



# THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

## About NUKSA

Nuksa The Pine Chronicle is the monthly news magazine of IIM Shillong which seeks to provide to the world outside, News, views and Creative Expressions from members of the IIMS family. Nuksa is a Khasi word meaning example or sample and as the Pine Tree is almost synonymous to Shillong and our beautiful campus, hence the name Nuksa, The Pine Chronicle.

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### Disclaimer:

The Views expressed here are not necessarily reflective of the views of the Editorial team or of the Institute

### Vision

To become an internationally recognized management Institute with a global outlook grounded in Indian values.

### Mission

To generate and disseminate knowledge in all aspects of management education for sustainable development and to develop innovative leaders with strong ethical values.

### Core Values

- ❖ Openness to new ideas and experiences
- ❖ Intellectual freedom
- ❖ Self-experimentation and creative pursuit
- ❖ Adherence to fair, just and ethical practices
- ❖ Compassion for others

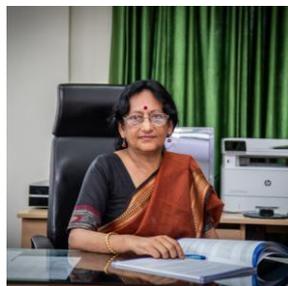
## EDITORIAL

As months come and seasons change, the month of May in Shillong tried to feebly announce the coming of the summer. But soon strong gusts of winds followed by flashes of lightning and thunder bolts and the cascading rain that came down every single day brought back the wintery feeling all over again. The fact that the campus was devoid of the students/participants, the PGP 2<sup>nd</sup> years having graduated in April, the 1<sup>st</sup> years in their summer internships and the PGP Ex away in their China module, it was the FPMS who were left holding the fort! But the fort at the Mayurbhanj Palace was soon to see the exit of its commander, Prof Amitabha De. Having held the position of Director for five long years he completed his time in IIM Shillong and left to join NITIE, Mumbai, his parent employer. In his stead was placed the senior most faculty, Prof Keya Sengupta as the Director in Charge. Her task was cut out and responsibilities appear daunting. But she is no stranger to the job having discharged similar responsibility for more than a year after the retirement of Director Prof. A.K. Dutta. Interestingly, Prof Dutta had assumed charge as the first Director in 2008. In other words, the institute is already 10 years old. The need to connect to the outside world and create niche for itself, was the guiding philosophy from day one. The weekly newsletter which carried tidings from IIM Shillong to the outside world has now become a monthly. It is named *Nuksa: The Pine Chronicle*. Nuksa is a Khasi word which means example/sample or in our context, the overview. Its tagline is news, views and creative expressions. Nuksa, hopes to emerge as the most vibrant forum for the IIMS family.

Please be generous with your inputs for Nuksa for it as an ode to creativity, and as we all know creativity is always work in progress, so please join the work!

### - Editor

#### ASSUMPTION OF CHARGE



Prof Keya Sengupta ,Dean (Academics) & Dean (External Relations) also took charge as the first lady "Director-in-Charge" of IIM Shillong on the Forenoon of 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.

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### AM I A THIEF?



“Chor hain, hum sab chor hain (Robbers, we are all robbers)”, shouted a seemingly deranged old man to the policeman outside a restaurant in Juhu (Mumbai) from where five of us were just making our way out on a Saturday night. While my friends had already passed it off as an inconsequential rant by a lunatic, I felt this musing was rather deep at a very different level (in retrospect, it could have been “my dear friend” – the one who wears a hat and holds a walking stick \*wink\* - inside me who was possibly doing this thinking). On the way back home, a 45 minute ride through the weekend traffic, I reflected on the conversations I had with my friends earlier that evening. One of them told us that he had returned from a 2 week backpacking trip to New Zealand. This was the twentieth country he has been to in his life thus far. He was one of those, as they call, “born with flying wings”. As he went on describing the places he saw and the people he met, I kept thinking to myself “such a lucky chum this one is. I wish I had done at least half of that”

Another one surprised us by telling us all that she just got promoted to become the youngest Category Head in her office. “This means I get my own cabin and am part of the CEO’s inner circle” she beamed. I said to myself, “If only I had focused on my work without distractions, I could have been like her or maybe even better...”

