

To all NAIST students, faculty and staff

A new semester has begun as we welcome new students, faculty and staff to the campus. At the same time, we have reached a milestone in the fight against the new coronavirus infection. While there are still cases reported at NAIST, the impact of the outbreak is quite different than in the past. Clusters appear to be under control and the number of infected patients showing severe symptoms is decreasing. This is due to the progress in research and understanding of the virus, the fact that testing for infection has become a familiar technology, and the thorough implementation of basic measures, including vaccination and wearing masks. I would like to thank members of the NAIST community for their cooperation and efforts to date.

On the other hand, the peak of the 8th Wave of infections, which is now being contained nationwide, was by no means small, and the number of deaths is at an all-time high. This shows that our society, which is composed of people of diverse ages and health conditions, includes many people for whom COVID-19 still poses a threat. As uniform infection control measures and behavioral restrictions have been relaxed, consideration must be given to the diverse members of our society.

For nearly three years, humankind has been fighting against COVID-19, which quickly overwhelmed the world as a new, unidentified viral infection, and the time of fear and anxiety seems to be passing. However, perhaps the eighth wave will not be the last. Let us continue to monitor the situation carefully, and each of us should take what we judge to be the best measures and actions to protect ourselves, our loved ones around us, and our society.

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