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CornerEd

I read somewhere that our brain stops renewing its neural synapses when we turn twenty. Now I don't claim to know much about brain detail- *you need one to know one*- but I also read that it meant that our analytical and creative skills peak at around this age and beyond that, its all downhill, giving way to enhanced memory. In other words, as we grow older as adults, we tend to get less smart, more nostalgic and a lot grumpier. *Hmmm.. That explains quite a lot- especially my dipping SGs. It's not MY fault...*

Another year will go by, and all that I will have to show for it would be two glossy sheets stamped with letters ranging from *B* to *F*. *Just like school*. All the great years in school spent raiding lunch boxes and attending morning assemblies are now reduced to a dusty grade-card and a sloppily made certificate telling anyone who cares about my grand exploits in the Board exams.

Or are they? One might argue that there are always old friends to meet. You know, a birthday bash here, a movie there...but they're pretty scattered these days. So that's about that. Or, one might say there are the teachers. They'd still remember us. I suppose we'd still feel familiar when we go back to school, albeit in a very mild way.

This is precisely what bothers me about this place. Imagine coming back to this Transylvanian town some years down the line. Would I feel familiar? There wouldn't be any friends to bump into at *Nesci* (or, for that matter, any *Sbians* to drop off dutifully at the strike of ten). All that would probably greet me would be strange glances coupled occasionally with whispered giggles. Not a very warm welcome, in my humble opinion.

And profs, the naive might ask? *Ho ho ho*. We all know that story. It's rare enough for a Prof to recognize you even during your stint here, let alone as an alumnus- *unless of course, you owe him money or got on his 'F' list*. That about sums up my nostalgic trip back to my alma mater. *And we complain about the apparent detachment of our alumni...*

When was the last time any of us thought of our much slandered faculty as anything but teaching machines? As humans prone to erring? As friends and counselors? I'm quite sure that most of us would have to delve very deep into our now rotting maze of synapses to find an answer, if any. I'm also sure that almost all of us are guilty of breaking that treasured relation between teacher and taught by shutting ourselves in and becoming mute pawns in this annual industry of engineer manufacturing.

It is this silent void between us and our faculty that we want to expose and contemplate this time around. Additionally we will try and unearth the reasons behind our rather pale performances in Guwahati and spice the whole lot up with a little bit of senseless humour here and there, maladroit as we are. As for me, well, the time has come for me to make my own little pilgrimage to SB. *Spring is in the air... ;)*

-Ed.



Think About It-

“The trouble with the world is, the foolish are too cocksure while the intelligent are forever hounded by doubt.”

-Bertrand Russell

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The day was that ominous day that discriminated against singles – the “V-Day” (sounds very much like the D-Day, doesn’t it?).

Inspired by “*If you can't beat 'em, join 'em*”, I decided to remove that tag from my personal profile. Since SB had already been booked by the Jawahar guys, Nesci was the last bastion of hope.

The first line of attack was on a pretty lady sitting lost in thought. But before I could even get past the preliminary “Hi!”, a hefty hand attached to an equally hefty body came up from nowhere and desired a chat with me. I entered into a rather one sided argument, leading to an unseasonal blush on my face, entirely due to artificial causes.

On my way back, a glance at the notice board provided me with great food for thought. “Students were found in *compromising postures* in the premises of CBRI and are hence advised not to be found there.” Voyeuristic videos command a good price on the grey market and what better day than V-Day to get material for the same? There I shot off with a video camera, hunting for those *compromising postures* that had been so widely publicised. But it seems that everyone in CBRI followed the unsaid dictum – Couples only. Singles were vigorously discouraged from “snapping the scenery”. But these trifles were not a deterrent and camera in hand, descended the bond for – birdwatching! Lo and behold, my first target comes out to be my heavy handed friend, whispering away in his girlfriend's ear. Ah, revenge is so sweet!

An hour later, having run out of tape, I created a fake profile on chirkut.com, posted the video and sent friend requests to both the lead actors and went off to sleep, waiting for the fireworks to begin which involved my room getting raided and while I was taking care of my aching bones, I realized that I had set the viewfinder to the forward camera and the recorder to the self shot mode and had sent an hour of video of a salivating face

VERBATIM

The IPR Cell has recently been launched at IITR. WONA spoke to **Dr. P.K. Ghosh**, head of the IPR Cell, about the work being done on the campus and the objective of the cell.

On the inception of the IPR cell: I took charge of the IPR situation here in 2005. A course for IPR generation was introduced in September that year. We had a conference on how to develop the IPR clinic, i.e. how to interact with persons concerned and give solutions to IP related problems. **Manthan**, a part of Cognizance 2006 was organized in order to raise awareness about IPR. The event saw good turn-out and the courses started also attracted many students. Keeping this in mind, the IPR cell was started for UG students. It is about to start for PG students also.

On goals and targets: Our awareness programmes are always objective oriented, i.e. having a specific target in taking mileage as well as advantage of every workshop. A workshop is going to be organized on 24th February on developing a model for IP creation and implementation through preparation of a database and networking. In 2006 we organized the **Intramatter** programme to develop the attitude of the people for IP generation. We have also prepared a team of the IPR cell which moves in different departments for close interaction and to encourage quick generation of IP. We had 10 disclosures for IP by middle of 2006 and 1 or 2 patents have already been filed. Our expectation is to get 20 patents filed per year. We are also working towards attracting industries to license our patents. There are also plans to start a 2 year course in IP management. The blueprints have been sent to various experts and will be forwarded to the Dean of Post Graduate Studies for consolidation.

On achievements so far: We had been invited by a reputed Spanish university to take part in their Asia-link programme. Unfortunately, we were not able to get funding despite a good rating of 40/50. But we have been told to submit our proposal in June and have been assured of another source of funds from some European organization. Plans to hold an international conference are in the pipeline. The conference will probably be held in the end of 2007 or beginning of 2008. The Annual Report of IITR has also dedicated one and a half pages to the IPR cell.

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A decade ago, the term 'Google' was foreign to most of our vocabularies, spare a few fans of the cartoon character, Barney Google. Today, the term is as common among net users as 'chaapo' among IITR *junta*. However, what few people know is that the company offers several services apart from the ones that have become part and parcel of our lives viz. the search engine, Orkut, Picasa, Blogspot, YouTube, Google Earth and Gmail. Google was the PhD thesis of its founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin- a thesis that they haven't completed yet.

