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Cola Shikanji Left

I've been trying to come up with a suitable metaphor for what penning down this last editorial is like. Sadly, everything that comes to mind is either too depressing (writing your own obituary, making your will) or completely unrelated (Aishwarya Rai, Cobie Smulders). So after a lot of soul-searching, all I can come up with is this- a couple of eons later, when I'll look back at my four years in this weirdo-ghetto that I've grown to be so fond of, it'll be safe to say that I'll consider my days here as divided into two parts- my time as part of Watch Out, and my time Out Watching. While I shall devote the rest of this page trying to describe the former, the latter so far has meant getting Chicken Pox, getting an unflattering new nickname and winning 5.4k at Cognizance 2008 (Muhuhahaha).

Posterity would regard my three years in this mag as a bunch of issues, but they've been so much more. These three years, now over, will find their place in the mosaic that life has so far been. Needless to say that this particular piece shall be one of the most cherished of them all. In these three years, I've been told, in a very serious voice, to be less serious and later in extremely exasperated tones, to try and bring some element of seriousness in my behaviour. I've sadistically seen my seniors grimace as I ordered more and more at the canteen at their expense, and then winced as the gluttons who call themselves my juniors displayed appetites far beyond what I considered were human limits. I've spent hours that passed by in a flash, in an overcrowded Ravindra room putting finishing touches to the predecessors of this issue, and then spent ever-lengthening minutes in solitude walking back to Cautley in the wee hours of the morning. I am reasonably certain that all of us taking our last bow in this particular theatre of dreams, have at some point or the other in the last three years, realized more than one, if not all of Rudyard Kipling's 32 immortal lines of 'If'. And now the unforgiving minute is truly upon us.

As I look back at these three years, there is naturally that tinge of regret that makes itself felt when I come to terms with the finality of it all. But more than that, there is a sense of gratitude to the two batches before and beyond mine for making these three years what they have been. There is a sense of immeasurable joy when I realize that some of the most talented people in this campus, who are now echoing similar thoughts, are now some of my closest friends. There is a sense of immense pride as I see the new team and realize that the gluttons who I always suspected would turn out to be blubbing nitwits have risen beyond my most optimistic dreams and are poised to take Watch Out to much much greater heights. This very glass of Cola Shikanji, now almost empty, will be replaced by one that will discover and touch more taste-buds than I could ever have fathomed. Wait and watch.

-Ed

THE PURPLE COW



Rummaging through his documents with an ever mounting desperation, PC was looking for anything that could save his hide. He needed a

job more urgently than a man on a fluid diet required a restroom. The placement season was coming to an end, and he felt like a kid on Christmas whom Santa had forgotten.

It was only now, with placement season nearly over, that he realized that assuming 'Goldman Sachs' was a jeweller, was a mistake. As the placement season went by, not surprisingly, he kept getting rejected.

Not all was lost though. Not yet. PC still had one last chance when a company turned up late. Hoping to emulate the protagonist from an IIT-based novel he'd never read, PC turned up for the interview after having five shots of vodka. What followed was half an hour of blank stares at the ceiling, desperately hoping the intricacies of a gear-box would magically appear on it. Having lost faith in all legitimate means of selection, he tried bribing the only female member of the panel. He invited her to Nesci, but after an hour of cajoling, 'This is for tonight' was all he could manage to blurt out while handing over the money to her. A neutral judge might have declared him innocent, realizing that he was alluding to the results of the interview. The lady, though, was far less forgiving. Needless to say, his dreams came crashing down more quietly than the resounding smack that he received across the face.

Realizing that his own credentials would never get him anywhere, he started contacting every uncle, aunt and cousin alive. Fortunately, PC's grandmother's friend's cousin's uncle's son worked for Slumburger-France. This seemed to be an opportunity even he couldn't ruin.

The rendezvous began smoothly and for a blissful hour, PC stuck to his plan. He did not talk about any of the fancy skills he didn't possess (but his resume claimed he did), instead he enlightened the interviewer on every celluloid masterpiece he had cast his eyes on. After the initial joy on meeting a fellow Keanu Reeves fan, all hell broke loose when they had a huge argument over how the bullet scraped past him in the first instalment of the Matrix trilogy.

Years later, PC, Manager of Jawahar Cyber Cafe Ltd. looked out of his office window – Solani still held the same charm... Life hadn't been too unfair to him. SB, after all, was still a

Verbatim



The Right to Information Act or R.T.I., with all its contributions, has remained an enigma in the student community. WONA interviewed Lt. Col. A.K. Srivastava (Retd.), Registrar, IIT Roorkee (Principal Information Officer, IIT Roorkee) about the working of the RTI Cell on campus:

RTI and its objectives:

RTI, 2005 is an act passed by the Govt. of India for providing secure access to information under the control of public authorities. Information which can't be concealed in the name of national security has to be made available to the interested party. This makes the working transparent, accountable and systematic.

Hierarchical structure:

The institute has a Principal Information Officer (PIO), who is aided by 7 Assistant PIOs. If the information pertains to any department, the assistance of the HoD can be directly taken. The Director of the institute is the first Appellate Authority to whom appeals against the decisions of PIO are addressed. The Chief Information Commissioner at Delhi is the second Appellate Authority, presided over by the Central Information Commissioner.

Procedure for obtaining the information:

The prescribed form is available on the IITR website. The completed form along with a bank draft of Rs. 10/- as fee can be sent to the Registrar Office. The reply is sent within 30 days of receipt of such a request. In case the information required is available with some other body, the application is transferred to that authority, which directly replies to the concerned party.

What it covers:

In case of the institute, the act covers anything and everything associated with the IITR campus. Apart from any such information which can be categorized under the points stipulated in Section 8 (1) a – j, the rest may be disclosed to the public.

Applicants to date:

Mostly the subordinate staff, faculty members and even people from outside the institute have applied. Surprisingly, very few students have ever applied for any such information (only about 3 cases so far). As yet around 242 requests have been received by the RTI cell.

More information is available on the institute website.



Ever wondered how Rajnikant can shoot many bullets at once or make a single one split into many? While it is for scientists to engross themselves in figuring it out his physics-defying gunmanship, let's delve into the workings of lesser guns used by lesser mortals. Firearms are one of the oldest and most evolved weapon systems. Guns have

undergone a series of evolutions but everything from the AK-47 to the Magnum Sniper has the same basic shooting principle.

Fire Arms are mentioned as early as the late 14th century; no doubt you've seen hand cannoneers in AoE. Muskets are smooth-bore long guns which are heavily spring loaded. This is released by pressing a button or pulling a trigger. The slow match clamped to a lever is swung into a flash pan containing priming powder. This minor explosion travels through a touch hole and ignites the main propellant charge of the gun, and the bullet is shot. Muskets are not accurate, which is why Tom shoots himself as often as Jerry.

Muskets were succeeded by the more accurate pistols and rifles. The cartridge that is filled in the guns contains a primer (which is a small explosive cap), a propellant (which may be a gas) and a projectile (the bullet). The hammer-spring action causes the primer to ignite. The primer sets off the propellant that drives the bullet out of the gun at high speed. The barrel has a spiral groove which spins the bullet as it exits the gun. This gives the bullet better stability and increased accuracy. In the absence of such a groove, it leads to spreading of the bullet and a loss in accuracy.

The laser guns seen in Star Wars are today a possibility. These weapons, called Directed Energy Weapons (DEW), will revolutionize today's warfare scenario. Laser weaponry, with heavy energy inputs, damage at the speed of light with high accuracy as well as stealth, without a recoil. They generate brief high energy pulses. Most systems use a low powered "oscillator" laser to generate a coherent wave, and then amplify it.

