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## Did you remember to...?

**Parasvil and Tannishtha bring you two checklists which should help you as you enter the final stages of apping/placements**

### The App checklist

(for more specific details, visit Uni-  
versity sites)

- Prepare your SoP (Statement of Purpose). Get feedback from seniors and Professors.
- Collect your transcripts from the academic section. Make sure you go before 3:00 PM on any given day. It costs Rs. 400 for every application, in addition to Rs. 100 per copy of the transcript, so decide the number of copies of the transcript required in advance keeping in mind that some Universities ask for two transcripts.
- Create logins for each University and check *their* checklist.
- Decide on which three Professors you will be asking for recos (Recommendation Letters) a month in advance at least. Make sure that you remind your Professors so that your recos reach in time.
- Make an excel sheet with exactly what needs to be sent to which college – résumés, personal statements, essays and so on. Note the different deadlines for filling in the online application form and sending the supplementary material by post (transcripts and so on).
- Some colleges require personal essays. Make sure that you write a draft of the essay yourself before showing it to a friend for the final coat of polish.
- Check which courier service you will be using, and whether you will send your documents along with someone else's. Leave enough margin for delays.
- Send your latest CPI (after the 7<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> semester) if possible.
- Also, send a copy of any paper you may have had published.
- Make sure all your scores (GRE/TOEFL/AGRE) are sent well in time. Contact the ETS for this.

### The Job checklist

#### Pre D-day

- Make groups to practice guesstimates, case studies, behavioural interviews and group discussion. A group of size 3 - 4 is optimum. One of the students can act as an interviewer while one is the interviewee. The others will be observers and will give important feedback on the responses and behaviour of the interviewee. Pay attention to feedback!
- Know your résumé's minutest details and be prepared to be quizzed on the same.
- Practice standard HR questions (HLPQ.doc, a compendium of standard HR questions which you can easily find on the LAN, should be useful).
- Placement tests: Practice data interpretation, quantitative problems and reading comprehension/verbal ability skills, depending on the type of company.
- Make sure you have/borrow two pairs of ironed formals, polished shoes and a matching pair of socks.
- If you are planning to have a hair cut, have it a week before the placements begin.
- Know every detail of the profile and the company you are interviewing for, and prepare accordingly. Visit the company site a few times to get a feel for how they do things.

#### On D-day

- Be presentable, bathed, shaved and well rested (very important, since you might be facing multiple interviews back to back).
- Carry water and some light food like a pack of biscuits.
- Carry paper, pencil, and your mobile phone (but don't forget to switch it off/silence it during interviews. DO NOT put it on vibrate mode)

## Secure-IIT?

**Rahul, Ashwin, Ashwin and Mayur take a closer look at the state of security at IIT Bombay**

The recent blasts across cities in India with increased frequency (which in no way justifies the previous less frequent attacks) have brought the spotlight on security matters like never before. And although terrorists may strike anywhere and anytime now, there are certain hotspots where it is thought that they are more likely to strike. Come to think of it, our college does belong to this group of hotspots. Now, we are not preaching doomsday here; we are just checking. Curiosity may not kill, terrorism sure does. How well protected are we against acts of terror, or even more common criminal acts?

The IIT Campus is a city in itself. It's much more than just an academic institution. And like any other city it needs a proper security system. Our college is an "Institution of national importance" and any such sobriquet is bound to have its consequences.

### The Security System of our Campus

The Institute has a Standing Advisory Committee for Security to look into all the safety related affairs on the campus. The Committee has two representatives each of students, staff and faculty to give their feedback on the security measures and bring forth their problems and suggestions to the Security Officer, Mr. Vijay Kumar. This committee is chaired by Prof. Sanjeev Chaudhari.

The implementations of the security measures proposed by the Advisory Committee is done by another committee comprising the Director, the Registrar and the Security Officer. The security personnel include 5 Duty officers and 6 Safety Inspectors. The Inspectors work in shifts of 8 hours everyday supervising the three important broad areas in the campus – the Academic Area, the Hostel Area and the Gates. The size of the total workforce deployed per shift consists of around 60 security guards including the hostel watchmen and the patrolling officers.

### Security Threats

The campus has seen some minor thefts happen over the years. Cycle thefts are the most frequent. Major cases include laptops being stolen. The Security Office

works in tandem with the Powai Police in such cases. In the recent past four cases of laptop theft were reported of which 3 were recovered, with the crook being caught red-handed. Cases of break-ins have also been reported in the residential area. Considering that students keep all their belongings in their hostel rooms, hostels can also become targets of malicious eyes. A few years back monitors and CPUs were stolen from the Hostel-13 computer room.

Other mishaps include girls being robbed of their money and belongings near Sameer. With cases of manhandling and students being forced to drink alcohol, the penalties meted out by the Disciplinary Action Committee have been as severe as semester drops.

### The Measures

The Security Office believes in an open security system unlike the stringent protocols followed in other places like BARC, IISc and so on. Though the one word password for entering the campus, "Student", may not look fancy enough for the security measures of an Institute of national importance, a thorough checking is not feasible. A possible solution to this problem is to utilise the Bar codes on the I-cards to ensure a valid profile of everyone who enters or leaves the

campus. While sticker vehicles are passed with minor checking, tourist vehicles are checked thoroughly, especially during college festivals. During these times, the security is beefed up in terms of manpower, as is evident during such times. Crowd control is another important aspect taken care of by the Security Office.

Certain areas have been declared restricted to everyone as a safety precaution. These include the pipeline area near H-4 because of its proximity to the water supply and the Borivali National Park. The fencing along the perimeter of the campus has been improved and reinforced over the last few years owing to leopard sightings. Though a 10 foot fence cannot stop a leopard from jumping over it, the frequency of these incidents has reduced drastically due to the fencing.

(Continued on page 2)



## Secure-IIT?

(Continued from page 1)

CCTVs have been installed at various points throughout the campus with the main focus being on the academic section and the Gates. While the Lakeside is the only open area in the entire campus in terms of being unfenced, a state-of-the-art camera has been installed near the Guest House. This sweeps the entire bay area, and provides a fair degree of security at the Lakeside.

In an attack at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore a few years back, Professor M C Puri, Professor Emeritus in the Mathematics Department of IITD was killed and four others injured after an unidentified gunman opened indiscriminate fire in the campus of the institute. The incident has put a question mark on the security of all pivotal institutes of science and technology in the country including the seven IITs.

Fortunately, no such incidents have occurred yet in any of the IITs. In IIT Bombay we have plainclothes security personnel as part of the vigilance division of the security office. They are on a permanent pay roll

throughout the year and collect intelligence from across the campus. Thus, it is clear that the Institute is taking special measures to safeguard our welfare, even though we do not really know about many of these measures.

### Our Role

Security measures have become synonymous with inconvenience and wastage of time and energy. We all know how security matters can come in way of our freedom. But we should remember that, when we get the freedom to choose, we MUST choose right. We should report sources of security lapses or suspicious activities. No one wants to live in fear. Security is an issue which is usually taken for granted but it can't be denied that it is essential for us to work and live in freedom from fear.

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## Endsem Tips

### Aishwarya and Harish present a few tips to ensure you crack your endsems, even if you haven't done the midsems too well

Here are a bunch of pointers to get you through the endsems with flying colours:-

- Certain courses have completely separate portions for midsems and endsems, so this presents a new opportunity to start afresh, without having to try hard to cover ground on what you've presumably not understood well in the pre-midsem portion. These courses offer the best opportunity to maximize your grade.
- Try and analyze where was it that you faltered in the midsem, even though you may have devoted sufficient time to preparation. Were there some tables or graphs you didn't know how to read from, or doubts on a few essential concepts you hadn't bothered to comprehend in depth, and just skimmed through a few questions containing basic applications of the same? Get these cleared as quickly as possible, ideally by the Professor.
- Identify emergency courses, where you've fared the poorest, and work extra hard on those. This might seem so logical that it's obvious, but we often tend to ignore courses we've done badly in, developing a mental block though we don't even know it ourselves.
- If you have trouble concentrating, try to make yourself pay attention by writing down either the main points of your notes or of the tutorial solution. If you are writing down, it is highly likely that you will retain something. Also, if you've never worked out a problem of a certain type before, you might lose precious marks in the exam even though you know all the relevant theory.
- Familiarize yourself with your calculator really well, especially for papers containing lot of numericals. Any calculator, even the 991-MS, can perform a lot of time saving operations such as matrix inversion and solving cubic

equations. Learning it might seem like a waste of time initially, but it pays off later.

