

autumn..
...is in the air.

THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

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EDITORIAL

One of the most powerful of human emotion is undoubtedly fear. Probably, as a survival instinct it has served humans well by provoking survival responses. However, it can also prove to be highly debilitating when fear is stoked by imaginary threats and non-existent danger. It is perhaps the propensity of humans to be fearful creatures that this strong emotion has been used to exercise social control. Fear has often been used as a tool to manipulate others and by extension exercise control over society in myriad ways. Interestingly, the flight or fight reflex that is hard wired into humans over the millennia was essentially a survival mechanism for humans in the wild. However, in the modern industrial world, much of the threat that humans faced in a hunting and foraging economy has disappeared, yet the threat perception continues to dominate. It is this primordial sense of danger and insecurity that has often been exploited to create mechanism of social control. As the philosopher and writer Edmund Burke rightly observed that there is no passion as effective in robbing the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear. History is witness to generations of the ruling classes in different parts of the world manipulating the collective conscience and intentionally invoking fear in their subjects as a means of social control. In his book the Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man, Henri Frankfort, highlights the fact that between 1800 and 1600 BC a fear psychosis spread through Ancient Egypt, precipitated by the invasion of foreign intruders seeking to overrun the kingdom. Initially this fear psychosis was based on a very real threat, but in time the tide was turned and the intruders were vanquished. Yet, the ruling powers continued to monger fear among the population, even after the threat was over, realizing that a fearful population was easier to control than a fearless one. This is how the official narrative of threat is manufactured and a gullible public become its strident advocates. This makes the job of the those in positions of power, who eternally seek to take advantage of, and manipulate others through the power of fear. As psychologists would explain, when one is gripped by fear of a danger, real or imagined, their rational and higher cognitive capacities shut down. This ensures that usually rational beings start behaving in highly irrational ways making them highly vulnerable to being manipulated by anyone who promises them

safety from the perceived threat. It is this artificial construction of a perception followed by a careful manipulation of the mind that has proved to be an important tool for the maintenance of the fear factor. As long as this fear in a population can be maintained, it is relatively easy for the ruling class to profess solutions that would provide a way out of the threat. It is seen that many oppressive governments seeks to maintain their grip on a nation by continually invoking fear. This is followed by claims that only they, the ruling powers, have the wherewithal to protect the people from the threat. To make matters worse, the technological advances and a pervasive electronic communication and social media has given tremendous reach and ability for propagation of narratives and engage in fear mongering to an extent never before seen in history. But at the same time, all is not lost. The perfect antidote to the situation is the very technology that created the problem. The very same media can be used to bust many of the myths and challenge the narrative through the most powerful narrative: truth and knowledge. As Plato had surmised, ignorance is the root of most misfortune. It is an ignorant population that allows itself to be manipulated through the use of unwarranted fear mongering. The best way to overcome it would be to become an active seeker of truth rather than being a passive propaganda receiver. A healthy dose of scepticism has been the very ingredient that has made man question the status quo and it is this that has always contributed to human progress. Though it may not be possible for a single individual to change the system, yet, it needs to be realised that truth has the insidious ability to bring the mightiest of lies to come crashing down. Seek the truth and to stand by that truth. Is this not what human life is all about? There can be no freedom without truth and as aptly said by F.A. Harper's that the man who knows what freedom means will always find a way to be free. In any case, truth and freedom are the two wings that always flaps together.

ABOUT NUKSA

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

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TIMELINE

International Programme on Health Care Management at IIM Shillong

IIM Shillong through its Centre for Development of North Eastern Region (CEDNER) in association with Consortium of Accredited Healthcare Organizations (CAHO) organized a 5 day Online Masterclass on Healthcare Management from the 3rd to the 7th of October, 2020. The focus of this program was to prepare the participants for an understanding on the concepts of Management across different verticals of Healthcare and for better and safer delivery of healthcare services. The programme saw deliberations from some of the top experts of the country and abroad and met the long felt requirements of Health care professionals to update themselves with the latest in the field. It was announced that a number of specially designed Healthcare Management programs would be offered in a phased manner. As many as 210 health care professionals from India, Bangladesh and Nepal joined in as participants.



The program was inaugurated by Prof. D P Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong. In his inaugural speech, he stressed the need for qualified healthcare managers in the country for seamless patient care delivery. Dr. Vijay Agarwal, President of CAHO in his speech highlighted the need of Healthcare Management as an integral part in the system and also for implementing patient safety practices in the hospital. Prof Sanjeeb Kakoty, Chairperson CeDNER spoke about the commitment of Institute to bringing about a qualitative change in the lives of people in the region and neighboring countries. He spoke of the need for collaborations to promote excellence and elucidated how IIM Shillong is taking a lead in this direction.

