

Winter..
..is here.

THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

EDITORIAL

A primary school teacher Ranjitsinh Disale, from Solapur's Paritewadi village in Maharashtra was declared the winner of the \$1 million annual Global Teacher Prize 2020. The prestigious annual prize was founded by the Varkey Foundation, in 2014 to recognise an exceptional teacher who has made outstanding contribution to the profession. Disale, 32, an engineering drop out who chose to become a school teacher, emerged the winner among 10 finalists from across the world. When he first joined the Zilla Parishad Primary School at 2009, all that existed was a dilapidated structure, desolate placed between a cattle shed and a storeroom. Not one to give up easily, he decided to do what he could. Cleaning up the location was followed by efforts to ensure textbooks were available in the local language. This required translation of the textbooks into their mother tongue, which he did. He followed it up provided each book with QR codes to give students access to audio poems, video lectures, stories and assignments. Incredibly, this remote school was the first in Maharashtra to introduce QR codes. After submitting a proposal and successful pilot scheme, the state ministry announced in 2017 that they would introduce QR coded textbooks across the state for all grades. In 2018, the human resources development ministry announced that all the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks would have embedded QR codes. In addition, his other mission was to promote girls education which he did with all his might. As a result of his forceful interventions the village has zero teenage marriage and there has been 100 per cent attendance of girls at the school. That Ranjitsinh Disale exemplifies the best traditions of India was amply demonstrated when in his acceptance speech he declared that all the ten finalist were people with exceptional contribution and hence he would divide half his prize money with the nine other finalists! In addition his portion of the prize would be devoted to a teacher innovation fund for improving the standards of teachers and teaching in his state. Probably there cannot be a better example of the selflessness of a teacher who not only refuses to accept the dictum of a culture which believes that success is relative and agrading seeks to determine who is better by ascertaining the one who is relatively not as good! Success, like all other things in life is absolute and relative gradation is a myth that this humble school teacher has so eloquently demonstrated. He went on to declare his conviction that teachers are the world's "real change makers", and saluted the work of teachers in a world virtually locked down by the pandemic, Asserting that the unprecedented situation has shown how education serves communities in a multitude of ways,

ABOUT NUKSA

Nuksa The Pine Chronicle is the monthly news magazine of IIM Shillong.

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sure every student has access to their birthright of a good education. Disale added to good measure that "Teachers are the real change makers who are changing the lives of their students with a mixture of chalk and challenges. They always believe in giving and sharing. Therefore, I am very pleased to announce that I will share 50 per cent of the prize money equally among my fellow top 10 finalists to support their incredible work. I believe, together, we can change this world because sharing is growing," he said. This noble gesture translates to a fact that the nine other finalists will each receive over \$55,000. This in itself is historic as there is no precedence of anyone sharing their prize money. "By sharing the prize money, you teach the world the importance of giving," said Indian education philanthropist Sunny Varkey, the founder of the prize. Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director General for Education at UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), a partner of the initiative was equally exuberant of this year's winner by stating that "Teachers like Ranjitsinh will stop climate change and build more peaceful and just societies. Teachers like Ranjitsinh will eliminate inequalities and drive forward economic growth. Teachers like Ranjitsinh will save our future," Interestingly, these were not empty hopes as the Maharashtra school teacher has already started an initiative to help the process of peace building and trust between young people across conflict zones. An ongoing initiative called "Let's Cross the Borders" connects young people from India and Pakistan, Palestine and Israel, Iraq and Iran, and the US and North Korea. Designed as a six-week programme, students are matched with a peace buddy from other countries with whom they closely interact with. Till date the programme has inducted about 19,000 students from eight countries into this programme. At other times, he is taking students on virtual trips across the world and also demonstrating scientific experiments from the science lab he built in his home. Ranjitsinh Disale has not only done India proud but also firmly planted the sacred principle made famous by an Ubuntu story: I cannot win when you lose. I win when we all win!

