



THE SCHOLARS' AVENUE

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Illu '09

Back This Diwali With a Bang

Ram reaches Ayodhya after his epic *vanvaas* and war with Ravana; the city of Ayodhya, in anticipation and in celebration of the return of its great hero, is lit up. Diwali, a collective memory of that celebration and a popular endorsement of the triumph of good against evil. Illumination and Rangoli, an institute's tribute to this festival of lights, an affirmation of spirit of the youth and a testimony to the idiosyncracies of KGPians.

Illumination a.k.a Illu is back. To say that the relevance of Illu is debatable is an understatement. KGP likes nothing better than to indulge fresh brains into the age old discussion about the merits and demerits of Illu. But last year we almost witnessed the death of Illu,

having been scrapped in protest, except on an apologetically small scale by a single hall of residence, and that too, much after Diwali.

So when halls geared up to do Illu this year, something was discovered. Almost every hall found it an uphill struggle due to the vacuum created last year. One lost year means a lot to an educational institute where the basic nature of talent is transitory; where expertise, if not handed down from senior to junior soon, brings us back to the 'Stone Age', so to speak. Hence Illu should have died. Did it?

On nights before Diwali, walking out of the hall in the evening meant being confronted by blaring music, students smeared in

dust and oil, and threateningly obstructive structures – structures of bamboo and structures of flesh and blood. As the days ticked by, the activity in each hall reached a frenetic peak, finally then, the big day arrived. The big moment came, the *diyas* were lit, the judges from Kolkata were shown around in each hall, and in each, the main workforce stood beneath tents and behind *chatais* praying, and waiting for a good show, of which they were only able to catch the end.

Witnessing this extraordinary celebration, the judges were left astounded and asking for more.

This year, the Illumination honours went to RK, who performed a repeat of their 2006

theme, '*Samudra Manthan*' (continuing KGP's long-running affair with themes from Indian mythology), while the Rangoli top prize was bagged by RP, which came up with a pixelated (101,000 of them) image of Mother Teresa. LLR and SN got silver and bronze respectively for both Illumination and Rangoli.

Post results, Diwali night brought with it mixed reactions (to say the least), and the usual post-Illu adrenaline rush was witnessed on the campus.

All of us may have different views on Illu, but just how big a part Illu plays in KGP life cannot be underestimated. Here's to a tiring and exhilarating Diwali!

Pan IIT Summit

Pan IIT Winners

Lifetime Achievement Award:
Dr. (Late) Rajeev Motwani,
Professor of Computer Science,
Stanford University

Academic Excellence Award:
Dr. Pradeep Khosla, Dean,
College of Engineering, Carnegie
Mellon

Corporate Excellence Award:
Ms. Padmasree Warrior, Chief
Technology Officer, Cisco

Entrepreneurial Achievement
Award: Dr. Suhas Patil,
Chairman Emeritus Cirrus Logic,
Chairman Digite and Cradle
Technologies

Technology Leadership Award:
Dr. Ravi Sethi, President, Avaya
Labs

Pan IIT is a global umbrella organization representing alumni from all Indian Institutes of Technology campuses. CBS 60 minutes has described IIT as Harvard, MIT and Princeton all put together. Alumni from the IITs have made a significant impact in their chosen professions not only in India but also in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia, occupying positions of leadership at top universities, leading research institutions, at small and large companies, in government, and at non-profits.

From 9th to 11th October 2009, IIT Alumni from all over the world met in Chicago at the annual Pan-IIT conference. The agenda of the assembly comprised several informative workshops, discussions on current affairs and networking opportunities to meet with innovators and entrepreneurs alike.

Pan IIT '09 also observed the launch of the first ever IIT alumni pink pages database. This initiative is aimed at enabling the cross-pollination of business ideas among registered alumni and budding entrepreneurs with their fellows.

The winners of the first annual Pan IIT American Leadership Awards, honouring exceptional achievements and contributions to American society by IIT alumni were felicitated in a ceremony graced by eminent speakers such as former American President Bill Clinton and business visionaries from America's leading corporations including Caterpillar, Cisco and Microsoft Research. The 2009 Pan IIT winners were selected from over 200 nominees by a panel of

luminary judges. Umang Gupta, Co-chair of the board of directors, Pan IIT and CEO, Keynote Systems, while congratulating the winners, said, "They have helped to make the IITs in India one of the most elite educational institutions in the world today." The three days of the event delivered an amalgam of nostalgia, networking and entertainment. While panel discussions were conducted by day, the nights bore witness to a fashion show, a sketch comedy and musical galas, starring popular artistes like Kailash Kher.

IIT KGP startup Lalaland Store (www.lalalandstore.com) was the official merchandise partner of Pan IIT 2009.

Inter IIT Aquatics

The 45th Inter IIT Aquatics meet was held in IIT Kanpur from 1st to 5th October, 2009. This year IIT Kanpur celebrates its golden jubilee too, marking 50 glorious years of its existence. IIT Kharagpur won bronze in the overall boys' aquatics standings and silver in the overall girls' standings. Chirag Fialoke was adjudged best swimmer with four golds and a silver to his name. He smashed all previous timings with a new Inter IIT record in the 200m freestyle event. Fresh blood in the form of a first year, Darshan Varier, bagged four silvers promising brighter outcomes in the future.

Visit our website for detailed results of the meet.

Notably, however, half of Kharagpur's team and almost all the participants from IIT Madras and IIT Delhi among others were struck by food poisoning during the course of events. One particular shop selling sandwiches and burgers located near the swimming pool reportedly sold contaminated food. As a result, most of the IITs except Kanpur failed to put to test their full-strength squads. Kanpur's athletes probably knew better than to trust the local "cuisine" days before the meet.



Annual Pan-IIT Conference at Chicago

“ They have helped to make the IITs in India one of the most elite educational institutions in the world today. ”

Entrepreneurship Fundamentals



Professor Ikhlaq Sidhu, founding director of UC Berkeley's Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology and an authority on the process of innovation and technology management, visited our campus recently. In this exclusive interview, he shares his insights on entrepreneurship in India and abroad, why entrepreneurship should be taught in companies and a lot more.

TSA: Do you believe entrepreneurship can be taught, or is it something one is born with?

Prof. Ikhlaq Sidhu: I think the truth is somewhere in between, in the sense that everyone can be more entrepreneurial than they are. Entrepreneurship is essentially a style of thinking and from that point of view, it can definitely be taught.

You could also ask, "Can engineering be taught?" In a way, yes it can. But engineering is taught to people who have an ability to learn engineering. For example, you've been selected (into an IIT) because you showed an aptitude for certain subjects believed to be relevant to engineering. If someone has great aptitude to begin with, he is likely to achieve more with what is taught to him. In that respect, entrepreneurship is no different from any other subject.

TSA: Do you think there is a way of judging a person's aptitude for entrepreneurship?

IS: I think it is possible to notice people who seem very entrepreneurial. There are always people who don't seem to give up easily; people who look for other ways if they are not satisfied with their work.

I like to think that the process can start with one conversation or by an observation made by a single person. Entrepreneurship is a very bottom-up process. It doesn't start from a research report. Entrepreneurship starts from understanding people's needs and finding solutions for them. In a way, it is an extremely applied form of engineering: more applied than somebody giving you a problem to solve, because it is so unconstrained.

