Every morning, when I sit down with my cup of tea and the newspaper, I usually turn to the sports page first. More often than not, it records people’s accomplishments while the front page is nothing but a daily litany of failures, at the individual level and in governance.

It is a curious paradox, that while physical education is considered an integral part of our modern education system in India, it is still mostly taken for granted — a statutory requirement of the government so that schools incorporate PE classes in the time table and provide facilities for students to play games regularly. The same trend continues when students reach college. A sport is considered a supplementary activity that students can indulge in if they so desire but never as an integral part of the college curriculum. In fact, while most people would accept that exposure to sports and physical activity builds awareness that in addition to structural growth, organic growth is equally important, and it is an integral part of the general health and well-being of young adults.

In fact, often how have we asked ourselves this question: “Are sports and physical activity a part and parcel of an IIT education?” Is it a well-integrated part of the daily ritual of the denizens of this campus?

Ours is a campus blessed with hills, lakes bordering our flanks and open spaces of land in between; one can always indulge in physical activities safely, and at one’s own convenient time. At the same time, it is situated at the heart of India’s most developed mega-city, Mumbai; people here have access to all sorts of gadgets to get their work done, both at home and at office, thus enjoying the best of both worlds.

However, life is becoming increasingly sedentary over here as well. Few people realise the importance of regular physical activity in creating and maintaining organic vigour, so crucial for maintaining a long and healthy lifestyle.

Getting into good educational institutions like IIT is extremely difficult due to the limited number of seats available. Students become involved in entrance examinations and in preparing for their professional careers at a relatively early age. So even in schools, most students neglect participation in regular sports programmes. This in turn adversely affects their physical fitness and even physical efficiency. We might be able to take care of our health to some extent through advanced medical care facilities, but our physical fitness levels continue to remain low, in turn affecting our physical as well as organic growth.

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(Contd. Overleaf)
Students reach IIT Bombay after a rigorous study programme. At their preparatory stage, they are often studying for 10 to 12 hours a day, for two to three years, starting from 15 years onwards when growth spurts remain high. To make matters worse, in order to recover from the exhaustion of long hours of study most students try to supplement their diet with highly nutritious food items. On one hand, food intake remains good and on the other, physical activity remains minimal due to lack of time.

In addition to structural growth, organic growth is equally important, and it is an integral part of the general health and well-being of young adults.

There is hardly a culture of sports and physical activity amongst elite students of our country.

Thus, students tend to become overweight and lethargic. This is particularly evident for postgraduate students whose involvement in sports is already on a downward curve during their undergraduate years, for reasons explained earlier. The same is true in the case of most Ph.D students.

All these factors contribute to creating a scenario where there is hardly a culture of sports and physical activity amongst elite students of our country. Awareness remains low, with little or no experience in sports and even less knowledge about the importance of physical fitness in leading a healthy and meaningful life. In school, they might have been encouraged to participate in sports, but they were not taught that the experience gained there could be continued, so that optimum physical fitness levels could be maintained throughout their life.

Recreation is only possible when you have the concept of leisure. Students nowadays are an ambitious lot, driven by the need to further their careers. So even when they leave the institute, their demanding, high-profile jobs mean that there is little time set aside for recreational activities. What little time is available in terms of sportive recreational activities like watching TV or just relaxing with friends, which makes their life even more sedentary. Physical fitness is the first casualty in such a lifestyle. They have little physical prowess left to enjoy the fruits of their hard-earned money to its fullest.
A Bit of This and a Bit of That

JAYA JOSHI

I'm going to present this issue of Raintree with a few important wishes. A big thank you to D. Uday Kumar from the Industrial Design Centre for giving us the new Rupee symbol, and once again putting IIT Bombay's name in the pages of history. A prominent national columnist says, "the newly-minted symbol is strong, neat, international and assertive". Uday, who is now Prof. Uday Kumar at IIT Guwahati, incidentally has been a huge hit in the media and we're proud of all the noises it's making. In my PR history, the last time a media deluge this big happened was when I had organised a press meet for Mr. Bill Clinton's first visit to India. Looking back, there were two things that were different. First, with Mr. Clinton, I had enough notice and was fully prepared for it but for Uday Kumar's announcement, when I woke up on the 19th of July, I had no clue that my phone that day would exclusively be taking calls for Uday from more than 150 media personnel from around the world. Second, the press meet with Mr. Clinton was a job but with Uday, it was a job with a great sense of pride. We're proud of you, Uday and wish you all the best!

The team at Raintree also wishes a warm welcome to all the freshies and good bye to all the passing out students. You're both on the verge of something new and exciting. Make the most of it and have a great time!

The theme of this issue is on the spirit of sports at IIT Bombay. The lead piece is written by Mr. S. N. Jha, our very own philosopher of sports. The two of us once had an interesting discussion on winning and playing and I was happy when he agreed to write this piece. If you're wondering why we chose sports for this issue, his article will hopefully tell you. Also don't miss the Random Meanderings this time. Sent by our alumnus Rajendra Laad, it looks at the same subject of winning and playing in a light-hearted way. As always, the issue comes filled with brilliant illustrations, photographs, poems and stories. I'll be interested to have your comments, so don't forget to write in.

And before I sign off, I just want to say, what's with the rains? This is my third consecutive year and the thing that I like best about the Bombay monsoon is that it cannot be predicted. Look at it this year and how starkly different it is from last year. It's spirited, strong and somewhat cynical. This cynicism does create havocs for the planners, but then it's a lesson in preparedness that it's been trying to teach them for many years now. Anyhow, the campus is all lush with mostly green and very little brown despite the leaking roofs and damp and mouldy walls. I hope you're enjoying the rains as much as I am.
Letters to the Editor

A special mention should be made of the recent Anniversary issue of Raintree, which you have sent me. It is devoted to the rich ecology and other habitat in our vast and picturesque campus. Yes, I recall vividly my friend and colleague Prof. G. C. De’s outdoor jaunts. Though viewed as a ‘contrarian’ by many colleagues (example: how many of us would write letters longhand and send it by snail mail in this day and age?!), Prof. G. C. De had a streak of originality; he combined an indoor profession like teaching and research with a robust outdoor hobby like bird-watching. I had accompanied him for a couple of trips in early 1962-63 and then gave up. To keep pace with him needed missionary zeal. I liked your article too. Parakeets seem to find a friendly host in you. That they come in pairs adds a touch of romance. My wife says: “Ms Jaya is lucky; in our days we had only lizards and cockroaches visiting us in our ground floor flat.” Wishing you success and best wishes.