- The cheat sheet:** In a course which allows cheat sheets, the fundamental premise is that writing any amount of matter on these cheat sheets won't ensure that you complete a single question, since no solution can be directly derived from whatever formulae/solved examples you manage to fit in. In fact, it becomes rather counter-productive trying to decipher your tiny handwriting in the exam. So, what should one ideally include?
  - Tough to remember formulae, especially those applicable under specific conditions, with the conditions mentioned, of course.
  - The sheet should serve as some sort of "memory map", allowing you to recollect everything you'd prepared about a given topic, say steam turbines, with only a couple of lines or a diagram/flowchart.

Essentially, it should be a very concise version of the notes you've prepared yourself/ the DR 1 has prepared himself, and not a word-to-word reproduction of class notes, replete with solved examples.

Contrary to popular belief, a 'cheat sheet' exam requires just as much utilization of your memory skills as a normal paper, it's just that you have a catalyst to aid the recollection process. It's never possible to include everything you've learnt in your cheat sheet/s -- the instructor will make sure that he/she allows only a fraction of the number of sheets required!

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## Money in the Bank

### Ajanta, Vinay and Sreenivas talk about stipends, arrears and fees

Congratulations to all PG students for receiving their much awaited eight thousand rupees. However, if you are still worried about how to pay your fees (assuming that you are hardly left with any bank balance) and are wondering if you can pay them off from the arrears dated from April 2008, then keep reading this article.

In case you are still hooked on to the question of why it took so long to give the stipends, here's what the GSAA has to say, "IITB provides stipends to students such as RAs, MPhils and DDs at rates and by criteria decided by itself. Any change here needs to be initially approved by the Board of Governors before implementation." This is the process that took so many months.

Coming to the increased stipends, MTech

DDs have to pay according to the MTech scale, it is not clear whether they should receive pay corresponding to that of a TA or a sponsored candidate. It would be unfair to ask a DD who does not get a scholarship to pay according to the sponsored MTech rate.

Many of us have wondered why it is that every time there is increase in stipends there is also an increase in fees. The Dean of Students' Affairs says, "The fee hike was pending for a long time, and it has nothing to do with stipends."

Yet the greatest question still remains: when are the arrears coming? The Deputy Registrar in the Academic Section says, "The work of the Academic Section is over. I am sure no major calculation is involved.

Programme	Year	Amount Then (Rs.)	Amount Now (Rs.)
MTech TA	All years	5000	8000
	1 <sup>st</sup> year	6000	10000
MTech RA	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	6500	11000
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	7000	12000
	5 <sup>th</sup> Year	5000 (CPI > 8)	8000 (CPI > 8)
DD	5 <sup>th</sup> Year	3000 (7 < CPI < 8)	6000 (6 < CPI < 8)
		Nil (CPI < 7)	If required by Department

Teaching Assistants will get a flat Rs. 8000 stipend. The rest of the stipends are as shown in the table. The actual good news is for the Dual Degree students, where a CPI in the range 8 - 10 will fetch Rs. 8000 and a CPI from 6 to 8 will get Rs. 6000. For the first time, people with a CPI of less than 6 can become TAs if there is a requirement in the department. The amount will, of course, depend upon the performance.

If the Finance Section wants to do it, they can". He asserted that he would try to fix the last date for fee payment as 31<sup>st</sup> December, so that students will hopefully receive the pending amount by then. At the finance section, we were told that the entire amount required to pay off the arrears for the current batch (Rs. 1.28 crore) is available. Thus, we've hopefully seen the end of the saga of stipends.

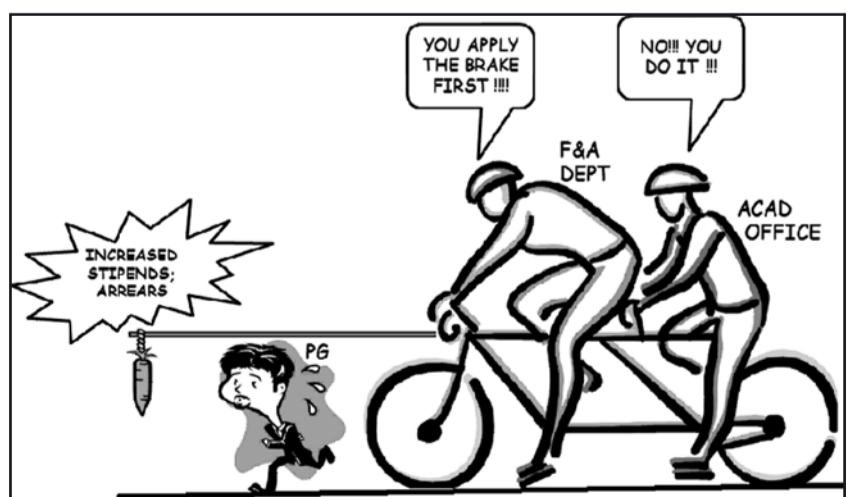
			Fees payable (Rs.)	
Programme	Year	Category	With Hostel	Without Hostel
MTech, MPhil, MDes, PDGIIT	1 <sup>st</sup>	Non-sponsored	8475	5375
		Sponsored	28475	25375
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Institute staff	2100	Nil
		Non-sponsored	4000	900
M.Mgt	1 <sup>st</sup>	Institute staff	350	350
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	All	4000	900
PhD, MSc+PhD, DD	1 <sup>st</sup>	All	5975	2875
	from 2 <sup>nd</sup>	All	4250	1150
	from 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Institute staff	Nil	350

Yet, people who are running off to a mall to celebrate, don't forget that you have to pay an increased differential fee amount for the last semester and the revised fee for this semester. While MTech second year students have to pay the differential amount of the semester fees only, MTech first year students

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will have to pay the differential amount of semester and tuition fees.

The fees for DDs have not been decided upon. If



## The genesis

'PG sports' was first conceptualized and organized in the year 2004 by the then PG nominee, Prashant Kodigire, in an effort not only to bring the PGs closer to the Gymkhana but also to spot hidden talent amongst the PGs for the inter IITs. It started off with a budget of Rs. 8000 and a few major sports like football and cricket. "There has been no looking back since", says the PG sports nominee, Rahul Bhat. The budget allocated has been growing since then and he hopes for an increased budget this time as well.

## Why PG sports?

Udaya Kumar, ex-PG gymkhana nominee, says he has been asked this question countless times. He points out: "The last edition saw about 180 medals awarded and almost four hundred participants. Is there any other event in the institute where four hundred PGs take part?" Ashok Kumar, ex-PG sports nominee, says, "It takes an extra effort for the PGs to get into the hostel GC events as the hostel teams prefer known old players to unknown new ones unless someone is exceptional". The present DoSA himself has gone on record to say that the Gymkhana now seems full because PGs are coming into it. PG sports acts as an excuse for them to take permission from the Department to come and play sports. Moreover PG timings do not usually match the UG dominated GC

## PG sports – Past, Present and Future

In order to augment the recent efforts of the sports council to improve UG-PG interaction in IITB, Vinay brings you an article on PG sports

timings.

## Enthu junta

PG sports has become a part and parcel of PG life at IITB. The department sports nominee elections are seriously and closely fought. The departments also conduct intras to make sure that the best players end up playing. Teams also design their own jerseys and get them printed at their own expense. Though a major chunk of participants are MTechs, there has been a notable increase in the number of PhDs.

## Organizing woes

Rahul says, "The budget allocated for PG sports is less than that allocated to any

single sport at IITB. In spite of this we have been giving away medals to the top three players in each sport. We have also been organizing opening and closing ceremonies which are presided over by stalwarts of the sporting world like Godfrey Pereira and Kamlesh Mehta". Ashok says, "Scheduling this sucks the blood out of us!!" High numbers of teams, ground availability, and schedule compatibility between teams

## Fruits of the efforts

Thanks to PG sports, there has been a notable increase in the number of PGs in the inter-IITs and GCs. Here are the names of a few PG players who made it big in the inter-IITs.

- Selva Kumar (Chemistry) - Gold medal, Crossy
- Kishore Kumar (Chemical) - Part of the Inter IIT cricket team
- Naveen Crasta (Aero) – two Bronze medals, Volleyball
- Madhav Mittal - Gold medal, Hockey

are the major issues.

