



Connections is the quarterly newsletter for friends of IIT Gandhinagar

Institute News

Important Visits

On August 20, 2009 Dr Anil Kakodkar, Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission of India visited IIT Gandhinagar. As Chairman, Board of Governors of IIT Bombay, the mentor Institute for IITGN, Dr Kakodkar has also been functioning as Chairman for IITGN. He was accompanied by Dr Srikumar Banerjee, Director, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai. Dr Kakodkar visited the facilities and reviewed activities at the institute. He addressed the students and faculty and later released "Palantir", the first issue of students' magazine. Dr Kakodkar emphasized the importance of natural sciences, social sciences and humanities in engineering education. In his address, Dr Banerjee emphasized on the importance of training in research early in career.



IITGN Marching Towards Its Second Academic Year: Orientation Program

IIT Gandhinagar welcomed the second batch of enthusiastic undergraduate students on 22 July 2009. 109 students joined the Chemical, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering streams compared to 90 students last year. All the new students were inducted into IITGN with a one-week orientation program. The program was designed to cater to the integral development of students and also to facilitate a comfortable initiation into their life at IIT.

Inauguration

Prof Bakul Dholakia, former Director of IIM Ahmedabad, inaugurated the program on July 22, 2009. He spoke on the potential of IIT Gandhinagar and expressed his appreciation for some of the innovative things that IIT Gandhinagar has already embarked on. Prof Sudhir K Jain, Director, shared his vision for the Institute wherein IITGN would be producing leaders in the fields of science and technology, industry and other walks of life. Also to speak at the program were the institute physician, clinical psychologist and hostel warden.



Workshop on Life at IIT: The Traps and the Tricks

Ms Madhu Chadda of *Personality Matters*, Hyderabad, and an alumna of IIT Kanpur, along with her team organized a one-day workshop on "Life at IIT: the Traps and the Tricks". Some of the salient topics of this workshop were stress management, time management, creativity, and IIT culture.



Personality Development Workshop

The orientation program kick started with a one-day Personality Development Workshop conducted by Ms Rashmi Datt of *Dialog Services*, Gurgaon. The objective of this workshop was to enhance the skills of teamwork and interpersonal communication.



Interaction with Second Year Students

The second year students were briefed on the various issues of ragging. As part of the orientation program and anti-ragging initiative, they organized several activities for the new students to ease communication between the two batches. The interaction also helped the second year students to identify some of the students from the upcoming batch to support various student activities.



Architectural Appreciation Workshop

An architectural appreciation tour was conducted by Theater and Media Centre, Ahmedabad. The students were shown a presentation on the architectural heritage of Ahmedabad and its neighborhood. Apart from visiting Several heritage sites in Ahmedabad the students were also taken to Lothal, where they saw the archaeological remains of the Harappan civilization.

Workshop on Film Appreciation

The first year students also got an opportunity to appreciate films in a better way through a five-hour workshop conducted by Theater and Media Centre, Ahmedabad. Three films were screened- one from the yester years, a Charlie Chaplin silent film and a regional film (Gujarati film)- followed by detailed analysis showcasing the different facets of a movie.

Theater Workshop

This one day workshop was conducted by Theater and Media Centre, Ahmedabad in the Conference Hall of IITGN. The workshop included hydra headed activities with specific tasks like "Mirror", "Statue", "Scene Making" etc. The theater workshop turned out to be amongst the most appreciated activities by the students.

Support To The Institute

IITGN Foundation Registered In California

Three US-based friends of IIT Gandhinagar have now registered "IIT Gandhinagar Foundation", a charitable trust in USA with the sole aim of supporting the Institute through philanthropic financial contributions from US based well-wishers of the Institute. The Foundation will enable the US based friends of the Institute to make tax-exempt donations to IITGN as per the US tax laws. The three Directors of the Foundation are:



Mr Raj Mashruwala holds MS from University of California, Berkeley (1976) and BTech from IIT Bombay (1975). He has co-founded a number of technology companies: TIBCO Software Inc.; YieldUp International; Media Computer Technology Inc.; and Consilium Inc. Mr Mashruwala is an active angel investor through Mashruwala Investments and is mentor/advisor to several early startup ventures. He is Director of IIT Bombay Heritage Fund, Charter Member of The Indus Entrepreneur (TiE), and Commissioner, Public Library, City of Palo Alto in USA.



Mr Bipin Shah holds a MS from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a BEE (Honours) from Jadavpur University. He has held senior positions in several high-tech companies, and has been founder of several of them. He is currently the CEO and Chairman of Kovair Software based in Milpitas, CA which has a Development Center in Kolkata. He is active with a number of non-profit organizations: The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE); Ahimsa Center at the California Polytechnic University, Pomona; Cupertino Education Endowment Foundation; the Jain Center of Northern California, etc.



Mr Abhay Bhushan is the President of IIT Kanpur Alumni Association and was the first President of PanIIT-USA. An internet pioneer, he developed FTP and the early versions of e-mail standards. A Silicon Valley entrepreneur, he founded several companies, including Portola Communications and YieldUP International, and mentored others. He received his B Tech from IIT Kanpur (1965), and Master's degrees in EE and Management from MIT. He is the joint holder of a dozen US patents.

