

Striving for Perfection

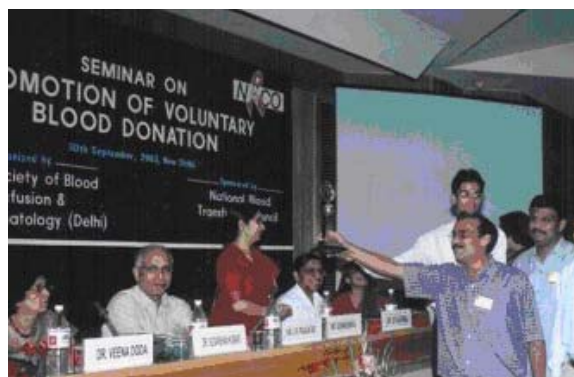
Moving ahead with its relentless quest for excellence in every dimension, BITS, Pilani was involved in diverse activities all through the First Semester, 2003-04. The campus witnessed events ranging from *international conferences* on *Conflict Resolution* and *Water Management* and a *Virtual Conference* on Biology to a host of *workshops, distinguished lectures* and *seminars*, making for an academically stimulating atmosphere. Both the faculty members and students participated in various academic endeavours at educational institutions in India and abroad. Some faculty members *published books* on their branch of learning; some others contributed to reputed national and international journals.

Oasis, the All-India inter-collegiate cultural festival organised during October, witnessed a myriad of competitions and cultural performances over ninety-six colourful hours, bringing in a convivial atmosphere in the educational campus. Several institutions across India participated, while professional music groups were invited to perform at the festival. The students also organised *BITS Open Sports Meet (BOSM)*, which attracted various colleges to participate in a plethora of sporting and sport-related events.

Upholding the high academic standards of the Institute, three students from BITS

were awarded the prestigious *Aditya Birla Scholarship*. BITSians also made their mark in the *BBC's University Challenge Quiz* and at *IIT Chennai's technical fest, Shaastra*.

The sincere contributions and untiring efforts of NSS, BITS, Pilani were aptly rewarded at a function held in Delhi



Dr. Motilal Dash, coordinator, NSS, BITS, receiving the award

wherein **Smt. Sushma Swaraj**, the Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare **presented** them the *Blood Donor Award* for their voluntary blood donation programme.

Started with an aim of networking the entire campus, the ambitious *BITSConnect project* has been marching ahead towards a fruitful end. A *magnificent new library*, one of the largest in Asia and equipped with several modern features, was inaugurated.

In recognition of its fine work, the *Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL)*, founded at BITS in March 2003, was named one of India's top five Entrepreneurship Centres by the Wadhvani Foundation.

Since BITS has three campuses now, viz, Pilani, Dubai and Goa, the following organizational changes have been brought in: Chairman, Dr. K.K. Birla has been redesignated as Chancellor, BITS. Director, Prof. S. Venkateswaran has been redesignated as Vice Chancellor, BITS. Each campus has a Director— Prof. L.K. Maheshwari for Pilani, Prof. M. Ramachandran for Dubai and Prof. T.C. Goel for Goa.

ACADEMIA

A Confluence of Ideas

A number of seminars, conferences, lectures and workshops were held during the semester. Some of them are mentioned below:

Second Virtual Conference on Genomics and Bioinformatics

The *Biological Sciences Group* participated in the *Virtual Conference on Genomics and Bioinformatics* conducted by North Dakota State University, USA during September 16-19, 2003. As new disciplines are integrated, the conference provided an advanced collaborative environment for the exchange and discussion of information related to innovations such as sequence analysis, transcriptional profiling, protein structural elucidation and other genomic techniques of the post-genomic era.

International Conference on Conflict Resolution: Peace and Development

The *Humanistic Studies* group organised an international conference on *Conflict Resolution: Peace and Development* followed by a *Workshop on Conflict Transformation and Citizen's Diplomacy* at the Institute during 28 October – 1, November, 2003 in collaboration with the Centre for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) and the University of Maryland at College Park, U.S.A.



Prof. Venkateswaran addressing the delegates

The conference coordinated by Dr. Nirupama Prakash, the Group Leader, was attended by eminent international delegates from countries including U.S.A., Canada, Nepal, Mauritius, Australia and the Philippines. At the national level there was active participation by experts comprising academicians, bureaucrats, Members of Parliament and representatives from NGOs. Mr. Leonnart Kotsallein, the Chief of Mission of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, also participated.