## The pattern

PG sports is held in two phases - one in each semester. The first phase includes mainly individual events as the odd semester is

hectic for the PGs. The 21 departments are divided into three groups of seven each. Points are awarded depending upon the position of the department in the group for a given sport. The overall tally is taken to award womens' and mens' championships and a PG sports championship is awarded based on aggregate points. When any department falls short of people, two departments are clubbed and points distributed proportional to composition.

While Carrom, Chess, cycling, Badminton, Athletics and TT are common for men and women, Football, Volleyball, Cricket and Basketball are exclusive for men and throwball for women. Last year's overall champions were the Mechanical Department followed by Energy Sciences. SOM is on top this year closely followed by CSE, although there is a lot of action left.

## Finally

Rahul says, "There are a lot more potential players, but they are not able to make it to the elims due to academic commitments". Rahul thanks all the institute sports secretaries and the GS Sports Rohit Drolia for their continuous support and enthusiasm, without which PG Sports would not have seen this level of success.

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## Table Tennis

**Nikhil Pande:** Having represented IITB for 3 years, this veteran captains the Table Tennis team. Known for his rather unconventional game, Pande has been instrumental in building up a strong TT team. Said to be the most enthusiastic player in the team even in his 5<sup>th</sup> year,

## A snapshot of the recently held Inter-IIT Aquatics meet

This year's Aquatics meet was packed with the usual action and even more drama than the previous year. There were some outstanding performances, some records broken, a few verbal fights and, of course, the celebrations following the meet. Overall, the IIT Bombay boys won the Swimming Trophy with Sarvesh Paradkar winning 5 Gold medals and Vivardhan Kanoria with 4 Gold medals and 1 Silver medal in the individual races and 1 Gold and 1 Silver in the relays. Also, Jyoti Swaroop Repaka won an unexpected Bronze in the breast-stroke.

The girls showed a remarkably improved performance by coming second overall with Hutokshi Sethna winning 4 Gold medals and 1 Silver medal in individual races and being named the 'Best Swimmer of the year'. Another proud moment for the girls' contingent was when IITB had 3 girls participating in the Butterfly stroke when the other teams had only 1 or none at all! Overall, the whole event was exciting and fruitful, and we hope it sets the tone for the rest of the events at Inter IIT 2008.

Pande is known for his efforts to encourage freshies playing table tennis. Besides using a wide repertoire of shots, Pande likes to play mind games with his opponents, and his team mates vouch for this skill.

**Claim to fame:** He has won 1 silver medal and 2 bronze medals for IITB and was ranked on the Sub-Junior Circuit of Maharashtra in his school days.

**Vrinda Agarwal:** Being the most experienced and consistent player from the girl's contingent, this Table Tennis Captain has been a crucial part of the team since her freshie year. With her swift and elegant moves she usually leaves her opponents in the dust just trying to defend her attacking style of play. Under her captaincy, the girls

## Sports Stars

One month before the 2008 Inter IIT sports meet, Siddhartha and Aaysha profile a few outstanding sportspeople from IITB

are extremely hopeful of a good finish.

**Claim to fame:** She has qualified for National Level tournaments in Table Tennis twice during her school days and has won 3 bronze medals at Inter-IIT.

## Volleyball

**Ashok Kumar:** One of the most famous Post-Graduate sportspeople in IITB, Ashok Kumar captains the Volleyball team. His silent off-field demeanour and on-field aggression has seen him win the respect of all his team mates. He has been IITB's main spiker for the last 3 years and continues to be an inspirational force with his unmatched passion for the game.

**Claim to fame:** Ashok has won 2 bronze medals for IITB in volleyball. He is famous for his rally ending spikes that have made him a crowd favourite in the various Inter-IIT Sports Meets. He captained last year's team to a bronze medal.

**Uday Kumar:** Like Ashok, Uday too is a reticent Post-Graduate student. Uday plays the role of Libro for

IITB's volleyball team and can be seen coming on and off the field of play as and when required by his team. Known for his solid defense and undying spirit, Uday has been the first choice Libro for the last 3 years running. Even with a heavy post graduate academic schedule, Uday makes it a point to come to practice every day.

**Claim to fame:** Uday, like Ashok has won 2 bronze medals for IITB. As a Libro he is required to wear a different jersey from that of his teammates and is constantly required to switch positions with players, and so is one of the most noticed players in the game. His

duty as libro ensures that he plays a major role in every game.

## Weightlifting

**Satadru Biswas:** Fondly called 'Tito' by his team mates, Satadru Biswas is one of IIT Bombay's most prolific weightlifters. Having won a bronze medal in his second year, Satadru stepped up his performance in his third year to win a gold medal. Known for his untiring efforts, Satadru also bagged IITB's highest sports recognition, the 'Sportsperson of the Year' award, in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

**Claim to fame:** Along with the 'Sportsperson of the Year' award, Satadru was adjudged Mr. Inter-IIT in last year's sports meet held at Bombay. Besides his exploits for IITB, he has also won two gold medals at the district level and one gold medal at the state level.

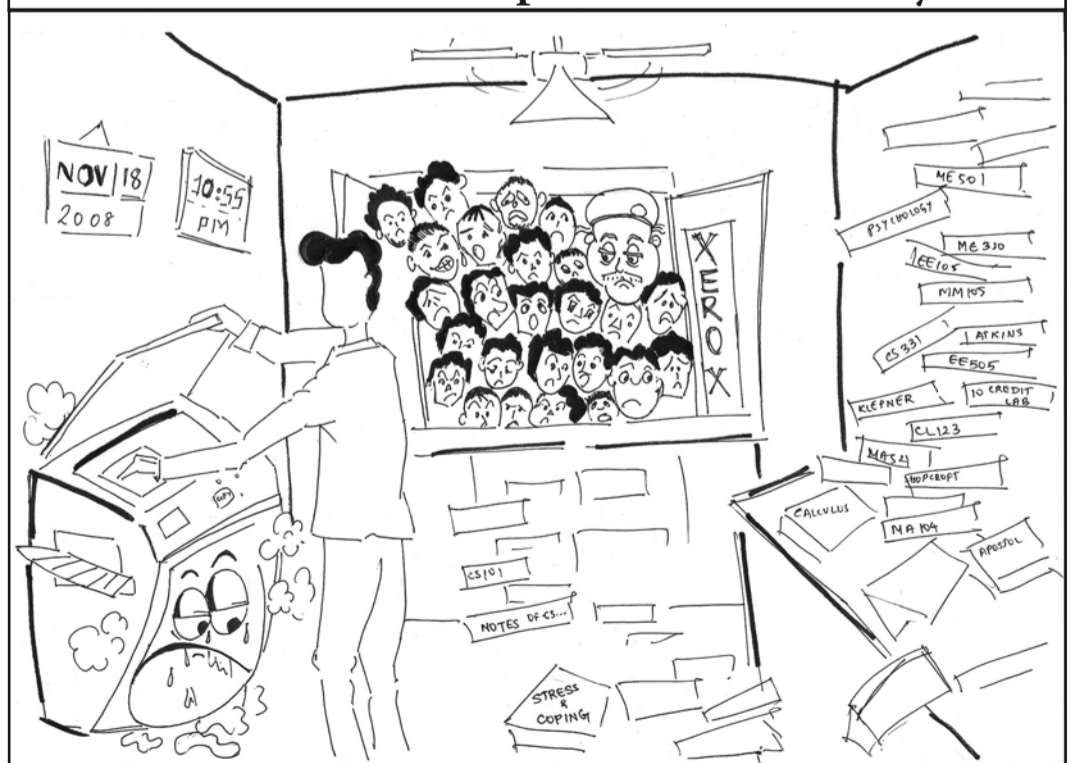
## Aquatics

**Hutokshi Sethna:** Ever since her inclusion in the Aquatics team, the numbers of gold medals have shot up drastically. This gifted girl, with her fast underwater moves, wreaked havoc in the recently held Aquatics meet in Chennai. Although generally a very quiet and a shy girl, she leaves the crowd dumbfounded with her speed in the pool. One incident which needs special mention is one when her swimming goggles broke in the middle of a butterfly stroke race. Hutokshi, undeterred, went ahead and gave her best timing ever!

**Claim to fame:** She has represented her district in swimming. She won 4 gold medals and 1 silver medal and was awarded the title of the 'Best Swimmer' at this year's Aquatics meet.

