

# 55 IIM students test positive

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**Joka:** As many as 55 students of IIM Calcutta have tested positive and are being quarantined at a special facility on the campus, an official of the B-school said on Sunday.

Most of the students are from the two-year MBA programme and the rest are from the one-year executive course.

“They have been lodged in Tata Hall and are under observation. No one has yet been hospitalised,” said the official, who is part of the Joka institute’s Covid response team.

Although classes are being held online because of the pandemic, students have been brought back to the campus in phases so they could use the institute’s internet connectivity to attend academic proceedings.

The students had to be brought back because many of them complained that they could not attend online classes from home because of poor Net connectivity.

While the students were returning to the campus, the institute authorities had said that they would be put up in hostels in strict adherence to the physical distancing norms and other Covid protocols.

“We suspect some students had dropped guard during Holi and contracted Covid,” the official said.

The infected students on the campus totalled 15 on April 2. By April 11, the number rose to 55. "These students will leave the campus after serving the quarantine period. The institute had drawn up a standard operating procedure to be followed amid the pandemic in June last year following the guidelines of the Centre," the official said. Once the infected students leave, the official said, the hostels will be sanitised.

"The classes for the next academic session, too, are likely to be held online but students will stay on the campus to use the institute Net facilities," the teacher said. "Particularly, those living in tier-II and tier-III cities will have to stay on the campus."

The teacher, however, said bringing students back to the campus would depend on how the Covid-situation was unfolding. "If the travel restrictions are imposed again to contain the renewed surge of cases, then bringing students to the campus would become uncertain," he said.

The B-school has already decided to hold the convocation on May 15 on online mode to avoid any assembly of students and guardians.

As many as 61 teachers had in September last year written to the institute's board of governors wondering whether it was prudent to call students to the campus amid the Covid pandemic.

The 61 teachers — the Joka B-school's current faculty strength is 82 — had expressed the fear that the students' journey to and presence on the campus could trigger grave health consequences.