

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Alumni,

It gives me great pleasure to present the second edition of the IITaV newsletter. In this edition, we are pleased to introduce and congratulate our IIT achievers who have been recognised and acknowledged for their contributions to the State of Victoria and indeed Australia. The membership of IITaV has doubled to nearly 60 since our Annual General Meeting on 26 March 2011. It is pleasing to note that IITaV members have been very active in the functions and professional activities throughout the year – workshop setting the mission and vision of IITaV; talk by Dr Mashelkar; Entrepreneurship workshop; Inaugural Dinner. In addition, monthly networking get-togethers are planned beginning December 2011, LinkedIn for IITaV has been activated and a website revamp is underway.

As we move forward, we will continue to build on the current activities. This will include strengthening partnerships with academia and professional organisations, providing a strong networking platform and enhancing the brand recognition of IIT. The success of IITaV can only be achieved by your strong commitment, support and active participation in its activities. I take this opportunity to thank all our committee members for their dedicated hard work in getting us to reach where we are.

Best regards, Arun Kumar

## EVENT ROUND UP

### IITaV August Dinner

**Indian Institute of Technology Alumni Victoria (IITaV) organised a dinner on 7th August 2011** with Mrs and Dr. S.K. Behera, the Consul General of India as Chief Guest. It was attended by over 70 members, their spouses and children. The first issue of IITaV newsletter was launched at the dinner.

Launching the inaugural newsletter, Dr Behera said that, "I am happy to note that IITaV has now taken a concrete shape and embarked on a series of activities aimed at fostering close relations between India and Australia. As we all know, the IIT alumni are one of the best brains in India. Their synergy in doing any positive work will be tremendous."

IITaV President, Professor Arun Kumar outlined IITaV's vision to contribute to the social, economic and environmental development of Victoria in particular and Australia in general. A key objective of IITaV is to provide a platform for networking among IITians, business, academia and the government.

Other IITians contributing to Australia also spoke briefly. They included DD Saxena and



DD Saxena, a graduate of IIT Kanpur (1974) spoke about the venture investment work being done in Wagga Wagga. The venture is to set up the biggest and only the second integrated oilseed crushing and refining plant in Australia. Dr Jay Vir Kaudinya (PhD, IIT Delhi 1985) and his wife Dr Rachna Kaudinya (PhD, IIT Delhi 1986) spoke about developing "Eco Pacific's High Efficiency Gas Ducted Heater for Residential Heating". Professor Raman Singh of Monash University spoke on the IIT Bombay and Monash University collaboration in setting up a collaborative centre at the IIT campus in Mumbai.

Ravi Singh provided a brief outline on the upcoming workshop being organised by IITaV on 20 August 2011. Mr. Rajiv Lal proposed a vote of thanks.

*"I should love to satisfy all, if I possibly can; but in trying to satisfy all, I may be able to satisfy none. I have, therefore, arrived at the conclusion that the best course is to satisfy one's own conscience and leave the world to form its own judgment, favourable or otherwise".— Mahatma Gandhi.*

## IITaV Entrepreneurship Workshop

### Bringing out the entrepreneur in you ...

This initiative of IITaV, as part of facilitating the process of formation of venture clusters, was coordinated by Ravi Singh. The one day workshop was attended by over 30 delegates. The workshop was opened by Dr. S.K Behera, Consul General of India.

The idea behind venture clusters is to provide a safe environment in which an entrepreneur can fully express their talents and experience without the downside risk of going it alone.

Dr. David Gilbert, Deputy Head, Industry Engagement in the College of Business, RMIT University got the ball rolling with a very motivational talk to the future entrepreneurs highlighting the need to look for fresh ideas and input especially from the new generation.

Ms. Gönül Serbest, Director of Trade Engagement with India in the Department of Business and Innovation, State Government of Victoria, Australia gave an overview of trade missions to India. The idea of linking the IITaV website to Trade Engagement Program – India was also endorsed.



Ms. Rohini Kappadath, Head of Cross-Border Business, Pitcher Partners facilitated the workshop. As part of this, Rohini interviewed DD Saxena, IIT Kanpur (1974) who is promoting a 175,000 Ton oilseed crushing and refining plant at Wagga Wagga NSW at an investment of \$85m. "It is the passion and very strong desire to succeed which provides the support when the time is tough during entrepreneurship journey", said DD.

The IITaV members then worked in four groups on a business idea, with each group presenting their visualisation of the concept to the wider group. The group activity was facilitated by Rajiv Dhar (IIT Kanpur, 1975) and Rohini who mentored the teams as they navigated their way through the initial questions for a new venture.

