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Students News Magazine, IITR

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CornerEd

Dawn is breaking. The first plumes of light are peeping out from behind the horizon. As I sit here in my tiny room- writing, when I should be fast asleep or preparing for the postponed *TS*- I remember my school-days. Those were certainly happier times, albeit much less autonomous. I'm pretty sure that back then, my mum would have turned a bright blue in disapproval at this late night penmanship a night before an examination.

I was more of what we call a *geek* till my first board exams. You know- teacher's pet, amongst the toppers, in bed at ten- the whole nine yards. It was then that I first began hearing about this college called IIT with its virtuoso alumni and its grand placement record. Rumours are abundant in the Capital, especially with all the *FIITJEE*s and *VMC*s around. This, I naively decided, was where I wanted to be. The entrance was challenging, affording it a degree of glory, and the legendary placements meant I'd never be out on the streets, like my parents kept lecturing me about, whenever they caught me watching TV. The rest, as they should say, is misery.

Let's face it- not all of us came here to become *Nobel* laureates or *Fields Medal* winners. In fact, I would be willing to bet anything I don't own on the fact that most of us are just humble bums who'd just as soon work hard as pass up a free lunch at the Sheraton. The case isn't as tragic as I make it sound though, for the 'future leaders' of our country. Much as we deny it, all of us came here carrying the dream of being amongst the best and shaping a scintillating career for ourselves. We had all set out with those same priorities on our minds, good grades and a cozy placement. But now, as I approach the half way mark of my time here, I realize that for many, including me, those priorities have changed beyond recognition. The late night movie, the nearest *bakar*-room and the all important "*Bomb has been planted*", have supplanted the tutorials, the *CGPA*s and- lest we forget- the *CV*.

As I refresh my memories of the pressed uniforms and morning assemblies, I ponder about what has caused this transformation. Bad food, lack of supervision, long work hours, rhetorical time-tables, poor compensation packages, or just plain indifference- take your pick. There is really no singular reason for the emigration from the goody-goody self, but the time has come to do something about it.

It is with all this in mind that we at Watch Out have decided to bring to light certain changes pertaining to our apparently morbid curricula and gloomy placement scenario. Changes which are bound to affect all of us and have far reaching consequences, for good or otherwise. Additionally, we bring you a handsome dose of sugar 'n spice in the form of a plethora of articles, columns, editorials and much more. As for me, dear reader, the time has come to quit rambling and wish you, in advance, a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

-Ed.

Think about it-

Victory need not be explained, defeat cannot be.

- Diego Maradona

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DISCLAIMER

The following is based on real life events, but to protect the anonymity of the characters, fictitious names have been used.

It's the usual story, I guess. Boy meets girl, boy falls in love, boy falls flat on his face. I had found a diamond in a coal mine, one named 'Orange Bull'. A little sleuthing later, I came to know that Orange was planning to join Fash-P. I thought I hadn't a chance. This is an IIT after all - anything remotely female is booked by (n+1) desperate guys 5 minutes after registration. But my ever-inspiring friend 'White Buffalo', giving me heart, said, "You often see these great looking girls with really dumb boyfriends- you could be one of them." (By the way, I'm sure the stupid buffalo did not come up with this on his own!). Well, there was no arguing the fact that I was dumb, given that I found myself at the Fash-P auditions.

The audi was packed (that's not saying much, since its capacity is 50) with many a Claudia Schiffer, who had never seen a ramp walk, and many a Tom Cruise who had never seen a Claudia Schiffer. Wonder of wonders, I actually made it through the first round... and so did Orange, though that was less surprising. In the Q&A session, when asked why I wanted to join Fash-p, I said I wanted to do the "cow-walk". The judges grimaced, the audience booed, but Orange actually laughed. "Score!", I thought, and struck up a conversation with her after the audition, during which she asked how I managed to come up with PJs as often as those bloody airtel messages on my cell. She soon regretted that though, as I replied that the ΔG for all my "jokes" was negative. She groaned, but my job was done. By the way I got cut in the second round.

The next 2 months saw my bank balance and her weight, both rocket in opposite directions. I wasn't complaining however, after all I had one of the cutest girls in IIT-R. This was about the time I went to Rendezvous and realised this wasn't saying much. Every love story has a peak, and mine was probably at this point. It was 'Red Bull' from 'Fanta' House, and I fell head over heels again. I told her that she really energised me. What I didn't know was that Orange was standing right behind me and to make matters worse, so was Red Bull's 6'3" boyfriend. "Beauty * brains * availability = a very low constant" is a standard equation, and the fact that I forgot to bear this in mind cost me 2 girlfriends and 3 teeth. *Ahhh, Mera Moooh...*

VERBATIM

*As another Alumni Meet gets over, we interview **Dr. R. P. Maheshwari**, on his experience as the Secretary of IITR Alumni Association. He also expounds on how Rajendra Bhawan shall soon become the envy of the seniors, with some changes already evident. So here's what we got:-*

Alumni Meet: The institute maintains a database but over the years, their addresses change and therefore only a fraction receive information, which this time was sent in early March. These few were then asked to contact their batch mates and eventually about 85% of the alumni were informed by the end of May. A website has been conceptualized which will automate the updating and contacting process.

Alumni Centre: Dr. Maheshwari proposes a devoted Alumni Centre, giving high priority to the Alumni's accommodation because it becomes an issue when the alumni come over for the meet. The current system in KIH is same as other hostels wherein, the institute requirements are given highest priority. The major objective of the Alumni Centre will be to provide better accommodation to the alumni and also help them to stay together.

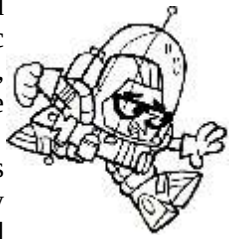
Alumni Contribution: The earlier trend of joining public sector caused most to never be too financially strong. However, many alumni occupy key positions in areas like Railways and their efforts have helped get the institute its own reservation counter and the Shatabdi Express getting a stopover at Roorkee. So instead of helping the *insti* with cash, it is being supported in kind.

Rajendra Bhawan: Dr. Maheshwari plans to make RJB a model hostel with better overall living conditions, an improved mess and high-quality canteen. He proposes an 'Open mess' system, allowing students to choose their mess, so as to create some competition. Another idea is to Outsource the canteens to contractors, so that a more accountable staff is employed. He also suggests a review of the current maximum 30 rupees limit on mess food. And in this way trying to create the perfect “home away from home”.

Dr. Maheshwari supports 'student interaction' as long as it's enjoyed by both sides. He also supports the earlier prevalent year-wise hostel system, as the current system has led to a dramatic fall in academic interaction among students.

