

Watch Out

Students' News Magazine, IITR

Vol XXIII No.2

NO LOOKING BACK

The alumni have left the building
Or have they?



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No Looking Back

The relationship between IIT Roorkee and its alumni.

Gender Bender 4

Perspectives and perceptions of the Guys and Girls at IITR

Cola Shikanji

I recently recalled the first time I'd had any association with Roorkee. It was on a train ride back to Delhi from Dehradun. An elderly gentleman was sitting beside me and as the train slowed down for its customary one-minute stop, he drew himself up to his full height and proudly told me- "Son, this is Roorkee. Home to the best engineering college in the country." Co-incidentally, only a couple of days prior to this conversation, I'd read about UoR being upgraded to an IIT and was thus able to wax lyrical on the subject that had been broached. I too, drew myself up to my paltry four and half feet and sagaciously declared my agreement with his views. "Absolutely right, old man," I said, "and it's an IIT now isn't it?" Old Man nodded in assent and went back to the deep dream of peace that he'd been enjoying before volunteering the aforementioned info. By the time the train puffed out of the station, this world changing tête-à-tête was over.

Four years later, when I alighted at the very station that had played host to that historic conversation, I couldn't help but recall that proud old alumnus of this place. My own future, it seemed, was etched along the lines of his weather-beaten face. The day will come, I thought, when I shall be the proud pass-out and another squirt will be the listener. However, a couple of months into the best engineering college later, I began to think that the role of the alumni was restricted to expanding the knowledge of impertinent half-wits in slow moving trains. They appear to have adopted the maxim, "It's the thought that counts". While the Nandan Nilekanis of our sister institutes present their alma mater with new hostels, their counterparts here are conspicuous by their lack of contribution.

As the season of alumni day and convocation dawns upon us, we at WONA have decided that the time could not have been more apposite to give the alumni situation the attention it has long been clamouring for. An insight has been made into the status quo and the efforts being made to improve it. This is a story that has been hovering backstage far too long, waiting for its turn in the spotlight. A story that is so used to being on the sidelines that centre-stage would seem an alien place. But the time has now come when we must give it its due. For it not only concerns us now, but shall also do so when we are no longer with a Watch Out in our hands, waiting impatiently for the ramblings of the Ed to cease. And here I shall take the hint and allow you, irrespective of whether you're curled up in a comfy blanket or are sneaking furtive glances to this page in class, to heed the much-listened to words of James Hetfield of Metallica- *Turn the page...* Cheers. **-Ed**



Driven to the edges of insanity with the endless trauma of being a loser, I decided to renounce all worldly pleasures (read- the

Sunday slab of ice-cream at the mess) and seek the lamp of spirituality. Having thus decided on my course of action, I set off for Haridwar leaving behind all my belongings. Well, almost all. I took my phone and my iPod along, just in case the path to enlightenment wasn't too entertaining.

The path to wisdom would have been smooth, had it not been for a couple of eunuchs who bashed me up accusing me of trying to seduce them. Trouble, it seemed, was underfoot. Prison looked like a distinct possibility judging by the anger the holy men were in. However, the misunderstanding cleared up, allowing us to proceed to small talk and I learnt that the two eunuchs went by the names of BC and MC (no hidden connotations intended).

Having broken the ice, I explained my ailment to the two sages. "You suffer from the common Aluparanthasutra," MC explained. "In the depths of the Ganga canal in Roorkee dwells the ghost of Lord Thomason (May his soul rest in peace.) Hallowed will be the man who takes a dip in the canal on a full moon winter night. He shall rise above the rest of his ilk and eventually, will go on to become the convener of Thomso." Though half the prophecy made no sense to me (What on earth does 'hallowed' mean?), the prospects of becoming the Thomso convener sent my spirits soaring.

Eager to prove my worth, I found myself on the river bank at the stroke of midnight, ready to do the one thing I hadn't done in ages- bathe. Having kept my belongings on the bank, I swam to the middle to take my 'lucky dip'. Hardly ten seconds had passed when I saw BC waving furiously. No ghost appeared though, as I stood there numb and shivering. Plagued with indecision, I decided to continue till dawn. I felt deprived though. Even the king of 'to be or not to be' had had his own private ghost to hob-nob with. Early in the morning a fisherman saw me and on hearing my '*dukh bhari gaatha*' started laughing. "Bad Cow and Mad Cow are the local cons. Seems they've taken you in completely."

I returned to the bank to find my N-series mobile missing. It seems that BC and MC needed entertainment too, as they had also deprived me of my iPod. Dejected, shaken, wet, humiliated and clean, I returned to the hostel, confident in my belief that Moksha and Nirvana could only be found in Planet M. Halfway back, I realized that they could also have been found someplace else- my iPod. Moo-hoo.



The Cinema Club in recent years, seems to have become too lax on the cultural activity scene. With the renovation of the convocation hall, nee hangar, nearing its end, we talk to **Dr. Rajesh Srivastava**, staff advisor, Cinema Club, to find out what's in store for movie buffs.

Overview: We are now working on the installation of hi-tech cinema technology in the hangar. Currently we have an antiquated Russian Projector of gargantuan proportions and limited utility. We have been allotted Rs. 50 lakh, which we plan to use to install a highly advanced PA system that will take care of echo cancellation and volume levelling and provide a high-fidelity acoustic experience. We have approached various companies for the job, and we are hopeful that some of them will come forward.

Under consideration: I'm thinking of proposing for installation of an advanced cinema screen DVD projector. The money for this has been raised by saving a portion from the student contributions over the past few years. Also, the public viewing licence of the cinema club is due for renewal. If everything goes as planned, we can expect this new system to be installed within 5-6 months.

Frequency of movies: I can't comment on the frequency of movies shown in past years, as I was not associated with this project earlier. Now, since the hall is ready and other systems are expected to be in place soon, we are thinking of screening approximately 8-12 movies a year.

The Association: The cinema club committee comprises mainly of Chief Advisor, Dy. Chief Advisor, a Secretary and an Add. Secretary along with other members. No student body is associated with it currently as we feel the secretary is sufficient to represent the demands of students. Nominations are invited for the post of Secretary and he is appointed after a review of resumes and interviews of candidates applying.

Expansion Plans: We have very limited plans as far as expansion is considered. The most obvious choice- the O.A.T., is not suitable due to extreme climate. The limited seating capacity of the O.A.T. also makes alternative arrangements for screening movies impractical. Also we don't have a portable projector with us. And being in a small city like Roorkee, we can't hire a projector to screen movies. Hence, expansion is not on the cards.



