resilient, and mentally healthy educational institutions across the country.

Annexure**List of Attendees
Faculty Members**

S. No.	Name of Institution	Faculty Nominated	Attendees	Absentees
1	Assam University	1. Ayesha T. Rashid 2. G. Albin Joseph 3. Naresh Kumar 4. Paromita Das 5. Rajan Kumar Vaidhya 6. Rajiya Sahani 7. Ramiah Balakrishnan 8. Ratna Huiram 9. Ruma Debnath 10. Shailendra Kumar 11. T. Manichander	1. Ayesha T Rashid 2. G Albin Joseph 3. Naresh Kumar 4. Paromita Das 5. Rajan Kumar Vaidhya 6. Shailendra Kumar 7. T. Manichander	1. Rajiya Sahani 2. Ramiah Balakrishnan 3. Ratna Huiram 4. Ruma Debnath
2	Banaras Hindu University	1. Anita Singh 2. Arun Kumar Deshmukh 3. Binayak Dubey 4. Ishi Mohan 5. Jai Lakshmi Kaul 6. Manisha A Mehrotra 7. Prashant Singh-II 8. Sharad Dhar Sharma 9. Somu Singh 10. Suresh K Nair	1. Anita Singh 2. Arun Kumar Deshmukh 3. Binayak Dubey 4. Ishi Mohan 5. Manisha A Mehrotra 6. Prashant Singh-II 7. Sharad Dhar Sharma 8. Somu Singh 9. Suresh K Nair	1. Jai Lakshmi Kaul
3	National Institute of Advanced Manufacturing Technology (NIAMT), Ranchi	1. Amitesh Kumar 2. Banshidhara Mallik 3. Debdas Roy 4. Kulkarni Rahul Ramesh 5. Lokeswar Patnaik 6. Madhu Kumari 7. Niranjana Kumar Singh	1. Amitesh Kumar 2. Banshidhara Mallik 3. Kulkarni Rahul Ramesh 4. Lokeswar Patnaik 5. Madhu Kumari 6. Niranjana Kumar Singh 7. Rahul Mishra	1. Debdas Roy 2. Umesh Khandey

		8. Rahul Mishra 9. Ratnakar Das 10. Sumit Raj 11. Umesh Khandey	8. Ratnakar Das 9. Sumit Raj	
4	Indian Institute of Information Technology, Allahabad	1. Amaresh Kumar Sahoo 2. B Shanti Bhushan 3. Manish Kumar 4. Pavan Chakraborty 5. Pooja Mishra 6. Radhika Gaur 7. Ramesh K Bhukya 8. Ranjana Vyas 9. Shashikant Rai 10. Shekhar Verma 11. Sonali Agarwal	1. Amaresh Kumar Sahoo 2. B Shanti Bhushan 3. Pavan Chakraborty 4. Pooja Mishra 5. Radhika Gaur 6. Shashikant Rai 7. Shekhar Verma 8. Sonali Agarwal	1. Manish Kumar 2. Ramesh K Bhukya 3. Ranjana Vyas
5	Indian Institute of Information Technology, Guwahati	1. Anuradha Jha 2. Arjab Roy 3. Debashree Devi 4. Masihuddin 5. Parashjyoti Borah 6. Radhika Sukapuram 7. Rupjyoti Saha 8. Sheikh Wasmir Hussain 9. Sudip Biswas 10. Upasana Talukdar 11. Valmik Tilwari	1. Anuradha Jha 2. Arjab Roy 3. Debashree Devi 4. Masihuddin 5. Parashjyoti Borah 6. Radhika Sukapuram 7. Rupjyoti Saha 8. Sheikh Wasmir Hussain 9. Sudip Biswas 10. Upasana Talukdar 11. Valmik Tilwari	None
6	National Institute of Technology, Hamirpur	1. Aditi Chauhan 2. Anoop Kumar 3. Anshul Sharma 4. Bharti Bakshi Koul 5. Neetu Kapoor 6. Pardeep Singh 7. Rakesh Sharma 8. Rifaqat Ali 9. Sachin Kumar 10. Sunil Sharma 11. Vivek Sharma	1. Aditi Chauhan 2. Anoop Kumar 3. Anshul Sharma 4. Bharti Bakshi Koul 5. Neetu Kapoor 6. Pardeep Singh 7. Rakesh Sharma 8. Rifaqat Ali 9. Sachin Kumar 10. Vivek Sharma	1. Sunil Sharma