So there are certainly some skills which would mark out people as entrepreneurial. I don't think there is

a standardized test for it, though – What standardized test would Bill Gates pass that other people wouldn't? But I think if you had spent some time with Bill Gates before he started Microsoft you would have guessed he was entrepreneurial.

TSA: So in entrepreneurship you work with a person and identify his skills. Don't you think it is different from engineering in that way?

“Entrepreneurship is a very bottom-up process. It doesn't start from a research report. Entrepreneurship starts from understanding people's needs and finding solutions for them.”

IS: Yes. In engineering you are given a problem on paper with all the specifications you need, and you produce an output. Engineering is narrow in that way, unlike the real world which is so much less structured. Once you enter a job you find that it is no longer like school: no one is giving you an assignment to complete.

TSA: What is the difference that you perceive between student start-ups in India and in the USA, such as at UC Berkeley?

IS: At one level, there is no difference. Students from both Berkeley and IIT are smart, have all kinds of different ideas, and try all kinds of new things. Just like in IIT, not every student who passes out of Berkeley starts a company.

The difference is in the number of students who believe they will start a company. In IIT, it is probably a small fraction. In Berkeley and in a lot of leading US schools, it is a very large fraction: one of three. In IIT, I would guess that fraction would be somewhere in the range of one out of fifty. In the US, even though it may be only 5 per cent of those, one out of three go on to start their own company; at least you start with a pool of one out of three students. On the other hand if you start with a pool of one out of fifty, you end up with far fewer start-ups.

The second difference is in the environment. In the Silicon Valley, for example, start-ups are all around you. Your neighbours work for one, your parents probably did too, your father's friend just started one... there is nothing mysterious about entrepreneurship. Therefore, the amount of mentorship available is much greater.

If you are a student in India and you intend to start a company in future, the problem is whom to go to. If your parents didn't start a company, how will they advise you? What will they tell you? They will probably

tell you what they know - you should get a job. And if everyone in your family is exactly the same way, it is going to sound like a consensus.

The other thing that mostly goes unsaid is that there is a lot more money in the American economy, particularly with the venture capitalist community that exists there.

To be fair, though, students in the

might be in place one year, and gone the next. Businesses have to make sense on their own - not because of some government regulation.

TSA: Are social enterprises similar, in some respects, to clean technology start-ups?

IS: No, social enterprises are different. Social enterprises are basically non-profit organizations that make money (laughs). In social entrepreneurship, instead of making a donation, you teach a person to make money and keep some of that money for yourself.

The big problem social enterprises face is that they are never sure whether they are businesses or charities. They are confused whether to reinvest their profits or to put it into the social good. If they reinvest all that money, they basically become businesses, while if they put it all into the social good, they risk becoming less competitive.

TSA: Any final word of advice to IIT students?

IS: India needs more people to be entrepreneurial. That is the only type of change that will make the country more efficient at utilizing its resources and ultimately make it more competitive. We need a much greater percentage of IIT students who decide that at some point in their career, they will be able to pick an opportunity and very effectively use it to run their own business.

You never reach all your goals. But if you set them too low, you don't reach any of them. India needs some more people with big goals.

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As for subsidies, though they might influence the R&D activity within a company, a business model cannot be built around a subsidy. A subsidy

might be in place one year, and gone the next. Businesses have to make sense on their own - not because of some government regulation.

Great Expectations

As BC Roy Hospital finally gets the upgrades it needs, it tackles some existential questions

It has now been six months since the fateful sequence of events of March 22nd last year. A life was lost, tempers had risen to boiling point, mistakes were made, and several promises were tossed about by the administration to bring matters back under a semblance of control. So the question that begs asking is - have things changed after such a massive shake-up? How fares BC Roy Technology Hospital, half a year after pledging to undo half a century of apathy?

Upon examining progress reports circa April 2009, it is heartening to note that the facilities and amenities at the hospital have indeed been vastly revamped (although some measures arguably should have been in place decades ago); for instance, students finally have 24x7 access to free medicine. Specialized staff has been recruited for radiology, pathology, emergency care, etc. New doctors and nurses have been appointed, and new ambulances have been introduced (for a more detailed progress report, log onto www.scholarsavenue.org).

However, it is still hard to gauge if medical care on campus is "good enough" - for where exactly does one place the bar? Public opinion of

the hospital is still rather low, but it is as yet unclear to what degree of medical care we can expect. There is a vast difference between a government clinic, which has its own set of guidelines, and a privately owned hospital. As Prof. Gautam Sinha (Chairman, BCRTH) asks in a concept paper to all stakeholders, "What exactly is this hospital expected to deliver?" As the primary medical centre of a university, BCR Hospital has to decide what degree of medical aid it can or cannot provide - is it expected to provide facilities for trauma, cardiac, surgical, bronchial, orthopaedic care, etc. - and then budget accordingly. The current focus of the administration is on formulating such a charter of deliverables. Until such fundamental questions are answered, though, any further measures undertaken by the hospital merely amount to applying band-aid.

Back to the Patient

Perhaps instead of constantly pointing fingers, it is high time we tried making good use of what we have. Prof. Sinha adds, "Neither am I omniscient nor am I prescient. I can



not do anything unless someone puts it in writing or at least writes a mail to me. If an ambulance is delayed, is the driver himself going to contact me and say 'I came 40 minutes late?'" The hospital has a feedback form next to the registration desk which is checked personally (and immediately acted upon) by Prof. Sinha and the Medical Advisor, Dr SK Ganguli. However, thus far very few complaints have actually been lodged despite all the stories of medical negligence floating around in the wings. It appears our own

self-restraint in voicing our grievances is keeping action from being taken.

Additionally, hospital administration is concerned about the undue load on the emergency ward, often for trivial ailments such as sore-throats and colds. It is hoped that students would make use of the Out-patient Department (OPD) whenever possible so that the emergency ward is available when there really is one.

KGP - UCSD Medical



On 18th August, 2009, officials of IIT Kharagpur and the University of California, San Diego Health Sciences (UCSD) signed a preliminary agreement, with the prior approval of the Ministry of Human Resources and Development for setting up of an International Medical Center (IMC) on land provided by IIT Kharagpur. The IMC will comprise of a School of Research and Medicine and a 300 bed state-of-the-art hospital.

UCSD, one of the best Medical Schools in USA, is a highly respected name in the areas of clinical service, management, education and research. Collaboration with them will facilitate the setting up of a new approach to medical education in India and there may be an option for joint accreditation in the future. There will be no financial transactions. Research collaboration will include faculty, student and resident exchange programs and jointly supervised clinical trials.

A meeting was held with the top medical experts of the country

to discuss how and why IIT Kharagpur is proceeding in the direction of medical education and research. Application of technology in medical education has assumed a position of immense importance and medical education and technology must go hand in hand for development of a more modern healthcare system in India.

The concept of medical education to be introduced in the IMC is rather ground-breaking when compared to other Indian medical institutes. Technology will be integrated to a large extent in medical education and a new curriculum will be developed with a more clinical approach and an increased usage of simulation, mathematical modeling, and artificial intelligence as tools for teaching. The delivery of medical education will involve theory, Model-Based Practice and Hospital-Based Practice (Clinical Experience).

