

SNIPPETS

Anokha

The preparatory meeting for Anokha 2014, the annual national level technical fest of Amrita School of Engineering, Amrita Nagar campus, was held on 20th January at Amritheshwari Hall. It was an introductory session for the 1st year students. The highlight of the event was a debate among the students and teachers on the importance of attendance in colleges. The fest is scheduled to be held from March 20th to 22nd. Popular singer Karthik will perform on the last day of the fest.

Thandav

Thandav, the induction programme for dance students will be held on 12th February. It is being conducted by Natyasudha, the dance club of Amrita Nagar campus.

Roof of the future

Mythreyi Bhavanam, the girls hostel, has recently replaced its mess roof with poly-carbonated sheets. These sheets are transparent and allow sunlight to enter the mess hall, thereby eliminating the necessity for using electric lights during the day. A similar experiment is being carried out in the library building.

Alumni Annual General Meet

The Sixteenth Annual General Meet of Amrita Alumni Association will be held on February 16, 2014 (Sunday) at the Amrita Nagar campus. The alumni are required to register online for participation in the event. For more details, log on to www.amrita.edu

“Say B for Business, P for Pragati”

Pragati, the annual national level B-fest organized by Amrita School of Business (ASB), will be held on the 7th and 8th of February this year. The theme for Pragati 2014 is ‘business beyond profits’.

The B-fest will host 12 management games spread across six domains. The domains include human resources, marketing, finance operations and systems. The domain expertise for designing these games has come from experts drawn from world class institutions.

Games students will play

Some of the names for these games sound pretty filmy and long. “Crusader – The great manager challenge for instance. While some of

the games are reserved for only management students, games like “Prameya – The Ultimate B-Plan and Prajna”, the business quiz are open to non-management students too.

The masterminds behind the games

The games were created by the B-school’s six forums – GenM, Fortune, Ozone, Relations, BizIt and Jagriti in consultation with domain experts from institutions like Berkeley, Cornell, Kellogg, Stern and Indian Institutes of Management. The forums have experience and exposure to marketing, finance, operations, human resources, systems and metagrowth.

Sustainable and socially responsible

According to the Pragati Student team organisers, the event has been designed to promote the concept of purpose driven business tactics among students. The student organizers said that through



the event, they were trying to explore and promote the idea

of sustainable business processes that were also socially responsible.

Let the games begin

The games will challenge the ‘wannabe’ Indian business leaders and test their industry readiness and adaptability. Competition for Pragati’s coveted overall championship and several other cash prizes have proved grueling in the past for contestants as the event attracts participants from across the country, including some of the premier management institutes in India.

The games have attracted positive reviews from the industry so far. It will be interesting to see the kind of responses Pragati will garner this time.

“Suda suda ghee roast and jillunu oru soda”

A student is always hungry but always short of money. Though the Amritians have the luxury to choose from three canteens, the students do not have the luxury to pay

add that the hot schezwan rice and chilli gobi served at the IT canteen during lunch is ‘finger lickin good’. The huts at the main canteen are the most happening place where



Main canteen: one of the favourite haunts of students.

for it. The ghee roast fixes this problem for it fills the tummy yet is light on the wallet and so is a favourite. The smell of the mouth-watering ghee roast has cast a spell on the taste buds as most of the students flock into the canteens to grab a bite of it. Despite the parotta and paneer masala being a favourite, most of them do not have it often. This is the moment the students feel inflation has hit them.

“The IT canteen is simply the best” say students. They

students chill out. While the Main canteen is filled with action, the MBA canteen is more for the sober ones. The crusty puffs that crumble in the mouth and the fizzy soda that beats the heat are an unbeatable combo after a long day. The cream bun is just right for the evening pangs of hunger. What better way to end the evening than with a coffee at the Night canteen?

(inputs from Divyakshmi and team, 1st BA, ASCOM)

Fish waste helps grow plants

An ingenious project from the Centre for Computational Engineering and Networking has come up with a solution to alleviate soil fertility problems without using chemical fertilizers. Ammonia, which is an important ingredient for soil fertility is found in abundant quantities in fish waste.

By connecting water pipelines from a fish tank to a vegetable garden and circulating water between the two through an electrical pump, the CEN experiment has succeeded in fertilizing gravel and cleaning the water in the fish tank at the same time. The ammonia content in the water that

circulates from the fish tank gets absorbed into the soil increasing its fertility in the vegetable garden. At the same time oxygen supply increases in the fish tank because of the decrease in ammonia content in the water that circulates inside the tank. Plants grow and fish thrive.

The project used minimal electricity of about 50 watts per 10 minutes and the total project cost is just Rs.25,000. CEN is in the process of identifying areas to carry out this project on a larger scale.

