



THE PINE CHRONICLE

News, Views and Creative Expressions

Volume I, Issue no. 2, June 2018

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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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

In many ways the month of June is a month of Metamorphosis for IIMS. The first year participants who had left the classrooms to join industry for their summer internships return to campus having metamorphosed into *Second Year Seniors*, visibly matured and worldly wise after their two month stint in the big bad world! Most of them portray an air of cultivated indifference and boredom which lasts until such time as the first taxis draw up and discharge their load of bright eyed and eager youngsters who have been selected to join the institute. They need to be welcomed, shown around, broken into the culture of the tribe and so much more. The seniors certainly get busy and when roughly forty percent of the new entrants are young ladies, there is certainly a new vibrancy in the campus!

Come June, the majestic hill that houses the IIM Campus at Mayurbhanj, Nongthymmai is choc a block with vehicles and people. Parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, cousins, and in a few cases grand parents and friends have accompanied the lucky 180+ candidates that have been selected to join prestigious portals of the institute. It certainly made sense to drop a loved one and use the occasion to visit the north east!

That it coincided with summer vacation for some, made it even better. However, most seemed poorly prepared for the sudden dip in temperatures, from the scorching 45 degrees of the plains to the 19 degrees of Shillong! Adding to the adventure was the strong winds and the rains! Welcome to the Abode of the Clouds!

The actual formalities of the admission was both rigorous and time taking. Registration, examination of documents, biometrics and what have you! A number of banks had set up their kiosks offering student loans, and parents and their wards thronged them trying to get the best offer available. Soon it was time for the byes and take care routine. The grind was about to begin. Starting with the induction process by the seniors to the sessions by select professors on pedagogy, followed by remedial classes, the reality of Life@IIMS slowly began to sink in.

Individuals have either cursed the darkness or tried to dispel it with light. These two years are supposed to be the training ground to equip the young participants with the knowledge and the ability to make a difference to the world outside. But ability without desire is like a candle without its flame and the light for this flame is found deep within the person. It is for each individual to seek ones spark, light ones flame, nurse it and shield it against the wind. Whether one would acquire the knowledge, the ability and the desire to do so rests solely in the choice of the individual.

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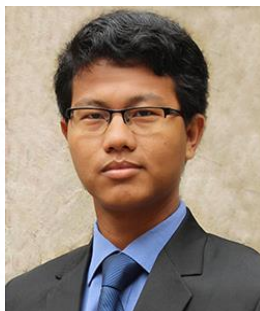
The remote village of Rampur in the Goalpara District of Assam, has become an important destination for International Theatre thanks to the monumental efforts of one man Sukracharjya Rabha, who founded the Badungduppa Kala Kendra and initiated the International Theatre Festival called Under the Sal Tree that has attracted participation and recognition from all over the world. Born in 1977, Sukracharjya he was deeply influenced by his guru Heisnam Kanhailal and they decided to ensure that theatre stayed rooted to its rural surroundings and in the midst of nature. The festival is held under sal trees without the use of any electrical or electronic devices and the stage as well as seats are made of locally available materials such as bamboo, straw, wood and mud!

Me and our alum Manash Jyoti Rabha often discussed this Theatre Movement and were planning to meet Sukracharjya and help him create a not for profit company. But before the proposed meeting could take place, God decided otherwise.

Sanjeeb Kakoty

ALUM SPEAK

UNDER THE SAL TREE - A THEATRE REVOLUTION



“A revolution can be brought to a society through the medium of theatre if the people feels that it’s their life that we are talking about.”

The sentence may seem far-fetched and ostentatious but the speaker, Late Sukracharjya Rabha lived his vision and proved it through his achievements during

short span of life on earth. Though at the time of his passing away, he was only 41, but he had already become a legend in the world of theatre. I had the good fortune of seeing him and knowing him since his early years.

Born and brought up in a small village Rampur of Goalpara district, Assam, Sukracharjya Rabha belonged to the Rabha tribe community and like most others, his father was a farmer. My earliest memory of interacting with him takes me back to the time when I was a student of Agia High School and I saw him commute to his college in Goalpara on foot. I asked him if he would like to accompany me on my bicycle, instead, he looked at me and asked, “Is it okay, if I pedal and you sit at the back on the carrier?”

The ride was interspersed with his good-natured talks and his contemplative outlooks of nature and the world that was inexplicable for a high school boy like me. That day he was explaining about the beauty of the Mother Nature as, “The creator have really created this universe beautifully for us; if the sky were Green instead of Blue, trees were some other color instead of Green, the universe might not have been so beautiful as we can see now and along with the sound of birds and animals the universe is just perfect.” I can fairly say that those contemplations were only a glance of the life he would chose few years down the line.

