

BITS ECHO

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Volume 2 || Issue 2



Message from Prof. Souvik Bhattacharyya

Dear BITSians,

The last three months have been unprecedented and eventful for Alumni Relations – BITS Alma Connect was launched, 3 anniversary batches visited Pilani Campus ('78-83, '89-93 and '93-97/98), BITS hosted an official reunion at Dubai Campus (Engage 2018), and an alumni couple (Prashanth and Anuradha Palakurthi) pledged to donate \$1 million to BITS Pilani. In addition, ever increasing alumni are visiting across campuses, not only to relive their memories, but also to engage meaningfully and extending support to their alma mater in a variety of ways. I see new energy, vigour and enthusiasm amongst you all.

You would be happy to note that BITS Pilani is now an 'Institute of Eminence', one of the only 6 institutions to get this coveted honour in India. However, with great recognition comes even greater responsibility that of breaking into top 500 institutions of the world. We have accepted this challenge wholeheartedly and our efforts have already started yielding results for the first time ever, BITS Pilani was ranked amongst the World top 401-600 institutions in 'Life Sciences' area, as per Times Higher Education (THE) Subject Ranking 2019. We were ranked 601-800 in Engineering & Technology and in Physical Sciences. We are committed to raise our overall ranking with significant improvements across the institution, strengthening our excellence in teaching and focus on research.



Connecting, engaging and partnering with our eminent Alumni community is a top priority now at BITS. I firmly believe that the next growth milestone (and many such milestones afterwards) would be made possible by support and benevolence from our alumni. From the year-and-a-half since we became pro-active

in making deep connections with our alumni, I see our alumni responding with the same warmth. More individuals, self-organized groups and reunion batches have pledged their support in both monetary and engagement terms, than ever before. Our immediate focus in alumni relations is to be transparent, accountable and agile in connecting and engaging with the alumni community. I hope that before I write to you again, our team would have put in structures and tools to ensure this and much more. Finally, I place my sincere thanks and gratitude to all our alumni who contributed their money, time, effort and expertise to their alma mater in 2018. Here's hoping that in 2019, we see more and more BITSians coming forward and becoming active partners in our journey towards becoming truly a world class institution.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy and prosperous 2019.

Regards,
Prof. Souvik Bhattacharyya
Vice Chancellor, BITS Pilani

Message From Directors

MESSAGE FROM Prof. R N SAHA

For last ten years, BITS Pilani has been making continuous effort to engage with all stakeholders including alumni and initiated several process for connecting alumni to involve them in overall growth of BITS Pilani. For growth of a university and enhancing international identity and rankings, alumni play very crucial role. They are the brand ambassadors of BITS Pilani. "BITS Echo", the quarterly Newsletter published with the mission to connect with the alumni across the globe and to build and strengthen the university and the BITSian community.

This year is extraordinary for the Alumni Connect in terms of accomplishments and activities. There was a launch of the alumni website, which takes our capabilities to a whole new level, allowing us to more effectively reach alumni, reconnecting them and moving them to stay involved and give back. Hope this 'BITS Echo' issue will be able to build stronger connection and bring all BITSians together. Wishing all Happy New Year 2019.

R N Saha
Director, BITS Pilani Dubai Campus



MESSAGE FROM Prof. G SUNDAR

Greetings, alumni friends. You are our greatest strength, and our most treasured assets. The tens of thousands of you, transcending geographical boundaries, have excelled in diverse fields of work, as technocrats and business leaders, educators and researchers, entrepreneurs and public servants, artists and artistes, bringing glory to your alma mater, and paving the way, in ways direct and indirect, for subsequent generations of graduates of BITS, to excel too. Even as you have followed your individual dreams and aspirations, we have all been tied together by our shared values, of meritocracy, of integrity and transparency, and of service to community. Over the years, you have demonstrated your love for, and commitment to the Institute, by contributing generously of your time and energy, and materially, to the development of the Institute. As BITS continues on its inexorable journey towards eminence, negotiating ever more challenging stretches, we seek your continued support, in even more ways and greater extent, so that together we may realize our vision.

G Sundar
Director, BITS Pilani Hyderabad Campus



Alumni in News

DailyNinja buys WakeupBasket in second acquisition

Hyperlocal delivery startup DailyNinja has acquired Hyderabad-based WakeupBasket in a cash-and-equity deal, a company statement said. As per the deal, all WakeupBasket employees will join DailyNinja Delivery Services Pvt. Ltd. WakeupBasket founders Satendra Pratap and Sai Varaprasad will lead DailyNinja's Hyderabad team, the statement said. It didn't disclose financial details of the deal. Besides Bengaluru, DailyNinja delivers in Hyderabad and Chennai as well. It fulfils 3,500 orders aday, the statement said.