The program, coordinated by Dr Jeet Patwari and Prof Biplab Bhattacharjee, was enriched by the participation of renowned speakers from leading hospitals and professional organizations. Some of the notable speakers in the technical sessions were Dr. Narendranath V (M S Ramaiah Hospitals, Bangalore), Dr. Sanjeev Singh (AIMS, Kochi), Dr. Chacko Jacob (IIM Shillong), Mr. Sivaramakrishnan (Sincere Syndicate, Chennai), Prof. Sanjeeb Kakoty (IIM Shillong), Mr. Vinod K B (Rajagiri Hospitals Aluva), Dr. Animesh Acharjee (University of Birmingham, UK), Mr. RajibKarmakar (Philips Healthcare), Dr. Lallu Joseph (CMC Vellore), Dr. Girdhar Gyani (AHPI, India). The programme is considered an important step in realizing IIM Shillong's stated mission goal of knowledge creation and dissemination for sustainable development.

Vaibhav (Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik) Global Summit

IIM Shillong, along with IIM Ahmedabad and ISB were selected as the three Champion Institutes for organizing the Management Vertical of the Vaibhav summit. The summit saw enriching presentations and discussions by a galaxy of Indian origin academics from all over the Globe engaging in deliberations on the theme of management education.

The broad goals of the Vaibhav Summit's **Management vertical** were to deliberate and strategize on:

- Fostering academic and research collaborations between Indian and foreign institutes;
- Create a roadmap for improvement of the management of Indian higher education and research organizations thereby creating a positive impact on the R&D output coming out of India; and
- Discussion on key areas for Indian organizations where management inputs (insights generated through research) could be applied in order to bring about positive transformations.

Speaking in the Vaibhav Summit, Prof. D.P.Goyal, Director IIM Shillong, stressed on the importance of collaborations for knowledge sharing and for advancing research. He highlighted the mechanisms of collaborations, many of which are adopted by IIM Shillong such as dual degree programs, summer internships and study abroad programs for students, executive training, adjunct professorship for NRI faculty, joint PhD supervision and joint research by faculty members in India and abroad. He also brought to focus a few challenges, particularly of forging academic collaborations which can be time consuming due to the fact that they are usually initiated based on one-to-one relationship and also due to the 'trust' factor which plays a big role. He elaborated on the large-scale benefits that can accrue from leveraging on establishing emotional connect with Indian diaspora who are keen to contribute to India's growth story.

National Winners of "Bond with Pidlilite"

Team Nexus consisting of Aritro Datta, Arko Datta and Arzoo Kamrah of PGP 20 were titled the National Winners of "Bond with Pidlilite 2020" case study competition sponsored and organized by Pidlilite Industries Ltd for the first year MBA students across India. The competition contained three rounds. & out of 52 teams that qualified to round 1 belonged to IIM Shillong. Three of these teams qualified to the next round. Team Nexus and Team Bond, Pidlilite's Bond from IIM Shillong made it to the grand finale as the top 7 teams where Team Nexus bagged the coveted title.

I looked ahead. The figure of Professor Thatcher faded into the airport crowd yonder. "The king is worshipped in his own country. The man of knowledge and wisdom is worshipped world over." I remembered the old Sanskrit saying ("Swadesh e Pujyate Raja/ Vidyan Sarvatra Pujyate").

The thought of that five feet four inches man also came to my mind - ever lonely, he shaped his own character and purpose of life, and created his destiny all by himself.

On the Birth Bi-centenary of Vidyasagar I remembered that car drive to the airport with Dipesh and Professor Thatcher and our conversation. I thought I must scribble it down here and now.

[Trans-created from the original in Bengali by Sudip Majumder who lives in California and has been with Oracle for long. Dipesh da (Prof. Dipesh Chakraborty), an IIM Calcutta alumnus, is an illustrious academic with an illumined mind endowed with a wide spectrum of interests and talents who has always been my inspiration in academia and otherwise. He is in the Editorial Board of Journal of Human Values (a Sage publication from IIM Calcutta) of which I had been the Editor-in-Chief for nearly a decade.

Pandit Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891) was one of the most prominent luminaries of 19th Century Bengal Renaissance. An illustrious Sanskrit Scholar, a pioneer of Education, especially Education for Women and Children, a Social Reformer who fought for the cause of Widow Remarriage, and a strong indigenous mind who challenged Imperial colonialism at its very root, Vidyasagar spent the last eighteen years of his life for the socio-economic development of tribals in the present district of Jharkhand. He was indeed 'Vidya Sagar' – an Ocean of Knowledge also endowed with an oceanic heart filled with compassion for the poor and the distressed. His life will ever remain an inspiration to generations of posterity for centuries to come.