Research in technologies and Biomedical engineering is another aspect which will be developed. Medical and engineering students can work closely in related fields and contribute to research and projects for the development of healthcare technologies.

Also, a major reason for setting up a medical facility in IIT Kharagpur is to make healthcare facilities available for

underprivileged people in and around Kharagpur. That is the spirit of this venture - "Health for all is the goal". The aim is to make technology available to the common people and develop a responsible healthcare system, with the socio-cultural aspect as a major concern.

An important aspect which can be developed is Telemedicine or an outreach program for the whole region. With improved technology, cost can be lowered to a great extent and rapid dissemination of medical knowhow can be investigated.

A Public Health Education Facility will also be set up with the help of the Public Healthcare Facility of India to take care of paramedical staff and nurses so as to ensure proper healthcare.

The process is now at an initial stage, with the planning and strategy being chalked out for the future. The Undergraduate MBBS courses may commence as early as 2011. MS, MD, PhD and post doctorate degrees will be provided in the future as well. Initially, the IMC will start with fifty Undergraduate students but the plan is to eventually increase student strength to 750.

A 55 acre region has been earmarked, adjacent to the IIT campus for setting up of the Health Park, which will have, in all

probability, a School of Medicine, a Research facility, a Public Healthcare Facility and a center for Biomedical Engineering. The next six months will see a lot of development related to this project.

Hated with injustice

Vikram Buddhi, an IIT graduate and former research scholar at Purdue University has been languishing in a US jail for three years now, accused of posting hate messages against George Bush. His father, Subbarao Buddhi has been fighting a lone legal battle but to no avail; so much for "freedom" and the American justice system. Somnath Bharti, IIT Alumnus said, "The judge did not follow the protocol. The judge is duty-bound to instruct the jury on the law, which the judge refused on record." Sympathy has transformed to rage now as this bright Mathematics scholar, who had also won an award for best lecturer at University of Purdue, is stuck in jail for what is so clearly an exaggerated interpretation as a threat to the national leader and which might well have been a result of internet hacking in the first place. Having had enough, IITians have now joined hands in fighting for justice. With several IIT alumni under the umbrella organisation PAN-IIT trying to pressurize the US government to see reason, we at *The Scholars' Avenue* sincerely hope the young scholar is served with justice.



Prof. Goutam Saha (Associate Professor, Department of Electronics and Electrical Communications Engineering) is a National Service Scheme program officer at IIT-Kharagpur. He describes in this article the efforts taken by his team to educate children working in and around campus.

Child Labour and Campus Life



the most vulnerable in our society. This organization was started by Vinayak and some of his friends using their private tuition money. Can we do something similar for the children in the areas surrounding the campus? Can we create a zone surrounding the IIT kgp campus where every child gets her education at least up to secondary level? This might prevent them from seeking work and also empower them for the future.

Here are excerpts from messages in the team Vivek mail group.

... visited a locality just outside the campus, where all the milkmen who supply the campus with milk reside. Many of their children do not go to school and might benefit from our program.

This post is for all those who are supposed to teach the group of children just outside the campus (Milkmen Area). We have planned to visit the mentioned area on Jan 21st (Wednesday) at 16:00 hrs. Those who do not have any problem with the timings can confirm their presence by replying to this post. We will assemble in front of RK Hall sharp at 16:00 on Wednesday. We will all go to the area and do our job...

Soon a study center started functioning there.

Inspired by Vinayak and his mentors, the young monks of Ramakrishna Mission, volunteers of Vivekananda Study Circle5 (VSC) at IIT Kgp initiated activities in this direction. Besides UG students (as found in NSS) this group is more inclusive, having PG students and many faculty members like me on its rolls. While UG students stay away from the campus for the summer as well as winter vacation, the services of PG students are available for a longer period. VSC is quite methodical in its approach. Here are excerpts of messages from VSC googlegroup. *The target was to visit a village named Soladahar within few metres of the IIT boundary wall, 10 minutes cycle-ride from the IIT Prembazaar Gate along the canal to the left hand side.*

We have a set of questions in a pre-formatted table; we will go to each house of that village and ask a member of that family to answer the questions. According to their answer, we will fill up that table. We have finished almost half of the village earlier. So if the number of people conducting this survey increases, we can divide ourselves into small groups and do this job much more quickly.



Of about hundred landless Lodha tribal families residing in Soladahar, the most educated is a Class VIII drop-out. Most of the adults are serving as laborers or house maids in the IIT kgp campus. Nobody from there holds a Government job in spite of the special opportunities provided by the Government for the tribal people. This is because of the lack of education and awareness. Currently there are six students from classes V to VII, still attending school in another village. The guardians we talked to are willing to educate their children but do not have the means or do not know how to go about it. VSC is starting an education hub there and the villagers are very enthusiastic. NSS volunteers are participating in this effort.

The first prime minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the first ever convocation address of the IIT system (1956) said, "Here in the place of that Hijli Detention Camp stands the fine monument of India, representing India's urges, the same cannot be said about the area as a whole. Unlike other IITs, IIT kgp is not in a metro city. That is why the differences become all the more glaring – the

on their faces and to know that they liked the gift. Then, we asked them about their daily routine, their families and their pastime activities. Their homes are in Midnapur but they stay with their master at his residence and go back home once a month. Samrat had attended school for a month while Bisu hadn't gone to school ever. As it was the first day, we taught them how to write their names. Samrat just needed some brushing up as he had learnt it earlier. He can write his name in Bengali too. We asked them to write their names five times by next week. Overall, we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to next week's meeting.

After some progress we wanted to have a one day meeting of all the students at the Rural Development Centre. We had competitions, prizes, fun shows, food etc. to make the event memorable. Scrolling back, I found the following message posted on the group by the student-in-charge.

On the basis of the mail sent after the meeting of 7th February we have decided that there are all together twenty students in our coaching classes and we have prepared our budget accordingly. If there is any change in the number of students, please inform us immediately so that we can modify our budget. Also get the permission from the master about attending the function when you go to teach this weekend and inform in this thread only.

The event was organized well. It was a great to see these children working out problems and their student instructors getting nervous about their student's performance like parents waiting outside the hall during examinations. The event ended with a prize giving ceremony where there was a prize for every child. We always got whatever support we asked for from NSS Coordinators and NSS Head and other NSS Program Officers.

At times we were disappointed. One day this message was posted on our forum.

The children Bisu and Samrat who we used to teach have left their job at Azad hall canteen. The owner of the canteen told us that a new kid would be coming in their place. They used to stay at Balrampur at their owner's place but their home is somewhere else. I think they mentioned Midnapore but I'm not sure about it because they told us that they go there very rarely. Now since they have left, we are not sure about their whereabouts.

There was a discussion about providing a rehabilitation package for these twenty odd children working in the campus. A monthly contribution of twenty rupees from each student member would be enough to put them in a decent hostel providing academic opportunities.