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## The Watchman- Report Submission Day



## Editorial – The Eleventh Hour

In school, most of us were 'good students', who spent the last week before the exams revising our portions for the third or fourth time. When we come to IITB, we learnt to do things at the last minute. Most people feel vaguely guilty about this; when the topic comes up in conversation, they make sweeping statements about how much better and more admirable they were before they came to IIT, and how bad it is to complete everything just in time.

But is it really a bad thing?

The last minute – the period of time when you know that you absolutely cannot delay any longer – is extraordinarily productive. Everyone who has studied a semester's worth of portions in the hour before the endsem will know that their power to grasp never – seen before concepts increases exponentially in that time period.

Even in event management, the law of the eleventh hour works. Most events that happen in IITB are hastily put together at the last minute, and the organizers exchange glances during the event in disbelief that it is actually happening. We have a belief that everything will happen – the *ho jaayega* mantra – and, miraculously, most things do happen.

The night out, the IITian's solution to everything, is another example. Anyone who has ever stayed awake all night with a group of people, working against a two-week old deadline, will testify that almost any task can be completed in a productive night out. It's also fun (at least till 5 AM).

I know a certain person who always turns up half an hour late for any exam. His rationale – he is under twice the amount of pressure in that half hour; the 'normal' last minute pressure is added to the pressure of being late for the exam. He says the strategy usually works for him, but we advise caution. After all, all

the last minute preparation in the world will be useless if you don't have time to write your answers down!

Obviously, it is not true that last minute work is always a good thing. Academically, it is almost always true that those who have spent a large part of the semester studying perform better than those who have desperately crammed a list of tutorial problems into their already crowded minds on the day before the exam. They also retain more – no last-minute specialist ever remembers anything the day after the exam. The thing is, not too many of us plan our last – minute time usage. Those who have become really good at it are known by various combinations of the words *god*, *stud* and *cracku*.

Last – minute work also does not normally allow for a large – scale project (to some extent, the PAF is an exception). For example, most tech enthusiasts at IITB are not able to do as well as their counterparts in other colleges simply because the students from the other college have put in more hours of honest effort.

Thus, the main argument against last minute work is loss of quality. The focus in such work is always to finish one's task at any cost, and very few people ever have the time to check whether the work is done well.

Most of us would have realized that, when we actually put in a sustained effort to do something in IITB, we do experience great success. It would seem logical that we stop last – minute work altogether, but I think that last – minute work definitely has its place. After all, what else can allow you to write a full lab journal, a seminar report and study for two quizzes, all in three hours?

- Vaibhav Devanathan

## Try These As Well

Think we have it all, here at IIT-B? Wait, there's more! Aishwarya and Prasham, with inputs from the General Secretaries, share a glimpse

In our for-next loop of daily activities we often inadvertently overlook, or aren't aware of, several really helpful resources that the institute has to offer. Some of them could redefine our approach to academics – others, pertaining to the tech and cultural spheres, bring alive the age old debate of "there aren't sufficient fundae sessions" vs. "the students aren't enthu enough to leave their rooms", which we'll save for later. All we'll do is show you things that are out there, which currently aren't being utilized to their fullest. Remember, at the end of the day, everyone's paying the same amount for the upkeep of these facilities. How well we use them is up to us.

**Moodle:** Designed as a forum for discussion, Moodle is a course management system (CMS) which facilitates professor-student interaction beyond lecture hours. Its usefulness lies in its assortment of features; where, along with getting their doubts cleared, students can continually provide feedback on course content and structure. Also, professors could post course updates and announcements, as well as supplementary material such as reference links and videos. Essentially, if integrated into a course instructor's teaching scheme, Moodle could transform into a one-stop shop for a student's academic needs where one can submit assignments, check grades and download lecture slides – tasks which currently require sifting through a lot of emails.

**CDEEP Video Lectures:** A comprehensive streaming video archive of certain courses of nearly every department is maintained by CDEEP, available free of cost for IIT-B students accessing it within the intranet. This is particularly helpful for students who've missed lectures, as it almost recreates the classroom environment we're habituated to learning from. Even for those who've attended, the possibility of completing one's class notes, and even revisiting something that wasn't clear earlier, is rather compelling. Several students have overloaded CDEEP courses that parallel their interests, since the problem of clashing slots can be taken care of, as students view the lectures at a later time.

**Free Public Wi-Fi:** Even though there is still some time for the entire campus to go wireless, several Wi-Fi hotspots exist, mostly in the academic area. Can't seem to connect to the internet? Changing your proxy settings to [openworld.iitb.ac.in](http://openworld.iitb.ac.in), port 3128, or simply [netmon.iitb.ac.in](http://netmon.iitb.ac.in), port 80, should do the trick. The convenience of wireless connectivity can be misused,

hence certain Wi-Fi networks, most notably those in the central library and the MB; have been encrypted recently over security concerns. Wi-Fi enabled classrooms are common abroad with the additional material online adding a whole new dimension to learning what's being taught – a possibility we look forward to being implemented in all departments.

**Books in IITB:** Hunting for an obscure title by your favorite novelist? In addition to the central library, your hostel library, or even the SAC library could be worth a look. The Cult Council plans on revamping the Book Club to include a wider variety of books available to the students who've registered. Urgently require a book that's already been issued to someone else? The department libraries could be your best bet, and a change in the current rules (one book per ID-card) could possibly see a lot more books being issued.

The central library offers several helpful academic resources beyond books for issue. The entire upper floor is dedicated to print issues of journals and periodicals, pertinent especially to PGs and UGs working on their final year projects. Numerous e-journals dealing with the most diverse of topics are available free for download via the central library's website, providing an excellent alternative to the ubiquitous Wikipedia. Also available are several video CD-ROMs containing documentaries pertaining to course matter, giving us all the information we need on a field of our interest.

**Hostel Activity Rooms:** Although stocked with everything one could imagine, hostel music and tech rooms remain locked save for when a competition's around the corner. Right from bass guitars to drum kits, from drilling machines to motors – there's enough to keep these rooms buzzing with activity throughout the year. It's possible to issue one of the several classical music instruments in the Convo Music Room against your ID-card. There's even a Hobby Room right beside the WEL Labs on the third floor of the EE Department, perfect for applying those electronics principles. Looking for a reason to log out of that chat window or CS game? This could be it.

(Aishwarya Sharma is a third year student of the Mechanical Engineering Department. Prasham Rambhia is a second year student of the Aerospace Engineering Department. They can be contacted at [bonny.sharma@iitb.ac.in](mailto:bonny.sharma@iitb.ac.in) and [prasham@iitb.ac.in](mailto:prasham@iitb.ac.in))

## To Make an Informed Choice

Archana examines some aspects of social responsibility

"Sponsorship is a paid privilege and does not constitute or imply an endorsement of the sponsoring companies, organizations or individuals, their products, services or business practices."

When the IITB Heritage Fund had decided to make Dow Chemicals a gold sponsor for the Golden Jubilee celebrations in New York (July 18-20, 2008), the disclaimer (above) came in useful. Looking at the date, it is rather old news, but with placements and many campus fests around the corner, it's relevant to talk about the choices we learn to make when it comes to our jobs and sponsors.

Now, what's wrong with Dow?

A gas leak at a Union Carbide plant had given Bhopal a generous dose of the poisonous methyl isocyanate in December 1984. Leading the reasons for the tragedy was the sheer negligence on part of UC when it came to safety procedures. Over 20,000 people have died from the contamination till date, including the thousands who had perished on the day of the disaster. Cancers and birth defects continue to ail the community of survivors. In a closed room deal, UC had paid the Indian government some money (it came down to about \$ 500 - \$ 1200 per victim) and pulled off a quick disappearing act. The polluted site is yet to be cleaned completely and the tox-

ins have entered the water supply which thousands of people continue to use. In 1991, the Supreme Court of India had written down Union Carbide for "culpable homicide not amounting to murder". Never did any of their officials turn up when the Indian courts summoned them.

Nothing much changed after that, except that Dow Chemicals, a company with its very own notorious history of Agent Orange and Napalm, bought Union Carbide in 2001. They chose to ignore Bhopal. In a clear case of double standards, Dow had set aside \$2.2 billion to resolve asbestos-related liabilities incurred by UC in Texas but refused to address its liabilities in India.

In 1991, the Supreme Court of India had written down Union Carbide for "culpable homicide not amounting to murder". Never did any of their officials turn up when the Indian courts summoned them.