The technology in this field is rapidly developing day by day. With laser guns and what not coming up, soon we hope to catch up with Neo!

Copycats

Human beings, it seems, suffer from a collective lack of originality. At every point in one's life, a person searches for someone to emulate, someone 'ideal'. This ideal figure varies from person to person. While one person might consider the *bond* as picture perfect, another might just want to follow the next-door *ghissu*. This search for the role-model is intensified when one just enters college, contrary to all perceptions of maturity and individuality.

For every little decision, we try to look at the situation through the eyes of someone who has already gone through it all before. This happens to such a great extent that we 'become' that person we worship. At various points in our lives here, we might feel that we talk and behave like this 'hero' of ours. In fact, we even start to think like them.

So why do we imitate others? Why do we feel so inadequate that we can't deal with a situation ourselves? (The answer perhaps lies in our having descended from the apes; we find it much easier to copy than to create!) When one enters IIT, one is on unsure ground, having suddenly been exposed to a group of absolutely brilliant personalities, which erodes one's confidence and makes him dependent on others. This may appear coupled with laziness. The lack of initiative so innate to all our persona makes us rely on someone else's wisdom rather than take the more difficult path of finding things out ourselves. Remember how, as a first yearite, you blindly relied on your seniors' advice, never bothering to find out anything for yourself?

This often results in blind imitation of the aforesaid idol, which may not always lead to success. After all, what's good for the goose may be bad for the gander. A person into sports with inter-IIT aspirations may bunk class after class just because his sports seniors did that – as though it would help him perform better! (This, we learn from a reliable source, actually happens.) It also leads to a lack of individuality. Some things are supposed to be better than others simply because they were that way a few years back and the information has trickled down the generations. Similarly, this may create a prejudice against certain professors and you stop concentrating during someone's classes just because one of your seniors said he couldn't teach.

On the flip-side, there may be certain advantages too as you get to learn from the experience of your role-model. You also tend to unconsciously imbibe your role model's good qualities. And sure, one must gain from others' experiences, but also learn to exercise one's own decisions when necessary. After all it's your life!

NEWS NOTES

ISIS B-Plan competition

13th April marked the culmination of the Entrepreneurship Development Cell organized, ISIS – The B Plan Competition. The ten finalist teams shortlisted from over 120 entries were judged on various criteria to test the novelty and viability of the plans. The judges' bench comprised of a market analyst, a consultant, an investor and an entrepreneur. The event stretched for two days wherein on 12th April, the teams figuring in top 30 gave two minute pitches to the panel. Four teams were promoted to the final presentations round. The prize distribution ceremony was attended by Dr. S.C. Saxena, the Director, IIT Roorkee who awarded the first, second and third prize winners with cash prize of rupees 1 lac, 60,000 and 40,000 respectively. The team from College of Agri Business and Management came first, while second and third positions were grabbed by teams from IIT Kanpur and IIT Roorkee respectively. As a prelude to the B Plan Competition, a Business Plan Writing workshop was also organized earlier this semester.

SPIC MACAY CULTURAL SHOW

Rupan Sarkar - a classical singer was invited for the cultural event organised by Spic Macay on the 19th of April in Department of Management Studies. Rupan Sarkar belongs to the Banaras Gharana of music. Rupan Sarkar, the vocalist was accompanied by a Tabla, a Tanpura and a Sarangi player while she herself played the Harmonium. People turned up in decent numbers for the event which lasted for one and a half hours. Power failures were frequent during the event. However, Rupan Sarkar was unperturbed and continued even without a mike for some time. She sang raag Dhanushree and also a Thumri depicting Krishna Virha especially for the guys. She also sang Mad Se Bhare Tore Naina for the girls as per the demands of the audience. There was a frequent change in tempo of the tabla accompanied by switching of raags in between, both of which were very much appreciated by the audience. She ended the event in the conventional way with Bhairavi raag. She also answered a few questions asked by the audience about classical music and musical instruments.

INSTITUTE CRICKET LEAGUE

The Institute Cricket League (ICL) was organized from 1st march to 12th march in the Major Dhyanand Stadium (for the less informed, that is the institute football field). The series saw an excellent and unexpected participation. In all 56 teams, formed irrespective of bhawan, branch or year, took part in the competition. Drawing inspiration from Twenty-20, this new form of cricket was played with eight-member teams and eight over matches and a ten over final. Some of the teams had quite funny names including 'Manchester Disunited' and 'Real Madrid'. The players seemed quite inspired by the recent Bhajji episode and the series was interesting more because of the sessions of abusing and sledging rather than the game itself. The Meta House (Captain: Ankit Mahajan, Metallurgy I year) and The Destroyers (Captain: Hitesh Gulati, Electrical III Year) made it to the finals. Meta House batted first and put up a total of 53 runs. The Destroyers successfully achieved the target in the 9th over and won by four wickets. The Organizers went through a lot of trouble with the administration but did a good job overall and matches were played under flood lights as well. The audience turnout was expectedly pathetic in beginning but as the series progressed and the sledging increased, more and more audience was drawn to the ground. Kundan Sweets and Vardhman Sports sponsored the event.

GIRLS' FOOTBALL tournament

The Girls' Football series took place from 4th march to 12th march with 21 matches in all, each of thirty minutes. Five teams participated; the four years of B.Tech and the PG. The first yearites (Captain: Shalu Agrawal, Electrical) and the PG (Captain: Gurbeer Kaur, M.Tech Civil II year) made it to the finals which the PG won 1-0. The series had all the elements of a regular tournament from headers to sledging, though on a smaller scale, and even internal politics on the part of the organizers who sought to stop the series midway because of disagreements amongst themselves. The added attraction was a high humour quotient in terms of the size of the field (which was slightly bigger than the penalty area of a regular football field), the superposition principle where the football could not move from its place on account of being (not) hit from all sides and the commentators. There were a few matches where the goalkeeper and the defenders of a team could be seen standing idly and having a nice chit-chat. The audience turnout was good as expected. Having said that, the spirit the girls showed in a game they had never ever played was commendable.

COGNIZANCE 2008

The highlight of this semester - Cognizance 2008 extended from March 28th to March 30th. The participation in allegedly one of the biggest technical fests of the country saw a major dip this year and having three conveners did not help much either. The main events included Chaos, Micromouse, Maya Workshop, Robosapiens, Quizzotica, Genesis, and Corpostrat. There were a host guest-lectures including those by Dr. H C Verma, Dr Yash Pal and NACO. Robomania attracted a participation of over 30 teams. CHAOS was a huge hit, attracting around ten professional 'Counter Strike' teams of the likes of A+E, REV and PW. Another successful event was the guest lecture by Mr. Manish Tripathi of the 'dabbawalas' fame from Mumbai. Over 100 teams participated in Corpostrat – the Business Plan Competition. Online events including TeChase, Metaproggy and Enquesta had a fair share of participation too. The Chemical Engineering Panel Discussion was on the 'hit-list' of the junta with a distinguished jury discussing environmental problems. The much talked about 'Super Uber' - an interactive media event fell short of expectations but attracted enough attention to itself nevertheless. Other notable events included the NACO marathon, Insomnia, Robokriti and Convergence. Most of the departmental events did not enjoy a lot of limelight with the Architecture department being the exception. The

RECHERCHE

The cultural week, which took a break in between, had a grand ending on 26th February with Recherché (for the less French crazy, it means 'exquisite') by the choreography and dance section. Following the tradition strictly, it started forty five minutes late with the Bhangra, which had been performed in Thomso as well. The event had eight performances in all with two solo performances by Ruchita Goyal (CS-II) and a classical performance by Moni (M.Sc Integrated-I) on 'Mann Mohini'. The choreography was good and the dancers did justice to it with the duet performance by Milan Garg (IDD Chemical-IV) and Swati Singh (Civil-III) on 'O Re Piya' being the most unconventional one so far. The section made a good attempt to revive the bygone times by performing a medley of Old songs. The all boys western dance was undoubtedly the best performance in terms of choreography, energy and dancers. The only goof ups in the event were of dress change during continuous switching of songs when the girls got late and their partners ended up doing the duet steps alone for a while. The lights section thankfully pulled off a good job and gave proper lights (minus the dreaded 'fog effect') to the dances. The event saw the expected large turnout of audience which was unexpectedly very unenthusiastic. Let's hope they were too dumbstruck by the dances to applaud.