This reminds me of the effort put in by Vinayak, an IIT kgp alumnus². He was visiting our campus³ on his way back to Kolkata from Amlasole, a tribal village in the same district as IIT kgp, West Midnapore. This village recently became famous for a wrong reason – death due to poverty. Shabar tribes living there have no access to basic amenities of life. Even food is not available everyday and thus even the little children have to fast. Education and healthcare are distant dreams. There were a few children from those villages accompanying Vinayak to become a part of Parivaar⁴, a home for the homeless. The group consisted mostly of girls,

It was my first year as a National Service Scheme (NSS) program officer at IIT Kharagpur. The student team I supervised called itself Vivek, the conscience. At our team meetings, several members wanted to do something for the children serving the campus community – in hall canteens, cycle sheds, food joints etc. Being students themselves, the members thought that the best way to serve these children was to empower them by providing basic education. A survey began and information like this started flowing in the team's googlegroup:



At Tikka, I came across two kids Sonu and Bijoy who expressed their willingness to study(when they are not on duty), but their masters did not permit them, but they said that

they could introduce me to a lot of other kids who do not work, and have never been to school. ... there were many of them. I found two kids at a tea stall; Hariom Patra(12) and Ridaya. Their parents/masters have no objection regarding their education and are pretty fervent about this. Hariom Patra lost his father long ago and has a blind mother and a little sister (I think she too can come) to feed and take care of, in abject poverty, thus explaining why he could never go to school. I also went to Vegies and found a kid named Obhi, and his master has given a go-ahead for the very same, but the problem is that he is about fifteen years old, although he has never been to school.

At a team meeting, we decided to have a number of teaching centers. The idea was to have at least one such center within easy reach of every child. We decided to provide every kid with a study material pack that included, among other things, multipurpose books, copies, colour pencils, drawing book etc. We also decided to give them toffees every time they come to study.

The team also considered other options available for the cases where the employer is not willing to let these children visit the study centres. There were two distinct categories – children employed inside student halls and those employed outside student halls. The opinion was that the employers inside halls can be persuaded, if necessary, by citing child labour laws. Trying something similar outside the hall, where the students don't have much say, may risk the employment of the child and we do not have any alternate plan for that situation. The IIT campus is an island of great economic activity amidst a rural setting. If a kid loses his job here, it will be very difficult for him to get one outside the campus.

The work started. Here are few lines from an NSS volunteer.

Yesterday (On Sunday 18/1), we taught two boys who work in Azad hall canteen. Their names are Samrat Singh and Bisu Singh. They were pleasantly surprised when we gave them the folder, stationery and the toffees. It was heartening to see the smiles

India's future in the making. This picture seems to me symbolical of the changes that are coming to India." While the IIT and the IITians have done quite well between 1956 and 2009, the same cannot be said about the area as a whole. Unlike other IITs, IIT kgp is not in a metro city. That is why the differences become all the more glaring – the academic opportunity and the bright future of students inside IIT and the lack of the same in its neighbouring villages that forces children to drop school and serve the IIT community in some form of the other. It certainly should not make us proud.

As I type this article, a current third year student, a former member of NSS team Vivek, (NSS is a program for UG 1st and 2nd year only) enters my room. He wants to discuss few important things about an initiative named TeachKGP⁵. Four of them have started this program and want to continue the effort from the point their batch of students left NSS. They want to teach the children working inside the campus as laborers thrice a week by taking the help of the current batch of NSS volunteers. The other day, in a discussion with a student representative, we were wondering whether there will be sufficient correlation in IIT, KGP campus to seek help from a city based NGO. Earlier I attended a meet⁶ called by Jagruti. I was surprised to see a number of efforts by different student groups. Stray children at Kharagpur railway station were the target of one such group. It was great to know the effort of Goonj. I believe that the IIT KGP student body, Technology Students Gymkhana has an important role to play to sustain these efforts and this enthusiasm.

A thought process and some work have started. The initiative is yet to reach its critical mass. It will do so only when the wider IIT KGP community starts taking note of it. When we all show that we care, we share.

¹<http://teamvivek.50webs.com/index.html>

²<http://www.alumni.iitkgp.ernet.in/july06/offbeat.html>

³<http://gskgp.blogspot.com/2008/03/afternoon-with-vinayak-our-alumnus-and.html>

⁴<http://www.parivaar.org>

⁵<http://vsc.iitkgp.googlepages.com>

⁶<http://gyws.org/activities/teach%20kgp.htm>

⁷<http://gskgp.blogspot.com/2008/03/social-initiative-iitkgp.html>

⁸<http://gskgp.blogspot.com/2009/03/being-heard.html>

Teach KGP

How often have you been to Vegies or Chhedis, where you've been served your meal by a child of barely 10 years of age? Ever stopped to think what sort of education they receive or what sort of future awaits them? Currently, on campus, there are around 20 children in the age group of 8-15 years who works nearly 40 hours a week at various eateries and shops around campus. Most of them are primary school dropouts. Four of our undergraduate students, in collaboration with Gopali Youth Welfare Society, have taken the initiative to launch a programme called TeachKGP, which aims to tackle the problem of illiteracy among these kids and curb child labour on campus. Initially, a six-months course, comprising of lessons on how to read and write in a language that they comfortable with, mostly Bengali and Hindi, and simple mathematics (in English), will be conducted. The course will also have complementary activities in sketching, drawing and storytelling that will incorporate moral education and general awareness in a fun and imaginative way. If you, who have been fortunate enough to receive a good education, feel like joining this cause, please visit the website (<http://www.gyws.org/activities/teach%20kgp.htm>) or contact Mikesh Udani at mikeshudani@gmail.com (09331026922), Sourav Das at souravreachesout@gmail.com (09432289658), Anurodh Vyas at anurodh.iitkgp@gmail.com (09733739827), or Koushik Das at koushikkp1@gmail.com (09474822629).

Adieu!

A

stalwart of the Department of Electrical Engineering, Professor T K Basu retired recently leaving behind a rich legacy from his time here at Kgp, first as a student and then as a professor. Professor Basu also taught at IIT Bombay and later served as the head of the Center of Educational Technology which was instrumental in developing the video courses for Kgp students. Now employed in Kolkata, *The Scholars' Avenue* managed to catch up with him on his farewell visit to the Institute, unearthing some candid moments and a lot of nostalgia. We present a few excerpts from a long and interesting discussion.



TSA: *As is well known, your association with Kharagpur goes right back to your student days, what memories do you have of that time?*

TKB: I was a student at IIT Kharagpur from 1963-70 and was a boarder of the Patel and JCB halls of residence. I was the Mess Secretary at Patel for two years at a time just before the Green Revolution when there was acute scarcity of food in India. Kharagpur shaped me as an individual and helped me build my confidence. I remember those used to be highly taxing days with 37 periods over five and a half days. We had both open and closed book exams in a trimester system. I remember having 12 theory papers in my third year.

Apart from self-confidence, I gained exposure to different cultures, languages and personalities. Kharagpur in a way is mini-India. You start noting your limitations, not only in your personality, but in your culture and daily habits, unlike in a closed society. I now miss the

“... if public money is going into their education, IIT students must serve the state for at least five years...”

competitions that the Gymkhana used to have in all languages. Even with three competitors, there used to be inter-hall and open IIT elocation and music competitions in languages like Punjabi and Malayalam.

TSA: *What were your hobbies and extra-academic pursuits?*

TKB: I was into cards. I represented Patel Hall in Bridge competitions. After joining the department in 1980, I took charge of the department society and introduced Bridge competition between the faculty and students. I looked at this as a platform to break barriers between the students and the teachers, an activity that both parties enjoyed.