Bionic Limbs

Sci-Tech



Welcome to the future of prosthetic limbs: true mind control. Remember Arnold Schwarzenegger taking a bang in the wall and still getting up and running at speed of light, well bionic limbs may just make that a reality. Amputees of today, whether from war injuries, illness, or accidents, have technological choices that those in the past never dreamed of. Thanks to Prosthetics research and the larger Orthopedics industry, a true bionic limb is now a reality.

Bionic limbs of today involve grafting shoulder nerves, which used to go to a patients arm, to his Pectoral muscle. The grafts receive thought-generated impulses, and the muscle activity is picked up by electrodes. These relay the signals to the arm's computer, which causes motors to move the elbow and hand, mimicking a normal arm. The nerves grow into the chest muscles, so when the patient thinks, 'Close hand,' a portion of the chest muscle contracts leading to immediate response of the artificial limb towards the stimulus.

Bionic limbs are a great improvement over conventional prosthetic limbs in many ways. A conventional prosthetic limb is limited in a number of ways in the types of movements. Moreover, it can do only one of those movements at any particular moment. A natural arm is capable of 22 discrete movements while a bionic limb is capable of four right now, though researchers are working to make them better. Leading the new technologies is Neuroprosthetics, which aims to integrate body, mind, and machine.

Among the projects in the works is a system called BrainGate that decodes brain waves and translates them into computer commands. An exciting new development is the system in which an amputee can perform simple physical tasks such as switching on a light using only his mind. The system, which uses a tiny sensor implanted in the brain, will allow a person's thoughts to trigger the movement of an electronic limb. So prepare yourself, you may see a bionic man walking or running down the street like everybody else in the immediate future.

Dreams

Editorial

Dreams have been a mystery to us since Adam first breathed life. The stuff of legends, myths and fairy tale, dreams have always fascinated mankind. What philosophy of sleep sprang from the observation of the phenomenon, we do not know; but like all phenomena, the causes of which are not obvious, sleep came, in the course of time, to be considered as the effect of the Divine agency and as something sacred. We should very likely see a vestige of this simple and primitive philosophy in the reverence shown at all times by the Arabs to a man sleeping. With the beliefs of primitive people, perception arose that persons favoured with frequent dreams were sacred and chosen as intermediaries between the deity and man. Far from being cast aside by the advancing civilization, these ideas developed with it, and were to a certain extent even systematized, as appears in particular from the records of the ancient people of the East. They took it for granted that every dream expressed a Divine message. Most dreams came unsought; but occasionally supernatural communications were solicited by "incubation".

Modern theologians, whilst profiting by the progress of psychological research, continue to admit the possibility of dreams being supernatural in their origin. As to the ordinary dreams, they are the results of unfulfilled desires and anxieties. But in all other cases, by far the most common, it is useless and illogical to attempt any interpretation. Now here's an analysis of a few of the most common dreams that most of the people have:

1. To dream that you are taking an exam indicates that you are being put to the test or being scrutinized in some way. Such dreams highlight your feelings of being anxious and agitated. You may find that you cannot answer any of the questions on the test or that the test is in some foreign language. Is time running out and you find that you can not complete the exam in the allowed time? Or are you late to the exam? Does your pencil keep breaking during the exam? Such factors contribute to you failing this test. These dreams usually have to do with your self-esteem and confidence.

2. Falling dreams: Contrary to popular myth, you will not actually die if you do not wake up before you hit the ground. As with most common dreams, falling is an indication of insecurities, instabilities, and anxieties. You are feeling overwhelmed and out of control in some situation in your waking life.

3. If you are flying with ease and enjoying the scene and landscape below, then it suggests that you are on top of a situation .It may also mean that you have gained a different perspective on things.

Many people have derived insights into themselves from studying their dreams, and most modern people consider dreams emotionally significant. As the saying often goes, one's dreams make him or her. So, dear reader, dream away...

ALMOST FAMOUS

...well almost

A huge shadow looms over Nesci. Little kids nearby scramble for cover and plants curse their sudden shortage of sunlight. Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's just Himanshu Aggarwal, our very own Double G.

WONA: First things first – your first crush?
Double G: Richa Gupta or maybe it was Tina Gupta.
(Can't even remember? You really have aged)

WONA: So what's the etymology of Double G?
Double G: In our class, there were two Himanshu Agarwals. One spelt his name with one 'g' and I spelt mine with 'gg'. Hence I was re-christened Double G.
(Didn't anyone suggest 'The Big Fat One'?)

WONA: Your favourite sport?
Double G: Foosball. I swear by it, *'Foosball ki kasam'*
(Oh! Is Mithun starring?)

WONA: Do you think you're a burden on this Earth?
Double G: No. *Main to IITR ka uddhaar kar raha hoon.*
(Main bhi ek Time Machine bana raha hoon)

WONA: Have you ever lied?
Double G: There was this time when I cards were being checked if you wanted to go out of the insti during late night hours. My friends and I went out in guise of '*mazdoors*' and came back in as IITR students.
(So much for GandhiGiri)

WONA: How tech- savvy are you?
Double G: I have a Sony Ericsson K750i with which I photograph the *farras*. The advantage is that you can zoom in and whenever the teacher is near, I close the flap and the screen goes dark; open the flap, the image comes again.

WONA: How did you woo your girl?
Double G: I just called her and said it on the phone.
(With the K750i, we presume. Did you use some farras there as well?)

WONA: Finally, thoughts about WONA?
Double G: *Yeh to ghar ka maamla hai ab aur kya kahein.*

OK Bye, Mr. GG. We had a nice time in the dark.

RANK

It's the same old story day in, day out. Late to class, and asked why. Here we present a plethora of unorthodox reasons that can be dished out in response.

RATE BEING LATE TO MAKE THE PROF IRATE

1.The Road just got longer: Due to the high co-efficient of thermal expansion and the scorching heat, there was a large difference between the natural and actual length of the road resulting in a time delay of 5 minutes from usual.

2. Slime Time: The 'heavy' rainfall recorded by NIH has created a thick layer of slime on the path to the classroom, so that "every step that I take is another mistake to you", i.e. for every step moved forward, the road pushes me 2 steps back.

3. Room Service: A long time ago, in a galaxy far far away, an agreement was signed which stipulated that the Prof had to pick up 'The One' everyday. 'The One' kept waiting for you but you failed on your very first day.

4. Time travel: I was intrigued by Einstein's Theory of Relativity and decided to put it to practice; following the age-old saying "Practice makes 'The One' perfect". Considering that the least count of my watch is 30 minutes, I'm actually on time within the permitted error.

5. Major illness: Actually, I suffer from acute *Makexcusis* and due to it I'm unable to reach the class on time. This is a highly contagious disease so other students shudder from giving me a lift. Moreover, cycles can also suffer from this disease so they shudder to let me ride them.

6. Gone with the wind: The wind has conspired with the slime and the heat to ensure that our happy re-union never takes place. It was blowing at 45.769 mph along 22.76 deg. North and 79 deg. east (Colorado?). And did I tell you it was also swearing at me, resulting in emotional trauma.