So what makes Google better than the sundry other search engines available on the net? The answer is PageRank- a technology that ranks search results using Markov chains, that is, every page's rank is decided from ranks of those pages which link to it. This ensures that popular pages go up in the results page as more and more people mention them in their own sites or blogs. The price comparison site *Froogle*, the global discussion system *Usenet* and the scientific journal database *Google Scholar* are some of its newer ventures. Google has revolutionized advertising with *AdSense*, a technology that allows users to place ads in their own websites and get a share of the advertiser's earnings.

Some of its lesser known, but equally useful services include *Click-to-Call*, a calling system through which users can call advertisers at Google's expense from search results pages, *Checkout*, an online payment processing service and *JotSpot*, a social enterprise software provider for small and medium sized firms. Several other services, which are in the pipeline, and can be tested by the general public through Google Labs include *Google Reader*, a feed-tracker to keep track of your favourite websites, and Google RideFinder, a service to find cabs using real time position of vehicles.

Victor's Justice?

History and literature abound with stories of glory, courage and conviction. One macho stud beating the hell out of some loser tyrant! God! How we loved to imitate those ideals. Unfortunately, these very stories were passed down not by a neutral spectator but by those ideals themselves – sung, painted, written, printed and reprinted on glossy papers, framed in libraries and museums and to become merged with the life of the day thanks to folklore.

Little do we think that Kauravas were only evil because they fought Pandavas for the greed of kingdom that they both equally shared. Dhritharashtra might have been blind despite being the elder son, but Duryodhan was not. Then how was his claim to the kingdom wrong? Logically, the entire kingdom should've belonged to him. But such is the way we have been brought up on our folktales that Duryodhan becomes the epitome of evil. In fact, the very name Duryodhan is laughable, no-one names his son Duryodhan - a bad warrior. His name was actually Suyodhan since he was second only to Bhima in hand to hand combat. But because he was the loser, Suyodhan became Duryodhan.



Similarly, no one considers Saddam Hussein to be a tragic anti-hero. Instead he is painted as the modern world's greatest villain who was hanged for his atrocities on the citizens-correction, slaves! But why is it so? Isn't America today's democratic dictator with the bald eagle's arrows shinier than its olive leaves? Wasn't the victim of terrorism- the USA the supplier of arms to Afghanistan (read Taliban) against USSR in the first place! And even now, isn't it turning a blind eye to all the Pakistan sponsored cross-border terrorism?

What is history, but a fable agreed upon? It is not an account of truth but the version of the victor. The loser loses the right of speech and the winner owns the power of expression converting his perceptions to facts and bloody wars to bravery personified. Any evidence conforming to his beliefs is preserved while the rest is meticulously destroyed. The inferences drawn from whatever little escapes the dominating force's attention are dismissed as conspiracy theories. In due course of time the victor's malicious iron hands inscribe his truth so deep in our thoughts and minds that all traces of the defeated are lost in the awe and praise of the victorious. No one pays any heed to the truth that might have been, to the lost causes that the unfortunate stood for or to the voices of the oppressed which will continue to echo forever for want of a sympathizing ear. All these are washed away with the tide of time and don't even get to become a part of what we call 'History'. Alas,

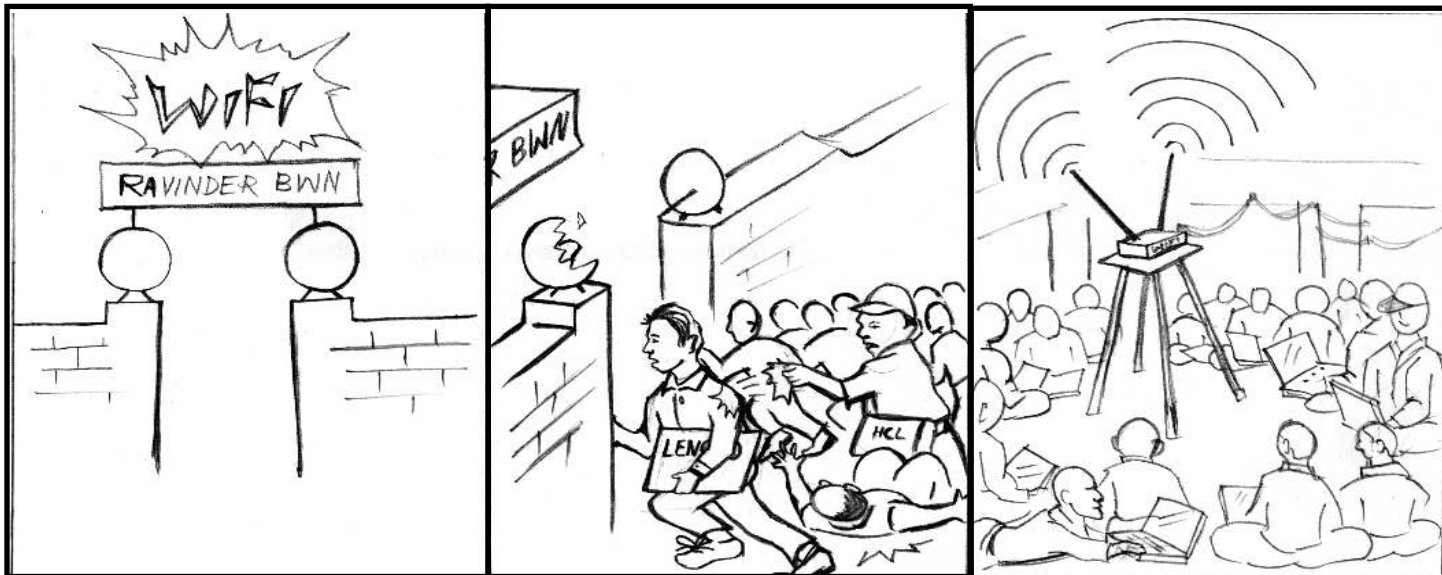
*History is written with the golden quill of the glorious winner,
In the red blood and hidden tears of the silent sinner.*

Who Moved My Cheese?