TIMELINE

IIM Shillong Incubation & Enterprise Support Centre (IESC), signs MoU with FICCI FLO

With the objective of providing guidance and mentorship to prospective entrepreneurs, IIM Shillong Incubation & Enterprise Support Centre (IESC) inked an agreement with FICCI Ladies Organization to chart a new future for women entrepreneurship. The two organizations agreed in principle to work together and create a facilitating and nurturing environment during the initial and critical stages of starting a business. The aim is to ensure appropriate intervention and thereby to reduce the initial start-up costs and establish themselves in a shorter timeframe. "True Women empowerment can only be achieved through making women economically independent" said Shri Shishir Kumar Bajoria, Chairman Board of Governors, IIMShillong on signing the occasion.

Jahnabi Phookan, National; President, FICCI FLO emphasised that their national incubation would endeavour to build a sustainable eco-system, identify potential start-ups and women entrepreneurs to provide them with the necessary mentorship. A self-reliant entrepreneurial ecosystem for women would empower women and transform them from being mere job seekers to job providers that would work for people, planet and profits!



Prof. D.P. Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong highlighted that the Mission statement of IIM Shillong which clearly lays down its mandate to generate and disseminate knowledge in all aspects of management education for sustainable development and to develop innovative leaders with strong ethical values. The MOU would certainly play a pivotal role in this regard. Shri. Atul Kulkarni, Member, Board of Governors IIM Shillong felt that the initiative could prove an opportunity for students to get real-time exposure through community immersion, something essential to develop thought leadership. Prof. Sanjeeb Kakoty, Chairperson, IESC, IIM Shillong, laid emphasis on the importance of women entrepreneurs, especially in the North East, by stressing that entrepreneurship here was essentially women-led, as in the weaving sector, almost 98% of all weavers in the north-east are women. If transformation has to occur in the north-east, it has to be women-led, he declared. The session was moderated by Nehal Parikh, National Head – FLO incubation Cell.

Diwali at IIM Shillong

The Institute hosted a small gathering for its fraternity on the occasion of the eve of Diwali. Faculty and staff of the Institute presented songs and poetry, making the meeting a joyous and fun-filled evening. Director of the Institute Prof. D P Goyal urged the fraternity to continue putting their best foot forward for the uplift of the Institute, while also wishing each member of the fraternity with the very best on the Festival of Lights.



Constitution Day celebrated

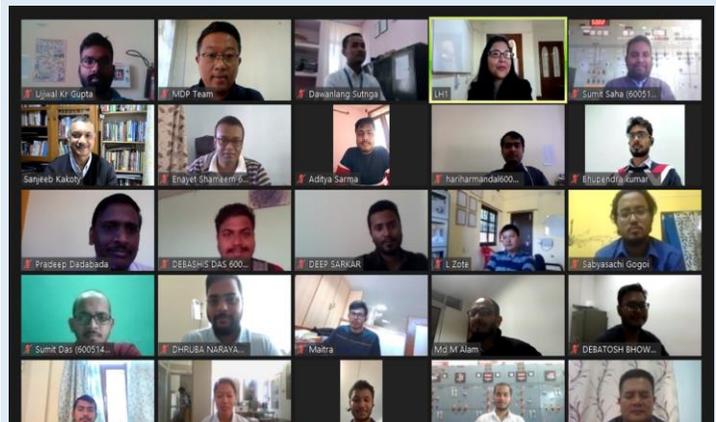
IIM Shillong joined in commemorating the Constitution Day and the adoption of the Constitution of India on November 26. Constitution Day is also known as the 'Samvidhan Divas'.

Management Program on Leadership

A General Management Program focusing on Leadership was organized by IIM Shillong for Officers of PowerGrid from 16th-20th November, 2020. The training had a participation from 27 participants who joined the training via virtual mode from across Eastern India, Assam and North East.

The training is coordinated by Prof. Sanjeeb Kakoty along with Prof. Pradeep Dadabada and facilitated by Faculty from IIM Shillong.

To quote a few participants, the training was a "Great learning through relevant examples" and a "Highly interactive program".