I was distracted from my chain of thought when my third friend suddenly revealed that he thought this time he might have finally found the special girl in his life. He said, “I have started understanding the meaning of all those Backstreet Boys songs and I keep hearing violins in my head all the time”. Sweet, I thought, “If only I had held it together with my ex-girlfriend”

At this point, the fourth friend said, “This champagne is on me as I just bought a house in Andheri (Mumbai)”. She went on, “The society is an upscale one with two clubhouses, three tennis courts and an exclusive cycling lane”. I zoned out at “two clubhouses”.

A large part of me feels happy for each of them every single time. But some small part of me desires all that for myself as well – all at the same time. Somewhere subconsciously I have reframed the rules of my own achievements by obsessively measuring and comparing my own life against the yardstick of my peers. I wish to bolster my tiny ego by attempting to outdo my peers in this silly game of bluff. Who has a better job? Who has more followers on social media? Who has been to more fancy places on a vacation?

Then again, who am I? Am I an individual, am I the group or am I the society? I go on solo trips to off-beat destinations doing crazy things but what about those glorified group-trips to conventional beaches. I go on group-trips but if I saved the money I would have that beautiful house. I spend all my time trying to buy the house but I don’t have a partner to call it a home. I found the special one in my life but I am no longer free to do all those crazy things on my own as before. Oh wait, did this come a full circle?

Then again, who am I? Am I a hypocrite, am I superficial or am I a thief?

I keep trying to steal the “journeys of other people” without realizing that this indentured servitude to being obsessed with constantly comparing my life with the lives of others is not really the path to happiness or contentment. When will I ever understand that every person is unique and has walked in different shoes on diverse paths to reach where they are? Every minute I spend trying to ape someone else I am meandering away from the one thing I am certainly great at - being myself. Nobody can be me better than me. So

why don’t I be the best version of myself? I should know that what truly matters is focusing on identifying my own journey and undertaking that with utmost gusto – I am allowed to be selfish about this I think. I should define my own goalposts and play my own game. I certainly must invest in growing myself. My life should not be about breadth, it should be about depth. I keep forgetting that wise men have been telling “Life is not measured by the number of breaths you take, but by the moments that take your breath away”. Let me be genuine in crafting my own life.

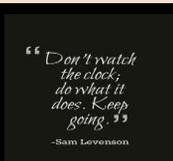
Then again, who do I want be?

-**Vaibhav Annam, PGP12** is currently working as "Manager - Consumer Insights and Brand Development, ABG".

### MÉTIER

#### LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- **Prof Keya Sengupta, Director In-charge, IIM Shillong**  
Publication: *Managerial Decisions for Innovation Strategy of firms: implications for country level innovation*, International Journal of Business innovation and research Volume 16, Issue 2.
- **Prof Keya Sengupta, Director In-charge, IIM Shillong**  
Review: Impact of Community based Health Insurance on Child Health Outcomes: Evidence on Stunting from Rural Uganda, *African Development Review*.
- **Mandal, P.C.** (2018). Qualitative Data Analysis and its Nature: Debates and Discussion, *International Journal of Society Systems Service*, 10(2), 148-158. (Inderscience Publications)
- **Mandal, P.C.** (2018). Trends and Developments in Retailing: Challenges and Opportunities, *International Journal of Advanced Research and Development*, 3(3), 19-24. (UGC Approved Journal)
- **Mandal, P.C.** (2018). Positioning and Branding for Small Businesses: Strategies and Initiatives, Mandal, P.C., *International Journal Advanced Research and Development*, 3(3), 80-84. (UGC Approved Journal)
- **Mandal, P.C.** (2018). Institutional and Government Markets: Strategies and Initiatives, Mandal, P.C., *International Journal of Academic Research and Development*, 3(3), 164-168. (UGC Approved Journal)
- **Mandal, P.C.** (2018). The Changing Marketplace: Challenges and Opportunities, *International Journal of Academic Research and Development*, 3(3), 245-248. (UGC Approved Journal)
- **Kakoty, Sanjeeb.** Nominated Expert Committee member of DBT, Govt. of India reviewed some Atal Incubation Centers in Assam.