Recherche



Spic Macay Cultural Show



Institute Cricket League



ISIS - B Plan Competition



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Special Economic Zone

The Reserve Bank Of India

For most of us, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is nothing more than an arbitrary entity that gets its name printed on our currency notes. 'Why do we even need a bank? Any printer would do the job just fine,' comments my dim-witted roomie. The RBI, for the benefit of those like him, is the central bank of the country and was established in 1935. It is governed by a central board (headed by a Governor) appointed by the Central Government.

The Reserve Bank of India is popularly known as the bank that rules them all (the One Bank?). With the passing of The Reserve Bank of India Act, the Bank has the sole right to issue bank notes. The distribution of notes and coins all over the country is also undertaken by the RBI. It is supposed to maintain a particular minimum amount of reserves, this is known as the minimum reserve system. As the single most powerful central banking organization, it acts as adviser to the Government on all monetary and banking matters. It also transacts government business by keeping their cash balances free of interest and manages its exchange remittances and other banking functions.

The scheduled banks can borrow from the Reserve Bank of India on the basis of eligible securities or get financial accommodation in times of need. Moreover, every bank and its branches all over the country must be approved by the RBI. Most importantly, the RBI maintains the official exchange rate of the country. It has the responsibility of maintaining fixed exchange rates with all other member countries of the International Monetary Fund. Its objective is to facilitate external trade and payment and promote orderly development and maintenance of foreign exchange market in India which is why you find the rupee being inflated so as to maintain a balance between the export and import markets.

So, the next time you pay your canteen-wala, a glance at the top of the notes will do well to remind you about the powerful organization that is behind it all.

Has the SAC Lost its Relevance?

The SAC can be as redundant or as relevant as the students want it to be as it is a student's body. We have the right to make recommendations and present proposals. But to make sure that these proposals carry some weight the members need to be present at the meetings. We cannot expect that we should be given the power to implement our proposals because the administration can not bank on the verdict of students blindly. Still, it was due to the efforts of SAC that Wi-Fi was installed and the Bhawans got their own libraries. Also this academic year, Thomso was held in the odd semester and Rs.100 was not deducted from the CCB account of students. SAC doesn't work only in terms of the meetings. We have committees for resolving different issues like that of security and introduction of smart cards, which are working efficiently. When administration sees you coming regularly to meetings, they pay heed to your suggestions and propositions. Also, we can not compare our SAC with that of DU or any other college; because none of us would want that kind of dirty politics here. For changing the system we have to be an active part of it. The results are there but the pace is slow which is inherent in any bureaucratic setup.

SAC has been reduced to a mere cribbing forum. Students are very enthusiastic when newly elected into SAC but that enthusiasm dissolves right after the first meeting when they see that their voice does not carry any weight. Only 15-20% of the total proposals made are accepted, even lesser are implemented and that also takes a lot of time. The SAC is redundant because we are not given any kind of power except that of speech which hardly matters. Even for resolving small issues like the maintenance of Alpahar and IIT-R canteen we have to wait for the administration's decision when we should have the power to decide on such proposals by a majority vote. There is a committee being formed for every petty issue. Implementing a plan at institute level is a tediously slow process because we have a typical government set up. The situation is far better at Bhawan level where we get our proposals passed and implemented relatively faster. Comparing our SAC with that of DU or any other IIT we realize that we are a body that exists for the sake of it. The administration should yield us more power which will ensure active participation of the members thereby making SAC an efficient functional body.

FACE OFF



P.D. Maheswari
CS-IV year



Neha Kadiyan
Civil-IV Year

AD

March 20, 2008: The dogs we had been told by our seniors had always been an essential part of the hostel, the only permanent residents of the dilapidated building and its equally shabby lawns. Hesitant at first to approach them, gradually we learnt the policy of "live and let live". The dogs too, it seemed, had long since learnt to ignore their human compatriots. All would have been well had it not been for the sudden urge in their hearts to multiply (induced no doubt by the highly explicit content being played on an hourly basis by their human compatriots). What seemed at first a sweet brood of puppies soon turned into a nightmare. The other day, as I was setting out for the cycle stand, I was greeted by a flurry of snarls. Before I knew what was happening, a sharp scissor drove through my flesh, leaving my jeans torn and a portion of my ankle missing. My subsequent howls (shrill enough to raise even the dead) soon brought my friends to my rescue. The next day I returned with five jabs of injection and a swollen ankle. Slowly more and more people joined the group as our pleas for mercy fell on deaf ears. All seemed lost until I got the news that the wild brood of mongrels hell bent on raising the price on their head had went ahead and bitten the supervisor. Another case of the administration going to the dogs. Though quite literally.

April 01, 2008: Not many of us in the college are lucky enough to have 'chicks' from Kasturba or Sarojini as girlfriends, do we? The other day my cell phone rung with its characteristic Nokia tune. It was an SMS which I presumed to be from the service provider. Nonchalantly, I picked it up before I realised that it would be the sweetest of surprises ...someone from kasturba had called upon me. Delighted and thrilled, I jumped onto my bed, but without showing any signs of eagerness, I responded casually asking her who she was (I had read somewhere that remaining calm in such situations is gentlemanesque and sends the right message across to her). This was the commencement of a series of messages that would go all night long...I went through all her messages repeatedly and concluded that she was intuitively pretty...surely, this was love at first SMS. It didn't matter how she looked, ugly or pretty...because she was the one I had been waiting for. Now, I was desperate to meet her. The rendezvous was fixed. The next day afternoon, we were meeting in Nesci. In my best attire, I was there half an hour early. 6:00 pm sharp...she'll be here anytime. Man, I hope I don't mess it up this time. Suddenly, I heard my name...but this wouldn't be her. Girls have a melodious voice and of course she wouldn't be an exception. I turned to see my roommate, then another one of my batch mates and slowly there was the entire class. Slowly and steadily did I dawn upon the realization...something that I had feared even more than my previous breakup, being laughed at and moreover giving a chapo for being made an April Fool.

April 04, 2008: With the accursed TS fast approaching, everyone was off ghisning. But something else was on my roomies mind...with an SGPA of 3.14159265 the TS didn't matter much, the haddu meet did. He was assigned a skit and his incessant dreams to hog the limelight inspired him to toil for 3 days and 3 nights without paying heed to the ghisning. After all, the stunts in haddu, mallu movies violated all the Physics laws. Not that it bothered him, as he hardly knew any. The night before his Physics endsems, his exhaustion got the better of him and he dozed off into a dreamless sleep that could have put Rip Van Winkle to shame. All my efforts to wake him up were futile. And all that my good ol' roomie managed to blurt out was, "Proxy, ra"! He slept through the Physics exam only to be woken up by the sound of ghisnus discussing after the exam. Things, for him, weren't as bleak as they looked...He already had an attendance back in Maths and with both departments attached, clearing Maths and Physics backs together wouldn't be so tough after all.

