

Winter..
..is here.

THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

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EDITORIAL

Modern day research seems trapped in the quagmire of trying to meet the set goals of the funding agencies, achieve international recognition and publication of their research findings, foster career advancement while also attempting to address societal and personal concerns. Attempts to produce internationally recognised research does not necessarily ensure that the fruits of that research would be available for social good. Add to this the strict conditionality set by funding agency and the IPR and patent regime that operates primarily on commercial considerations and not societal needs, the task of the researcher seems extremely complicated. Though it may be argued that the goals of research need not be incompatible with larger social good, but of late the commercial aspects, and personal career advancement seems to be the overriding factors. The question which arises is whether the researcher will have the opportunity of choice on how to utilise their time and effort. It is seen that young researchers are often constrained by the strict requirements of professional activity that determines career advancement rather than interest and passion that should guide their research. This has had an adverse impact in such research output making significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge much less on research making breakthrough contribution in addressing issues of vital human and planetary interest. While it may be argued that the nature of societal engagement cannot but differ across different subject domains and that it would be unreasonable to expect every researcher to behave in a particular way. But at the same time, it has to be accepted that the concept of engaging in a dialogue with the numerous stakeholders that constitute society is a concept that has become alien while formulating research questions. As a consequence, higher education, especially research education has become the clichéd ivory towers, often removed from the realities of life. A corollary to this has been the scripting and presentation of research findings. More often than not, research findings are hardly ever presented to the public in a language that would be readily intelligible to them.

ABOUT NUKSA

NuksaThe Pine Chronicle is the monthly news magazine of IIM Shillong.

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This forecloses most avenues of the possibility of the fruits of that research being available and useable by the society at large. Of late it has been noticed that many researchers and research organisations are showing signs of guilt for using up huge resources and taxpayers money but not adequately sharing their knowledge expertise beyond the academic circles. With this has come the realisation that society needs their valuable inputs and that even a small research finding, if used properly, can have significant societal impact. This has resulted in the popularity of extension departments sprouting up in most institutions engaged in scientific research be it agriculture, veterinary or even medicine. Unfortunately, the same trend has not been noticed in intuitions dealing with social science, engineering, management, law and the like. These institutions also seem to have conveniently forgotten that though educating students to meet society's needs was originally a part of the mandate of these intuitions, today it is meeting only industry requirements! This has to be reversed and institutions of national importance need to take a proactive approach on this. It may be argued that the concept of institutions existing as islands unto themselves independent of the society has been increasingly debunked. More and more questions are being raised about the value proposition that higher education and research has succeeded in incorporating. If institutions engaged in teaching and research of management does not bring about dissemination of management best practices to all stake holders, be it business, industry, agriculture, government or organisations, the very purpose of such institutions will ultimately get questioned. Likewise, if universities and institutions engaged in teaching and research of social sciences, engineering or architecture are unable or unwilling to study, diagnose and prescribe solutions to pressing problems that plague society, those institutions run the risk of becoming redundant. With the start of the new decade, it is time for institutions like ours to take the lead and make higher education and research in the area of Management Education a tool for effective social transformation.

TIMELINE

Business Leadership Summit 2.0

The institute concluded 2019 on a celebratory note with its flagship events - Business Leadership Summit and Innovative Corporate Engagement spanning between December 6 and December 8, 2019, carving out one more chapter in the history of the college.

Chief Minister Conrad Sangma inaugurated the annual Business Leadership Summit of IIM, Shillong. The summit sees top business and corporate leaders discussing ideas that are transforming the regime they work in.

Delivering the inaugural address Mr Sangma focused on how the institute is assisting the State in ameliorating its horizons and at the same time is being benefited by the unique essence of the region itself.

Himself a business graduate from Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, he stressed on using business and entrepreneurship to help the State grow leaps and bounds.

He said, "My administration welcomes collaborative studies and research by institutes and students that will facilitate the government in formulating its plan and policies to best develop the State of Meghalaya."