TSA: *Back in our October 2007 Issue, Prof S K Som, in his interview as the new Dean of Academic Affairs opined, “Personally, I feel that the academic performance is not as good as it should be, especially for the Undergraduate students. This could possibly be due to loss of interest and*

motivation after stepping into IIT. This problem has increased in recent times. I have been here for a long time. The love for academics that was seen in students earlier is seen in very few students now”. How do you think the Institute and the faculty can address this issue?

TKB: This is not the fault of the students alone. Now a student comes to IIT to get a rubber stamp and get a better job, not to become a

“First and foremost, current examination systems should be smashed. When I fail a student, I feel restless. If a student fails, it's the failure of the teacher also as he has not been able to inspire the student to study.”

good academician. Many students aim to go abroad and earn more money. These aspirations have been moulded by the schools, by the parents and by the society. Even then I feel that IIT still attracts a bright section of students who are committed to academics. Now that I am out of IIT, I can concede that it's not only the students who have grown to show less inclination towards academics. The faculty is also equally responsible. The faculty should take more care when they are teaching. On the other hand, if the faculty member has to publish papers and bring forward projects for promotion, it becomes a distraction from the main job of teaching. Again, this is not the faculty's fault, rather this is the fault

“We should make at least 50% of the examinations open-book exams. The tendency to cheat will go. Moreover, this will ensure that the students are more thorough with their course material.”

of the system that has been created from the top which the faculty is constrained to follow. I'm not saying that these things are not necessary, but none of these should serve as a substitute for teaching. Teaching is primary.

It is also very important to keep the students motivated as they study. I find that the conventional

timetable schedule system of taking classes should be broken. Appoint a few more teachers. Research scholars and M.Tech students should be trained to teach. Pick a few good students early and interest them in teaching. At the same time, let them go on to improve their academic qualifications. Nowadays we want ready-made teachers! Motivation has to be created at a very early age. It's a wrong selection process that you want people of a very high

standard, but you don't give them time to grow.

TSA: *As the head of Centre of Educational Technology, you have seen the Indian education system from close quarters. Mr. Kabil Sibal has plans to liberalize the current university and school system. What's your take on such a drastic change?*

TKB: I don't support the privatization of education at all. I support the idea of education totally nationalized. Develop a uniform syllabus and therefore, a uniform education for all. Education should be for everyone- rich and poor free of cost. I'm in favour of an Open-IIT system- an open education system. Why should there be restricted education? After all, IIT is meant for the country, it is the country's asset. Even in MIT, they have a system for taking in some general students. I feel JEE has caused a lot of damage to the IIT system. With such a large student population and a limited number of seats, the competition becomes very dirty and breaks all kind of ethics, and that is reflected in professional lives of students later on.

I believe that outstanding students should be free from other subject requirements so that they can pursue their interests with dedication. I am in favour of special topic subjects in the final year, if electives are being offered. Give a chance to the students to learn on their own and be tested accordingly. We lack the flexibility of the Russian and American systems. I fully agree with Kapil Sibal's initiative to not have any Board examinations in class X. By no examination, I mean no conventional examination. You can

have evaluation on a day to day basis.

TSA: *What is your opinion on students taking up alternative career paths?*

TKB: I am not against different career paths. For instance, as an electrical engineer, I myself wouldn't mind taking up some aspects of finance modelling as the skill set required is similar though ends may be different. Technical experts are required today in various walks of administration. Sometimes, they are better suited to understand and appreciate various problems.

TSA: *Where are you now heading?*

TKB: I've already joined Aliah University, which is the latest university set up by the Government of West Bengal. This is a university that focuses on the education of minorities. I'm joining as the Dean of Science and Engineering. This is an institute modelled on the principles of our IIT system. I believe that students should be employable as soon as they pass out. The IIT model is saleable.

“Why should anybody be deprived of primary schooling? Don't you feel the small kid serving tea and washing dishes in Tikka's deserves as much education as you did?”

TSA: *Any final message to the students of your alma mater?*

TKB: I would like to tell all the IIT students to have more of creative activities on campus. Insist on longer semesters and more holidays spanning the calendar year so that you can participate in such activities. These are an essential part of life. Extra Academic Activities should be made compulsory for all the 5 years. Your professional life requires team spirit which comes with working together and playing games. I wish you all the best.

Due to constraints of space, we could not accommodate the entire interview of Prof Basu. To read the unabridged version, please visit <http://www.scholarsavenue.org>.

It's The i Of The Tiger!

Himanshu Baweja takes us through his exploits at TC50 and more



"Life imitates arts far more than art imitates life", said Oscar Wilde.

At the recent TechCrunch50 in San Francisco, it couldn't have been more true for me. I took the stage to demo iMo, my heart beating with excitement. With 5000 people watching, this was the biggest event of my life. Friends, family, co-workers watching from all across the globe. And then it happened. The demo failed. It was anyone's worst nightmare come true - you could call it a "textbook nightmare". With *Eye of the Tiger* from Rocky blaring on the sound system and the audience clapping to the beat of the music, I did the first 15 seconds of my demo script of donning a helmet and zipping up my racing car jacket to demo how to use an iPhone as a joystick to play a video game. The demo froze. The iPhone couldn't connect to the game. I frantically hit connect on the iPhone repeatedly. "Connection Error" flashed across my screen. I got off the stage, equally disappointed and embarrassed. The opportunity of my lifetime and the demo had bombed! This was not happening. I wish I would just "wake up". What followed was a truly inspirational turn of events and what is quintessential Silicon Valley and more so TechCrunch50. Even though the demo was a fiasco, a complete dud, the judges and audience wanted us back. The TechCrunch50 team wanted us back, the support from everyone was incredible.

Later that afternoon, technical glitches fixed, I took the stage again. The panel of judges included Marc Andreessen, Paul Graham, Marissa Meyer, Tony Hsieh and Ralf Boetha. The demo went flawlessly. Everything worked like a charm. I played 3 video games, controlling them with my iPhone, changed into three different costumes and swung a baseball bat at the judges. The audience loved the presentation and applause tore the auditorium as well as the "twitterverse". The judges had excellent things to say. At the awards ceremony, we got the award for "Best Presentation". There couldn't have been a more perfect end to the conference. *The Eye of the Tiger* was befitting. Rocky had fought back and won!

My journey building iMo started six months ago. I quit my job and decided to venture out on my own and build a company. Honestly, looking back, I really had no idea I would be doing what I am doing now with iMo - a product that has gained world-wide buzz. To tell you the truth, I could talk incessantly about the usual clichéd stuff about passion and the love of entrepreneurship and technology and how my thirst for innovation brought me here. Instead, let me focus on the essence of what prompted this journey - I love building cool stuff!