Prof. Sanjoy Mukherjee

Life in IIM Shillong

It feels like only yesterday when I was basking in the glory of securing admission in IIM Shillong. I remember how I ironed my business formals, shaved my beard, properly positioned myself in front of my laptop, and logged in at 6:45 P.M. for the session scheduled to start at seven.

And here I am, just two months later, completely oblivious of the day I shaved last, fluttering at 11.55 P.M. to complete the assignment to be submitted by EOD, desperately hoping the link doesn't deactivate before I hit 'Submit'.

MBA is like a constant race against time. In the blink of an eye, an entire month has swooshed away. It is hilarious to think that just thirty days ago I too used to have a luxury of a *normal* life. Now it feels like it was a lifetime ago.

Because IIM Shillong is a different life altogether.

Here the life works on a very simple fundamental: either you adapt to the system, or the system will transform you. Either way the change is inevitable. And although it is only the starting phase, I can already feel the difference within. Here is the list of things we have learnt so far:

1. Time Management

When you are forced to complete 48 hours' worth of work in just 24 hours, you automatically learn how to multitask and double up your work speed. A *normal* day is filled with half a dozen classes, just as many assignments (both individual and group), industry talks, alumni sessions, clubs/committee activities, case studies, corporate competitions, and what not. And the cherry on top is that deadlines are *sacrosanct*. There are no second chances.

There is literally a flood of WhatsApp groups and sometimes it gets difficult to even keep track of events, let alone complete them. Along with all these you need to be updated with all the current issues, prepare for placements, and pursue your own extra-curricular interests. And you also got to keep an eye on the campus buzz to ensure you don't miss out on any fun.

Believe me, it is actually as overwhelming as it sounds. But with time, you learn to manage time. You learn to prioritize, increase your efficiency, and work at your maximum productivity level. And yes, you also have to forego a few meals, skip a few showers, abdicate worldly leisure of *chilling* out and pull all-nighters. Sacrificing sleep is the hardest part. But gradually you get used to it.

2. MBA Culture

MBA teaches you the requisite etiquettes and mannerism for the professional world. It transforms your personality, polishes your presentation, and hones communication skills. But MBA isn't just about making you ready for corporate world, it also makes you a better human being.

It teaches you kindness, empathy, and a vision to care not just for those around you but for the entire community and the whole world.

Sustainability, after all, is the foundation on which IIM Shillong was started. In MBA, doors are always open, or to say in the current virtual context, the cell phones are always on.

You can literally ping ANY batchmate or senior, at ANY time, for ANY help, and you shall be helped in the best possible manner. Being the only 100% student-driven campus, peer learning is the soul of IIM Shillong.

3. Work discipline

When the first slide of the first MBA session reads "**the rigor is real**", you are already cautioned that this is serious business. And that there's more to come.

The personal life gets thrown out of the window. And in between, there are colleagues from diverse backgrounds, whom you need to work along with. There is politics, drama, arguments, discussions and everything else to make it feel like a typical Indian serial. But just like the happy ending in movies, ultimately, the whole batch stands united as one, big IIM Shillong family.

MBA is all about getting the work done. So even if it doesn't look cool or beats your ego or doesn't conform with your lazy assed schedule, you got to pull your socks and get work done. You learn to be punctual, sincere and a team player. Not that it's all always serious, there are late-nights parties as well which runs till early in the morning. The motto is simple, "Work hard, Party harder"

4. Opportunities are galore

It was only a couple of days into the program, when we had already recognized that the sky is the limit now. When you have industry giants like Amazon, Mahindra, PepsiCo and many, many more coming to your campus for corporate talks, competitions, live projects and placements, you can already see the long-awaited and much coveted dream of working in these companies turning into a reality.

5. Competition is intense

With so many opportunities it might feel like heaven is just fingertips away. But look around and you will see hundreds like you fighting for the same golden ticket. No achievement comes easy in a batch comprising of a dozen CA/CS, engineers from IITs and NITs, and participants from diverse academic background ranging from hotel management to mathematics, from law to prosthetics.

For anything you claim to be expert in, there are many others who can do it even better. We have all sorts of people with all sorts of talents. The breadth of diversity is insane—from sticker queens to meme kings, from subject experts to sports champions, from poets to painters. While it is scary and can sometimes even make you feel inferior, it is also a great learning opportunity and experience.

The whole batch is like a giant super-market of people with all the possible varieties of talent out on display. Whatever you wish to explore, you can choose and connect with that person.

Perhaps that's why they say in MBA, your network is your net-worth.

I fell down from the high horse I was riding on a month ago, and now it feels like I am riding a mad buffalo. Life in an IIM can be daunting but it also magical.