## REFLECTIONS

### DREAMS DO COME TRUE

The City of Gold is something that every student aspires to be in once for his lifetime. "Dream and the universe shall conspire to make you meet your dreams", is something that was existing only in the pages of inspirational books until it came true for the four of us. I am a student of Indian Institute of Management Shillong with aspirations that every guy like me dreams to have. In the hectic lifestyle and within all the hub dub of IIM Life, I had made some lovely friends here. Subhrajyoti Saha, Subhabrata Mukherjee and Sabyasachi Dasgupta, brothers with whom I would go worlds over. And it is with this small group that our dream of the City of Gold, Dubai, had come true.

Hult Prize foundation was something that we had never heard before. So, naturally when it came to college through our Campus Director, Kshitij Arora, we were quite excited to explore. As the agenda for the competition to build a sustainable idea in the lines of energy, also resonated with the theme of sustainability of IIM Shillong, we were hooked to it from the beginning. Subhabrata and Subhrajyoti were the marketing guys for us. So while Sabyasachi and I ideated to bring about a revolution in the land of dreams, it was them who gave us the wings to reach there. Together we worked nights, and slogged our hours into building one small idea that could hold the earth together for a longer period of time and bring the power of electricity to each and every corner of India while saving it altogether.



Every little idea did start in the small brains of humans to develop this beautiful planet into something new and yet making it live a longer and a better life.

On the coveted day, we walked into the stage with thumping hearts and the name of our country on our hearts. 7 minutes. I never knew that 7 minutes can change your life. And it did for us. When we came out of the presentation room, we weren't the same again. Whatever happened inside that place, made us better, made us stronger and made us aspire for more.

Everything came to an end with a commendable effort, and a recognizable idea in the world forum. We held the name of our country high on our shoulders. We sure did not win. But we did learn. And one thing to take away from all of it, "There is something to learn in everything".

P.S – Our names were etched on the Business Standard page 5, which added to the accolades. A sweet surprise from a sweet country.

-Indrasis Roy, PGP17

## CHINA TIDINGS

We the students of PGPEX (MBIC – Managing Business in India and China) program of IIM Shillong spent two months in Qingdao and Shanghai as part of the China immersion program to understand business culture and economics. The entire experience of staying and attending to academics was not only informative but also challenging at time. The close interaction with general public and successful CXO's of leading Chinese companies made the entire immersion very successful and students had immense knowledge about one of the fastest growing economy of the world where primary collaborators were Institutes – Ocean University of China, Qingdao and School of Management, Fudan University, Shanghai.

Qingdao being the tier-2 City and port of China attracted a lot of foreigners and traders. The campus of Ocean University, Laoshan was awarded as the "Most scenic campus", evident by flock of people visiting from across the country during the "Cherry Blossom Festival". It has carefully planned buildings inspired by the city's German architecture. The main road which was lined with 'Cherry blossom' trees (known in Mandarin as Yīnghuā Dàdào) was in full bloom when we were there during our immersion (March – June); it was a sight to behold and surely a rare phenomenon occurring only in Shillong, China & Japan.



Our Qingdao stay in Ocean University was excellent, weather was very soothing – cloudy and windy most of the times. Sports facilities provided were of Olympic standard. We observed how each Olympic sport is important for them and with what sincerity the students there pursue.

Apartments with three rooms were provided to us with single occupancy with a common kitchen for every apartment where students tried their culinary skills, some successful and some better not to describe.

Our host campus was very well connected to rest of the parts of the city via bus or metro. Many students chose to cook for themselves in confidence of well-connected and nearby markets; thanks to 60 hours of training of Mandarin in China we were able to communicate well enough with the street vendors in market who had very little knowledge of English. This instilled in us the confidence to converse more in Mandarin, one of the most difficult language to learn.