WakeupBasket, operated by Crocksys Technologies Pvt. Ltd, was founded in 2015. It provides morning delivery of household essentials like DailyNinja, besides selling milk and groceries on its platform. The Hyderabad-based startup had raised a seed round from various angel investors and has grown to fulfil 2,500 orders a day, the statement said.

Founded by BITS Pilani alumni, Sagar Yarnalkar and Anurag Gupta, the idea of DailyNinja came up because the duo personally faced problems managing groceries for their kitchen. The DailyNinja app allows one to order milk and groceries. Customers can place orders till 11 pm in the night and the order is delivered at their doorstep by 7 am the next day along with milk. Customers can subscribe to daily milk delivery through DailyNinja, and top up their cart with everyday household needs like groceries, which are also delivered along with milk. DailyNinja claims to deliver to close to 25,000 households everyday, clocking over 7.5 lakh orders every month.



"DailyNinja's business model latches onto the Indian habit of purchasing fresh milk every day. Once this is moved online, the high engagement generated by this habit makes it is easy for the company to deliver groceries, home services and medicines to the customer to help them manage their household in an efficient manner," Anurag says.

Bengaluru-based subscription startup DailyNinja has previously raised \$3 million in funding led by Saama Capital and existing investor Sequoia Capital. The team had raised \$1.5 million in October last year, led by Sequoia capital. The start-up raised funds from well-known angel investors Kunal Shah and Sandeep Tandon of Freecharge, Aprameya Radhakrishna of TaxiForSure, Anupam Mittal of Shaadi.com, and others.

Cryptocurrency exchange firm Koinex eyes global markets amid trading constraints in India



Run by Discidium Internet Labs Pvt. Ltd, Koinex was founded in August 2017 by IIT graduates Rakesh Yadav and Raj and BITS Pilani graduate Aditya Naik. Venture Capital firms like Singapore-based Beenext and US-based Pantera Capital have invested in the company.

Koinex claims to have over five lakh registered users. Its trade engine can process over one million orders per second and its trading volume hit a peak of Rs 1,722 crore in one day in December 2017, the company has claimed.

To fuel its global expansion plans, Koinex has said it will offer blockchain-based solutions and has even opened a new development centre in Bengaluru. The company's move to expand globally comes at a time when the global Bitcoin price has been in freefall and also amidst restrictions by the Indian Government over crypto trading.

"Having built India's first and largest exchange, it gives us the confidence to now diversify our product offerings. There is a tremendous opportunity to solve issues like latency, reconciliation, access to capital and building of new financial instruments all with the use of blockchain technology," said Raj.

Wozart Technologies' Aura Switch wins HYSEA product award under best gadget category

Bootstrapped Wozart's Aura Switch is a retrofit wireless home automation device, which fits behind any switch board and enables complete control of your home from your smart devices.

When Manoj Malineni wanted to automate his new villa in Pune, he was shocked at the exorbitant price quoted, around Rs 30 lakh, and a rewiring process that would last four-to-six weeks.

A computer science engineer from BITS Pilani Goa, Manoj felt the same job could be more cost effective, quick and yet powerful. It was then he decided to rope in his friends and batchmates - Abhilash Dasyreddy, Nikhil Mandalika and Prashanth Rao - to start an Internet of Things (IoT) startup - Wozart.

Started in 2016, the aim of the startup is to build sustainable and environment-friendly products in the IoT sector that simplify and improve the quality of human life. Being a product manufacturing company, the most significant challenge was to survive in the market during the R&D, design, licensing and manufacturing phases. The design and fabrication take place in Hyderabad.

The team has a manufacturing facility in Shenzhen, China, at an Apple licensed manufacturing unit.



Bostonian couple pledge USD 1 Million to their alma mater at the ruby anniversary celebrations of 1978-83 batch.



BITS Pilani received a USD 1 Million pledge from alumni couple Prashanth and Anuradha Palakurthi for its campus programmes, the largest individual donation ever received by the institution. The couple made the announcement during the ruby anniversary celebrations of Prashanth's 1978-83 batch. More than 200 alumni of the batch had gathered from all over the world to relive their campus memories in the desert town of Pilani in Rajasthan from November 16-18. Warmly welcoming the contribution, Prof Souvik Bhattacharyya, Vice-Chancellor, BITS Pilani, termed the announcement by the Palakurthi's as "momentous and a game changing gesture".