The bomb has been planted. This time it's big, the big-daddy of all bombs, literally (or at least that is what the Russians think). It all began when the U.S. developed the "Massive Ordnance Air Blast" (MOAB) bomb, whose backronym is known as the "Mother of All Bombs", and previously enjoyed the dubious accolade of the most powerful non-

nuclear weapon in history. The Russians were quick to respond, when in September 2007 they exploded, what they claim is the largest ever vacuum bomb and named it, in a shameless display of male chauvinism, the "Father of All Bombs" (FOAB)!

Vacuum bombs, also known as high-impulse thermobaric weapons (HITs) or fuel-air explosives (FAE or FAX), produce more explosive energy for a given size than other conventional explosives, however are less predictable in their effect. Its simple mechanism is as follows. It first disperses a cloud of powder or liquid explosive using a small charge, and then ignites it with a second charge. The weapon consists of a container of either a volatile liquid or a finely powdered solid, which could be an explosive or metal powder, and two separate explosive charges. The weapon is initiated upon dropping or firing, and the first explosive charge bursts open the container and disperses the fuel in a cloud that mixes with oxygen. Once the fuel is appropriately mixed, the second charge detonates, propagating an explosion and boom! We have achieved destruction.

If you are unlucky enough to be in the vicinity of such an explosion, here is what you would experience before being lifted off the earth on a cloud of dust. First, you would be flattened by the overpressure as the rapidly expanding wave front flattens all objects within proximity of the epicenter of the blast. Next, you'll face the heat, which is only slightly less than that produced by a nuclear bomb. Vacuum bombs are more useful than conventional explosives against hard targets such as minefields, armored vehicles and bunkers due the longer duration of the overpressure. Notably, the FOAB flattened a multi-story block of apartment buildings with a power similar to a low-yield nuclear blast. Wonder why they made the buildings in the first place?

Often the vacuum bomb explosion is thought of as a fission device, read N-bomb, without the radiation side-effects. This is however inexact, as in most of the present-day as well as foreseen nuclear weapons, prompt radiation effects predominate. These radiations produce some secondary heating which is totally absent in the case of the vacuum bombs. So the effective yield of a nuclear bomb is much larger. To add to this all, if the fuel fails to completely ignite; the device is at risk of producing the effects of a chemical weapon! Now that's one multi-utility bomb!

SSSUPERSSStition

What do you think you have in common with Julia Roberts, who always has peas for breakfast and leaves four, or Kris "Srikanth" (What's in a name?) who used to look at the sun after every six or a four? Try remembering your faded blue jeans, the horse shoe or your lucky pen which you believe brings you luck? Did you realize that all this constitutes superstition? A superstition is a belief that events are influenced by specific behaviour without any casual relationship. There are times when our prudence is overcome by our desire for providence. It is then that we all end up doing things subconsciously (or consciously) to either help us focus or to give us hope.

How did this begin? Well, human beings have always been brutes lacking rationale! So we need an external force to guide us, give our lives a purpose and to keep a check on our basic instincts. These beliefs were created to give us a sense of God, a feeling that we are being watched over and taken care of all the time, to help us with our day to day problems and to give us hope. So long as it remains a guiding or feel good factor, it's actually good in that sense but more often than not, it converts into an insecurity and starts interfering with our decision-making power. In some people this becomes an obsession, a compulsive neurosis. There are a few who actually lose all their confidence in their exams if they have lost their so called lucky pen or T-shirt, despite having prepared well for it. Numerology, "nameology", astrology, palmistry; all of these target this insecurity in us and use it to their advantage. In most cases people just don't want to take any risk or leave any stone unturned. What's amazing is that there are some weird beliefs, like in some parts it is believed that breaking of glass brings bad luck while others take it as a good omen. Same goes for overflowing of boiling milk, i.e. do you really think that God is selective? The rabbit foot that is supposed to bring good luck, didn't bring much luck to the rabbit.

Ultimately it all comes down to our self-confidence and what it takes to overcome our mental blocks. For some like Rafael Nadal, it is pulling their socks up (literally!) while for others it is all about focusing their concentration and understanding their weaknesses. Ironic though it may sound, we generally find it easier to blindly believe in superstitions than to believe in ourselves. It takes a great deal of conscious effort to overcome our fears and believe in ourselves. It does not matter whether you are an atheist or an agnostic, the only thing that matters is whether you are a pragmatist.



*Despite all the fuss about gender equality and whatnot, the fact remains that the two sexes are as disparate as chalk and cheese, or to quote John Gray, from Mars and Venus respectively. The difference in lifestyles is more conspicuous in our insti than in most places and it does not take a genius to figure out the causes- LP and the sex ratio being the most prominent. Despite the incongruity, the Adams and Eves seem to be getting along reasonably well, as a fleeting glance at the junta at Nesci would prove. Beneath all the mush and rosiness, how do the two sexes truly perceive each other (**Perceptions**) and themselves (**Perspectives**)? How do their lifestyles differ? How does the outside world view them? Watch Out investigates...*

Gender Bender

Perspectives

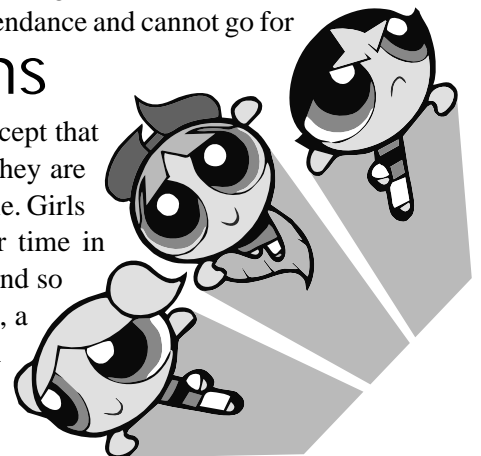
The SBites feel that there is a difference in the lifestyles primarily because their basic nature varies from that of boys. They spend our time chatting, reading, watching movies or shopping. Pillow-fights, sadly, do not seem to figure on their list of priorities, much to the chagrin of most guys. As girls are very few in number, they have to be conscious of what to do. As far as the so-called gender bias in the eyes of the professors is concerned, girls present a unanimous picture- **“We are not favoured by professors or others. We do well academically because we are inherently more sincere and hardworking than boys. People expect us to be more academically oriented and being the first-benchers of the class, we need to live up to those expectations and the brand name of an IITian”**. Says Manju Garg, **“IIT aspirants approach us for guidance and the world sees us as intellectuals. We are viewed with respect bordering on reverence.”** The value of a girl increases manifold after that fateful day when the JEE results were announced. More eyes turn towards them after we clearing JEE. Girls complain that girls are never given positions of authority, probably because of the male ego and because of lack of initiative from their side. Being lesser in number, there are not many problems during placements.