Statutory warning: Not to be used by students with nervous temperament.

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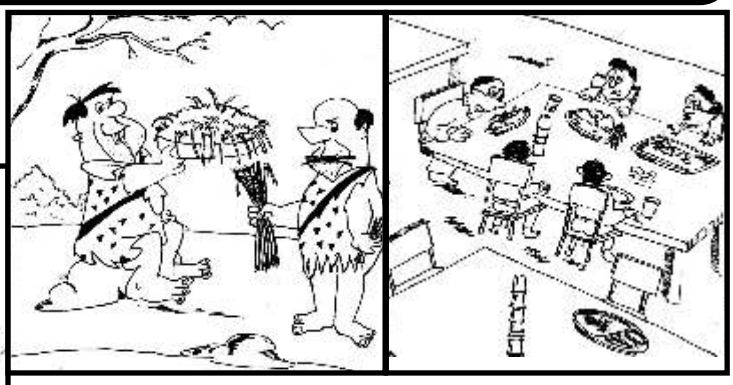
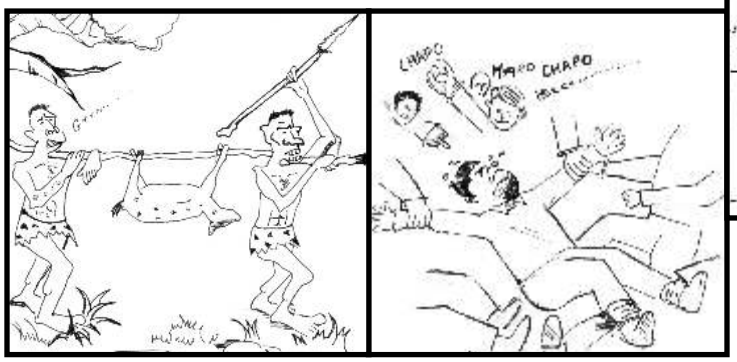
A Brief History of R-Ville

Ever wondered why the mess food tastes so stale? Well, its simply because neither the recipe nor the ingredients have changed since the ancient times.

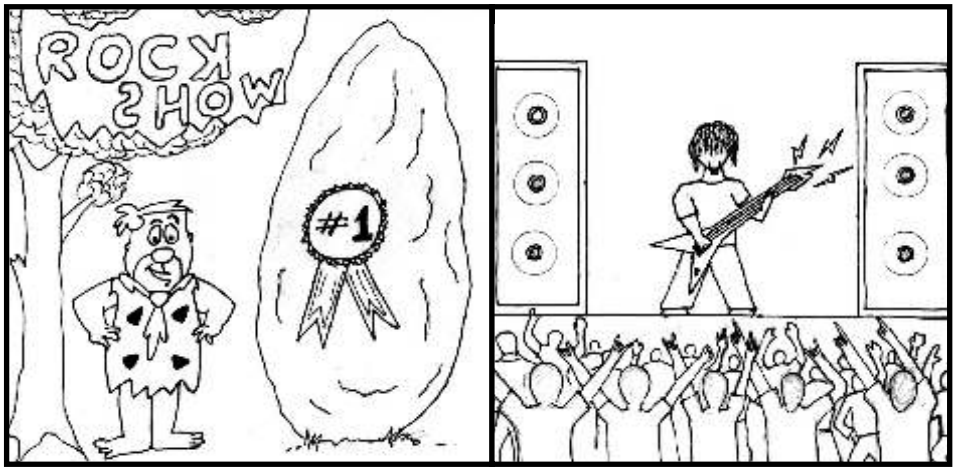


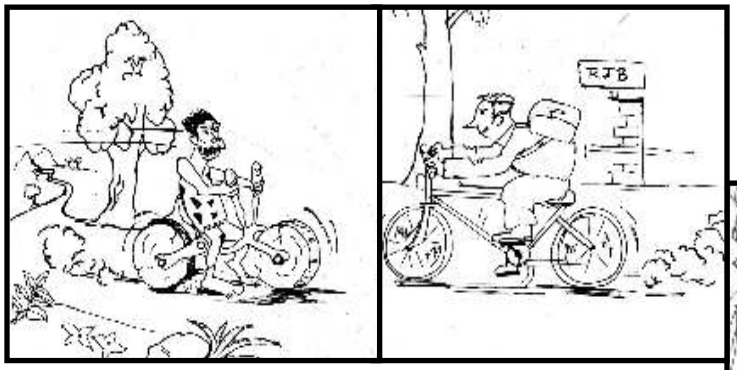


Oh yes, the savageness and the brutality of it all is shown forth during the "treat"ies. A skewered deer or a warmed behind... its all the same.

We all know that the history of our (prestigious) insti dates back to more than 150 years, or does it? Here, we instigate to investigate into the more ancient ties which we might share with our predecessors... right after they decided that the trees were not too good a place to hang around in.

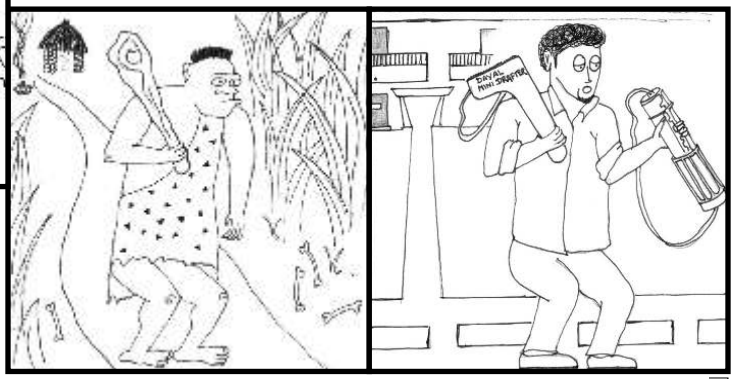
The choice of music too hasn't changed. The Rolling Stones were and still are the favourites. Keep rocking.





Bipedal, biwheel, bihandle and a moronic rider... the means of locomotion seems to have remained the same down the years. Wonder where's the destination at?

A mini-drafter, like a club, is a weapon to shamelessly assault the ED and the MD sheets. And even then none of it makes any sense. The only difference is that a club can only be swung around.



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It consists of **Prof. P.K Jain(***Professor in-charge, Training and Placements***), Prof. V.K Gupta***(DOSW)*, OC Placement from the various departments, and a few students representatives. Among the various students representatives four are part of the central committee headed by **Siddharth Jain** (P&I, 4th Yr.). They work along with the placement complex staff and coordinate the whole placement process. There was no selection procedure for this committee and it was formed as a result of an initiative taken by the students. The committee was conceptualized so that the functioning of the various departmental committees could be co-ordinated for the benefit of all parties involved. This is a change from last year when **IMG** coordinated the whole process. There are also separate student placement coordinators from each department, one UG and one PG, who have the responsibility of exchanging information between the students and the placement committee.