"With this pledge, BITS Pilani is launching a campaign to set up a Rs. 100 crore Research Endowment Fund. This fund would help to provide an additional thrust to Research by way of attracting research driven faculty, post-doctoral fellows and research scholars," he said.

Prashanth Palakurthi is the Founder and CEO of US-based Reflexis Systems, and his wife Anuradha, the founder of Juju Productions, is a professional singer and radio personality in the United States.

Speaking at the gala event commemorating 40 years of his entry to BITS Pilani, Mr Prashanth said that "we wanted to give back to our alma mater which gave us so much and where we started our journey."

At the event, Ms Anuradha also performed Juju Productions' first live show, titled Desert Storm, accompanied by a 42-member musical band from Bollywood including members of the original R.D. Burman team.

Prof A K Sarkar, Campus Director, Pilani, applauded the donation and said, "The Research Endowment Fund would be instrumental for our journey to pursue our agenda for Institute of Eminence (IoE) in the years to come".

Some Other News Updates



Mr. Tanmay Lal from batch of 1982 - Chemical and Biological Sciences from Pilani campus and IFS of 1991 batch has been appointed as Ambassador of India at Mauritius. Indeed a very happy news for the whole community of BITSians across the globe. Very many congratulations to Mr. Tanmay Lal.

Dr. Jameel Rizwana Hussaindeen - First Indian Recipient: American Academy of Optometry Diplomate - She is an alumna of world renowned Chennai based Medical Research Foundation Sankara Nethralaya Elite School of Optometry (ESO) BITS Pilani collaborative BS Optometry (2000-2004), and M.Phil Optometry (2007-2009) and PhD programme which had set the benchmark in Optometry education for over two decades in India. Very many congratulations to her for bringing great laurels to her Alma mater.



Sai Nikhil Reddy Mettupally a BITS Alumni; presently at The University of Alabama in Huntsville won second prize at the 2018 Science and Technology open House competition for creating a space detecting algorithm that relies on Big Data analytics and deep-learning techniques to lead drivers directly to an empty parking spot.

Student Achievements

Goa Campus

IQC Singapore



A team of Goa Campus students including Yash Zanwar, Aditya Dhoot, Gaurav Gandhi, Mrinav Saxena, Sreeram M, and Souradeep Chakraborty represented India in the inaugural edition of the International Quant Championship held at Singapore in early September. The International Quant Championship is an annual event which occurs in 3 stages, with the final one being international rounds.

Over 11,000 participants from more than 80 countries and 1000+ universities took part in this competition, and the BITS team was selected as one of the top 12 teams worldwide, whilst being first in the country. The national finals saw participation from other top Indian universities including the IITs and other premier business schools. Based on the creativity and robustness of their algorithmic models, overall presentation outlook and the detailed treatment of their stock strategies, BITS team was ranked first nationwide.

Gaurav Gandhi

India

Mr. Aravind Satish, a FD student working on his project with Dr. Sharad Sontakke of the Department of Chemical Engineering, won FIRST Prize in oral presentation at SCHEMCON held at ICT (Insitute of Chemical Technology), Mumbai. The same work has also been presented by Dr. Sharad Sontakke in the 2018 AIChE (American Institute of Chemical Engineers) Annual Meeting held at Pittsburgh, USA and it has been highly appreciated by leading institutes.

Pinky , a Research Scholar at the Biological Sciences Department working under the supervision of Prof. Rajesh Mehrotra has been selected for the EMBO (European Molecular Biology Organization) short-term fellowship. She will be visiting Prof. Tony Miller's lab, at John Innes Centre, Norwich starting January 2019 for her research work.

Dubai Campus

The BITS Dubai Toastmasters Club won the Inter Club Debate Contest against many more experienced teams such as the ICAT Toastmasters Club, the Emirates Toastmasters Club, the Friends of Yoga Toastmasters Club, the Dubai Advanced Toastmasters Club and the DIC Advanced Toastmasters Club. This division level toastmasters debate contest was conducted on the 16th of November 2018, at the American University in the Emirates.

The NaviFly team (Aeronyx), secured 2nd place in the Techstars Global Startup Weekend Dubai, Women Edition 2018, the first women's startup in the Middle East, held at DTEC Silicon Oasis between the 15th to the 17th of November 2018. Team Aeronyx will be involved in 3 months of a co-learning program from QLC in their first ever cohort.

In the same event, Team Zuv of BPDC won the third prize, which includes extended support as well as mentorship from the coaches and facilitators of the Startup Weekend Dubai Women Edition, 2018.