The girls' attitude towards others changes as they no longer bother about what others think, are bolder now and are cool about everything. In answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe and Everything, girls offer the following explanation- **The reason why fewer girls clear JEE is because very few girls appear for the exam. Comparing the success rate of boys and girls would give us a better idea. It may also be because of the relatively lower number of educated females in India. But the situation will definitely improve.**

As far as long time commitment is concerned, it is seen that girls are less rigid than their male counterparts. At least they believe in keeping their options open. They would not mind marrying IITians but would prefer it if they have achieved something else- say MIT or IIM (Guess that explains why Keerthi Raghavan was and still is so popular!). The disadvantage of being a girl is that they do not get proxy attendance and cannot go for night walks or to *bus-tee* for a tea beyond 10.

Perceptions

The perception is that the lifestyle of boys is the same as that of girls, except that they can roam around after 10. Boys tend to be more outgoing because they are more in number and hence can easily hang out with their own kind of people. Girls believe that guys tend to get distracted easily and spend most of their time in exploring new pass times like gaming etc. Some of them try to act cool and so acquire habits like smoking and drinking. In a quest to be the coolest one, a guy's speech is garnished with an overdose of profanities. But, when speaking in front of a girl, he tries to curb his 'natural' instincts and makes an effort (many a times, a poor one) to mind his language. As far as extra-



curricular activities are concerned, it depends from person to person, but boys in general are more involved in co-curricular activities than in academics and hence do not excel in academics as much as girls. Guys also feel that girls do not work as much as them and may be sceptical if a girl gets a responsible post.

Boys rely more on the brand-name of IIT and flaunt it more than girls. There is not much difference in the way the world treats them. They probably find it easier to impress people. Their attitude also changes in much the same way as girls'. Confidence level improves but they also show a tinge of arrogance. Due to their large number, they have to fight for everything and hence even the smallest of positions sees a lot of competition. They generally believe that a girl has it much easier than them. Says **Neha Kadiyan, Civil IV**, **"Guys keep cribbing about the lesser number of girls here but do not do much to make the girls feel more comfortable amidst themselves. The interaction between boys and girls has improved over the years but many of them still feel awkward talking to girls."**

BOYS WILL BE BOYS Perspectives

The male junta can be broadly classified into two categories- the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. The difference in the lifestyle of the various genera could not have been more striking.

Category 1: Their day starts well before that of the others. They attend every single class, if only to gaze at their lady love. Their evenings are spent on long walks down "Lovers' Lane". Their day practically ends with the teary 10 PM farewell ritual. Songs like *'Wish you were here'* and *'Waiting for you'* can be heard playing from their rooms. Their arrival at any bakar venue is dreaded, owing to their uncanny knack of roping their lovers into any discussion. Though people always dreamt of belonging to this category prior to their arrival here, a close look at the others in this league has forced them to decide otherwise.

Category 2: Shabby. Unshaven. Seldom bathe. It is this class that is responsible for all the aforementioned common (might we add accurate?) notions about an IITian. Classrooms are forbidden territory, except towards the end of the semester when they start hoping against hope in their quest for the distant 75% mark. Realizing the fact that there is a fair chance that they will be posted abroad at some time in their lives, they strictly work according to US timings. Maggi and burgers suddenly assume a whole-new importance as people make the long trip to bustee at times that 99% of the world would find unearthly.

'Haves' and 'Have-nots' notwithstanding, the IIT tag is a double-edged sword for a male IITian. While it does help in getting noticed, the expectations that come along with it can be overwhelming. Moreover, the tag brings along with it a sub-tag that says 'Geek'. **"At a recent social gathering, people were shocked when the fuse blew and I had no idea what was to be done. 'How did you make it to IIT?', people kept asking. My counter-parts from NITs or even BITS for that matter never face such problems."** Piyush Gulati, 2nd year Meta laments.

The guys are, by and large, content with who they are and what they have (CG included). The girls, they feel, have

better CGs but lose out on a lot in terms of exposure and fun. For many guys, allowing academics to take a backseat in favour of sports, gaming, organizational skills or cultural activities is a very reasonable option. **"I feel I'm better off as a multi-faceted well-rounded 7 pointer than as a serious minded 8 pointer bore. After all, one of the main reasons I joined IIT was to ensure complete personality development and be ready for whatever challenges face me outside,"** explains Udit Dhawan, III year Elec.

Perceptions

The general perception, though, is that girls here are a bunch of ubergeeks. **'Male professors favour them out of pity, while their female counterparts do so out of their deep-rooted feminism'** sums up a student. The fact that girls perform better academically is attributed by most guys to the fact that they have fewer diversions (read Counter Strike) as compared to the boys. Despite their grades, the male section still has a strong superiority complex, which is evident from their opinion that fewer girls make it to IIT just because they are plain stupid when it comes to analysis-oriented subjects. Some, like **Arjun Ramakrishnan, 4th year, Meta**, are of the opinion that girls have their share of problems too owing to the largely male-dominated atmosphere prevalent here. As far as the issue of professors favouring the girls goes, Arjun says, **"The professors have a soft corner for the girls only because they are far more sincere than we are."**

The 'males' and 'non-males' dichotomy is the one that leaps to the mind the minute an IIT guy is asked for his take on the girls. Be it choice or compulsion, many guys write-off 'commitments' after having a look around. The 'first-bench pet student' attitude of girls coupled with a distinct reluctance to mingle with the guys and behave normally does not help matters much. Guys from co-educational schools specially feel aghast at this mammoth transition from the girls they were used to to the ones they see themselves getting used to in the years they spend here. This kind of unhealthy atmosphere gives way to such remarks- **'I would never even date, let alone marry, an IITian, male or female'** (on condition of anonymity). Thankfully, however, not all guys seem to share this opinion. Remember category 1?

Almost Famous

We finally decided to throw some light on **Mathew Kurien Eranat**, Secretary of LitSec, member IMG and nominated for the best dressed student award (note the common Geekiness in all three) and in case you are wondering, yes, the light did bounce back...

WONA: First things first... Tell us about your crushes. Before that, is this question applicable?

MK: Hey! It's not like that. I mean I'm a perfectly normal guy with perfectly normal crushes. Just that I belong to this class of people who like to appear as intellectuals beyond worldly desires. Guess, I can't take it if anything humiliating happens. (Are you trying to say it's a matter of personal choice? Would you like to name some who're beyond worldly desires?)