April 06, 2008: Thanks to the non-existent Rajendra Wi-Fi and the unwavering thirst for web to its inmates, "Internet Explorer is unable to open this page", recently became the most visited webpage. Its repercussions, unfortunately, weren't just limited to such upsets. My compromise with my gf had been breached. The absence of Wi-fi ruled out the possibility of chatting over the net. The phone bill that ensued burned a big hole in my pocket (or rather my dad's). Downloads were nightmares with the net connection staying for a minute and vanishing for the other two. Even the download manager couldn't be downloaded. Consequently, almost every download had the tendency to abruptly end with a status bar of about ninety-five percent, reminding me ominously of Sachin's consecutive failed attempts to a century. The worst affected were the AOE and CS players as the die-hard Orkutters 'flushed' the gamers out of the CCs. With a sudden unexpected turn of events, for the first time after coming to a "prestigious" institution, did I dust my books. It was at least a blessing in disguise during these TS!

Almost Famous

He's really not just "almost" famous. We're talking P.M. Secy, alleged baski player, and a tongue-twister posing as a last name. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the ubiquitous Rahul Yelliseti.

WONA: Why are you called Yella?

RY: One of my seniors found my name too long so they shortened it to Yella.

WONA: Tell us about your first (of the many) crushes on campus?

RY: Pallavi Tiwari. She was two years senior to me. (Then he tries to show us her pic on Orkut but all we see is his 'impending friend request')

WONA: Your "Yella Salute" is quite famous in the basket ball circuit. Your comments.

RY: Being such a "good" basketball player, people feel the need to impersonate you. (F.Y.I., the object is to get the ball into that basket thing)

WONA: One memory you want to erase in your campus life?

RY: There's nothing on campus I would like to forget. (Awwwwwwwww... isn't he pretty...?)

WONA: How does it feel to be the head of PM?

RY: I'll always remember the 4 D's dump, delay, delegate, do (Felt more like delay, delay, delay and delay)

WONA: Is it true that you cried during the Inter-IIT in Guwahati?

RY: Yeah, when people go after your <hsst> you tend to cry. (Phrase lost in static, sorry!)

WONA: One thing you wanted to do, but never did in the campus?

RY: I wanted to be in the starting 5 of the baski team and have a conversation with Sonali Mangal. (We're planning to make her the mascot of Almost Famous.)

WONA: What do you think about Watch Out?

RY: Its nice. Maybe you should mention who's going out with whom. (Why are all you fourth yearite guys gossips?)

For more on Yella, though why you would want any more is a moot point, see his blog. Signing off with a Yella salute...



After rolling out innumerable services that never saw the light of a computer screen, I.M.Geeks hit the spot right on with Buy-and-Sell. "Fun is a serious business at IMG" was taken a bit too seriously by the denizens, with everything from bhelpuri to kidneys going under the hammer. Here are a few more items which we could have seen had it not been for the fear of the repercussions on our "all important" intranet accounts...

1. Pipes: Long since you've taken a bath? But still can't? Need to take a leak, but deterred by the resulting waterfall? Has someone stolen your bathroom pipes too? It's Buy and Sell to the rescue! We have one for (from) every bhawan!

2. A Roommate: Want a roommate who's really interesting, brilliant at *bakar*, never *ghisses* and doesn't fiddle with your stuff? And a sound sleeper too! What's more, he even sweeps your half of the room. Matches are made in heaven but found only on Buy-and-Sell.

3. "9 Point Someone: How Not To Get Kicked Out Of IMG": The local best seller which has suddenly become popular among the *nehlis*; the journey of three *ghissus* and their adventures at the IMG, how they shun all worldly pleasures, and how they hack into a professor's daughter's computer and 'screw' it up. "A perfect 9; 270 pages of pure and undiluted *ghisai*" - The Cribune.

4. E&C tower: Want to invest in hardcore real estate? We have the tallest tower in town. Ideal status symbol and advertising space, can double up as a watch tower too. That's right, now even you can be a part of the real estate boom. Real estate doesn't get bigger, sorry taller, than this.

5. Chicks served hot!: Thunder thighs is coming to town! Breasts you'll die for! Don't let your imagination run wild, we were referring to chicken all along.

6. Carrier spikes: Tired of carrying your fat, lazy friend every time up the tortuous DOMS slope? Exhausted all your excuses for not doing so? We provide state-of-the-art detachable carrier spikes which can render your carrier useless for all such labours. No more sweat, no nagging conscience!



A Google search for "Solani aqueduct lion" yields 64 results. One for "Trafalgar square lion", on the other hand" yields 257000. That being the case, it's hard to believe that the Trafalgar lions are mere replicas of the ones on our very own Solani.

The lion, which was once the emblem for our institute, represents just one of the many aspects of our legacy that few of us know about. This is not intended to be a monologue on the insti's enormous and varied history. Having said that, the fact that we do not take as much pride in our insti as certain 'others' is one few would disagree with. This is all the more curious considering the rich and eventful history that our insti boasts of. Here, we hope to achieve exactly that- to awaken Roorians to Roorkee (reminded of a lame quiz show, anyone?) So, here's to our insti!

Infancy

Adam's hill, the year 1847. A certain knight of the British Empire decided that to provide for the country in terms of the multitude of public works officers that would be necessary, a centre for Civil Engineering needed to be set up in India. (Civil Engineering in the day referred to all forms of engineering for civilians and not just to playing with hard rock and heavy metal.) This idea was taken up by the then Lt-Governor of the Empire in India.

The aforesaid knight was later charged with treason for "empowering natives." He was during his lifetime, publicly censured in the columns of 'The Times'. The institute which he envisioned did in fact empower a lot of us "natives" and continues to do so even to this day. For the knight in question was none other than Sir Proby T. Cautley (let's hear it from the *gaon-wale!*) And the Lieutenant General who did most of the ground work was Lord James Thomason. Today, Adam's hill is better known as Main Building, IITR.

So much for the genesis of IIT-R. Of course, it wasn't always called that. In fact, it has had 5 names in its time. In 2001, it was made an IIT by an act of parliament (which is ironic, because it was thanks to a politician that it was not made India's first Institute of Technology!)

The Time Capsule

The logo of the institute has taken many forms over the years. And here they are:

1847-1904

Thomason
College
of
Civil
Engineering



1904-1949

Thomason
College
of
Engineering

1949-1954

Emblem
never
officially
adopted



1950-2001

University
of
Roorkee

2001-present

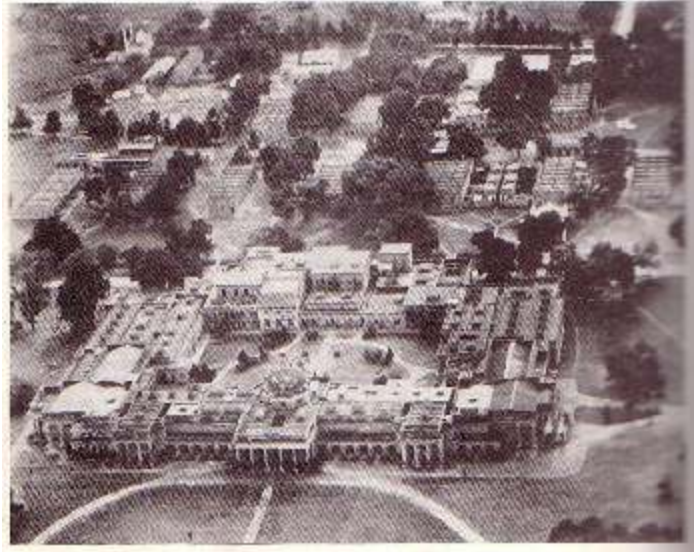
Indian
Institute
of
Technology
Roorkee



The Departments

The departments too have had their share of skeletons which we've painstakingly removed from their closets. The very first department to be established here was obviously the Civil Engineering Department. As we mentioned, though, at the time it didn't deal only with construction. The next to follow were Electrical and Mechanical in 1896.