The institute is abuzz with PPTs and interviews as the fourth year wanders through the labyrinths of STEP with a question mark look. The 3rd years run around CCs emailing every Mr. Tom, Dick and Harry for an internship in the suburbs of Siberia. Don't go comparing with KGP just yet, as WONA has fished out some closely guarded information which can be the light at the end of the tunnel as a few good men take matters in their hands.

COVER STORY
DE_PLACEMENT
Auto-Aim

THE GREAT DIVIDE

All companies that come for placements are classified as either dream or regular companies. All companies which offer a pay package greater than 6 lacs are classified as dream companies, the rest being regular. The scheme of classifying companies as A, B, C cannot be used as the number of companies is less and the present system allows for having the system of rounds. According to **Prof. P.K Jain** no minimum pay package has been fixed but in general companies offering more than 2.5 lakhs have been invited. Students can at most hold one job from each class of companies and the placement procedure ends as soon as the candidate is placed in a dream company irrespective of the fact whether he has been offered a job by a regular company or not. The committee does not negotiate the package offered by the companies.

CHANGES MADE THIS YEAR

This year, a list of 1400 companies was prepared with the help of last year's database and contacts from **IITB**, **IITM**, **IITKgp** and other contacts of students which was later short listed to 700 companies on the basis of minimum package. So far, 140 companies have confirmed while 60 more are in the pipeline. The Pepsi Quest, introduced this year, is a preliminary test conducted by an organization having tie-up with 15 companies offering packages within 4-9 lakhs who short list the candidates on the basis of the results of this test. **Prof. P. K. Jain** said that even though some of the departments have separate placement cells all the placement offers will be made through the **Training and Placement Cell** (TPC). A committee of 3rd years will be formed which will work under the supervision of the Executive committee and these will be the people working next year under various capacities.

SCHEDULING

The mass recruiters are called in the first slot to solve the problem faced by branches like **Metallurgy**, **Civil** and **Architecture** who have very few core companies. Priority is given to Dream companies and the bulk recruiters have been adjusted in between, making sure that no two Dream companies clash. The Dream companies are invited in the order of decreasing package. **Prof. P. K. Jain** says he expects around 200 students to be placed during the first slot. The Placement Coordinators of **DOMS** do their own scheduling though they work in tandem with the central committee.

PROBLEMS FACED REGULARLY

Though free accommodation is provided by the institute in the various guest houses, in case none is available, the company is forced to arrange for their stay in hotels. The present condition of the Placement Complex is also a point of concern, as the companies have to manage within limited space and equipment. Also, the ambience of the complex is in dire need of improvement. Often companies are careless about the PPT dates and create confusion by postponing and canceling dates which is why some placement notices appear for a very short time. There are a few companies like Lehmann Bros. which must be contacted in July but the committee was formed in September.

SOLUTIONS SUGGESTED

A hall with larger capacity to be constructed above the Placement Complex which can hold many PPTs at a time and therefore the need to book separate auditoriums can be eliminated. A person or group of persons who are professionally employed for this work is required which can dedicate itself totally to this work, the only problem being that they'll be seasonal employees. Also, the institute could pay for the company's stay in hotels in case accommodation in guest houses is unavailable.

INTERNSHIPS

All companies coming for placements are asked to open for internships, though very few actually do so. Most of these are manufacturing sector companies, offering low packages. Most companies short list people on the basis of tests while the rest rely on other criteria such as CGPA and resume. Internship interviews are generally arranged in the even semesters as 3rd years head home during December.

Myths:

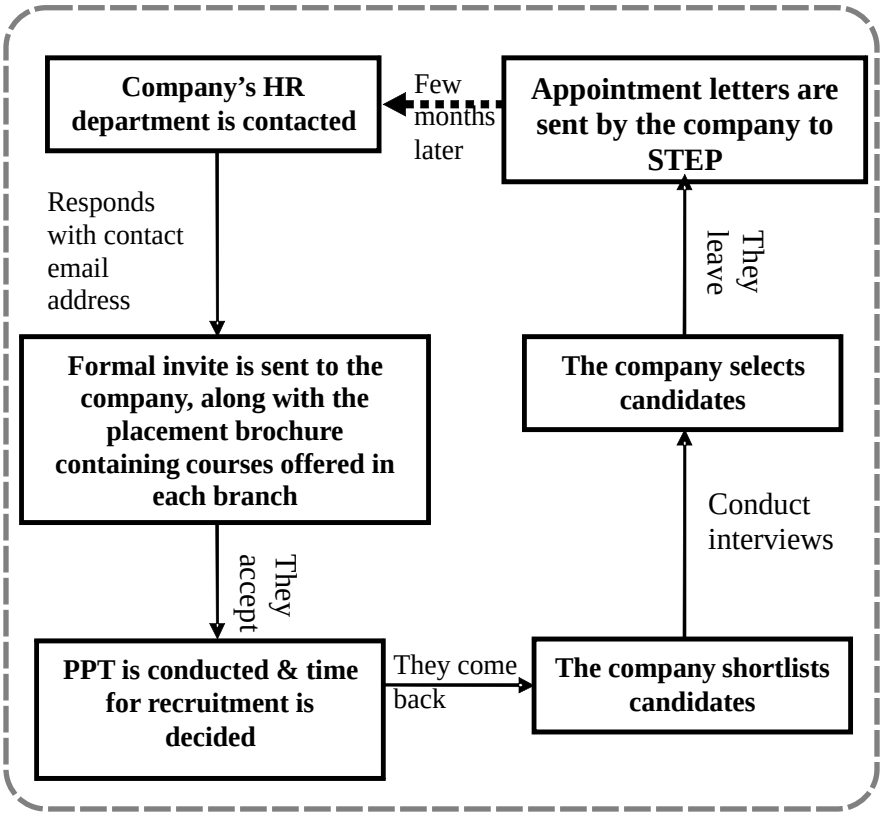
"ITC was rejected, being a tobacco company". *Though the institute holds the right to reject a company, ITC itself didn't come for recruitment.*

"Lehmann Bros. *is* coming". *Well, it's not.*

"Public Sector offers poor packages". *We have companies like* ***ONGC, NTPC*** *etc. which are Dream companies.*

"About 42 new companies having pay packages above 3.5 lakhs are visiting our campus this academic year" - Prof. P.K Jain

"My mission is to improve the placement percentage, mainly for M.Tech students, get everybody placed and improve the average pay-package." - Prof. P.K Jain



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We may while away our time indulging in Bakar sessions (how we wish they were Bird-watching sessions!) and consuming infinite cups of tea at the canteen (yeah! We know you don't, Ye Ghis). But not for a moment, does the thought of acads leave our minds. For most of us, it's not allowed to. Be it the academic sword that suddenly appears over our head before the TS's and the end-sems, or the eyesore of the conscientious Roomy/Neighbour deciding to perform the long forgotten task of studying, the Curriculum Monster is always around. This time, we decide to dissect it completely and know exactly how and where it exists here.