Starting out, I would have loved to have had a garage as my office but too bad I live in an apartment. I started out building a Facebook application. DeshkiAwaaz. It was easy to whip out the application in a few days and with the Indian election around the corner it was the perfect thing to launch. The application attracted quite a few users and generated very interesting discussions on Indian election issues. It was a thrill to get off the ground so

especially innovative product idea or company is getting people to know about it. Sure, I could blog, tweet, facebook about it - even go present it at a barcamp. However, that still wouldn't reach the scale I wanted to reach to build it into a wildly successful product. How do I launch this? I started to scratch my head. And then I realized that the answer was obvious. As a voracious reader of everything TechCrunch, I knew that TechCrunch50 would

gotten on stage with a PPT presentation, I would have had no failed demo, nothing to worry about. Winning the Best Presentation award and gaining the adoration of the audience also may have been a distant possibility.

4. *Team:* We are all good at certain things and lack at others. It's important to have a team where everyone complements each other and everyone rounds off the team. iMo has a great set of founders and a strong ecosystem of well wishers and friends whose help is invaluable.

5. *Go all out:* I experimented with a number of ideas till I discovered iMo. I have tinkered all my life, but had I not quit my day job, the focus and energy to prototype iMo, share it, submit it to TechCrunch, work with a team, fly to San Francisco and present it to the world would just not have happened. Anything that's worth doing, is worth doing well. Don't shortchange your ideas, give them full focus, even if it means quitting your day job. On this note though, I'd like to thank my parents and family who believed in me and let me take this step. I realize this may not work for everyone with different set of responsibilities and financial commitments and I hope you can still make it happen.

6. *Tap into your network:* I got help from a lot of batchmates, KGPIans and friends. Murari Tikmani (2k6 batch) helped us in testing and Robin Anil (2k9 batch) did the graphics. You can only do a limited number of things, so tap into your network.

7. *Don't be afraid of rejection:* We would have never been selected if we had not applied. If nothing else, I would have got some experience of the application process. So don't think "I won't make the cut".

The best part of the last six months is that the fun has just started, the stage is set and soon as the product goes live, it's time for another round of astounding performance!

Himanshu Baweja is the co-founder of iMo Controller (for more details visit www.imocontroller.com). He graduated in Computer Science and Engineering from IIT Kharagpur in 2006.



“ I played 3 video games, controlling them with my iPhone, changed into three different costumes and swung a baseball bat at the judges. ”

quickly. However, I wanted to do more. I dug deeper into what I loved doing and it's gaming. One of the golden rules of successful product development is to "Build what you use". Being a gamer I could really use a video game, I mused. I wrote a simple but addictive video game for the iPhone called SwipeBall. While I was developing SwipeBall, I was over-awed by the iPhone as a hardware device and particularly the developer platform and APIs. Couple this with how Apple does a brilliant job with mobile applications end-to-end (from enabling development, publishing, downloading, monetization etc), and I was completely hooked. I was particularly enthralled with some of the hardware related APIs, especially the accelerometer. Back during my days at IIT-KGP, I was into gaming big time. One day as I was waving my iPhone at a friend as a fight gesture, a thought occurred, that the iPhone was sensing what I was doing. It was sort of an epiphany - the proverbial "eureka moment"! Wouldn't it be cool, I thought, if these gestures could control a video game. This would be like a Wii but with an iPhone/iPod Touch! I got to work and built the prototype over a weekend with my buddy Pankaj Meena (now a co-founder of iMo). We showed it to friends and everyone loved the idea. Most importantly, I was hooked and I started to spend hours playing games with it. When I realized I was so addicted to it, I knew others would love it too and that this had the potential to become a hit. I sought advice and mentorship from Gaurav Bhatia (my ex-manager and also now co-founder of iMo) who helped me think through some of the challenges in getting this out for mass adoption. One of the challenges for any new and

provide the best possible platform to launch the product and tell the world about it. I filled out the TechCrunch50 application process. I had to admit - much as I was sure of the potential of my idea, the process of making it with 1000+ companies from across the globe applying seemed daunting. Nevertheless, Pankaj, Gaurav and I sweated it out and submitted what we felt was a strong application including a video of the product. We were excited when the application was short-listed from a few thousand to top 200. We had an interview with the TechCrunch50 committee and when we learnt we were selected as a Top 50 company, it was a rush of excitement that I will cherish for a long time. We flew to San Francisco, rehearsed like crazy and then went on stage and did the presentation.

iMo is currently in closed beta and we planning to release it soon. TechCrunch50 has already set the stage and the world is watching. While there is a lot that remains to be done and accomplished, there are certain key ingredients of what I believed in strongly that have brought iMo so far, they are:

1. *It's the idea, stupid:* No amount of technical knowledge/savvy can replace the merit of the idea. If you don't believe you will use the product, don't bother building it, it will fail.

2. *Execution:* 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration couldn't be more true. We have toiled and worked for everything from the coding, testing, prototyping to doing the presentation.

3. *Taking chances:* Marissa Meyers called the presentation gutsy! Had I

Calling all geeks!

digit

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How about that faculty job at an IIX?

Don't let the IIT faculty strikes fool you. For the academically inclined, IIXs are still the best.

IT faculty made history in September 2009 when they went on hunger strike -- not just once, but twice! Their strikes were to press their demands for a better deal from the Sixth Pay Commission (SPC), and to protest against what they perceived as an "insult" and "a slap in our face."

In spite of those anger-laden phrases and industrial protest actions, I am here to argue that the IIXs (where X = T, M, Sc, SER, ...) continue to be among the best -- if not the best -- places in India for the academically oriented among you. The protest by IIT faculty (cheered from the sidelines by others in IIXs) should not be allowed to block your view of arguably the brightest picture in Indian academia.

Before I get to that picture, let me first take care of a blot in it. Almost all IIXs suffer from not infrequent interruptions in flow of electrons, water, and data. One could add other problems such as poorly trained (and poorly paid) support staff. While IIXs will eventually find suitable long-term solutions, there certainly are work-arounds for each of these problems. Indeed, many scientists have overcome them to go on to run world class research groups.

With that out of the way, let's now turn to what's so great about a faculty job at an IIX, and why the academically inclined among you should consider such a job as a serious option. You are probably interested in the first thing that everyone focuses on -- the 'pay package.' Fortunately, it is also the easiest to address.

Here's the bottomline: IIXs are among the best in the public sector. They beat private academic institutions handily. With job security, autonomy, sabbaticals and the summer months off, they are competitive with private industry

as well. With the option to consult for industry, you'll have to wonder if a non-IIX job is even worth considering! (See Box)

But that's just the salary, which does not include the 'benefits': allowances (house rent, transport, telephone and internet), social security contributions (pension or provident funds, career-end bonus, etc) and perks (medical insurance, leave travel concession, for example). The value of these benefits could easily exceed 50 percent of the salary.

And then there is consulting. It can give you the satisfaction of solving some real world problems. It can be a great source of ideas for long term research. Most importantly, it also has the highly desirable property of giving you some extra cash! Indeed, every IIX has quite a few superstars whose earnings through consulting dwarf their salaries.

In these days of economic slow-down, pay-cuts, and lay-offs, I'm sure it's reassuring to know that

“Going by the present, post-SPC salaries, you'll start as an assistant professor at Rs. 6 lakhs, at the end of your career, you'll be at over 12 lakhs. Thus, you can expect to earn about Rs. 30 million -- Rs. 3 crores -- over a career spanning 30 years. Or, an average of about Rs. 10 lakhs per year.”

your IIX salary is not only fully protected, it'll also (a) keep up with inflation, (b) keep rising (through annual increments) and (c) see substantial jumps every decade or so. To sweeten things even more, IITs are planning to introduce incentives to reward extraordinary performance (and I'm sure other IIXs will follow suit). Let me now turn to a few relevant comparisons.