M.V. HARIHARAN

Received the latest issue of Raintree and was impressed by its heft — intellectual as well as corporal. The articles are interesting as ever, but the use of so much paper to spread awareness about ecology/sustainability seems akin to using a loudspeaker to tell people that noise pollution is really bad for them. Please do consider making this an online only publication with limited copies printed for visibility. Most people on campus have access to computers and internet and a few articles for leisurely reading can easily be printed by individuals.

PRITA PANT

Congratulations for creating such a wonderful newsletter. I really enjoy reading the articles and would be happy if you could write a little more about the Academy’s activities in the campus. We’ll be happy to assist you in this regard.

ANASUYA BANERJI
Academy Executive Coordinator, IITB Monash Research Academy

I have liked Raintree from the first issue onwards in all respects. But what I like in particular is the small front page articles about trees in campus. I myself love trees a lot and really appreciate the efforts taken by the writer of those articles (the name has not been mentioned anywhere). So I wanted to convey my regards to the writer and a request to continue the good work. Looking forward to read further.

BHAKTI JOSHI

Letters should be sent by e-mail to pro@iitb.ac.in. We regret that owing to the volume of correspondence, we cannot publish or reply all the letters. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.
In the Eye of the Tiger  ■ Interview with PROF. DIPAN GHOSH, Department of Physics

Q. Tell us about your recollections from the early years. What were the kind of difficulties you faced?

The biggest difficulty when we arrived here was housing. Even today, you find young faculty complaining about housing, but in ’74, the problem was in a different order of magnitude. Before reaching here, I was informed that there was a housing problem and that I would get Staff Hostel accommodation. When I arrived, I had to face the first bureaucratic hurdle in this institute — the Institute Engineers’ Office — which informed me that they had absolutely no place to give me. A colleague staying in a Type 4 Quarter house offered to host us till we got our own accommodation. But we used to eat out and after some ten days, I got fed up and went to see the Director. Prof. De had just joined then and he promised to look into it, though he told me there was no accommodation available.

Q. Prof. Ghosh, to start at the very beginning, could you tell us a little bit about when and how you decided to join IIT Bombay as faculty?

I joined IIT Bombay in August 1974. I had been in Bombay in 1966 as a student, when I joined TIFR for my PhD and from there in ’71, I went first to England and then to the USA. In the 70s, there were not many opportunities for a person with a PhD in science. The university system was in doldrums and there were not many options for theoretical physicists like me. My decision to look towards IIT was primarily because I had spent time in Bombay and Bombay is a city that grows on you. So, when we decided to return from the USA, the IITs were the only alternatives available. My letter of appointment had a bit of historical value as this was perhaps the last document signed on the last working day of Prof. Kelkar as the Director.

Q. What was your first impression of the institute?

The first time I came to IITB was when I attended a conference here on Nuclear Physics as a student of TIFR. In the 60s and early 70s IIT was absolutely barren; in fact this is a matter that should be of great pride to us, the greeneries that we see around us today is completely man-made.

Q. Any humorous incidents from the early years?

All sorts of funny things used to happen in the hospital. When you joined the institute, you had to get a physical evaluation done. So the first day I went to see the SMO, a Dr. Bilingadi. He put the stethoscope on me and suddenly lowered his voice and asked me my name. I told him my name and then he told me — that was the hearing test! There were essentially three colours of medicines available; you either had a white medicine, a blue medicine or a red one. The answer to all your ailments was in one of these three choices. Once I went there with a sore throat (in those days, many doctors were Bengalis). They would suddenly ask, “So shall I give you Tetracycline, Sulphur or Penicillin?”

When we started our Engineering Physics programme, we had to do a tremendous amount of lobbying. A lot of people said “What is this Engineering Physics? Is it neither Engineering nor Physics”. But we had to innovate for survival.

The same night my wife and I were returning to the campus after having dinner, and we came across Prof. De and Mrs. De out on a stroll along the main road. I greeted him with a hello, he recognised me because he had met me the same day. Now, you see, I introduced my wife and I forgot to tell her that he is the Director. I just said “This is Prof. De,” so then as it happens in Indian society, Prof. De and I walked together and Mrs. De and my wife lagged behind a little and were talking to each other in Bengali.

So, the conversation as I understood later went like this: Mrs. De asked my wife when we had come and my wife had replied that we were new. Mrs. De politely said that they were new too. My wife had to ask, of course, whether they had got a quarter and to her surprise Mrs. De said, yes, they had. My wife was shell-shocked and asked her how they managed to get a quarter so soon. She said, “These people told us they will give us a quarter and they have not given it to us.” When she related this conversation to me later on, I had to tell her that she had been talking to the Director’s wife!

Soon we were put up in a room in Staff Hostel 2. From there, we moved to Staff Hostel in a single room (there was no Annexe then) for the next two years. But for anyone here in 70s, such things didn’t bother you. This was a time when there was no rice available in the market. We are primarily rice eaters and I still remember going to the other side of Govandi with a bag because rice was a controlled item. There was no kerosene available, no gas; in fact, the first time I got a gas cylinder was after four and a half years of being at IIT. The point is, those were difficult days for the country and anybody who had decided to come back knew exactly what they were getting into.

Q. When you joined IITB, how did you perceive it in general, with respect to it being a primary engineering institute? In that light, how were the pure science departments placed?

