

My traveling experience during COVID-19

Mahindra Rautela, PhD- 2nd Year, Aerospace Engineering

I am writing this to share my travel experience from Delhi to IISc. It may help other IIScians during their journey. I have traveled from IGI Terminal-3 to Kempegowda Airport, Bangalore on 18th June (7pm flight in the evening). Yes, I know the timings are odd but I had unavoidable circumstances.

In the beginning, I was a bit uncomfortable to travel because I didn't step out of my home in 3 months. While traveling I followed a simple rule precautionary rule called SMS.

1. S = Social Distancing (minimum 2 meters)
2. M = Mask (N95)
3. S = Sanitizer (more than 75% alcohol percentage and I keep sanitizing my hands after 15 minutes)

I will share the overall experience in different sections. I have included some suggestions from my side based on my overall experience.

The experience may look lengthy but images are taking a lot of space.

IGI Terminal-3

Documents required at the Airport

1. Flight ticket (Do Web Check-In beforehand)
2. Baggage tag pasted on your luggage
3. Self-Declaration form

I booked a ticket from Indigo. They sent me all these 3 documents on my email id. It is not necessary to take print of 1 and 3. But the baggage tag should be printed and pasted or tied on your bag.



Caption: Baggage Tag

Other necessary documents are:

1. Seva-Sindhu (soft copy is fine)
2. Aarogya Setu app
3. BBMP Letter from IISc (In case you are traveling from Delhi/Chennai)

Entry Gate and Baggage drop at IGI-T3

The situation at IGI is under control and they are well prepared. All staff and security are constantly calling for social distancing. At some places, they are providing sanitizers also (non-contact based).

However, it is necessary to follow social distancing on your own and don't hurry up (natural tendency of Indians at the airport or public transport). The airports are not crowded so you won't find long queues, so, there is no need to hurry.

It is necessary to reach 2 hours before the boarding time. For me, I get everything done in an hour and spend hours nearby my boarding gate.

When I entered the first security check, they checked my ticket. Then, they measured my temperature through non-contact based thermometers and check my Aarogya Setu app.

After that, I directly approached the baggage drop counter (Near Gate-5 and 6 for Indigo) and again they asked for my boarding pass, self-declaration, Seva-Sindhu and Aarogya Setu.

Security check and Boarding

The Security check is as usual but with social distancing. After the security check, I waited near my boarding gate.



Caption: The Sitting area near my boarding gate. Yellow Tag on the middle seat is to maintain social distancing

While boarding, please maintain social distancing (Again, the natural tendency of Indians to rush). I was traveling through Indigo, they are providing face shield and

PPE kit (A kind of jacket) but not to everyone. You can ask if you want one. If you ask for water, they will give you small water bottles during the flight.

As per the Indigo announcements, they are sanitizing the flights before every boarding. I was using sanitizers after an interval of 15-30 minutes. I kept my handbag with me instead of putting it in the upper head cabin.

Kempegowda Airport, Bangalore

Testing and Document Checking

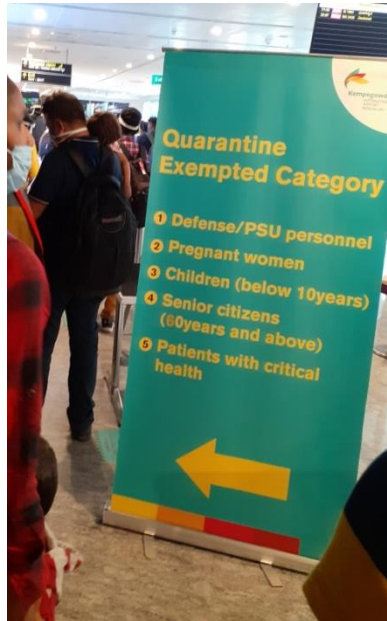
Try to book seats in the front rows so that you can leave the airplane and can avoid the rush as soon as possible. This will help you to get testing and document early.

Once you enter into Bangalore Airport Premises. They will let you stand in different queues based on where you are traveling from.



Caption: Testing and document checking procedures at Bangalore Airport

1. For Non Delhi/Chennai Students: They will ask for all the documents and mark a stamp on your arm and your boarding pass mentioning “Home Quarantine”.
2. For Delhi/Chennai people (**Not IIScians**): They will ask for all the documents. After that, they will stamp your arm and your boarding pass and ask you to choose any one of three categories of hotel (Standard, AC, and Premier) for 3 days quarantine. Don't do this.
3. For Delhi/Chennai Exception Category people (**Not IIScians**): They have to register separately in another queue and get a Covid test (swab test) done at the instant. They will charge Rs. 650 for that.



