

Newer-er coffee shack A renegotiated contract takes the coffee out of coffee shack Page 2	The Hostel 13 Fire A tale of secrets, lies and hush hush like no other Page 1	A new JEE, a new hope? JEE paper setters look for innovative solutions Page 1	Convo, No More A major overhaul of Convocation Hall and its impact in the short term Page 2
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Coffee Shack, Ver. 2.0 beta 3

The Coffee Shack – Say adieu to these words that have become an integral part of our lives. Generations of IITians have counted on a dose of strong coffee to give them the strength to survive the torturously boring classes in store. All that is about to change, as a plan to expand the shack into a multi-storied cafeteria is being put into place. Nikunj Jha investigates:

The problem starts with the coffee shack becoming too monotonous for the upcoming generations of IITians, as the tradition of "shack gathering" at 12:30 is fast losing its popularity. Possibly, the shack menu has become too obsolete, with just one variety of iced tea available, apart from hot coffee, cold coffee and hot chocolate. Hungry? The only thing around these days is Maggi, which almost everyone agrees is too tasteless and water heavy. Maggi Bonda, which was really popular has suddenly disappeared from the menu. Add to this, the afternoon heat and mostly dirty tables and chairs plagued by Maggi droppings and one gets the big picture – the shack, sadly enough, isn't popular anymore.

The Solution

From what started as an arbitrary discussion on the manifesto of the GSHA, Rohan Jha during his campaigning, this has transformed into a whole new plan to renovate the shack and turn it into a two storied cafeteria for the students. The lease for the area that is currently under coffee shack gets over this September. Among the other ideas considered to restore the old glory of the shack was the installation of automatic coffee vending machines. Such machines would not require any operator and it will be possible for everyone to get coffee against some change. However, the basic problem of refilling it regularly, scrambling for coins and the lack of variety in the menu quickly led to rejection of this idea. The next idea was to turn it into a proper

cafeteria under a more professional organization like CCD. None of these reports have been confirmed by the GSHA as he plans to make a grand announcement about the same at the beginning of next semester when all the details would have been finalized. Although everybody has been keeping quiet on this matter, the Dean Planning it seems was caught unaware one day when he launched into the description of these plans in an interview with Insight.

The Plan

It was CCD which proposed a two storied cafeteria which would vend out a large number of products at considerably cheap rates. The lower level will be equipped with air conditioners and would be a fully equipped CCD outlet – without any discounts. However, the upper level will have an open air cafeteria somewhat like the current shack – with a wide range of drinks available at a discount. Under the current plans the shack terrace will be joined to the cafeteria balcony to form an extended terrace on which canopied tables will welcome tired students after a hard day of lectures. All in all, it looks pretty impressive on paper and if implemented, it will change the whole look of the shack and hopefully restore its fading glory.

The Concerns

The primary concern is, of course, whether this new branded shack really serves the students better than the current one. Given, it will anyway be more expensive than the current version; the question arises whether it would provide value for students' money.

The CCD at hostel 8, though popular, is hardly a match for cheap and excellent service provided by Bhavani Juice Center. The biggest barrier to this new cafeteria becoming a student's paradise is its lack of mass appeal with its somewhat expensive service.

Another major concern is that if the construction goes on for too long and is delayed like the rest of the work in campus is, then the students may be devoid of benefits of coffee shack for too long. However, that issue has been addressed as CCD has promised to make coffee available on the shack terrace via a small shop on the current shack terrace for the duration of construction.

What remains a mystery is the silence that the GSHA, the security office and the estate office have been observing when approached on this matter. The Dean Planning suggests that it is probably because the GSHA wants to surprise everyone, but there just might be an explosive angle to this matter which is probably the reason for it being so hush-hush till now. All in all this new venture does threaten to put an end to a glorious era of afternoon lukkha at shack that it has come to be identified with. Let's just hope these winds of change lead us to greener pastures. Promising though they seem to be; only time has all the answers.

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InsIghT Custom

Have you ever experienced the agony of turning page after page in InsIghT because it looks too bland? Have you ever had the feeling that you friendly neighbourhood campus newspaper isn't really that friendly? Have you ever crumpled up your copy of InsIghT, tossed it into a drain and then shouted "There you go, you white piece of muck!?" No more, dear reader – come Autumn, 2009, we plan to roll out a revolutionarily new product – InsIghT Custom, where you decide what you want to see in your newspaper. After hours of brainstorming for means of increasing our readership, a customized newsletter catering to individual tastes seems to be the best way to move forward.