His incommensurable ideas found an outlet with his subsequent meeting with the noted Manipuri theatre personality Padmashree H.Kanhailal who took him under his tutelage. In his own words ‘Theatre is purely a human business’ and the path he had chosen towards his goal of making theatre a simple medium of communicating with human emotions and their expressions teemed with many hurdles. Lack of practice space in the initial days found him working with his troupe in the village primary school after the

school hours till early morning sufficing on a cup of tea on most nights.

Rupkonwor Jyotiprasad Agarwala’s “Rupalim” (translated into Rabha) was his first drama as Director before he started his theatre group naming “Badungduppa” around the year 2005 and the Badungduppa Kala Kendra was started about the same year at his own village Rampur in the district of Goalpara, Assam. The name ‘Badungduppa’ (a rarely used Rabha musical instrument) itself was his very idea of rekindling forgotten folktales, songs and traditions among the masses.

As time passed, I could sense that he was exceptional and different and as a neighbor, I used to go to meet him and to Kalakendra where discussions happened to be mostly on the development of our cultures, society and how to introduce our identity to the whole world. He refused to get budged by other’s ideas and working style, in fact he encouraged inspiration from nature herself as well as the rich culture of our community and



state. However, those discussions made me realize that he was determined to reach the sky under the shadow of nature. His determination was behind his confidence to develop his own nature-inspired open air stage for plays in later years that received both appreciation and criticism. His style of using his actors to give their whole body for movements and voice on stage without using any artificial lights or sound system gave his plays a life of their own. He did not want his actors to be puppets pulled on by the focus of light on their faces or their emotions muted by loud exaggerated sounds. His very idea seemed outrageous and his idea of taking cue from daily life in

his plays was thought to be a backward one, much less appeal to audiences from cities and other countries. However, he struggled and all this was not achieved in a day as his seriousness of making nature a part of his plays was questioned, but he fought to do the type of theatre that he believed in – Nature as an entity of life.

In the year 2008 he conducted “Under the Sal Tree”, a theatrical performance program for the first time where he invited theatre groups from different parts of the country. This was his turning point and the festival received nationwide recognition. The program has now become a festival and by ninth edition in 2017, many foreign theatrical group also participated in the festival. The festival is exceptional from others as performances are held in an open space inside a Sal Forest without the use of any artificial sound system, lighting and a stage. Bamboo, straw and grass mostly forms the stage decorations, seats as well as props in the plays staged there.

The plays performed there have found many lovers who say they feel exhilarating and connected being there, maybe the tall Sal trees surrounding the stage area have cushioned the cacophony of the outside world and let the actors live up to the characters they were playing. As was his vision, the very idea of the festival is to have a theatrical exchange in most nature friendly way. In later years, Badungduppa Kala kendra has become a destination and center for research for many enthusiastic artists from all over the world. From the initial few dozen of attendees, now every play attracts around 2000 people.

Through Badungduppa group and Under the Sal Tree Festival, he

brought unique identity in the theatre field. By performing theatre in different languages such as Rabha, Assamese, Bodo and Nepali, he used the theatre as a blending tool of humanity, harmony and integrity and thus narrowed down the communication between human and nature.

By giving birth to Badungduppa and Under the Sal Tree festival, he took responsibility to reform our immature society. Instead of bringing in modern instruments and elaborate costumes, he chose to use the traditional musical instruments, local dialects and simple handloom traditional dresses for his plays. He not only introduced our traditional dresses (Pajar, Kambung, Rwfan etc.), dialogues (Rabha, Boro etc.) and melody of musical instruments (Kham, Badungdyppa etc.) to the world but also he was able able to attract national and international artists, researchers to the Sal Forest and Sal Festivals.

Thus, he proved that a drama can be successful at the international level in its simplest form. Sukracharjya Rabha, was honoured with many awards like the notable Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar by Sangeet Natak Academy at the age of 33 for his Excellency in traditional drama. His fame and uniquely-directed plays brought him to notice in the world stage as he got invitations to perform within India and also overseas.

A special mention must be made of the efforts he made in giving to his society in spite of his busy schedules and gruelling practice hours even after he got favorable recognition and awards.



OFF BEAT

The Prerogative Called Silence



Its 3:15 in the morning. A lone guy sits amid racing winds and bickering insects in a city which is new to him. The sky is dark, the leaves are loud and there is no other conscious soul around. Yet, this feels like music to his ears and makes him wonder if this is what life means. Thoughts which haunt him during sleep seems

to have evaporated and all his questions disappear amid the sound of nature and the lack of words. For a while, he was truly in the moment. Man didn't always know how to talk. Silence was the pseudo mode for human beings. Language was then invented to express the thoughts which originated in the minds of the cave men. It helped them convey what they felt, inform what they planned and signal about the prey they saw. But slowly, it became a way of hiding what they felt, lie about what they planned and misguide about the man-eaters. Today, silence has become a prerogative. Words are cheap to use, cheaper to influence. History is witness to the fact that whenever humans have had a desire, they stepped forward to find a way of fulfilling it. In the century that went past us two decades ago, the need to talk was satisfied by the broadcast industry. A select few could communicate with the world around them through the medium of radio, television and films. But then rose the desire of the common man to communicate on that very scale and technology came forward with the solution of the internet. Today, billions consume what other billions make, day after day, every day, with a hope of getting entertained.