For other students who chose to try out more of Chinese cuisine – plentiful options were there, namely in the college run food courts and canteen in affordable range, specially discounted for students.



However, eating with chopsticks was new for all of us and it was a trick to eat rice with chopsticks which, need not to mention, only a few could master.

During the entire immersion we had planned industrial visits to different industries both in Qingdao & Shanghai. Trip to the Tsingtao Beer Museum (largest market share holder in its segment in China), Qingdao Port, Head Quarters of white goods manufacturer Haier were among the few in Qingdao. Whereas in Shanghai we visited China's steel behemoth BaoSteel China, Volkswagen-SAIC Pvt Ltd (one of the first JV in automotive sector in China) where we were taken to the plants and we experienced the procedures of automobile manufacturing. Infact we got a chance to visit Shanghai's Wisdom Bay, an innovation hub where we saw how 3D printing, a concept that will revolutionise the future printing ideas. Further, we have had the privilege to be part of the hospitality extended by Indian Consulate wherein Shri Anil Kr Rai IFS, Consul General of India, Shanghai addressed the students and also discussed in length about India and China business perspectives.

## OFF BEAT

### A PILGRIMAGE

It was a routine summer afternoon for me. The PGP were yet to return back from the internship, few of the colleagues were sweating it back at home at 46 degrees Celsius, and here we were vacationing amidst endless pines of the "Mayurbhanj House". A group of 15 peers were on campus to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Faculty Development Program of the Institute and I had just finished my sessions with them. As I walked up towards the main "Admin Building" thinking about my friends and the usual tea stall gossips, I saw a motorbike being parked at the usual two-wheeler parking space. There are some in the Institute who are the macho-men with jazzy bikes but this one was slightly unusual since the bike had two flags – one the National flag and the other had slogans for Indian Army and the Country. And it had a West Bengal number plate on it. As I stretched the flag to read what was written, and understand who could have brought the bike, I saw a middle aged gentleman wearing the typical biking jacket and safety gears walking towards the bike. Out of courtesy I asked him, if it was his bike. And the conversation started where he told me how this was his third attempt to reach "our campus" all the way from Midnapur in West Bengal. While I kept appreciating his efforts to drive up to here, I was confused about his intent. And even wondered why, of all the places, he wanted to reach our campus. Finally I gave up and asked him again – why did he choose our campus? And his reply was "after all this was the place where the great Ex-President had breathed his last". I didn't pay much respect to his intent, and walked up the reception and saw a bouquet

of flowers, a packet of chocolates and a framed photograph of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam kept at there. And it was then that I asked him again, is "HE who brought you here?" and the prompt reply was "Yes Of course," and it was his third attempt.

As I could only look at him to understand the significance he had of the campus and the Institute, I asked him gently, if he would like to see the auditorium where the great "Missile Man of India" delivered his last lecture? And he said, "Yes sir, that is what brings me here". While I immediately asked the guard at the reception to open the Audi for the gentleman, there were a few colleagues who also joined us there. And then, out of civility asked him, if he would like to have some tea. To which he replied, "Sir, first I will pay my respects and then I will eat anything. I have not eaten anything since morning.

Only in the anticipation of reaching here and offering the flowers first". I was taken aback, all these years I thought we were a School of Management, claiming to create future leaders in business and have been struggling to make it a professional organization which had no soul, no religion and had absolutely nothing to do with faith or even belief. And here was somebody, in front of me who did not only believe but also had risked his life to travel all this distance only to offer a few flowers...which to him was a pilgrimage. All those of us, who were part of this Institute, ever in this life could realize.

I couldn't even ask him his name...for a devotee, it is the faith which matters!!

**-Prof Rohit Dwivedi**

### A DAY IN THE LIFE OF IIM SHILLONG

When I converted an IIM seat, my only source of information was Chetan Bhagat's two states. And I couldn't be any more disillusioned. While the idea of finding love in a hopeless place, sounds exciting, few get the opportunity and the time to pursue such interests. Here is a glimpse of an average student's daily itinerary.

