

Hello  
Spring!

# THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

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## EDITORIAL

As the world grapples with the coronavirus pandemic and its fall out, the one thing that needs to be accepted is that this is more than a health crisis. Apart from its direct impact on economic systems the other area of concern are the ecological systems and human polity and society. It puts the spotlight on our systems of production, distribution and consumption. As a fallout of this crisis would be the cascading impact on the systems of governance, privacy concerns and the rights of individuals. It could also easily lead to the exacerbation of injustices experienced by the poor, marginalized and vulnerable thereby increasing social strife. What is interesting that these issues will not be confined to specific countries and regions but encompass the whole world. The spread of the pandemic has certainly exposed the underbelly of the phenomenon of globalization! As the pandemic runs its course and better protocols of dealing with it emerge, the focus of each country would be to execute economic rescue packages to deal with the impact of the pandemic. Most planners would try and make up for lost time and production losses by accelerating production and consumption. This scenario has inherent dangers and might well create the perfect conditions for another catastrophe that must simply overwhelm mankind for good. In other words, there is a growing consensus that hasty measures will lock the world into a high-carbon future that could irrevocably destroy the ecology and our future. As Mary Robinson, a former Irish president and UN high commissioner for human rights, who served twice as UN climate envoy rightly opined "Governments need to put huge amounts of money into trying to sustain jobs and livelihoods. But they must do it with a very strong green emphasis. The threat from climate change is as real as the threat from Covid-19, though it seems far away." The silver lining here is that pandemic containment measures by governments around the world has already educated people about the changes needed in lifestyles. This could provide a readymade platform to bring about policy changes that would help achieve a low-carbon future. As it were, economic plans worth trillions of dollars in public money are being daily announced. Ostensibly, such measures are needed to prevent the immediate collapse of some badly hit businesses, and to protect the incomes of workers in danger of redundancy as

normal life becomes impossible across most parts of the globe. It is not Impossible. It is imperative to factor in sustainability features in all of these plans. Unfortunately, as policy planners are overwhelmed with trying to meet the immediate welfare of workers caught up in the crisis, it is entirely possible that policy designs will miss the big picture. Most interventions may end up with accelerating unsustainable practices and further entrench fossil fuel dependence across the global economy. As a matter of concern are the strong voices emerging from many countries which argue that the present exigent situation requires climate concerns to be shelved for an indefinite period and instead ensure rapid growth by directing stimulus money into existing high-carbon businesses and fossil fuels. John Sauven, the executive director of Greenpeace UK, flagged the issue and urged governments to urgently protect people's livelihoods, without directly supporting ailing sectors whose long-term future are already threatened by the climate crisis. This is where good leadership is called for. Most leaders have faltered between long term strategy and short term gains. Considering the preponderance of a political system that requires periodic elections to retain power, pandemics and crises unfortunately provide the right circumstances to retain power and absolve oneself of policy failures by assigning the blame to the handy scapegoat: COVID19. At the same time, it would also be in the interest of leaders wishing to leave behind a lasting legacy to use this crisis as an opportunity to change the entire trajectory of future growth. It may begin with campuses of educational institutions like ours to start the process. For a country that produced the enduring philosophy of living in harmony with nature and an economic system based on *Sarvodaya*, or the welfare of all, it is the perfect moment for India and IIM Shillong to rise to the occasion and provide an alternative pathway to the world!

## ABOUT NUKSA

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

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## TIMELINE

### Corona Care Centre at IIM Shillong Campus

The state of Meghalaya has been among the lucky few to report zero COVID 19 positive cases so far. However, as the pandemic has gripped the neighboring state of Assam, in a proactive precautionary measure, the government of Meghalaya has set up several Corona Care Centers in the state.



One of the care centers has been established in the Mayurbhanj Complex, the Nongthymmai campus of IIM Shillong. Upon a request from the government, the institute had made available 116 well furnished rooms for corona isolation and care which would be available for isolation purposes. The Institute's facilities was inspected by Shri Conrad Sangma, Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Shri Prestone Tynsong, Deputy Chief Minister and Shri Lakhmen Rymbui, Home and Education Minister, along with Senior Officials of the Health department in the presence of Prof. D.P. Goyal, Director, IIM Shillong.