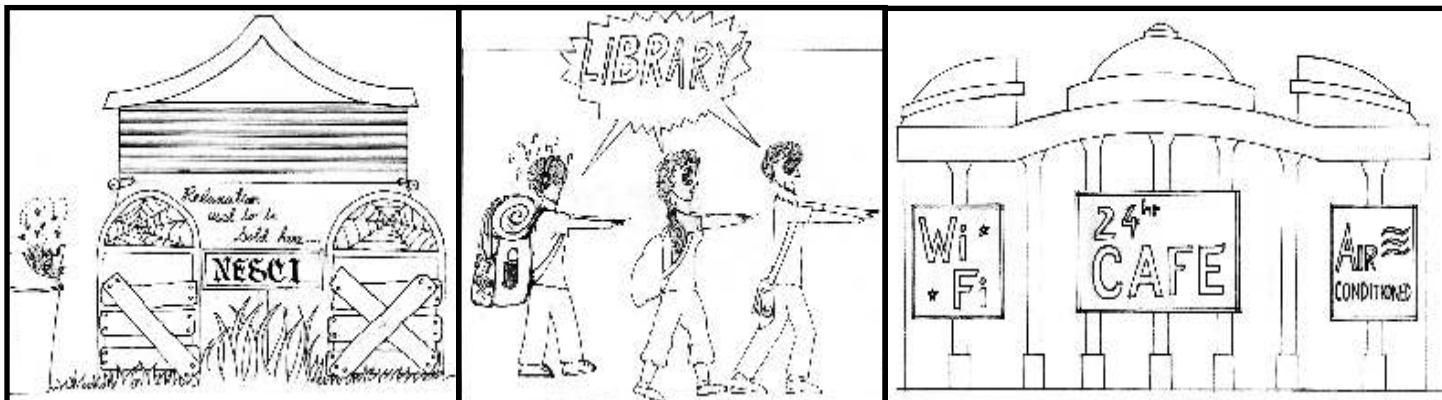
Graphic Pages

Change is what makes the world go around. It's part of everyone's lives and is almost everywhere. Nobody likes change though, because it makes someone or something obsolete and demands that we move our behinds and do something about it. Our insti is undergoing several changes this season and we thought we'd have some fun at their expense. Do join in...

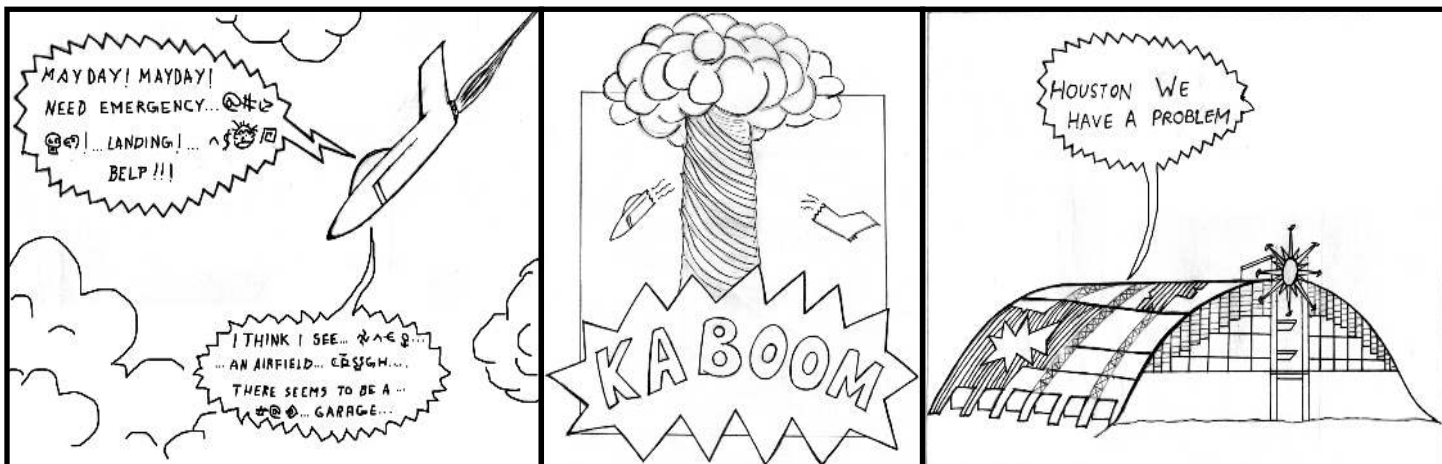
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And some people think the convocation hall doesn't solve our purposes, dubious as they are... ▼



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Aseem Singhal, 19, is a second year Computer Engineering student of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Dr. Johns is a Professor at the same University. Every Sunday, Aseem and his batch-mates have a barbecue party or some other recreational activity at Dr. Johns' residence. The atmosphere is friendly, hence assuring that the students are quite comfortable whilst with the professor. And this is the scenario event though Dr. Johns is a Canadian teaching in an Indo-Chinese state and Aseem is an Indian citizen.

One can be quite cocksure that we would find the same situation unimaginable in our own IITR. Why does the image of a group of students sipping coffee at Nesci with a prof seem ludicrous to say the least? Why do some of us, having more free time than can be called good, use the same to devise new theories on how the profs are probably beings from another planet sent to Earth with the prime intention of making hapless students' lives miserable? After all, the story was completely different in our schools. Why is it that a mere mention of school evokes such fond memories? Why do we return often and anon to meet our beloved school teachers while our profs apparently don't command the same affection?

We seem to be living in our own shells, not even aware of the benefits of amicable student-professor relations. It has become all too easy to forget that the idea of a residential institute is to allow for such relationships to flower and thus help in the making of a fonder four years of undergraduate study. The faculty and student body have become too sundered to allow us to imagine that the professor teaching that dreaded 4 credit course might actually be a benign soul sharing the same interests as any of us whippersnappers. In fact, the situation is so dire, that any student who gets too close to a faculty member is generally shunned by his or her peers because it is seemingly 'uncool' to have a prof for a good friend.

The other side of this great void is equally clueless and indifferent in most cases. Barring a few cases, the average faculty member is quite happy to let the status quo remain and get on with things, difficult as they are. It is a rare thing for a professor these days to remember the names of the students they have taught- something which is only possible if the relation between the teacher and the taught is more intimate than it is now.

Let alone personal confidences, students are often hard pressed to find profs whom they can ask doubts to without apprehension. A major reason for this hesitancy of

COVER STORY

THE GREAT

DIVIDE

the student body is the non-approachability of the profs. According to **Sumeet Kumar, Electrical III yr**, “**Professors keep you waiting for days for a 2-5 min meeting**”.

Some students blame the excess importance given to CGs by some profs for this communication gap. **Mukund Murari Singh, P&I III yr**, echoes the views of many when he says, “**As far as a few profs are concerned, academics is your face. Their treatment of you is determined by the C.G. that you've got.**”

INTERVIEW WITH DR. PRAMOD AGGARWAL

Has there been a change in the level of interaction over the years?

A: Yes, there has been a decline in the amount of enthusiasm exhibited by students. This can be attributed to them becoming more and more engrossed in their own worlds, particularly after PC's. **Teachers are more confined to their research now.** Also, now the faculty is not as young as it used to be, so the students could interact freely. We also used to dine together in the mess. There're also more students. This situation could worsen after reservations get implemented. **“I believe there is no way out except if the faculty could be strengthened.”** Previously we used to have activities (sports etc) organized by the dept level societies, in which students and profs took part at a large scale.