The Big Story

All Work and No Play?

Contact Hours and Credits

The B.Tech programs at IIT Roorkee at present have too many credits as compared to other IITs. Consequently, the number of contact hours is also a lot more than we would like. The ideal number of contact hours, according to a majority of the insti and voiced by **Prashant Kr. Singh II year Meta, "should be 24-26 per week"**. When questioned in this regard, Dr. Ravi Bhushan, HOD Chemistry Dept. said that a decision had been taken to reduce the no. of credits from 206-214 to 186-192. Dr. Hari Om Gupta, DUGS, confirmed his statement. The current credit distribution in all the IITs is:

Madras	Bombay*	Delhi	Guwahati*	Kanpur	Kgp	Roorkee
165-168	317-343	180	340-360	168-170	165-173	206-214

* IITB and IITG have a different credit to contact hour relationship.

We also zeroed in on the general secretary of the SAC to find out more about what is being done about the burdening academic programme and clarify certain rumours flying about in the insti. Here's what he had to say-

Q:*There are too many credits that we have to complete due to which, the contact hours are too much leaving lesser time to study.*
A: This problem has also been taken up by B.U.G.S. By next year, an improved curriculum with lesser no. of credits should be there.

Q:*There were some proposed changes in the 1st year syllabus. Have they been finalized?*
A: All these proposals were made in last year's SAC meeting. To the best of my knowledge, ED and MD have been combined into a single course and C++ will be studied in both semesters with Data Structures in the even semester. Chemistry might also have been removed. The details can be obtained from the Body of Undergraduate Studies.

Q:*There is a skewed grading in the different departments because of which students of some departments have more students in the higher CG segment. Due to this, placement of students from other departments suffers as the companies see their CGPA relative to the entire institute. Can anything be done about this?*
A: The companies can be given complete information regarding the CG distribution of students in each department. That way they can know what a good CG is for a particular department and there will be no problems. Placement coordinators of various departments must directly approach the company when it comes for placements and explain the situation of their department.

Q: *But can't the whole institute have uniform grading?*
A: That would destroy the purpose of relative grading. The students of each department can be graded only with respect to their department. That's why the concept of percentage marking was removed. The grading is always subjective and some allowances have to be made.

Q: *Some of the courses we study seem too obsolete and it does not appear that they have been updated to keep pace with the world. Your take on that?*
A: Any change in any course can be suggested by the Class Senior to the concerned Professor. You can also voice your opinion through the course response sheets that are given to you during the semester. Any changes you suggest are considered by the authorities.

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Present State of the Course

Many students voiced concerns along the lines of their courses. **Saurabh Gautam, CSE, III, thought that a few Electronics subjects in III year and Material Sciences in II year were irrelevant to their branch**. Students from other departments also agreed saying that some of the courses like **BMP** were redundant.

Also, with the same tutorial sheets being handed down from generation to generation, most students naturally feel that the courses are not updated and are too obsolete in today's world. **Dr. Gupta** said that Syllabus revision at Institute level is done by a committee headed by **I. Mishra (Chem.)**, along with recommendations by last year's **SAC**). All departments are revising all courses and electives. Regarding the evaluation of the Response forms, he elicited the following points:-

- **Evaluation of the forms is an important process, undermined only by the lack of seriousness of students while filling up these forms. Hardly any good opinions are expressed, so they cannot be taken into consideration.**
- **While deciding the recipient of the Best Teacher Award, a major weightage is given to his/her response forms which is all the more reason why students should take it seriously.**

Tutorials

What was intended as an interaction session between the Professor and the student has turned into an hour whiled away by the students as they wait for attendance to be taken. Many of the Research Scholars just take attendance and leave and rarely clear doubts.

Dr. Ravi Bhushan said that the fault in the tutorial system was two-way as the students are more than willing to copy tutorials and that it was necessary for Research Scholars to take the tutorials to get teaching experience. **Dr. Gupta** said that corrective action could be taken only with the help of students, if proper feedback is given.

Department Labs

Students from different departments had varied opinions when asked about the status of their labs. **Vikram Mahajan, III year Arch.**, said that "**Our department lab needs more printers, plotters and computers with net facility".**

Dr. Gupta, on this subject, said that "Emphasis on purchasing equipment for UG courses has been there since last year. If Reservations are implemented, extra funds will be demanded. Modernization of equipment is also being done and old experiments are retained in some cases, if they are still relevant."

"The courses are never updated but are only restructured. The practical sessions, most of which are that of a B.Sc. course, are totally impractical with the focus on getting the readings rather than on understanding the underlying concepts. The Departmental libraries are there just for namesake and would do better off as sections in the central library. The tutorial sessions must make use of audio-visual aids to make concepts clear."

Abhijeet Parashar, IV year P&I.

Departmental Libraries

Very few students from the insti admitted to using the Department Libraries. The reasons given were many. **Tauseef, Meta III year,** said that **"I have been in the department library just twice because of its unhelpful timings of 1 hour in morning and 1 hour in the evening".** **Dr. Ravi Bhushan** agreed that the department libraries should allow students to issue books. He informed that the annual budget for the Central Library was around 5 crores while that for the departmental ones was several lacs.

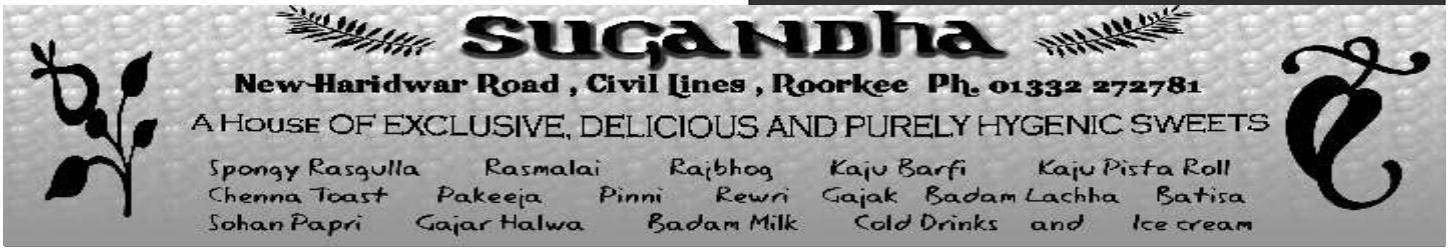
The lowdown on the Departmental Libraries:

- At least one copy of every booking a departmental library is supposed to be in the central library. However this rule is not being fully implemented.
- Departmental Libraries only issue books to a certain segment of students, for limited periods, as the function of these libraries is to be operated during the working hours of the department.
- No of frequently used course books can be easily increased on demand by students, if proper feedback is given. The Student Consultation Committee was created for such purposes.