WONA: A cliché now... Tell us about your stay in IITR.

MK: Initially the going was tough, especially since I didn't speak Hindi. It was only later, after I mastered the art of *gaalis*, did I find myself at ease. Apart from that, there have always been good days, bad days, worse days. Quizzing has taken up greater importance this year, enjoying that.

WONA: How does it feel to be part of the most hated quiz team on campus?

MK: I now understand how Keerthi and team would have felt. C'mon now, I at least leave the Music and Sports quizzes. Those guys didn't even do that! Also, we're trying to make LitSec quizzes less *LitSecy* and more trivia stuff, so people can have a better chance. (Or... you could stop participating altogether.)

WONA: So, any advice for the future generations of IITR?

MK: Well, enjoy your time here... But when the majority start to ghiss, you'd better take the hint. (As they say, *When in Rome...*)

WONA: Any regrets before you leave?

MK: I should have started CAT preparation a little earlier. I've done most of what I've wanted to do. Would like to play Basketball though. Used to play for my school team. ()

WONA: And as usual, what are your thoughts on WONA?

MK: Well, it's pretty good. But I used to like it better before, perhaps because of the novelty factor. (In other words, *WONA is receding with age*)



Reiterating the immortal, and highly incoherent words of Kurt Cobain. Yes, this is what he says:

*"With the lights out, it's less dangerous;
Here we are now, entertain us"*

Considering the frequency of power cuts in campus, Watch Out comes up with some innovative (though, not entirely safe) ideas of how to pass time during those blissful hours... of nothingness. For parents- children's guidance is advised.

Let there be no light

1. Bakar galore- *Bakar*, arguably, is the most common means of spreading and sharing facts and views, (read: rumours and misinformation). You can feel free to back bitch (it's a typo, we meant 'bite') about anyone or anything you like and pass your not-so-valuable time. If the TS is nearby, you have a ready-made excuse to indulge in that desperately desired *bakar* session and blame it on the power supply.

Caution: Once addicted to *bakar*, it doesn't matter whether the lights are on or off, the session never stops.

2. Calling the Romeos- Remember those tough times, when you couldn't find a lonely corner to spend some *quality* time. Here's your chance! Be a man, climb the high walls of SB and/or Kasturba, sneak into her room and... *Your text here.*

Caution: Make sure you end up in your girl's room and not the matron's.

3. Study C++- This one is dedicated to the first yearites. Studying C++ with the lights on or off doesn't make much of a difference to your grades, so why bother!

Caution: Don't even think of going to the reading room, you will actually understand that you don't understand a thing.

4. Call up. Express yourself- Studying in one of the best technical institutions of the country, one expects the best of the facilities. So we have every right to call up the gentleman(?) who has promised us 24x7 assistance.

Caution: Do not be over excited and blurt out your name. This has been proven to be hazardous.

5. Beat the Ghissu- You've always hated him. Your chick always took notes from him. He treated you as if you never existed. It's Payback time! Grab the opportunity (his neck), go to his room and give him the *best day* of his life.

Caution: Do not, in any circumstances, kill him for he has something you can and will never have- the tutorial copy.



CHIRAUNJILAL CONSPIRACYWALA™

Amidst all the woo-hoos about the Indian team winning the T20 world cup, and for all those fellas feeling smug about the team being “invincible”, I, Chiraunjilal Conspiracywala, am about to unearth one of the biggest conspiracies that threatens the very existence of mankind (at least half of it which eats cricket, sleeps cricket and drinks only Nimbu-Pani). The “great” Indian team winning the T20 is no miracle, but yet another conspiracy. In the middle of it is a villain- I shall call him Mr X, who suddenly saw that there were fewer weddings to dance at and was in urgent need of cash. So he approached the BCCI board of selectors, who had no idea at all about 20-20, and thought that it was a game supposed to be played by players in their twenties. So obviously Sachin, Sourav and Dravid were shown the door. Then onwards it was completely Mr.X's show, where he was the mastermind behind every single thing. He joined hands with Yuvraj and Sreesanth by giving them dreams of captaincy and turning them against Dhoni. Sreesanth, who showed high levels of hyperactiveness as he was suffering from some Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), a common symptom of which is a propensity to perform pelvic thrusts, was actually aiming for Dhoni's skull (notice the excessive over-pitching), but unfortunately the stumps always got in the way. Similarly, Yuvraj tried to vent his anger by aiming his shots at Dhoni at the stands but his not-too-perfect placement meant that the ball kept going for a much lauded six.

The brilliant mastermind that he was, Mr X always had a backup plan in case these two failed. In a desperate attempt to save the day, when the unfriendly neighbours threatened to play party poopers, he unleashed his trump card – Joginder Sharma. The opposite batsman would wonder how a nincompoop like that ever made it to the first 11, let alone inspire the confidence to bowl the final over and in his perplexity would make a mistake, costing him his wicket.

Mr. X is not as unknown as you might think him to be. In fact, he was there in the thick of it all throughout. He even made it to the front page of TOI the next day, letting the credulous public believe that he was there to support the team. Why then, did he not visit the final of the 2003 World Cup, which was on a grander scale and held in the very same country? Some slightly more intelligent readers would argue that he meant to promote his latest movie. But the movie in question is so senseless and nonsensical that nothing can prevent it from being a superhit in India. Hence, it required absolutely no promotion. So think about it- was there any earthly reason for him to have taken the trouble to go to a country, where people prefer being robbed so that they can't be murdered? Why else would he do so if not for the reasons mentioned above? Remember dear readers, nothing, absolutely nothing, escapes the watchful eyes of Chiraunjilal Conspiracywala.

SAC update

1. On the issue of poor lighting of corridors during power blackouts, it was announced by the ADOSW(D) that the DOSW had already asked the Institute Engineer to propose a plan to provide emergency lights in the corridors of the Bhawans.
 2. The General Secretary, Sports, presented a proposal and a tentative budget for the proposed Annual Sports Fest. It was stated that the Sports fest can be organized, provided the number of academic working days were not affected. The General Secretary, Sports, was also advised to work out a consolidated proposal taking into account all the extra curricular activities in the campus during the whole year.
 3. As per the decision of the IAC (Institute Administrative Committee), no charges are to be levied for the use of auditoriums for student activities.
 4. It was decided that the Professor in-charge of Security would be requested to approach the representatives of the Rickshaw Union and hold negotiations on the increase in the official Rickshaw fares.
 5. Due to the poor representation of PG students in the Central Placement Team, it was decided that the Professor in-charge, Placements, will be approached for including a PG student in the CPT.
 6. A 9 member committee of student representatives from each bhawan was formed under the aegis of Dr. R. K. Jain, ADOSW(D), to look at how outsiders can be prevented from entering the campus.
 7. It was informed by ADOSW (Disipline) that the DOSW has already issued orders to provide rooms for barbers and tailors in the Bhawan premises.
-

NO LOOKING BACK

**“As we go on, we remember
All the times we spent together...
And as our lives change, come whatever,
We will still be friends forever...”**

And on that rather sentimental note of a song on graduation, we begin our tryst with the perennial question of alumni interaction with the institute.