What should students do in order to improve this situation?

A: One of the reasons why students shy from questioning is because they aren't up to date with the syllabi. They must ensure that they're regular in class in order to avoid that.

But students are titled 'ghissus' if they come up with doubts.

A: The situation was always the same – it's never the case that students encourage others raising questions but then this comes down to the level of commitment of the individual.



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REPERCUSSIONS

The most serious loss that the institute bears because of this divide is the lack of alumni support. After all, it's not the hostels or the roads that are going to lure you back to the campus – it is the human attachment that should be formed. This lack of empathy is probably the main reason behind the dismal alumni turnout and contribution. In the recently held Alumni Meet, **Mr. R.K. Verma, batch of '71** expressed his disappointment at not finding a single faculty member to greet his batch at the alumni interaction held at the Students' Club. It doesn't exactly take a genius to figure out that this Greater interaction with the faculty will result in students keeping in regular touch with their profs and hence keep them interested in the affairs of the institute, the lack of which they lament at present.

Another serious repercussion is the lack of feedback from the students, relating to the various activities in the institute. If a prof is not approachable, students avoid making him aware of any ideas they might have. According to **Mranal Gupta, IV year, Mech**, **“The issue of self esteem comes into play while approaching a prof. The students don't feel comfortable approaching the prof as they think they will be humiliated.”** Once again, the loss is the institute's.

The students also lose out because of lack of association with the profs. According to **Sunny Jain, II year, Civil** **“We have a huge disadvantage when we apply for internships. We get stereotyped recommendations from profs as they hardly know us.”** Compare this with foreign universities where professors not only fill in the required recommendation form but also attach extra sheets to highlight the students other virtues. One reason for such a scenario in universities abroad is the compulsion of Faculty Advisors, also known as FacAd's. Once you enter the university, your Faculty Advisor is your mentor, protector and most importantly, your friend. Whether you want an extra job to supplement your income, an idea for a new project or a place you want to go to chill out, it's your Faculty Advisor that you turn to. Naturally, the Faculty advisors know enough about you to give you a dream recommendation and you've also made a friend you can always ask for advice anytime in your life. Implementation of faculty advisors for students here might go a long way in bringing about a healthy student-teacher interaction.

Students agree with the profs in recognizing the fault to be two-way. **“Almost all profs give the students their contact number. But it is the students who have to take the initiative to approach them.”** says **Ankit Prakash Srivastav, II year, Civil**. Similarly, **Amit, Elec IV year** admits after retrospection, **“The problem of poor student-teacher interaction is primarily because of students and their habits – their psychological behaviour.”** For the situation to improve, the mind set of students needs to change. Many students are of the opinion that **“There is no need for student prof interaction. We are happy this way, and we're sure the profs are too.”** These kinds of remarks are probably the bane of the entire institute.

SOLUTIONS

The answer is obvious – increase interaction between students and profs. The simplest method of bringing this about is self-realization. But the helping hand needs to be given to get the process under way. Various methods have been suggested by profs and students alike.

- Ice-breaking sessions at the beginning of each semester with all the profs is one possibility.
- A sports meet can be organized by the student societies in each department to bring the students and profs together on an informal setting.
- A student-teacher committee can be formed that organizes the celebration of festivals together. The students and profs can also participate in cultural events together during these festivals.
- **“Student's societies like EESS, MIESS etc. can act as an interface between students and professors. The HoD should be made the patron of the societies and hence made approachable directly.”** says **Prateek Trivedi, III yr Electrical**.
- **Kushal Chauhan, III yr Electrical** suggests that **“A common dinner should be organized for students and professors which might act as a platform to enhance student faculty interaction.”**
- **Profs could allot a small portion of lecture time towards getting to know students better, i.e. a general bakar session. We could also include profs in our general activities. “Profs feel completely left out during Thomso, Cogni and other fests. We could organize some events to get to know the prof's personal side”** **Chirag Dureja, IV year, Mech.**



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The 42nd Inter IIT Sports meet came. The 42nd Inter IIT Sports meet went. IIT Roorkee was conquered. The tournament saw the worst performance by our contingent since joining the ranks of the IITs – 7th among 7 teams in the Men's division and 4th in the Women's, despite boasting of arguably the best sports facilities and a lot of hard work having gone into the preparation. What was more surprising was that the slump came after two years of good performances. Despite having won 2 consecutive gold medals in cricket, this time we failed to even reach the semis. In Badminton too, we could not repeat our earlier performance. The worst outcome of the meet was that we didn't even win a single medal in the team sports and just a couple in the athletics. So this time we decide to take a look into the matter. Find out exactly what went wrong and what is being done to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

JUST BLEW IT.

REASONS FOR BELOW-PAR PERFORMANCE:

Mr. Alok Pandey, Assistant Sports Officer, made a very lucid observation regarding the below-par performance. He said that any athlete must be in his top form in order to excel in the inter-IIT sports meet. However, all players take their exams just before the meet, due to which they get out of shape, let alone remain in top form. After that, they have to travel to far-off places like Guwahati and then perform without getting any rest or time to regain their top form. This late peaking showed in this year's performances as the IITR contingent lost to comparatively weaker teams in the earlier matches and was able to beat teams which eventually reached the finals later. Mr. Pandey said that the administration had been requested to get the end-sems finished a week earlier, like all other IITs. However, due to the mid-semester break, the administration had not agreed.

The team captains also elicited various reasons for their teams below par performance. **Navneet Chahal, Women's Basketball captain** said that pulling out of 4 players at the last moment coupled with the unavailability of the coach at Guwahati made a big difference. As far as cricket is concerned, **Akhilesh Tyagi, Men's Captain**, said that 6 players graduated last year and the team was inexperienced. In Aquatics, a sport where our performance is generally not that good, **Varun Vardhan, Men's Captain** explained how Roorkee's geographical position made it difficult for the team as they could not practice all year long like Bombay and Madras.

SPORTS COMPLEX TIMINGS:

On the question of extending the Sports Complex timings, Mr. Pandey said that the timings could be extended if the need was felt. If a team captain impresses the need for the team to get extra practice, he could be given late access to the facilities. However at present, there seems to be no need to extend the timings. Moreover, the timings have already been extended from 6 to 7 to 8 and the ground staff cannot be expected to stay back so late.

LACK OF SPORTS CULTURE.