As a mark of commitment to the people of Meghalaya, Shri Shishir Bajoria, Chairman of Board of Governors, IIM Shillong, in a letter to the Chief Minister of Meghalaya, had further offered 258 rooms and several classrooms at the new campus in Umsawli, New Shillong, located closer to NEIGRIHMS, for additional emergency requirements.



### IIM Shillong bags 10<sup>th</sup> position in D2C top 10 Competitive B-Schools

It has been another successful year of laurels and podium finishes at corporate competitions for IIM Shillong. The year 2019-2020 has been particularly spectacular for the institute, with the participants bagging 2 National Winner titles at Future Generali Get Set Go & GSK E^3 Challenge, 8 National 1st and 2nd Runners Up titles, and 4 National Semi-Finalist titles.

These slew of achievements has also won the Institute and its participants several awards in the prestigious D2C Competitive B-School category and Competitive Leaders category.

The achievements by the participants in different competitions has secured the Institute the 10<sup>th</sup> place in the prestigious D2C's Top 10 Competitive B-School list, 2020.

This year, Garima Singh Nahar and Ritika Jha of Class 2020 have secured 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> positions respectively in the Top 10 Dare2Compete Competitive Leaders 2020. They have collaborated for various B-School competitions and have been the National Winners for GSK E^3 and National Finalists for Berger InnoVision 2019, Credit Research Challenge (CRC), L'Oréal Group Competition L'Oréal Sustainability Challenge 2019 to name a few.

Arumuga Vinayakam and Apoorva Bansal of Class 2020 have secured ranks in the Top 30 Dare2Compete Competitive Leaders 2020.



### International Women's Day 2020

In 1977, the United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day – a day intended at generating civil awareness about issues that impact women around the world, and at understanding where women stand in the modern rapidly-developing world and the challenges they face. The most crucial part about women's rights issues-like with any other civil rights issues-is understanding that there's a high degree of dynamism, and as such, ensuring that small victories do not cloud the roadmap for the upcoming years.

The Management world had long been a male-dominated space before both the industry and management schools realized the potential that they had been missing out on by restricting diversity. IIM Shillong's diversity have been impressive showing the emphasis that the institute places on the creation of an inclusive world. The PGP class of 2020 had a female representation of 42%, and this number stands at 39% for the PGP class of 2021. PHD and Executive MBA programmes also have impressive gender-





But there are subtle difficulties in achieving the objective. With no common standards for e- learning, the results have varied wildly. Teachers have experimented with apps and formats - live streams, pre-recorded lessons or a mix. Many teachers are holding web classes now but plan to go over the same material a second time when normal classes restart. For some students, distance learning means switching to different class materials than they had been using before.

If we compare with India, the initial magnitude of pandemic and the present duration of lockdown apparently does not set alarm bells in the education sector, hence such concrete measures are seemingly slow to emerge. Besides, the contextual realities of countries like India are yet another important factor impacting the penetration of online education when it is most needed.

While central and state governments are trying to manage the exodus of unorganized labor, returning home during the lockdown, the frequent incidences of non-compliance and infrastructure shortage for medical treatment are factors leading to imminent havoc. In such a situation, a focused approach to continuity of education is, perhaps, secondary.

Nonetheless, HRD ministry has launched 10 online learning resources, majorly for graduate and post-graduate candidates. But, with only 36 % of internet penetration with urban India having a considerably higher percentage of internet penetration for imparting K-12 education, especially to the unprivileged classes, percolating the rural population is a challenge that needs robust plans.

The students of graduate and post-graduate institutes have better access to learning even in the times of lockdown. It is also a motivation to achieve their ROI, but the students, with lack of such facilities, are unable to meet the needs.

Moreover, unlike China, the absence of a single language is identified as a potential barrier for the proliferation of online education uniformly, across the nation. Online education, perhaps, has a long way to go for being a public good, in all aspects.

In the backdrop of the lockdown, the pressing need of e - classrooms and online education portals, coupled with a thrust from the government to encourage e-learning, is a surging point for the already proliferating, yet unprofitable EdTech businesses in China to upskill the teachers, enhance the quality of content and increase their penetration to tier 2 and tier 3 cities

The Indian optimism to fight back the pandemic, because of a consistent increase in Corona cases, perhaps, should not be a factor for the education sector to defer a back- up plan for education in the present crisis, especially for those who lack net access.