MÉTIER

Mandal, P.C. (2020). Marketing Information and Intelligence and their Roles in Generating Customer Insights, Mandal, P.C., International Journal of Collaborative Intelligence, 2(2), 125-137.

OFF BEAT

Alexander and the Sage: Insights from an Ancient Conversation

There goes an old saying – Those who can look deepest into the past can also see farthest into the future. Let us take a look at a cross-cultural conversation that took place in the terrain of India millennia ago. The story unfolds like this.

Alexander the Great with his mighty army has come to the western part of the Indian landmass – the final destination in his journey from Macedonia to conquer the world. The Greek contingent was camping on the bank of the river Jhelum in Punjab and gearing up for the impending battle with the Indian king Porus. Every morning the Prince himself would be seen on horseback leading the regular drilling process of the Greek army in preparation for the battle. The camp was laid on a vast field at the end of which there was a deep forest.

While Alexander was busy patrolling his troops with fire and vigour, a very strange sight caught his attention. Under a tree where the forest began he spotted a 'weird looking Indian'. This person had long hair with matted locks, a long unkempt beard and only a piece of loin cloth in his whole body. And there he would sit under the tree for hours in a particular posture always staring at the horizon. Alexander was deeply intrigued by this man and became curious to know more about him. One day he approached the 'strange Indian' and began a conversation with the help of local people.

"We see you every day sitting under the tree for hours looking at the horizon. What are you really doing?" The Prince asked.

There was no answer.

Alexander started getting impatient but kept his cool and asked again:

"While we are gearing up for the battle, we find you sitting here and doing nothing. What are you up to?"

The old man gave no answer.

The Prince now was on the threshold of his patience. Still he collected himself, came close to the man and asked:

"You can at least tell us your purpose in life so that you are sitting here for hours day after day doing nothing?"

This time the old man looks up at the Prince. He responds

"Will you please tell me one thing? What is your purpose in life?"

"You don't know! I am Alexander the Great and I am out to conquer the world. That's why I am now in India." Bold was the reply from the Prince.

"So you will conquer the world? After that what will you do?" asked the man.

"After that I shall take all the elephants and horses from the vanquished lands to my country". Alexander replied.

"Suppose you achieve that Prince. After that what will you do?" the old man continues.

"After that I shall take all the men, the prisoners of war from these countries as our slaves and all the women to entertain us in Macedonia", flaunted the proud Prince.

"What an ambition! All the men as slaves and women as entertainers!" remarked the old man. Then he asked gently, "Granted you achieve even that Prince, after that what will you do?"

Alexander was quiet, little puzzled as if looking for an answer. Finally, he said with a smiling sigh:

"After that probably I shall sit on my throne and relax."

"That's what I am doing," smiles back the 'weird Indian'.

This is a classic example of an encounter between two different cultures with some powerful messages for all leaders and teachers of today especially in the context of globalization. Let us try to unveil these messages for our personal and organizational enrichment.

Modern organizations operate in a world where there is a confluence of myriads of cultural entities each with its unique characteristics and values which may often conflict with each other. The episode above throws light on the mood, mode and tenor of conversations across cultures so that communication may flow smoothly without any deadlock.

Alexander is the supreme embodiment of an outgoing aggressive tendency dominant in certain elements of the Western culture that is all out to acquire, conquer and possess. The situation is very similar to the modern corporate leader with a compulsive drive 'to kill' and 'win'. Single pointed focus on bottom-line at any cost with an eye only on financial parameters like profits, turnover, sales and market share, characterize their dominant mood and mindset. Any input on Ethics, Values, Cooperation or Sustainability sounds completely irrelevant and de-motivating for these go-getters of today. Like Alexander they are the repository of surfeit energy that is exteriorized and acquisitive in nature with no time and space for reflection. Now attention to critical issues like Values and Sustainability, Goodwill and Social Responsibility, Ethics and Quality of Life will demand some moments of reflection in our mind space that most of the dynamic leaders are unable to appreciate or practice because of their one directional thrust on numbers and results within a short-term time frame. In that kind of

The Indian sage in the episode is the manifestation of human energy drawn inward which opens our doors of inner perception through contemplation and reflection. This provides one insight into not only how to see the world in depth and totality, as it is, but also how to engage with the world even when it is hostile and different. The approach adopted by the sage is important to study and consider in this regard.