Water management

The *Civil Engineering* Group, BITS, Pilani



Dr. Rama Sastry, the Chief Guest with the hosts

organised the *National Conference on Integrated Sustainable Water Resources Planning and Management* during 11–12 October, 2003 with a view to bringing out the research developments in *Water Management* and allied fields closer to implementation for the common man. The conference, co-ordinated by Dr. K. Srinivasa Raju, Group Leader, was attended by fifty-five delegates comprising academicians, engineers and researchers. Delegates from the Ministry of Water Resources, NABARD, and various renowned educational institutions were also present.

Disaster Management

Adding another feather to its cap, the *Civil Engineering* group organised a conference on *Disaster Management Case Histories* at the Institute during 14 – 16 November, 2003, supported by the All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi, the Indian National Committee on Hydrology, Roorkee, and the University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

A huge success, the conference was attended by many experts from various academic institutions and professional organisation across the nation. The conference, coordinated by Prof. Rajiv



Gupta, focused on man-made and natural

Prof. Rajiv Gupta welcoming the delegates

disaster and their management. It was held with the objective of bringing together people involved in disaster management. It also served as a forum for discussion and helped publish authenticated reference material for future planning and action.

Workshops

30 October – 1 November 2003



Learning to manage conflicts

witnessed a workshop on *Conflict Transformation and Citizen's Diplomacy*

organized by the **Humanistic Studies** Group and conducted in parallel with the international conference on **Conflict Resolution**.

Prof. Edy Kaufman and Prof. John Davies of CIDCM acted as resource personnel for the three-day workshop that followed the conference. About 25 participants, including BITS faculty and professionals from various nations were trained in the domain of conflict management.

Distinguished Lectures

- The **Economics and Finance Association** conducted a talk on *Joy of Stress* by Mr. C. P. Ramaswami, IRS Commissioner, Income Tax Department, Government of India, Jaipur on 30 August, 2003. The talk was followed by an interactive session.



Dr. Shishpal Rawat

- Dr. Shishpal Rawat of Intel Corporation, U. S. delivered a lecture on 19 September 2003, in the area of VLSI design on the topic *Filling the Design Gap: Challenges to Electronic Automation*.

On 6 September 2003, a talk on *The Medical Aspects of the Mind, Body and Spirit* was organised by the **Community Welfare Unit** and the **Staff Association**.



Dr. Sunil Sanon

The talk, led by Dr. Sunil Sanon, M.D. from King George Medical College, Lucknow, was focused on the scientific and philosophical issues pertaining to brain, mind, body, and spirituality. It was aimed at establishing an interface between the known faculties of the brain and the largely subjective aspect of super-consciousness, the probability of an oft-untapped fund of knowledge.

- The **Computer Science – Information Systems** Group organised a lecture on *Anti-Patterns in Software* by Dr. K.R.V. Subramanian, CEO and co-founder of Answerpal, Bangalore on 11 September 2003. Dr Subramanian is an erstwhile Professor of Computer Science, and Dean, Distance Learning at BITS, Pilani. He guided the students in Anti-Patterns, which represents the latest concept in a series of revolutionary changes in computer science and software engineering thinking.

- Prof. S. K. Rao, formerly Professor and Head, Civil Engineering Department, IIT Kharagpur and presently Senior Consultant, LEA Associates South Asia Private Limited, New Delhi, delivered a lecture on *Road Developments in India: Challenges Ahead* on 17 September. In his seminar, Prof. Rao stressed on the necessity for good infrastructure and proper maintenance.

UGC Refresher Courses

During 8–28 December, 2003, the **Chemistry** and the **Mechanical Engineering** Groups with the guidance of the **UGC-Refresher Course Centre**, BITS, Pilani, organised two three-week refresher course programs on *Theoretical and Computational Chemistry* and *World-Class Manufacturing* respectively. The University Grants Commission, New Delhi, sponsored these programmes.

Comprising seventy-two lectures each, the programmes spanned a period of eighteen working days. The course on *Theoretical and Computational Chemistry* included areas such as *Group Theory, Graph Theory, Statistical Mechanics, QSAR, Quantum Chemistry, Ab-initio Methods, Semi Empirical Methods, Biophysical*



At the valedictory function

Structure and Dynamics Calculations, Bio-informatics, Computations using GAUSSIAN and MATLAB software and Simulation Procedures. The course on *World-class Manufacturing* covered the areas such as *Manufacturing Planning and Control, Manufacturing Management, FMS, CMS, Concurrent Engineering, Integrated Product Development, Green manufacturing, JIT, Lean Manufacturing, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Mechatronics, Manufacturing Strategy, TQM, World-Class Quality Management, and TPM, World-Class Maintenance.*

The lectures were delivered by faculty members from BITS, Pilani, IIT Delhi, MNIT Jaipur, J. N. V. University, Jodhpur and A. P. S. University, Rewa and benefited faculty members of over thirty colleges from all over India.