From stalking Instagram profiles to pinning people on zoom, from binge-watching shows to sitting glued for sessions, from that business formal to the combo of shirt-pajama, a lot has changed in just one month.

We, the batch of 2020-22, are very special. For the first time in the history of Indian management education, a full-time course has started in online mode. A residential program now being attended from personal residence—it is both ironical and hilarious. And an amazing learning experience.

As our chairman Prof Basav says, "MBA is like a Himalayan trek. Your legs will hurt but your eyes will enjoy the view"

It is rough, and rigorous, and stressful. It is also fun, and entertaining, and amazing. It is MBA at IIM Shillong.

Divyaraj Chandwaskar
PGP2020

ALUM SPEAK

Best Foot Forward

A while ago, there was a heated debate on my twitter feed about résumés. A user had put down a series of irate tweets saying she decided to reject any candidate who presented a CV longer than one page ("Its 2020!"). Needless to say, the tweet sparked a flurry of reactions ranging from "CVs must be succinct and show clarity", to "people can choose how they want to represent their own career". I agreed with the entire spectrum of opinions, while my thoughts turned to the evolution of my own résumé. A pause

Fast forward a few days, a friend looking for a job since April, lamented about multiple companies rejecting his CV. A quick look at it revealed he had the right qualifications but had worked too many jobs for reasons he could not put down on paper. More thoughts again, this time as a recruiter, on all the CVs I have looked at, and what they express. Three outcomes of all the thinking I had done that whole week.

Résumés are the original social profiles. A representation of ourselves, they're the hook for recruiters (to whom we are aliens) to stop a moment and look closer, what we call 'thumb stoppers' on social feeds. Doubt we need any expertise in painting a pretty picture of ourselves with well-curated content. Work on them like you would while updating your profile on Instagram or Twitter. The two would not look the same though they are both representations of you. Candidates hardly ever tailor content for different use cases beyond the odd addition or removal of a point for a particular interview. Consequently, they lose out on showing multiple facets of themselves. Short versions, longer ones, suited for different roles or companies, it is good to have variations.

Second, CVs when done right, offer candidates a good opportunity to evaluate companies. 'What are the sections I would have liked to be quizzed about and what was asked in the interview ("conversation")? What does that say about the company, the culture, the role, my future team?'. Even a rejected résumé is a good signal to choose the direction to look for the next opportunity.

Finally worry not about length, but how you present yourself. Several people find it difficult to put down even one page of content

and begin worrying about their own achievements. Maybe the standard A4 size was the problem. Should you instead put things out on a Power Point deck, themed to your liking? Why not?

Everyone is caught in this “here is make or break for me on white paper”. In an immensely digitized world, one need not stick to traditional formats. A good CV is one you are comfortable with.

All through this read, I have used résumé and CV interchangeably though they mean different. The former being a concise summary,

and the latter, detailed. In my own case, I have managed to mix the two and make ‘a profile’ (easier calling them that). Since I graduated, the *one pager* built for conformity, has taken its own shape and course. The question I ask myself when I choose to the direction to look for the next opportunity.

Finally worry not about length, but how you present yourself. Several people find it difficult to put down even one page of content and begin worrying about their own achievements. Maybe the standard A4 size was the problem. Should you instead put things out on a PowerPoint deck, themed to your liking? Why not? Everyone is caught in this “here is make or break for me on white paper”. In an immensely digitized world, one need not stick to traditional formats. A good CV is one you are comfortable with.

All through this read, I have used résumé and CV interchangeably though they mean different. The former being a concise summary, and the latter, detailed. In my own case, I have managed to mix the two and make ‘a profile’ (easier calling them that). Since I graduated, the *one pager* built for conformity, has taken its own shape and course. The question I ask myself when I choose to update it, is ‘how do I, the candidate, grab the attention of me, the recruiter?’. My profile today is interactive, mimics a social media profile, and like one, leads viewers to further information on demand. The long and short of it all taken care of. Not only does it furnish relevant details adapted to the audience, but also piques one’s interest given it stands out among A4 sheets. If nothing else, it certainly shows intent.

Of course, these three thoughts must go together with other general pointers you see about feedback, regular updates, brevity, recency, other considerations, and the likes. Quoting the ever-relatable Thanos, “Reality can be whatever I want”.



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ODE

Invictus: The Unconquerable

Out of the night that covers me,
 Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
 I thank whatever gods may be
 For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
 I have not winced nor cried aloud,
 Under the bludgeonings of chance
 My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
 Looms but the horror of the shade,
 And yet the menace of the years
 Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
 How charged with punishments the scroll,
 I am the master of my fate:
 I am the captain of my soul.

- W.E.Henley



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