To start with, physics, chemistry and mathematics were regarded as service departments; their primary function was to strengthen the scientific foundation of students who had joined IIT right out of school, and were not quite prepared to go into a five-year engineering programme. However, in the early 80s the science departments started asserting themselves. It started with early pioneers who held positions of authority at the institute. One of the first among them who I can recall is Prof. S. C. Bhattacharya, who became the Deputy Director. Then there was Prof. Hirelal and one of the earliest Dean of Academic affairs, Prof. Tyagarajan. The situation changed in the 80s and certainly in the 90s. When we started our Engineering Physics programme, we had to do a tremendous amount of lobbying. A lot of people said “What is this Engineering Physics? It is neither Engineering nor Physics”. But we had to innovate for survival. A science degree was (and still is) considered commercially less viable than engineering and in 1983, when the engineering programme became a four-year stint, Engineering Physics was an engineering programme that could be completed in four years, and also fetched you a lot more money. Compare that to a science programme of five years with an uncertain future. The faculty prepared a model more like a B.Tech degree in science. Today our cut-off at JEE is much higher than many engineering departments, so it has turned out to be a reasonably successful programme. Our boys get PhD scholarships to places like MIT, Harvard, etc. And 100 percent of them get placed in good places. When we started this programme, many IITs opposed us with the argument that we were bastardising Physics. In fact, IIT Kanpur still probably maintains that, but IIT Madras has started Engineering Physics, so has IIT Delhi, albeit 15 and 20 years later than us, respectively.
I have taught almost every course at the Physics Department. I began my teaching in this institute with the PH 101 Mechanics course. After a break, I went back to LG teaching and I have been teaching first year students ever since. In terms of evolution, black board teaching has given way to PowerPoint teaching. But I don’t necessarily believe that it is a better way of teaching. With a PowerPoint presentation, things look much better. I can add animation and all sorts of things but as teachers we tend to go too fast. Lights have to be turned down and as a result you don’t have eye-to-eye contact with students. In order to be a successful teacher you need to be a good actor too! Classes, too, have become so big that the students are afraid of asking questions for fear of being laughed at. Earlier, in a class of 70, 80 or 100, you knew that when you said something and saw a hesitant face, you could probe further and find out if the student had a problem. I put all my lectures on the web, which is what most students want now. I still enjoy teaching first year students as they are the least cynical and there is brightness in their eyes. Teaching styles have changed out of necessity. We will have no alternative now but to rely on some impersonal methods, if we have teach 900 students together. In the long run, there is bound to be a shift in the general nature of a teacher-student relationship.

Q: Since we are on the subject of students, why don’t you tell us about your tenure as Dean of Students Affairs?

Dean (Students Affairs) is one of the most difficult jobs I have ever handled. The problems that come up are totally different from those one comes across in teaching. There are often unprepared cases. For instance, you might have to spend the whole night in the hospital trying to save the life of somebody who has attempted to commit suicide. Or this other time when some 40 people were in the hospital, because they had had too much bhang (cannabis) on Holli. The Dean (Student Affairs) has to be continuously alert and aware of what is happening. I also believe that the important role which the Dean (S.A.) plays in keeping the institute going is not recognised in many quarters.

IIT Bombay was one of the pioneering institutes in getting rid of ragging. When I took up the position as the Dean (S.A.), one of the requests that I made to Prof. Sukhatme was that we should have a zero-tolerance policy on ragging.

By the time we reached there, the students had vanished. The students used to hire the equipment from a local trader. The next day when that fellow returned to get his equipment, I asked him for the names of the people who hired it. I still remember the General Secretary of Hostel 4 stating that everybody would be held responsible. We punished the whole hostel by telling them to sweep and clean the hostel — “jhadu pocha sab karema hai ek din” (you will have to sweep and clean everything for one day).

Q: We now come to your stint as Dean of Resource Mobilisation, which was your next major assignment.

I think the name Dean (Resource Mobilisation) is a misnomer because the work is actually to act as the finance minister of the institute, and our primary source of finance is the Government of India. So Dean (Resource Mobilisation) does a lot of resource management of funds that usually come from a regular source — the ministry.

Mobilisation forms a small part of this work. I did do some amount of fund mobilisation but that was from alumni, since the post of Dean Alumni and Corporate Relations did not exist then.

One way to augment funds could be from alumni funding. But this has not been significantly large. After the initial basket of funds we received for Kanwal Rekhi School, Shaleesh J. Mehta School and Parag Saxena Auditorium we haven’t received much. What we often don’t realise is that our biggest donor so far is an Indian resident, Nandan Nilekani. He has given around ₹ 25 crores but has chosen not put his name anywhere. Everyone knows about Hostel 13 but not so many people know that he and Raj Mashruwala gave money for hostel renovations. Part of that money came during my tenure. With that, we renovated the messes of all hostels with modern industrial kitchens and things like that.

But by the time the Golden Jubilee celebrations started, funds had started to taper off to roughly 5 crore per year. It has begun picking up now. But an important point that I would like to make here is that the alumni expect a certain amount of promptness from IIT in dealing with their money. Unfortunately, IIT’s mechanism is such that we have not kept up to it. For instance, Ram M. Mashruwala promised $ 3 million to be given to the Mechanical Engineering Department. But because nothing was moving there, at one point of time, he gave us a notice stating that he was withdrawing the money. Most alumni are accustomed to a corporate culture where delivery deadlines have to be met. Ours is an academic culture, where things happen perhaps in a more relaxed mode. So this becomes a problem area as alumni are not always happy with the way we deal with last dates, delivery schedules, etc. In any case, we then talked with Raj, and eventually we were able to convince him not to withdraw the money.

Q: A lot has happened since the Golden Jubilee and in your opinion, what are the key long-term challenges that the institute will face?

50 years is actually not a very long time in the life of a university; what we have achieved in such a short span is very creditable. There is long road ahead with a lot of obstacles and challenges. It has been often remarked that the IITs are known for their famous undergraduates. To be able to compare us with well-known universities abroad, the institute has to emphasise on research.

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Inter-IIT Sports Meet

IITB beats IITM

Time: December 1983, Venue: IITM home turf. IITB was leading IITM by more than 12 points towards the overall trophy awaiting the result of the tennis finals. IITB had already won the trophy, irrespective of the tennis results. The entire IITB contingent was excited and rejoicing. But alas, the final tennis game was washed away by rain. The tournament was incomplete and hence no overall trophy was awarded.

For several years in a row IITM had won the overall trophy. Every other IIT hated them so much! IITM was very strong in Athletics, which carried 20 points for gold. Oh and, the point system was:

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IITB always won several games, viz. tennis, basketball, kabaddi, cricket, table tennis, badminton. IITM would be second, third or fourth. IITB won several games, viz. tennis, basketball, kabaddi, cricket, table tennis, badminton. IITB had a contingent of 120 students or so. As a result, every other IIT hated them so much! IITM was very strong in Athletics, which carried 20 points for gold. Oh and, the point system was:

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IITM has a wonderful campus! IITM campus is between two lakes, Powai and Vihar, whereas IITM is in the middle of a protected national forest. As a result, it is not uncommon to see beautiful deer (around 70-80 of them) crossing the Hockey field from one end to the other, a little after dawn. This was in mid-November, 1983 when Pramanik from Gymkhana and I attended the pre-meet planning meeting.

This time we had a strong team for most sports except, of course, for Athletics. Everyone had practised really hard during the camp with the single objective of beating IITM. We devised several strategies this time. One of them was to plan our cheering properly. We didn’t bother cheering for games we were sure to win or lose. We focused all the attention and energy on borderline games/events and pulled them across to the winning side. Looking back now, I realise that it was not fair to those teams that they almost got no audience from our contingent. I guess it was that age!