Enriching the Learning Experience

Faculty members from various disciplines attended and participated in a number of workshops and seminars the world over:

- Dr. Sunil G. Bhand attended the XII *International Conference on Heavy Metals in Environment* held between 26 and 30 May 2003, in **Grenoble, France**.
- Dr. R. K. Sen participated in the *International Conference on Chemical and Bio Process Engineering*, 27 – 29 August 2003, in Malaysia.
- Mr. N. N. Sharma participated in the *Second International*

Conference on Computational Intelligence, Robotics and Autonomous Systems, 15 – 18 December, in Singapore.

- The papers presented by Dr. R. Mahesh and Dr. Sajeev Chandran at the 55th Indian Pharmaceutical Congress, held in Chennai during 19 – 21 December, were adjudged the best in their respective sessions.

On the home front, several internal talks and lectures were organised by the various discipline Groups.

The Management Group organised lectures and seminars on various topics like *Business Process Re-engineering*, *Development of Quality Highway Infrastructure in India using BOT System* and *Changing Paradigms in Marketing of Services*.

Monte Carlo Simulations of Poly-electrolyte Complexes, Reduction of Emissions and Hydrocarbons and Mechanism of Mass Transfer Enhancement in Textiles with Ultrasound were some of the topics taken up by the **Chemical Engineering** Group in the various seminars it organised.

The Biological Sciences Group conducted a seminar titled *Fermentation Process Modelling and Optimisation to Enhance the Biomass and Spore Yield of a Pro-biotic Culture* by Dr. Ramkrishna Sen on 10, September. It was a part of the proceedings at the *International Conference and Bioprocess Engineering*

held between 27 and 29 August 2003, at **Universiti Malaysia, Sabah, Malaysia**.

Engineers' Day

The 36th Engineers' Day, held in memory of Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya, was celebrated at BITS, Pilani on 15 September, with the central theme *Improvement in Values in Engineering Profession*. Vice-Chancellor Prof. S. Venkateswaran inaugurated the programme, paying a floral tribute to the **Bharat Ratna engineer**.

Prof. Ravi Prakash, Convenor of the



Prof. Venkateswaran and colleagues

programme, presented some highlights and achievements of Sir Visvesvaraya's life, followed by speeches on the theme by the Director Prof. L. K. Maheshwari and Deputy Director Prof. K. E. Raman. The Paper Presentation session, coordinated by Prof. B. V. Babu, included fifteen technical papers related to the theme presented by both faculty and students.

JOINING HANDS

Memoranda of Understanding

- BITS, Pilani and Binghamton University (State University of New

York) have signed an agreement on Educational Scientific Corporation in September 2003.

- The Centre for Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL), founded in March, 2003, to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship and leadership amongst the student population, has been named one of India's top five Entrepreneurship Centres by the Wadhvani Foundation (which also sponsors CEL) for promoting entrepreneurship education in India.
- BITS, Pilani and Wadhvani Foundation – National Entrepreneurship Network have signed an agreement to build Entrepreneurial Development programs and activities at BITS, Pilani and to establish a nation-wide network of entrepreneurial development centres, National Entrepreneurship Network (NEN).
- BITS, Pilani has joined hands with **EURESCOM (Germany)**, **IRISA (France)**, **IUT at the University of Haute Alsace (France)**, **IISc-Bangalore** and “**ERNet**” for a joint project in the area of *IPv6* specific research and testing.
- BITS has launched its *IP based Bidirectional Desktop Video Conferencing Facility, Video-on-demand facility* and the *Scheduled Video Multicast Facility*. These new breakthrough video communication technologies enhance the learning experience of Distance Learning

Students registered under various courses with BITS, Pilani. It also complements the learning facilities available to on-campus students and works as an add-on to the BITSCoconnect project, which is nearing completion.