However they were closed down in 1923. Apparently in the 10 years that preceded their closure, 11 and 6 people, respectively, graduated from the 2 departments, of whom only 2 got placed. The placement package too left much to be desired (one legacy that continues). While the civil engineering graduates at the time received around Rs. 250 a month, the placement team from the electrical and mechanical departments boasted of an average monthly package of Rs. 40.



Looks familiar? An aerial view of the institute in 1927.

Lifestyle and Traditions

Being a college of the Empire, the pre-independence days were marked by a punctiliousness characteristic of the British. A blazer and tie at that time did not always mean that placements were in session. The dress code, we have heard, was so ubiquitous, that even the stray dogs of Roorkee learnt to recognize it. (A misguided soul that arrived for dinner in shorts was apparently chased by a canine around the insti for nearly an hour.) "Etiquette wasn't restricted only to dress codes and eating with a knife and a fork. It also extended to certain minute details that gave you the feeling that you were in an elite institution. For example, one could not leave the dinner table until everyone at the table had finished their meals," Prof. S.P. Sharma of the Mathematics Department fondly recalls. Life in the insti, though, was never only about formalities and etiquette. Our insti was home to a club as early as 1894, when it was called the European Station Club and later renamed the Cameron Castle, the ruins of which can still be found just outside the NIH gate. Reflecting the prejudices of the time, only European students were allowed inside. The Billiards room was always crowded, and the system of booking half-an-hour beforehand was prevalent even then!



Cameron Castle, the predecessor of the Students Club.

Geography

160 years is a long period of time. Every block of concrete around us has changed steadily over this period, some beyond recognition, others less so. The gaon used to be a Polo Ground until the 1950s and a race cross ran right around it, encompassing not only the present day *gaon* but also the *Mandir* and parts of the LBS. "The Hyde Park was home to a Garden Party every weekend which were not only fun but also acquainted us with the personal front of professors, reminisces Prof. R.N. Mishra of the Electrical Dept. Each Bhawan too tells a story of its own. The Jawahar Bhawan was earlier a cow shed (that perhaps explains

the size of its rooms), while a football ground occupied most of the present day Azad until the turn of the century.



No that isn't a dining hall in the Taj. It's the Engg. Students' Mess in 1937 (the present-day Ravindra mess)

Few people have been in the insti as long as Prof. Vipul Prakash of the Civil Department has. Being the son of a professor of the same dept. and going on to study ther, he has been in the insti virtually all his life. During a casual conversation, he took us down on a trip down memory lane. Here are a few excerpts:

There is a misconception that discipline marks have begun only with the onset of the IIT system. That isn't true- they have been in place ever since the inception of the institute, though the students were more vocal in their protests. That is, in fact how Kranti Chowk (the junction beside the E & C department) got its name- it was the hot-spot for all protests of all magnitudes! At times, the mob also became violent, and on one occasion, a group of students even immolated a couple of research scholars. The fees too have reduced considerably, especially those of the Mess. The pay scales of professors back then were more than those in other colleges of that time. Maybe it is out of nostalgia, but the Main Building seemed to be better maintained back then. We were allowed to sit on the lawns that face it too- a ritual I sorely miss. The rules too have slackened, and I for one, am in favour of that. In fact, during the Thomason College days, getting pass marks in horse riding and swimming were necessary to get a degree! There was even an apocryphal story of a student arriving at the entrance of a class with a professor. Out of courtesy, the student let the professor enter first. The professor, though, accused him of arriving after him and banged the door in his face!

TUFFY

Totally useless facts for you

☞ During the days of the partition, the Punjab Engineering College was being shifted from Lahore to its present campus in Chandigarh. During the ten years of its construction, true to the Gandhian values of the day, UoR allowed the students to reside and study in our institute under their own professors, thereby running two parallel institutes on the same campus!

☞ The University of Roorkee has bestowed many a celebrity with honorary degrees, including Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, (Dr.) Rajendra Prasad, ex-President Zakir Hussain and Indira Gandhi.

☞ The Main Building was originally constructed without the dome at an enormous cost of Rs. 91500. The dome was added a decade later, at an additional cost of Rs. 20500.

☞ A few years ago, the First Folio of Shakespeare (one of the four original collections of his works) was found gathering dust in our Central Library.

☞ Despite the establishment of the Electrical Dept in 1893, electricity came to the insti only four years later. With a massive power engine in the present Students' Club delivering electricity at 110 volts, the insti became the largest electrified area in the country. A central powerhouse was built and the voltage doubled only a decade later.

☞ All the facts and illustrations in this article are courtesy Wikipedia and the book, 'History of the Thomason college of Engineering' by K.V. Mital. Anyone wishing to verify the anecdotes out of curiosity or mere joblessness may feel free to do so.

Looking Ahead

Today, our insti is going through what is arguably the most crucial period of its long and eventful history. As fate (and the Indian Government) would have it, our ancient institute has taken on a new avatar- a brand that, ironically, was initially based on emulating our very own institute. Trying to find a place for ourselves in history, we face an identity crisis- a dilemma between holding on to our past and moving on to achieve a position beyond the wildest dreams of either Thomason or Cautley. At times like these, the ordeal of studying our history might seem pointless.

Having said that, the materialization of our goals requires not only an honest evaluation of the present and a clear vision for the future, but also a critical appraisal of the past. After all, as the adage goes, in the perception of the past lies the future.



Have you ever had to wait for days, if not weeks, outside the Main Building for getting even the most trivial of tasks done? 7 years into the IIT system of education, have the efficiency levels improved to match the brand-name?

Watch Out investigates...

Dr. G. S. Srivastava, Dean Under Graduate Studies

On Application and time for processing

The time required depends on the nature of the application in question. Any student with a query related to undergraduate studies, like change of courses, etc. can directly see me so things go on smoothly without any delays.

On role of the departmental offices

In some cases, consent from the department is mandatory before the application is forwarded to us, depending on the type of the information the student seeks. In fact, most of the academic procedures must pass through the departmental offices.

On Centralized Help Desk Facility

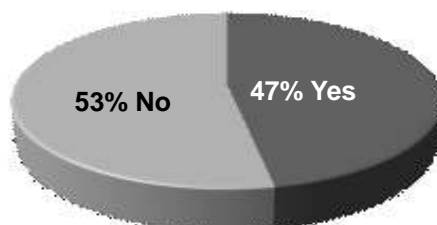
There are mainly three spheres where students need administrative assistance – Academics, Sports and Cultural & Financial matters. And there are separate heads to handle each issue. The help desk will also refer them to the relevant section so I think that it may not be of much help.

It does happen many a times that the students don't know whom to approach like students from 2nd year and in fact 3rd year also come to me with issues concerning room change. But I believe that students must learn the administrative procedures by the end of the first semester.