(inputs from Malavika and team, 1st BA, ASCOM)

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“Holding up half the sky”

In conversation with Pravin Patkar on a life dedicated to empowering the socially marginalized populace of India

Gaurango Banerji

Ettimadai: The department of Social Work at Amrita University, Coimbatore is gifted with a mentor who has transformed the lives of countless slum dwellers, tribals, and sex workers among many others. Pravin Patkar is the Founder and Chairperson of a prominent NGO, Prerana, Vice-Chairperson of ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism) International, Director for the Anti-Trafficking Centre (Prerana), and the mentor and guiding force for the Amrita School of Social Work, Coimbatore. Dr. Patkar describes how social work paved his professional path, and brought him true happiness and fulfillment. During his college days, Dr. Patkar, would just walk out of college, hop onto any truck passing by and travel 100 odd kilometres to spend time with tribals, trying to understand them and help relieve their problems. He would go to visit them twice or thrice a week with less than three hours of sleep.

A completely dedicated professional in the field of social work, he shares his views on his work in the field and how he plans to implement his mix of industry and academia in creating a new generation of social workers from Amrita University. According to him, change and transformation should be people-driven, not industrially or institutionally driven. Dr. Patkar and his wife Priti, would visit places where people were distressed in order to help them out.

His primary focus pertained to all issues that concerned the basic survival of the poor. In 1986, Dr. Patkar and his wife commenced working on aiding the children of sex workers and, implemented their work in 1988.

The couple has had an opportunity to present their achievements before the member countries of the United Nations in the U. N. congress at Vienna, Austria in April 2001, where it was considered a path-breaking model of social service.



Dr Pravin Patkar interacting with a student journalist.

Dr. Patkar says that a person can pursue two jobs with ease, and should not ignore the necessities of his or her family while on the path of social service. He taught at the prestigious, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, where he completed his post-graduation and pursued his passion for social work. This helped him maintain his family at a relatively comfortable scale. His daughter

is a student of medicine and his son is an engineer from Amrita University. As a mentor to the Department of Social Work, he plans to focus on creating social workers who are skillfully the best in the continent and empowered with such moral values that will separate an Amrita social worker from the others. He stressed that value based education is what he

aims to provide for his students, thus giving them a holistic outlook.

He concludes by shedding light on the challenges that he faces at the Amrita campus. He cites language as a barrier restricting his interactions with people in and around the university. He also feels that his age is starting to overpower him as he cannot walk the miles he used to as an agile youth.

A topper's tryst with social work

Raghavan Raj

Semester results are one of the worst night mares in college life. But the real student dares to think beyond score cards and targets the true goal. For Yashwanth Ponnala pursuing Master of Social Work at the Amrita Nagar campus, being a topper is not the only thing that sets him apart. His commitment to the greater social good makes him exceptional among his peers. He is not that type of a guy who is bothered only about studies and forgets about all the fun and frolic of college life. Like every other back bench, he burns the midnight oil for any exam. Yet, his ability to understand the concepts very clearly gives him an upper hand. Quite often, he skips his home visits just for the sake of volunteering for various social service programmes. His tryst with social work began way back in eighth standard with the visit to an orphanage. Since then, he contributed in every little way to contribute to the well being of the society. This included visits to orphanages, old age homes, volunteership for raising funds and relief materials for the Gujarat Earthquake in 2001, the Tsunami in 2004 and the Kurnool flood victims in 2009. He is also a part of several village adoption programmes initiated by Mata Amritanandamayi Mutt in and around Ettimadai. He believes in the concept of love for all beings. He dreams of starting an NGO with the motto of making the needy villages self-sufficient and to equip them with the state-of-art facilities.

#TRENDING

Sherlocked

With odd villains, eccentric aristocrats and fashionable London settings, BBC's Sherlock Holmes series has caught the world's attention with just three seasons, more than any of the books ever did. This contemporary adaptation of Sherlock Holmes, created by Stephen Moffat and Mark Gatiss of 'Doctor Who' fame, has revived our favorite characters from the past. So let us look at how 'A study in Pink' gained hundred folds more popularity than 'A study in scarlet'.

The effective crafting of the characters and a wonderful choice of crew has lured a huge passionate cult of followers to watch this show. The portrayal of Sherlock as a high-functioning sociopath and Watson as the blogger has had an unimaginably wide reach compared to any other version of Sherlock Holmes as it is much more realistic and easier to associate with. Benedict Cumberbatch as the sleuth has (hands down) done one of the greatest portrayals of Sherlock Holmes ever considering from Robert Downey Jr. to Peter Cushing and beyond. And as the show itself says "Every fairy tale needs a good old-fashioned villain." The show's clever and classy antagonist Jim Moriarty is definitely very warm and likeable. He is called by many, as the 'most amazing villain' ever and has a special place in the audience's hearts just like Sherlock.

The quality of writing and the exquisite production is also a major reason for the show's success. Each upcoming season has outdone the past with its thickening plot, witty dialogues and increasingly savvy humor. This blend with a rich scent of British culture and nobility has ensured increasing fan base and positive reviews from today's hard-to-please audience. Season three's cliffhanger ending leaves no room for us to forget Sherlock. As the global audience holds their breath and wait for the next season to come out, there is something for all Indians to look forward to- A Punjabi version of Sherlock Holmes. In the end, all that matters is how BBC and the whole of Sherlock's team has rekindled the audience's love for the best detective of English literature.

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