Yashodhan Naik and Shivank Gupta from the Team Navifly, recieved an opportunity to pitch their idea at Propeller Shannon in Ireland. They secured an offer from Propeller Shannon and the team will be funded with 20,000 pounds for their startup.

Pilani Campus



Siddharth Mehta, a third-year student has been chosen among the 25 member contingent to represent India at the World Youth Forum 2018, to be held at Egypt in November. This event is one of a kind where young leaders from over 160 countries unite, exchange views and recommend initiatives to decision-makers and influential figures. The Indian Contingent was led by Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports- Col. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore in last year's edition.

Six Teams from BITS Pilani have been selected by the Rajasthan Government for the Silicon Valley startup exposure program. The program is going to be held from 25th August to 10th September 2018, at San Francisco, USA. A total of 20 students from BITS Pilani will be taking part in this competitive educational program which aims at nurturing youth entrepreneurship in the state of Rajasthan. The Rajasthan Government has selected 100 students from various colleges and these selected students will spend 2 weeks in the Silicon Valley. They get to visit Fortune 10 companies like Google, Facebook, etc. and universities like UC Berkeley & Stanford.

Hyderabad Campus

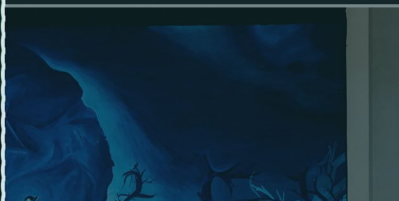
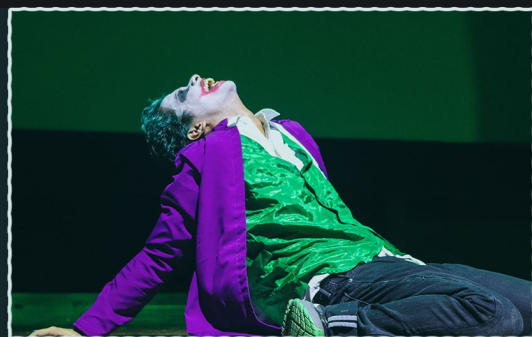
V. Harikrishnan, who joined the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre after graduating, received the Homi Bhabha Medal for Nuclear Reactor Physics for his performance during the training period.

Gajraj Rathore, a fourth-year undergraduate in B. Pharm, has recently completed a summer internship from the Université de Sherbrooke, Canada, through the prestigious Mitacs Globalink Research Internship initiative, which has an acceptance rate of around 1%.

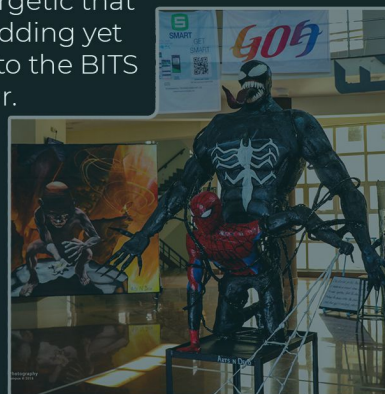
Events

Goa

Waves 2018



Embracing the shadows, Waves 2018 kicked off on the 26th of October as thousands of students, from various colleges across the country, showed up for the 3 days long fiesta. The days were filled with impressive displays of talent and the nights were exciting and energetic that culminated in adding yet another success to the BITS calendar.



We hosted the 4th Asia Pacific International Society for Microbial Electrochemistry and Technology (ISMET) and the meeting was conducted on 13th Nov, by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation along with ISMET. The inauguration of the event was followed by a Keynote Lecture titled 'Upgrading of urban ammonia, CO₂ and minerals to microbial protein' by Prof Willy Verstraete.

Mr. Bryan Lee, the founder and director of Krishi Star, gave a talk about 'Cash flow and Supply Chain Management'. He is working towards creating a great social impact in rural livelihood development, particularly the agricultural sector. He is dedicated to increasing and stabilizing livelihood for small farmers by giving them greater ownership of higher value supply chains and bring their foods to the market under his brand.

Mr. Nishith Rastogi, the CEO/Co-founder of Locus, gave a talk on 'How to successfully raise funds for your start-up' in an event conducted by Center of Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL) as a part of Startup Activities on Campus. Mr. Rastogi was profiled in the prestigious Forbes Asia '30 under 30' list. His company Locus is regularly featured in the likes of CNBC Young Turks, Times of India, Economic Times and many other publications.