**8:00 am-** I have only one regret in life that I didn't sleep enough in my previous life. Every morning the corridors resonate with alarm ringtones. Wake up Sid should have a sequel of sleep-deprived MBA students struggling to get up. What works for us is that the first person to get up ensures others are up to. We have a no-lock policy, and it works well for us. Nobody misses class because nobody woke them up. It's a part of the bro code. Look out for your section people. Wake them up

**8:30-** Breakfast is not an option. It is a mandate. The classes are tough; the weather is cold. You need the energy for the kick. So we stuff ourselves with Idlis, parathas, up whatever is the menu of the day. My peers are pretty health conscious and choose diet variants with fruits and cornflakes. I am happy with a large butter jam Sandwich.

**8:59-** I have never participated in any sports day event, and suddenly find myself running at undiscovered speeds towards the class. At strict 9, the door closes, and the

attendance sheet will have a sad blank by my name. Attendance is a big thing in MBA colleges.

Every Class is 1.5 hours long. Some of them seem short, and some of them infinitely long. Theory of relativity. Also directly proportional to how hungry you are. We get a break of about 15 minutes between classes which is our golden time. Depending on how busy we are, we use it to discuss the college gossip, have a cup of tea, go through pre-reads or collate PPTS. It is also a good time to go deposit laundry and finish other menial chores. I also do my side-reading on my beloved kindle during this time

6:00 PM- By this time, we are drained and would trade our soul for a bed. Luckily its tea-time and we can forget our miseries while we drown ourselves in the snacks. The next part of the day is spent on club committee work. There is always an event coming up that needs to be taken care of, always an article to be written. However, I don't mind the work on most days.

The M in MBA could be for meetings. There are so many! Study group meetings, Club meetings, Competition meetings!

This has a super positive side too- you know everyone. Everyone is on at least Hi-hello terms. You are always paired up with someone or the other, and hence the whole family thing is even closely strung. Sleep is a luxury- it is. However, the awake hours are fulfilling. There is a sense of achievement in spending hours over a PPT and then be appreciated by the teacher for it. Learning when we spend hours planning the next club event. The thing that keeps us going is- all of us are into this together. We are huddled up together in our legacy hoodies, uniformly united (pun intended)

And we find a way to do things. Going to Neef and Dorema ( our favorite food joints) and working over steaming hot momos or soul soup, are memories that will haunt me all my life.

By 12, we are weary but determined. The Night Canteen fuels us. Chai pe Charcha is the driving force that keeps us going. There are always assignments to submit, and pre-reads to devour. Most of us have little notebooks or apps to make our to do lists. My favorite thing in the world is a list of all ticks. It is therapeutic and is the papyrus equivalent of Xanax.

We have made a truce with the pre-reads though, most of them are Harvard cases and are a delight to read. Some of them I don't understand, but my finance enthusiast friends seem to like. So I guess one man's food IS another man's poison.

The weekends are more relaxed; we do have pending work to be done. However, we can choose our pace. If we had worked hard enough during the week, the weekend is about trips and sightseeing. There are hills to see, lakes to enjoy and wind to catch in your hair. You are in the North-east, the most beautiful seven sisters you would ever meet.

If you love food and charming cafes as much I do, you will be spoilt for choices.

If you are an indoors person and don't want to go out- you don't have to! Clubs and committees ensure that you have the whole experience here. Every festival is celebrated.

As I write this, I cannot wait for Dahi- Handi. One of the first festivities to be conducted. The whole human pyramid, the whole Bollywood dance tracks. It's the day when 360 people become one. Then there will be the events. Marketing, Operations, Finance, HR, Environment- all the clubs spend a lot of time coming up with fun versions of concepts. Together, we make it work.

Committees make our MBA life as comfortable as possible. Hostel Committee brings out little surprises like Sunday Biryani. Cultural Committee ensures no festival is left uncelebrated and those little game and movie nights. Sports Committee manages to engage in Sports enthusiasts like me too. We have our IPL version of Cricket and football.