Alumni have often been called the identity of an institute, and it's not hard to see why. After all, the first thing that comes to mind when we think of Harvard are its famous alumni (and sometimes its infamous ones, like George W. Bush). Similarly, the image of an IIT is usually associated with a bunch of serious-looking software professionals, pounding away at their keyboards in California, shielded from the bright California sun by their brighter computer terminals. Against this backdrop, where do we stand as far as keeping in touch with those who've passed through these “hallowed” halls before us? Watch Out investigates...

Need for alumni

We IITians have been accused, not once, but repeatedly, of selfishness. We might as well commit the crime we've been hanged for and be selfish, so let's start with why alumni interactions are so important to an institute.

The obvious benefits are, of course, monetary. Successful alumni generally attribute at least part of their achievements to their alma-mater, and are usually generous in repayment. As a matter of fact, quite a large part of the infrastructure in universities such as MIT, is alumni sponsored. Closer to home, the alumni of IIT Kharagpur have been instrumental in financing huge developmental projects, such as the internet connection in every hall (read hostel) room.

But possibly even more important is the fact that the reputation of the institute is nearly completely in the hands of the alumni. To quote **Ankit**



“The subscriber cannot be reached at the moment”

Srivastav, a student of Civil Engineering, “**Alumni matter because in the outside world, once you pass out, the only brand value you have is the one they create for you.**” Companies and universities, quite naturally, tend to trust in institutes whose graduates they've had “good experiences” with. In other words, the worth of an institute in the eyes of the world is built up of the Lego bricks of alumni achievements.

There's more to the scene than this, though. The inspiration and guidance that can be provided by someone who's “been there, done that” is unmatched, and can serve as a powerful motivator. Alumni in companies could at times outsource small tasks to their former departments as sponsored projects, which generally turn into a win-win situation for all parties concerned.

Not everyone thinks alumni interaction matters all that much, though. **Shrish Trivedi**, one among this minority, said, “**I believe they are way overrated. They might matter for would-be entrepreneurs who might be able to gain something in the way of ideas or assistance, but not otherwise.**” This certainly happens to be an interesting contrast

We had a talk with the Dean of Alumni Affairs, Dr. Harsha Sinhval, about the current state of the alumni-institute interaction and the measures being taken to improve it. Here's what he said:

"Sentimental reasons lie at the core of alumni-student interaction. The people who have passed out from this place are mentors for the current batch. The alumni-student relationship should be a symbiotic association. We need the alumni for financial, intellectual and networking support. Also the alumni benefit from institute interaction in some ways like finding old batch mates and so on.

We here at the alumni office are trying to make the interaction as cordial as possible. The office now is a single window office and everything related to alumni affairs is handled at a single place. Work is being done with IMG to make the website livelier, more interactive and informative and efforts are being made to widen the database. This office is a nodal body for Pan-IIT and by holding events such as the golden jubilee functions we get suggestions about ways to improve the IIT Roorkee image."

When we asked him what students could do to help things along, he replied, "Students should make relations, do some ground work and keep level-headed during their stay at the institute and not make it an aim to go to only foreign countries after passing out. Possibly their seniors can provide some good advice in the matter of their future."

from the mindset of the rest of the junta, which gives prime importance to their seniors who've left.

How are we placed?

For a really old institute, we seem to have a somewhat paradoxical dearth of alumni. Of course, the issue here is that the insti's contacts with those who've moved out, to put it mildly, were never great. This seems clearly indicated by the fact that most of the respondents to our opinion poll seemed unaware of our illustrious alumni of yore. A few like Dhruvjot Singh, a 4th year student in the Civil Engineering Department knew of "Naveen Jain, CEO, Intellects, Aparna Kapoor, CEO, CTec and quite a few others", but most seemed pleasantly surprised to learn that IIT-R was capable of producing someone famous. Considering the obvious advantages of good relations, it might seem strange that we continue to undervalue ourselves; still, there lies the truth. The good news, however, is that the situation is rapidly changing.

A year ago, when we spoke to a jubilee alumnus who'd come back to his alma-mater after a long spell of 25 years, he seemed to be more than a little disappointed at the less-than-warm welcome he'd received. He claimed that there was nobody to meet him at the railway station, much to his surprise. His comment that we couldn't expect the alumni to do much when the institute didn't take the first step seems to have been heard by the

authorities. This year, the main building has seen a highly uncharacteristic flurry of activity, clearly aimed at welcoming back the former inhabitants of the campus with open arms. The first step taken was the setting up of the new Office of Alumni Affairs (see box).

What is being done?

Well, that's one major step in the right direction. The next task is obviously to put alumni in touch with each other. Our very own (loved and hated) IMG have taken the initiative in this regard with the launch of the Orkut-esque alumni portal, which has recently been revamped and launched. We spoke to Sankalp, Tarun Madan and Ankit Goyal – the IMG 4th yearites in charge of the portal to find out more...

According to them, Alumni Portal is meant to increase alumni interaction amongst themselves as well as with the institute. It provides a single window access for them to hear the latest about the institute, to learn about donations made by other alumni and provide reasons to show their generosity and gratitude towards their alma-mater. Communities for each batch of students passing out ensure that old friends will always remain in touch. ThinkTank has already been launched to improve student-alumni-professor interaction. Unfortunately, the latter two have yet to hear of it.

Expectations from alumni

If the institute hasn't exactly spread out the red carpet every time the alumni came calling, our graduates haven't been blameless either (washed of milk, it seems!). When we asked people around the campus what they specifically wanted their alumni to do for them, Apurva Shrivastava of the Electrical Engg. Department, came up with a typical response: "Our alumni network should definitely be stronger than it presently is. We should be able to benefit from their experience in more meaningful ways. More forums and associations should organise interaction sessions so that we get to know about what's happening outside our campus, especially in the corporate world."