XLII (42nd) All India Cell Biology Conference inaugurated and is being held for the first time in Goa. Organized by Dept. of Biological Sciences, this prestigious conference was held from 21st to 23rd December 2018 on the theme of 'Trends in Cell and Molecular Biology'. Padma Bhushan Prof. Padmanabhan Balaram, an Indian biochemist and former Director of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, inaugurated the conference while renowned scientists from across the country attended and delivered lectures.

Pilani

Oasis



Oasis 2018 was an immense success. The campus overflowed with students from across the country, who arrived to participate in various events and competitions. Heads vibed to fervent music on one night, while the DJ made the crowd go 'whip' and 'nae - nae' on the other. It was in these three days that we realized that 'We were Infinite!'.



Lab Inauguration

JCI Sponsored Smart Building Lab was inaugurated at BITS Pilani on Wednesday, October 24, 2018. During the inauguration, the MoU in this regard was signed between the Vice Chancellor, BITS Pilani and the Director of Johnson Controls, India. Strengthening the engagement further between Johnson Controls and BITS Pilani further, Johnson Controls decided to design and set up a state of the art "Smart Buildings Lab" which has the entire range of intelligent building management controls systems, double deck Mix-Air Handling Unit (prototype) & Direct expansion (DX) cooling unit of chilled water systems. This laboratory has the capability for Simulation exercise of HVAC controls systems; Providing practical experiment and exposure; Understanding of data structures and data analytics; and Conducting advanced research and development in the field of intelligent and smart buildings.



1978 batch celebrated 40th Reunion



Around 180 members from 1978 batch visited BITS Pilani to celebrate their Ruby Reunion Meet between 16 -17 November 2018. A special musical program named "Desert Storm" which witnessed a jam-packed auditorium, was arranged by Mr. Prasanth Palakurthi with his wife and BITSian Anuradha Palakurthi. Anuradha was accompanied by a 39 member Bollywood band, including members of the original R.D. Burman team.

During the event, Mr. Prashanth Palakurthi ('78 batch) and Mrs. Anuradha Palakurthi ('84 batch) pledged a sum of \$1 Million for setting up a Research Endowment Fund at BITS Pilani. The largest contribution in the history of BITS Pilani, this goes a long way in pushing the research agenda to a next level. The endowment will go towards ₹100 crore research fund created by BITS Pilani.



Release of the Book "Robust Plastic Product Design: A Holistic Approach"

BITS Pilani Library in association with Department of Mechanical Engineering organized the release of the book "Robust Plastic Product Design: A Holistic Approach" by Mr. Vikram Bhargava on 13th November 2018. Mr. Bhargava, a 1968 batch alumnus of BITS Pilani is a renowned person and a fellow of the Society of Plastics Engineers. He served as the Director of Mechanical Engineering Services at Motorola Solutions in Holtsville, New York. He is also a much sought after international trainer having trained around thousands of engineers and suppliers and a holder of 21 patents. His book is a masterpiece among the hundreds of books available on plastics by various authors. Mr. Giridhar Kunkur, Librarian who organized and conducted the event, welcomed the guests present. Prof. P. Srinivasan from the Department of Mechanical Engineering, introduced Mr. Bhargava to the audience. He said that the book insists upon the problems targeted by engineers in unrealistic deadlines in industries to get the product right at the first attempt. Mr. Bhargava insisted on the importance of plastics and the required reason for plastics to outweigh metals owing to the different properties associated. Prof. Arya Kumar, Dean, Alumni Relations, BITS Pilani applauded the contributions made by Mr. Bhargava in the field of Plastic Engineering.



The Reunion of 1989 Batch

“Getting together and having a laugh-what else in the world could be more adorable than that”

The fellows of '89 batch, after spending some refreshing time, gathered in the VFast lawns. Everybody was enlightened and filled with zeal after seeing each other wearing ethnic clothes. They were welcomed by local Rajasthani women who blessed them by smudging tilak on their forehead. Beautiful red-orange textured turbans were distributed.

Only after getting crowned with the turban, they seemed ready for the tour ahead. Moments were captured and past happenings were recalled.

After having photographs clicked, everybody made their way to the iconic Saraswati Temple. On their way to the temple, they relived their memories of living in the hostels and moving around in the campus. They said, “It has changed but it is still the same”. Some alumni met the redi owners and it felt as if it was yesterday when they used to spend time there. They couldn't resist expressing their love of the old times. After reaching the temple, everybody sat down for the group photograph.

It was time for everybody to indulge themselves in the devotional aarti and show their gratitude to God. Forgetting all thoughts of the world, they all had a great time. After spending some devotional time, they went for dinner. A special welcome dinner was organized for the batch at Ram-Budh (RB) Mess. Everybody sat together and relished the delicious food and they seemed like a family spending time together. The praises of crispy chicken and juicy paneer of the Shahi Paneer were heard. The Cassata ice-cream after the meal made the meal complete and perfect.