- *BITS-Microsoft Centre for Mobile Computing* is yet another venture between **Microsoft Research** and BITS, Pilani. This new lab aims at understanding the latest computing technologies in the field of wireless communication.
- Microsoft Research appreciated the work done by the interns from BITS, Pilani in the US. BITS, Pilani won the *Microsoft Research RFP for Embedded Systems Course*.
- A second centre is being established by **IBM** at BITS, Pilani in the area of *Open Source Computing*. This would serve as an addition to the existing IBM Lab.

HONOURS

President's visit to Dubai

It was a momentous day for the BITS, Pilani-Dubai Campus when the **Hon'ble President of India** accompanied by **The Hon'ble Union Minister for Telecommunications, Shri Arun Shourie**, visited the institution on 20, October 2003. Dr. Kalam was received by the Vice

Chancellor Prof. S. Venkateswaran and the Director Prof. M. Ramachandran. His



The President being received by the Vice-Chancellor

Excellency Sheikh Maktoum Bin Mohd Bin Al Rashid, the Prince of Dubai, Mr. Syed M Salahuddin, Managing Director, ETA-ASCON Group of companies and host of other dignitaries were also present at the reception.

Chancellor's Visit to Dubai campus

Dr. KK Birla, Chancellor, BITS, Pilani, arrived at Dubai on December 11, 2003 from Delhi. Accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. S. Venkateswaran, he

The Chancellor at the Dinner Session of the IKC

visited BITS Pilani Dubai campus and interacted with students and faculty. Apart from visiting the campus, he visited Practice School II stations also.

Chancellor Felicitated

The Indian Business Community of Dubai felicitated Dr.K.K.Birla, the Chancellor, BITS Pilani, at a function organized in Dubai during December 2003. The Chancellor congratulated the Business Community for their dedicated work and progress.

Dr.K.K.Birla was the guest of honour at a function hosted by the BITS Alumni Association of UAE Chapter. Nearly fifty alumni and their families attended the function and enjoyed listening to and interacting with the Chancellor.

Award to NSS

One of the major honours for the National Service Scheme (NSS), BITS, Pilani, this year was the Blood Donor Award it received for its voluntary blood donation campaigns. **The Honourable Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Smt Sushma Swaraj** gave away the award to NSS for having the highest number of voluntary blood donors among Indian Academic Institutions.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Aditya Birla Scholarship

Sonu Swaika, Uzma Hussain and Ravish Patel of BITS, Pilani were awarded the prestigious **Aditya Birla Scholarship** after a nationwide contest in October, 2003. The scholarship scheme covers all academic expenses of the students for the entire duration of the degree programme, commencing with the academic session of

the first year. The top 20 students from all IITs, IIMs and BITS, Pilani vied for the top honours, in two stages of selection. The



The candidates from BITS in Mumbai

three awards bagged by students of BITS, Pilani were **out of a maximum of ten** from BITS and the IITs.

Shaastra – IIT Chennai

A three-member team from BITS, Pilani emerged victorious in the *Open Hardware Design contest* at *Shaastra 2003*, the All-India technical festival of IIT, **Chennai** held during 9–12 October. The BITS, Pilani team comprising Rekhawar Rahul Ashok, B. Raghu Raman and Karthik Kumar, competing with participants from IITs and other colleges, won the contest for their circuit designs, presentations and discussions.

BBC University Challenge

A four-member team of students registered an impressive win over the team from Sir MVIT Bangalore, in the first round of the **All-India BBC University Challenge Quiz Contest**. A total of 24 teams from undergraduate and

postgraduate colleges, selected on the basis of a written elimination round held in May 2003, competed in the first round of 12 episodes. The team, comprising



The BITS Team with the Quizmaster

Ashwin Balasubramaniam, Nitish Korula, Chitra Raghunath and Sansaptak Dasgupta, went on to face Indian School of Business, Hyderabad in the second round. The quiz was conducted by the distinguished quizmaster, **Siddharth Basu**.

Abracadabra!!!

One of the biggest hits of Oasis 2003 was the Magic Show, the first for any student, by Sandeep Tharian, a BITSian,. The two-hour show drew unprecedented crowds with tickets sold out days before the actual performance, the highlights being the *Indian Rope Trick* and the *Vanishing Act*.

VISTA – IIM Bangalore

12 BITSians, led by Arun Shashank, participated in *VISTA 2003*, **IIM Bangalore's** management convention held from 31 Oct – 2 November. They won

consolations in *AdAge*, an advertising workshop and *Chakravyuha*, a competition on *financial securities*. The team also secured the third position in *Dumb-Charades*.