The event concluded with Prof DP Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong, extending his gratitude to the Chief Minister on behalf of the IIM fraternity and for kickstarting the Business Leadership Summit.



The second edition of the Business Leadership Summit witnessed the presence of eminent speakers and corporate stalwarts from around the country who participated in discussions on various management topics which are germane to the business world. The discussions, which were focused primarily on Indian economy and its path ahead towards becoming a 5 trillion-dollar economy, saw various learned personalities sharing their views in the light of different domains of management studies such as operations, finance, marketing, analytics and so on.



Innovative Corporate Engagement Meet 2019

While on one side, the leadership summit was being concluded, parallelly organized was the Innovative Corporate Engagement meet at the Assam Rifles Golf course which saw the participation of avid golfers including players from the corporate world, armed forces, professional golfers from across the region and country and students of the institute, showing their sporting spirits and mastery of golf skills. The innovative meet really lived to its name where the students who are generally going through the rigorous process of the management school got to meet with eminent corporate personalities and top-notch officials and fathom their view on various pivotal issues which are shaping the world, we are living in.

Both the events finally concluded in the State Convention Centre in the presence of Chief Guest A L Hek, Meghalaya Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Atul Kulkarni, member of the board of governors, senior officials of the armed forces and other dignitaries. Delivering the valedictory address, Shri Hek remarked, "Meghalaya is a land of beauty and great opportunities. I invite you, the corporate leaders, to seriously look at investment opportunities here. We remain grateful to the innovative methods employed by IIM Shillong, to bring in corporate leaders under one spectacular meet."



Prof D Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong, felicitated the winners of the Innovative Corporate Meet and talked about how both the programmes have helped the institute give its students a practical and pragmatic look towards the society and have helped them shape opinion based on informed vies and advice.



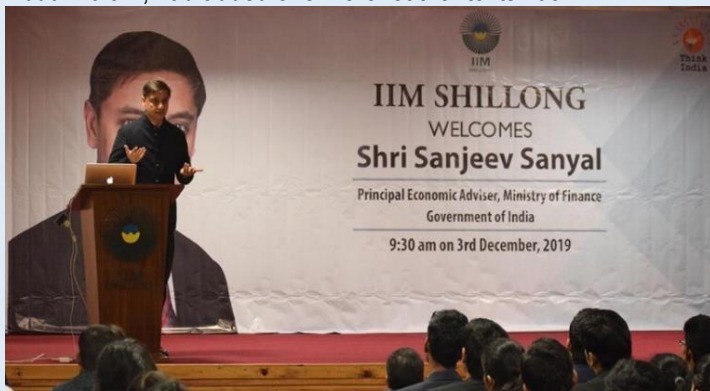
Podium Season 8 – An Interactive Visit by the Principal Economic Advisor to GoI

On December 3, 2019, IIM Shillong had the honor of hosting Mr. Sajeev Sanyal, Principal economic adviser in the Ministry of Finance, Government of India for its annual flagship corporate lecture series, Podium Season-8.

Mr. Sanyal, who is, among various things, an economist, writer, environmentalist and urban theorist, elucidated on “Complex adaptive systems” and “network theory”, and touched upon how the contemporary state of affairs need to detach itself from conventional notions to survive in a world that is throwing unprecedented challenges every day. An erudite man, Mr. Sanyal referenced his address with interesting scholarly examples and talked about how network theory and understanding of complex systems is going to shape the world we live in. When asked how, in a world which is obsessed with old-school theories, we can progress ahead with these ideas, he said the famous lines: “You don’t have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.”

After the lecture, Mr. Sanyal along with Prof. D P Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong, launched the official mascot of the IIM Shillong’s Innovative Corporate Meet, a three-day golf cup in one of Asia’s largest golf ground which hosts corporates, professionals and amateur golf players.

IIM Shillong was deeply honored to have hosted such a personality for its annual lecture series and undoubtedly Podium, which has had the honor of having speakers like former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, had added one more feather to its hat.