On the way back to VFast, some went to visit the places where they used to spend most of their time. Some paid a visit to their hostel rooms. Seeing the TT table in the common room, they couldn't stop themselves from having a game. Everybody spent a great time and cherished the moments. They were still energized, and they couldn't wait for the sun to rise and the next day fun to begin. The next day began with campus tour. They relived their old memories seeing the iconic Clock Tower, Krishnabhawan, Gandhibhawan and many more. They had many stories to tell. “Hey!! What room were you in Malviya?”, came directly from an Alumnus. They even participated in various sports events like Cricket and Football. More of competition was building new memories and cherishing the old ones.

The Alumni also interacted with the students in a “Student Alumni Meet” where they answered some of the questions of students and shared their life experiences. It was followed by a meet with the Faculty. Interviews were a constant thing under “The Bitsian Portrait” where we tried to encapsulate their lives in a 20 minute interview. The night ended with the extravaganza of “Musical Nite” where everyone danced to their feet. We bid them Farewell until the next time.



Life in a Consulting Firm

An interactive session on “Life in a Consultancy Firm” was organised with Gaurav Jha, Rohan Passey, Nishant Mishra and Sanchit Aggarwal, here they talked about various aspects of consultancy, the traits desired by the industry and the screening process. Here is a summary of the session. Consultancy is finding a viable solution to problems faced by companies that they themselves are not equipped to handle. A consultant’s job involves working with the company, interacting with the management to understand their problems and focus areas, and then suggesting solutions and areas of improvement. The hiring process in a consultancy firm includes a resume short-listing round which looks for responsible candidates with some experience in consulting. As such, candidates with a good CGPA and candidates with relevant internship experience during PSII are preferred. For a consultant, a good problem solving approach is very important. This is often tested by case interviews where the firms presents problems which have been addressed by the firm earlier, and the candidates are evaluated based on the efficiency of the solution. Often, to help the candidates, a case buddy is assigned to them. Case buddies are consultants two to three years into service, who help the candidates through this interview. A consulting team comprises of a core team and a support team. The core team is assigned to a client and it comprises of one or two managers and four to six consultants. The support team consists of consultants who specialise in particular fields, and are called upon when needed.



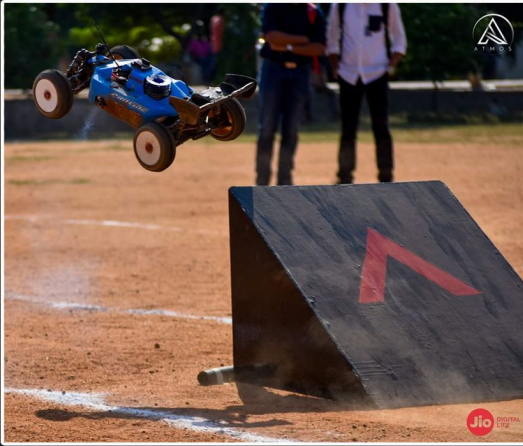
Indo-Israel Workshop on Nanoelectronic Materials and Devices was organized by Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, BITS Pilani on 2nd November 2018 in association with Tel-Aviv University, Israel. The goal of this workshop is to gather researchers to share their work in the field of Nanoelectronics and to provide an ideal environment to develop collaboration and meet experts from Tel-Aviv University, Israel working in this field. In the workshop ten distinguished lectures and nine researchers from various institutes presented their work through posters, and two of them were adjudged as the best posters. A panel discussion was also held in collaboration between BITS Pilani and Tel-Aviv University, Israel in the field of Nano electronics.



International Conference on Life Science Research & its Interface with Engineering and Allied Sciences (LSRIEAS-2018) was organized by the Department of Biological Sciences, BITS Pilani, Pilani Campus in collaboration with other science and engineering departments of BITS campuses during November 1-3, 2018 at BITS Pilani, Pilani Campus, Rajasthan, India. The conference featured talks and presentations by eminent scientists and researchers under various themes such as core life sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, biosensors, imaging and diagnostics, biomaterials and biomechanics, bio-heat transfer and bioprocess engineering, computational biology, biophysical and biochemical sciences, and mathematical modeling and quantum biology, spread over three days.