The sports junta was unanimous in lamenting the lack of a sports culture in the institute. As **Navneet Chahal put it, "The problems faced by sportspersons here is the lack of iconic status. Students still prefer the cultural section to sports. There is also a lack of spectators. If people turn up to watch the game, then even players are motivated to give their best."** Mr. Pandey also said that the Sports persons here were often not looked up to. He said that IITD had a good Sports Culture as far as Tennis and Basketball are concerned, and IITB had a good swimming culture.

SPORTS FESTS

Mr. Pandey said that the lack of local teams was a major problem as our players do not get enough practice. The BEG teams are too superior and our sportsmen just end up feeling demoralized. He agreed that Sports Fests were essential in order to improve our sports prowess. He said the sports office had been requesting the administration for a Sports Fest for the last 4 or 5 years as a Sports Fest can easily be held in the year break. **Akhilesh Tyagi, the Cricket Captain** also corroborated his views, saying that these fests would give players sufficient match practice.



INTERVIEW WITH DR. ROSHAN LAL,
STAFF ADVISOR FOR SPORTS

Q. What is being done to improve our sports performance?

A. This year the annual athletics meet was held to pick up talent. Mobile numbers of talented students were taken. The 1st month of the next semester will be dedicated to sports. I have personally contacted a few people who are willing to provide additional assistance to certain teams if required. Equipment wise I'll try to provide whatever the students need in minimum time.



Q. What are the chances of having a Sports Fest?

A. Our participation in these depends on the enthusiasm of the students. I will try my level best to arrange it but 90% of it depends on the contribution of the students. We can go or call teams from IITD/some regional Engg. Colleges. July onwards these opportunities will be considered. The whole thing will depend on the Chief Sports Officer & the general secretary.

Q. Should Sports be made compulsory?

A. People do not have time to play when they are preparing for the JEE so it would be great if sports were made compulsory for these students. Sports should be at par with NCC/NSS.

Q. Can the sports complex be extended? And can the sports complex also be open on Sundays?

A. I am willing to extend the timings upto 9'o clock. If I see plenty of students willing to play - the facility timings can be extended in their favour. The sports complex is closed on Sunday because the workers, staff, and coaches need a day off. Besides, teams also need a one day rest so that they do not strain themselves.

ATTRACTING BEGINNERS

The Assistant Sports Officer pooh-poohed the opinion that not enough attention was being given to beginners. He admitted that ultimately to play well in the Inter-IIT sports meet you need groomed players but even then beginners are scouted for signs of talent. Players showing speed, fitness or a good sports sense are encouraged to take sports seriously. In tennis the Govind Bhawan Lawns are devoted to beginners' Coaching. In fact, most of the institute players are those who started playing after joining IITR.

Voyage

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REMEDIAL MEASURES BEING TAKEN UP

On the measures being taken to improve the current performance, Mr. Pandey said that the sports teams have been divided into A, B and C teams depending on talent. The 3 teams would play against each other and the players would be shuffled depending on performance, thus resulting in a sense of positive competition. The players have been asked to manage their time during the end-sems so that they can practice for some time everyday. This would make sure that the main problem of sportsmen not peaking on time would be addressed.



Mr. Pandey also said that more and more competitions within the institute are going to be started. For instance, inter-year cricket competitions have been started this year to give extra match practice to the players. He said that the Athletic Meet should first be organized at Bhawan level. This year, more league matches are being played.



Ayaskant Sahu of the Football team suggested the idea of a PG meet to increase the number of PG students involved in sports, as these students often have experience from having played at the undergraduate level. He also said that Sports should be made compulsory through proficiencies like NSO.



MR. PANDEY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the dismal performance at the Inter-IIT sports meet, Mr. Pandey has compiled a list of recommendations:

1. In most IITs, exams are completed at least 2 weeks before the Inter-IIT meet. However we only have a week's break so our top form is not attained.
2. Organize sports festivals like other IITs so that our students develop competitive spirit.
3. Before Annual Athletic Meet we should organize Intra Bhawan meets for talent searching .
4. Participation in Annual Athletic Meet should be compulsory for institute team members.
5. Some matches should be organized in DPT to enhance their participation.
6. During institute team selection, minimum fitness levels should be compulsory and probable team should be selected in August itself.
7. Students do not have the opportunity to play frequently with nearby teams on a regular basis.
8. Give emphasis to other sports like athletics and rowing.
9. Give incentives like "Best Player Award".

Mostly Harmless

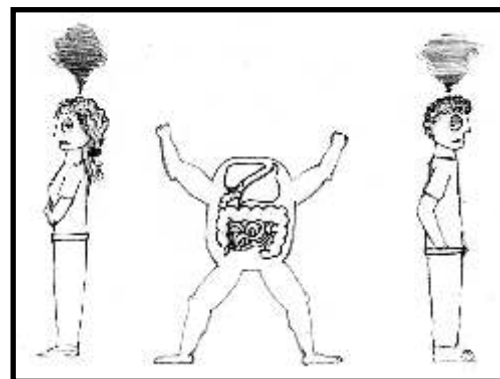
Crib Corner

THE BOYS' SIDE OF THE STORY

Here I sit on my desk waiting for the worthless Param compu (my personal one that is) to return solutions to my 658th equation, and then I see the most stunning woman in the world walk up to me and switch off my monitor. Lunch? She asks, and takes my "Umm.. Aaa" as a yes. After an extraordinary meal, she knowingly takes the bill and pays. How the hell did she know that I have no money? Is she for real? Apparently not! I guess continuous exposure to mathematical radiation coupled with the 1:22 ratio made a John Nash out of me. Moral of the story: Illusions are generally feminine in Roorkee.

THE GIRLS' SIDE OF THE STORY

Two years is a lot of time, still a day here amidst the raging Hippos, Bulls and some unassuming Dandelions is much the same. Nevertheless, I finally picked up the most charming dude (or so it seemed!) in campus; a candlelight dinner and several unprintable incidents later the whole insti shook!!! The reason was attributed to the innumerable tremors registering 9+ on the CG scale leaving love-birds like us out in the rain. The charm vanished and the Hippo raged. Pledged myself to turn over a new leaf.



THE STOMACH'S SIDE OF THE STORY

The stuff that masquerades as food is filling up inside me, making me lose whatever self respect I had managed to sustain since coming here. The only thing I can say to its favour is that it doesn't look any different once I digest it. It seems that the body I belong to is bovine and not human as I had originally thought. In that case, I wonder where my three siblings are. And people complain about lack of quality and quantity of the opposite sex. Sheesh. Hey little intestine, what say you and I get hitched?