It would seem a cruel jape in the eyes of the victims that we celebrate 50 years of our existence with money tainted with their blood, when they have been languishing in the courts and streets for the justice that has eluded them for the past 23 years. Many of our professors had signed an e-petition, addressing the organizers of the Golden Jubilee celebration, calling for re-

jection of ties with Dow (<http://www.petitiononline.com/dowiitb/petition.html>), but their voices seem to have gone unheard. When contacted, Prof. Om Damani (CSE), one of the authors of the petition, said the students should draw their own inferences from the facts presented in the petition.

At this point I'd like to reiterate that the Dow-Golden Jubilee issue is a case in point to rationalize the need for fruitful discussions about social responsibility and the importance of making informed decisions.

Do we care?

Even if Dow doesn't, we should. It might be difficult for many of us to relate to the suffering of the victims of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, but at least we must be able to sense that something is wrong when we take money from a company whose

spokeswoman had had the audacity to declare that "\$500 is plenty good for an Indian". Something is wrong indeed.

As an IIT, our actions do count. We garner much media attention for a candle light protest, an MI or a Techfest; and when we had banned Dow from placements, we got our share of claps too.

Right now, we do not have a system to root out companies with bad track records from the placements scene or sponsorship deals (Dow is exceptional because of the scale of the tragedy involved. You never know how a company does its business until you do a bit of research - their safety practices, environmental policies, the hazards of their products and so on).

(Continued on page 5)

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, the Senate, which is the policy-making body of the Institute and comprises all full-time professors, passed a resolution to change the institute PT policy. It was earlier required that a student would undergo at least eight weeks of compulsory practical training after two and a half years of study in top-class industrial or research institutions. The new policy stated that "a student would undergo at least eight weeks of compulsory practical training only in Indian companies and research institutions."

This was adopted as the policy by the Institute back then, but because the then third year batch (the batch of 2009) were

#### Current third year batch (so far)

##### Civil Engineering

No. of companies contacted: 24  
No. of refusals/trail offs: 19

##### Electrical Engineering

No. of companies contacted: 101  
No response/ refusal: 69  
Recruitment process over: 4  
Process (talks) going on: 28

halfway through their process, it was decided to implement this from the next batch, the current third year students (batch of 2010). The institute functionaries had a rigorous plan of following up this change in policy to deal with the extra number of PTs required. Alumni and industry spearheads

As we sat at the Shack sipping coffee and cursing classes, we remembered an interesting incident which had occurred in our second year. The professor taking a Mechanical Engineering course for Metallurgical Engineering students came to the last class looking really distraught. This was his complaint: "I was compiling the list of students who have low attendance and I am confused about whether to give them XX or not. To my surprise, most of them have a much better performance than the ones who have high attendance. It's the first time I've seen this and I'm baffled!"

This led us to wonder what brought about the 80% attendance rule in the first place, whether it really led to better academic performance and whether it is still useful. We talked to a few professors to find out. Here's the story of the 80% attendance rule.

#### The Origin

Prof. N. Ballal from the Department of Material Science, who has been at the helm of things for a long time, and was a senate member during the late 80's when the erstwhile senate enforced this rule, remembers that when the rule was put into place a strong correlation was observed between the attendance of the students and their performance. Within one or two years of enforcing this rule, the number of students whose degrees had to be terminated due to poor performance decreased drastically. The immediate results of the rule were so impressive that it has remained in place since then.

Prof. Ballal explains that the rationale behind introducing the rule was two-fold. Firstly, since the IITs are residential campuses, the students should be answerable for their whereabouts during class hours. And the second and more fundamental reason is the educational system here in India. In India, if a student is kicked out of the institute after his/her first year, his time has been wasted. Whereas, in the U.S., for example, a person can carry over his/her degree courses to a different university

## 3<sup>rd</sup> year PTs: The Lowdown

### Mohit and Anvesh give you the lowdown on the status of the PT policy for the third year batch

were to be contacted. Presentations and representations were to be made. And the transition was to have been seamless.

It is clear now, though, that there was not sufficient follow up on this plan. Third year students were told that they were not allowed to apply for foreign internships and that was it. Some protests came from the side of the students about the deal being an unfair one, with them being the losers. The institute responded by promising to ask/request all faculty members to use their contacts this one time and help the students find PTs.

The institute, by now, had implicitly admitted the fact that there had been implementation issues and that, based on pure logic, the new policy should have been revoked. The counter-argument given, however, was that of the institute image suffering because of this flip-flop. Of course, the fact that the idea of professors asking for PTs was an impractical one was impressed on the authorities.

The existence of 'good' companies has been another issue. Even when foreign interns were allowed, all the students were not placed with good companies, as is evident from last year's stats (see box on right). Having to arrange for about two hundred odd extra PTs in good companies this year was always going to be a challenge. The

stats for the current third year batch (see box) reflect this fact.

Then again, the batch of 2009 had an effective 'free-for-all' while the batch of 2011 have optional PTs, on top of minors and greater elective options. So the fact that this policy was being implemented for one batch alone was something not quite logical.

The final nail in the coffin came from the swift change in the global economic scene. Overnight, banks went bankrupt and liquidity became an issue. The tight conditions forced corporates the world over to shed jobs and delay new projects. Calls made for internships are mostly ignored and met with an apologetic no, whenever acknowledged.

The issue was discussed at length in a meeting of all the Deans during the Diwali holidays and it was decided that the issue will be returned to the Senate, since the Senate alone can cancel out or modify its decision. A meeting has been called for the third of December. We can only hope for the best.

(Mohit Sharma and Anvesh Shah are third year students of the Civil and Mechanical Engineering Departments respectively. They can be contacted at mohitsharma07@iitb.ac.in and anveshsh@iitb.ac.in)

#### Batch of 2009

##### Aerospace Engineering

Thirteen companies + Foreign internships + Internships in IISc/DRDO for a batch of about 40. Due to shortage of PTs, some students had to accept whatever was available at zero stipend.

##### Chemical Engineering

37 out of a batch of about 90 placed through PT noms in companies.

##### Civil Engineering

Out of 75 students, 20 got placed through the department, and 20 went for foreign internships. The rest had to fend for themselves.

##### Computer Science and Engineering

18 students were placed through PT noms with others mostly going for foreign interns.

##### Metallurgical Engineering and Material Sciences

23 companies came in to select interns.

##### Mechanical Engineering

Almost all 95 students got internships in various companies.

## To Bunk or Not to Bunk

### Ever wondered why we are made to attend 80% of the lectures? Was it always so? Is it only enforced at IITB or at other IITs and other universities too? Devasheesh and Palak explore

without repeating the courses he/she has done. This puts a greater responsibility on the authorities here to monitor students' academic activities – especially those of the weaker students. He further adds that, unlike the trend here, where parents support students up till their graduation, most of the students abroad pay for their own education, and are hence a lot more responsible. He wonders whether letting the students earn on the campus itself might help loosen the belt a little. He also brings to notice the fact that the enforcement was done in consultation with the student representatives at that time, and was definitely not a rule arbitrarily imposed by the authorities.

#### Opinions

Prof. Anurag Mehra from the Department of Chemical Engineering does not believe that an attendance rule should be enforced;

if there are students who can manage to do well by having less than the mandatory level of attendance, he doesn't have a problem. However, he says, it is important that a regulatory framework be in place so that students can then decide for themselves how much attendance and self-study they should put in. A few surprise quizzes and random attendance, say, once a week serves as a good framework for keeping students 'interested'. He said that, though most of the professors in IIT are liberal in their outlook about such issues, they have to show some respect for the conservative expectations that parents of, perhaps, a significant number of students harbor: of looking after their wards like

surrogate parents. Taking attendance sometimes, he felt, as did Prof. D. Manik (Mechanical Engineering), gives the data and the confidence to the faculty so that they can answer the parents in case of any confrontation as to whether or not the student was spending his lecture hours elsewhere.

Most of the professors we interviewed agreed that IITB must not blatantly imitate the U.S. varsity system and should rather develop its own structure based on India's social and economic system. Added to that are the changing preferences and

Prof. Biswas suggested using automated finger-print detecting machines in classes; while Prof. Manik suggested an innovative idea of exempting a certain top bracket of students, who are doing well in a course, from the attendance rule as an incentive for other students who might be tempted to bunk classes!

motivations of the students. While Prof. Mehra makes a comparison between the students here and the students at IIM or US universities and observes that under-graduates here are much less motivated towards academics, thus

making this rule a good check, Prof. P. Seshu from Mechanical Engineering totally disagrees with the view that the motivation or perceptions of students towards their departments could really be related to low attendance or, for that matter, corrected through just monitoring of attendance.