Minoring in a different field

The concept of doing a minor in a different course from which you are doing your B.Tech, though very common in foreign universities and, closer home, in IITD and IITKgp seems to belong to a distant future.

Dr. Ravi Bhushan conceded that no developments were being made on that front. The only consolation is the choice of the institute electives that students have, by which they can study a course not related to their department.



Mostly Harmless

Crib Corner

29th September: Why Max ?
It must be the hangover. The tale of "Man and WiFi" apparently came true, the rusty, old, never-used doors of *ghissus* and *chirkuts* opened to let in more of the ethereal signal, carrying educational sites and inspirational movies . Christmas was merry again. Ah, well, the cynic in me had the time of his life sniggering at the forlorn faces of the 'cc *putras*', waiting with the blue lights for a whiff of the elusive WiFi. But, alas, it never came. Life is back to normal, and rumours of net in room by 31st December are back on the roll. Hail thy kingdom, Dictator of Sure WiMax.

3rd October: One Night @ Hostel
I drowse off to a disturbed sleep on my new bed beside my roomie's, who is a sardar and he sleeps with his hair open. I have dreams of the already famous and much discussed SB. I wake up at 6.30 (full of good intentions!) to find a long haired "lass" sleeping on the adjacent bed...Am I in heaven or SB?! Unfortunately my mind is just as alert for the rest of the day and I run from pillar to post to find where my classes are going to be held. After a long and tiring day, I end up in my room enjoying the eternal pleasure of a dreamless sleep.

5th October
Late for class again... I climb up on the carrier of another late bird and I jump off and almost fall over and getting a stream of compliments for my dexterity, "*#$$#0[3 $O8!!" I walk into the class magnificently with the sweet words ringing in my ears... and everybody else's as I find out later. This definitely does not improve my already tarnished image. And to top it all I am caught sleeping in class, and that too in the middle of a surprise test!

18th October
Two days to the mid sems and I am in the library, studying... hard? Not exactly. The title of the book in my hands is not too scholarly and I am engrossed on the library third floor. It is completely deserted. Suddenly a couple walks in and without any warning, starts getting up close and personal. I cough embarrassedly and walk away as they separate. Who is more embarrassed... them or me? As I return to the hostel, I see another couple walking down hand in hand... I wonder why they still crib around asking "Where is the Love?"

13th November
As D-Day looms closer, I finally decide to wipe away all the cobwebs from the bookshelf and dust the dust off the books. Heck! Even the spiders seem more intelligent to me what with them having literally gone through the books. I have to squint to make out the gold letterings on the red back background. And the tute submission frenzy causes more sleepless nights. But instead of reading the course material, I go through my *topofying* techniques again and again and also buy myself a sleek hi-res camera cellphone. And in this way ends another semester full of memories that I'm bound to forget. I wish I could have a Pan-Galactic Gargle Blaster at the moment.

Periscope

Distance Learning

Oxford Comes Calling: Oxford University is breaking new ground with plans to set up a business-research center in India. The first one outside the United Kingdom, it will study the country's rapidly expanding economy. The university would invest £10 million (Rs 85 crore) initially to set up the research center which will study a wide range of issues from infrastructure and education to social entrepreneurship and business taxation related to India.

Cut in Subsidies: M. Veerappa Moily-Head of Oversight Committee in his final report to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh while advocating financial autonomy to IITs and IIMs has also recommended that IIT and IIM students should be charged fee commensurate with the per student cost per year as it's a well known fact that IIT and IIM graduates enjoy a 100% job assurance and hence will be able to obtain bank finance to meet their fee and other expenses. In case of IITs, the present system of a subsidized fee structure may, however, have to continue in some measure for post-graduate and research stream students, till all of them become hotshots in the employment market.

IIT-KGP Gears up for 250 crore Kolkata campus: IIT Kharagpur is preparing to set up a Rs 250 crore Kolkata campus in Rajarhat, for which it has acquired 10 acres of land in New Town. The campus is expected to be ready in the next four to five years. At optimum capacity, it will house 2,000 students, though the first batch will get admitted in 2008. It will have day-boarding facilities as well, which is not an option available to students on the Kharagpur campus.

SEZ

Business Gyan

Here, we are starting with a new feature called SEZ, and quite aptly, the inaugural writeup is about SEZs. This space is devoted to providing you an insight into some economic fundas encountered everyday, that force you to scratch your head while reading the newspaper or while having a bakar session with that all-too smart ghissu.

Special Economic Zones, the new age industrial song, are special land areas where the government gives complete tax holidays for different industries. This policy, implemented in next-door China, has been the backbone in elevating their standard of living, and has recently come into the limelight in India, with everybody expecting the economy of the country to flourish.

SEZs have many advantages; it attracts Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs), leads to uplifment of relatively underdeveloped regions, and generates employment and export revenues of billions in the process. In return the government loses nothing - revenue lost as tax is compensated in the form of trade, income and other taxes that are byproducts of development. While HSIDC Reliance joint venture and DLF SEZs form the biggies in terms of area and investment, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh top the state list in terms of number of zones.

he story of SEZs however, is not that hunky dory as it sounds. The past has witnessed some bloodshed of farmers over land acquisitions, Maharashtra Reliance SEZ being the most recent example. Moreover, they are highly concentrated on IT sector (a whopping 94 out of the 150 approved in the ambit of IT or ITeS). All in all, SEZs have emerged as the modern mantra for a one way ticket to exponentially higher trade, better industrial growth and an economy sounder than ever before. Jawaharlal Nehru had once quoted infrastructure and heavy industries to be the pillars of India 1.0. Today, the country is same but pillars have changed with SEZs carving a place for themselves in the new version India 2.0's foundation.

Know Your Campus- IITR Hospital

Hospital: A place where sick or injured people are given medical treatment. But what if, the motive of the hospital itself starts to get questioned. All of us have heard various stories in relation to the irresponsible and lackadaisical attitude of the hospital authorities. But to what extent these are true and not blown-out-of-proportion rumors is one question which is worth putting up. So WONA decided to carry out an extensive research on the Institute hospital. Here is what we received.

Excerpts from an interview with Dr. Satya Prakash, Head, Hospital Advisory Committee

The IITR Hospital is well equipped with labs and the required machines .It has **5 regular and 4 visiting doctors** to its service with specialization in Surgery, Gynaecology, Pathology and Dental fields. X-ray facilities, Pathology lab with modern machines like ultrasound machine etc. are also available. It remains open for 5 days a week. For the convenience of the students it is closed on Mondays rather than Saturdays.