Hyderabad

Atmos 2018



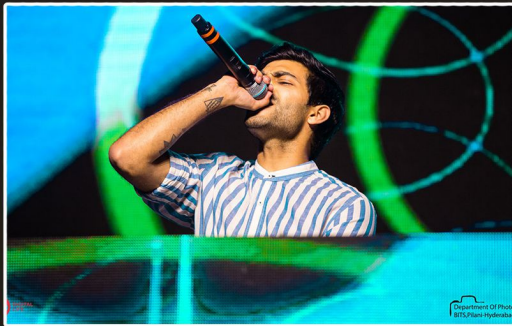
Science is ever-growing and has always welcomed curious minds to extend its boundaries. The theme of 7th ATMOS, 'Into the Sixth Dimension' is a call for the science enthusiasts to use their curiosity and break down the unexplored laws of nature. BITS Embryo invited Mr Praveen Teotia (ex-naval officer), who is a part of MARCOS and Mr Sanjay Govilkar (Mumbai Police Inspector), two bravehearts who risked their lives in 26/11 attacks to save the lives of the civilians. They shared their stories of how they made it through the stressful time to stand upon the oath they took for the safety of their motherland. ATMOS in association with BITS MUN

Hyderabad presented a conversation between one of the greatest economists of India, Dr Subramanian

Swamy and Mr Sriram Karri, a renowned writer, journalist and columnist. There was a talk by Mr Kamal Shah, an application developer for Apple and co-founder of Nephroplus, India's largest chain of dialysis centre. Despite being on dialysis for 21 years, he was able to kick start Nephroplus, his story is truly inspiring. ATMOS in association with The Firefly Community held two talks- 'Unheard' where the victims of sexual abuse shared their stories of how they dealt with their mental trauma and acknowledged the different platforms where one can seek help; and 'Out and About' which an

open mic was bringing to limelight the stories from the LGBTQ+ community.

There were 3 Pro-Shows in ATMOS – the 3 evenings of the fest were filled with thrills and entertainment. The first one being a standup comedy by Naveen Richard. On the second evening, Arjun Guru put up an illusion show. The third night saw Zaeden, an artist who represents India in EDM on the international scale.



Workshops

Hyderabad Campus organized a colloquium lecture on 15th November 2018 by Dr. V. R. Lalithambika, the Director of Indian Human Spaceflight Programme, ISRO. The talk featured important topics like mission design, launch vehicle design, rocket science and human centric domain. The talk delivered at Hyderabad campus was attended by all campuses via telepresence.

Dubai

Engage 2018

ENGAGE'18: an alumni meet-up was organised at Dubai campus on 8th December 2018, which focused on providing alumni a platform to network and interact with each other along with a walk down the memory lane. The event was organised by the Alumni Relations Division in collaboration with BITSAA Middle East.

The event saw an enthusiastic participation from alumni residing in UAE. The event began with address by Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Souvik Bhattacharyya who presented the growth of Alumni network and BITS over the years.

He emphasized on encouraging the collaboration between alumni and BITS Pilani, to achieve greater heights. He highlighted the new initiative, ALMACONNECT which is a virtual platform, made available for alumni to connect and network.

Prof. R.N Saha, Director, BITS Pilani Dubai Campus, addressed the gathering with details on the achievements of the BITS Pilani Dubai Campus students. He briefed the numerous ways in which alumni can play a key role in enhancing the University on all aspects. He supported it by stating a possible chance of stopover at BITS Pilani Dubai Campus, for the alumni travelling through UAE. Further, Prof. Arya Kumar, Dean, Alumni Relations, elaborated on the contribution of Alumni and their primal role in sustaining the development of the University.

Ms. Sandhya Prakash, Chairperson, BITSAA International, focused on the various contributions and initiatives taken by alumni. Mr. Sharma, an alumnus from Pilani campus and the MD of Techmart World highlighted the need for research to stimulate the growth of the university and also elaborated on it by painted a bigger and global picture.

The gathering witnessed the release of the Naming Rights Policy by Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Souvik Bhattacharyya, Ms. Sandhya Prakash, Chairperson, BITSAA International, Prof. R.N Saha, Director, BITS Pilani Dubai Campus and Prof. Arya Kumar, Dean Alumni Relations.



Light music and dance came in as ice breakers for the event. Some of the talented alumni participated in singing and later shared some experiences at BITS. The narration of their experiences, from their college days kept the audience rolling in their chairs. The success of the event is to be accorded to the team, faculty, BITSAA and staff involved.

Interview of UPSC AIR 1

Story of Anudeep Durishetty

Yes, getting AIR 1 sounds as grand as it is. However, behind every successful story, there are struggles and failures. Anudeep's story is inspiring for everyone who ever thought of giving up.