The workshop provided a platform and brought together like-minded individuals and information relevant to their aspirations. While no follow-on sessions are planned, a good sign of the value created by this workshop is the ongoing dialogue between workshop attendees on starting new or growing existing ventures. In that respect the workshop achieved its objectives.

### Prof. Pradipta Banerji- soon to join as Director, IIT Roorkee

He is a Professor of Structural Engineering at IIT Bombay, where he has been since 1988. Prof. Banerji graduated with a B. Tech degree from IIT Delhi in 1981, securing the Director's Silver Medal as the top-ranked graduating student in Civil Engineering.



He then completed an M.S. and a Ph.D. in Structural Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley, USA, with a specialisation in Earthquake

### Monthly Networking Sessions

Based on surveys and feedback from members, your IITaV committee has taken the initiative to organise monthly networking events. This will provide an opportunity for members to meet face to face and discover the strength of the network. It is also hoped this will enable members achieve their professional goals. Depending upon how this initiative grows and develops it may be possible to expand it to include guest speakers or other individuals of interest.

A separate communication will be sent to you advising the date and time of the first session.

For more information, contact **Satish Varma**; [satishkvarma@gmail.com](mailto:satishkvarma@gmail.com); 0438 130 260 or **Rajiv Lal**; [lalrajiv@optusnet.com.au](mailto:lalrajiv@optusnet.com.au); 0409 528 473.

## IITIANS CONTRIBUTING TO AUSTRALIA

Rakesh Aggarwal, IIT Varanasi (IT-BHU), 1978; MD Longwarry Food Park (dairy plant) – winner of 2011 Victorian Exporter of the Year

Rakesh ventured out in 1999 to take control of his own situation. He started working as a self-employed Engineering Consultant, working on hourly basis to provide engineering services to companies in the food industry, calling it the Saurin Group (named after his two sons, Saurabh & Rohin). He then moved into manufacturing of food processing equipment. Within a year, he was competing with large international companies like Tetrapak, APV, NIRO among others to manufacture and supply plant equipment & packages. An opportunity came knocking. The Bonlac plant in Longwarry was up for sale. To Rakesh's advantage, he had worked in that plant, and knew what improvements could be made. Rakesh came up with an ingenious plan. He would first look at improving the plant performance to try to make it viable. In case that did not work the fall-back plan was to sell individual components of the main process plant to other industries – a business he was already in.

However, this required a lot of cash influx. His persistence of many months paid off when a banker came up with a plan which made it possible for him to purchase the Longwarry Plant. Re-establishing and running a large manufacturing unit (dairy plant) was entirely a different ball game. One had to set up an organization to look after procurement of milk and raw materials, sort out production headaches, establish proper human resources, build marketing outlets for finished products, and comply with government regulations, etc. Rakesh received the much needed and unstinted support and encouragement from his wife, Sunita and sons Saurabh and Rohin. He established a wonderful team and a very good working relationship with the farmers. He states, "Despite drought and shortage, our milk supply has increased 40% every year due to our milk pricing policy and rapport with farmers", and soon started selling his products to 30 countries around the world.

Rakesh has worked regularly with CSIRO and some local Universities on research & new projects relevant to his industry. His company has also supported the local communities as well as their social and environmentally relevant projects. As a result, he and his company have been recipients of many Government awards for their efforts.

The IIT community can justifiably feel proud of having this entrepreneur amongst us in Australia. For more information, visit <http://www.longwarry.com/> Congratulations to Longwarry Food Park for winning out the prestigious **Victorian Exporter of the Year** for this year.

## MEMORY LANE

Radhey Shyam Gupta, IIT Delhi, 1971

I was just lucky to avoid ragging after 15 days of settling at Aravali Hostel, IIT Delhi (1966). It so happened, after going through the torture of IIT Shimla/Paataal etc, few seniors knocked at my door. Shivering inside I opened the door and said "Good Morning Sir". "Do you have a talent? Can you act, sing a song or .....There is a talent search and you need to perform", they said. "Sir, I can play Sitar but I don't have one" was my answer. "No problem, come with us" and they took me to Music Room in ECA centre – which had all sorts of instruments – Tabla, Harmonium, Dholak, Sitar etc. I chose one Sitar which was the best amongst three. My performance on the day, mainly film songs of choice impressed the Aravalites and some of the seniors became my friends. I made a point to move around with them only. Nobody would approach me for ragging when they saw me with them.