Chennai had had drought for three years in a row and 1983 was the first year that they had some rains. Water was still rationed, not only on the campus but throughout the city as well. IITM, however, filled the swimming pool for our event in spite of complaints from the staff. I digress...

With all those strategies fully at work, they gave IITB more than 12 points over IITM. We were all so excited to beat IITM on their home turf and bring the trophy home.

Ye Ilaka Hamara Hai

Whenever I see a Hindi movie with a Bihar context or hear Shatrughan Sinha’s “Ye Ilaka Hamara Hai” our train ride back from IIT Kharagpur flashes before my eyes. Bihar was and is (in)famous for its gunda-giri (hooliganism). The TC mentioned later that the villagers would have reached us within half an hour and burnt the bogie with others were bruised as well.

We immediately picked up speed. I remember some folks got out of the train and were phoating around. Out of nowhere came 15 – 20 guys, some with bamboo sticks, and attacked them. A fight broke out! We handed hockey sticks from inside. A few more guys went out for reinforcement. Those two local boys were among them! This went on for a few minutes. Jha and Appaji (Hockey coach) were outside as well, trying to persuade the guys to get back in.

All of a sudden we saw a plume of dust at a distance and heard some noises. The TC (there was one in our bogie) immediately screamed, “Sab lag unda chalo. Hum gaadi chole wale hai. Window bandhi karo, glass nahin, metal shutter se” (Everybody get inside. We’re about to start the train. Close the windows with metal shutters). Somehow, all of us managed to get in while the train started slowly. We immediately picked up speed. I remember some bruises on my forearm, Appaji was bleeding and several others were bruised as well.

The TC mentioned later that the villagers would have reached us within half an hour and burnt the bogie with us inside. We were lucky! His very close TC friend was a victim of such a raid the year earlier.
The i-Race was a whacky idea right from the beginning. It was an accurate race that could be run at multiple locations on earth, wherein everyone competed against everyone else in the world on equal footing (pun unintended); age, gender, race distance notwithstanding. I realised it was showing up to be a true-blood IIT race when a prominent orthopaedic surgeon in Mumbai called me, "Madhur, you IITians are now making even running complicated.

As I write this, there are 10 days to go for the fifth running of i-Race. While most registrations come in the last week before the race, we are already beyond the 400 mark in registrations. So my mind goes back to those early days with many funny and not so funny episodes.

**RACE MODEL AND TECHNOLOGY**

Initially, we were not sure whether the race model would work. We thought it would throw up absurd results. However, after the first race, we realised that the model went far beyond our expectations. For one, we realised that our equations fitted the world records for almost all ages within +/− 4%. We found that the children’s world records were given the same statistical weight as the adults’ records had progressed from 1970s, we could see that our models predicted exactly the same again. We found that the children’s world records were kept for younger ages. So we had to go back to ages 14 and above. This was because there are no world records kept for younger ages. So we had to go back to the drawing board and look at the world record tables again. We found that the children’s world records were kept till the 1970s after which they were abandoned as given the massive variations in human performances over age, gender and racing distances.

Our winners also reflected that sensitivity. One winner, D. Yadav of IIT Bombay has been representing India in Athletics at the Veteran Olympics. On another occasion, Bhasker Desai of IIT Delhi, an ardent marathoner, won at the age of 56 years, though in the actual race he was placed fifth. The first four were youngsters from IIT Delhi’s Athletic team.

The biggest upset came when seven-year old Sonu won the third race. His performance in New Delhi was scintillating and he stood fifth amidst a sea of fast men. Before his performance, our model was fitted only for ages 14 and above. This was because there were no world records kept for younger ages. So we had to go back to the drawing board and look at the world record tables again. We found that the children’s world records were kept till the 1970s after which they were abandoned as given the massive variations in human performances over age, gender and racing distances.

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to display the moving locations of runners, we realised that on Sundays between 7 and 8 am, it was downtime for Reliance Communication. So there was no internet connectivity to the website from our laptops. Of course, in true IIT style, we ran the ‘simulation’ recorded earlier and no one noticed, other than us, that is.

THE FUTURE

Even today, there are many interesting issues. We looked at RFID (Radio Frequency ID), and their global norms. However, they did not make sense as the cost of trans-receivers that would measure the runners was going too high. Can we track the runners using GPS, without adding excessive costs? That will help in checking runners taking short-cuts. Also, then we can update positions of runners on a map, adjusted to their abilities.

Can we measure height, weight and body fat percentage of runners without making them go through actual measurements? Can we use the runners’ chest numbers using some form of Optical Character Recognition to track their positions and finish times? That way, we can have someone with a mobile stand at a location and click the runners. The software on the mobile would track the runner’s number and update the central website along with the time stamp. That would make tracking really easy.

We can also incorporate temperature into the model, as obviously the race temperature affects the performance. But then, how do we get humidity and wind measurements to be incorporated? They are equally important variables. Maybe, some iITians could come up with interesting solutions to these problems.

The uniqueness of i-Race is that it can be run over multiple locations. The largest race of any kind currently is Bay to Breakers in San Francisco. The San Francisco Examiner comes out with the names of the first 10,000 finishers a day after the race every year. In 1986, nearly 11 lakh runners started it, which is the world record for the largest number of participants in a race.

Unfortunately, no race can grow beyond that number. After all, by the time the last participant crosses the start line of Bay to Breakers, the lead runners would have crossed the finish line. It is impossible to start so many people at one venue. If i-Race catches on as a concept, it could become the world’s largest race one day, as it has no such limitation. And it will have the IIT stamp all over it. After all, Mood Indigo was just a tiny cultural programme 30 years ago.

ADVENTURE

White Water Rafting – A Lifetime’s Adventure

It was a surprising evening when my father declared that he had planned a 4-day holiday tour to Haridwar, Rishikesh and Mussoorie. I was so excited and thrilled that I couldn’t think of anything other than white water rafting. After enjoying the evening puja at Har-ki-pouri in Haridwar and the waterfall in Mussoorie, we left for Rishikesh. My mind raced enthusiastically at the thought of white water rafting on the Ganges. I had heard that it starts from Shivpuri in Rishikesh. As we had not made prior bookings for rafting, we were not hopeful that we would be accommodated instantly.

In our journey to Shivpuri, to my utter disappointment, our car ran out of diesel. We dragged the car to a couple of petrol pumps but unfortunately diesel was not available anywhere for reasons unknown. I was upset and sad thinking that chances of cancellation of our rafting plan anywhere for reasons unknown. I was upset and sad thinking that chances of cancellation of our rafting plan probably did not look too bright.