Gaurav Mathur and Vishaka S. Gupta constituting a two-member team representing BITS-Pilani, have entered the final round of the ***Intel Student Research Contest***.

Prof. B. V. Babu was invited as the keynote speaker at the ***International Conference on Desert Technology*** (DT -7), during November 9 – 14, 2003, Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur. He was the member of the Programme Committee at the ***Genetic and Evolutionary Computation Conference*** (GECCO-2003) which was held during 12 – 16 July, 2003 at the University of Illinois, Chicago, Illinois, USA.

Prof. Babu was also the Organising Committee Member (Publicity Chair) at the ***Second International Conference on Computational Intelligence, Robotics and Autonomous Systems*** (CIRAS – 2003), during December 15 – 17, 2003 at the National University of Singapore, Singapore. He was also the session-organiser for a special session on “Evolutionary Computation”.

Projects

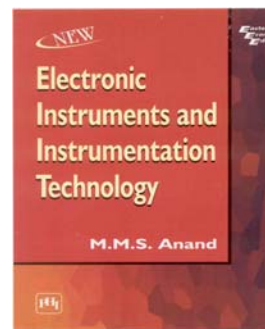
Over the last three years, the **Pharmacy** Group has undertaken a number of projects under the UGC scheme and also in collaboration with several industries.

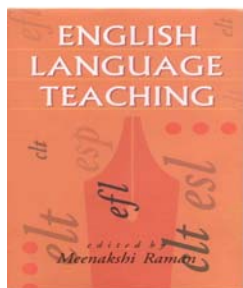
- Among the completed projects is the design of *Once-daily Oral Controlled Release Formulation for Selected Drugs*, done in collaboration with IPCA Lab, Mumbai. As part of the project, a drug has been designed and is slated to be marketed shortly.
- *TQM and GMP System Implementation* was done for Shashi Phytochemical Industries, Alwar, to enable the organisation for second and third party quality auditing. The project was completed and the client has successfully cleared the quality audit.
- The first stage of the *Journal Server Digital Library Project* has been completed. This project is in collaboration with the **Oxford based Journal Server Initiative**.

IN PRINT

With the aim of making quality-knowledge-available to all, some faculty members published books while others contributed to international journals of repute:

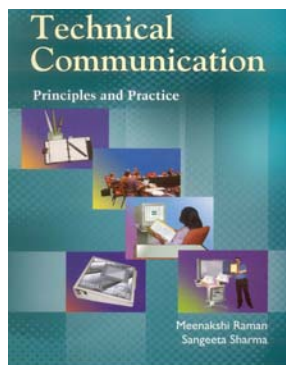
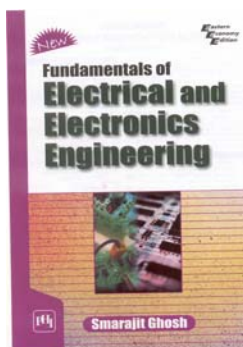
Electronics
Instruments and
Instrumentation
Technology,
***Prentice-Hall of
India, M.M.S. Anand.***





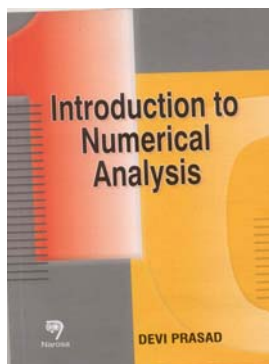
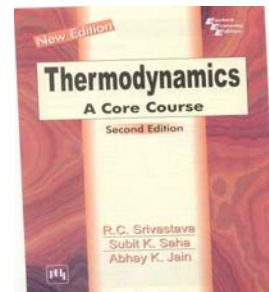
English Language Teaching, *ed.*
Meenakshi Raman,
Atlantic Publishers.

Fundamentals of Electrical and Electronics Engineering,
Prentice-Hall of India, Smarajit Ghosh.



Technical Communication Principles and Practice,
OUP India,
Meenakshi Raman,
Sangeeta Sharma.

Thermodynamics: A Core Course (Second Edition),
Prentice-Hall of India, R.C. Srivastava, Subit K. Saha, Abhay K. Jain.



Introduction to Numerical Analysis,
Narosa Publishing House, Devi Prasad.

New Optimization Techniques in Engineering,
Springer, Godfrey C. Onwubolu, B.V. Babu.