Prof. S. Biswas of the Computer Science Department, on the other hand, believes that it is not motivation levels or social settings that make the rule relevant – it is the course structure at IITB. He holds that a student has to be introduced to a topic within a certain number of classes (maybe with the exception of first year courses), and to perform well in the course, a student

has to take at least 80% of the lectures. He believes if a good number of students are managing to do well without fulfilling the minimum criterion of attendance, then the course content needs to be revised! Thus, he believes that courses should enforce 80% attendance by their rigour alone.

#### The Consequences

Some professors have observed that there isn't any direct correlation between the attendance and performance of a student in a course, since most students have found out easier or smarter ways to crack exams. This has in fact sprouted other problems like giving proxy attendance and has led to a change in the priority of professors from just monitoring attendance to monitoring attendance in a foolproof way. Some professors have stopped taking attendance, some take surprise quizzes while others make students mark their own attendance and sign a declaration about their honesty! Prof. Biswas, who is also the Dean, A.P., suggested using automated finger-print detecting machines in classes; while Prof. Manik suggested an innovative idea of exempting a certain top bracket of students, who are doing well in a course, from the attendance rule as an incentive for other students who might be tempted to bunk classes!

In conclusion, most of the professors agree that, while the imposition of a minimum attendance requirement might not be the best solution to some of the problems faced by the IIT system today, it does help keep a check on the borderline students who might fall out otherwise. Till someone figures out a solution which suits all, good students would be expected to be present at the front benches; if not always, at least 80% of the time!

(Devasheesh Mathur and Palak Ambwani are final year Dual Degree students of the MEMS Department. They can be contacted at devasheesh\_mathur@iitb.ac.in and palak\_a@iitb.ac.in)

# OUT OF SIGHT

One day, we started wondering how it would be if **evaluation forms** were introduced for things other than courses. We are proud to present the results below. Also on the page: hot tips from our greatest experts on how to ace that endsem.

The following abbreviations have been used: A - Agree, D - Disagree, V - Very, I - one, etc.

## EPISODE 1 - REVENGE OF THE PROF

I. PERSONAL QUALITIES OF THE STUDENT	SA SA SA VSA VVSA	II. IMPACT OF THE STUDENT ON FACULTY	SA SA SA VSA VVSA
1. The student has displayed a wide range of knowledge on the number of ways to fall asleep in the first row.	0 0 0 0 0	1. The student has successfully abused me by words of discouragement and/or destructive criticism.	0 0 0 0 0
2. Presentations were delivered with almost no communication skill, but word-for-word text reproduction from wikipedia.	0 0 0 0 0	2. My interest in the subject has declined because of my continued exposure to the student's work.	0 0 0 0 0
3. The student displayed destructive interaction, always sitting in the last row.	0 0 0 0 0	3. My confidence in the student community has grown so much that I no longer see murder as an offence.	0 0 0 0 0
4. The student was always available and accessible in the class on the day immediately following an XX warning, or when an assignment was to be submitted.	0 0 0 0 0	4. In my opinion the student should be considered for the post of Mood-I CG.	0 0 0 0 0
<b>2 - EVALUATION (INSIGHT)</b>		<b>3 - DR 1 EVALUATION</b>	
III. INSIGHT FEEDBACK FORM	SD D N SA PCSA	IV. DR-1 FEEDBACK FORM	[Get a new DR - 1] [Don't] SD SD D D SA
1. With reference to the videos we release, iNSiGHt is an 'INDIA TV' wannabe.	0 0 0 0 0	1. His notes are available in at least 3 xerox shops, at least a week before endsems.	0 0 0 0 0
2. The people behind the leisure page should be shot at sight. Our names are conveniently printed at the foot of this page.	0 0 0 0 0	2. His phone is always reachable at all times.	0 0 0 0 0
3. InsiGHt should go green and stop. Otherwise, it should be banned.	0 0 0 0 0	3. His handwriting is good, and is also big enough to be visible from at least 2 desks away.	0 0 0 0 0
		4. He is awake till 4 AM during the endsems.	0 0 0 0 0

### The Leisure page guide to the perfect endsem

1. First, realize that your CPI does not matter (at least till your pre-final semester); there is always next sem.
2. If, even after this, you want to keep studying, we suggest you spend your scarce time studying rather than familiarizing yourself with the working of your calculator.
3. You could also put reminders in Google Calendar and your cellphone instead of studying - they'll make you feel organized.
4. 'Cracking the endsem alone would not ensure that your grades don't fall' is a myth. Whatever you do, your grades will fall...
5. Some courses have different portions for midsems and endsems- but knowledge *is* our supreme goal, so read everything from the beginning.
6. Make good friends. (read, DRs, TAs, Professors' relatives, and so on)

**Mock CAT:** We've watched, bewildered, as the CAT becomes more complicated every year. We think it might end up like this.

**Instructions:** 1. The question paper and answer sheets have colours. Please co-ordinate at your centre with other aspirants to find the matching color corresponding to the question paper. This will test your team playing skills. 2. Each question has about 5 options, and the options are jumbled. There are multiple correct options. 3. **Marking scheme:** Correct answer: + 0.125/0.3. Incorrect answer: -20. Unattempted question: -(3\*x) where x is the remainder on division of 4y by question number and y is  $\log_4(\text{question number})$ . No calculators are allowed. 4. Each centre has 10 log tables hidden somewhere. Please co-ordinate with everyone to find and use them. Each table is in a different language. You may find bonus questions in them. 5. There are 20,000 questions, 4 sections: Problem Solving, Logical Reasoning, Verbal abilities and Bonus questions. Time allotted - 30 minutes. 6. It is necessary to solve at least 10,000 correctly for you to be considered for the IIMs. Do not write ANYTHING on the OMR no matter how much we prompt you during the course of the exam.

1. Complete the sequence 14, 22, xyz, 356hxy, -0.234, ... .

e) all of the below

c) 1

b) integral  $f(x) dx$ . Limits: -20 to 20,  $f(x) = 0$  from -20 to 0 and -0 from 0 to 20

a) b or c

d) none of the above

2. If I think of a number, what is the probability that it is 3,45,275.2345? You may use any identity you want, you won't get the right answer anyway.

z) Infymax

r) delta

p) 1/infy

j) 1/3,45,275.2345

f) 3,45,275.2345

g) all of the above

3. Two trains are going somewhere.  $T_1$  is between Chandigarh and Ludhiana.  $T_2$  is between New York and Ohio. In how much time will they cross each other?

Assume that the speed of  $T_2 = \text{mach}3$  and the length of  $T_1 = 2 \text{ km}$ .  $T_1$  leaves Chandigarh at 3 past midnight Singapore time.  $T_2$  leaves New York at 2 PM Moscow time. For Singapore and Moscow timezones, refer to your mobile phones (remember:- use of mobile phones is not permitted). Speed of  $T_1 = |\sum \Omega \beta \psi| * \text{Speed of } T_2$ , where all symbols have their usual meanings. Length of  $T_2 = 4$  times the 1D area of this question paper in square microns, neglecting the header and footer.

a) insufficient information

d) Too much information

c) 2 seconds (prove in the margin of the OMR)

d) option e)

e) option d)

4. Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

"hey hi boys girls and evrybody

im a nice guy

i want great frandship frm all boys and girls

i looking for my queen basically

i can be a very good fradship ...because im nice evryone add me so dat frandship growth..so frands for ever

im smart evryone likes me ...i very open so ppl

add me very quick ...they think i very nice

SO GALS wat u waiting for

u can scrap me everytime and anytime and talk me anything."

*Sadly, we can't print the questions here because we've run out of space. Find the questions on our webpage (URL below). The same webpage also features an extremely detailed and enjoyable DI question!*

OUR NAMES (SO THAT YOU CAN SHOOT US ON SIGHT): SHREYAS SAGRI, RAVEESH VYAS, VAIBHAV DEVANATHAN  
The whole mock CAT paper is up on our webpage (URL below), as well as on <http://notshirtclub.blogspot.com>

**Status Quo**

From the Institute standpoint, Cultural Activities are promoted for the students' personality development, for developing a competitive spirit and, most of all, for fostering creativity. The effects are clearly seen when Companies and Universities consider your participation in cultural activities as a resume 'spike', or when you have to choose between two equally unpalatable situations in life, or when you 'score' at major college competitions around the city! You might want to take a look at our distinguished alumni-role-models, there was definitely something common to Rajat Gupta, Manohar Parrikar and Arun Sarin that made them what they are today.