Lack of working staff is the biggest shortcoming that the hospital faces. Although there are 1160 staff members in all (including PHD degree holders) but out of them only 46 members constitute the working force. And to top that a further reduction is being planned on the directions of MHRD which wants the doctors-to-teaching staff ratio to limit down to 1:2. Also there is no ENT specialist. The ICU facilities are also not full fledged. Only one cardiologist is present and he too is only a visiting doctor. Considering the fact that the hospital has an ultrasound machine worth 2lacs and has no personnel to operate it, there is no lack of funds for sure.

Lt.Col.Dr.M.R Kural (CMO, IITR hospital)

On the infrastructure:

The hospital labs are capable of conducting most of the tests and treatment on its own and those which cannot be carried out here are referred to some other place without any delays. Students are insured by the institute and enjoy the same reimbursement rules as the employees. The hospital is well connected with an intranet (a system USA is planning to launch for all its hospitals by 2010!!!) which helps to keep records of all patients. It also enables online prescription, reducing the chances of error...

On the forthcoming changes:

Very soon an orthopedic surgeon is joining and a physiotherapy section is going to start. As far as the emergency services are concerned though a doctor is not available for 24hrs, but is always available on the call. The Hospital has changed a lot in the past few years and its development will continue to take place. When compared to hospitals of other IITs ours is the biggest and has maximum facilities.

WEB IN ROOMS

*Guess what's back on our query list...*When are we going to get net in our rooms? WONA puts this age-old question to **Dr. Padam Kumar,** head of the **Institute Computer Centre** and M**ember of Committee** formed for providing the internet facility.

WONA: *Could you give us an update on the process of providing internet connection in hostel rooms?*
Prof. Kumar: We are in process of providing a wireless internet connection and are trying our very best to meet the deadline of **31st December 2006**. **Intel** is acting in an advisory role for this process. As for now we only have a radio frequency survey of Ravindra Bhawan and we are going to test it and make necessary adjustments.

WONA: *Wifi or a WiMax?*
Prof. Kumar: There is going to be a two phase connection with a central *WiMax* network, but *WiMax* is not directly receivable by current computers and requires a license for the frequency it uses. To solve this problem the *WiMax* signal is going to be converted to a *Wifi*

WONA: *What about the security and bandwidth of the wireless signal?*
Prof. Kumar: As security features, we are going to have a login and password scheme along with Mac addressing for every machine. On the bandwidth, I cannot give you an exact figure, but we know that if a lot of users are logged onto the network, the speed decreases.

WONA: *When can we expect the work to be finished?*
Prof. Kumar: Again, I am not in a position to promise any dates; the work in Ravindra is just in its initial stages and a lot more still needs to be done. All I can say is that we are making our best efforts to meet the current deadline.

(NOT?) GOING PLACES- *CUL SOC*

Every year the *Cultural Society* sections plan to compete in fests of other institutes but their plans fail to materialize due to one reason or the other. And then starts a blame game between the administration and the students. Although the previous records don't paint a pretty picture yet, their hard work and dedication cannot be overlooked. **WONA** presents both sides of the coin and leaves the decision in the hands of the readers.

Prof. V.K.Gupta *(Dean Of Students Welfare)*
Explaining the mechanism for participation in events outside campus, he said that the students on receiving an invite from other colleges, first send the application to the corresponding staff advisor, which, if approved, is forwarded to him. After evaluating the financial implications, timings and other aspects, a decision is taken.

The cultural council is allotted **Rs 3-4 lacs** annually to maintain their infrastructure and sponsor participants. A reasonably extra amount to the tune of Rs10,000-20,000 can be sanctioned at his behest, according to the need. Though, he was quick to point out that being IITians we have a reputation to maintain and hence should limit our participation to institutes of national standing (at least).

Sher Ali ***(Secy Dramatics)***
Till last year we could manage to participate at least once in two semesters, but this year due to the stringent and unresponsive administration, we have not been able to make a single trip and our activities inside the campus like the intro talk have also been adversely affected. The reason sought by the administration was lack of funds due to which they rejected invites for a national level competition sent by the ministry and IIT Kanpur's annual fest.

THE FIRST HURDLE- SPORTS

The sports contingent toils hard for several months and prepare themselves for a seven day battle. The least they expect from the authorities is to take care of their basic requirements. ***WONA*** *gives you an account of the two major setbacks to the institute sports:*

Absence of IITR girls in Inter IIT Aquatic meet: Girls team of IITR could not participate in the aquatics meet as their train tickets to Guhawati were not reserved. **Mr. Sukumar** told us that it was the responsibility of **Mr. Hemant Sharma**(*official in charge*) and **Mrs. Kakkar** (*Staff Advisor*) to get the reservations done. Putting the blame on the team members themselves, he added that girls should have gone to Delhi if they really wanted to go, as the reservations were confirmed after reaching there.

Vaishali Aggarwal (*Joint Sec. Aquatics*) was obviously annoyed with the irresponsible attitude of the authorities. She said that the authorities, instead of taking responsibility, are blaming the team members and giving vague reasons for the debacle.

Udghosh: The much renowned sports meet of IITK has been frequently participated in by Roorkee-ites. But this year the teams could not take part. Shedding some more light on this topic, **Mr. Sukumar (***sports advisor***)** said the **DOSW** rejected the applications suggesting that participation in inter IIT was enough and the class schedule should not be disturbed. Though not the issue this time, funds, which are equally divided amongst different sports are limited and are used for maintaining the sports facilities as well.

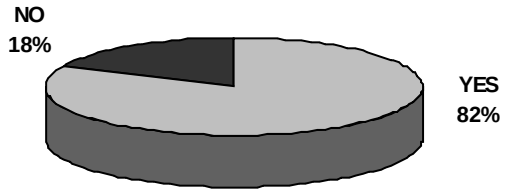
WORC

Watch Out Redressal Cell

...Lets Worc

Security and environment are the two major concerns of the institute junta. Whether it is the regular thefts of cycles or the checking of I-cards at the gates of the institute, one thing that stands out is the inefficiency of the security agency on the campus. The reckless cutting of trees which is taking place in the name of development is also a major concern. Another major issue is of the insects and pests in the institute which is literally unchecked by the authorities. WONA as an Institute Students Magazine takes up all these issues and conducts a mess survey. Armed with the feedback and demands of the institute junta we approached the concerned authorities. This is what we received.

Is there excess of deforestation on campus?



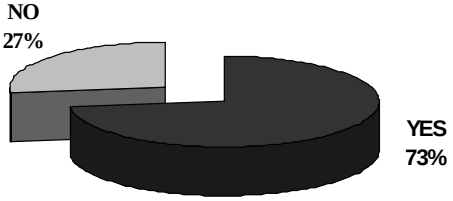
MAJOR VERMA [Security In-Charge]

On cycle thefts: I do agree that cycle thefts are a big problem. To solve this problem we have advised Jawahar bhawan to issue tokens for cycles coming in and out of the bhawan. A similar policy can be advised to other bhawans with a different colour code for every bhawan. All unclaimed bicycles found in the institute by us are deposited at the Shatabdi Gate from where they can be claimed.