Will we be good alumni? So we expect a lot out of those that left. But we will leave as well, someday. And then, will we meet the presumably lofty expectations of the kids of the future?

Interview with Vaibhav Tandon
Student head, Placement team.

There is a general notion that most of the alumni of IITR are in PSUs and government sector organizations. But that is not so. If you see the recent alumni meet, there were many alumni who held great positions in big companies. The only problem is that we are not in touch with such alumni. There are only a few alumni who are in top positions are working towards recruiting more freshers from IITR. Until last year the British gas company, a dream job company, conducted placements only in IITB and IITD. But because of the efforts of an alumni, who is in one of the top positions in the Indian division of the company, this year the company is expected to conduct placements here as well. One main issue is that we do not have the database of alumni as a result of which we are unable to approach them. Also, people who passed out in the 70's and 80's do not know much about the placement scenario of the institute. There exist alumni chapters in Delhi, Noida, Bangalore and all over the country. We are trying to approach them and find alumni who can contribute towards the placements, through their contacts our placements can be made comparable to that of IITB and IITD.

We also talked to Dr. R. P. Maheshwari, who has held the post of secretary of the alumni association in the institute, about the state of alumni affairs.

Funding Scenario:-

Several people have contributed though very minimal amounts. Alumni association charges Rs.1000 from passing out students but that's on consent basis. Also, while admission some part of the initial deposit is for the alumni fund but it never comes to alumni association.

What steps had you undertaken during your tenure as Honorary Secretary of the Alumni Association?

I wanted to increase the corpus funds to such an extent that we should not need to ask alumni for money for organising jubilee celebrations. I also wanted to construct a multistory building for the alumni when they come here. MHRD doesn't support some projects. I would have channelised the funds to needy students, for budding students who want to take part in competitions abroad like GATI and to meet the medical needs of some students.

What steps should be undertaken in this regard?

Students must take an initiative to build up an Alumni Support cell for a smooth channel of communication between students. A calendar for alumni talk sessions should be drafted out for a whole year preferably, one talk every month. A lecture series should be started by distinguished alumni. Slowly the interaction will increase.

What are the problems that the Alumni association is currently facing?

Any donations from alumnus goes to IITR account. No information regarding the expenditure of such funds is given to alumni association. Moreover, when some students approached me for helping raise funds for GATI, I brought the issue up at an association meeting. I had plans to contact alumnus who are academicians and could have easily raised the 2.5 lakhs that the students wanted. But the executive body assured of getting the money from foreign sponsors and the promise vanished in a puff of smoke.

Business Gyan

FOREX

The news in ET and Business Line over the past semester has revolved around either the amazing Bull run or the Rising Rupee. The combined impact of both was properly felt when rumour arose that Mukesh Ambani had become the richest man in the world. WONA takes a look at the mechanism behind exchange rates and the factors that governs them. See if you can predict where the rupee goes from here.

Exchange rates are affected by many factors, the supply and demand forces being the most important ones. Supply and demand factors are constantly shifting, and the price of one currency in relation to another shifts accordingly. The world's currency markets can be viewed as a large and ever-changing mix of current events. These elements generally fall into three categories: Economic Factors, Political Conditions and Market Psychology. Economic factors include economic policy and economic conditions. Economic policy comprises government fiscal policy (budget/spending practices) and monetary policy (reflected by the level of interest rates). Government budget deficits or surpluses, inflation levels and trends and economic growth and health are included under economic conditions.

Political conditions, both internal and international, have a profound effect on currency markets. Political upheaval and instability can have a negative impact on the economy. The rise of a political faction that is perceived to be fiscally responsible can have the opposite effect. Also, events in one country in a region may spur positive or negative interest in a neighboring country and, in the process, affect its currency. Market psychology and trader perceptions influence the foreign exchange market in a variety of ways. Unsettling international events can lead to greater demands, and hence higher prices, for currencies perceived as stronger over their relatively weaker counterparts. Prevalent market rumors have a massive influence on the demand and supply forces. However, it must be kept in mind that above all these, the Reserve Bank of India plays a pivotal role in regulating the strength of the Rupee.

Should regional meets be held?

In regional meetings, you are actually calling people from one region or community and it is like they bear a stamp. It signals that you prefer to interact with people of your own state or community. The tag of such events can create misconceptions in the minds of the people that the event is targeted towards a particular community only. Instead of having the event named after the region, we can have it named after something very popular in that region like the "Kalaripayattu" for Kerala which involved participation from all communities. If you look at an event like Durga Pooja, you find people from all regions participating, although Durga Pooja is a typical Bengali event. Instead of having a restricted entry to a meet, why cant we have a region specific event but open for participation from all communities? It is high time that we open up and accept the raw fact that we can't always be with people of our own regions. The principal strength of an IITian is his interactive ability. Having a region specific meet encourages people to interact less with people of other regions. This defeats the purpose of living in a diverse environment with people belonging to different ethnicities and cultures..

FACE



R. Ashok
Meta-III year

OFF



Venkata Aditya
Elec-III yr

People all over the country come to the institute. The meet serves as a platform for meeting other people from your region and promoting your culture. There are many problems that you face after coming here like language and food and hence you'll find that there is always some kind of an attachment to your own region. It's a fact that people feel more comfortable surrounded by people of their own region and prefer to speak in their regional language. It makes you feel at home, and everyone enjoys the meet, seniors and juniors alike. We learn how to tackle the food and language problems by interacting with our seniors, who have been through the same phase. However that does not imply that one would interact only with people from one's own region. So, the perception of people should change towards such events. Mostly, people from other communities would not prefer attending cultural meets of other regions although there might be a few exceptions. If there is a culture specific program, the people from outside wont be able to enjoy due to the language problems. So, it wont matter if there is a meet or not, people of one region will still tend to interact better with people of their own region.



Have you ever been woken up by the reverberating sounds of mosquitoes flying around you like tiny F-16s. Pests, open drains, nauseating smells filling the hallway have become common place in the campus.

Watch Out probes into the efforts being put to maintain sanitation and hygiene.

Dr. N. P. Padhy
Chief warden Jawahar Bhawan

In order to control pests fumigation is done season wise or whenever we come across a malaria case or some other disease that spreads through pests but yes the frequency should be increased. As far as the water coolers are concerned they are being cleaned weekly, at least in Jawahar. I have not received a single written complaint about the drainage system and I myself don't see much of a problem. The new blocks in Jawahar have been connected to the conventional drainage in a optimal way so that there will be no problem for at least next twenty years.