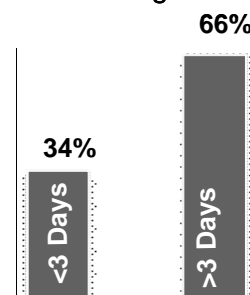
On complaints from students

There are complaints and we try our best to resolve all the problems. As such we haven't got any direct complaints. But there are loopholes everywhere and it is a combined effort of students and administration to make the ends meet.

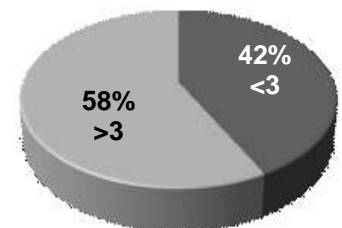
Is the situation in departmental offices better than that in the Main Building?



How long does it take for an application to get processed in the Main Building?

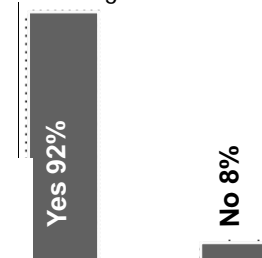


How many people do you need to meet to get the desired information?

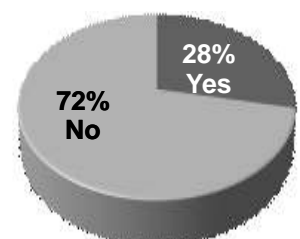


Dr. S.C. Jain, Dean Administration

Though the delays do exist, they don't have a generic solution. If the students feel that there is a problem in the working of a particular individual, then they should report it to the concerned authority. They should give the application or complaint in writing. Raising issues such as these in a general manner, with no specific example won't help. In fact, the students themselves need to be a part of the solution. The Online Grades, Regol, Online Fees Payment etc. are there to reduce the time and efforts of the students and the authorities, however, they are not being utilized to their full potential. The push for making changes in the campus has to come from the students. As far as having a common help desk is concerned, it will end up elongating the process further and hence increase the time for processing.



Would a centralised help desk aid in improving the situation?



Are the departmental offices aware of all their responsibilities?

The Graduation Gap

During the last SAC elections, I was sitting in my room, just trying to build a decent empire, when my (very) little empire in IIT-Roorkee (a.k.a., the aforesaid room) was invaded. A barrage of propaganda speeches followed, some promising pipes in toilets, others choosing to try and lure votes with the evergreen promise of idli-sambar in the mess every morning. But one campaigner stayed clear of all such irrelevant promises and cut right to the chase, saying, "What counts most is your loyalty to fellow B.Tech students. The PGs won't pay much attention to our issues."



But one campaigner stayed clear of all such irrelevant promises and cut right to the chase, saying, "What counts most is your loyalty to fellow B.Tech students. The PGs won't pay much attention to our issues."

Why? Why should such a strange divide exist? We, after all, co-exist- B.Tech, M.Tech and Ph.D. students all live in the same hostel, eat in the same mess (even if, in the case of present authors, rather occasionally) and trouble one another in the same labs and tutorials. So it seems peculiar, to say the least, that a person is incapable of addressing the issues of the hostel simply because they happen to be pursuing a post-graduation course. Such a narrow attitude perhaps arises out of the lack of interaction between the UG and PG students. Let's delve deeper...

Why take the trouble?

The mindset of difference is so deep-rooted that it appears most people don't even realize the importance of good relations with "people with different degrees" (PWDD, as we shall now proceed to call them). Shubham Puri, Chemical 4th Year, provides us with the case in point, "There is not much need of interaction," he says. This is a reflection of the sorry state of affairs.

The advantages of being on good terms with the guy who takes your lab are obvious. That aside, he's just another guy at IIT-R, so we really shouldn't need to look for other reasons to justify communicating with him. After all, when he lives in your wing, you're bound to have dealings with him, so might as well make that process easier! Given that every Bhawan has PWDDs in its council interaction can certainly not be termed as a trivial issue.

The most obvious advantages that people have pointed out are project work and the smooth running of tutorials and practicals. Of course, most project work does need a lot of cooperation and all those people who claim to have excellent rapport with PWDDs have met them through projects. But the participation of PGs in Cogni and Thomso tells us of a different side to matters. Of the entire core team of Cognizance, there was one PG post (as opposed to about 20 UG posts, roughly half of them conveners). The sad part is that this is actually an improvement.

Perhaps Swetha Rao, a research scholar in the Humanities and Social Sciences department, puts it best when she says, "It's important because we are an IIT which means bringing new ideas by interacting with people across different disciplines and it is by interacting with different people that you grow."

Coming down to first causes

As first year B.Techs, one of the first words taught to us was Matka, a derogatory word for people who are doing M.Tech; one of the first cultures taught to us was about the great divide – how B.Tech students are better than Matkas because they have cleared the great exam called IIT-JEE. This is probably the first and most important reason- in the words of Neha Kadiyan, "PGs think that the UGs have an ego problem because of JEE while the UGs form an aunty or an uncle type image of the PG students."

These are, no doubt, the roots of the problem. The mindset of the two groups seems to be firmly set against each other. Another major factor which people claim is an issue in talking to PWDD is the age factor... one tends to look askance at anyone not in the same "age-bracket". The strange part about this argument is that one becomes an M.Tech only a year after completing one's B.Tech. So it seems odd that chatting with a fourth-yearite is no problem, but carrying on the same bakar session with an M. Tech first-yearite is. The problem could be a manifestation of the prof-student divide (see "The Great Divide", Watch Out, Vol. XXI No. 1). From the B.Tech point of view, the research scholars are the "people who take labs". Any B.Tech seeming to be on excellent terms with his tutors is termed a suck-up. In other words, it is seen as a cheap attempt to influence the impartiality of the evaluator.

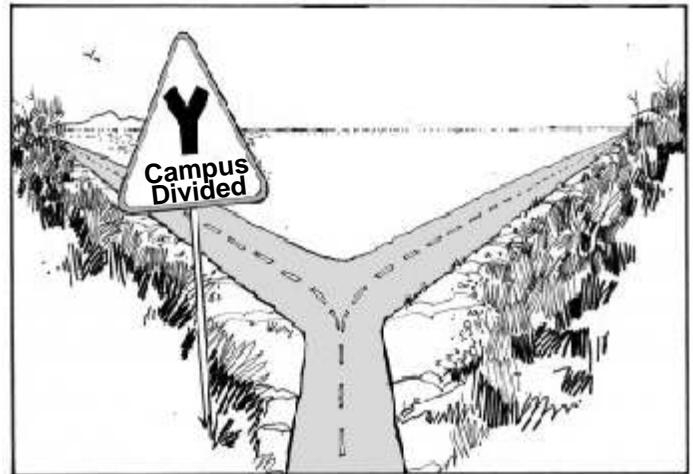
Lifestyle is another perceived barrier. What a B. Tech student perceives as fun might seem infantile to a PG (or vice versa!). The "time for fun" for one group might coincide with TS Week for another, leading to clashes galore. Of course, to some extent, perhaps, it is natural for people to flock with birds of their own feather. As Sathish, Vinay Kumar and Deepak Bora, M.Tech students in the Department of Computer Science put it, "When a person is thrown into a crowd, he tends to stick to people of his type first. We all do the same things. Like the B.Techs stick together, so do we. But we'd like it if they were less formal towards us. There's a thinking among them that we're 'Sirs' rather than just other students."