Out of the blue, a Tata Safari with a raft on top of it was speeding toward us. We stopped it and my father requested the guide to stop in the still water and encourage me to get into the water and overcome my fear. After swimming in the river and around the raft, the guide told us that we have two more rapids to go. I was scared of even thinking of those rapids now. My father requested the guide to stop in the still water and encouraged me to get into the water and overcome my fear. After swimming in the river and around the raft, the guide told us that we have two more rapids to go. I was scared of even thinking of those rapids now. My father requested the guide to stop in the still water and encouraged me to get into the water and overcome my fear.

The guide threw a rope toward me. I caught hold of it and pulled myself up. Then I threw the rope to my father who was still in the rapids. He grabbed the rope and we both got back to the raft safely.

What a relief! My heart was bursting out of my chest. I was thankful to the life jacket. It saved us. Thanks to Dr. Reddy for the swimming lessons. Since I know swimming, I was confident of overcoming any untoward situation in the river. But even an expert swimmer cannot swim in such strong current.

The guide told us that we have two more rapids to go. I was scared of even thinking of those rapids now. My father requested the guide to stop in the still water and encouraged me to get into the water and overcome my fear. After swimming in the river and around the raft, we felt much more comfortable and we resumed our journey. I enjoyed the next two rapids. Our trip came to an uneventful end and I was quite happy that we could complete it.

POETRY

Kailash patti

In gentle embrace your blooms hold
You in their soft and fragrant fold:
They invite the busy carpenter bee
To visit the flower for a nectarous fee
But deposit the precious dust unaware
Brought from another lovely cannon ball tree
Its buzzing nectar-searching spree.

You will then be caught in a fruity embrace
Your fruits jostling with flowers for space
Like a gift-wrap the fruits envelop your frame
from whence you get your unique name
Tall and lovely may you go on to grow
And dazzle all with your striking show
Long after we have all gone by
May your evergreen beauty never die.
There was hardly anything to do. Maybe a radio set or a record player. TV was installed in my hostel in 1972-73, in my final year. Because of the lack of entertainment, the only source of diversion in the hostel was the pastoral side to students’ lives in the sixties, outside the academic area’s sphere of influence, seemed to have been brush-stroked by three defining features. One, a huge overdose of potato trees; two, a huge underdose of pre-fabricated entertainment; and three, such vast oceans of time on your hands, empty of distractions, that it could drive you to your wits’ end trying to figure out what to do with it.

That’s the operative phrase here: empty of distractions. Consider the scenario. TV signals were yet to cross the skies (not even the terrestrial, Doordarshan-monopolized kind had come to Bombay); the word ‘personal’ was still two decades from wedding itself irreversibly to ‘computer’; and as for phones, even a land line was a distant dream. Nor were you in any danger, should you have strayed out of the campus, of being ambushed by diversions. Outside IIT-Bombay’s gates, all was still and quiet; nothing to ‘see’, no malls – why, not even a clutch of shops – you could fritter your time away in. One just had the campus, and its retiring surrounds.

And here was the clincher. Nor any more was there the distraction that can grow to become the most consuming of all: the company of the opposite sex. That all-defining number, the girls: boys ratio, though it might have spiralled relentlessly upward from 1:875 since 1960, yet remained pitifully low; on the IIT-Bombay campus, days together must have studied for the sake of studying but I think, quite a few must have studied just to kill the boredom. There was no other entertainment available. I don’t think it was a very good idea, but that was what we ended up doing.

How well drilled this curious work ethic left some of the students, what masters of their territory it made of them, is evident from this: ‘Today, it might seem an absolutely mad idea, but many of us solved the whole of Kreyszig, the whole of Resnick and Halliday’ during our second years. We studied all there was to study in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics and I think in every wing, two or three students would have done this, either together or individually. We had so much time on our hands.’

What about those, never too few in number, with books the last thing on their minds? Expectedly, there was sport. Many recall having spent entire evenings, daily until dark, sharpening their skills in a range of sport, including basketball, volleyball, cricket, athletics, hockey, tennis, badminton, bridge, chess… you name it. Conspicuous by its absence throughout the decade, though, was swimming. To the chagrin of many, IIT-Bombay was perhaps the last of the IITs to get its own swimming pool (it arrived finally, many years too late, in 1979).

An early red-letter event for IIT-Bombay’s sporting enthusiasts was the hosting by the Institute of the first ever inter-IIT sports meet, from 27 to 30 December 1961, for which 200 students from its sister institutions travelled long distances to take part.

If not too drawn to sport either, the battle against vacancy became a stimulus for the deepest absorption in some or the other chosen activity. Since you really were at your wits’ end to kill time, those wits got relentlessly sharpened and honed. Passions could be pursued with single-minded intensity, so that they ended up taking on an astonishingly accomplished hue.

There were those who, fascinated by the art of rocketry, obliterated themselves quite literally, for one of them dropped out of his B.Tech.) to the making and launching of their own rockets. There were others who, fascinated by the dynamics of private enterprise, went about floating public limited concerns in the marketplace of their own hostel wings and corridors – with resounding commercial success (for more on this, see Chapter 4.5).

Yet others, possessed by the spirit of electronics, set up their own HAM and radio broadcasting stations – that again at the height of Indo-Pakistan tensions in 1965, arousing the consternation and the suspicion of the local police, causing them to move into campus to nip the misguided enterprise in the bud. One restless soul, votary of the epicurian life, fabricated his very own Coke dispensing machine: state-of-art technology for the time, and no doubt a useful status symbol to have in your room.

The lure of the arts was no less strong. There were the numbers who plunged themselves into theatre, film, writing. Student magazines of the sixties and seventies – Technik is a prime example – carry writing of sometimes astonishing assurance, elegant and informed, peppered with literary allusions. A film society flourished: the first screenings took place, early sixties, in the Civil Engineering building, moving next into the Lecture Theatre and finally into the Convocation Hall. And the films shown were often whimsically offbeat, including those by the European masters of the medium. ‘Often the guy who was organizing the movies would decide,’ recalls Vasi, ‘that such-and-such movie by, say, Bunuel or Bergman, was something we simply had to see – and because there was nothing else to do, 500 people would troop along to see the movie.’

Again the ‘nothing else to do’ syndrome, resulting in its own tangential edifications: here, in the finer points of cinema.

As they looked then: IIT-Bombay’s students flash their creased trousers and ironed shirts, mid-1960s. No prizes for guessing what sorts of figures a similar group would cut today.