A famous Post Graduate once said, "In God we trust, everybody else must bring data to the table". I present to you my bit of hypothesis driven stats. 3300 students out of 5600 enrolled students in IIT comprise the PG population, that's about 60% of the entire Institute. This obviously means that, if the PGs have successfully recognized the importance of participating in cultural activities, there would be proportionately 60% of PG population in the Cult activities. But clearly, as the graph shows, it isn't so.

**The Reasons**

For the sake of simplicity, we consider H1, H11, H12, Tansa as Cluster A and rest of the hostels as Cluster B. Starting with the foremost problem: **Time** – the majority of the PGs are enrolled in a master's programme, in which they have two years of stay. The first year is spent trying to understand the IIT system, and the second is spent with their projects. With PhDs, the story is entirely different. They are involved with their research groups and RA-ship, and spend most of their time in their hostel communities, where they actually tend to develop interest in a particular activity, only to be shattered by the *baccha* UG domination of most institute clubs and activities. **Awareness:** If you're a PG, you would yourself raise your eyebrow if I told you that the institute has a Video Camera which can be issued on your I-card! This is just the tip of the iceberg that consists of other happenings like workshops, shows, competitions, inter-college fests, PAFs and the breeding grounds for them all – the clubs. **Hostel distribution:** In the first year, PGs enter a

**Special Guest Article: Bridging the Gap**

**Sajid, the GS Cult, talks about the participation of PGs in Institute Cultural activities**

Cluster B hostel and in the next, they are most likely in Cluster A. This results in sporadic talent allocation in the Cluster A hostels which renders them with the least time possible in nurturing talent within the given span, while Cluster B hostels gladly spend 4 years in sending their most refined entries for the GCs.

**Enter the IITs**

IITs are the only institutes, and mind you, if you're a wary PG from another institute, you'll know I'm nailing it when I say that the IITs are the only institutes which foster the growth and proliferation of activities which are not academic. The amount of resources, facilities, work-force and dedication IIT devotes to the extra-curriculars spans right from the 30% of UG students occupying non-academic organizational posts to the annual 6 figure amount it spends on us. Why is all this being done? Was the success of debaters like Rajat Gupta, and performers like Arun Sarin not attributed to the IITs' lush environment?

**Solutions**

To tactfully promote participation from PGs in GC events, there were three major measures taken which are as follows. Hostels 1, 11, 12 and Tansa hardly get time to prepare with their hectic schedules, and their residents hardly stay for 2 years (or are shifted from other hostels into theirs for just one year) leaving them in a disadvantageous position inherently. For this, the Overall GC Trophy is now divided into Overall Trophy for Cluster A and Overall Trophy for Cluster B, resulting in 'like hostels' getting their bit of fair competition and retaining the motivation to fight for something foreseeable rather than against an inherent handicap. The second measure: one week before any GC event, the respective club must conduct a workshop for the same in any one PG hostel. The third measure: separate orientations for the inmates of selected PG hostels were conducted to brief them about activities in the institute.

**Current Scene among the PGs**

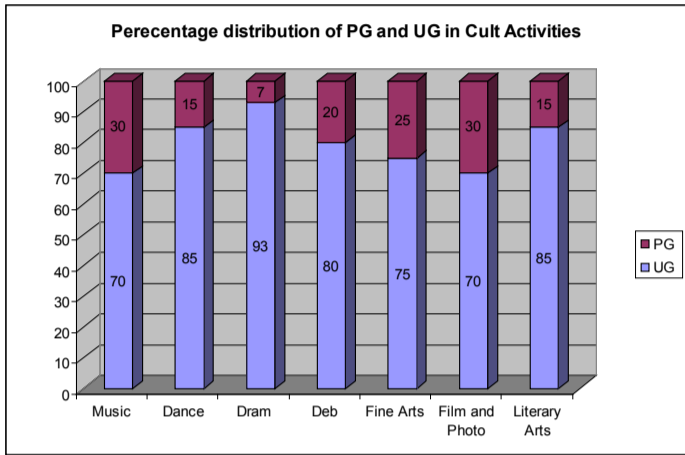
In *Surbahaar* this year, out of all the par-

ticipants, more than 50% were PGs. 80 out of 250 students registered with the Institute Dance and Music classes are PGs. In the Institute Debating league, the PGs are leading both the groups. Gyration and Street-Play saw a decent performance this year not only from Hostel 11 but also from Hostel 12 and Tansa House. Fine Arts has seen a tremendous increase in participation in the Fabric Painting Fine Arts GC and workshops by PGs. The students of Hostel 12 successfully organized a highly appreciated Art Festival.

**End Notes**

Well, having said this, it doesn't look as alarming as the graph did, but it's a definite indication that the PGs have started becoming conscious of the opportunities that are provided by the Institute, and are at a stage where they realize that they need to take full advantage of the current system and exploit the resources provided.

It's a time when the PGs ought to be exploring tangential options, exhibiting their acquired skill and sharing their knowledge with the rest of us. For all you know, tomorrow, you might find a stage exclusively for yourselves, a stage where you have the spotlight on yourself and the ability to create the difference. The same stage where one might believe, people like Rajat Gupta, Arun Sarin, and Manohar Parrikar all had a common virtue. We would be obliged to have you on board for otherwise, we will never be able to cross that bridge.



**Computers: boon or bane?**

**Teja and Ghaza talk about the good and bad effects of computers on student life at IITB**

Notwithstanding the radical change that computers and the LAN have made to our lives over the past ten years, the "good" effects of these seemingly harmless contraptions and applications are in no way small. With Google and Wikipedia, knowledge has become more accessible. Blogs changed the way people expressed themselves and got read. Facebook stole all your excuses for not saying 'hi' to the guy who used to eat his tiffin at that quiet corner of your high school classroom. And here are some of the ways in which life @ IITB changed:-

procedure of using snail mail and filling application forms. [We overlook the negative aspect of arbitrary spamming from almost two generations of the ever expanding IIT student fraternity]

- It takes us less than half an hour to design a brilliant poster announcing a meet/event on Photoshop as opposed to making them by hand. [We overlook the loss in creativity, thanks to Google Image search]

In addition to the above we now have the unlimited advantages of Web 2.0 starting with preparing for the CAT and GRE online to 'A Word a Day', 'Send Free SMS' and 'Recommend and Win a Reebok Shoe' as opposed to, well, nothing.

So, as with every other change in student life at IITB, computers have had both good and bad effects. Whether you think that the bad effects outweigh the good or not, computers are here to stay.

(N. Sri Teja is a third year student of the Mechanical Engineering Department and Gautam Hazari is a PhD student of the Electrical Engineering Department. They can be contacted at iamteja@iitb.ac.in and ghaza@ee.iitb.ac.in)

- It takes us only a few minutes (and some patient refreshes) on IRCTC to book our tickets compared to the cold journeys all the way to the Thane railway station at 5 AM.
- Research of any kind (UROP, BTP, etc.) can be conveniently done in the comfort of our room as opposed to sneezing in the Library and pinching the guy on the lone computer at the Department Computer Room. [We overlook the impact of the numerous distractions in our comfortable rooms]
- Applying to numerous colleges simultaneously in a very short time for internships and apps is a great boon. This is in contrast to the almost offline

Life @IIT before computers	Life @IIT after computers
8:00 a.m. ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ	ZZZZZZZZ
8:30 a.m. ZZZZZZZZZZZZ	Need to find the brush before class!
12:30 p.m. What's wrong with the potatoes?	What's wrong with IRCTC?
5:00 p.m. Time for football	Connect 10.4.201.65 Establishing Network Connection to Server... Preaching Resources... Parsing Game Info...
7:00 p.m. Need to crack that Dram GC again	Need to watch that movie again.
8:00 p.m. We will be on the left side of Convo. Raja Hindustani is being screened today.	BUZZ hiii.....der???
10:30 p.m. MI meeting in lounge	I have just mailed you the poster. Take printouts after class tomorrow and put them up at the shack, BJC and hostels
12:01 a.m. Hey, the Soc. Secy. has rented the VCR for tonight. Let's go to the Lounge.	What's the portion for tomorrow's quiz??
1:00 a.m. Ssh, let's start from that corner. Tonight the entire wing has to get wet. Are the buckets ready?	Hmmm....Obama was good. [SHIFT + DEL] Now, where did I leave the tutorial?