Other reasons we were given

- ☞ Very different interests- PG students more focused on academics.
- ☞ Interactions have been poor because M.Techs are usually busy.
- ☞ Less involvement of the PGs in cultural society and various campus events like Thomso and Cognizance.
- ☞ The JEE factor and the age factor.

Some Possible Remedies

- ☞ Host common cultural and sports events
- ☞ More relaxed and informal interaction in tutorials and practicals
- ☞ Interact more and get involved with M.Tech and Ph.D. projects and research
- ☞ More posts for PG students



So what's to be done?

Well, it's evident there's a problem, and like all other problems, a solution needs to be found. The most frequent suggestion we received was to ensure that most campus activities were more inclusive. A recent effort in this direction was the opening up of the PG and UG clubs to all students and their renaming to the Jawahar Club and the Students Club respectively.

Many people have said that involving PWDDs in all the "masti" on campus, is actually do-able and will go a long way in aiding the situation. Things like regional meets have helped some people get to know the PWDDs, at least of their region. A few people claim that cultural meets within the bhawan have helped. (Which is another argument for those proponents of inter-bhawan cultural!) Even the problems raised in the senate are, according to one respondent, UG specific. The posts in the cultural council are also mostly for UG students, except for one Joint Secretary post in each section. Even we, your humble and unbiased reporters, are not completely blame-free in this regard. Much to our own chagrin, we recently realized that we haven't been giving our "super-seniors" their due (which is why this issue came up!)

Ultimately, though, this is a problem of attitudes. There is only so much that, as an institution, we can do. "The problems are with the people, their attitude prevents them from interacting. If they are more frank with each other and freely speak out to each other, most of this will be an irrelevant issue," says Shailesh Kumar of 4th Yr Electrical.

So it all comes to this, then. Our attitudes, our mindsets need to be broader and more open to other people and ideas. Then, we'll come to realize that we're all of the same stock. We're all IITians, all people and in the end, we're of the same breed.

One for All, All for One

Despite the administration's lack of faith in the school uniform system, the students showed their faith in the same, with everyone from the dhobi's son to the Azad canteen-wallah sporting the same sweatshirt. Most people's brains---> though---> were so simple-----> that they couldn't understand-----> what was written on it.

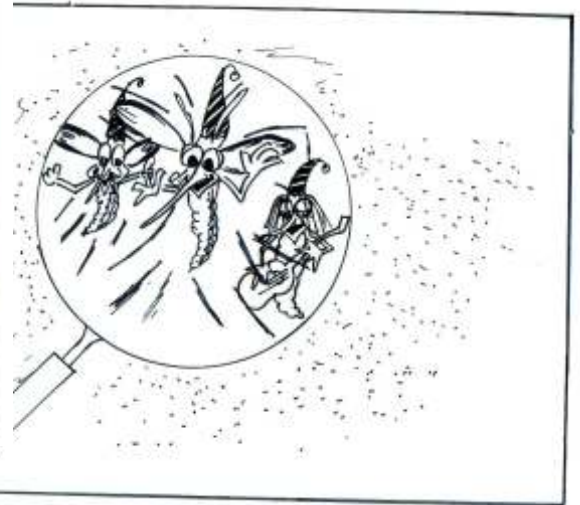
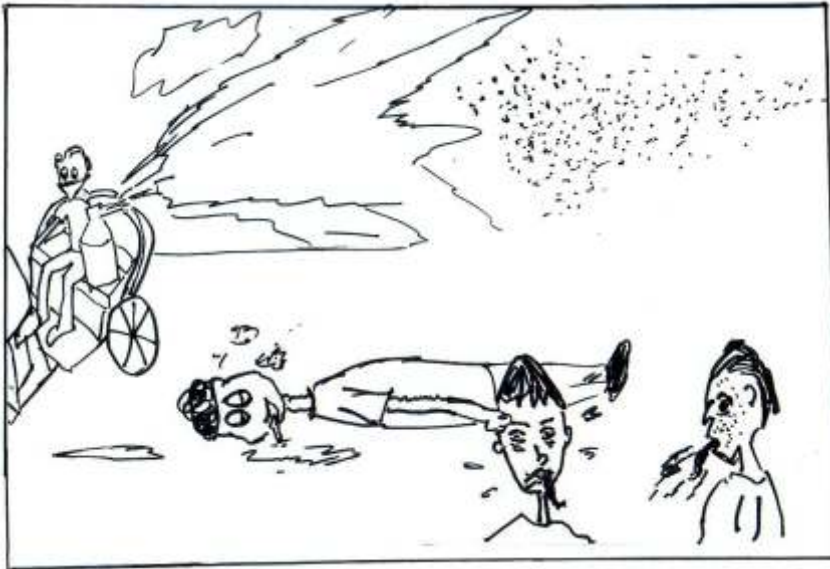


"I am what I am. I am what you are not.
This is what we wear. This is what we say. This is what we believe.
This is Roorkee!"



All Out!

The number of cases of people fainting has hit an all-time high this sem.
Watch Out finds out why...



The human, oops, insect repellants have had more than their share of casualties, few of whom were arthropod. The spraying sessions ceased half way through the sem though, as the sprayer himself succumbed to its fumes. May his soul rest in peace.



Realizing that they could never make guys swoon with their looks, the fairer sex resorted to their sporting skills, or rather, the lack of any. With players throwing the ball into the net from the penalty spot and cat-fights galore, the massive audience that turned up for the inter-year girls football tournament was to be expected. Did someone say football was a man's game?

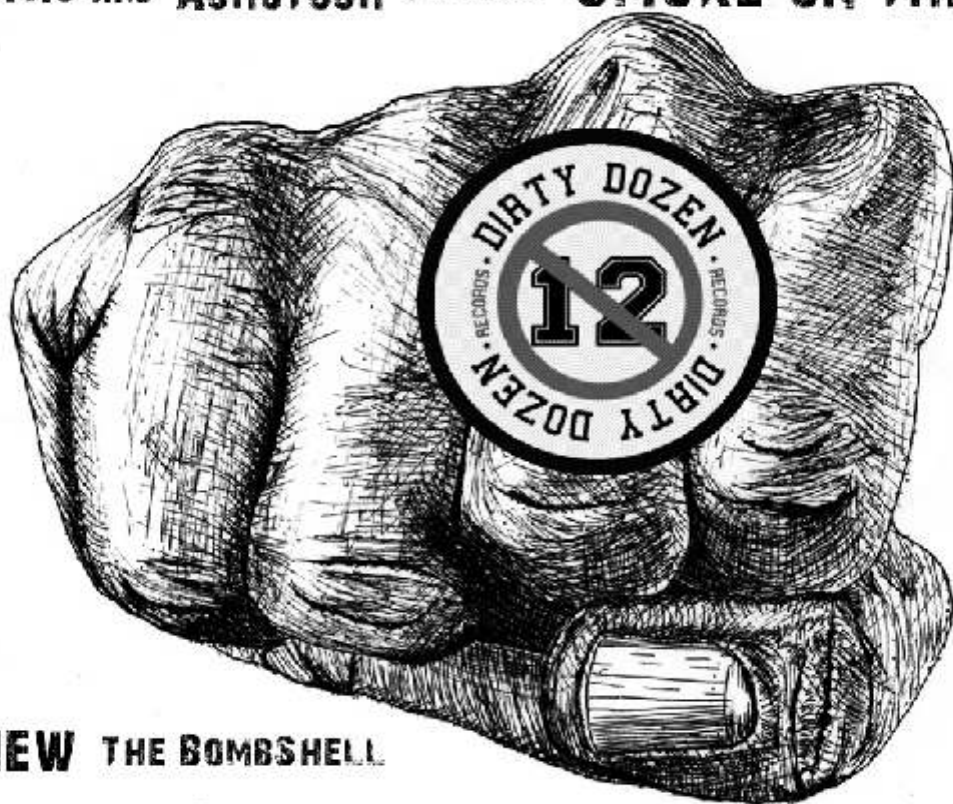
SATYA VYAS AND AARTI GILL NEIGHBORS ENVY OWNERS PRIDE
KOTA OWNERS ENVY NEIGHBORS PRIDE