As an IIX faculty member, you'll enjoy a couple of features that are not available to engineers and managers in industry (in both public



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and public sectors): two (or even three) months off every summer and a one-year sabbatical leave every seven years.

As an IIX faculty member, you'll enjoy an advantage over those in other academic institutions -- public or private. Research funding, infrastructure, access to bright students, culture of nurturing research, travel grants -- on every one of these parameters, IIXs offer you a better deal than any other university or research lab.

As an IIX faculty member -- and this may come as a surprise to you -- you'll also enjoy certain advantages over faculty in US universities. First, you don't have to pay your graduate students, the government pays them. More importantly, the same research idea has a far higher probability of getting funded in India than in the US. This means that you'll spend more of your time on actually doing research, than on writing grant applications seeking that elusive funding.

Finally, the autonomy, the choice and the flexibility. As an IIX faculty member, you'll probably spend 30 to 40 percent of your time in teaching and related activities. The remaining time is yours, and yours alone -- nobody tells you how to spend it. You could use it for research (for getting peer recognition), teaching (for your students' adulation), and consulting (for money, and collaboration with industrial partners). There are other academic pursuits as well: writing books and popular science articles, teaching kids in local schools and colleges, learning about new and emerging fields, etc. What you do depends only on what you think is right for you -- that sweet spot in the multidimensional space of knowledge, scholarship, peer recognition, money, respect, fame. The IIXs offer you a variety of activities to choose from, and they do not impose any restriction on what you could or could not do.

At an IIX, you dance to your own tune, and not to some institutional music. And the Indian government, which is in a tremendous hurry to develop India's scientific and technological capabilities, will help you make your tune and your dance better -- with research money, with opportunities, with students. I don't think you can ask for more -- except when the future Pay Commissions screw up!

Faculty Strike

Modus Operandi Justified?

With our Union Minister clarifying his stand on the issue and reaching out to the faculty, the standoff finally seems to have subsided. However, the protests and the manner in which they were conducted have raised quite a few eyebrows. In an exclusive interview with *The Scholars' Avenue*, Dr. Souymo Mukherjee, Board member, IIT Powai Faculty federation, tries to explain the federation's position and gives his personal opinion regarding the whole crisis.

TSA- *Many feel that the manner and method of protest could have been better. What is your opinion?*



Dr. Souymo Mukherjee is a Board member of the IIT Powai Faculty federation

S.M. - The representations / negotiations has been going on for quite a while now. The government delayed the implementation of this pay scale by more than a year for no good reason. Prof. Goverdhan Mehta had submitted a recommendation that fell short of the recommendation made by our

Directors and far short of what the faculty federation had recommended. We had issues with that as well but the recommendation from the ministry was even below what Goverdhan Mehta had recommended and was a complete shock.

TSA- *Mr. Sibal has repeatedly claimed that most of the protests have been financially motivated. If this is true, then why is the faculty association feeling shy to say that good financial remuneration is one of the most powerful ways to attract top quality talent? Even if it is not, then why should money not be a concern at all? Surely, in today's world,*

devotion to the country cannot be solely relied on to attract excellent faculty!

S.M - Mr. Sibal's claim has been amply refuted in Karan Thapar's program and in IIT Bombay's GBM resolution in which we have resolved to forgo the additional RS 1500 in AGP (transition from 10500 AGP to 12000 AGP for 40% of the professors) in order to safeguard the flexible cadre system that was practiced in IITs. There is a significant question of money for incoming people but as said earlier nothing much for the people who are already here.

We Are The Champions

Srijaamyaham, the Zone-4 NASA or the National Association of Students of Architecture convention, 2009, which successfully concluded at BIT, Mesra on 3rd of October was yet another success story as IIT KGP contingent marched its way to victory yet again.

Inaugurated by world famous Architect Dulal Mukherjee, who is known to profess vernacular architecture through the medium of local folksy arts and crafts and by employing locally available natural materials in his architecture, this three day long inter-collegiate fest was marked by enthusiasm as about 250 high spirited budding architects from the 8 guest architecture colleges of eastern zone, namely Jadavpur University, Kolkata, BESU Shibpur, CET Bhubaneswar, ABIT Cuttak, GCA Guwahati, NIT Patna, AUCE Vishakhapatnam and IIT Kharagpur competed with each other in various events showcasing their creative mettle.

The annual Zonasa meet serves as a meeting ground for students

from various schools of architecture to compare and share their architectural know-how and very successfully demonstrate

s and amalgamates the multifaceted socio-cultural aspects of architecture,

which is reflected in the meticulously designed events that span 3 days. Events, broadly classified as Formal, the core architecture design competitions, Informal, architectural events with a tinge of fun and interesting twists and Fun events, mostly musical, literary, dramatic and sporty in nature were interestingly conceived, making them

challenging and thought-provoking. Interestingly, in some of the events, inter-college teams were formed to

contest amongst each other, which played a very instrumental role in cross-college friendships in the student community.

Hindustan Times
Sunday, October 4, 2009.



The winning KGP contingent

The month long perspiration, anticipation, innumerable temp-shouts, spouts of excitement and energy bursts well paid off when IIT

KGP clinched most of the major trophies including Main design and product design and earned

second stand in the very prestigious Rueben's cup. Extending the KGP legacy of Dance Choreo, the team left the audience and judges speechless after a stunning flawless performance for the Cultural. Kudos to the first years who stayed back for Durga Puja vacations to fine tune their Zonasa preparations along with some seniors to assist and direct. Being the well-knit family that Archi is, final years engrossed in preparation for CAT and GRE, took some time out and made it all the way to Mesra taking an 8 hour journey just to cheer and encourage the team.

Despite an outstanding performance in the previous edition, a very small margin had pushed KGP to the second spot. However, making no mistakes this time, standing tall with a grand total of 252, bagging a total of 15 golds, 12 silver and 5 bronze, IIT KGP emerged as the most deserving champions, followed by CET Bhubaneswar and JU Kolkata taking the second and third stand respectively.

ASHRAE

ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers has initiated its first ever student chapter in India at IIT Kharagpur. The chapter was inaugurated by Mr. Sushil Chowdhary, Managing Director, Blowtech India (and also Chair, Student Activities ASHRAE, India) and Mr. Prateek Dutta Roy, Eastern Region Technical Head of BlueStar.

ASHRAE advances technology to serve humanity and promote a sustainable world by endorsing

energy efficient designs and green practices in architecture.

ASHRAE is relevant to students pursuing mechanical or chemical engineering and architecture. Membership in this prestigious society helps open up industrial opportunities in the form of Industrial Visits, Internships and Industrial Project Outsourcing, which aims to bridge the gap between students and researchers and industrialists.

Kryotech, the ASHRAE India Student Design Competition held

during Kshitij 2009, was the largest event in India on air conditioning and architecture and included prize money of INR 1 Lac. This event is to include architectural expertise in the coming year.

Carrier, Bluestar, DLF, TRANE and Daikin are some of ASHRAE's partners in India, along with leading thermal sciences and architecture firms.