How or Will, India march for galvanizing its online education reach, as a spillover of the pandemic and construct back up plans, is a question worth considering.

**Ashutosh Jha**  
**Nayyar Khan PGPEX 18-19**



*'Campus in clouds'*

**Tridha Agrawal**  
**PGP 2019-21**

## COVID-19 CHINA and the WORLD

As world is getting quarantined, schools, colleges, shopping malls, markets, factories, offices, public transport everything came to halt in every part of the world, except CHINA where this COVID\_19 started and created panic around the world.

The first quarter of this year is witnessing major upheaval of economies across the world due to a disruptive supply chain caused by the outbreak of COVID-19. Little did people all around the world know that this year the season of valentine would be followed by the season of quarantine. Initially what was perpetually perceived as common flu turned out to be a major life-threatening epidemic caused by the deadly Virus. This has not only resulted in lockdown of the stellar financial capitals but has also taken a toll on normal per diem.

COVID-19 which is a new strain of Coronavirus which has not been previously associated with humans (though the large family of this virus carries a lethal legacy of diseases like MERs, SARs etc)

First case of COVID-19 dated back to 17th Nov 2019, with Wuhan, China as its epicentre (source - according to media reports on Chinese Govt Data), from where it spread like the wildfire leading down to large masses of people getting quarantined and hampered functioning of public as well as private institution.

Wuhan became the epitome of fear, terror and epidemic with Official declaration of the outbreak of COVID-19 on the last day of the year 2019.

The disease has travelled down from the busy financial centre of the Central China to rest of the China and to rest of the world via different transportation modes leaving some 8648 cases of deaths out of the infected population of 2,07,855 cases across the globe.

Lockdown of Wuhan on 23rd Jan (just before the start of Chinese New Year as it had already killed 18people and hundreds were infected) came as a major radical step by the Govt. of China. Till this time almost 5million people already left the city to various parts of the world.

China had taken CORONA VIRUS as deadly battle with their land as battlefield & medical officers, nurses, doctors etc. as their soldiers; locking every individual at their place by closing each n every place of interaction whether it's school, university, market place, shopping malls, offices, transportation system, social interaction, and even pulling out each and every individual from their home if being suspected of COVID-19 and sent to quarantine. Even to meet the demand to keep patients at isolated place, it had made makeshift hospital in merely 10 days with capacity to hold up to 1000 patients.

Seizing as the most populous country and second largest economy of the world it had taken all the possible steps to contain the virus, without affecting their internal system i.e. food & essential medical equipment's supply to meet the demand of common people despite transportation on hold.

The initial weak signal of disruption is a declared PANDEMIC by World Health Organisation as there is a constant surge in no. of suspected and infected cases in European countries (France, Italy), USA, INDIA & other Asian countries where new cases of COVID-19 are leading to rapid increase in death percentages. Almost every country in the world has quarantined itself, isolated from rest of the world, lockdown their boundaries, lockdown their cities, opening quarantine spaces to keep the affected and suspected people, giving full fledge support to save their citizens. At this stage China is not worried, the country which had maximum no of affected people i.e. more than 80K people, only 3237 people had died and 69600 people got recovered from COVID-19. As per Media reports life in China is returning to normal as the COVID-19 outbreaks slows down and medical officers who were on special work got leave.

Countries who had not taken the COVID-19 seriously is now wondering how China controlled the major life-threatening disease of the century which bring the world at standstill. By the time outbreak of COVID-19 came to lime-light in China, if every country had taken preventive action well on time, spread of COVID-19 to the rest of world could have been stopped. Now, it's tough task for every country to stop the spread of COVID-19 and this can be done on a war foot, way China had done it.

**Ravi Kant**  
**PGPEX-2020**

## ALUM SPEAK

### Pursuing an academic career post MBA

Hello to all the alums. I want to use this opportunity to introduce you to academics as a career post MBA. I am currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Finance and Accounting from IIM Bangalore. I will begin with my experience and then attempt to give my views on the key questions people have when they explore this path. Doing a Ph.D. is a difficult decision because of the long-time commitment and a high opportunity cost. However, it is a rewarding learning experience if taken for the right reasons.