Periscope

Sneak-Peek

Instant Tea@ IIT Kgp: IIT Kgp is about to reveal a secret method to brew instant Darjeeling tea, just like coffee: The Food and Agriculture Department is currently in business talks to transfer the secret recipe for instantly soluble tea- it got an Indian patent last year. If the deal is clinched, the copper brown tea powder will hit stores by mid-2008. All one needs to do is to stir a pinch of the powder into a cup of hot or cold water, with sugar or milk to taste. Just a pinch!

Smart Window: The textile technology department of IITD has developed a smart polymer window that responds to outer temperatures. The window lets in only diffused light when it is very hot and it turns clear when it gets cooler. The thermo-responsive polymer becomes solid or semi-solid when it is very hot, in effect blocking radiation but letting in diffused light. However, it turns liquid when it is warm, letting in the warmth of the sunlight, while the polymer disperses 90 percent of the radiations. The temperature range to which the window responds can be changed according to requirement. The polymer makes use of indigenous materials, so it is not very expensive

Practical Knowledge: IIT Kanpur is inviting industry executives to share their experience with budding engineers. A number of high ranking officials, including Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of companies, have either joined the institute as faculty or have applied for the posts for full time or part time basis. Company executives, including those from Tata and Samtel are already working with the institute.

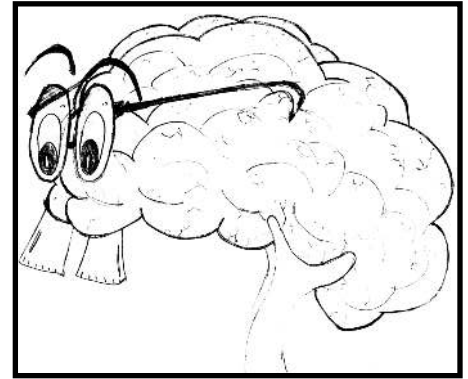
Nanotechnology to purify water: US-based Rice University is in talks with IIT Bombay to facilitate research collaborations in the field of nanotechnology. The university officials, currently on a visit to India, have discussed similar research opportunities with IITD, Delhi College of Engineering, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Rice University's interest in these premier Indian institutes stems from the areas of research interest these institutes have. Scientists at Rice University's Centre for Biological and Environmental Nanotechnology have developed a revolutionary low-cost technology for cleaning arsenic from drinking water which holds promise for millions of people in India. Additionally bio-engineers and physicists at the university have developed a multi-site vaccination strategy to prevent the four known strains of dengue virus.

Knowledge Economy

Business Gyan

Gone are the days where labour and capital determined a country's prosperity. The era of knowledge economy is upon us. This is the age where brains replace brawn and smart work replaces hard work. You learn, you earn.

Economists all over the world have long been trying to find out a tool to assess a country's long term economic growth and finally they have hit upon the concept of Knowledge Economy. A country's knowledge base, human resources and intellectual capital determine its progress in the long run. This is quite obvious since knowledge can never be destroyed and one can only build upon existing knowledge. Knowledge is power and information is wealth. (No wonder that the government has sponsored a 4 Crore project at DOMS).



R&D is the buzz word in this era. Generation of knowledge and its distribution is what determines any country's development. Universities play a major part in the generation of knowledge and Information & Communication Technologies bear the responsibility of spreading it. Information Technology, which is a knowledge intensive industry, will play a key role in a country's growth and development.

This is a boon to India since it has vast human resources and scope for knowledge generation. The government has taken the initiative to set up more universities to facilitate production of skilled human resources. Companies are capitalizing on their employees' knowledge, brainpower and technical know-how to gain a competitive edge. Nevertheless to make this concept click, all aspects of the country, namely academia, government, society and industry, have to work in tandem to contribute to the overall growth.

Know Your Campus- Earthquake Engineering Department

*Acclaimed of being the first and the most advanced department of its kind in the country, the **EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING** department, established in 1960, has been of great service to the nation. **WONA** brings to you an account of its golden journey through all these years and the plans it has envisaged for its future.*

PROJECTS IN PROCESS

The officiating head of the dept. **Dr. Ashwini** told us about the various projects currently being handled by them. The department has installed 200 instruments in the Himalayas to record and absorb shocks. A further installation of 300 instruments is the target they want to achieve, on which the work has already started. The Strong Motion Project for monitoring earthquakes, telemetry, post earthquake damage study, seismic analysis and many other projects are actively and beneficially being carried out in full swing. It also has the project of dynamic analysis of dams, monitoring their activity in recommendation for earthquake parameters. The **Tehri Dam** project in Uttarakhand is receiving their full attention at the time. None of the earthquake projects in Northern India are passed by the central government without recommendations from this department.

*It takes a great deal to stay intact in the die-hard competition that the world offers today but the **EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT** is doing the best any technical dept. can for the welfare of the country.*

ACADEMIC DETAILS

The dept. offers M.Tech courses in structural (20 seats) and soil (12) dynamics for students with civil engineering background. It also has some seats for mechanical engineering students. The dept. has almost a dozen labs of its own where different research works are carried out. The labs include the seismological observatory with high-standard equipment, some of which were designed by American professors many years ago. It also has a Tilt-meter which was developed here and also an Isometer for recording earthquake intensity. It enjoys the facilities of having a shake table (designed by our own profs) and a shock table with railway wagon facility.

MATTERS OF CONCERN

Lack of promotions for the faculty is the major setback that the department is facing. The faculty strength is of 18 plus 2 scientists. Also it's quite difficult to maintain the student-teacher ratio with decreasing number of youngsters interested in research in this mathematical era.

WiFi

With the whole institute eagerly awaiting the deployment of wireless internet facility and some impatient students camping in the Ravindra Bhawan lawns, we decided to relieve the tension by providing an update on the situation. Here is what the man at the helm, **Prof. Padam Kumar (Head, Institute Computer Centre)** had to say...

On the current scenario:

The network in Ravindra Bhawan is running smoothly apart from some minor problems which are being rectified. Some reasons for lack of connectivity have been traced to poor hardware quality at the user end. In the current network each bhawan is connected to the institute computer centre through optical fibers. There are plans to replace these with a WiMax connection. Also the current network is working on minimum security requirements and MAC addressing as well as a login will be needed in future.

What lies ahead:

The next bhawans on the list are Govind and Jawahar, here the groundwork has already been laid out. This will be closely followed by Sarojini where the whole process is expected to be completed by April. In the meantime any complaints or queries can be conveyed through emails.