But its high time to dig deeper and understand the impact of this incessant noise on our lives. Man has become so busy listening and talking to others that he has forgotten the sound of his own thoughts. He is afraid of sitting alone in the dark and come face to face with the reality of his life. So, he wishes to delve into the discussions which have no definite end to them. Words that used to follow the thought have now become so important that they are blurted out without even thinking first! Man is so consumed in the discussion on the table that the speeding clouds behind hold no importance to him. Silence now haunts even during the day.

Words are cheap to use, silence is expensive. And no sane soul on the planet would let this offer go. Only the richest would indulge in such a luxury.

Shubham Singh
PGP 2017

**Success in management
requires learning as fast as
the world is changing.**

Warren Bennis

The Unsung Hero



You dream the life of a hero but who is a hero? Someone who fights on the border for his country, someone who is a trustworthy and dynamic politician, someone who acts movies or a simple common man. Life is full of endeavors to be taken care of. The end of this

journey is not the ultimate end. We always project ourselves as doing something heroic. Let's not indulge in the definition of hero because a hero is a hero.

You may have heard of Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Abraham Lincoln, Roger Federer, Sachin Tendulkar and many other superheroes of real life. Yes, they are great personalities of their arena and the entire world enchant their names. No one can ever doubt what they did in their fields. A great man is a perennial river of endurance, will power, leadership and generosity. But, what about the people behind these heroes, what about the people who were overshadowed in the bright light of these mighty people? Are they less magnificent?

Life doesn't give everything to us. The unsung hero might not even complain of their ignorance because that is what he is – a hero. He spends his whole life working and doing all good things. If someone is not a good speaker he will resist himself to back stage and ensure the proceedings from there. There you will always see a person behind every mighty hero who has sacrificed the same amount. He will be the most serene, calm and composed personality. He is the backbone of the success. He wants to do justice to his job and that is what his motto of life is. He doesn't dream of a life where people portray him as the hero, but he wants that people should be given the best. This is his only limitation. This is not his limitation it's his ultimate mightiness. Eyes only see what looks beautiful and unsung hero is the essence of this beauty. He will continue to be the same. In his heart, he may want some appreciation but never craves for it nor use any unfair means for that. He is the hero, this is his life, this is what he is made of- a dynamic mind, a passionate eye and a spirited heart.

An unsung hero is always near you. He can be your teacher who scolds you because he wants you to do well. He can be your friend who is always there for you but never makes you feel if he has done something for you. He just did it. He is a good person but doesn't waste time proving it. He will always be a hero.

Don't sing carols for him because he is worth much more!!!

Himanshu Jhandai
PGP 2017

Complexion Vs Complexity



We live in a country which is culturally rich and diverse. We speak so many languages. Our food and living habits varies so dynamically from one part of the country to the other that sometimes it becomes very tough to believe that we all belong to the same country. As there is always two sides of anything, so is the

case with the India. At one side we talk about integrity and culture and on the other we have some conflicting and disturbing notions and some of the prominent ones are based on religion, caste and girl's education to name a few. But one emerging notion nowadays is based on the complexion of the skin.

There are lot of incidents out there where a person (or women to be specific in most of the cases) with fair complexion is given priority over so called person with dark complexion. You suddenly have brown skin actresses in reality, appearing many shades lighter on screen. Somebody like Kajol is seen promoting a cosmetic cream in almost 8 shades lighter than what she used to be. There are commercials out there that clearly sent out a message that if your skin is lighter, you are more acceptable to society. In our society we have often seen that a woman is not expected to give her opinion or stand up for what is wrong just because she does not belong to fair, white or pink category. During marriage also, a girl does not get accepted by her mother in law or husband if she is dark complexioned and even somehow, if she gets accepted then it becomes just a compromise.

These are just some of the haunting examples and you can easily find out more out there in the society. This notion leads to the weakening of the moral. And when you doubt one thing about yourself, you start thinking there's also something wrong with your hair, your body, your clothes, your accent—everything. There might be exemptions where Indians have fair complexion but mostly we are people having brown complexion. Complexion is something which is not under someone's control. It depends upon many factors including geographical location and food habits but mostly it is hereditary. In fact, Asian skin was never as white as it is portrayed now with the help of these cosmetics.