#### *My Ph.D. experience*

I joined the program in 2015 post writing an entrance exam (research aptitude test (RAT)) and interviews. These requirements differ from institute to institute. Also, the process varies across specializations. My interview focused on my teaching experience post-MBA. From what I could understand, the professors tried to ensure that you are serious about an academic career and will survive the long duration of the program. The initial 2 years of the Ph.D. program is coursework (no exemption) and then a comprehensive viva. Along with our coursework, we also worked with professors as research assistants. We got a chance to work with different professors and explore working styles, teaching methodologies and philosophies. Post the viva, we worked as teaching assistants.

Once we clear the viva, we had to finalize our dissertation committee which is the major support system for our research work. The Ph.D. topic is like a negotiation between what you want and what your professor wants. Ph.D. is a data-driven degree and involves extensive analysis and in-depth assessment. Research is an exhausting process. There are times when I am stuck on something for days. I then come up with results only to be told they don't matter in the big picture. The contributions we make are tiny. Despite this, it is well worth the effort. I think that research is not the objective of the Ph.D. degree, the journey of trying to create new knowledge and understanding yourself is. I had read somewhere, that the output of your Ph.D. is 'YOU'. It makes you humble. A Ph.D. trains you for a lifetime of learning.

Key questions people have when they consider doing a Ph.D. post MBA:

#### **Why Ph.D. post MBA?**

If you want to pursue a career in academics, most business schools require a Ph.D. This requirement may be relaxed for candidates with substantial work experience, but that will specifically be profile-based. Having an MBA degree and some work experience is a desirable criterion for Ph.D. admission. Several of my peers at IIMB



have an MBA before they joined the Ph.D. program.

### Where should I do my Ph.D. from- India or abroad?

If you can, do a Ph.D. abroad. The market demand for academicians with a Ph.D. from outside India is extremely high. Also having a good international network of peers helps you later. Within India, IIM's are the best choice for a management Ph.D. Think of it as a layered structure. You are most likely to get an academic position in a layer below the one you are studying in.

### How does Ph.D. work money wise?

All IIM's give a stipend for 5 years. This will be less at the start and increase as we achieve our Ph.D. milestones. Some campuses offer hostels/married quarters for Ph.D. candidates (please check institute website). Else you get an HRA. Ph.D. students are also paid to attend conferences and grants for basic equipment. However, this is not enough to run a family. Hence, include your spouse (very important!) in any decision you make. Several of my peers have saved before they joined the program. When you live on a stipend, frugality is a way of life.

Another option is a part-time Ph.D. Few institutions allow working professionals to enroll in Ph.D. programs. They have various sets of rules that you can find on the official websites of the universities & colleges. IIM Indore, XLRI, IIM Shillong, etc. have such programs

### What are the career options post Ph.D.?

Post Ph.D., the two major paths are teaching jobs and research jobs. Entering academics is the most common option post a Ph.D. You will join as an Assistant Professor. Entry-level academic salaries range from INR 10-15 lakh p.a. apart from the research perks and grants you may get. Academicians also consult and author books along with academic research. This way they earn a salary, consulting fees as well as book royalties. Executive training

programs are another rewarding avenue for academicians. Promotions are based on research output and experience.

A small number of Ph.D. holders head toward industry or consulting roles. These are mainly research-focused roles (e.g. training and development, business research, analytics). Post Ph.D., job finding is individual driven, supported by your dissertation committee. Institute support will vary from case to case.

### How should you start your research and application process?

Read about institutions that you consider applying to, read about the faculty profiles there and the kind of research they do. Also research potential specializations. Talk to professors and reach out to the Ph.D. students there. Read a few research papers. Google Scholar is a good starting point. Have a research proposal that integrates your experience and your interests. It is always better to have a proposal based on your area of expertise. The ideas are bound to change once you start your work. So, don't feel too pressurized by the proposal.

Professors select candidates based on their profiles. They have no obligation to fill a certain number of seats. There have been cases where no one was selected in a specific area as the Professors did not find any right candidates.

Going for a Ph.D. after MBA will equip you with one of the best educational combinations in the world. It will not be the easiest of programs to pursue but the benefits are going to be fruitful for your professional journey. Choosing the right Ph.D. program and university that fits your interests and aspirations can provide you with extensive exposure and opportunities to soar ahead in your career. I will be happy to hear from you and help you further. So welcome to this mad world!

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