On the gate timings: As far as the gate timing goes the problem is that the residential areas are intermingled with the campus. We also have four schools operating inside the campus and two outside which are used by staff children and their timings also need to be taken into account. Keeping these constraints in mind we try to keep gate timings such that we do not compromise security while causing least inconvenience to the inmates. Two gates, Vikas Nagar gate and campus main gate stay open all night.

On the question of checking I cards at gates: It is impossible to do with the present resources of manpower but if smart cards were introduced it could be possible.

Should I-cards check be introduced as a security measure?



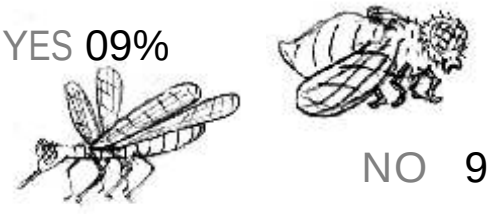
Have authorities taken enough steps to counter the problem of cycle thefts?

Around 40 odd cycles have gone missing from the Jawahar Bhawan parking lots during this semester alone. WONA talks to **Chief Warden** of **Jawahar Bhawan Dr. N. P. Padhy** on the cycle thefts and the problem of insects and pests:

"Regarding the cycle thefts we have informed the higher officials as soon as the matter was reported to me. A temporary action had been taken at their end within a day in the form of closing the entry sites for **the construction workers** as they were being suspected by the students. We are starting to use token system for cycles coming in and out of bhawan. A **new protocol** may be implemented in future according to which space will be allocated to each individual for parking his cycle. To counter the problem of pests and insects we have attached sealing to the door to cut down that extra space under it in order to deal with snakes, frogs etc. As far as insects are concerned while the proposal of **providing mesh doors** is being thought over but it may encounter problems on account of the huge budget it demands."

Are enough steps being taken to counter the problem of insects and pests?

YES 09%

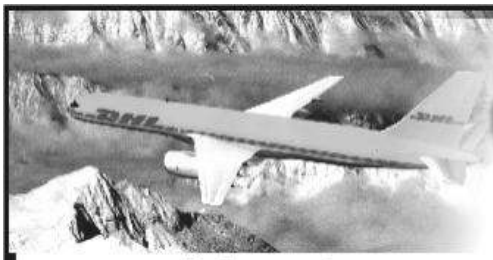


NO 91%

Are you satisfied with the present gate timings?

YES 17%

NO 83%



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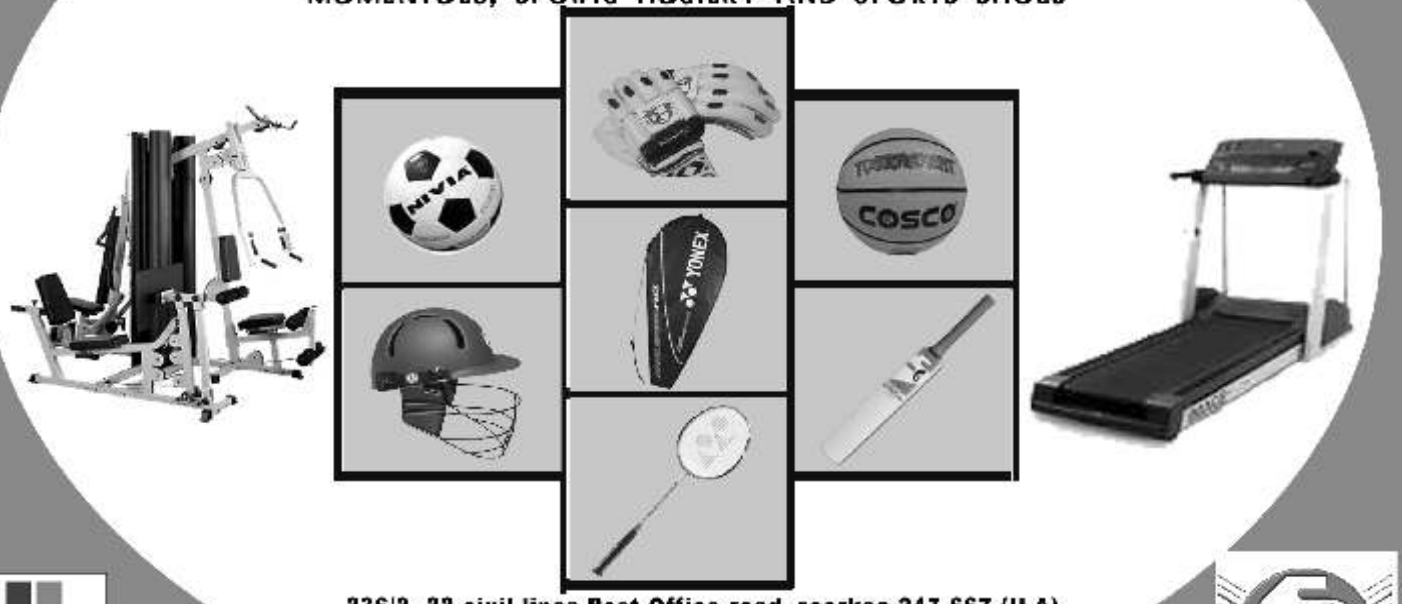

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SAC Update

Politik

WONA met up with Prakhya Avinash (General Secretary, SAC) to discuss with him the activity in the recent meeetings of the SAC. Here's what came up during the rendezvous:-

- A committee of 3 students and 2 faculty members will be constituted to look into all aspects of issuance and use of smart cards on the campus for various facilities such as hostel, library, hospital etc.
- The long awaited Wi-Fi connectivity in the hostels is underway and it will be completed by the end of this semester.
- A considerable amount of rooms in KIH and VIP guest house will be reserved for the executives of various companies during the placement season. Departmental lecture rooms and auditoriums shall be used in an integrated manner for placement purposes.
- More security will be provided in the bhawans with 2 security officials, one at the bhawan gate and the other for patrolling purposes.
- In the future it is expected that numbered tokens will be allocated to all vehicles entering the campus which would help in identifying the outsiders.
- C.G.P.A criteria for the post of cognizance convener have been relaxed from 7.5 to 7.0.
- To the *ghissus'* delight and others dismay corridors and bathrooms will be lighted up during power cuts.
- The Senate has appointed a 5 member team to review the Rule Book, issued at the beginning of the semester and present a report to the Senate and concerned authorities, as the Senate was not satisfied by the implications of some rules mentioned in the book.
- Rs. 25 will be contributed towards the kidney transplant operation of a student from each student's CCB account.
- In an effort to improve infrastructure of institute, renovation of SWP Hangar is underway.

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