EDC Summit

Entrepreneurship Development Cell organized a 3-day long entrepreneurship festival titled E-Summit. It started with an acquisition based case study contest on Day 1 won by Piyush Khandekar and Apurva Samudra. Day 2 saw a presentation from International Knowledge Sharing Student's Organization – **ShARE**. The presentation witnessed a decent footfall (courtesy: the tempting refreshments). It was followed by a guest lecture from Dr. S. P. Mishra, VC, Dev Sanskrit Vidyalyaya, Haridwar on “How to convert an idea into a B-Plan”. The panel discussion on Day 3 attracted the masses, something the organizers had clearly not expected, resulting in shortage of seating space. Entrepreneurs from various age groups and backgrounds, ranging from 4th year engineering student cum carbon credit consultant to one of the founders of

Nucleus Software Export elaborated on their experiences and problems. The event was rounded off with the Business Quiz with the usual cryptic, audio visual and rapid fire rounds but at least there were new winners in the form of Vaibhav Kesari and Aman Arora. An overall good effort by the organizers helped them earn a few points with the masses. The next big thing in the pipeline is the B-Plan Contest – **ISIS on 17th March**.

NASA

This year at NASA (National Association of Students of Architecture) we won the special consolation prize in the LIK trophy handed out for the analysis and documentation of old heritage buildings, ending a long barren spell of six years and our U.Sec. Anish Kumar (B.Arch 3rd year) got elected as the vice president of NASA. WONA talks to the man of the moment and to the Head of Dept., Prof. Kulkarni about their views on this achievement.

Anish Kumar, Vice President, NASA

WONA: *How big is NASA?*

ANISH: National Association of Students of Architecture is the only national level organization of its kind and boasts of a membership of 110 colleges. It collaborates with industry biggies like HUDCO, while affiliation with organizations like UNESCO and COA is in the pipeline.

WONA: *What support does the institute provide?*

ANISH: There is a NASA advisor, all permissions to use the facilities of the department have to go through him. Attendance is not given for classes missed during the event. Financially the institute provides us with stationary but we would also like for it to provide traveling allowance. We would like some encouragement from our professors

WONA: *How do we compare with other colleges?*

ANISH: In a recent ranking released by NASA, IITR stood third out of all the architecture colleges of the country. Our performance in the competition is impressive considering that we hardly get 20 - 25 days to work for it while in many other colleges they include the NASA problems as a part of their syllabi.

Prof. Kulkarni
(HOD, Department of Architecture)

On finances...

On the question of travel allowance being given by the institute he said that an activity like NASA requires a lot of expenditure and since it's not a part of academics they are unable to finance it. He also pointed out that in IITR, architecture is just a department while other colleges are entirely architecture based so there is a difference in the thinking of people.

On attendance...

Regarding the attendance problems he said that he couldn't help as it had to be a unanimous decision by the teachers. Since not all the students are interested in the design work, this cannot be taken up on a large scale.

On encouragement...

He said that personally he had always encouraged his students to participate in NASA as it exposes them to professional activities going on around India. He added that he would do his best in the coming years to aid the participants.



Watch Out Redressal Cell

SPORTS @ IITR *...Lets Worc*

“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” – this idiom is known by most, but little attention is paid to its meaning. This is unfortunate as sports go a long way in ensuring a well-rounded personality. So what does our own IIT Roorkee lack due to which it ended up seventh in the recently concluded inter IIT sports meet. WONA thus decided to peek into the matter and find answers to at least some of the questions. Based on our mess survey results we interviewed the people who matter the most, and this is what we received.

NO 86%



YES 14%

Is there enough encouragement for beginners in sports?

Shruti Rana (Deputy G.Sec, Sports)

Enthusiasm was at its peak last year with inter IIT being held at Roorkee. However, this year there was a sharp decline with many people refraining from going to Guwahati. As far as timings are concerned, they should be extended and we are willing to take the responsibility of locking up if needed. A sports fest would be great but if it is not possible then at least we should compete with teams from nearby colleges. In the end to improve results, it is the students who need to be more committed and attend practices regularly. Only then will we be able to repeat our brilliant performance last year when the girls contingent won the GC.

Manish Singh (G.Sec, Sports)

Though we had the potential to perform well, our teams just didn't click at the crucial moments. Less time available for practice and many talented 4th yearites opting out due to their placements also added to the failure. The inability of some of the professional staff to evoke zeal and infuse the right spirit in players was also a disconcerting factor. As far as organizing an annual sports fest is concerned, we are planning to put the proposal in front of SAC. Along with inter year, inter bhawan competitions and the annual sports meet, you can expect more sports camps this year to develop the requisite bench strength. There must be more enthusiasm and participation by students to boost the sporting standards here.

Should we have separate sports fest as in other IIT's?



NO 06%

YES 94%

Is there enough emphasis on sports in the campus?



NO 51%

YES 49%

Prof. Roshan Lal (Staff Advisor, Sports)

On emphasis and encouragement..

We try our best to organize events like the athletics meet and other intra institute competitions to promote sports in the campus. If any student comes up with a request to organize any other event which is feasible we will surely do it. A separate sports festival will face a lot of hurdles and I don't know whether it will be possible or not, but we will try and arrange as much competition as we possibly can. I want that 60 to 70 percent players of all teams should be from first and second year and this point has been conveyed to the coaches. Special events will also be organized for the first year.

On timings..

This point has been brought to my attention and I am trying to get the timings extended till 9 pm in spite of resistance from the workers. I think that if students stop wasting and whiling away their time they will find enough time for sports in spite of their schedule.

Is there enough time in your daily routine for sports?

