



Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar

Education As Usual @ IITBBS After the extremely severe cyclone 'FANI'

The extremely severe cyclone "FANI" struck IIT Bhubaneswar with the wind speeds touching 190KM/hr, causing serious damages to Civil and electrical infrastructure and to the outstanding vegetation and greenery of the campus (two video clippings are appended herewith for illustration). Due to pre-planned preventive steps, the loss suffered by the civil and electrical infrastructure could be effectively limited to about Rs 6.00 Crore.



There have been other damages taken place including in labour hutments, and offices of contract agencies engaged in the Phase-2 constructions of IIT and it is likely to cause delays in the construction work. A few photographs are appended herewith for illustration. There were no casualties reported inside the campus due to precautionary measures taken, but minor injuries were sustained by 12 persons. All emergency services continued on 3rd May, the day of the cyclone. Other operations of the institute of 3rd May were disrupted, but were back in full swing on Monday, the next working day, and it has been 'education as usual,' since then.

The Climate Science faculty of our School of Earth, Ocean and Climate Sciences (SEOCS) predicted the landfall location of FANI as at Brahmagiri at 09.30 IST with the maximum wind speed of 196 kmph at landfall including its course of movement, intensity and associated storm surge with great degree of accuracy well in advance prior to 5 days before its landfall with the state of the art meso-scale modelling systems. The team customized the Hurricane Weather Research and Forecast model (HWRF) for cyclone forecast over Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea in collaboration with the Hurricane research department, NOAA, USA, IMD, New Delhi and INCOIS, Hyderabad. The IIT Bhubaneswar team appraised me that they carried out real-time forecast and provided information to IMD, New Delhi for their operational use. The IIT observatory recorded a maximum sustained wind of 169 kmph with gust factor of ± 20 kmph. The eye of the cyclone was estimated to have passed about 10 Km north-east of IIT campus leaving the IIT campus inside the eye wall sector (for about three hours) which is one of the potential damage zones.

Through pre-planned operations and spirited functioning, we could continue security and medical services during the cyclone, provide water supply on the same evening, supply campus DG generated power, maintain house-keeping and Intranet services on the very next day and grid generated power on the second day with the help of the state government. Our Internet and cellular communication services were seriously affected till 8th and 10th respectively, in view of problems at the service provider's end. All uprooted trees could be replanted, bent trees could be straightened and temporary protection for damaged windows of buildings could be provided. It may take 2-3 more months of time for restoring for damages in the civil and electrical works.

With disruption of academic and other operations on Friday and Saturday (3rd and 4th May), it has been 'Education as Usual' from Sunday (5th May) onwards. Examinations of 3rd and 4th were conducted during 5th-8th and our students were relieved of their exam stress before leaving for vacation. There has been no disruption in the academic calendar. Even MTech admissions for those candidates who arrived unmindfully on 2nd and 3rd were conducted for them and they were taken care of during the cyclone. All the other events including faculty and staff selections, except for postponement of one, were carried out as per the schedule.

Overall, the institute showed excellent resilience, due to the active and spirited participation of Faculty, Staff, outsourced staff and cooperation from our students. While it has been a nightmarish experience for all, the resolve with which the institute could minimise the loss, withstand the blow and maintain normalcy is gratifying to all of us.

I take this opportunity to thank one and all, for their support and sharing concern!

Prof Raja Kumar
Director



FaniLandfall_Dr. Sandeep Pattnaik.mp4



WhatsApp Video 2019-05-11 at 14.18.55.mp4