Since the beginning the old man had noticed that the dynamic Prince was impatient to know about him. But he chose to remain silent to the initial questions that were superficial in nature and asked in a hurry. Then he found Alexander getting close to him and asking a deeper question about purpose of life. The nature and very tenor of the question has radically changed by now. And the sage chose to respond but only with a counter question about purpose of life directed to Alexander. The initial responses of the Prince were symptomatic of his aggressive, acquisitive and externally directed energy and mindset - conquest of the world, capturing the horses and elephants, enslaving the men and women as prisoners of war and so on. What is interesting to note that never during this conversation the sage stopped this outward flow of energy to acquire but actually fueled it further to get the full steam out of the galloping Prince. Nor did he intervene in the outgoing movement of the Prince with sermons on Right and Wrong from his Indian point of view. That would have led to confrontation and the conversation would have come to a block – deadlock! But the sage kept the flow on smoothly and rapidly enough, Alexander went out of steam with no way ahead! Then the final answer came from the mouth of Alexander who uttered it with a sigh, almost pushed against the wall! The sage never gave the answer but consumed the entire energy of the Prince so that he is finally compelled to spell out the answer. The sage merely endorsed the same. “That’s what I am doing”.

This is the approach of a true Indian Master who never blocks the energy of the opponent or hostile force but uses the energy of the rival power to his own advantage and plants the seeds of transformation in the other. He achieves this by asking the deeper questions but never dilutes the conversation by giving answers to the superficial questions. He keeps the conversation alive and flowing and helps the other find his own answers. This is Transformational Leadership par excellence!

[There has been reference to this conversation in the book ‘Leading Consciously’ by Prof. Debashis Chatterjee, Director – IIM Kozhikode]



Prof. Sanjoy Mukherjee

ODE

Friendship during a Pandemic- Virtual Bonding

I remember exactly how it once was
 Heavenly magical, soothing and sublime
 We were inseparable but this pandemic occurred
 And soon we found ourselves in different zones of time
 And I am no longer a witness to your smiles
 Our banter now happens over video calls
 And we share gossips on zoom meet,
 This lockdown may have put us miles away
 But we still share the same heartbeat

Our stories are still intertwined
 But we now have routines of our own
 I miss our group tasks and study sessions
 Friend, it is no fun to waste time alone
 But there will be a character reunion
 I'll run back at the first break of dawn
 But even today, I'm always a whisper away
 Even if it seems as if I'm long gone

So call me on your loneliest nights
 When you can no more hold it inside
 When you're looking for a shoulder to cry on
 I will extend my hand and pick you by my side
 I won't co-star; I won't even be the second lead
 I am a special appearance, here only for a few scenes
 And when your hectic MBA day will need a happy ending
 I promise I'll be there, as I have always been!

Soon we'll be reunited with our lifelong friends
 And share a laugh with a cup of tea in hand
 This is temporary, my dear, our virtual bond
 Our story is meant to continue...forever and beyond

DivyarajChandwaskar
PGP 2020-22

Darker than Black

Often I canvassed the dark night,
 Asking if something was darker than black?
 He consumed my flesh like a sadistic freak
 I urged for payback.

Tears trickled down my cheeks,
 He devoured me like a demon
 And I vowed to worship him like Shiva
 In my wedding sermon.

He finished his feast
 When the clock struck midnight.
 I washed the blood from my vagina,
 Angels laughed at my plight.

There was one amongst them,
Who didn't laugh?
She brought a warm cloth,
Wiped blood off my calves.
She was his sister, Asavari was her name.
She truly loved me, wanted to relieve me of the shame.