S C Mehrotra's Scholarships

Mr S C Mehrotra has set up three merit-cum-means scholarships of Rs 1500 per month. He is the Managing Director of Mehro Consultants, New Delhi which is a leading Civil, Structural and Project Management Consultancy firm. Mr Mehrotra is a B Tech and M Tech from IIT Delhi. His 37 years of professional experience include structural designs for commercial and residential buildings, hospitals, malls, industrial structures and public infrastructures. He has published many technical papers and his designs have won several prestigious awards.



Reaching Out

Professor Sudhir K Jain visited San Francisco and Los Angeles area in September 2009 to meet potential benefactors and faculty for the Institute. Besides a number of one-to-one meetings, two larger meetings were held to showcase IITGN: Mr Abhay Bhushan, Director of IITGN Foundation organized a public meeting with Prof Jain on September 17 at TiE Conference Center, Santa Clara; and Mr Bipin Shah, another Director of IITGN Foundation hosted an evening tea with Prof Jain on September 19 at his home for some influential non-resident Indians.

Professor Jain also visited Stanford University, California Institute of Technology, and University of California Los Angeles. He addressed the Indian graduate students and post doctoral fellows at these universities with a view to seek outstanding faculty candidates for IITGN. The institute acknowledges the following students for facilitating the meetings: Gajanana Krishna and Chetan Kalyan (Stanford), Ravi Teja Sukhavasi (Caltech), and Sameer Behere (UCLA).



Student Internship

To impart holistic education and inculcate leadership qualities amongst its students, a high-priority agenda for the Institute is to ensure quality internship opportunities in India and overseas for its students. During the quarter July-September 2009, the following opportunities were created for our students.

- ✎ Prof Nitish V Thakor of Johns Hopkins University, USA will host one student in his lab in summer 2010.
- ✎ Underwriter's Laboratories, Northbrook, IL, USA will host eight students of IITGN in their facilities during summer 2010.

Activities at IITGN

Curriculum Development Workshop

IITGN is planning to usher in a change by means of a new curriculum and the first brainstorming workshop for discussing the new course of study was held on July 18, 2009. 31 academicians from IITs across the country and other premier institutes participated in the workshop. The crucial roles of basic sciences, humanities and social sciences, developmental issues, energy and environment, engineering sciences in shaping the leadership for the emerging knowledge economy were recognized and discussed at length. The workshop was coordinated by Prof S L N Murthy. Further details are available at the Institute website <http://www.iitgn.ac.in/ws-DoC.htm>.



Perspectives of Research Workshop

IIT Gandhinagar has already registered a modest first, by becoming a preferred destination among the new IITs for undergraduate students. The next goal is to make it a preferred destination for research students by shaping it as an excellent centre of research. With this goal in mind, IITGN organized a one-day Brainstorming Workshop, entitled “Perspectives of Research at IITGN in the Near Future: a Vision”, on August 29, 2009. In the course of this workshop, the Institute obtained some valuable insights and inputs on this theme from the distinguished invited participants from a number of prestigious institutes. Prof D V Pai coordinated the workshop. For more information log on to <http://www.iitgn.ac.in/ws-PoR.htm>.



Continuing Education Programme on Automation

IITGN conducted its first Continuing Education Programme entitled Low-Cost High-Tech Automation (LCHA) during September 14 to 16, 2009. The course dealt with various technologies, their comparison and steps involved. Many real-life problems were discussed to lay emphasis on applications. There were 38 participants from various industries including Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Auto, Bharat Gears, Pennar Industries, Skoda Auto, Rajkamal Metal Industries, Sintex Industries, and Asia Motor Works. The course was coordinated by Prof N Ramakrishnan. Further details are available at <http://www.iitgn.ac.in/cep.htm>.

Popular Lecture Series

IITGN has initiated a series of popular lectures delivered by eminent persons aimed primarily at the undergraduate students. Recent lectures are listed below:

- ✎ Prof Nitish V Thakor, Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA. “New Frontiers: Journey from Electrical Engineering to Bioengineering to Neuroengineering” on August 18, 2009.
- ✎ Mr Bramh Awasthi, Founder and Chairman, Whirlybird Electronics, Mumbai, India. “Closed Loop Control System” on August 19, 2009.
- ✎ Mr Rakesh Pandey, Independent Consultant and Former Director of Research, Bose Corporation. “A Discussion About Acoustics: Why Systems Thinking Matters” on August 20, 2009.
- ✎ Dr Tarun Goswami, Joint Associate Professor of Biomedical, Industrial and Human Factors Engineering, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, USA. “Application of Biomedical Engineering in Orthopedics” on August 21, 2009.
- ✎ Prof Subir Kumar Saha, Professor of Mechanical Engineering at IIT Delhi. “Robotics[AT]?” A RoC-BEE (Robotics Competition Based Education in Engineering) Concept on September 5, 2009.
- ✎ Prof Sudhir R Ghorpade, Professor of Mathematics at IIT Bombay. “Evolution of the Theory of Equations - A Journey through Renaissance” on September 7, 2009.
- ✎ Dr Pravinray D Gandhi, Director of Corporate Research at Underwriters Laboratories Inc in Northbrook, IL, USA. “Introduction to Fire Protection Engineering” on September 29, 2009.