Caption: Quarantine Exempted Category

4. For Delhi/Chennai IIScians: I showed my IISc letter to the concerned authorities and they said I have to wait first in the Quarantine Exempted Category queue.

But, the people in this line have to do a COVID test (Rapid Swab Test) also. Then, **I found a senior official, I showed the letter to him and he told me to do follow the document checking procedure and there is no need for COVID test for me.**

They checked my documents and marked my arm with G with a circle around it. I don't know what this is. Actually, I was fine with a COVID test as well.

So, try to find a senior official who is dealing with testing and document checking procedure and show him the letter.

This whole procedure took me some 2 hours. During this time, the staffs were unaware of the letter but senior officials are. Anyhow, everything is settled at the end. Prof Dipshikha was in constant touch with me during this time on WhatsApp and Calls until I reached KRVH. I am very grateful to her.

Indian Institute of Science

IISc Entry

I took an Uber at night which cost me around 750 but there could be other options also if I would have come during the regular timings. You have to reach IISc Main Gate. Those who are coming at regular timings, they have to follow some preliminary steps before reaching their hotel rooms for home quarantine or Institutional Quarantine (for Delhi-Chennai).

Those who are coming at odd timings have to stay at KRVH (Near P Block) for the night and then they have to go to the IISc Main gate in the morning (9 am).

Testing and document check

I am enumerating the steps which I have to follow in the morning of 19-06-2020.

Step-1: Hand Sanitization and Student ID check. Cross-checking the name in their directory of re-entry students (you need the soft copy of re-entry letter and Seva Sindhu)



Step-1: Hand Sanitization and Re-entry check

Step-2: DWAAR. They will do non-contact based temperature measurement and your ID verification along with sanitization. There is marking on the way to DWAAR to maintain social distancing



Step-2: DWAAR entry

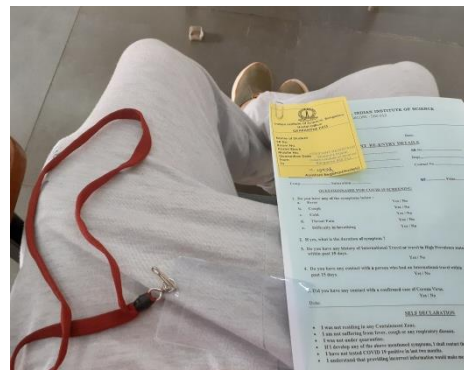
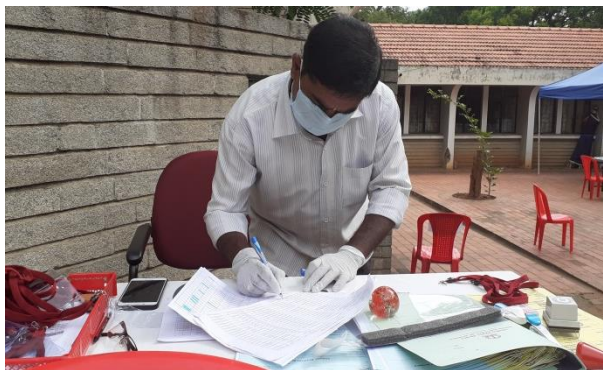
Step3: Luggage Sanitization. Drop your luggage in a tent near to Choksi hall. They will Sanitizer it.

Step4: Collecting some documents. At the entry of Choksi Hall, they will give you 4 documents (a. yellow slip for ID and red tag, b. Details, c. Quarantine Board (Page

need to paste on the door), d. Regular measurements sheet). You need to fill all these documents.



Step – 4: Choksi Hall Entry



Step – 4: Collecting documents

Step 5: Health Check-up. Before going to health Check-up, I have to wait in the Choksi hall for my turn.



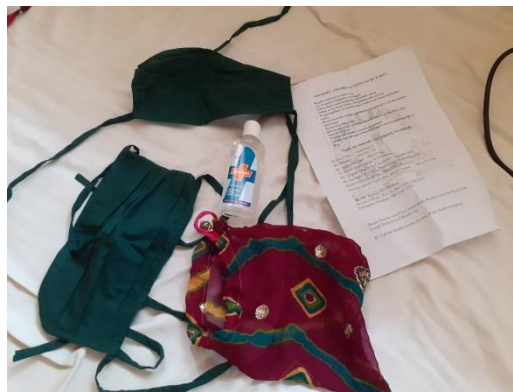
Step-5: Choksi Hall

There were 3 small tents during health check-up (See the picture below (right to left)).