RENEWING THE BONDS

1978 Batch Reunion

Keeping alive the tradition, **BITS Alumni Association (BITSAA)** organized *Silver Jubilee Reunion* for various batches. The semester was special because both, the 1978 admit and 1978 pass-out batches turned up to visit their alma mater.



A batch reunites

The 1978 admit batch, were the first to come in the last week of September, 2003. In all about 48 alumni and their

families visited the campus to relive their memories.

The Class of 1978 arrived a week later, in the first week of October 2003. Apart from visiting the campus, they talked to the administration about the admission system, the course structure and the



Reliving Old Memories

efforts taken by BITS in research and development areas. They also presented a cultural show jointly with the current students.

ONWARD

The Sanctum of Learning

The much-awaited dream of every BITSian came true when the new library building was inaugurated for use. Situated close to all the Faculty Divisions, the library, with a floor area of 65000 sq. feet, houses over 210,000 volumes relating to Science and Technology, Management, Social Sciences



The magnificent library

and Humanities arranged in different sections. Almost 50,000 old and rare books are kept in different section and made easily accessible by a computerised facility in the library premises. Journals, periodicals and magazines are maintained separately. Many e-journals have also been added to the library site. Further the facilities may be extended into a separate section for Art-Books and Audio-Video library.

CARING BEYOND OUR WALLS

Computers in Jherli High School

With a view to introducing the students of *Jherli* to the wonders of technical education, a new Computer Laboratory was started at the under the *Gyanganga Project* of the National Service Scheme, BITS, Pilani.

NSS Volunteers have started taking classes on Computer Education for the students and teachers of the school and will continue to provide technical support.

District Inter-School Competition

More than 300 students from 25 reputed schools of Jhunjhunu district participated in a district Inter-School Competition



The Vice Chancellor welcoming Swami Anubhavananda

organised by the NSS Unit. It aimed at making students understand the cause of social evils and to kindle in them a sense of responsibility.

NSS Oasis Stall

Prof. G. Sundar, the Dean, Students' Welfare Division, BITS Pilani, inaugurated



Prof. G. Sundar inaugurating the NSS stall

the NSS Oasis stall aimed at raising funds by sale of articles like stuffed toys, WWF greeting cards and handicraft pieces.

Asha-India Summer Meet

As a part of its initiative to invite celebrities, scholars and social workers to encourage and guide the volunteers, **Dr. Sandeep Pandey**, a **Ramon Magsaysay** Award winner was invited as the Chief



Magsaysay award winner Dr. Pandey at BITS

Guest to the *Asha-India Summer Meet*, in late summer. During his visit, he addressed hundreds of NSS volunteers on how to take a lead role in community development. He also requested for proper partnership with *Asha*.

National Pharmacy Week

The **Pharmacy** Group organised the *National Pharmacy Week*, during 16-22, November 2003, with the theme *Pharmacists for Promotion of Future Free of Tobacco*. The Pharmacy faculty and staff at the Medical Centre presented a series of lectures on topics ranging from *Pharmacists Can Help Their Patients Quit Smoking* to *Tobacco Dependence: A Kaleidoscopic Panorama*. All the speakers stressed on the important role of the pharmacist in patient's care and health.



Diabetes awareness and detection

The lectures were well received by the audience.

The Group, in collaboration with the **Community Welfare Unit** and the staff of the Medical Centre, also organised a one

day *Diabetes Awareness and Detection Camp* on 14 November 2003.

SPIRITUAL YEARNINGS

Art of Living Course

The BITSians benefited from the *Art of Living Course* conducted by Mr. Pradeep Pillai of Jaipur. The classes were held on campus from 24-28 September, for students and staff. The course was a workshop on *Pranayama, Yoga, meditation and relaxation*, structured using an easy,



Mr. Pillai conducting the workshop

step-by-step approach. Mr. Pillai introduced to the participants the *Sudarshan Kriya*, a simple yet powerful breathing technique that reduces stress and increases vitality.

CREATIVE ZONE

Playing to the Gallery

The **English Drama Club** presented the Oscar Wilde classic, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The play, which is about the very confusing life of Jack Worthing,

who prefers to keep different identities in different places, takes pot shots at the landed upper classes. The production had perfect portrayals of the characters adding to the humour in the script.

The **Hindi Drama Club** staged a classic family comedy, *Prem Nagar Ki Dagar*. The hilarious play, mocking generation gap and joint family problems, kept the audience glued to their seats.