Nandita Das has recently started a campaign named "Dark is Beautiful- Stay Unfair Stay beautiful". She is always described as dark and beautiful. It's high time that not only dark toned women but also naturally white ones need to come forward and extend their support. Media has got a very vital role to play here. And above anything, we should be proud of whatever skin colour we have and have to believe that its "Who I am " that will make me beautiful than my skin colour. We should look at ourselves every now and then and say, "I'm proud of myself. I like the way I'm made."

Vivek Kumar
PGP 2016

Memories of a Forgotten War ~ Looking Back

"When you go home tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today"

~ J.M Edmonds



Mr. Utpal Borpujari's documentary on "Memories of a Forgotten War" is a chilling reminder that war has cost us so many innocent lives. The documentary takes us to a tour of the World War II which was fought across the Eastern corridors of India.

In 1944 ,the North East was the entry door to the Japanese armies to the then British occupied India, the latter being a part of the Allied forces. However, the war was not only of the Axis and the Allied forces. It was a queer war being fought. Japanese forces had advanced to Imphal and Kohima and along with was the Indian National Army (INA) founded by Subhash Chandra Bose. INA wanted India to be freed from the yokes of the foreign tyranny. It was a decisive battle. The documentary shows at Moirang, Manipur, a thatched hut which served the headquarters of INA, and which was the place where the Tricolor of Free India was flown. We realize that both Nagaland & Manipur had the association of direct conflict of World War II like no other states in India. Memories are still alive amongst the villagers. In this documentary one can see curious odd little things that the villagers have collected: spoons, helmets. It was a poignant point in the movie where it showed that from shell of a bomb, temple bell was made. It was such an ironic twist of faith. A bomb which tore apart all faith in humanity tolls at the temple hoping to bring back peace and faith in lives of people.

The documentary provided a rich tapestry of accounts from all sources even after six decades of the war. Mr. Borpujari travelled far and wide for this documentary. He met soldiers from the Allied sides in United Kingdom, America & met the soldiers who fought for Japan despite the latter's deep hesitancy to talk about this subject. The director also gets to meet soldiers from both side of the battle for a joint commemoration of the Battle of Kohima. It is a historic moment for everyone present there. Most were meeting each other for the first time after the battle front. Memories of the war were relived and along with came deep respect. They were octogenarians, their bodies battered from war and lives, but in their heart they carried the goodwill & respect and it poured down as tears as the soldiers who once fought against each other hugged. It was an emotional scene, and we as viewers too, were moved to tears. The war of Kohima & Imphal claimed a heavy casualty. Of the 65,000 front-line troops, 30,000 were killed, 23,000 were wounded, and 600 were captured; among the 50,000 support troops, there were 15,000 casualties. The Allies only suffered 17,500 casualties in comparison [1]. Japanese Army possibly suffered the greatest defeat, not because they were killed, but starvation, bouts of diseases claimed more lives. There were running thin on supplies. This battle is often referred to as the "Stalingrad of the East" [2].

Letters to the EDITOR



Dear Sir,

Hope you are doing well. Been long since we spoke Can't help but say this was an amazing read. Its making me feel like going back to Shillong right now.

Couldn't have started my day with a better read. Hope we can still receive this even after our course is over.

Thanks for creating this for us.

Regards,

Sushmita Sarkar.

Management Intern - Sundram Fasteners Zhejiang Ltd.

Class Representative PGPEX 2017-18

Dear Sir,

Congratulations on the release of the first edition of Nuksa!

You might have also heard about the appointment of Dr Atul Gawande (Being Mortal) to a revolutionising new effort by the Amazon-Berkshire Hathway-JP Morgan Chase trinity which aims at changing the face of healthcare across the globe.

I was pleasantly surprised. This news helps me at least to pursue in completing the book you so thoughtfully selected for us.

Congratulations once again on NUKSA!

Regards,

Shashwat

PGPEX 17



“Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success.”

- Paul J. Meyer

Hello Kakoty Sir,

Greetings from Beijing while I complete my 2 months Internship here. I read the issue and the magazine concept sounds amazing and will help to give and share real insights of our lives at IIM Shillong. I can surely look forward to contribute to “Nuska” with my unique China experience of what I have observed and learnt here. There are some amazing things about China’s culture and people which I may pen down soon that our people in India can learn and get a close perspective about.

That being said we all await to report to Shillong soon to learn and grow further.

Regards,

Anil Pagare

Placement Committee Member

IIM Shillong PGPEX (Managing Business in India & China)

Dear Nuksa Team,

I really love the maiden issue. Looking forward to such more issues. Good Job.

Thom

Sir,

It's really a great and a much needed addition to IIM Shillong. I am sure it will rise to newer horizons under your editorship,

Sincere Regards,

Achyanta Kumar Sarmah



