

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

Webinar Report on Decoding COVID 19: Ground realities of the new virus

Date: 11/05/2020

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The outbreak of the disease came to light on December 31, 2019 when China informed the World Health Organisation of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of an unknown cause in Wuhan City in Hubei Province. Subsequently the disease spread to more Provinces in China, and to the rest of the world. The WHO has now declared it a pandemic. The virus has been named SARS-CoV-2 and the disease is now called COVID-19. The disease has impacted the economy of the world as a large and has caused global health crisis. As a part of the nationwide lockdown all educational institutions have been closed. The college communities are involved in organising webinars for faculty and students. As a part of this a webinar was organized by the Department of Biotechnology on May 11, 2020, on “Decoding COVID 19: Ground realities of the new virus”.

Dr. Murali Malliga Raman, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya, Malaysia, spoke on the history of coronaviruses, the types of human coronaviruses which produced mild and severe symptoms. He detailed on the pathogenesis of the virus, and transmission methods. Further, he detailed on the classification of the virus family and explained on the comparison of the similarity of Structural proteins, transmission, symptoms. He highlighted a detailed account of the pathogenesis of the virus from the portal of entry until it reaches a different part of the body. He outlined the diagnostics methods with viral tests and antibody tests with emphasis on RT-PCR protocols, rapid test, and other new diagnostic tests conducted in different parts of the world. He gave a detailed note on the new kit — based on clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats (CRISPR) technology — that tests for the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) in an hour’s time and the results for which can be seen through the naked eye.

Dr. Shaktivel Vaiyapuri, Associate Professor School Pharmacy University of Readings, UK gave insights on the preventive measures on COVID 19 -Do's and Don'ts during the quarantine period. Necessary actions to be taken by each individual to protect from the infections. He also explained how viruses affect the humans and detail on the characteristics of the coronavirus, the mutant strains, and vaccination development of the virus and how the vaccine development is challenging based on their mutations. He insisted there is a detailed study required on the types of live and attenuated vaccines developed against the mutating coronavirus. The most important part he gave the importance of handling the current situation by working out with strong mental strength and follow the rules given by the government as it's the time to support each one of us to be away from the viral infection. The whole webinar covered all the aspects of COVID 19 from the pathogenesis to prevention and control of the novel coronavirus.

The webinar had 90 participants and who appreciated the initiative as it was the need of the hour. The participants gave feedback in google form and were provided with E-Certificate