IIM Shillong is a verb; it is constantly buzzing with activity. Everyone is always doing something. However, that little something that they do is what makes them the amazing managers that they wanted to be. I could have written a little longer, but I realized I miss my buddies too much, I am going to call them and count days till we are back in IIM SHILLONG- together

That is what a day in IIM Shillong feels like, the feeling of belonging, the feeling of longing for Shillong.

-Sanchari Das, PGP 2017



## WORKSHOP ON "PAY FIXATION RULES"

Alvin Nongtraw, Mr Kennedy Pdah, Office Assistant and Mr Longmanbha Thangkhiew, Accountant was nominated to attend the workshop on "Pay Fixation Rules" organized by NAHRD, New Delhi from 21 to 23 May 2018. The training programme was attended by Officials & Dealing Assistants from various organizations and Institutes of the country. The 3 days training programme covered the Overview of V-CPC, VI-CPC and VII-CPC, Introduction to Pay Fixation as per VII CPC, Rules on Increment, Fixation of Pay on Promotion, Fixation of Pay for Direct Recruits, Fixation of Pay for Re-employed Pensioners, MACP, NPS, Financial Effects of Penalties.

The workshop was delivered by Shri. Yogesh Dwivedi, Deputy Secretary, DOPT, Govt. of India who is also a faculty of ISTM, New Delhi with very good course content and delivery with real case studies and practical exercises.

## OBITUARY



Kaustubh Bhagwan Tarmale (26), a participant of IIM Shillong, passed away on May 12th 2018. Kaustubh lost his life after successfully saving three of his cousins from drowning in Bhatsa river in a family picnic. All students and faculty at IIM Shillong deeply feel this loss. Kaustubh was a friendly and helpful soul. Classmates remember him for his dance performances and ever jovial attitude, while the faculty still praises his inquisitiveness and lively persona. Kaustubh was extremely enthusiastic about

entrepreneurship, and had participated in several campus activities. His loss is deeply mourned and felt by all. His heroic act of bravery has left an impact on all of us. The IIM Shillong family organized a condolence meeting in remembrance of the brave soul, on 14th May.

## TRAVEL TO THE UNKNOWN

*It was a dark frightful night,  
the lord of darkness was in his full might,  
I walked upon the road with strangeness beside,  
but my companion never said anything but gazed aside,*

*the beautiful flowers of the morning,  
were swaying in trance as if in mourning,  
the trees were like silent deities,  
staring at me, never showing any peity,  
The wind blew and chilled my spine,  
shreiking and menacing as a wound in a brine,*

*I did not know where I was going,  
Thought it was a path walked by many,  
but I saw no signs of them in my journey,*

*There was a sound in the air if you want to listen,  
whispering chillingly in my ear from a distance,  
I followed that voice, fearfully mesmerized,  
As my only hope I felt the burden getting light,  
all the fears, pains & liabilities seep out,  
all the foolish personas that we flout,  
as you stand before naked as truth,  
Nothing to trade, only your soul to sooth.*

*The path is difficult and full of scars,  
Trial by fear or fire, choice is always ours,  
Fears,pains and past, face them head on,  
Then, My Friend, You would have travelled the Unknown*

- Vaibhav Srivastava, PGP 2017

## NEGLECTED GENDER

*Born like anyone else*

*For no fault of mine, I was a figure of despise  
Asked my mother, she turned aside and wept  
Grew up alone, without any friends  
Loneliness was my company and pain my friend  
Determination to break the shackles was always there*

*But the path wasn't very clear  
Decided one night to go far away  
To live life on my own*

*To realise the dreams I saw  
Sold my body and soul to survive  
Never lost the hope in my eyes  
Standing here, looking back  
This journey was worth the fight  
Although we don't matter to most in the world  
I carved a niche of my own  
And I am proud to say I "SURVIVED"*

- Harish Nair, PGP2017

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## THROUGH THE LENSES