## An Informed Choice

(Continued from page 4)

We can learn from Stanford University when it comes to placements. It has a group called SICD on campus - "Students for Informed Career Decisions". They realized that their image as Stanford students has the potential to question if not intimidate multi-billion dollar corporations. They present to the students the positive and negative aspects of the companies coming for placements.

On the SICD website (<http://www.Stanford.edu/group/SICD/>) you can get to know about some companies with not-so-clean track records.

As a parting message, here's what the students and faculty of IITM had written to conclude their petition against Dow - "For members of the student body, it is infinitely important that this sort of critical thinking and learning accompany educational instruction during the years at college. It would perhaps be our best insurance against sudden disillusionment and its degeneration into chronic cynicism."

It would be a shame if we, with our claim to being the brightest and the best, grow up to be socially irresponsible and ignorant citizens.

(Archana Raja is a third year student of the Chemistry Department. She can be contacted at [archana.raja@iitb.ac.in](mailto:archana.raja@iitb.ac.in))

## Panel Debate – It's not about ragging

On November 4, 2008, InslghT conducted a Panel Debate on senior – freshie interaction, on whether there was a better way to curb ragging than the method currently being used. The panelists who held that the current method is efficient were Prof. N. B. Ballal (Head, Anti – ragging squad), Tarun Mathur and Manasvi Srivastava. The panelists who tried to suggest an alternate method were Prof. P. Banerji (Dean, AIR), Rahul Dash and Shashwat Gandhi. Prof. D. K. Ghosh, ex – Deputy Director, was the moderator. Prof. P. Gopalan, Dean SA and Prof. V. M. Gadre, Head, Institute Student Mentor Programme, were the guests of honour.

The discussion started with each side presenting its points. The main argument put forth by the proponents of the current method was that 'interaction' can only be between equals, and that senior-freshie interaction as it currently happens is an oxymoron. The alternate method suggested by the other side was that there should be a set of 10 student representatives of the Anti-ragging squad (which currently comprises only professors) in each hostel. They could ensure that serious cases are brought to light, and that the difference between healthy interaction and ragging is well understood.

There was then a 90 – minute long question and answer session with the members of the audience. Many questions concerned the model proposed to curb ragging – there was a feeling that it would be extremely difficult to find 10 members of a hostel who would act impartially to identify a case of interaction fairly as ragging. There

were also multiple questions on whether curbing interactions between seniors and freshies would not lead to the death of the 'hostel spirit', but Prof. Ballal and team made the point that too much interaction would lead to a loss of creativity.

The debate saw many moments of heated discussion, but it also had its lighter side. Prof. Ghosh, the moderator, kept the audience entertained with his classy one-liners, while Prof. Gopalan almost outdid his illustrious predecessor as the audience heckler.

The amount of involvement in the debate, both from the faculty and from the students, can be gauged from the fact that the debate went on for a full hour longer than it was scheduled to. Prof. Ghosh regrettably brought the session to a close, saying that he himself would be ragged at home if he reached late, and that the next panel debate would be about *him*.

The broad consensus reached at the end of the debate was that the Institute Student Mentor Programme should be strengthened to ensure that freshies do not miss out because of a total lack of interaction, and that they are also not harmed by some students who take interactions to unacceptable limits. After the debate, the feeling among everyone who attended was that there should definitely be more such faculty – student interaction.

(The video of the Panel Debate is up on our site, along with highlights from the debate.)

In this special placement edition of Questech, we bring you problems that might be useful in interviews/placement tests. The solutions are on our website.

- How many numbers  $n$  are such that  $n!$  has 99 zeros?
- A man has three daughters. With the help of the following details, find out their ages.
  - The product of their ages is 72.
  - The sum of their ages is the last two digits of his phone number.
  - The oldest daughter likes chocolate.
- $N$  cars move on a circular path with the same speed. If two cars collide, then they exchange their velocities (in other words, they undergo elastic collisions). Can you prove that the motion is periodic?
- An airplane has 100 seats, and 100 passengers were assigned seats. The first passenger, 'Joe,' enters the plane and, rather than sitting in his assigned place, he sits in a random place. The next passengers come in one by one

## Questech

and every passenger sits in his assigned seat if it is empty and in a random empty seat if his/her seat is already taken. What is the probability that the last passenger 'Jim' will sit in his assigned seat?

5) Consider a row of  $n$  seats. A child sits on each. How many arrangements are possible if each child is allowed to move by at most one seat?

6) Can you construct a hexagon with sides measuring 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 units with each angle measuring 120 degrees? (Hint: think of how you can get such a hexagon from a more well-known shape.)

7) You are given an empty jar and 100 marbles: 50 white and 50 black. You have to put all the marbles into two jars, in any way you like. Afterwards, you will be blindfolded and asked to pick one marble from one of the jars (the jars will be shuffled and you will not know which is which). How many of each type of marble should you put in each of the

jars so as to maximize your chances of picking up a white marble?

8) Given a directed graph with  $n$  vertices. How can you find if there is a vertex such that there is no edge coming into it, but there is an edge going from it to all the other vertices, in  $O(n)$ ?

You can represent the graph by an adjacency matrix and assume that reading each entry of the matrix takes unit time.

9) There are  $n$  identical VLSI chips that in principle are capable of testing each other. Each chip can test any other chip and can report whether it is good or bad. A good chip always reports accurately whether the tested chip is good or bad, but the answer of a bad chip cannot be trusted.

If it is known that more than half of the chips are good, give an  $O(n)$  algorithm to find all the bad chips.

(Mail your answers to [raoanupb@iitb.ac.in](mailto:raoanupb@iitb.ac.in) or [vaibhavdevanathan@iitb.ac.in](mailto:vaibhavdevanathan@iitb.ac.in))

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## Announcements

**The Golden Jubilee Magazine** For the first time, InslghT and *Aawaaz* are joining hands to bring out a bilingual magazine commemorating the Golden Jubilee of IIT Bombay. The magazine is slated to come out in March 2009. It will have content about the past and future of IITB - both in terms of how we have grown infrastructurally as an institute and in terms of how student life has changed and evolved here.

We welcome your ideas for different things we can do with this magazine, do write in at [insight@iitb.ac.in](mailto:insight@iitb.ac.in)

**The Open House Session** with the Biswas Committee, to discuss the pros and cons of the revised curriculum saw more than a hundred second year students attending. A wide variety of questions were asked, including questions on Minors, fundamental questions about why there was a curriculum revision in the first place, questions about how the new system is relatively easy on backloggers and many more. Keep watching our site for a video review of the event, as well as a detailed report and an analysis of how well the second year students think the new curriculum has been implemented.

**Our site** will continue to be updated with regular news items during December. We will have three special features running side by side, breaking Inter IIT news and coverage of the preparations for MI and Techfest. Do visit our site even if you're at home - you'll be able to catch up with all the Institute happenings as and when they happen.

**The InslghT Show** continues, with the last video of this

semester featuring the PG representatives as special guests. In that episode, we will try to debunk common UG misconceptions and myths about PG life, and try to bridge the gap.

**St. Gallen Wings of Excellence Award:** We recently had a representative from the St. Gallen University visit us, to popularize this event. All IITians are eligible for this award, providing they write an essay/ make a multimedia piece on the topic "Revival of Political and Economic Boundaries". The top 200 students from all over the world win the chance to go to Switzerland next May to participate in the 39<sup>th</sup> St. Gallen Symposium, where the winners will also be announced. For further details visit their website: [www.stgallen-symposium.org](http://www.stgallen-symposium.org)

In this final issue of the year, we have tried to bring you a little of everything- from sports to a PG special to a guest article to brain teasers, and we do hope we have provided you with a means of respite during the endsems.

For us, it has been a year of hilarious cartoons and inspiring videos, counting pennies and discovering talent. We have thoroughly enjoyed providing you with campus media and shall continue to do so in the coming year. Good luck for the endsems and placements and Happy New Year.

We have a whole lot of surprises in store for you in the coming semester, but for now, we'll see you in 2009!