Turning lathe and turning heads: IIT-Bombay’s early students looking rather roguish, in their high gum boots, on the workshop floor.

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which to nurture it – aided on one hand by a stimulating academic environment and on the other by the company of some of the nation’s best young talents. Further on in the book, we’ll see that these circumstances bred some truly fertile minds and foreshadowed, in many cases, success stories on a national and on a global scale.

**GUM BOOTS, F-1 DONKEY RACES, AND ‘HUGE PILES OF TALENT’**

With the Institute virtually an unknown quantity in the early 1960s, and armed with very little idea of what awaited them, IIT-Bombay’s early students were like prospectors venturing into unmapped terrain. And they looked the heroic part, too – if only because the Institute obliged them to. ‘When the time came to actually make your way to IIT,’ recalls Vasi, who arrived in 1964, ‘you were sent this letter saying that prospective students had to report on such and such date and bring the following. Now amongst ‘the following’ were all kinds of interesting things. For example they said you have to bring a hat because of the intense sun, especially in the summers – and I know at least two people who actually brought along not just hats but their Sola Topees. The other thing they insisted on bringing was gum boots, so you saw all these freshers coming in holding bags in one hand and in the other, holding a pair of gum boots. It was quite an odd sight but,’ Vasi concedes, ‘you did need those gum boots because right away when you came it was already monsoon, and Bombay has such fierce rains. It was muddy and squishy and I remember actually wearing my gum boots for a few days.’

But for all their practical utility, the gum boots could be a big liability, and not just in the matter of causing foot cramp. ‘Obviously gum boots were very alien to the IIT culture,’ Vasi explains, ‘and sooner or later nobody wore them, switching over to chappals – except at the start of the next year: Going into their second and third years, Vasi’s batchmates were able to spot freshers from a distance as ‘the guys wearing gum boots’. And as for the latter, betrayed by this loud advertisement of their status, they became sitting ducks – serving up for their seniors yet another go at that most dubious of diversions, a bout of ragging.

And what, inconveniences and oddities apart, was life for students like in the 60s? One outfall of being in an area like Powai, cut off from Bombay was, in Dr K.P. Madhavan’s words, that ‘since there weren’t too many things you could do in the immediate vicinity, at least for five days a week you tended to be interned here – and naturally, you took full advantage of whatever facilities were available.’

‘Facilities’, of course, were being created one by one, and were necessarily limited – but students did take the fullest advantage. The 1960s seem to be high days for sport (all except organized swimming), theatre, writing, and hobbying of a great many kinds. Students acted in and directed a wide range of plays, both within the Institute and in theatres in the city. And student magazines of the time – such as Technik and the annual Progoti – carried a good amount of controlled, nuanced writing – if somewhat quaint in its Victorian fl air. (Today, of course, it is Americanisms that hold sway, on paper and on the tongue.)

Added to which there was no little maverick activity of an undeni ed nature. Consider, for instance, the ‘Pagal Gymkhana’. In response to an appeal for memories and photographs from the 1960s, alumnus Dr Dinesh Mohan (now on the faculty of IIT-Delhi) sent in the pictures shown on these pages and the accompanying write-up. Supplemented by Dunu Roy, they resurrect something of the timbre of the times.

**Pagal Gym 1:** We organized the ‘Pagal Gymkhana’. I forget whether it was just once or twice. These pictures show the Coca Cola drinking contest (Anand Virmani in the foreground) and Brig Bose in Arab head gear.

Which still doesn’t tell us what exactly the ‘Pagal Gymkhana’ was; and which is where Roy’s account helps us along: ‘This was an idea that Dinesh and I had stolen from our old school (Goen). How we got into the Student’s Gymkhana in 65-66 is one of those accidents of history. The previous year the Committee, headed by Virat Sahni, had got so disillusioned with the adamant attitude of the IIT administration, headed by the formidable Brig Bose, that nobody wanted to stand for elections. So we put in our papers, much to the displeasure of our seniors, and all of us got in unopposed! It was a truly fantastic team with Dinesh heading the social and cultural side and Ashok Madak steering the sports activities. We jelled so well that together we took on the Brigadier and the result is there to see in the picture – he came to the Pagal dressed as an Arab!’

**Pagal Gym 2:** ‘Top picture shows Professor T.R. Sarkari launching the festivities by running around the main field with the Pagal Gymkhana ‘torch’ and the bottom picture the winner of the donkey race (Tycoon Tyabji?).’

And there we have it: pictorial evidence for what Dr S. Dixit had dubbed, some 40 years later, the ‘strangest sports event’. He had gone on to describe it further: ‘This was the first, and only, donkey race anyone has perhaps ever seen – Formula 1 style, complete with flag-offs, betting stalls, a running commentary – and the donkeys ridden by carefully selected students of short stature (the jockeys)’. ‘Some competitors,’ added Dixit, ‘did complete the race.’

When asked to cast his mind back to the exploit, Dunu Roy said, ‘From what I recall, the animals were turfed out from the local building contractor’s camp, where he was trying to construct Hostel 8.’ And instantly sank back into reminiscences of times past, recalling the adolescent energy at the Institute waiting to be unleashed:

‘There was a huge pile of talent just waiting in IITB in all kinds of fields – theatre, debating, football, gymnastics, boxing, ham radio, electronic gizmos, aeromodelling, and so on – and I think (or like to think!) that our panel merely provided the opportunity for all that talent to let loose. And how both the seniors and juniors responded! They just whizzed off in all directions – including the iconiclastic Rejekte, the hugely creative inter-hostel dramatics, the fi ercely competitive inter-college debates, and the building of an image of IITB slightly removed from the Intel type nerds. In fact, there was so much activity that both Dinesh and I had less than the required 40% attendance in classes. The Pagal was a kind of culmination of all that effort. And I think a lot of people of those years may remember it with quiet affection and ribald humour!’
**IN THE WILDERNESS**

**POETRY**

**Monsoon**

MALLIKA IVYER Campus Resident

The sweet snail fills the night air
As the Earth below me parched and dry;
Rejoices in its re-kindled love affair
With the daughter of the sky.

I rejoice in the first raindrops as well
And in the fresh fragrance of the Earth;
How sublime this simple joy I cannot tell
That heralds a new season’s birth.

**NEWS**

**Snowballing Green**

The previous issue of Raintree and its focus on ecology led to a snowball effect, where several newspapers like DNA, the Indian Express, Navbharat Times and Hindustan Times covered the ecological aspects of the campus, throwing light on the campus’ rare flora and fauna, its Green Campus Initiative Committee and the campus’ different approaches at becoming increasingly environment friendly.

