

Teaching during a pandemic-- a personal experience

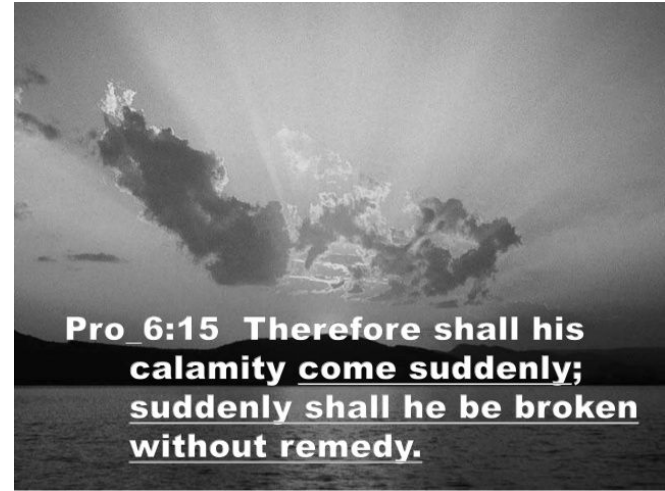
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(Thanks to the creators of the images used.)

Once in a century event

- ❖ Probably, last time India saw a disease at this scale was in 1918 (Spanish Flu).
- ❖ Systems not trained for this kind of event.
- ❖ How do you suddenly adapt at this scale?



**Pro_6:15 Therefore shall his
calamity come suddenly;
suddenly shall he be broken
without remedy.**

The administration

- ❖ IIT Kanpur began regulating the movement of visitors in March 2020.
- ❖ Before the national lockdown all hostels had been evacuated.
- ❖ That semester, teaching got disrupted suddenly.
- ❖ At short-notice the teaching shifted online.
- ❖ There is no change expected anytime soon....



The teacher

- ❖ Instructors not used to teaching online.
 - Much less professional, from home
 - Demotivating to talk to a computer
- ❖ At least twice more work needed.
 - Creating videos in advance
 - Separate discussion hours
 - Evaluating assignments, exams is far more intricate
- ❖ Laboratory courses go for a toss.
 - All studies become theoretical



The student

- ❖ Pandemic environment makes them more insecure.
 - Living at home; always looking at a screen
 - Slower internet, fewer computing facilities
- ❖ Peer learning gone.
 - Hostel friends and interactions are missing
 - Extra-curricular activities missing
- ❖ Plagiarism on the rise.
 - Cheating from the Internet, Chat, SMS, Phone calls...
 - When few do it, everyone has to?



Online education

- ❖ Organize lectures far better than before.
 - Write on screen to simulate class-blackboard.
 - Share lightweight videos and slides.
- ❖ Long discussion hours, once students cover lectures.
 - Use online Forums.
- ❖ Give assignments, assuming they will collaborate.
- ❖ Give very short Quizzes and Exams.
 - Randomize the questions.
 - Check: Does Google know the answer?
 - Reduce the benefits of cheating.



Online research

- ❖ Keep the MTech/MS/PhD students involved.
- ❖ Have regular online meetings.
- ❖ Ask them to give online talks.
 - Survey research areas
 - Review papers
- ❖ Encourage them to discuss with each other online.
- ❖ Research in theoretical areas goes on unhindered!



In addition...

- ❖ NPTEL courses are important now, more than ever. Flipped mode courses?
- ❖ I will be offering “Teach the Teachers” courses in collaboration with Prof. Jalote (IIIT Delhi).
- ❖ Find ways to relax and keep innovating!