We decided to run,
Live a life of our own.
Away from this inferno
Where the grasses are green, new seeds are sown.

But little did we know
That we clocked our own demise.
For the demon was not one,
But a collective to our surprise.

We were beaten, raped
and mutilated in public.
They restored order to the society,
By breaking all bones in my pelvic.

I took my last breaths on the streets,
Lying on my back.
Finally, I found something
Darker than Black!

RounakGanguly
PGP 2020-22

ALUM SPEAK

The Policy and Academia interface for Development in North-East

The Development of North-East India comprising of eight pristine states has been one of the most common words that seem to have gained traction in the national media for some time now. Be it the Act-East Policy, the Bhupen Hazarika bridge or a host of infrastructure projects that the present government has sanctioned for the development of the land and its people, North-East has finally started getting its share of attention from New Delhi. However, as for a region like North-east which has been secluded from the rest of the mainland for a while now, it needs a little more than investments into infrastructure and connectivity. The region and its unique characteristics are less studied and hence less pondered upon, as and when the policies have been implemented through in the region. The people of the Northeast have preferred sustainable thinking and planning, and community involvement has been a pre-condition for development-based initiatives. One of the major reasons that the North-East economy did not grow as expected in spite of massive investment into the region by the previous governments in schemes like the North-East Vision 2020 was its inability to understand the dynamics of the region and lack

of sync between the ground level research and policy implementation. In other words, the pre-requisites like emotional empathy, planned discourse and the desire and ability to make sure the schemes for the people benefit the targeted group seemed lacking in the past. However, as there is a new hope and interest in the present government's slew of initiatives for the region that ranges from Act-East Policy, Northeast Special Infrastructure Development Scheme, One District One product policy and so on, there is also a need to understand that these policies should not again get lost like the earlier ones in the past. The solution lies in engaging more stakeholders ranging from local communities, businesses and academic institutions from the region to partner in these development initiatives with the government and develop a contextual based approach towards implementing the mega schemes in a phased manner. Creation of better feedback mechanism in the system to assess the impact of various policies is a one of the pre-requisites to understand and operate through policy implementation in North-East. But to build these seamless feedback loop that constantly self-updates on the impact of policies in the ground requires the collaboration of stakeholders at various levels to succeed. North-east is comprised of 9 percent of India's geographical area but contributes mere 3 percent to the country's GDP. However, given the rich natural resource and the diverse cultural and historic heritage of the land, opportunities of turning North-East into a model of sustainable development where economic growth and environmental bio-diversity go hand in hand is immense. The need is to start connecting with stake-holders from various indigenous industries at different levels, engage academia to come up with research inputs that gets into the depth of issues that had restricted north-east to avail benefits of the various policies that were intended for north-east and its people for years and come up with new and innovative ways to engage with the North-East.



Dr Rouhin Deb,
PhD batch of 2016-20
Senior Researcher, Invest India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry,



November was a month of truly a month of good byes and welcome. IIM Shillong would certainly miss the services of Prof Sonia Nongmaithem and Prof Lata Chakravarthy. They had to reluctantly bid adieu to Shillong due to pressing family issues. While Prof Sonia has relocated to Imphal, Prof Lata has returned to Bengaluru. Both these indomitable ladies succeeded in leaving their distinct mark on the institution as well as on the minds of the numerous students they taught and individuals they trained. Honest to a fault, outspoken and absolutely dedicated to their work, both these exceptional ladies made a yeoman contribution to IIM Shillong. We take this opportunity of expressing their gratitude of their immense contribution to the making of the institute.



Prof Raymond Paquin of the John Molson school of Business, Concordia University, Canada has joined the IIM Shillong family. A respected name in the world of Sustainability, Prof Paquin first visited the institute in 2010 and taught a course on Sustainability to the PGP. Since then his involvement with the institute has only grown and after almost a decade we have the pleasure of welcoming him as an Adjunct Professor in the Area of Sustainability and Liberal Studies!

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