**Hits and Misses: JEE’s Surprises**

To all young adults who see IITs as the window of accessing burgeon- ing opportunities, the JEE is the most important exam of their young lives. For two years, they work with unceasing focus on cracking JEE and the moment of euphoria comes through when they excel beyond their own expectations. Such excelling also includes some of the top rankers giving IITs a miss and taking a subject they really like, in a college that gives them the freedom to decide, say after two years? This is something that gives them the freedom to decide, say after two years? For instance, Aakansha Sarda, who topped among the girls with an All India Rank of 18 and filled up the IIT admission form during the first round, but, will be vacating her seat, which therefore allows another candidate to take up Computer Science. “I will be joining MIT, but I filled the form because my visa had not been processed then. I am interested in a whole lot of subjects,” she says. “MIT gives me the flexibility of declaring my major after two years. This is something that IIT does not offer me.” Some other top rankers are more interested in pure sciences and are therefore choosing ISERs over IITs, like K. Hari Ram, AIR 97, who could have secured a seat in Computer Science but did not even fill up the IIT admission form. He wants to pursue an intensive course in Maths and has thought about opting for Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore, or the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune. But such instances are rare, we are told by JEE officials. The IITs remain the best place for an engineering education in India. “Though two students from the top 100 will drop out of the admission, most others will join IITs. In fact, we have 17 of the top 20 AIRs joining IIT Bombay,” said JEE vice chairman, Avijit Chatterjee.

There is an upward spiral of aspirants from the OBC category. And the good news is that the percentages of students who don’t require a relaxation of 10% in scores to qualify have increased from 990 in 2007 to 1,489 in 2010. However, this means that the 27% seats set aside for the OBC category will not get filled. The general category got 220 seats from the OBC quota this year.

**Polish Delegation Visits IIT Bombay**

A delegation from the Wielkopolska Region visited IIT Bombay on May 5, 2010. The delegation comprised Prof. Grzegorz Skrzyczak — Rector of the University of Life Sciences in Poznań, Prof. Jan Pikuł — Vice-Rector for Science and International Relations, University of Life Sciences in Poznań, Prof. Aleksandra Rakowska — Rector for Science, Poznań University of Technology and Mr. Michał Platzy ski — Department of Economy, Marshal Office of the Wielkopolska Region. They all met Prof. A.K. Suresh, Dean Faculty, IITB along with representatives from Energy, Chemical, Electrical, Biosciences and Design departments. This was the first time a Polish delegation visited the institute. The delegation expressed interest in the R&D and academic programmes of the institute and is keen to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with IITB.

**Light Combat Helicopter’s (LCH) Maiden Flight: Cause for Celebration**

The LCH’s maiden flight took place on May 23, 2010 at the HAL Bengaluru airport. The helicopter is fully designed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). Mr. B P Rao, an IITB alumnus, B-Tech (Aero) 1971, M-Tech 1973, was the Chief Designer and Overall Program Manager for the Combat Helicopter. He was in charge of basic design concepts, detailed design and release of thousands of manufacturing drawings as well as the establishment of the Design Tech Park (dedicated co-located CAD teams and facilities). He was also responsible for the manufacture of prototypes and establishing new facilities and young teams for full-scale production of the LCH.

**Aaroha: Design Degree Show, 2010**

The graduating batch from Industrial Design Centre (IDC), IIT Bombay held their Annual Design Degree Show titled “Aaroha” at the Industrial Design Centre, IITB, Powai and at Nehru Centre, Worli on 26 and 27 June, 2010 from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm. The show consisted of an exhibition of projects and screening of films made by the batch of 2008-2010. The exhibition at Nehru Centre was preceded by a three-day curtain raiser event at IDC from 22 to 24 June, 2010, which included project exhibitions, seminars featuring prominent names from the design world and workshops conducted by the faculty and alumni of IDC.

**Design at IDC is all-encompassing and coexists in an active triadic relationship with design education, design research and design practice. The batch proudly presented their creative exploits. The exhibition was the harbinger of their arrival into the industry. The who’s who from the world of design gathered to collaborate and work with the fresh talent moulded by the institute. Mobile phone applications ruled the roset at the exhibition. Students came up with speech translators (a feature you can install) to translate languages in a cell phone. Another mobile phone feature dealt with interactions between doctors on the phone with their patients affected by AIDS. The feature will make these interactions easier and will also allow them keep their identities anonymous.

The concept of aaroha emerges from Indian Classical music. It is said that our music lies not as much in the notes (swar) themselves, but in the journey from one to the next. Thus, music lies in the bridges, the in-betweens, the unseen and the unsaid. Two years ago, around this time, 48 individuals had embarked on an expedition, with which they scaled the first of many peaks to come. It was not about reaching the destination as much as it was about celebrating the journey. It was as though the 48 people shared their adventures and stories from the expedition, individually and collectively. Celebrating Journeys | Celebrating Design (DDS) brought together Indian and international design students as well as professionals, to share the vision of creating a platform to pool resources, express, innovate and thereby enable young minds to progress to the next level.

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The story starts with a pair of butterflies mating. It’s an episode in nature rather rare to be caught on camera. This photo is by Joseph Tharion who saw these two butterflies somewhere near the Kendriya Vidyalaya school.

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The winner, Sanjeev Shankar, who is an independent design consultant, won ₹ 2 lakhs for his idea ‘Ubiquitous Planting and Growing’ – a technique on which indigenous seeds and plants can be integrated so that plants become an intrinsic aspect of the new building blocks of large cities. He completed his B. Arch. from School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi University. He followed this with an M.Des. from IIT, Delhi, and an M.S from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. Shankar is an Adjunct faculty at the Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Bombay. He has also been a faculty at the Department of Architecture, Architectural Association, London, UK.

The other finalist was Prof. Dipankar with Mr. Atul Sekaria who won ₹ 2 lakhs for their idea ‘High Efficiency Lighting’. Prof. Dipankar is an Adjunct faculty at the Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Bombay. He has also been a faculty at the Department of Architecture, Architectural Association, London, UK.

These two ideas were chosen out of the 900 ideas submitted by people across the country. The intellectual property for each idea is owned by the ideator. A list of 15 ideas (compiled by a team of IIT Bombay faculty) was given to the eminent judging duo — Prof. R. Chidambaram, Chief Scientific Advisor, Government of India and Prof. Mark Welland, Head of Nanosciences at Cambridge University. The criteria for evaluation were centred on contribution to human development and environmental impact.