Pilani Tamil Mandram (PTM) had the honour of inviting, for the first time in their history, a professional drama troupe during August 2003 to perform at BITS. With their hilarious comedy *Jurassic Baby*, Crazy *Mohan and his troupe* from Chennai had the audience roll in the aisles.

Ragamalika

Ragamalika conducted a number of cultural events during the semester. Three freshers' concerts *Shruti Laya*, *Amrutha Varshini* and *Ganamrutham* were conducted in August 2003.

Nritya Ranjini, a festival of music and dance choreographed and co-ordinated by the members was staged on 5 October, on the occasion of *Dussera*. This was followed by *Trinity Day* on 2 November, to pay homage to the august trinity of Carnatic Music Saint Thyagaraja, Shri Muthuswami Dikshithar and Shri Shyamashastri. The graduating members performed the semester-end concert that mesmerised the audience.

SPICMACAY

The activities for the semester began with a scintillating *Sarangi* recital by **Ustad Sultan Khan**. Accompanied by his son and a tabla maestro, the artist set the mood for the evening with *Raag Yaman*. He also performed numbers like *Albela sajana aayore...* and *Piya Basanti*

The **Bengali folk dance** performance by Purulia Chhau captivated the huge audience. The colourful costumes, energetic dance style and the vibrant music left the audience yearning for more. The theme for the dance was based on



Purulia Chhau

Mahishasura Mardini taken from Hindu mythology. The folk performance, accompanied by brilliant light effects, was received enthusiastically by the audience. Gurmit Bawa and troupe graced the



Gurmit Bawa and troupe

BITSian stage with a **Punjabi folk** performance. The artist performed several pieces from Punjabi literature which upheld the themes of unity, religious harmony etc.

Sudip Gupta and troupe staged a grand **Puppet Show** performing various episodes with music and light effects; accompanied by the actual theme for each of the storylines they kept the audience, glued to their seats. Towards the end of the show, the artist demonstrated the manipulation of the puppets with the help of his troupe.

Music Nite

Music Nite is always a much-awaited event in the BITSian cultural calendar. One of the most admired student clubs on-campus, the Music Club performs a variety of songs with professional expertise. The songs range from popular Hindi and regional movie songs to the latest Western numbers of nearly every genre. The first of the two Music Nites of the semester was a welcome-gesture for the newly admitted



Keeping the rhythm

students while the second was dedicated to the graduating students, featuring many veteran Music Club members in their farewell performance.

BOSM 2003

The BITS Open Sports Meet is the annual All India inter-collegiate sports festival of BITS, Pilani. The meet has come a long way from its humble beginning, eighteen years ago and has attained a truly national character. This year, over sixty colleges from all over the country responded positively to the invitation.

Featuring many innovations, BOSM 2003 made for an enjoyable experience. Besides traditional sporting



Competing teams in action

disciplines, new events like carom were added to make it more complete. The BOSM Sports Quiz and a cultural eve extended the aura of BOSM to arenas other than the Gym Grounds.

It was exhilarating to watch some great players, like the highly ranked badminton player **Nishad Dravid**, in action.

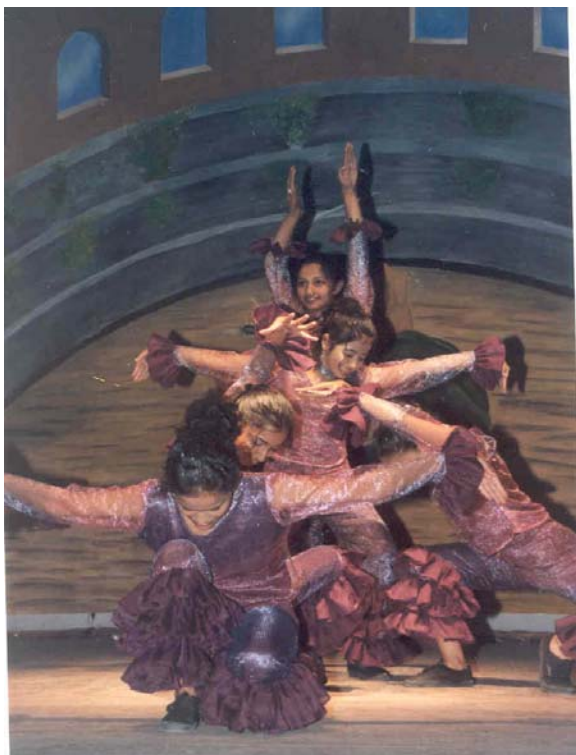
The event ended with SBMJC, Bangalore emerging as the overall winner with the hosts as the runner up.