NO 34%



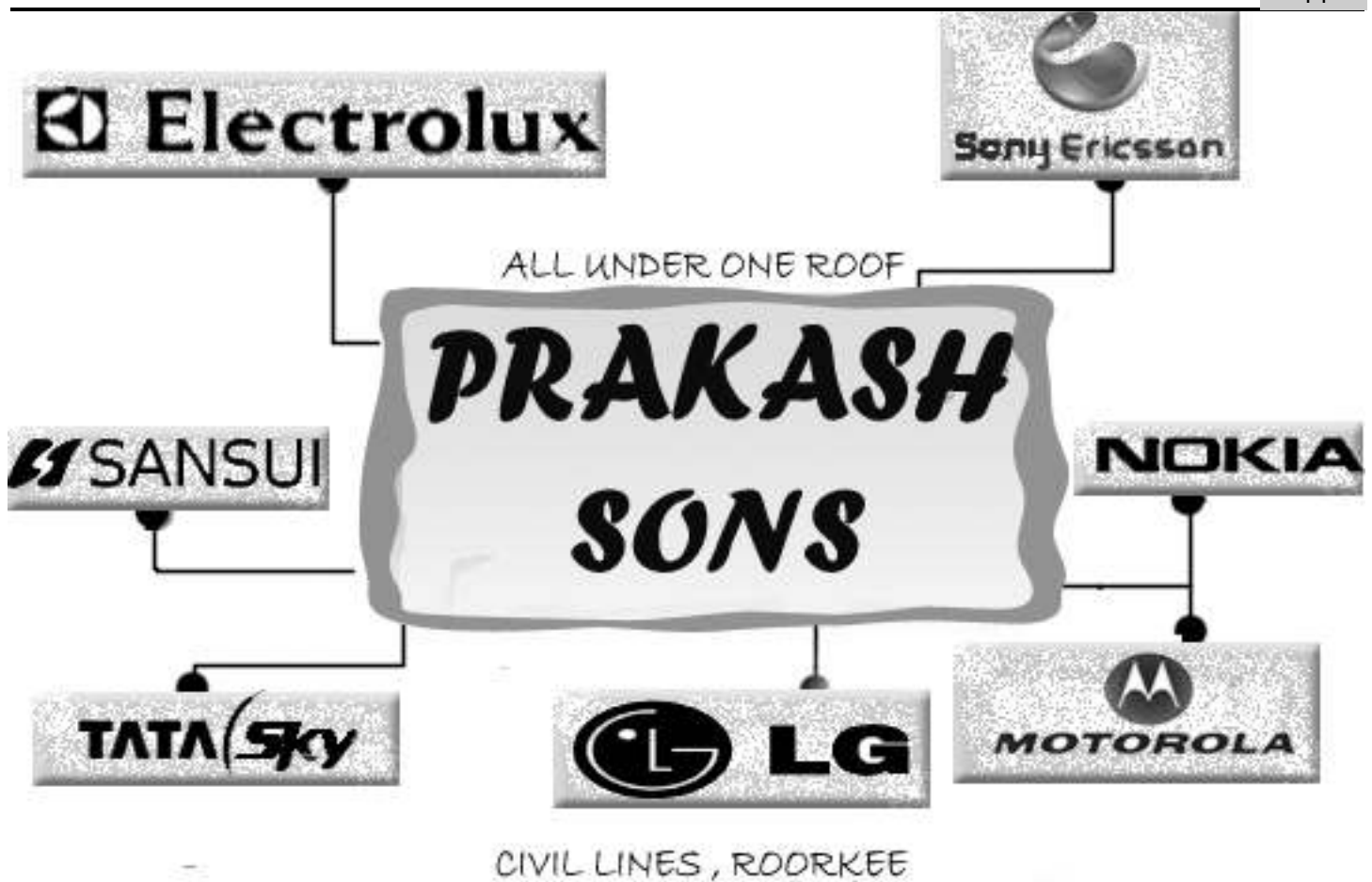
YES 66%

Do you want sports complex timings to be extended?

NO 09%

YES 91%

* The figures are based on the data collected in mess survey conducted in all bhawans



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Face-Off

Mano-a-Mano

We always think of our Proficiencies as a waste of time...er...well, at least most of us do. But is there more to the mundane addition of another 2 credits to our already overloaded semester? Or is it just another of those things that happen in neverland?

Sumedh Chaudhry, II year, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering – The term Proficiency means taking an activity in which you are proficient or desire to be proficient. However, from the first year itself, students are forcibly made to join proficiencies in which they have not the least interest, NCC being a perfect example. The worst thing is that these Proficiencies are 2-credit courses due to which a student's CGPA can be affected. I missed my branch change simply because my grades in my proficiencies were not good enough. It is also well known that the best way to kill interest in anything is to make it compulsory. In this regard too, I feel that proficiencies should be optional, like the Hobbies Club or the Cultural Council. The method of awarding grades is also dubious. While it is true that the students excelling in their respective proficiency get the deserved grade, for average students there is no concept of fair evaluation. In fact, a not-so-proficient student can get better grades than a more proficient counterpart simply because of his contacts with those who matter. An appeal ought to be made to the administration to reconsider the whole Proficiency framework and remove the existing flaws.

Kota Laxmi Narayana, IIIrd year, Production and Industrial Engineering- “*Compulsion becomes initiation and then propagation.*” The proficiency system in IITR is highly structured with proper compulsion levels for each year. When a student enters an IIT he doesn't know about some subtle things which are important for him. Hence it becomes necessary to make two proficiencies compulsory. One is either NCC or NSS and the other is according to one's interest. NCC develops the disciplinarian aspect of one's personality whereas NSS helps to develop a humanitarian aspect in life. Next year, the administration is planning to introduce NSO in IITR as well, which is already in practice in the other IITs. With experience they come to know what is important and become interested in respective proficiencies. Hence gradually the number of compulsory proficiencies is decreased from 1 in second year (inclusive in GPA) to none in third year. When proficiency is evaluated for credits, it gives rise to core competency. In case the proficiency is made a simple pass/fail course, it will hinder the pursuit for excellence. Though I agree that the grades in proficiencies should not be considered for a branch change.

NSS- Working Hard

Gandhigiri

The **National Service Scheme**, or NSS as we know it, has lately ruffled a lot of feathers with a whole bunch of activities up their sleeve. Around 150 students have enrolled in NSS this year. This year it's not just lectures and camps which form the NSS calendar – there's much more. This time we bring you the details directly from the horse's mouth – **Kota Laxmi Narayana**.

NSS has adopted 3 villages, with the mission of transforming them into model villages. For this purpose, all the students are divided among 2 cells - **R&D** and **Disha**. The former is the technical cell which surveys each village about its topology, its needs and almost everything that matters. The purpose of this survey is to identify their problems, and come up with efficient ways of their eradication. Disha, on the other hand, works for the primary education of the village children. On weekends a group of selected students is taken to the village where they teach the children.

A **candle factory** has been set up in order to provide employment and self-sustenance. Once the factory is running on its own, NSS will take up the problems of electricity, roads, sanitation and other basic necessities. Within the campus, NSS is organizing regular group discussions, guest lectures, debates, extempore etc. with a much greater intensity than before. **Prerna** - the evening school is going on in the MCA department where NSS students go to teach children who are missing out on proper schooling due to financial or other reasons. It is a 90 day school with 1½ hrs each day. This program has been further extended to include illiterate workers in the vicinity. Also a book bank has been made for them from the NSS funds. **Prerna** also helps **Roorkee School for the Deaf**. This time NSS is also planning to publish two magazine issues. An NSS award ceremony is also in the pipeline.

Despite the much needed facelift, all's not well in the organization - recently the blood donation camp, organized every year on 26th of January, was cancelled without any apparent reason. Kota expressed disappointment about having a tough time arranging for **Prerna** classes, with none of the departments showing enthusiasm about providing classrooms to help educate the needy.



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