7	National Institute of Technology, Raipur	1. Anup Kumar Sharma 2. Ashish Kumar 3. Devanshi Gaur 4. Himanshu Govil 5. Manwendra Tripathi 6. Meena Murmu 7. S.K. Dewangan 8. Sachin Kumar Sahu 9. Shruti Sharad Nagdeve 10. Tungabidya Maharana	1. Anup Kumar Sharma 2. Ashish Kumar 3. Manwendra Tripathi 4. Meena Murmu 5. S.K. Dewangan 6. Sachin Kumar Sahu 7. Shruti Sharad Nagdeve 8. Tungabidya Maharana	1. Devanshi Gaur 2. Himanshu Govil
8	IIT Kanpur	1. Abhranil Chatterjee 2. Anveshna Srivastava 3. Ebin Cherian Mathew 4. Heena Khanchandani 5. Malabika Koley 6. Namrata Singh 7. Salman Ahmad Khan 8. Siddhartha Mukherjee 9. Sivaprakash Kullampalayam Ramalingam 10. Subhadip Das	1. Namrata Singh 2. Salman Ahmad Khan 3. Siddhartha Mukherjee 4. Sivaprakash Kullampalayam Ramalingam 5. Subhadip Das	1. Abhranil Chatterjee 2. Anveshna Srivastava 3. Ebin Cherian Mathew 4. Heena Khanchandani 5. Malabika Koley
9	IIT Mandi	1. Ajay Soni 2. Amit Dattatraya Lad 3. Awneesh Kumar Yadav 4. Baskar Bakthavachalu 5. Deepak Deelip Patil 6. Deepak Raina 7. Dipankar Deb 8. Doyel Pandey 9. Dwijasish Das	1. Ajay Soni 2. Awneesh Kumar Yadav 3. Baskar Bakthavachalu 4. Deepak Raina 5. Doyel Pandey 6. Lokeshkumar Pisaram Ramteke 7. Narayan Sinha 8. Parmod Kumar 9. Ranbir Singh	1. Amit Dattatraya Lad 2. Deepak Deelip Patil 3. Dipankar Deb 4. Dwijasish Das 5. Kumar Sambhav Pandey 6. Parimala Kancharla 7. Pushpendra Singh 8. Ridhi Arora

		10. Kumar Sambhav Pandey 11. Lokeshkumar Pisaram Ramteke 12. Narayan Sinha 13. Parimala Kancharla 14. Parmod Kumar 15. Pushpendra Singh 16. Ranbir Singh 17. Ridhi Arora 18. Sanjeev Nara 19. Shashwat Bhattacharya 20. Tanushree Roy 21. Thainswemong Choudhury 22. Yanumula Venkata Karteek	10. Shashwat Bhattacharya 11. Tanushree Roy 12. Yanumula Venkata Karteek	9. Sanjeev Nara 10. Thainswemong Choudhury
10	IIM Calcutta	No Nominations Received Officially	1. Alok Chandra 2. Bodhibrata Nag 3. M. Banerjee	
11	IISER Berhampur	1. Ajay Perumal 2. Chinmaya Kumar Dehury 3. Debendra Kumar Mohapatra 4. Natasha Sharma 5. Rohit Soni 6. Shashi Bhushan Singh 7. Shikha Gandhi 8. Vinay Bulusu 9. Vivek Tiwari 10. Vyas Akondi	1. Ajay Perumal 2. Chinmaya Kumar Dehury 3. Natasha Sharma 4. Rohit Soni 5. Shashi Bhushan Singh 6. Shikha Gandhi 7. Vinay Bulusu 8. Vivek Tiwari 9. Vyas Akondi	1. Debendra Kumar Mohapatra
12	Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Allahabad	No Faculty Nominated		
13	Unidentified		Jitendra Mishra	

Additional Attendees

Affiliation Details	Name of the Attendees
Ministry Officials, Resource Persons, Officials from NIEPA	1. Prof. Kumar Suresh, NIEPA 2. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India 3. Ms Geeta Mehrotra, Faculty, University and School Life Skills, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Expressions India 4. Prof. Santanu Misra, IIT Kanpur 5. Prof. Mona Sedwal, NIEPA 6. Mr. Ramesh Kumar Sharma, Dept. of Higher Education, Ministry of Education 7. Ms. Richa Shrivastava, Consultant, MMTTP, Ministry of Education