Dr. S. Prakash
Faculty Advisor, IITR Hospital

Lack of doctors-

The hospital has to attend to 300-400 patients per day with each physician having to attend 70-80 patients. The physicians working with us are all on part time basis. We don't have a full time physician. We have job openings for physicians, part time child specialists, physiotherapist and psychologist but there are hardly any applicants due to the low pay scale of these jobs We are trying to get more applicants but our location is a set back here.

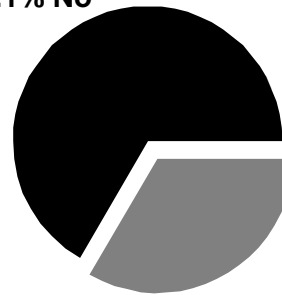
Inadequate Infrastructure-

We have just 2 old ambulances of which only 1 is free for the campus. But we are making conscious efforts to improve this. We have up to date equipments like pathological testing equipments and modern X-ray machine.

Efforts being put-

To counter, the problem of classes clashing with hospital timings, we have arranged for a doctc the evenings (5:30 to 8:30) for students. At all ti there is an on call emergency doctor living within campus. We are trying to get professional pharmacist work here rather than hospital employees doing it. We planning to train the existing staff in handling trauma cæ We provide annual checkup to faculty here.

69.1% No



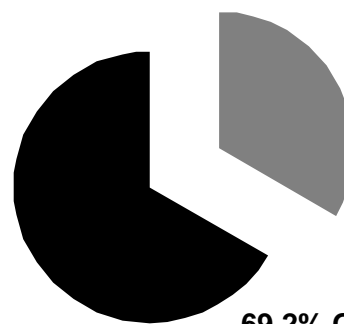
Is the drainage system properly maintained?

30.9% Yes

87.06% No

12.94% No

Is there enough being done to control pests?



30.8% IITR Hospital

Where would you prefer treatment?

69.2% Outside Campus

66.94% No

37.06% Yes



Are the water coolers properly maintained?

NEWS NOTES

IBM DAY

The IBM Technology Day was held on the 3rd of November, with a lot of events being held in the Bose Auditorium. IBM Fellow and Chief Scientist IBM India, Dr. C. Mohan was present for the workshop, lectures and seminars along with IBM India's technical team. The technology day was a part of IBM UR programme to improve University-Industry relations and upgrade technology skills of students to get a more competitive workforce. The inaugural addresses by Prof. S. C. Saxena and Dr. C. Mohan were followed by a series of presentations with topics like High Performance Computing by Dr. Manish Gupta, Enterprise Architecture by Mr. Atul Misra, Information Management by Gaurav Sharma and Speech Research at Indian Research Labs by Ashish Verma. This was followed by presentations by selected IIT-R students. A panel discussion was also held in the evening on- "**The technical education and research scenario in India and what companies like IBM can do to change it**", with the panel comprising Dr. C. Mohan, Dr. Manish Gupta, Dr. Ankush Mittal, Dr. P. K. Ghosh, Dr. S. Ray and Dr. H. Joshi. IBM representatives said they would be more than eager to provide students with various internship plans that they have to offer and invited the interested students to submit applications. T-Shirts were distributed to all who displayed immense patience in attending the nine hour long event.

CHEMICAL CONVENTION

The 23rd National Convention of Chemical engineers on the theme "*Recent trends in chemical engineers*", was organized from 5th October by Department of Chemical Engineering and Institute of Engineers, India (IE(I)). Various reputed personalities from industry and academia including Director IIT Roorkee **Prof. S.C. Saxena**, **Sh. Mukesh Rohatgi**, CMD Engineers India Limited, **Prof. S.C. Naik**, Immediate past president, IE(I), **Sh. N.B. Vasoya**, Chairman Chemical Division Board (CHDB), IE(I) among others were present to grace the occasion. The convention consisted of panel discussions and plenary lectures by eminent personalities from chemical industries. Seven technical sessions were held which included fields like Modelling, Simulation, Optimization Control and CFD; Hydrocarbon engineering; Waste to Energy Conversion; Biochemical, Food Processing and Biotechnology; Environmental Science and Hazardous Waste Management and Transfer Process. The three day long convention ended on 7th October with a trip of the dignitaries to Haridwar.

Despite the jam packed schedule of the IBM technology day **Dr. C. Mohan** -chief scientist of IBM was kind enough to sit down with us and give us his views on the state of research and development in India.

On research work in India...

Research work in India needs a lot of improvement, the situation is not that rosy even in IITs. But I believe that India has ample scope for the development of technology and research. Research and development work is getting more global now.

On problems in the system..

Teachers here are less respected and are underpaid as compared to the scenario abroad. Here the teachers, except a few, lack the passion to teach. The students also have a smoky view about what they want in life, a major reason for which is the fact that most of the teachings are bookish and not practical. I also believe that the scenario can change by improving Ph.D. and higher education facilities provided in the premier institutes in India.

Advice to students...

Students from technical background should not be only technically focused. Marketing and sales knowledge is also very important. It is not good enough to just do good work, but also equally important to market the work. This includes good communication skills, which the general Indian lacks. Students should make a conscious decision while choosing a career and not change jobs just for extra money but also think of their interests.

UMANG

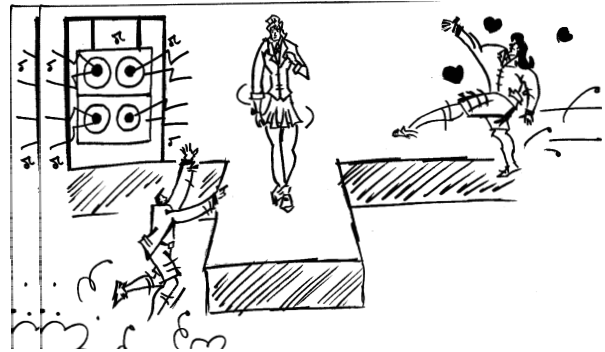
The Department of Management Studies recently held its flagship event – **Umang 3**. The topic of this event was 'Micro-finance' which deals with providing financial services to those people who have been neglected by the banking industry. About 70 NGO's had turned up for the event. After the inaugural function, there was a half-an-hour lecture on Micro-finance by **Mr Manab Chakroborty** from MIMO Finance, and also a graduate from the Kellogg's school of business. Then there were more talks by eminent people like **Dr Mahipal Singh**, Chief Manager SLBC, who spoke about the role of banking institutions in micro-finance, **Dr Mukesh Sadana**, Zonal Sales Manager ICICI Bank Ltd., who enlightened the audience about the Micro-financing experience of ICICI bank in Uttarakhand. The event ended with a panel discussion. All in all, the event was successful in providing awareness about the concept of Microfinance and its applications in improving lives in rural India.