Here's how it works:

- Prior to release of InsIghT, we make all the news items available to you on the InsIghT website.
- You read through all the items, and select which ones you like the best
- Enter your name, hostel and room number, and click 'Go'
- The next morning we deliver your customised copy right to your doorstep!

It is a little unfortunate that this announcement comes on a day when you expect jokes and pranks, and we understand that you might find it a bit hard to believe. Unlike most things that are too good to be true -- Insight Custom. It's the thing!

There's No Smoke Without Fire?

In a startling revelation, there was more to the H13 blaze than what the hostel council offered by way of explanation. The inside story:

On the 1st of March, a fire was reported in C-Wing of Hostel 13. The entire thing had been a hush-hush affair and the usual reasons were attributed to it. Sketchy details are now emerging about how there was another dimension to the incident. An independent investigation by InsIghT has been launched into the incident, and so far it has emerged that the fire actually started when the H13 inmates had tried to test out a couple of small-scale explosives and other forms of arson that they had been making for their PAF, "Arthur Road", hoping to add a touch of realism. The incident had

actually occurred in the Tech Room on C5. All hostels have very strict rules about risky activities of this sort, with the harshest of punishments having being meted out to students for bursting crackers inside hostels.

Another twist to the saga came in when an anonymous source from Hostel 5 told us that his hostel copied the idea from H13, after downgrading the bombs for their own PAF. The authorities have been intimidated about the matter and a full-scale official investigation is set to get underway, and could lead to some dire consequences.

JEE : Business Process Outsourced

An innovative solution devised by the faculty members promises to make the JEE more stringent than ever. Insight digs deeper:

The plight of IIT faculty members across the country and the great workload they have been put under is well known, given the setting up of nine new IITs, and the mentoring these nascent entities require. The increased load has had a direct bearing on the paper setting of the JEE, it has emerged. Prof. Venugopala Rao, Chairman, JEE 2009, in a conversation with InsIghT, reveals details of the new process. "New students who come in are best aware of how coaching classes teach and how we can buck the Kota trend." He is of the view that these students would

be better at setting a paper which would ensure that the most conceptually sound candidates are selected through the JEE. Touting this as the long sought-after solution to combat coaching factories, he emphatically adds that professors would have the final say in the paper setting routine, with students being required to pledge an oath of secrecy.

Specifically, interviews are going to be conducted August onwards to select the right students. Educell, a freshie startup, of which Prof. Rao is aware, is understood to be a key player in the entire process.

Coffee Shack, Ver. 2.0 beta 4

Close on the heels of the ambitious reconstruction plans for Shack comes another surprise. This just in, as this issue was going for print: A new contract has been negotiated with Amul Co-operative Ltd for the supply of beverages and other consumables to our very own shack. In simpler terms, Nescafe Shack is now going to become Amul Shack. The lowdown:

The deal with Amul has been a sudden one, having been signed about a few days back only, resulting in a slight delay in the rebranding exercise. Also, until the formalities are ironed out, the drastic change in Shack's look that we all expect will get slightly delayed. But signs can be seen with bits and parts of shack being painted white and Nescafe flexes being removed.

The effort has been a combined one involving the outgoing and the incoming General Secretaries, Hostel Affairs-Ashwin Soni and Rohan Jha alongwith the outgoing Institute Secretary, Hostel Affairs-Arpit Khandelwal. The exact details of the contract remain under wraps as certain tax considerations are still to be dealt with. But in the words of Rohan Jha, "The deal has been signed. A few formalities have to be completed and we are confident that these will get cleared without much hassle."

What caused the marriage to fail?

Ashwin Soni elaborates, "The contract of Nescafe(Nestle) with IITB gets reviewed every year and there hadn't been

a major problem as such with periodic increases in prices and rent concessions being granted to Nescafe. However, in 2006-07, Nescafe asked for an out-of-turn increase in prices and would not relent on it. The then GSHA promised them another shack-like entity in the hostel area in lieu of them keeping their prices constant. But no one else had been consulted over such an issue and, as expected, the issue fell into an administrative manhole even before it could reach the higher-ups. Nescafe(Nestle), quite obviously, got put off by this." The problem was kept in check until last year when Ashwin Soni, the GSHA for 2008-09, had to relent and hence the prices of various items saw a 25-40% increase in prices.