In 1969 IIT Delhi was invited by BITS Pilani for the youth festival for a week or so. We were a group of 30-35 students in the leadership of Rajat Gupta, who was the General Secretary of RCA (please note the name change from ECA to RCA), for debating, running, music etc. competitions. We all went together in the IIT bus and had lot of fun. At BITS we grabbed almost all the prizes including shield for Music. On the way back the driver of the bus requested to have lunch at his village which incidentally was on the way. Our group was very happy and to entertain the villagers, some started dancing on the top of the bus and some on the ground. Some of the girls from our group started dancing with the loud music on. We thought it will be great for us to entertain village folks but it wasn't. For a little while, the villagers were amused but the Village Pradhan could not tolerate any more. "Stop it", came a loud thunder and we stopped. He gave a big lecture to us about our culture and behaviour. We became like a sheep and very humbly with our head down ate the lunch. I believe the driver had a big argument with the village head later.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR ALUMNI

Ravi Bhatia (IIT Delhi 1970) and IITaV founding member

*Why did you choose to go to IIT?*

After finishing High School, I had the option to study medicine, science or engineering. Unfortunately, I had distaste for dissections and cadavers, science seemed too boring from a career point of view and IIT became the default choice. To this day, I am not sure if I made a wise decision.

*What is the best memory you treasure from your IIT days?*

Actually there are two: the first being meeting Madhu and the other is restoring a 1928 Morris 8 vintage car that we used to run in the Statesman Vintage Car Rally - we never lasted the distance.

*If not an engineer, what other profession you would have chosen?*

Although I have never practiced as a real engineer, my engineering education has given me structured thinking and probably a problem solving ability (not that the solutions always turn out to be ideal!). If I had the luxury of being able to do it all over again, I would have studied medicine and become a medical research scientist.

*What was your first job?*

I started my first job within a week after my final exams, a long time before our results were declared. Although totally raw, I was appointed the Manager of the customer service centre for Telerad, one of the first TV manufacturers in India at that time. I had to train my initial staff of five who had to visit customers to fix TV sets which were pretty shonky in those days. Fortunately, I was very good at electronics and trained my staff to be good techs. I learnt people management (my staff were much older than me) and customer management as our customers had paid princely sums to acquire badly made devices. I also met many interesting people as I used to make some calls personally.

*What superpower would you most like to possess?*

A magic wand would do – I would like to wipe out political corruption in India and restore national pride and strong confidence in the future of India.

*What was the worst thing which still haunts you from your IIT experience?*

Pretty mundane - My failure to master microwave theory and wave guide design: it was simply too abstract.

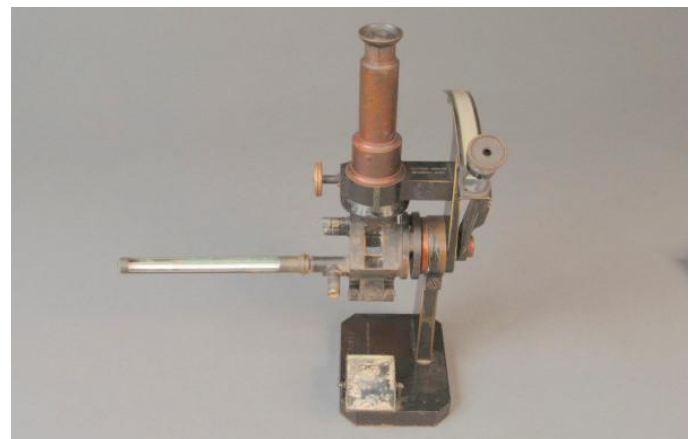
*If you are appointed director of an IIT, what one thing you will do first?*

I would build a strong culture of applied research and try to achieve several world firsts.

## MYSTERY OBJECT

There were no correct answers to the mystery object in the Issue 1. The correct answer was “Feussner Type Potentiometer” and the closest entry was Ram Lal Garg. Well done but unfortunately no wine bottle!

Let's see if this issue can break the dry spell. Please submit your guess to [mail@iitav.org.au](mailto:mail@iitav.org.au). To win you need to provide the full name of the object. The first three correct submissions will be announced in the next newsletter and the person with the first correct answer will get a special bottle of wine (committee members excluded).



We trust you enjoyed this edition of the IITaV Newsletter. Please send your feedback and contributions (news, views and memories) to Yogendra Vashishtha (0439 692 010; [yogendra.vashishtha@gmail.com](mailto:yogendra.vashishtha@gmail.com)) for the next issue by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011.

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