The KGP Chapter is headed by Prof. Souvik Bhattacharyya (Dean, SA Professor, Mechanical Engineering)

and Prof. Kanchan Chowdhury from the department of Cryogenic Engineering. Joining this society requires a membership fee of \$16 to be deposited in the Mechanical Engineering Department Office.

Further details can be had from student heads Abhinav Shashank (9775502362), Prateek Singhal (9932573509) and Jyotika Gupta (9734428984).

e-Xamination

This mid-semester examination, 511 students of Physics- I sat for the first major online examination of this course. Conducted in the Takshashila PC Labs, the two-hour examination consisted of 26 Multiple Choice Questions, and results were published the same day.

The main reason for the introduction of this measure is to try to eliminate the disparity and manual effort involved in evaluation of written scripts. To this end, Professor Anushree Roy of the Department of Physics and Meteorology worked with members of Kgp startup Intinno to create the online quiz, and to ensure the smooth conduction of the exam.

To minimize adoption of unfair means by students in the examination, the order of the questions and the options they contained were randomly shuffled and modified. Also, the number of invigilators was increased. In addition, students were forbidden from leaving the lab during the exam. The limited number of computers caused the test to be conducted in two consecutive batches. This also means that the three-hour endsems will have to be carried out in the old-fashioned way, on paper answer scripts.

In conclusion, it is a promising initiative which holds benefits both for students and teachers.

Entrepreneurship Awareness Drive

Keeping true to their motive of promoting entrepreneurship, the E-cell launched the Entrepreneurship Awareness Drive. This massive initiative was undertaken with the aim of encouraging the youth of India to embrace the concept of starting one's own enterprise. Mrs. Rashmi Bansal, author of the best-selling book 'Stay Hungry Stay Foolish', was the guest of honour for the inauguration on the 29th of August '09. The first of its kind, the EAD kicked off on the 29th of September in Chandigarh and travelled through Delhi, Lucknow, Bhubaneswar, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad; finally concluding at Kharagpur on the 8th of October.

In each city, the Entrepreneurship Awareness Camp comprised interactive sessions wherein the speakers shared their experiences and success stories, and the audience had many of their

questions and doubts answered. Some of the eminent personalities who spoke were Mr. Arbind Singh, Mr. Pramod Rao (co-founder of eLitWit), Ms. Rama Devi (founder of the Association of Lady Entrepreneurs in Andhra Pradesh) and Mr. Murugavel Jankiraman, Founder of Bharatmatrimony.com.

Not only did the EAD succeed in inspiring many individuals to follow their dreams of being entrepreneurs, but it also helped some of the host colleges set up their own Entrepreneurship Cell to foster indigenous ideas, helping them on their way to becoming successful ventures. At the end of the day, initiatives such as this that seek to inspire, encourage and unleash the spirit of entrepreneurship, will play a significant role in asserting India's position as a major economic power. We wish E-Cell the best in all their future endeavours.

Life At IIT BBS

How do you feel after a roller coaster ride? A ride full of ups and downs, thrills and slumbers, joys and sorrows, which gives you the time of your life and then suddenly screeches to a halt. It is the perfect analogy for life at KGP. That is exactly how we feel now.

After having spent our first year at IIT KGP, we finally arrived at Bhubaneswar. A run down minibus greeted us at the station, with a banner in tow that read "Welcome Students of IIT Bhubaneswar". It took us through a route that gave us glimpses of the much-awaited city pleasures, but we eventually found ourselves in the outskirts of the city. There stood the desolate SBI apartments, 9 kms from the Institute. The flats were indeed nice - 3 bedrooms, 2 students to a room; with a hall, kitchen, dining room, balcony and a 24x7 WiFi service - luxury indeed! There are, however, no facilities for outdoor and indoor games and no canteens. Added to this is the 11:30 curfew that has to be strictly adhered to.

All the drawbacks of staying outside the city are annulled by the location of our institute. We share our walls with swanky hotels and cafes. A five-minute walk to one side leads to a mall, which has become a favourite hangout for students. On the other side is a shopping centre with snack bars, really expensive restaurants (which fulfill all our treat-taking needs) and a pub too!

A typical day starts with getting up early and rushing to the mess for a hurried breakfast and scrambling after the bus to college. The freshers follow a rigid 8:30 - 17:30 schedule and the second year students have a 9:30 - 17:30 schedule, during which

time we manage to squeeze in occasional trips to the mall and yet attend all classes (yes, all of them) and labs.

We, being the senior-most batch and having experienced the actual college life at KGP, have taken the onus to start our very own versions of all major societies and clubs. Mixed feelings of apprehension and excitement overwhelm us as we realise that the future and reputation of IIT Bhubaneswar is ours to mould.

“KGP is Heaven!”

The limited number of students in our college ensures that we are closely mentored by the professors, who are very affable and almost like fathers to us. Although personal attention from the professors isn't something that we always enjoy, we know that it will be valuable in the long run.

It is extremely hard not to compare Bhubaneswar with KGP, but to do so wouldn't be fair. It is an entirely different experience. From having a batch-strength of over a thousand to a college-strength of a mere 230, from a 1,640 acre campus to one with barely three buildings, from rickshaws and Chhedis to bikes and Pizza Hut, from an established culture to one that we are trying to foster; the transition, though has been surprisingly smooth. Even though we're living it up here in Bhubaneswar, we cannot help but state - "KGP is Heaven!"

- Courtesy: A Kiran Chakravarthy, Sameep Arora and Santosh Sabyasachi



The Kgp Nobels

In light of the recent Nobel Prize distribution (a particular one of which disturbed the general Peace), we at ScholsAve think it's high time to crown our very own Kgp Nobel Laureates.

For their consistently low prices, irrespective of the economic upheaval of the country in the last century, Tikka's bags the Nobel Prize for Economics. Be it the '70s or the present decade, Rs12/- suffices for a full stomach. Special mention goes to the makers of KGP's ubiquitous sauce, for their inexpensive production through innovative use of cucumber to curb costs and an efficient distribution model that spans every single kiosk and restaurant on campus. KGP sauce also boasts a rather uniform (albeit not-very-sauce-like) consistency that brings in an

element of familiarity to any store, further reinforcing its position as a reliable brand.

The Nobel Prize for Medicine, as always, is conferred upon Bhonduda... s'nuff said.

Ever browsed through the menu at 'Little Sisters'? Cuisines like 'Ghost Masala' and 'Ghost Motor' pop up at you, leaving a person wondering whether the name indicates the fate of those who dare to try it. The literary genius cannot be missed. Hence - LS is the proud winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Special mention goes to the English for Communication lab for attempting to describe the entire language in four syllables or so... dum dee dah.

The Nobel Prize in Physics goes to the PAN hostels for persistently defying the laws of physics by sustaining the load of additional floors on unstable grounds. Illu earns a special mention for its novel efforts in efficient conversion of inspired human labour into five minutes of blazing luminescence.

The Nobel Prize for Chemistry goes to ChemTop, attributable to its location (Top of the Chemical Engineering Department) and to the 'chemistry' that it helps foster among the general KGP public (*nudge nudge wink wink*).

The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to all the bongs out there, for their pioneering work on afternoon siestas and sugar-overdoze induced contentment.