Winner of GSK Pharma E^3 2019

The team RIDE IT comprising of students Apoorva Bansal, Garima Singh Nahar & Ritika Jha were adjudged National Winner of GSK Pharma E^3 2019.



Christmas Celebration

The Institute celebrated Christmas with Director Prof D P Goyal addressing the Security Personnel, House Keeping Staff and presenting them with gift vouchers.



Further, children are seen cutting a cake to commemorate Christmas celebrations of the entire IIM Shillong fraternity in the presence of Faculty, Officers and Staff including family members.



OFFBEAT

One day at the river

The summer sun was shining brightly down on the city as the rickshaw creaked its way slowly through the road. Naushir and Ankit both were trying hard to stay in the shade as the Sun played hide and seek with the rickshaw. A left turn and it was on the port side and then on the starboard after another turn. “You can’t hide from me”, it seemed to say. The ride home after school was taking longer than usual and Naushir was edgy. “What do you say we go down to the river and beat this heat once uncle drops us home”, whispered Naushir, as they got closer to home.

“We can shower at home; I don’t think we should go to the river. Maa will be very angry”, retorted Ankit.

“Oh, common year! Be a sport. She will be angry only if she finds out”

“But...”

“Chill. We will go to the river, play around and throw some rocks in the water. We will not get into the river”

“Okay then”, consented Ankit still thinking about the scolding from Maa if she comes to know about this little escapade.

The river had gained some notoriety over the years with many drownings and incidents. Only a few months back some boys out for a swim, got caught up in the current and were sucked under. The river had a rocky bed and quickly changed speed every few hundred yards. Both boys were learning to swim but were no experts.

The rickshaw stopped at the start of the lane and the boys got down excitedly, dragging their heavy school bags and water bottles down.

“Don’t move. Let uncle leave and then we will go to the river. He will surely tell on us if he sees us going elsewhere”, said Naushir.

Both stood there until the rickshaw disappeared around the corner.

“Let’s go now. See if you can beat me to the spot”, said Naushir as both of them sprinted to the river.

They ran through the street, past the huts of the construction workers and straight to the river, no more than five hundred meters away. The riverbank was sand and stones and offered plenty of space to play. The summer sun had shrunk the river, and where there was water once, the ground underneath had been laid bare.

“Don’t take your shoes off. Last time around you cut yourself on the stones”, cautioned Ankit.

“Of course, I remember! Damn these stones”, said Naushir kicking one away.

The riverbank was quiet at this time of the day. Usually, a few boatmen could be seen ferrying passengers to and fro but there were no customers now and their boats lay idle on the bank as they retired elsewhere.

“I bet that my stone could bounce off the water more times than yours”, said Naushir as he picked a rock and threw it onto the water bending his arm to make the stone hop on the river water. One..two.. and down went the stone on the third.

“The trick is to pick the right stone”, said Ankit as he whipped a flat pebble towards the water.

The pebble bounced around three times before sinking.

“Lucky throw. This sun is making me miserable. I am going to take a dip in the water”

“No! Don’t do that. There is no one around either and if you go home wet, Maa will know that we came to the river”

“The Sun will dry it off in a minute. Relax! In and out only”

Ankit looked on hopelessly as Naushir took off his clothes. A dread coming over him, imagining what he will tell his mother. Naushir was not going to listen. He should have never come here.

Naushir jumped into the river and took a dip.

“Come on in. The water is perfect”

“Please come out. We need to get going. It’s getting late”

Naushir lunged forward back towards the bank.

“Thank God he is coming back”, thought Ankit to himself.

By now Naushir was trying a little too hard to get back. He was splashing his arms desperately. Something seemed wrong.

“Are you alright?!”

“Help..”

The current was pulling Naushir back. He was struggling. Ankit looked around nervously but there was not a soul to be seen. He knew he will need to pull Naushir out himself. Not waiting further, Ankit waded in a few feet, dug his shoes in the mud and held his arm out as far as he could.

