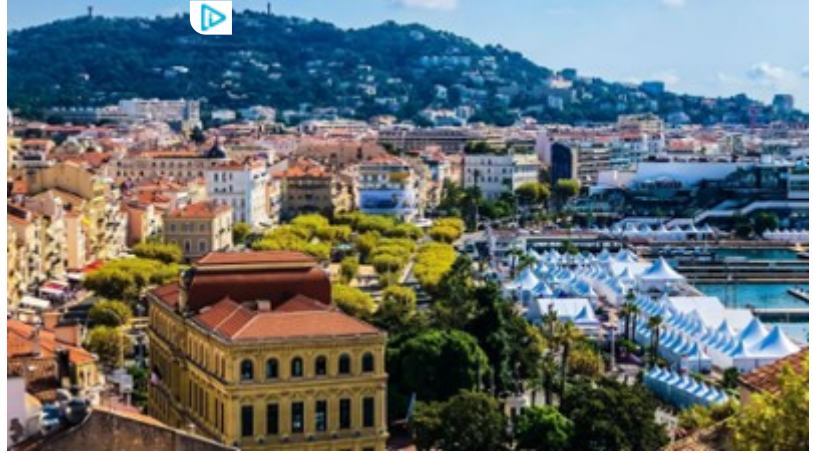




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Colleges shut, job opportunities hard to find: Students oscillate between despair and hope

With curbs confining them to home and shrinking job opportunities outside, their days, which not long back revolved around a carefree college life, have been marked by distress and anxiety even as they try their best to hold on to hope.

Written by [Ruchika Goswamy](#) | Pune |

May 16, 2021 2:31:35 am



Despite the circumstances, the students are still trying their best to help others. (Express Photograph by Tashi Tobgyal/ Representational)

Written by Ruchika Goswamy and Seona James

Urvi Shetty, 19, a sociology student at St. Mira's College for Girls, believes she is missing out on a lot of crucial experiences as she has not been able to visit her college for months, 21-year-old Shubham Patil also misses his roommates at NIT, Surat and confesses to being 'college-sick',

Shravani Karape, 16, is disheartened at not being able to enjoy her days in the junior college.

Shetty, Patil and Karape are just three among thousands of students whose lives have seen a sea change due to the [Covid-19 pandemic](#).



marked by distress and anxiety even as they try their best to hold on to hope. Explained Audio

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“I wanted to go abroad for further studies. However, I am really unsure if that is a possibility now,” says Shetty.

Patil, a third-year B Tech student who too was looking overseas for his higher education and employment, said that staying away from college has affected his overall development. “I wish to pursue my MS in computer engineering either in the United States or Australia. Our morale since (the pandemic hit) has just plummeted and it is harder to work to our full potential. Social media and the news are filled with tales of distress and suffering,” he says.

Poorvi Bondre, a film student, says she is having a hard time keeping negative thoughts at bay. “It is difficult to stay motivated during these times.”

Classmates Akhilesh Dhar and Ashwin Bhat, both 21 and final year students of journalism and mass communication at DY Patil International University, Pune, are preparing for the good old safety net of government jobs. “I pursued journalism and a lot of convincing went into making my parents align to my career choice. As I am home now, working on my final research papers, it is distressing when people around you question why you are home,” says Dhar at his Jammu. home

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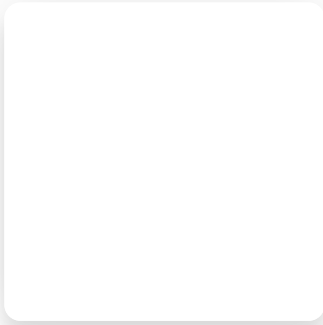
Says Bhat: “After sitting for a competitive exam, we went to Delhi for an internship opportunity which was withdrawn due to Covid-19 and I had no choice but to move to Jammu with my uncle as Pune was then the worst-hit...if there is rejection for unpaid work, then employment is out of question,” he shrugs.

Government jobs were never an option for Bhat but the changed circumstances have made him rethink. “I want to make a career in advertising but looking at the



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Despite the circumstances, the students are still trying their best to help others.

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Shetty, for example, has begun an initiative called Covid Resource Students' Association (CRSA) through which she and her friends assist those in need with verified information on the availability of medical resources. Sherin George, a student at St. Mira's College and a volunteer for CRSA, is trying to look at the bright side of things. "It can be emotionally draining sometimes...However, we receive positive messages daily from individuals whom we have assisted. This becomes a source of motivation and positive energy. Everything has its own challenges. It is a new experience and it is truly a positive one," she says.



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