Anudeep started out in BITS, where he learnt how to get out of his comfort zone and. He learnt how to handle a position of responsibility and manage people. Most importantly, he learnt how to balance academics and activities he was passionate about. This is how he could work towards achieving his dream of being a Civil Services Agent despite being a student of the Instrumentation department.

During his time on campus, he kept himself motivated by two things. Firstly, he always believed in himself. This kept him going under all circumstances. Secondly, he always worked hard without keeping results in mind. These qualities played a great factor in his success.

Anudeep started preparing seriously for the UPSC exam only after he graduated. Although he was placed in Oracle, he decided to leave his job in order to pursue his passion without any distractions. However, despite preparing for two straight years, he failed to find success. With financial pressure on his back, he decided to find a job and got placed in Google! This did not deter him from his real goal, clearing the UPSC exam. He attempted the exam two more times, at the end of which he was working for the IRS. Out of his four attempts, he cleared the mains examination only once. Almost about to give up, he decided to give it a last chance. During his fifth attempt, he corrected all his previous mistakes and achieved his dream. He not only cracked the exam, he did it in the best possible manner, becoming AIR 1 in CSE 2017.

After telling us about his journey and everything related to the UPSC exam, he ended by saying, "Cracking the JEE or getting into a prestigious institute like BITS isn't the ultimate success, you need to work harder, be patient and dedicated throughout to reach even bigger heights, this is just the beginning".

Contribution by Alumni

Inauguration of EM Lab



Mr. Kishore Kumar Gupta, a proud alumnus of BITS Pilani donated ₹1 crore to set up the Kishore Kumar Gupta Electrical Machines Laboratory in Pilani campus. The lab which is at par with global standards was inaugurated on 15th November 2018. Mr. Gupta did his Bachelor's degree in Electronics Engineering from BITS Pilani in 1970. His involvement with various elite organizations of India in the fields of Aerospace, Defence and Automobiles gives him first-hand experience of the collaborative opportunities between industry and academia. Mr. Gupta's vision of bridging the theory-practice gap in engineering education gets materialized in this Electrical Machines Laboratory. Catering to the B.E., M.E. and Ph.D. programs, this laboratory also has a high level of safety features and is extremely energy efficient.

Other Contributions

A ₹1.5 crore (~\$200,000) gift to BITS Pilani Pilani Campus via the 'Spirit of BITS1988 Scholarship', which will be directed towards enhancing student success at the Pilani campus, through annual cash awards. The Scholarship celebrates the can-do attitude, esprit de corps of the entering Batch of 1988 and serves to fondly celebrate the memory of loved ones lost. The Batch of 1988, which celebrated its silver jubilee reunion last year raised funds through a collective effort with the goal of promoting active alumni engagement. As part of this sustained initiative, the beneficiary students each year will be chosen by BITS administration and each student will receive an award that will cover 25% of tuition fees. Starting January 2019, 4 students from the Pilani campus will receive the award for a period of 4 years. The fund will continue to award a new set of 4 scholars every year.



Satish Goel of 1980 batch (Chemical and MMS) committed a fund of Rs 21 Lakh for sponsoring "Dr. Goel's OMKARA Fellowship" to support 50% fellowship for a research scholar in the area of Chemical Engineering, Chemistry or Computer Sciences from Pilani campus.

1978-83 Alumni Batch has taken a collective lead to mobilise funding to contribute back to their Alma Mater. The utilisation of fund in tune with institutional requirements and priorities would be decided after mobilisation.

The batch of 1993-98, celebrating 25 years of their entry to BITS Pilani, have set themselves a target of contributing \$333031 to their beloved alma mater. The funds thus generated, would be used for high priority needs of BITS Pilani after a collective decision by the Batch.

1989-93 Alumni Batch celebrated their Silver Jubilee Reunion and set a collective target of 120,000 USD towards promoting active alumni engagement and contribute back to their alma mater. The purpose to utilize the fund would be decided in due course.

New Year's Greetings

Wishing you all a year full of happiness and prosperity. May this year gives all of you the opportunity to follow your dreams, love like there is no tomorrow and smile unconditionally. May all of us join hands to care and share with each other and do our best to lift our Alma Mater to greater and greater heights in its journey towards Leadership through Excellence. Happy New Year 2019!

- Alumni Relations Team

AlmaConnect is turning out to be a vibrant community and would go a long way in updating and enriching Alumni data base for developing a segmented approach to network and connect. This would also help in a powerful connect amongst Alumni. Please join and communicate your BITSian friends/groups to join AlmaConnect on the link <https://bitspilani.almaconnect.com>



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