“Catch my arm quick”

Naushir flapped hopelessly with outstretched arms. His fingers barely touching his friend’s.

“Got you!”, said Ankit as he grabbed Naushir’s hands.

Pulling desperately, hands digging into the river mud, Ankit was ready to burst into tears. Both of them clambered out of the water. Naushir was shaken and lay still on the sand, scratches and bruises all over his arms and legs from the river rocks.

“What happened to you?”

“The water was pulling me”

“Let’s get back home now”

“Hmm..”, said Naushir as he scrapped the sand off his feet and arms.

Wearily both got up and as Naushir got dressed, Ankit looked at the watch. Within minutes they started walking back towards home

“Don’t tell your mother about what happened”, pleaded Naushir.

“What about your bruises?”

“I was cut the last time too”

As they approached home they could see both their mothers standing in the lane.

“What happened? How did you get these bruises?! You went to the river again, didn’t you? How many times have I told you to come back home straight after school!”, yelled Naushir’s mother.

“We are sorry. It won’t happen again”, said Ankit.

“This is all the rickshaw uncle’s fault. I have told him several times to not drop the kids at the lane but bring them right till our doorstep”, Ankit’s mother said angrily.

“Wait...What?! It’s obviously not his fault”, thought Ankit.

“I am going to complain against him to the school authorities and make sure he doesn’t get to pick any kids from the neighbourhood.

Do you know how many incidents have happened at the river lately?"

The boys looked at each other, wondering if they should say anything. The axe had fallen, but not on them. They never imagined that the poor rickshaw uncle is going to pay for their mischief.

"Good, we didn't tell them about the incident at the river. Mom would probably beat the poor guy down", whispered Naushir.

"See you tomorrow then", replied Ankit as he walked behind his Maa.

"Yea. But wait... How are we going to school tomorrow?"

Parag Sharma
PGP 2017

ALUM SPEAK

Time to begin!

I dillydally. I vacillate, give time a wait. I procrastinate.

All the time, I take the time to think. The journey of life is tarried, I seek asylum under the shadow of time. My savior, my scapegoat, is time at the same time. I have plenty of time whereas I hardly get time. But then, I never give up; I procrastinate because, at the end of it all, I have time.

Many a time ruing over missed opportunities our world seems filled with words like, "if", "had", "wish", "but." We reprehend ourselves, most always try to put the blame on time. We fail to recognize thatwe whiled away but did not own any moment of it. You, I, we prolonged it, we all procrastinate. That blockbuster, why not watch it on a big screen, oh! It sure will feel much better than squinting our eyes in front of a laptop. . Those assignments could've beendone yesterday, why do we always need to be lastminute.com? Why not nip the pain in the bud? Why suffer when we can mostly conquer?

The days are full of activities that ought to be done, but most of the

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time the planning and sequencing takes all the time. And in the process none of it gets done, even if we start most don't get completed. The sense of accomplishment always remains a distant nail waiting to be hammered. But all we end up doing is running after with an imaginary tool in hand. So what then can defeat procrastination? Prioritization probably, not definitive though but handy nonetheless.

The definition says procrastination comes with an absence of urgency; so prioritization might as well do away with it. I don't know because ironically I have not prioritized enough. But then I won't put it on time anymore. I have realized that even if time is not money physically, it is a very good investment which would reap rich dividends now and in the future. I have plenty of time and I won't give up. I will prioritize because all I have is the time!

I wanted a perfect ending.

Now I've learned,

the hard way,

that some poems don't rhyme,

and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle and end.

Life is about not knowing,

having to change,

taking the moment and making the best of it.

-Gilda Radner.

And by the time one gets to the beauty and depth of the above lines, let us come back to reality and accept that Gilda Radner was an American comedian and actress who died of ovarian cancer at the age of 43. Unfortunately, she did not have much time to procrastinate!



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