YELLA YELLA YELLA DIRTY FELLA

NAVNEET CHAHEL BUSYBEE

PUNIA AAJ MERE ROOM PE

NEHA VYAS AND ASHUTOSH GOYAL SMOKE ON THE WATER



MATHEW THE BOMBSHELL

PDM THE ONE

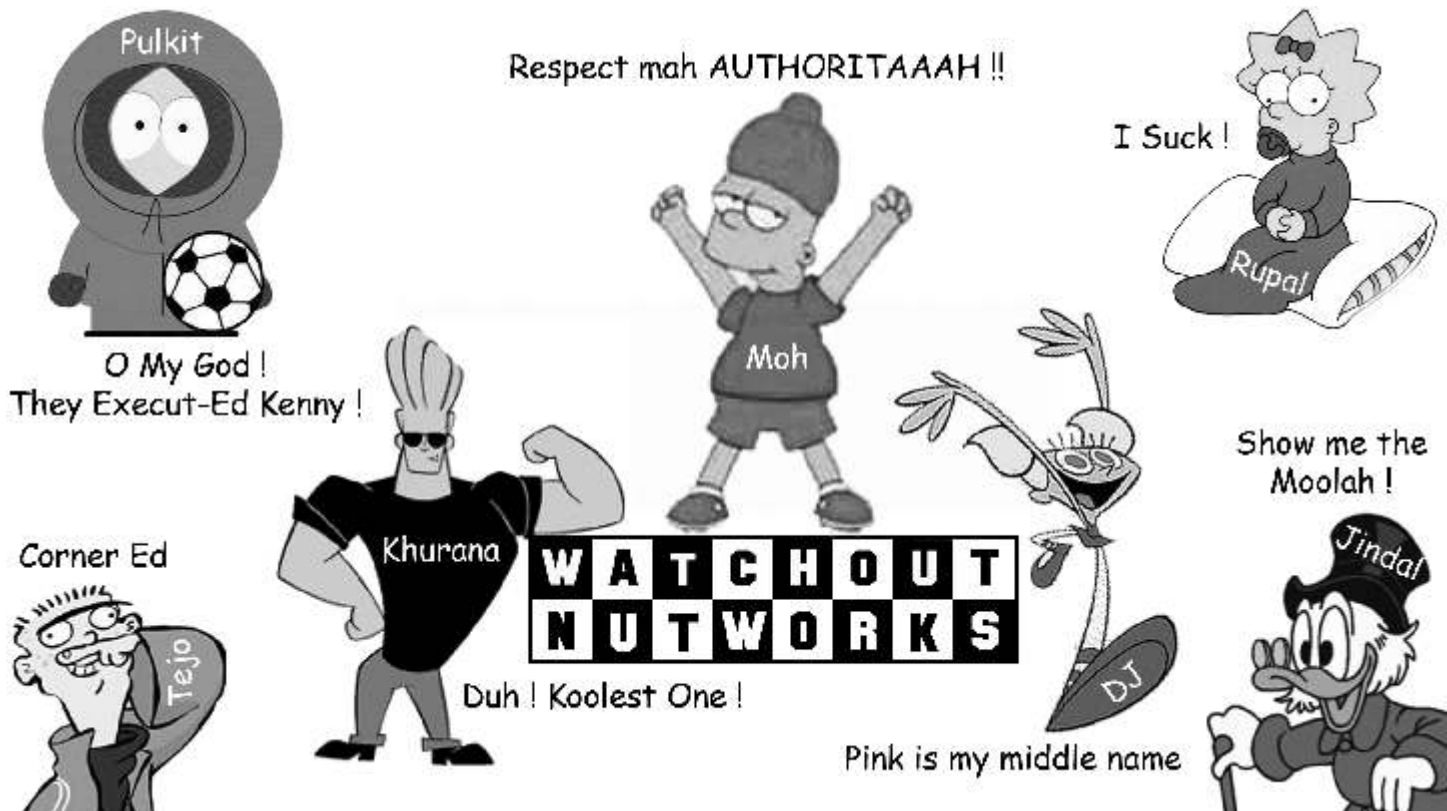
SONALI MANGAL THE HOLY GRAIL

ARJUN RAMAKRISHNAN THE NEW MALLU CHIMNEY

GAURANG RUN FORREST RUN

ANISH BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU

TANDON AAJ PUNIYA KE ROOM PE



Agony Aunt

Dear Agony Aunt, I have been trying to save money by chatting online with my girlfriend. But due to the pathetic net connection, I am forced to call her every day. What happened to the administration's promises of improvements in the net in rooms?-Kahn Juicy
Agony Aunt: Dear KJ, Son, you are mistaken. They were referring to the mosquito nets.

Dear Agony Aunt, Being a student of the Archi department, I have a serious back problem. What should I do?
-Five Point Someone
Agony Aunt: Dear Five, Moov lagao...

Desperado: Dear Aunt, I'm really inspired by your advice and I've begun to love you dearly. Will you marry me?
Agony Aunt: Dear Despy, Seeing that you actually read this column, I'm tempted...

Hey Aunt, I'm generally a studious guy but now I have been expelled from the college for a month for abusing the professor. What should I do now?- GA Ali
Agony Aunt: Dear GA Ali, You can forget about a 'BC'. Try and avoid a back if you can.

Dear Agony Aunt, I broke my foot while playing football and am now unable to attend classes. I am very upset about this. What do I do?
-French Tripod
Agony Aunt: Haha very funny.

I can never get senti. Nothing makes me feel bad, not pain, not affection or rejection. People accuse me of being inhuman. What is this problem that I have? -Old Monk
Agony aunt: You are too high on spirits.

Errata: In the cover story of the previous issue, while quoting Dr. Asawa, we mentioned that about 4-5 crores had been sanctioned for the purpose of improving lab equipment in the Civil department. We would like to clarify that though such a mov is in the pipeline, no sanctions have been made as yet. The inconvenience is regretted.

AD

ad



Top row: Vivek, Ankit, Piyush, Aayush, Shubham, Saahith, Vishant
 2nd row: Anirudh, Aditya, Amit, Pranav, Karthik, Vishwa, Kushal, Digvijay, Vikram, Mohit, Shruti, Chandni, Shefali, Ipseeta
 3rd row: Prachi, Akanksha, Abhishek (dela), Amogh, Puneet, Kanishk, Vaibhav, Abhishek (chatu), Prateek, Mohit, Atulya, Stuti, Sripriya
 4th row: Richa, Sundaresh, Saurabh, Pratap, Kushal (gogo), Arjun, Piyush (khandu), Gautam, Saagar, Shrey, Divye, Varun, Akshay

Chairman's Message

It's been a good 3 years. The time spent in Watch Out has been some of the best spent hours in IIT Roorkee. I have seen plenty of ups and downs, and I sincerely believe that as we are leaving we have come out on top. It's not just about bringing out the magazine, but Watch Out as a group, that has been a source of life itself during my time here. Its good to see the mag being passed on to the next batch, and I hope that it will be a good experience for them as it has been for us.