Departmental Seminar

Prof Rajesh N Dave, Professor of Chemical Biological and Pharmaceutical Engineering, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, NJ gave a talk on “Particle Engineering for Creation of Nextgeneration Materials” on 18th September, 2009.

Interactive Session With VGEC

An interactive session was organized on July 8, 2009 where the faculty members of IITGN exchanged their views with the faculty of Vishwakarma Govt Engg College, Chandkheda. This was followed by a lunch in a nearby restaurant.

Independence Day Celebration

The students and faculty of IITGN observed the 63rd Independence Day of the nation. Prof Sudhir K Jain, Director hoisted the National Flag. In his speech Prof Jain pointed out that despite gaining freedom from foreign rule India has still to free herself from the shackles of poverty and misery, and urged everybody to contribute his or her level best towards reducing the disparities inherent in our society. Prof M R Patel, Principal VGEC shared his vision for the development of India by and for the youth. This was followed by a cultural programme by the students wherein they presented several patriotic songs.

Teachers Day Celebration

Teacher's day celebrations were a perfect blend of drama, music, dance and movies at IIT Gandhinagar. The celebrations started with a drama "Purani Jeans" which reflected upon the various horizons of the unique life at IIT campus. The drama was followed by the soulful musical performance by the club "Planet Sangeet" which drew a huge response from the audience. The dance club also displayed an acrobatic dance performance which made the crowd rise to their feet. There was a screening of the movie "Pancham Unmixed- Mujhe Chalte Jaana Hai", a film directed by Bhramanand Singh exploring R D Burman. The film has won several awards in the USA and was premiered in India for the first time and at what a better place than IIT Gandhinagar! A member of the production team of the film Mr Gaurav Sharma, an IIT Bombay and IIM Kozikode alumnus, exchanged his views on the movie.



Faculty News

The Ever-expanding IITGN Faculty

As of September 30, 2009 the following faculty were added to the already distinguished IITGN faculty:

Name	Designation	Discipline	Ph. D.	Date of Joining
Pallavi Ghalsasi	Assistant Professor	Physics	IISc Bangalore; 2002	01.07.09
Iti Gupta	Assistant Professor	Chemistry	IIT Bombay; 2005	03.07.09
Kalyan Gayen	Assistant Professor	Chemical Eng	IIT Bombay; 2007	21.07.09
M S Agarwal	Visiting Professor	Electrical Eng	U. of Liverpool; 1977	22.07.09
Dhiren Patel	Visiting Professor	Computer Sci & Eng	REC Surat; 2004	23.07.09
Sharmita Lahiri	Senior Lecturer	English	U. of Houston; 2008	27.07.09
N Ramakrishnan	Visiting Professor	Mechanical Eng	IIT Bombay; 1980	27.07.09
Dhiren Modi	Assistant Professor	Mechanical Eng	U. of Nottingham; 2008	28.07.09
Deepthi Shanker	Assistant Professor	Sociology	ISEC Bangalore; 2005	03.08.09
Koshy Tharakan	Associate Professor	Philosophy	U. of Hyderabad; 2002	03.08.09
Manmohan Pandey	Associate Professor	Mechanical Eng	IIT Kanpur; 1997	10.08.09

Faculty Activities

Prof Dhiren R Patel attended the International Conference on Information Security and Digital Forensics 2009 during September 7-8, 2009 at the City University London. Professor Patel delivered an Invited Talk titled *Moving Forward: Cryptology Primitives for Secure Systems*.

Prof D V Pai was invited to visit DST Centre for Mathematical Sciences at Arunapuram, Pala, Kerala during 11-12, September 2009. He chaired the Planning Committee for the SERC School series entitled *Matrix variable calculus and statistical distribution theory and applications in data analysis, model building and astrophysics problems*.

Prof Sharmita Lahiri was invited to the National University of Singapore during August 5-8, 2009, to conduct workshops on *Writing Exercises, and Converting Syllabi into Effective Writing Modules*.

On August 20, 2009, **Prof Sudhir K Jain** delivered a lecture in Ahmedabad to professional engineers and architects on *Seismic Assessment and Retrofitting of RC Frame Buildings*. This was at the invitation of Dr Fixit Institute of Structural Protection and Rehabilitation under their Healthy Construction Lecture Series. Prof Jain was also invited by the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI), USA, to attend two meetings in San Francisco : *Housner Gift Invitational Workshop* held from September 20-22, 2009; and *EERI/WHE-PAGER Project Review Meeting* held on September 23, 2009.

Prof U A Yajnik presented a talk titled *Topological objects and metastable vacua* on September 02, 2009 at the International Conference on Challenges in Cosmology at the Tufts University Center, Talloires, France. He attended the International Conference on Particle Physics and Cosmology - "Cosmo09" at CERN (European Centre for Nuclear Research), Geneva, Switzerland, during September 7 - 11, 2009.