Chirkut

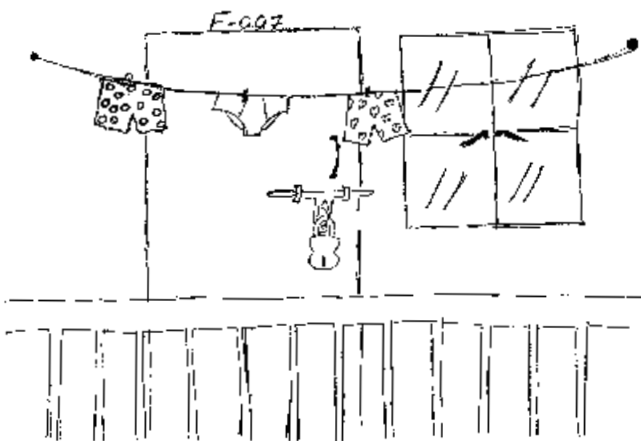
The only news over this semester that lost out to the Indo-US nuclear deal in terms of interest and coverage was, hold your breath, YOU CAN NOW POST UNLIMITED PICS ON ORKUT. Wow, isn't that brilliant? Our lives shall never be the same again. Here, we take a look at the web album of one of our more enthusiastic friends who's decided that even the most minor incident of his life deserves a place in the hallowed portals of the ubiquitous social networking site. On special request, his name has not been displayed. And on our team's special request, the more 'private' pictures featuring killer 'bodies' have not been displayed.



My big muscles outside SB.
Check out all the hot babies
behind me.



Myself at Vogue, the awesome Fash P at Thomso
2007. Isn't that totally cool? Look, its Udit
Goswami walking the ramp (and I'm the idiot in
the remote bottom left corner who's drooling). I



That's my room. I've gone home for
Diwali. I miss my room so much. I
love you, room.



In mother nature's Lap. Ha ha.

I know what you did last Sports Camp

The Inter-IIT is just around the corner. (Yes we know the end-sem hurdle needs to be crossed before that happy moment). The time is not far-off when our own Sachins and Milkha Singhs will start getting groomed for what they hope will be their moment of glory. WONA gives the less athletic among us an exclusive look into what happens during the strict training regime that our heroes face. So whether you're feeling bad about not having made the first team, or are the type who says, 'Sports! What the heck!' you can all get a sneak peek into what was till now an esoteric gathering.



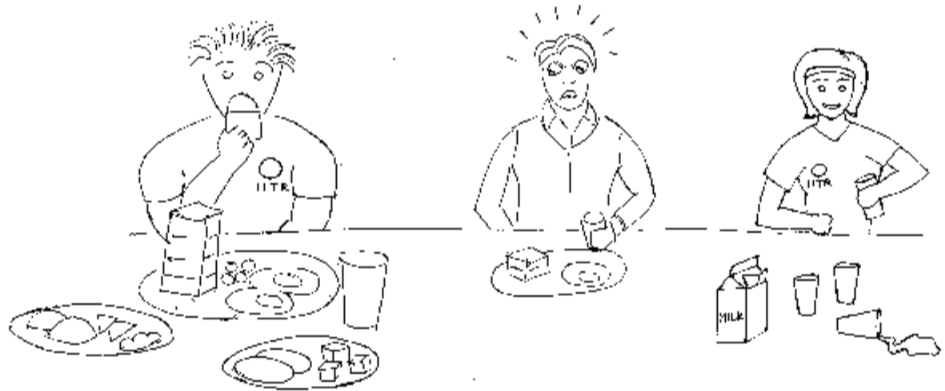
"Hup-two-three-four"
"Hup-two-three-four"

For those who are unfamiliar with Rise of Nations, this is what 'attrition damage' means- the starting contingent of 50 is rapidly reduced to 5. The ones that survive ensure that we finish 7th in the Inter IIT. Sorry,

The Silver Lining- Guys who are unfortunate/silly enough to attend the NCC camp can empathize with the Sports Heroes.

"Yummy Yummy"

Apart from the Ultimate Answer to Life, the Universe and Everything, the Computer was asked an infinitely more difficult, though not as well known question- How do you get good food at IIT R? The answer- attnd the sports



With unlimited loaves of bread and badam milk to be had, aren't you, dear reader, feeling jealous? You're not? Oh we forgot. the winter holidays are on and you're enjoying better food at home.

Furquan Ali 9759283455

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To- 4 glasses of milk

Sorry. Nothing personal. Say Hi to Djinn Dal.

From- Third pockets.

To- Boady Boady

Bhai, murgiyon ko extinct nahi karaane ke liye shukriya.

From- Non veg Meta

To- Midget King

Why 2k?

From- Munshis

To- LOTG

Marry me? Your request has been heeded.

From- Loving Minion

To- Committed People

When will you become extinct?

From- Non-committed people

To- Another Chick

Silence is not always golden. But you are.

From- Smart Boy

To- The Sports Page

Na na na – na na!

From- Messages

To- Lady Tuesday

A dog can be more than a man's best friend

From- Pakistan TeleVision

To- Committed People

Thanks. Keep it up.

From- Telecom Service Providers

To- Smart Boy

Oye, is it me or something?

From- PK Tally

To- Parakeet Girl and Pinky

Read my blog.

From- Gorgeous Mid-half.

To- The World

I Love Pink!

From- Lefty

To- Natkhat IITian

STOP STOP STOP

From- *Femme Flat*

To- Big Brother

Mallab, oye main mayoos hoon.

Mallab, oye meri bhi shadi karao.

From- PK Tally

To- The Wild Bore

Congrats.

From- Lords of the Farmhouse

To- Cherry Blossom

All Ashes got married.

From- AB baby hate club

To- Living Dino

My pic would sell for more.

From- CHV

Messages tere naam se

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Idea to Landline: 75p/min

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SMS: 50p

(All Local Idea Calls)

EASY 300

Monthly Rent: Rs300

Call Rates:

Idea to Idea: 50p/min

Idea to Mobile: 75p/min

Idea to Landline: Rs 1/min

STD: Rs 2/min(All India)

SMS: Rs. 1/2

(All Local and STD calls)

EASY 500

Monthly Rent: Rs500

Call Rates:

Idea to Idea: 30p/min

Idea to Mobile: 50p/min

Idea to Landline: Rs 1/min

STD: Rs 1/min(All India)

SMS: Rs.25p (All India)

(All Local and STD calls)

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