How Amul clinched it:

The Hostel Affairs council, however, realised that this was not to be the end of the problem and started looking for other suitors during the year and Amul emerged as the frontrunner. The plan was to sign the deal with Nescafe(Nestle) for three months after which Amul would take over. But when the contracts came up for renewal on March 28, Nescafe(Nestle), citing recession and other supply issues asked for another 50% increase in prices.

This, according to Ashwin Soni, was not feasible. Hence the deal with Amul was rushed through with the administration too showing great efficiency and the contract finally getting signed on March 30th. The contract with Nescafe was terminated.

What we can now look forward to:

From the new financial year, which is April 1st, Nescafe Shack will officially become Amul Shack. Nescafe(Nestle) officials could not be reached for comments despite repeated attempts.

As of now though, until Nescafe stocks run out, the Coffee Shack will have all of the old products plus a few new ones at reduced prices, which we thought we'd share with our readers:

- Amul Kool : Rs. 8
- Amul Kool Kafe: Rs. 12
- Top Ramen Noodles: Rs. 6 for the small pack, Rs. 12 for the large pack.

The Dean (Academic Programmes), Dr. Supratim Biswas, recently announced that common course lectures for first year students will be held in the just-completed Convention Centre behind the Civil Department building.

This announcement follows a recent Senate meeting in which it was decided that three courses in liberal arts would be introduced under the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences and also that the intake of the SJM School of Management would be increased by about 30%, in view of the increasing demand for MBA seats, with effect from August 2009. These extra lectures will be held in the ICs while the lectures that were held in the ICs

Convocation Hall, No More?

will be shifted to the Convention Centre classrooms.

For special attention of the first-year batch and a few second-year courses, it has been decided that the end-semester examinations for all common courses will also be held in the Convention Centre auditorium instead of the Convocation Hall. This follows reports of a plan to completely rebuild the Convocation Hall and make it a state-of-the-art, multipurpose auditorium, as part of the Golden Jubilee programme. It has been reported that the first stage of demolition of the Convocation Hall may start

anytime next month, wherein all the furniture and the stage will be removed. Since this will render it useless from the point of view of being used as an examination centre, it has been decided to use the Convention Centre auditorium for the same. The construction of the Convention Centre auditorium was hastened to meet the tight schedule and was finally completed last week. For exact details, respective Faculty Advisors (Facads) may be contacted.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

SNIPPETS:

Rory Byrne, the Ferrari chief designer, has expressed interest in setting up a special programme for Indian students involved with Motor Racing, in association with the Enfield School of Racing, France, to promote Indian talent. FSAE students are understood to be leading candidates for scholarships.

A proposal about clubbing hostel Valfis was mooted and shot down. Recession and inflating costs were said to be the reasons behind the proposal. PAF groupings were going to be followed for clubbing, should the proposal have gone through

GS Cult Rahul Gaur, in a special video interview(which will be released on April 3rd) has proposed a drastic overhaul of MI, with the GS Cult acting as OC, a couple of years down the line

Amir Khan is set to return to campus during the lab end-sems for Mechanical Workshop and a couple of theory courses' examinations to film a couple of scenes for their new movie "Three Idiots" according to the Public Relations Office (PRO)

RE-QUESTECH:

Tired of reading the old, unsolvable puzzles of Questech? And the treats which never come, even after a hundred promises? Feel your efforts have gone thus far in vain? Worry not! For here is the new Questech, as requested. Not only is it easier to crack than before, but this time we actually mean it when we say that ten (yes, ten!) Dominos vouchers worth Rs. 350 each, await the people who manage to crack the level Genius:

12 words: Noob!

15 words: Almost there!

18 words: Voila!

20 words: Genius. Your pizza awaits.

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R G I U G G C A S E Y R U
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D H I R I O I N A H K X A
P S T T C M A B M A M O R
P T H H H S S Y B Z K D B
G Q A E L B P A T U K E D
B P M C A R R O K S P C I
S J Y E M R C L M J C I M
R H L M S H H S E U F U W
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InsIghT wishes all its readers a very Happy April Fool's Day!