1. Testing using thermometer and oximeter.
2. Asking for symptoms and travel details and other stuffs.
3. Quarantine rules and welcome kit.



Step-6: Health Check-up



Step-6: Welcome kit

Step 6: Got a transvahan and went to the KRVH (Delhi-Chennai) or Hostel.

Step 7: Paste the Quarantine form on your door and start filling up the medical test sheet regularly.



Caption: Quarantine form outside my KRVH room

Step 8: Take food to room facility is available for Quarantine people in C-mess. For Institutional Quarantine students (Like me) packed food will be delivered to their rooms in KRVH.



Caption: C-Mess take to room food facility for Quarantine students (Picture source: Unknown)

Some more points, I would like to focus on while traveling is:

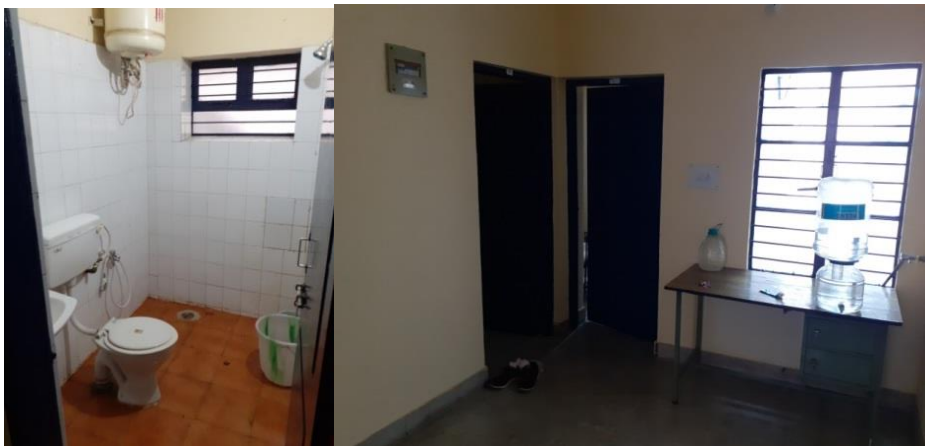
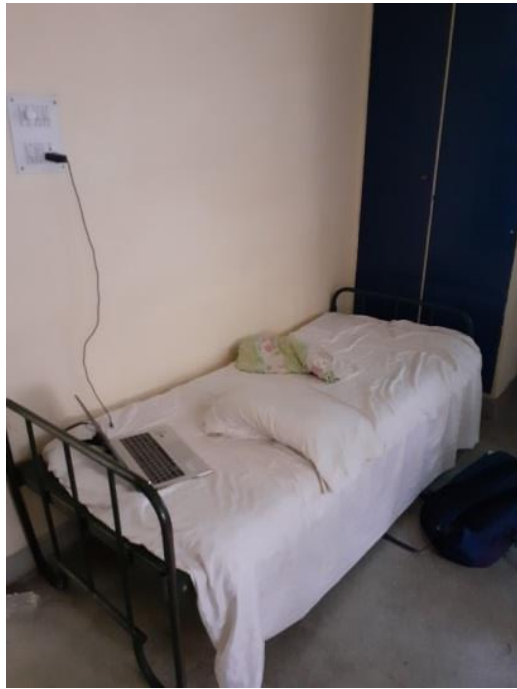
1. Bringing your own food and drinks packed from home. Don't rely on outside stores for that.
2. I relied on Ola and Uber cabs during my journey because their apps show that they are following the guidelines given by the governments.

KRVH (For Delhi/Chennai Students)

Those who are coming at odd timings due to unavoidable circumstances or are coming from Delhi-Chennai have to stay in KRVH for a night or for 3 days (3days for Delhi-Chennai students). I found KRVH facilities good and it is proper to set up institutional quarantine facilities here. It is far away from the main campus.

These are some of the pictures of the KRVH facility.







I found IISc is putting a lot of effort for the safety of everyone over here. Everything is designed perfectly. But in the end, it is our own individual responsibility to behave maturely.

One small mistake can pose risk to the entire campus and the main motive of coming back to the campus (to do research) may go in vain.

Let's promise ourselves to follow the IISc guidelines properly and strictly and contribute what IIScians are always known for, a world class research.