

B-schools postpone convocations

Several IIMs, XLRI, WeSchool defer annual event to avoid risk to students and staff

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Chennai, March 13

Celebrations can wait as B-schools from across the country have shelved their convocations following advisories from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the World Health Organization (WHO) to avoid large gatherings to counter the spread of Covid-19.

IIMs at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Indore, Lucknow, Ranchi, Shillong and Kashipur; SP Mandali's Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad, and XLRI-Xavier School of Management have deferred the event.

The ceremony at IIM Ahmedabad was to take place on March 21. "The decision has been taken to preclude any risks

to students and their extended families and friends as well as to the faculty and employees of the institute," said the institute.

XLRI, India's oldest B-school, has postponed its 64th convocation for an 'unspecified time'. A spokesperson of XLRI told *BusinessLine*: "We generally have around 1,300 people during a convocation. At this point, it is not advisable to have such a large gathering. Some of them might have travelled abroad. This is the probably the first time in the history of the institute that a convocation ceremony has been postponed."

G Raghuram, Director, IIM Bangalore, said: "We will continuously monitor the situation and when we feel that the situation enables us, the new date for the convocation will be decided."

The two-day convocation ceremony at IIM Indore was scheduled from March 24. As a precaution, the biometric attendance has been discontinued at the institute. Himanshu Rai, Director, told *BusinessLine*: "We are taking precautions on campus — no more biometric attendance for staff and students; providing sanitisers in every classroom and office or department; conducting awareness sessions regarding coronavirus and advising the community to immediately visit the on-campus medical centre if they have any flu-like symptoms."

Apart from the graduation ceremony, WeSchool has also put off conferences and seminars till further notice. Uday Salunkhe, Group Director, said: "WeSchool has deployed a sizeable task force led by WeSchool leadership and two doctors among the healthcare management faculty."