OASIS 2003

The semester radiated great pomp and pageantry in the form of Oasis 2003 which bore the theme *Elysium: Where Hopes, Dreams and Destiny Meet*.

The festival, one of the highlights of the semester, was the result of much hard work by BITSians. With the enthusiastic participation from BITS and other institutions, the four-day cultural extravaganza was thoroughly enjoyed by the BITSians as it provided a good relief from their routine. The fest started off with a grand inaugural ceremony presided over by the Vice-Chancellor, BITS-Pilani, Prof. S. Venkateswaran. The inauguration witnessed a brief introduction of the Student Union Council for Cultural Activities (StUCCA) body members, followed by a presentation that enthralled the audience, while conveying the essence of the theme. The structure and beautiful paintings by the students left the audience awestruck. The three-hour function saw a packed auditorium, consisting of students and faculty members, enjoying the performances given by BITSians.

The evening of the first day was very magical, with a BITSian student, Sandeep Tharian mesmerizing the audience with his animated tricks like the great Indian rope trick. A day, the audience were glued to their seats when the professional troupe **Indian Ocean** drenched them with a wave of their soft fusion music. This was followed by **Orange Street**'s electronic rock



Choreography performance during Oasis

that left the audience clamouring for more.

Among the various events conducted, *Razzmatazz*, the dance competition saw several talented teams performing to a jam-packed auditorium. The students displayed their awareness for fashion and their talent for creative designing, through the Fashion Parade contest called *Fash-P*. *Rocktaves* - a rock concert of national

popularity showcased various rock bands like *Prestroika* and *Friday the 13th*.

The theatre and acting buffs were amply entertained by the *Stage Plays* and *Street Plays*. *MAMO – Mr. and Miss OASIS*, was a search for unchallenged talent and irresistible charisma among outstation participants. Also keenly contested were the events like *Western Jam*, *Junk Art*, *Mock P*, *Shades* (a pencil sketching contest), *Creative Writing* and *Hindi Kavi Sammelan*. Besides these, *Antakshari*, *Mime*, *Fusion*, *Andholika* (a classical music contest), *Oasis Quiz*, *Choreography* were also thoroughly enjoyed by the audience. Several on-the-spot events, most of which were organized and sponsored by *Mountain Dew*, one of the sponsors of OASIS 2K3, and others like *Nestle*, *Hindustan Times*, *Penguin Publishers*, *Pepsi* etc.

The semester concluded commendably with smile on the lips of the students and hope in the hearts of everyone to land in the New Year on the plank of promises, premises and promotions with the ensuing events knocking on the doors.

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We wish to thank the staff and students of BITS who have helped us in procuring data and photographs.

Please feel free to send your comments, suggestions or feedback of any kind to mraman@bits-pilani.ac.in

Mediaspeak

Here is what the media has to say about BITS, Pilani

Pilani does its Bits to change village

“Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, is undertaking a project to transform the rural face of Jherli Gram Panchayat in Jhunjhunu district by undertaking the development of infrastructure for education, health and economic growth.”

THE TIMES OF INDIA

[MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2003.]

When's A Job Not Just a Job?

“With recruitment, retention and reskilling top of the mind, companies are giving employees the opportunities for higher education – whether management, engineering or pharma – even while they work.

...perhaps the best example of this learn-while-you-earn culture is BITS Pilani's Collaborative Degree Programmes, which integrate the working environment of employees with the Institute's learning requirements.”

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

[MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2004.]

Campus backbone network wires BITS

“The Birla Institute of Technology & Science (BITS), Pilani has announced that BITSCoNECT, a Rs. Seven crore project, has been commissioned to full capacity. India's largest campus backbone network, BITSCoNECT is one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by a university in India. It was led jointly by BITS and BITS Alumni Association (BITSAA) and is the culmination of a year long effort that spanned continents, organisations and people to bring together alumni, faculty and students to provide a best-in-class networking infrastructure for the BITS Pilani Campus.

“Having the nation's largest and efficient backbone infrastructure will enhance BITS distance learning program division, to offer media rich content to over 7500 students”, said S. Venkateswaran, Vice Chancellor BITS Pilani, “now we can look forward to a successful expansion of the virtual university concept allowing students, faculty, research and organisations to collaborate with no geographical and time zone constraints.”

ECONOMICS TIMES

[MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2004.]