Nitin Nohria Appointed as New Dean of Harvard Business School

A Harvard alumnus, Nitin Nohria, is the first Indian to become Dean of Harvard Business School. Nohria, who graduated as a chemical engineer from IIT Bombay in 1984, says that IIT taught him to think out of the box. Over the years, his changing interests have dictated his career choices. The chemical engineer went on to complete a PhD in Management from the Sloan School of Management, MIT, 1988. After this, he became the youngest professor to teach at Harvard Business School. He has co-authored 16 books and is a specialist in the area of ethics and business leadership. He has received a Distinquished Alumni Award from IITB in 2007.

“I feel humbled and privileged to follow many outstanding Deans”, Nohria, 48, said on his appointment. “With business education at an inflection point, we must strive to equip future leaders with competence and character to address emerging global and social challenges.” He took up his new role from June 1, 2010. We wish him all the best.

Aerospace R&D takes off

Unknown to many, researchers at IIT Bombay’s Department of Aerospace Engineering have been quietly working on a number of research problems set to bolster indigenous capabilities. The research done by Prof. Sripad P. Mahulikar, Department of Aerospace Engineering, is a case in point. Prof. Mahulikar has uniquely contributed to research on infrared (IR) signatures of aircraft and helicopters. This is a strategic component of stealth technology. The IR radiation emitted by hot parts of the power-plant is used by heat-seeking missiles to lock-on and attack the target; hence, it is important to predict its IR signature for stealth design. Prof. Mahulikar’s academic research on IR-stealth technology, co-authored by his Masters’ & PhD students, has been widely accepted internationally in several prestigious journal articles. He has also masteredmind the indigenous IR-suppressor for the Advanced Light Helicopter, together with an officer from the Hindustan Aeronautics masterminded the indigenous IR-suppressor for the Advanced Light Helicopter, together with an officer from the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., his Masters’ student.

His most recent research is in the field of micro-fluidics. Microchannel-based heat exchange is a technology for cooling aircraft gas turbine blades, thus limiting combustion temperatures. However, micro-heat exchangers are not just limited to aerospace applications, they can also find applications in the form of a mini refrigeration system. While conventional heat exchangers are designed to suppress this radiative mode of heat exchange, Prof. Mahulikar and his team of co-workers theoretically revisited this popular scientific belief. They proved that for micro-heat exchangers, surface roughness actually increases the heat transfer performance significantly. Consequently, the design of micro-heat exchangers should augment and not suppress the radiation heat amongst its surfaces. This path-breaking research made it to the latest edition of the prestigious AICHE Journal published by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Prof. Mahulikar is a recipient of the prestigious A. von Humboldt Fellowship, and is a chartered engineer of the Engineering Council London, UK with membership to the Royal Aeronautical Society, London. He has taught and collaborated with many educational institutions across the world in research, spread of technology, and teaching. He has also received a Distinguished Alumni Award from IITB in 2007.

RTD winners

Each year, IIT Bombay posts a call for applications for a competition for social entrepreneurship on May 28, 2010. Of the 100 competition for social entrepreneurship, 10 teams were selected (with another nominee) for the award of ‘Best Professor in Operations Management’ by Asia’s Asia’s Best B-School Awards instituted by CMO Asia. The award was presented in Singapore on July 23, 2010.

Mr. IMDAD RIZVI

PhD student, CSRE, presented and published a paper with his supervisor titled “A Novel Technique for Automatic Extraction of Roads from High-Resolution Satellite Remotely Sensed Images” in the first International Applied Geological Congress (IAGC 2010), organised by the Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran. This congress was held between April 26 and 28, 2010. He was awarded the Best Paper along with a cash prize of 20 lakh rial, which is worth ₹ 10,000. The paper has been published in the Iranian Journal of Earth Sciences.
SHRI M.K. PATIL retired after 37 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked as Deputy Registrar, Academic Section.


SHRI SUDHIR N. THAKUR retired after 40 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Jr. Supdt., Department of Chemical Engineering.

SHRI JAGANNATH L. WAGHMARE retired after 35 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Sr. Supdt., Material Management.

SHRI NAMDEO K. KURADE retired after 39 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Jr. Supdt., Department of Mathematics.

SHRI DANIEL MATHAI retired after 34 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Jr. Supdt., Industrial Design Centre.

SHRI DANIL J. RAMNATH retired after 34 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Head of Department, Chemical Engineering.

SHRI VISHNU N. GORULE retired after 39 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Library Assistant, Central Library.

SHRI VISHAL B. BHATIA retired after 34 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Sr. Cleaner, Staff of Deputy Director's Office.

SHRI BHAGWAT B. AHIRE retired after 35 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Sr. Mechanic, IDC carpentry work.

SHRI VIJAY B. BHAPNE retired after 40 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Mechanical Assistant (SG), Department of Electrical Engineering.

SHRI LAXMAN G. WAKODE retired after 34 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Watchman (SG), Security Section. He was his punctual and hard-working attitude.

SHRI MANOHAR L. BHANDARE retired after 37 years of service on May 31, 2010. He worked in the institute as Lab. Asst., Department of Electrical Engineering.

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While in Hampi, I came across a person who called himself a river-watcher. When I asked what that meant, the reply was not greatly helpful.

“A river-watcher, watches the river.”

I was reading one of Steinbeck’s engrossing novels, in which he speaks of the ‘tune-in-the-head’.

So I asked the river-watcher, what was the tune in his head.

“It is the sound of the river, the way light falls on the waters, the manner in which the fish dart in and out of the shadows ...” said he — and I was beginning to understand a little about this river-watching stuff.

The river-watcher continued:
“The tune in our heads changes, depending on who we are with; what kinds of spaces surround us; how often we walk in the hills; what we eat (and drink!). Watching the tides, ebb and rise; or the stars mark their paths, arrogant is the one who says, ‘that-I-am-in-a-hurry’.”

Back in the city, (and most often, in a hurry), the river-watcher’s tune continues to haunts me.
Culled from the past and present, the Photo Essay displays IIT Bombay’s various sports facilities and the good use that has been made of them over the years. As the issue is themed around Sports, we have a little competition for you. Read the captions carefully. All of them have a common characteristic. Do you know what that is? If you do, write in to pro@iitb.ac.in. The first one to get it right will get a surprise gift from the Raintree team. So scramble to your laptops and write in to us as quickly as you can.

Play it again, Sam.

Houston, we have a problem.

Do you feel lucky, punk?

Crisis, what crisis?

Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.

Send in your articles, photographs, etchings, poetry, or anything else you would want portrayed in the magazine to pro@iitb.ac.in.